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What is the difference in the destination image of the Russian settlement of Barentsburg on Svalbard archipelago by tourists before they arrive and after they visited it?

Recommendations to make Barentsburg more tourist friendly

—

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Abstract

In 1596, while searching for the North-East Passage, the Dutch explorer Willem Barents discovered the largest island in the Svalbard archipelago. On this island, the world's northernmost city and airport are located, as well as, the northernmost bust of Vladimir Lenin. Today, the Norwegian archipelago, located near the North Pole, is attractive to many tourists. According to an agreement from the twentieth century, a number of Russian settlements, which have post-Soviet background and unique atmospheres; are located in Norwegian territory. In these settlements, one can find luxury hotels, abandoned mines, a canteen and an expensive restaurant with its own brewery.

This thesis explores the difference in destination image before and after tourists arrive at the Russian settlement, Barentsburg, in the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard. Different tourists, who had visited Barentsburg, were the focus of the thesis.

The main concept used throughout this thesis is tourists' images of the destination. Using several theoretical issues and approaches, this concept and its supplementary notions are discussed in the third chapter, "Theoretical foundation".

The research that informed this thesis also investigated aspects related to the current conditions, opportunities and constraints for the development of tourist activities in this settlement's territory.

The second goal of my research was to disclose potential opportunities, strengths and weaknesses in order to offer recommendations for tourism development at the destination.

Data was collected from February to March 2015 by observing, photographing, and interviewing tourists, and from July to August 2016 by electronic survey and interviewing via Skype. This data is presented in this thesis.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background for the study

Nowadays, Svalbard is one of the most accessible Arctic territories in the world. Subsequently, it is an ideal place to conduct research with respect to a range of scientific fields of study. While the harsh Arctic environment creates difficult living conditions, people manage to sustain their lives amongst snow and frost. From a touristic perspective, Svalbard is one of the most developed tourist destinations, and possesses the most developed touristic centers in the Arctic region (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014).

To date, tourism development has been concentrated in two Russian settlements in the Norwegian Svalbard: Barentsburg and Pyramid, albeit that Pyramid is a ghost city. In other words, Pyramid does not have any inhabitants now and the mine that operated there is abandoned. There are only tourist excursions during the summer. Historically, Barentsburg and Pyramid are settlements that belong to Russia. There is nothing unusual about a Russian town being in a Norwegian area. Before 1920, Svalbard was considered “no-man’s-land” until “The Treaty of Paris” was signed, under which Norway established a protectorate over the territory. The treaty enables all signatory parties free access to the archipelago and to be able to conduct business there (Drivenes, Jølle, Zachariassen, & Arlov, 2004).

The focus of the research that informs this Master’s thesis is Barentsburg. Barentsburg is a new center for the tourism industry since tourist activity began not so long ago. Previously in the first half of the twentieth century, coal mining was the main industry of the Barentsburg settlement. I chose the destination as a platform for my fieldwork due to its novelty and uniqueness. Subsequently, I conducted my first fieldwork in the Barentsburg settlement during February-March, 2015. International tourists were the main informants for my research. Additionally, I met representatives of the administration, and authorities, who kindly provided me with significant data related to my research topic. I observed the area of settlement with and without a camera as well as conducted interviews. One of my tasks was to interview respondents using specific and open-ended questions concerning Russian settlement in Svalbard.

Due to limitations associated with the destination, I had to conduct extra fieldwork via the Internet. Accordingly, I located some tourists who had visited Barentsburg, and who had written reviews of TripAdvisor’s webpage. Fortunately, these tourists agreed to kindly take

part in my research, which consisted of three stages-Internet reviews, an electronic survey, and new interviews. Collected data helped me to shed light on the difference in the destination image of the Russian settlement of Barentsburg on Svalbard archipelago by tourists before they arrive and after they had visited it.

1.2 Research question and relevance of research

The main question of my research was “What is the difference in the destination image of the Russian settlement of Barentsburg in the Svalbard archipelago held by tourists before they arrive and after they have visited it?” In addition, I tried to give recommendations to make Barentsburg more tourist friendly.

Any tourist has some expectations before a trip, for example, about the area to be visited, activities and people there, as well as about nature and environment. These expectations are likely to be directly opposite to the real image of a destination or they may change. For people who are engaged in the development of tourism in an area, it is important to evaluate and make conclusions about these changes. I hope that the results of this research will help in understanding the destination image of Barentsburg, which was modified by tourists after direct experience of the settlement.

As I noted earlier, Arctic tourism has become popular among tourists. Polar tourism is not an entirely new phenomenon; however, from a tourism perspective, Arctic destinations are not well-studied. International tourism could become a good source for Russian tourism.

There is an enormous amount of research devoted to various topics related to the Arctic region, such as, physical and geographical features of high-latitude areas, the world-famous polar explorers whose names are associated with the northern latitudes, etc. However, as already mentioned, there is little research devoted to tourism perspectives of the Arctic region. This alone indicates the relevance of the research topic of this thesis as Barentsburg and its inhabitants have an interesting history that is unknown to many tourists (Arctic: Location and Geography, 2015).

In my research, this piece of Russian culture located in Norwegian territory is a unique phenomenon, which has been little studied (Evers et al., 2013). Here, without a visa, Norwegians can visit Russian settlements to experience Russian culture. From my point of view, this is rather unusual. Currently, relationships between Russia and the Western world

are rather complicated; meanwhile, Svalbard and Barentsburg in particular remain places with a peaceful coexistence between Norway and Russia. Furthermore, the situation concerning Ukraine and Russia is even more complicated; however, Ukrainians and Russians still live in peace in Barentsburg. To gain an understanding of such tourist experiences of Barentsburg, a qualitative study was undertaken for this Master's thesis. The outcomes of this research could benefit both Russia and Norway. The research is especially relevant for the Arctic tourism industry, which works on developing infrastructure in remote places. In addition, I hope that Russian companies can benefit from this research by looking at the qualitative data collected from the informants.

1.3 Structure of the Master's thesis

This thesis consists of eight chapters. The first chapter, 'Introduction', presents background information on the study, wherein I describe Svalbard and Barentsburg in particular in order to present the research area of my Master's thesis. Further, I formulate a research question and the relevance of this study. At the end of this chapter, the structure of this Master's thesis is presented.

Chapter two contains information about the Arctic region in general and in particular about the Svalbard archipelago. I provide a brief overview of features of the archipelago from a tourist point of view. The settlement of Barentsburg is the focus of my research, and a discussion of this area is presented. I describe information, which I found in my literature and Internet searches. I begin with "What is the Arctic?" in which I present general information about the region. The next part is devoted to Svalbard wherein I contextualize the subject of my research. In doing so, I highlight general information about the Svalbard archipelago concerning geography, natural resources, history, industrial roots, and so on. The third part is quite short and focuses on the Russian settlement called Barentsburg in the Norwegian archipelago. I use a deductive approach moving from the general to the specific - the destination of my fieldwork.

In the third chapter, I describe the theoretical concepts used in this Master's thesis. It consists of several sections, specifically, 'Previous research', 'Destination image', 'The destination image analysis', 'Motivation as a major background driver for tourists', 'Expectation, perception, and satisfaction', and 'Tourism concepts'. Thus, the term of destination image

becomes defined and considered in the framework of supplementary notions. In addition, some tourism conceptions are considered at the end of this chapter.

In the fourth chapter, I present my methodological approach as well as information regarding the methods I used during the conduct of my research in the settlement of Barentsburg in Svalbard. This chapter consists of the following sections: 'Introduction', 'Qualitative research', 'Quantitative research', 'Informants', 'Data collection', and 'Data analysis'. Considering the methodology of this research, I would like to note that a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods gives us various data collections in order to achieve a comprehensive answer to my research question.

The fifth and the sixth chapters are devoted to my two sets of fieldwork and have the same structure. They are organized using the following sections, 'Introduction', 'Data collection', 'Data analyses', 'Limitations', and 'Ethical issues'. Information from these chapters is summarized in the next chapter, 'Findings'.

The seventh chapter is devoted to the findings of my research. It is structured based on my methodology and theoretical framework. It consists of the following sections: 'Introduction', 'Formation of destination image before participation', and 'Experience of the destination after arrival'. My findings are revisited in the next chapter, the conclusion.

In addition, a list of references and four appendices are included at the end of the thesis.

2. Description of the Arctic region

In this chapter, I present descriptive information about the Arctic region in general and Russian Barentsburg in the Svalbard archipelago in particular. I iterate that this area is rather under-studied, especially the Post-Soviet areas. In a tourism context, there are few sources devoted to Barentsburg. I was able to find some Russian sources in the libraries of Longyearbyen and Murmansk (Russia), although these were predominantly in Russian. Additionally, the data was rather old; and, it was rather complicated to access the data directly.

2.1 What is the Arctic?

The Arctic region is the area above the Arctic Circle, $66^{\circ}32'$ north in latitude (Figure 1). This area includes the northern outskirts of Eurasia and North America, almost the entire Arctic Ocean and islands as well as adjacent parts of the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014).

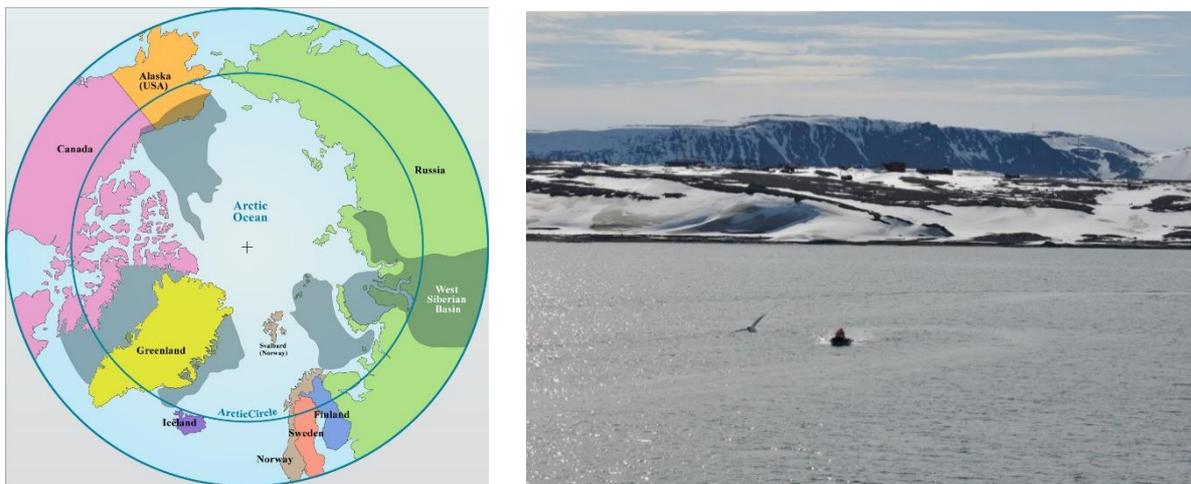


Figure 1. The Arctic region^{1 2}

Currently, the Arctic region is identified as one of the least studied areas; and, is very attractive and exotic for tourists (Svalbard: round trip, 2008). According to the International Association of Tour Operators, in 2014, about 80 million travelers from foreign countries visited the high-latitude region called the Arctic (This is Svalbard: What the figures say,

¹ <https://iakal.wordpress.com/2015/08/05/united-states-and-russia-in-the-arctic-zone/>

² Photo by Alexey Malkin

2014). This region is rather unique because of its remoteness, clean air, polar animals, rare species of plants, deep silence, etc. Such things are very attractive for tourists wanting to observe and feel the untouched northern high-latitudes. Almost all active tours in the Arctic are related to nature. In other words, the process of moving from point A to point B, to some extent is an adventure. Moreover, the journey itself is already part of the tour, as the nature of the northern latitudes is incredibly beautiful and stunningly original (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014) (Figure 2).



Figure 2. The attraction of Arctic region³

Nowadays, there are a number of nations, which lead demand for Arctic tourism, such as, Germany, China, The United States of America, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The high economic development of these countries enables their citizens the income or wherewithal to take part in expansive sea cruises. Additionally, the residents of such nations have high education levels, which may influence an elitist taste in travel and a subsequent interest in a variety of trips to the high latitudes. In particular, Svalbard (Spitsbergen), the North Pole, the Russian Arctic, the Canadian Arctic, and Greenland are the most popular destinations among the tourists (Svalbard, Spitsbergen, 2013).

2.2 The Svalbard archipelago

The Svalbard archipelago extends across 61,229 square kilometers and is located in the Arctic Ocean between 76° 26' and 80° 50' north latitude and 10° and 32° east longitude (Viken, 2010). It is one-fifth part of the territory of the Kingdom of Norway. The archipelago is located in the northernmost part of Norway. The archipelago includes over 5,000 islands and the largest of them

³ Photos by Marina Galaburda

is Spitsbergen. The distance between the northernmost point of this archipelago, “Ross Island”, and the North Pole is about 1,020 km (Figure 3).

The area of Spitsbergen is very mountainous. The height of the mountains ranges from 800 to 1,717 meters (the peak of Newton). Each of the islands in the archipelago has a unique landscape including some features, such as, high sharply broken ridges, deep valleys, flat hills and terraces (West Spitsbergen), vast plateau (North East Land), and narrow ridges with flat rounded tops (Nadegda’s Island) (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014). Glaciers are the most characteristic feature of Spitsbergen’s landscape. They occupy 57% of the total area of the archipelago. The thickness of the ice cut reaches 500 meters in some places.



Figure 3. Svalbard archipelago and its numerous islands⁴

The archipelago’s geographical location, relief, and sea environment determines climatic conditions in the Svalbard archipelago. Its western coast is bordered by one of the branches of the Gulf Stream, making the climate milder than in other areas situated at the same latitude. However, from October to May, most fjords are covered by ice. The most difficult ice conditions form in the eastern part of Spitsbergen. Annually, the archipelago has about 240

⁴ <http://www.mappery.com/Svalbard-Physical-Map>

days with precipitation including 170 with snow and 70 with the rain. In an average year, rain falls from 200 to 400 mm in different parts of Spitsbergen. Summer commences in late June. It is very short and cool. Snow begins falling in September. Usually, winter is frosty and snowy; and, the temperature is lower than -35° C. The long polar night commences at the end of autumn and lasts until February. Additionally, the Svalbard archipelago lies in a zone of continuous permafrost that determines the flora and fauna of the archipelago (Evers et al., 2013).

The activity of many geophysical processes (atmospheric electricity, air ionization, cosmic rays) in Svalbard is considerably higher than in other parts of the globe. From September to March, one can watch a rare natural phenomenon called “The Northern Lights”, which is usually accompanied by powerful magnetic disturbances.

The Svalbard archipelago is home to a diversity of species. There are over 300 species of plants and fungi; mosses, lichens, and mushrooms predominate. Trees and shrubs are absent. In some places, there are dwarf birch and willow. In valleys, the northern inconspicuous flowers, such as arnica, astragals, sorrel, campanula, Lapland rhododendron, polar poppy, cotton grass, and chamomile grow. This is only a small listing of all possible flowering plants particular to the Svalbard archipelago (Evers et al., 2013).

Fauna in the Spitsbergen archipelago is scarce. All sorts of birds, such as, gulls, guillemots, loons, and geese settle in abundance there. There are about 100 species of birds. Large mammals that inhabit the archipelago are represented by polar scribe, polar bear and deer. The coastal waters are rich in fish. Seals and sea hares populate the coast of Spitsbergen. In addition, there are some colonies of walruses and a variety of whales (Evers et al., 2013).

The unique legal status of Svalbard is defined by the originality of discovery, geographical location, economic development of and scientific research in Svalbard. For several centuries, the territory of the archipelago was considered as “no-man's-land”, available to all who wished to use its resources. For the first time, the legal status of Svalbard was defined in 1878 by an agreement between the Russian Empire and the United Kingdom of Sweden and Norway. This agreement recognized the equality of all countries in the exploitation of natural resources and the production of scientific research in the archipelago. In addition, its territory could not be considered as the exclusive possession of any state (Evers et al., 2013).

“After getting independence in 1905 Norway went on with the idea of acquiring sovereignty over Spitsbergen and really took administrative functions in the archipelago” (Drivenes, Jølle, Zachariassen, & Arlov, 2004). The uncertainty of the status of the islands forced European powers to sign a special agreement, under which Norway received the rights to Svalbard (Drivenes, Jølle, Zachariassen, & Arlov, 2004). Nowadays, Svalbard remains a territory with a special international legal status, although it has been under the sovereignty of Norway since 1920. The Soviet Union has also had the right to operate coal mining in Barentsburg.

In the following section, the history of the archipelago is overviewed. As I noted earlier, before World War I, the Svalbard archipelago was a no-man's-land. After the war, in 1929, the “Spitsbergen Treaty” was signed in Paris. In this treaty, sovereignty over the archipelago has handed to Norway. However, any other country receives the right to conduct commercial activity there. More than 40 countries signed the Treaty. England, the United States of America, and Italy have tried to mine coal in the Arctic (Evers et al., 2013).

The Soviet Union joined the Treaty in 1935, although Russians began to mine coal in the archipelago much earlier. The quantity of coal mined was enormous for Russia needed to ensure the functioning of the Murmansk and Arkhangelsk regions, supply fuel to ships, locomotives and power plants. Consequently, the Soviet government bought three sites in Svalbard with a total area of 251 square km. Then, the USSR organized a trust named “Arcticugol”. One of the first directors was Mikhail Plisetsky, father of the world famous ballerina Maya Plisetskaya. Three working village were built to support the mining named Grumant, Barentsburg and Pyramid.

In September 1943, Hitler’s squadron destroyed and burned the villages of the archipelago. Industrial buildings and facilities were destroyed in Barentsburg. All who remained after the attack, died in a fire. The German battleship, “Tirpitz”, with three other destroyers shelled buildings at Cape Hotelnesset and dropped to a landing, and then proceeded to fire Longyearbyen. Paratroopers captured the village and burned the buildings left after the fire. On the way back, the Germans destroyed the second soviet mine called Grumant. Everything was destroyed. Pyramid remained intact because the German ships did not dare to go to the end of Isfjord (Evers et al., 2013).

After the Second World War, a new stage in development of the Soviet mining industry recommenced in Svalbard. The Soviet Union had great difficulties with fuel, so in late 1946,

the trust “Arcticugol” began to restore the destroyed mines in Svalbard. Already in 1948, it had sent about 70,000 tons of coal to the Murmansk and Arkhangelsk regions (Evers et al., 2013). Nowadays, Barentsburg and Pyramid are built on the site of the previous primitive wooden buildings and are located near coalmines. Since 1961, the mine Grumant has been conserved.

2.3 Barentsburg

The Russian settlement of Barentsburg (Figure 4) was named in memory of Willem Barents and it is situated on the east bank of Greenfjord, which is the south offshoot of the gulf Isfjord (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014).



Figure 4. Location of Barentsburg in the Spitsbergen archipelago⁵

⁵ <http://www.worldrover.com/vital/svalbard.html>

The mine is the main object of the settlement (Figure 5). A network of mines with a length of several tens of kilometers is located in the bowels of the mountain massif named Ullav. The temperature of the atmosphere in a mine in permafrost reaches -5°C . A mine is a complex mechanism. Its “lungs” are the productive ventilation system. It delivers fresh air in the most remote corners of the mine. Consumption of air reaches more than 2 billion cubic meters per year (the nervous system of “mine” is a network of electric cables in the solid rubber membranes). The total length is about 25,000 meters. The mine produces coal delivered to the mainland by sea. Navigation occurs in five months, from May to October, so the rest of the coal is collected in a warehouse. All works in the warehouse are fully mechanized. The mechanized dock in Barentsburg was commissioned in 1980. Its capacity is up to 600 tons of coal per hour. The port is one of the busiest places of the village. Every year, tons of various cargoes are delivered there by sea (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014).



Figure 5. The mine of Barentsburg^{6 7}

The settlement built new houses and buildings for cultural and community purposes. There is the Barentsburg hospital, children's institutions, the palace of culture, and a sports complex with a swimming pool. Sport activities help the miners to withstand hard physical activity related to working at the mine.

A builder in Svalbard is no less an important and honorable profession than a miner. Builders emerged from the ruins of Barentsburg and Grumant and built the first panel houses at Pyramid. For a long time, panel building material was important to the settlement. Now, slag blocks are widely used in construction. Slag is manufactured from the waste of power plants based on coal.

⁶ <http://caas.ru/article/shpitsbergen>

⁷ <http://uritsk.livejournal.com/65995.html>



Figure 6. Barentsburg before the modernization^{8 9}

It is strictly prohibited to have weapons in Barentsburg, although in neighboring Norwegian Longyearbyen carbines are indispensable for everyone who leaves the settlement. Carbines are used for protection against polar bears on the island (there are about 2,500-3,000 polar bears) (Svalbard: round trip, 2008).

In preparing for my fieldwork, I tried to find video sources about Barentsburg in order to create a preview or pre-image of the destination. I found the short film called “Into the unknown. Episode 2” published by “Aftenposten”, devoted to Svalbard in general and Barentsburg in particular (Norendal, 2015). One can consider this video as one of the representations of Barentsburg. This film presented a scary picture of empty buildings with strange things, such as children's drawings and ugly interiors. However, I could not use it as an anthropological document due to supplementary sound effects and sorrowful music. It was one possible representations and I had to verify it during my fieldwork.

2.4 Tourism on Svalbard

The Arctic is one of the most remote regions of the world, which can be a tourist favorite for those who “have seen everything” (Svalbard, Spitsbergen, 2013).

Since the early 1800s, the Arctic has attracted tourists. The first, so called Arctic tourists were some hunters, anglers, climbers and adventurers, who were attracted by fishing, exotic wildlife and remote regions (Drivenes, Jølle, Zachariassen, & Arlov, 2004). During the same period, several innovative travelers to the Arctic published diaries, which became popular guidebooks for future Arctic travelers (Drivenes, Jølle, Zachariassen, & Arlov, 2004). Mass

⁸ <http://caas.ru/article/shpitsbergen>

⁹ <http://www.arctichusbands.com/index.php/10-barentsburg-a-russian-town-in-the-arctic>

tourism in the Arctic has flourished since the mid-1800s, when steamships and railways actively expanded transport network, providing access to numerous destinations throughout the Arctic (Viken, 2010). Expeditions in 1800 received a lot of public attention. Both travel writing and newspaper genres arose during the period and for the newspapers, the researchers and their history were the prime sources of material. It was also the first period of modern tourism, from the point of view of the planned, prepaid and accompanied trips, and the Arctic was one of the modern tourism areas (Viken, 2010). During the last two centuries, numerous advances in transport technology have led to a steady increase in Arctic tourism (Viken, 2010). Currently, advanced technology vessels with improved nautical charts and navigation aids allow cruise ship travel to grow exponentially (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014).

For Svalbard, tourism is the most important sector there (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014). After the early 1990s of the twentieth century, travel agencies turned their attention to Longyearbyen, where the industry began to grow rapidly. Citizens of Norway were among most of the tourists visiting Svalbard. The number of foreigners increased slightly, but they still accounted for only a small part. The Norwegians accounted for more than 70% of the 93,000 beds per night in hotels and boarding houses in Longyearbyen. Among foreign tourists, Norwegians were the fastest growing number of Europeans, excluding Scandinavia (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014).

Tourists come to Svalbard by air or by sea. There is no information about how many passengers are tourists, but in recent years, it has considerably increased the volume of passenger. In 2010, the province of Svalbard about 50,000 passengers passed through the airport (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014).

Most tourists come to Svalbard to see the natural wonders of the archipelago. The choice of organized tours is quite broad, and includes a hike to a glacier, a boat trip, excursions on snowmobiles, and kayaking or a trip with dogs. The most popular are hiking, skiing and hiking on the glacier, and there is a great demand for travel by snowmobile. However, many people prefer to rest in the company of their friends among the untouched nature of Svalbard. In recent decades, every year, from 300 to 500 tourists travel on their own to remote parts of the province of Svalbard in pursuit of a good rest (Svalbard: round trip, 2008).

The increase of tourists visiting Svalbard, is observed evenly throughout the year, even in low season from October to February. According to the tour operators, 2013 was more productive compared with 2012. In 2013, about 45,000 overnight tourists visited Svalbard, an increase of 20% compared with 2012 (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014). Statistics for the 2014 also show a rise in the number of overnight stays (about 13 %). Subsequently, statistics show a steady increase in the flow of tourists to this area, which opens up new horizons for development of the tourism industry and attracting investment. However, these statistics do not fully reflect the flow of tourists to the Russian settlement on Svalbard, since the awareness of European citizens about the presence of such a unique place is mediocre and limited (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014).

Barentsburg is a new object in the tourism market. According to tourist office in Barentsburg, tourism there began to evolve, relatively recently, about three years ago. In contrast to Longyearbyen where tourism is an important industry, tourism in Barentsburg is at an early stage of development now. Mining industry, however, is still the main source of income in Barentsburg (This is Svalbard: What the figures say, 2014).

According to the tourist information on Svalbard, tourists are travelling to Barentsburg to experience a Russian society that is governed under Norwegian law. In the present day, there are about 400-500 Russian citizens living in Barentsburg. Visiting Barentsburg in the season, from February to April, takes two hours by snowmobile. Presently, in Barentsburg, there is one hotel run by 'Arcticugol', which offers the possibility for an overnight stay.

What is particularly attractive from a tourist point of view is that Russian culture and Russian society are presented there. It is very interesting that the Norwegian archipelago can show culture of its neighboring state in its own territory. It should also be noted, that Longyearbyen and Barentsburg are quite close to each other, just a couple of tens of kilometers, but they look like complete opposites.

It is fascinating that there exists a Russian settlement on the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard, and it is fascinating to find that Russian culture is alive in a territory that is actually Norwegian.

In preparing the material for my work, I was faced with a negligible amount of information available on the topic. The only place where I could locate information about Barentsburg was Murmansk Regional Library (Russia). However, most sources were outdated; and did not

reflect the present realities of life in Barentsburg. Thus, I sought Internet sources about Barentsburg before commencing my fieldwork there.

3. Theoretical foundations

3.1 Previous research

In the following overview, I consider the formulation and development of the notion “destination image”. The term first appeared in 1970s. According to Gallarza, Saura, and Garcia (2002), in their review of the notion between 1971 to 1999, the concept and measurement of destination image are variously treated from one discipline to another. These researchers also noted that both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to study the notion during that period, even statistical methods of measurement of destination image. This multidisciplinary status led to various definitions of the term, which I consider further. In their review, the researchers examined more than sixty articles related to destination image.

After a while, another group of researchers, Govers, Go, and Kumar (2007), examined 142 sources from 1973 to 2000. Their overview shed light on Internet and computerized technologies used to measure destination image in a multidisciplinary discourse that suits this research. Moreover, they proposed a three-dimensional model of measurement of destination image, which will be considered further.

Thus, the measurement of destination image was widely well studied and was the main direction of research in this period. However, there were some articles devoted to the formation of destination image in stages. One such model consisted of seven stages of formation and it will help to depict the framework of my research (Jenkins, 1999).

In my research, the focus is the modification of destination image before and after arrival of tourists at a destination. This research focus is rather rare and I only found one article devoted to the measurement of the image of India before and after tourist arrivals (Chaudhary, 2000). However, I would like to underline that India is quiet popular and a well-studied destination, and that can not be said about Barentsburg on Svalbard. Thus, my research is unique to some extent.

Based on the research question, a literature search associated with destination image and its related concepts was conducted. The related concepts of destination image, such as motivation, expectation, perception, and satisfaction are considered separately in contemporary sources. A number of writers (Crompton, 1979; Pearce, 2005; Uysal, 2008)

emphasize the significance of these concepts in tourism discourse. Motivation and perception have an important relationship (Uysal, Li, & Sirakaya-Turk, 2008).

I would like to emphasize a notion of perception that is quite detailed, because this is strongly related to destination image as an operating function of images. As far as I know, perception is a psychological notion. It is a mental function whereby the recognition of different images is possible. The main unit of perception is image; however, in tourist perceptions, destination image is the main unit. In my literature search, I found a set of sources emphasizing destination image and perceptions of tourism. According to Beerli and Martin (2004), a tourist's perception depends on destination brand image and Internet reviews of other customers' satisfaction. In other words, network communication is highly significant; therefore, I found Internet sources in order to locate information regarding Barentsburg as a destination.

Foxall and Goldsmith (1998) emphasize that brand perceptions influence consumers' perceptions. In other words, marketing and branding play a key role in the perception of destination image. This aspect of Barentsburg, I will examine in detail.

According to Chheang (2011), tourist perceptions and experience are very important, because they build up expectations based on cultural heritage, local people's friendliness, and local hospitality facilities. I identified that some significant concepts, such as expectation, satisfaction, and motivation lay at the base of my research. In the theoretical part of my thesis, I demonstrate relationships between them.

In my research project, I used several theoretical concepts to describe destination image. A three-dimensional measurement scale of image by Echtner and Ritchie (1993), staging of image formation by Gunn (1988), and certain tourism notions helped me to establish the framework of my research. Those notions were motivation, expectation, perception, and satisfaction.

3.2 Destination image

Nowadays, a variety of definitions of the concept, "destination image", exist. According to Pearce (2005), there are ten well-known definitions. Three are depicted here. A destination image is "*an expression of knowledge, impression, prejudice, imagination and emotional thoughts an individual has of a specific object or place*" (Lawson, & Baud-Bovy, 1977). This definition

provides more or less a comprehensive picture of this concept with all differentiation elements. Another definition of the destination image is “a reflection or representation of sensory or conceptual information” (Stringer, 1984). In the middle of 1980s, the definition had become more abstract but was still incomplete. In the 1990s, Kotler defined this concept as a “net result of a person’s belief, ideas, feelings, expectations and impressions about a place or an object” (Kotler, 1994). This explanation is more contemporary and was used to construct the frameworks of my research objective. From a tourism perspective, the unit of perception is image and there is a destination image. I wanted to focus on the transformation of this image before and after visitation to Barentsburg. A destination image as “a mental prototype” (Tapachai, & Waryszak, 2000) forms by sensation, perception, and other mental activities. The object of my scientific research is firstly the formation of the image and secondly, modification of it by direct experience.

3.2.1 Components of destination image

‘Image’ is a multidisciplinary notion that is difficult to define. It is found in the context of different disciplines such as, psychology, sociology, anthropology, geography, and marketing. In particular, ‘destination image’ could be defined as a set of expectations and perceptions in a tourism context. Moreover, this notion is multidimensional and complex. I now consider the theory of Echtner and Ritchie (1993), which shows the multidimensional nature of this term.

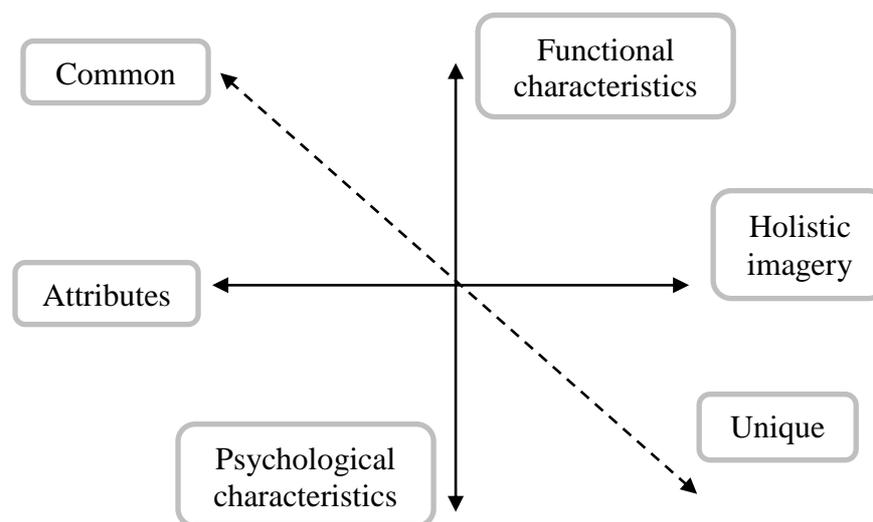


Figure 7. Dimensions of destination image by Echtner and Ritchie (1993)

This model could be used for describing a destination image. This model offers a theoretical platform for the analysis of my two sets of fieldwork. In brief, the three axes provide a framework for the concrete placement of a destination image. For instance, the aspects of the destination image could be common or unique. The uniqueness will push the image to the “unique pole” and vice versa. Thus, this model gives us a 3D theoretical template, which could prove useful for my research.

3.2.2 Formation

In this sub-section, I consider Gunn’s model of the formation of destination image. This model offers seven stages, in each of them this or that destination image could be modified. These stages are shown in Figure 8. The first stage is accumulation, where pre-image emerges. It could be mass media or private information that visitors use to form the pre-image. Second is a modification stage. In this stage is sources, which are mostly accessible from the Internet or libraries. The two first stages are preconditions for decision-making. In these stages, a potential tourist decides where to spend a vacation. The travel to the destination is a special stage, where local sources become accessible, such as, tourist information, brochures/travel guides, and even road signs (Gunn, 1988).

The participation stage is special and most pertinent for my research. In this stage, the destination image is modified most of all, because the direct experience forms its own image, which could be a positive or negative impression. On the way back, these impressions are crystallized and generalized, and a new destination image is ready for new accumulation and sharing with others.

The new accumulation stage could form pre-images for others; therefore, this stage is highly important in tourism discourse. In the next section, I combine Gunn’s theoretical model with supplementary notions, specifically, motivation, expectation, perception, and satisfaction. Thus, the model starts to be shaped into a pertinent framework for my research.

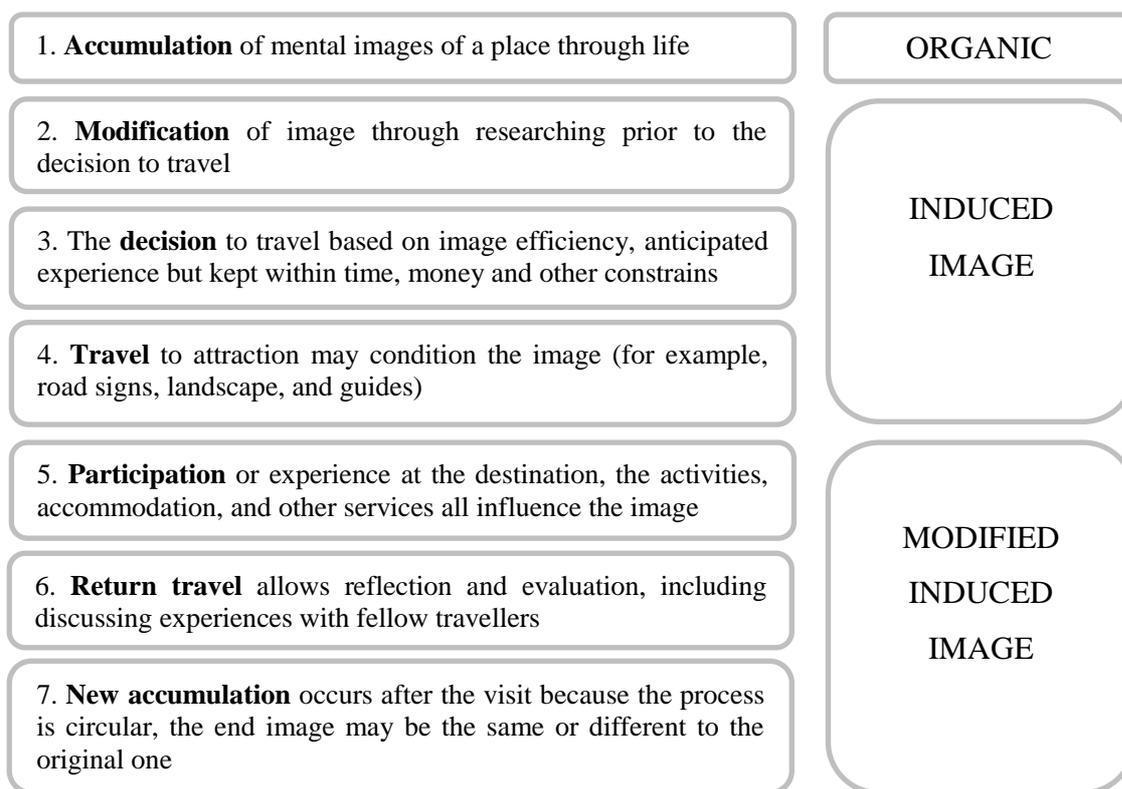


Figure 8. Gunn's stage model of destination image (1988)

3.2.3 Modification

In the next figure, I have combined Gunn's (1988) theoretical concept of formation of destination image with the notions of motivation, perception, etc. In my opinion, the accumulation and modification stages could be associated with motivation processes, which is a major background driver for traveling. The decision-making and traveling stages have connotations with expectations for destination image.

Meanwhile, participation has a strong relationship with perception that frames the first fieldwork of my research. The return travel and new accumulation stages could be associated with satisfaction that informs my second set of fieldwork.

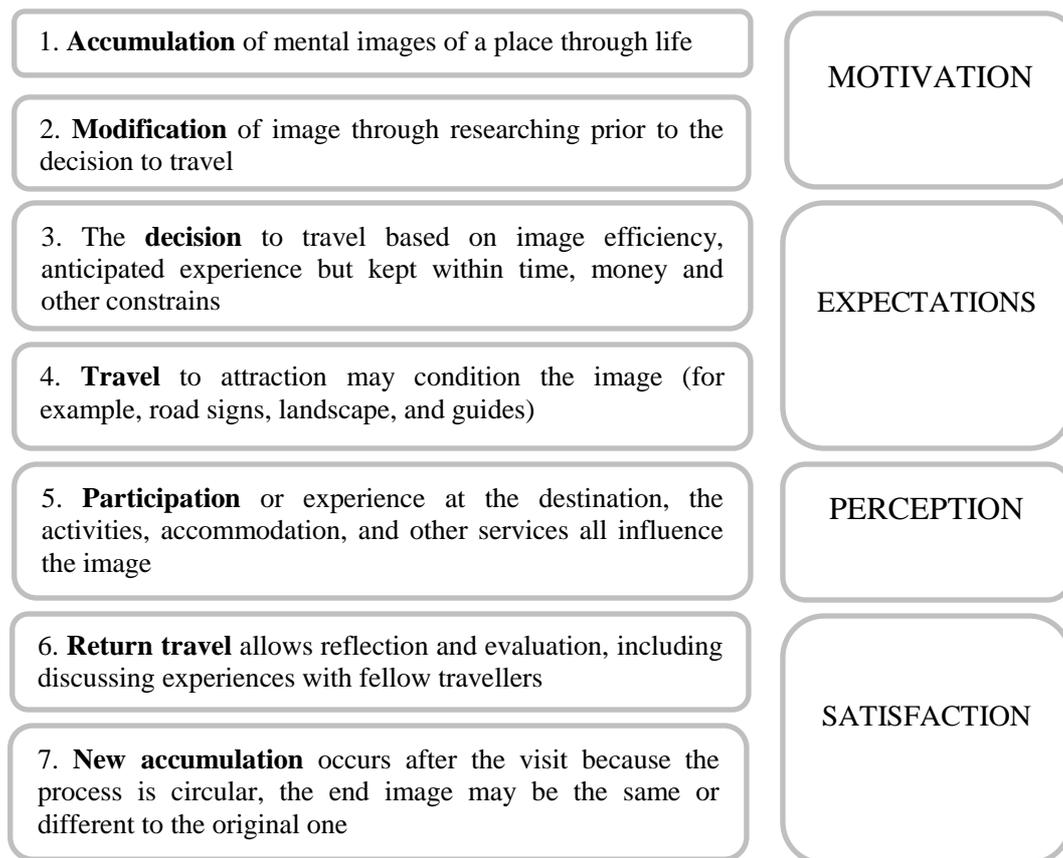


Figure 9. Relationship to my scheme

Next, I present Pearce’s (2005) concept of destination analysis, which has relevance for the methodology of my two sets of fieldwork.

3.3 Destination analysis

As a result of travel motivation analysis, Pearce (2005) underlined several dimensions of 74 selected motive items, which were assessed using principal component analysis (PCA). The result of this analysis is found in Appendix 2. This table of motive items was considered as a useful tool for my evaluation of the destination selected for the research that informs this Master thesis.

The results of principal component analysis show that “having fun”, “experiencing something different”, “feeling the special atmosphere of the vacation destination” are the most important motive items, which in a general sense push tourists to travel.

According to my pilot research, the Spitsbergen’s area offers a different and special atmosphere. The motive item, “visiting places related to my personal interest”, was also a

possible motive for several groups of people. The mining industry is rather developed in the area; so, it could have been interesting for engineers, technicians, etc. Meanwhile, the area has a unique nature with picturesque surroundings. The area could also offer, “being close to nature”.

Considering self-development, the Russian settlement on Svalbard has a unique cultural background deeply rooted into Soviet history. Collectivism is demonstrated there. This background defines a specific relation between settlers. Thus, “experience different cultures”, “meeting new and varied people”, “observing other people in the area” could be satisfied here.

From my point of view, stimulation factors are also present in Svalbard. People from the Western world have a sophisticated image of Soviet daily life and conditions of living to some extent; therefore, expectations of this experience could be different from the reality of this place. “Exploring the unknown”, “having unpredictable experience” are offered there. Due to isolation factors, the Russians settlements on Svalbard are located in hilly isolated areas, so “experiencing the open space”, “being away from the crowds of people”, “enjoying isolation” are also possible motive items.

The preceding has considered various motives, which could influence tourists to visit the Russians settlements in the Norwegian territory. This offers potential insights regarding reasons why English-speaking tourists could decide to visit this area. This set of motive items construct an imaginary picture of expectation. The next related concept, expectation, is now considered.

Pearce (2005) discussed the notion of “choosing the destination”. This could be considered as the middle stage between motivation and expectations. Motive items influence us to choose this or that destination to satisfy our needs. Pearce offers a comprehensive model for “choosing”, which could be used to theorize and classify tourist destinations (Table 1).

Table 1. The destination analysis (Pearce, 2005)

| Label | Emphasis | Characteristics and examples of the system |
|--------------|-----------------|---|
| Activities | Physical | Listings, profiles, GIS approach |

| | | |
|------------|----------|---|
| Settings | Physical | Public management agencies use of zones using a biophysical basis |
| Facilities | Physical | Micro-environment and service escapes: the immediate physical features of the tourist space |
| Service | Social | Personnel: the characteristics of personnel in the service quality framework |
| Hosts | Social | Community responses and reception; Social representations of tourism and differences in community views |
| Management | Social | Marketing labels and management actions |

According to this classification, a valuable set of labels is provided, such as, activities, settings, facilities, etc. It offers a template for analysis of the destination called Barentsburg. These labels are divided into two groupings: physical and social. Barentsburg is evaluated in the analysis chapter, using this approach that was modified by me.

3.4 Motivation as a major background driver for tourists

In order to consider the object of my study, I have to describe in detail a set of concepts and relationships between them. Common sense helps us to understand several stages of the phenomena of travelling. However, we still need a theoretical point of view to depict clearly the basis of where the research objects exist. First, I consider the concept of “motivation”. This term appears in behaviorist perspectives of psychology associated with John Watson and Ivan Pavlov; wherein, motivation was considered as a force, which causes behavior (Smed, 2009). Nevertheless, an ‘animal-centric’ approach was not enough to apply in a tourism perspective; therefore, the work of Abraham Maslow’s ‘anthropocentric’ approach became

more useful for tourism discourse. In many cases, Maslow's hierarchy of needs influenced the classification of tourists' motivation (Maslow, 1970). I have chosen Pearce's (2005) interpretation of how the hierarchy can be applied. The factors of novelty, escape, relaxation, isolation, social status, nature, self-development and self-actualization appear as foundations of travel motives (Pearce, 2005).

Thus, a set of different motives and needs can be defined as aspects of motivation. Consequently, motivation is formed due to tourist needs and the desires they want to fulfill. Motivation becomes a major background driver for tourists. In my work, this background is rather meaningful because of the preconditions for perception. Motivation influences perception because our needs and desires determine how we view a situation. We perceive things differently and use concepts and images, which we already have in our mind and this causes us to have a preconceived image or expectation. Furthermore, our previous experience builds up our expectations. There is a variety of news, internet sources, TV-programs, etc. In this imaginary space, our expected pictures are born and these influence emotional reactions and satisfaction of received experiences.

3.5 Expectation, perception, and satisfaction

As I noted earlier, a notion strongly related with destination image is perception. This psychological procedure operates with images and objects. In particular, the object of perception (not to be mixed with the object of my master thesis) is the mental prototype of the Russian settlement, Barentsburg. According to definitions in the Cambridge Dictionary, perception is *"the quality of being aware of things through the physical senses, especially sight"* or *"a belief or opinion, often held by many people and based on how things seem"* (Cambridge Dictionary, 2015). This particular mental procedure is validly examined in psychological science. The phenomenon is applicable to many different issues. In particular, it is useful in tourism as well. However, my research objective is more concrete – destination image before and after direct experience. The next scheme demonstrates a conceptual visualization that depicts and specifies the objective of my Master's thesis:

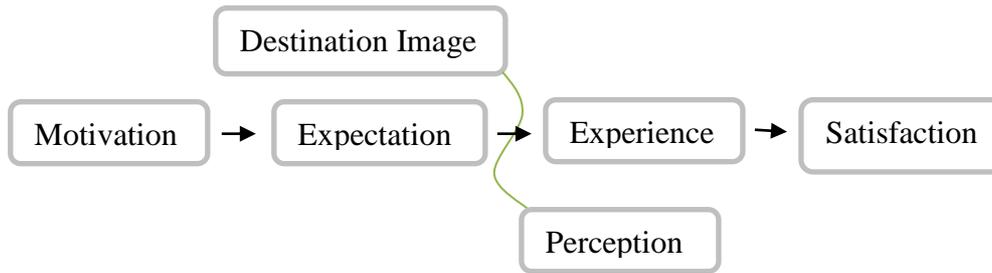


Figure 10. The concept of destination image

Based on Pearce and other authors, the visual model (Figure 10) shows relationships between these notions. I combined them myself in order to present the framework of destination image.

Thus, my theoretical concept follows this scheme. Motivation and accessible information form tourists' expectations. Between expectations and direct experiences lies the psychological procedure – perception and transformation of destination image, which is the objective of my Master's thesis.

In this section, I consider the phenomenon of perception. Perception is a mental function whereby the recognition of different images is possible. The main unit of perception is image; however, in tourist perception, destination image becomes the main unit. I located a set of sources emphasizing destination image and perception in tourism. According to Beerle (2004), the tourist's perception depends on destination brand image and Internet reviews of customer's satisfaction. In other words, network communication is highly significant. Foxall and Goldsmith (1998) underline that brand perceptions influence the consumer's perceptions. In other words, marketing and branding play the key role in the perception of a destination image. According to Chheang (2011), tourist perceptions and experience are very important, because they build up expectations based on cultural heritage, local people's friendliness, and local hospitality facilities.

Herein, I consider two basic concepts related to destination image. They are "expectation" and "satisfaction" of tourists. According to Teas (1994), expectation can be defined as performance of establishment, ideal performance or desire performance. In destination marketing, some elements are significant, such as, tourist destination selection, consumption of good or services and making the decision to visit a destination again (Aksu, İçigen, & Ehtiyar, 2010). Tourists usually create expectations using accessible information related to

motivation, which stands behind expectation. Tourists may fulfill their expectations or not. The concept, which describes this fulfilling, is “satisfaction”. For Prebensen, satisfaction “*is the result or the final step of a psychological process from need recognition to evaluation of experienced products*” (Prebensen, 2004, p. 5). This phenomenon emerges from positive feedback. A satisfied tourist communicating with others can promote a product, destination, which is a significant part of tourism marketing.

3.6 Tourism concepts

In this thesis, I consider several tourism concepts, such as, cultural, ecological, adventure, and industrial types of tourism. According to McKercher (2002), there are five types of cultural tourists in his classification:

1. Purposeful cultural tourists;
2. Sightseeing cultural tourists;
3. Casual cultural tourists;
4. Incidental tourists.

I highlight four of them. First, the purposeful cultural tourist, who learns about culture and heritage as a main reason for visiting a destination in order to gain a deep cultural experience. However, this type of tourism would only be possible if there was enough information about the destination. Secondly, the sightseeing cultural tourist, who learns about the culture or heritage in the same way as the previous tourists; nevertheless, they are entertainment-orientated in their experiences as a rule. In other words, the experience is shallower. The next type is the casual cultural tourist, who has a few reasons associated with cultural tourism and they get such experiences supplementary to the trip. Finally, the incidental tourist, who does not have any cultural reasons and they receive a shallow experience by the existence of culture in the trip (McKercher, 2002).

4. Methodology

4.1 Introduction

In 2010, when I was a third year student in my hometown university in Arkhangelsk (Russia), my interest in Arctic tourism started. Even then, the methodology of scientific research was a key discipline in my curriculum.

To me, Spitsbergen is a very exotic place in the Arctic, especially because of its extraordinary historical territorial attributes. As already mentioned, the territory of the Norwegian Svalbard archipelago consists of two different types of settlements: Norwegian and Russian. The history of this archipelago was detailed in chapter two. From my point of view, Svalbard has conserved the layout of a bipolar world: Longyearbyen and Norwegian settlement, symbolizing welfare of a capitalist society, and Russian settlements as a reminder of utopian communist ideals. The distance separating the prosperous Longyearbyen and aging Barentsburg is about 70 km away.

The subject of my scientific research is the destination image of English-speaking tourists of Barentsburg's image before and after visitation. I wanted to compare expectations of tourists with direct experience. I was interested in the satisfaction of tourists with the experiences they received.

In this chapter, I describe in detail the methods of scientific research, which I used during my two fieldworks. I used the following methods of qualitative research: semi-structured interview (my interview guide appears as an appendix), participant observation, and photography, and quantitative research is presented in my work by way of survey method. I also briefly describe my empirical reports wherein I consider my work journal used during my two sets of fieldwork.

4.2 Qualitative research

My scientific research needed to select an appropriate approach and method. The philosophy of the social sciences provides a range of research methods and approaches. During my first semester at the UiT, the Arctic University of Norway (Alta campus), I learnt about classifications of methods and their applicability. In my Master's research, I decided to use qualitative methods in order to achieve my research goal. There is a huge variety of methods. I chose the most suitable of them, specifically, semi-structured interviews, participant

observation, and photography. Qualitative research method is a study, in which the conclusions cannot be extrapolated beyond the context in which they were derived.

The development of qualitative research has been largely due to dissatisfaction with “numerical” traditional methods of experimental psychology. Proponents of qualitative methods are convinced that the conclusions that can be drawn from psychological research always depend on the context and cannot be extrapolated beyond the context in which they were applied. Of particular importance, in this context looking at the process of investigation, is a review of the patient (“what does it mean for me?”). In a qualitative study, the researcher focuses on interpretation of language (interviews, personal diaries, and so on) not trying to convert the research results into a statistical form. Subsequently, qualitative research maintains close contact with the respondent. In the next section, I outline my methods in more detail.

4.2.1 Semi-structured interview

Interviewing can simply be defined as a primary method of obtaining social information through direct talks between an interviewer and a respondent (Kawulich, 2005). The interviewer offers questions and informants provide answers (Berg, & Lune, 2012). There are three types of interview: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. A structured interview is a typical form of interview in any social science study. A distinctive feature of a structured interview is the fact that all questions in it are determined in advance, and will not change during an interview. Unstructured interviews, conversely, do not have any strict structure, and questions change depending on the situation. Preparation for an interview is an obligatory and an important element of the interview regardless of type of conversation, content and duration. It is important to pay attention to goal setting and preliminary work with materials, to explore fully all written sources, and think through discussion strategies. The questions are the most important element of an interview (Kawulich, 2005).

In the case of my research, I decided to choose a semi-structured interview. This type of interview has some key questions, which provide some guidance for an interviewer regarding what to ask depending on the response of informants (Gill et al., 2008). In line with this, I made a survey guide with questions, which I used as the foundation for my interviews. The purpose of my interviews was to find out what was the difference in the destination image of the Russian settlement of Barentsburg on the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard before and after visitation. I prepared questions for my informants, which helped me to achieve a fuller

picture of the issues and provided more detailed answers to the thesis question of my research. Interview questions were designed in a way that it was not possible to answer “yes” or “no”. The questions were open-ended. According to Gill (2008), questions in qualitative interviews must be comprehensible and clear. It is better to start with easy questions, which respondents can quickly and easily answer before moving to questions that are more difficult. In addition, it is important that informants reflect upon topics, even though they may not have a lot of knowledge about some aspects. Semi-structured interviews allowed me to add or delete questions as necessary. The main purpose of the interview was to discuss the topic of my research. Thus, collected data became the basis for the analytical part of my research.

It should be noted that the location of the territory of Barentsburg allowed me to undertake interviews during face-to-face meetings, which I thought were best, and the tourists were able to be interviewed one-by-one. Further, each of the tourist informants interviewed had to be able to speak either English or Russian. A voice recorder was used to record the words of the respondents. The voice recorder gave me the opportunity to capture the interview and follow the essence of the conversation. Transcribing all the interviews was mandatory and an important part of obtaining data.

The interview guide is presented in the Appendices. The first part of the interview included general questions, such as, name and age of respondent, place of residency, occupation. The rest of the interview guide related to the Russian settlement of Barentsburg in the Svalbard archipelago.

4.2.2 Participant observation

Participant observation is a method of sociological research through which the researcher becomes a participant in the social phenomena that he or she is going to examine (Kawulich, 2005). An example of observation could be a situation where a sociologist, who studies interpersonal relationships among inhabitants in some specific community, is embedded in their environment, while he or she becomes a participant, spending time with them in their community and thereby is able to explore all the features of their communication. In my case, I participated in a community of tourists because tourists were my main informants. In addition, my own experience was considered as a relevant example.

The method of observation suggests an informal collection of data of interest to the researcher. It is neither filling profiles of respondents nor interviewing them. Instead, it is

either an observation of social phenomenon or an experience relating to something that one saw and heard. In my case, I generalized the collected data of observation and evaluated the destination following my methodological approach.

Participant observation in sociology as any other method of primary data collection has its drawbacks or limitations (Rahman, 2012, p. 90):

1. It is quite laborious in nature and involves a high cost of time and money because, as a rule, the observation lasts a long time;
2. The researcher may influence the social process being studied;
3. In some cases, the use of observation may be dangerous to health or even the life of a researcher. For example, in the study of drug addicts, criminals and other anti-social elements;
4. Antipathy between the researcher and respondent may be occur, which could influence the result of observations. It should be noted that a researcher is a subjective person whose attitude could be influenced by other issues unrelated to a study. According to Rahman (2012), this phenomenon is called Hawthorne effect.

Despite all the difficulties, the method of participant observation was deemed a valuable method of sociological research.

4.3 Quantitative research

My second fieldwork gave me an opportunity to use quantitative methods as an optional approach. A quantitative approach examines the relationships between and among variables in order to answer questions and address hypotheses via surveys and experiments. Reliability and validity of measures or observations provides an objective data result that leads to meaningful interpretations of data (Creswell, 2003).

In general, quantitative methods enable us to collect numerical or statistical data in order to consider and analyze a wider sample of research objects. Thus, researchers are able to extrapolate and generalize conclusions with regard to an entire population. In particular, there are not so many people who have visited Barentsburg. Moreover, it is rather complicated to find these people and encourage them to answer a long survey; therefore, quantitative methods were rather limited for my research of Barentsburg. Thus, I used them in an optional way. As before, a qualitative approach was the main approach.

4.3.1 Survey

I used survey method in my second set of fieldwork. According to Fowler, surveys have the following characteristics (Fowler, 2014, p. 1):

1. The purpose of the survey is to produce statistics, that is, quantitative or numerical descriptions about some aspects of the study population;
2. The main way of collecting information is by asking people questions; their answers constitute the data to be analyzed;
3. Generally, information is collected about only a fraction of the population, that is, a sample, rather than from every member of the population.

I applied all these characteristics electronically via Google Forms. It is one of Google's services accessed on Google disk, which provides a survey constructor. The survey was rather short, where the last questions were devoted to the informant's intention to participate in an interview. Thus, I found respondents to interview. Meanwhile, the structure of survey was based on the destination analysis approach of Pearce described in the previous chapter and the result of the table of my first set of fieldwork. I consider and interpret the statistics data in the analysis of the second set of fieldwork.

4.4 Informants

In my fieldwork, I examine two groups of tourists. First of all, there are tourists who are in the participation stage of destination image formation. In other words, these are tourists in Barentsburg. They provide me an opportunity to observe and consider the modification of the destination image during perception.

The second group of informants is tourists who had been in Barentsburg and have given reviews on TripAdvisor's webpage. This group is suitable for my research because their images have been modified since the participation stage. The satisfaction stage emphasizes the impressions of the travel experience. I contacted them via TripAdvisor's messenger, Google Forms, and Skype. However, the reviews on the TripAdvisor's webpage were valuable too, so these were considered as an optional source.

4.5 Data collection

There were two data collections in my research related to each of fieldworks. The first one consisted of a fieldwork diary and informant description. In addition, there is a result table of

my evaluation as a result of my participant observation. This table became a template for the second set of fieldwork.

My second data collection consisted of diary entries, informant description, statistical data derived from survey research, and interview transcripts. The survey had a question about interview intentions of informants. In addition, I iterate that the survey was an optional data source to accompany the qualitative data set.

My second set of fieldwork involved mostly electronic communication provided by Skype and TripAdvisor. This was because of the different geographical locations of my informants. However, I conducted face-to-face interviews in the destination during my first set of fieldwork. As a tool for capturing conversation, I used a voice recorder in both data sets. All the interviews were transcribed; and, I translated the interviews of Russian-speaking informants.

4.6 Data analysis

Data analysis is the most important stage of my research. According to Lacey, and Luff (2009), there are five stages of data analysis:

1. Transcription;
2. Organizing your data;
3. Familiarization;
4. Coding;
5. Themes (pp. 20-24).

First of all, I would like to underline the process of transcription: *“Almost all qualitative research studies involve some degree of transcription – the data may be tape recorded interviews, focus groups, video recordings, or handwritten field notes”* (Lacey, & Luff, 2009, p. 20). From this set I used tape recordings and handwritten notes to help me with a structure.

The next stage was organizing my data, and I used theoretical foundations in order to make the frameworks of my research clear. In this stage, all personal data must be treated carefully and optimized: *“A secure file will be needed that links pseudonyms and code numbers to the original informants, but as with any research this file is confidential and would usually be destroyed after completion of the project”* (Lacey, & Luff, 2009, p. 22). Thus, I am going to delete the data collections in order to follow two principles, such as, confidentiality and anonymity (Wiles,

Crow, Health, & Charles, 2008). As a researcher, I have to delete all personal identifiers in order to protect personal data of my informants during my research and publication procedure (Lacey, & Luff, 2009). Therefore, I will try to avoid direct citation of my informants in the 'Analysis Part II'. It could protect my informants and their privacy.

In the third stage, familiarization, I organized transcribed data according to my theoretical foundation. The theoretical part was the main tool of structuring data analysis in my two sets of fieldwork. Lacey, and Luff (2009) call this accumulating work familiarization and it means the following: "*The researcher listening to tapes and watching video material, reading and re-reading the data, making memos and summaries before the formal analysis begins*" (p. 22). In addition, optional information could provide a survey, which helped to formulate the recommendations for the destination, Barentsburg. Thus, these parts of my research will be the basis for interpretation of the collected data.

The last two stages-coding and themes were not relevant for my particular research. Thus, the data analysis of my two sets of fieldwork was conducted in a considered way.

5. Analysis Part I

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to empirical data, which I planned, collected and analyzed for my Master’s research. The chapter focuses on my data collection, data analysis, limitations, and ethical issues.

In “Data collection”, I describe the data collected in the Russian settlement of Barentsburg. In the next section, “Data analysis”, I comprehensively analyze my data to determine my findings and conclusion. During my fieldwork at Barentsburg, I experienced some unforeseen difficulties regarding a lack of respondents, and other complicated issues. Finally, I consider how a researcher handles data in accordance with ethical norms and rules.

5.2 Data collection

Before my departure to Barentsburg for fieldwork, I decided to write a diary, in which I recorded the main events, moments, names, meetings, and so on.

The diary started on the 25 February 2015, the day of my arrival in Barentsburg. I knew that a record of daily events would help me in the reconstruction of all the days in the archipelago, because I knew that no notes would complicate my work upon return to Alta. It should be noted that the photos that I took in Barentsburg, helped me to reconstruct events from those days. For each day I spent in the archipelago, I had my own folder on a “desktop” computer, so I could identify the exact date of my stay in Barentsburg.

Table 2. The empirical report – my diary

| Date | Content during the day |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 25 th February 2015 | First day, arrived in Longyearbyen airport, and after two hours trip by snowmobile arrived in Barentsburg. |
| 26 th February 2015 | The first meeting with the Head of Tourism at Barentsburg, Timofey Rogozhin, coordination of an interview with him, first inspection of the settlement of Barentsburg and photographing the area and other objects. |
| 27 th February 2015 | My first 2 interviews with tourists who came to Barentsburg, interview with the tourist office in the hotel, ‘Barentsburg’, |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| | photographs of the surrounding area, evening music at the hotel ‘Barentsburg’. |
| 28 th February 2015 | Interview with Head of Tourism, Timofey Rogozhin, a two-hour excursion with Timothy Rogozhin, which identified the current condition of infrastructure in the settlement for Russian tourist companies. |
| 1 st March 2015 | Transfer from the hotel “Barentsburg” to the hostel “Grumant” in order to find new respondents and inspection of infrastructure, staying overnight in the new hostel. |
| 2 nd March 2015 | Due to the lack of new respondents and the high cost of living, decided to move to Longyearbyen for 2 days stay, arrived in Longyearbyen, overnight at the hostel, inspection of area, photographs, and one short interview with a German tourist. |
| 3 rd March 2015 | Search of the literature in the public library at Longyearbyen, copying, photography, preparation to depart next day. |
| 4 th March 2015 | Departure to Alta (Longyearbyen – Oslo – Tromsø - Alta), arrival in Alta. |

Now I would like to describe the data, which I collected during my fieldwork. I undertook two interviews with tourists, who spent only two hours in Barentsburg during a snowmobile excursion. I interacted with more tourists; however, I had to stop interviews due to a lack of expectations by tourists. In other words, tourists who had no previous knowledge about Barentsburg were not suitable for my research. In addition to these two tourists’ interviews, I collected two interviews with authorities, specifically, the Head of the Center for Arctic Tourism and a tourist office. These respondents gave me comprehensive information needed to complete a destination analysis and an evaluation.

5.3 Data analysis

After data collection, I focused on the analysis of my data. Before the trip to Barentsburg, as a researcher, I decided to find and interview a man who knew the situation from the inside and who could tell me about the settlement and the current condition of the tourism and so on in Russian Barentsburg in the Norwegian archipelago. That man was Timofey Rogozhin, the Head of the Center for Arctic Tourism in Barentsburg. Timofey and his family have lived in

Barentsburg for two years, although from November to the end of January he is outside the archipelago, since there are no tourists in Barentsburg then. Timofey is Russian and has a long and rich experience in the field of tourism. For many years he engaged in the development of adventure tourism in different regions of the Russian Federation. Before my fieldwork, I contacted Timofey Rogozhin. He kindly gave me his help on my arrival in Barentsburg.

The following is example of how he described his own experience of the Arctic during an interview: *“The Arctic is a unique place. Here there are many things to see. Here I have found a symbiosis of culture and wildlife. I fall in love with the Arctic”* (Rogozhin, 2015). Timofey noted that currently the main tourists who visit Svalbard are Norwegians (70-80 percent of the total tourist flow), and 20-30 % are tourists from other countries. He continued *“It is very insulting that here there are not many Russian tourists on the archipelago. Russians here are only those who work here”* (Rogozhin, 2015).

Actually, I was not surprised that the amount of Russians tourists was so little. During my fieldwork at Barentsburg, I experienced enormously high prices for goods and services. It was impossible to predict such a costly trip. Before my arrival, I researched accommodation prices. For one night, for example, at the hotel “Barentsburg” costs 800 NOK; however breakfast was not included, and there was no information about that. This lack of information caused misunderstandings and extra expenses. Nevertheless, it was just the first part of my disappointment with this destination.

After that, I tried to find places to buy food or products to prepare for myself. However, there was no store where I could buy goods using “normal” money or a card. Currently, the inhabitants are still using a modern variation of the post-Soviet card system. Each inhabitant uses a plastic “Arcticugol” card, the currency of which is rubbles. Tourists have no chance to buy something in this system. On one hand, it represents part of post-Soviet heritage, but on the other hand, it is inaccessible for visitors.

Consequently, I had to eat in one of two restaurants, so I paid about 600 NOK per day. This meant that one day in Barentsburg cost approximately 1500 NOK. This is 500 NOK more than the monthly cost of living in Russia. I spent approximately 15 000 NOK during my fieldwork. Although the University covered one-fifth part of this, it was the most expensive research I have conducted in my life. In comparison to Longyearbyen, Barentsburg is

significantly more expensive than the capital of archipelago. Accommodation in Longyearbyen costs 100 NOK less than in Barentsburg; however, breakfast is included there. Thus, Barentsburg is 50 % more expensive than Longyearbyen. From my point of view, it is a significant disadvantage that there is no store where one could pay with common cards or currency.

“Russian settlements of Barentsburg and Pyramid attracted 20,000 visitors last year. It is an extremely small amount of Russian tourists here in Barentsburg. Before the trust ‘Arcticugol’ began to develop tourism, the Russians were only among transit passengers on the drifting polar station ‘Borneo’ and spent quite a small amount. By 2010, the number of Russian tourists was estimated to be twenty or thirty persons per year.” (Rogozhin, 2015)

After considering expenses, I now focus on infrastructure and places of interests. I am sure that people may pay such an amount of money when there are enough places of interest, unique nature, etc. I am going to consider this with respect to my own experience and collected data.

“There are at Barentsburg 1. Restaurant, the “Red Bear” with a tasting room and its own brewery 2. The Bar “Barentsburg” 3. The hotel “Barentsburg”, in which we find ourselves, 4. The Post office 5. The Souvenir shop at the post office. Just two weeks later (data on 27.03.2015), we open a separate gift shop, 6. Museum 7. Hostel “Pomor” (opens from 15.04.2015) 8. Hostel “Grumant” (open all year round).” (Rogozhin, 2015)

When I was in Barentsburg, the most interesting parts of this set of touristic places, the museum and souvenir shop, were closed. In total, it took one hour to see Barentsburg and its surroundings. Subsequently, it was rather boring. All the interesting facts, which I considered in the section devoted to Barentsburg, were completely unmentioned in the destination. There was no access to any historical or post-Soviet items. It seemed to look rather renewed and “Norwegian”, and had lost all historical background and authenticity. Thus, post-Soviet uniqueness had disappeared.

According to Pearce’s classification of motive items, the factor of novelty, included four items, which are most important for tourists, that is, “having fun”, “experiencing something different”, “feeling the special atmosphere of the vacation destination”, and “visiting places related to my personal interests”. According to the principal component analysis (PCA), motive items are ordered and listed by importance. In other words, if PCA is high, one can

say that motivation is rather strong. I have noted this in detail in the Methodology chapter. In line with this, I now present each of the items in decreasing order of importance. I also consider related motive items from other factors.

At the beginning of my fieldwork, the most exiting experience I had was the trip from Longyearbyen to Barentsburg by snowmobile (Figure 8). It took two hours and I was surrounded by picturesque landscapes and wild Arctic nature. There were snow dunes, snowy, sharp mountains, strong gusty winds, and the great cold Arctic silence. I did not consider this as “having fun” when separated from other motive items. Therefore, the snowmobile trip was a combination of several items. There was “being close to nature”, “exploring the unknown”, “engaging in an unpredictable experience”, “experiencing the open space”, “being away from crowds of people”, and “enjoying isolation” to some extent. In addition, I would like to note two items from another factor: “feeling excitement” and “having an adventure experience”.



Figure 11. Snowmobile tour¹⁰

From my point of view, it was “to have fun”, but on the other hand, this means of transport is limiting for old people, because it is dangerous sometimes and uncomfortable. It should be noted that older people are used to travel in the Western world. In other words, Barentsburg as a destination loses this target group of tourists, which has enough money to visit it. Regarding this limitation, I recommend using as a means of transport that uses caterpillar traction

¹⁰ <https://www.extremeiceland.is/ru/aktivnyi-otdyh/snegohody>

(Figure 9). There is a variety of such transport in hard-to-get areas in Russia (Kuskov, Golubeva, & Odintsova, 2005).

There are several snowmobile trips in Northern Norway. Usually, it is just observational tours around wild areas. A “Snowmobile safari to Barentsburg” could be considered as a part of adventure tourism because it is the only possibility to reach the destination. In other words, one uses a snowmobile as a reasonable means of transport for its direct purpose instead of as a sightseeing excursion. Nowadays, adventure tourism is a modern and rather popular branch of tourism science. There is a special offer at the University of Tromsø, “North Adventure Tourism”. Moreover, snowmobile is usually associated with the Arctic region; therefore, I hope that a variety of snowmobile tours will be offered at the destination (Kuskov, Golubeva, & Odintsova, 2005).



Figure 12. Snowmobile¹¹ and transport on caterpillar traction¹²

I would like to comment on ecological tourism. This was my Bachelor’s specialization, and an ecological perspective is applicable to Barentsburg as a destination. This branch of tourism is relatively new and prospective nowadays (Byzova, & Smirennikova, 2012). Ecological discourse is highly important and significant in Norway. It is one of a several national states, which maintains the environment regardless of high levels of industrialization. Therefore, it is a good example of nature being treated carefully. In general, the whole of Norway is full of ecological items, such as, mountains, fjords, national parks, etc. In particular, the Svalbard

¹¹ Photo by Marina Galaburda

¹² <http://sdelanounas.ru/blogs/?search=%D0%B2%D0%B5%D0%B7%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%85%D0%BE%D0%B4>

archipelago is a good example of such items, and snowmobile tours provide huge opportunities to develop ecological tourism at this destination.

After I arrived there, I discovered that I could take part in live music in the evening. It was music in the folk-rock genre. There were also some cocktails associated with the Arctic region, such as “The Northern Lights” and “78 parallel”. It was a good attempt for “having fun”; however, it happens quite seldom at Barentsburg (it was devoted to the tour operation companies). Here, I consider “meeting new people” and “observing other people in the area”. With regard to these other factors, I would like to emphasize that the bar is a good platform for current events and the place where tourists can meet locals. Therefore, the motive items of “following current events” and “meeting the locals” situate here.

Next, I focus on “experiencing something different” and “feeling the special atmosphere of the vacation destination”. As I noted in Chapter 2, Russian Pomor people, who first reached Spitsbergen called it “Grumant”. It means that the history of Svalbard is deeply rooted in the Middle Ages and this fact has cultural potential for the destination. Fortunately, this cultural identity is pushed and promoted by authorities. In my opinion, it is a strong advantage of their marketing strategy. During my fieldwork, I attended a local excursion; and, collected some significant data doing that.

In particular, during my excursion with Timofey, he told me about the almost ready hostel named “Pomor”, which will have all conveniences. This season, it will be ready to accommodate arriving tourists. The main and most attractive feature of the hostel is that each room is decorated in Pomor style (each room has different and unique interiors). The capacity of the hostel is 78 persons. The interior items were bought and delivered from old Russian towns, such as, Ivanovo, Yaroslavl’, etc.

Unfortunately, I was not able to visit the only museum in Barentsburg also named “Pomor”, since it was closed for reconstruction. Timofey told me that the museum is full of unique items relating to the culture of Pomor people. Pomor people have been deeply examined and comprehensively researched in the Russian North. Their heritage is very significant in that area. Hence, one finds good guides, who present the “Pomor” culture in an attractive way.

As far as I know, Pomor people have status as indigenous peoples (Pyzhova, 2011). The indigenous movement provided by the United Nations (UN) has assisted the development of indigenous discourses, which are highly demanded (Pyzhova, 2011). As a result, authorities

participate in this movement and receive support from the UN in order to support and maintain the Pomor's heritage. I sincerely recommend the "Pomor" culture. Relations between Pomor people and Norwegians have existed since the Middle Ages on the Kola Peninsula. I have seen several books in Kirkenes devoted to this topic. Thus, there are opportunities for tourism development at the destination. I completely agree with Timofey's concept and I hope it will go on. In addition, I note several other motive items such as "experience different cultures" and "exploring the unknown".

With respect to "experiencing something different" and "feeling the special atmosphere of a vacation destination", I was rather disappointed with the disappearing uniqueness of the place as mentioned above. In the Soviet times, the situation on the Spitsbergen archipelago was opposite to the current situation. There were 2,500 Soviet citizens and 700 Norwegian citizens. Currently, there are about 2,600 Norwegians in the overall archipelago; and some 500 Russians and Ukrainians. The Soviet facilities are rather poor and the authorities' initiatives are directed to modernization and renewing post-Soviet units. Some units are hidden from visitors, such as, two-bedroom and one-bedroom apartments, which are typical of the whole Soviet Union. Nevertheless, one or two of them could be reorganized as a museum with authentic interior and Soviet houseware. Barentsburg still has a few wooden buildings from the past century, which one could not even locate in modern Russian towns. Unfortunately, authorities plan to renew them, which will lead to a total disappearance of the unique atmosphere of the post-Soviet period. In my opinion, it is wrong to lose these post-Soviet roots based on Pearce's classifications (2005). There may be some extra items, which match this side of the destination, such as, "experience different cultures", "meeting new people", "observing other people in a new area", "exploring the unknown", and "knowing an unpredictable experience".

However, from my point of view, this is completely an opposite emphasis from which Timofey places on the development of Barentsburg.

"When foreign guides tell tourists "we go to see socialism", and tourists come to Barentsburg, where socialism is less and less, and instead of it they see a lot of new buildings, restaurants with good food, smiling Russians who speak English, people see a discrepancy between images. Our task is to make sure that after a year, not one foreign guide could not characterize Barentsburg in this way" (Rogozhin, 2015).



Figure 13. Barentsburg. Past¹³ and present¹⁴

The special atmosphere is being lost while Barentsburg is becoming less attractive. Therefore, huge amount of money needs to be invested in the destination; otherwise, it may become senseless and unprofitable. In addition, if we consider Russian tourists, some motive items will be lost. These include the factor of “nostalgia”, and “think about good times I have had in the past” and “reflecting on past memories”. For me it sounds contradictory, regarding actions to attract Russian tourists. Thus, I remain skeptical about these initiatives. This tendency of losing Soviet heritage is opposite to the viewpoint of the Minister of Culture of Russian Federation, Vladimir Medinsky:

“We make it clear that the Soviet era heritage should remain about the strength of human spirit, war and labour heroism of our ancestors. This is the only way to achieve historical and cultural continuity, necessary for Russia`s future. With regard to the monument to Vladimir Il`ich Lenin, they undoubtedly are part of our historical identity, and the Ministry of Culture will do everything in its power to protect them” (Kinossian, & Gerlach, 2015).

Both Soviet and Pomor cultures could be considered as a part of cultural tourism. The most attractive type of cultural tourists is purposeful; however, this type I could not find from my informants due to a lack of information. Thus, there were only incidental cultural tourists who did not have any preconceptions of the destination.

¹³ <http://maxpark.com/community/129/content/830682>

¹⁴ Photo by Marina Galaburda

The fourth is “visiting places related to my personal interests”. Barentsburg was built as mining town. There is the coal mine, which was constructed by the Soviet Union. According to Alta’s experience, the power plant on the Alta River could be considered as a place of interest. The same approach for consideration is “Melkøya” in Hammerfest, where some areas are open for visitors and student excursions. I asked Timofey if he considered the mine as a tourist object. He provided the following comment: “We are not considering the mine as a tourist object, because we cannot let tourists in an operating mine. But at some longer term it might be possible. This prospect is still faraway.”

In addition, I note that the mining industry is deeply rooted in the history of Barentsburg and the whole of the Spitsbergen archipelago. Therefore, forgetting about these roots loses an important part of the uniqueness of its destination image. On the other hand, they have to follow safety rules that may delay development. In addition, there are two motive items, such as, “develop my personal interest” and “knowing what I am capable of”. Nevertheless, I hope that they will release and disclose potential, which might be attractive for several reasons, one of them is “visiting a place related to my personal interest”.

“Currently, the mine is in working condition. We extract from the mine about 150,000 tons of coal per year, from which 30,000 – 40,000 still being here in Barentsburg, and 120,000 tons of coal sent to Europe and beyond” (Rogozhin, 2015).

Thus, my high hopes may be fulfilled because the industry is alive and there is a comparison with other mines called Pyramid and Grumant.

Pearce (2005) offers his own approach for evaluating a destination, which informs my evaluation of Barentsburg. I have created my own evaluation score as an average value of PCA of each activity or setting. The last four labels I have evaluated subjectively on a scale of ten. The result of my calculations is found in the following table, Table 3.

Table 3. The evaluation of the destination

| Label | Unit | Average PCA | Quantity of motive items | Values of multiple PCA | Score |
|--------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Activities | Snowmobile | 6,09 | 9 | 11.58 | 9.4 * |

| | | | | | |
|------------|-----------------|------|---|-------|--------|
| | tour | | | | |
| Settings | Bar | 6,21 | 5 | 9.32 | 7.6 * |
| | Pomor heritage | 6,44 | 9 | 12.24 | 10.0 * |
| | Soviet heritage | 6,44 | 9 | 12.24 | 10.0 * |
| | Mining industry | 6,6 | 3 | 8.59 | 7.0 * |
| Facilities | | | | | 9/10 |
| Service | | | | | 7/10 |
| Hosts | | | | | 6/10 |
| Management | | | | | 5/10 |

* These calculations are presented in the Appendix 3

At first, the only activity that I noted was “snowmobile tour”, which has 9.4 points. It includes nine motive items that could attract tourists using proper marketing of the “endless” area that has potential for development of snowmobile tours; however, it might be limited by polar bear habitat.

Secondly, I consider settings in the destination in decreasing order. Pomor and Soviet heritages have 10.0 points, which is the highest score. Hence, authorities should place emphasis on these two settings in order to increase tourist’s motivation to visit Barentsburg. Both these settings include nine motive items. It means that these two directions of development could attract a broad target group. In other words, authorities should develop and maintain them. Otherwise, interest and motivation will decrease. Meanwhile, Timofey’s strategy is opposite and in comparisons to my point of view reflects inappropriate management and marketing. It is one reason why I have evaluated management with 5 points.

The bar “Barentsburg” has 7.6 points and includes five motive items. We could consider it as a platform for Pomor and post-Soviet events, such as, festivals, folk-rock concerts, excursions and so on. Thus, these four settings could be related in order to offer a comprehensive and attractive product. The last one is the “mining industry” as a part of “industrial tourism”, which I try to promote in my thesis. It has 7.0 points and only three motive items. Nevertheless, the mining industry is closely related to Soviet heritage, which has some potential for development.

Finally, there are four labels that were scored subjectively on a scale of ten. I have evaluated “facilities” with 6 points. There are several places, such as, restaurants (one of them has its own brewery, Figure 11), bar with scene and dance floor, and a Soviet style canteen. The facilities are good for local entertainment. In addition, there are accommodation facilities, such as, the hotel “Barentsburg”, hostel “Pomor”, and the hostel “Grumant”.



Figure 14. The hotel and the restaurant with its own brewery in Barentsburg¹⁵

There are enough possibilities to accommodate tourists in Barentsburg. I would like to add the museum “Pomor”, souvenir shop, and the post office. We should not forget that the population of Barentsburg is only 500 inhabitants and the area is relatively small. Therefore, I have evaluated facilities so high. In addition, I would like to support my interpretations and evaluations with a quote from the tourist office in Barentsburg:

¹⁵ Photos by Marina Galaburda

“Here there was no tourist activity in Barentsburg two years ago. It has existed, but nobody paid enough attention to it, there was no investment in infrastructure. In general, we could say that the attraction of tourists to the settlement was not the purpose. Therefore, there are no statistics of tourist activity, since tourism in Barentsburg has only just begun. Only now, we are beginning to report and to post information in Longyearbyen. We inform the fact that we exist, that we are ready to receive people that we have another new hostel and so on. Already we offer our products, but it is only just now” (Tourist Office in Barentsburg, 2015).

The facilities that I observed were the result of two-year long efforts by authorities; this was rather inspiring for me. The level of service in Barentsburg was also relatively high. The score was 7 points.

The next label was hosts, which scored 6 points. My experience was rather contradictory. On one hand, I was surprised by the friendliness and kindness of locals and authorities. During interaction with them, I received warm hospitality and felt safe. On the other hand, people floated like grey shadows along the streets. However, this impression is not unique; and is common for the Arctic region.

Next, I consider management in detail. I evaluated this with 5 points and I have several arguments for this. I do not agree with Timofey’s initiatives concerning modernization of Barentsburg’s image. From my point of view, it could destroy the uniqueness of the destination. As I mentioned previously, Soviet heritage is significant; therefore, there has to be a compromise between modernity and post-Soviet aspects. Authorities should also maintain Pomor heritage and create further entertainment at the destination. The last recommendation is using the mining industry as a tourism resource.

With regard to Timofey’s strategy for attracting tourists, the Head of the Center for Tourism in the Arctic archipelago noted that:

“If we talk about world tourism, it will continue to develop today. There are from 70,000 to 80,000 tourists on the archipelago of Svalbard. At the same time, Norwegians are 70-80% of the tourist flow, and 20-30% - citizens of other countries, mainly - from Scandinavia” (Rogozhin, 2015).

Before trying to understand them in-depth, these numbers sounds optimistic. All the initiatives are directed to the Russian tourism market and sounds reasonable to some extent.

“Last year (2014) we received about 100 Russian tourists. This year (2015), we expect a government delegation from the Russian Federation. There will be about 200 tourists from Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Nevertheless, the percentage of Russians is still low in the total tourist flow” (Tourist Office in Barentsburg, 2015).

From my point of view, this marketing strategy seems like moving money from one pocket to another while the main part of tourists are administrative authorities, who have all-inclusive offers covered by the government. However, when we try to imagine private Russian people, who self-finance travel as I did, this marketing strategy is senseless and unprofitable. My example is rather special, as common Russian people do not have any motives with regard to Barentsburg. Moreover, most of the Russian population lives in poverty; therefore, to rely on this target group of tourists is unreasonable. In addition, Russian tourists need a Schengen visa in order to reach Longyearbyen, which may be difficult to access.

In this section, I return to my theoretical concept from Chapter 3 in order to describe collected data according to my methodological approach. There are a number of concepts that need consideration, such as, motivation, expectation, perception, experience, and satisfaction. As presented in Chapter 3, I use the following schema:

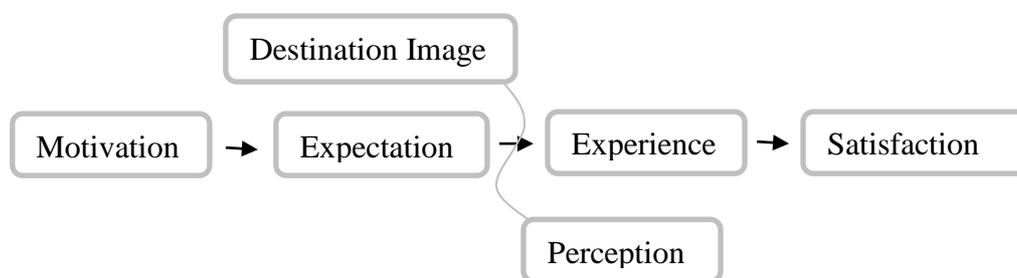


Figure 15. Relationship of the notions

Previously, I have discussed motivation and related this to marketing. Another side of marketing is advertisement and the provision of accessible and comprehensive information on the Internet. There is a lack of information about this destination. It is not enough to create a destination image in someone’s mind. Nevertheless, I had some extra opportunities to access sources in a Russian library and during my fieldwork; I had the opportunity to research sources in Longyearbyen, which was an advantage for my destination image study. However, I had a specific personal motivation, which one could not find in the average tourist visiting Barentsburg. Hence, average tourists have no opportunity to create a destination image. Thus,

it was impossible to answer my research question to some extent; therefore, I would like to share my own experience, while I still hold this image and expectation.

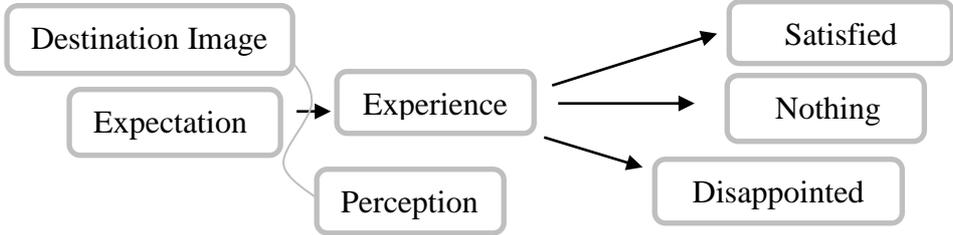


Figure 16. Level of satisfaction

Let us imagine that there are two groups of tourists, who visited Barentsburg. The first group is people who have a special interest for this destination; the example of this is me. Meanwhile, the second group is tourists, who accidentally visit the archipelago.

Let us consider the first group, me. In the beginning, I conducted some research about the Arctic region in general. In particular, I researched the archipelago of Franz Josef Land, Novaja Zemlja, and the Solovetsky islands. It seemed to me to be attractive to spread the area of my examination to the West, Spitsbergen archipelago. Accidentally, I found the Russian settlement in the Norwegian area attracted me. I began to collect some information about this area. It was complicated and limited; therefore, I concluded that there was a lack of information. Nevertheless, I found out that Barentsburg maintained a post-Soviet spirit and atmosphere. This was my private interest based on stories of my family and country. Thus, I created a destination image in my mind and it was rather clear, so one could conclude that expectation was constructed.

When I arrived there, I was disappointed with my experience of the destination. Then I became upset that it was just a waste of money and time; therefore, I would not advise anyone about this destination at all. Thus, my feedback is negative. One can see in the schema that “disappointment” matches my example. According to McKercher (2000), my example could be considered as a purposeful cultural tourist, who learns about culture and heritage as a main reason for visiting a destination in order to gain a deep cultural experience.

Let us consider the second group of tourists, who visited Barentsburg by accident. In this group, I place my two informants, who kindly gave me interviews in Barentsburg. Now I discuss and analyze their answers.

The first respondent, Peter, came to Barentsburg with the snowmobile company from Longyearbyen. He was motivated to visit Barentsburg because Russia seemed to him rather special and exotic to some extent. It was interesting to him how Russia organized this “little town”. I asked Peter what the image of Barentsburg was before he came here, and received following respond:

“I thought it was a mining town. I did not know that there was a hotel or restaurant. I did not know there was anywhere you can sleep. This is a beautiful hotel. Next time I want to stay here at least for one night” (Peter, 2015).

Then I asked him about changes in destination image and perception of Barentsburg after arrival.

“It has changed 100 %, because as I said I did not know you could stay here and eat food. I did not know that. Therefore, now when I know that there is the restaurant and there is the hotel, I wished that I had not booked the room. I did not know about that. I want to stay until tomorrow, but now it is too late. It is too difficult to organize” (Peter, 2015).

In Peter’s case, he had several expectations, which were turned upside down. For him, basic conveniences and infrastructure were surprising and acceptable; therefore, we can conclude that the destination had enough advantages in order to attract visitors from Longyearbyen.

“The fact that this place is Russian is very interesting. The location, of course, is beautiful. I wished that somehow one could talk to the people who work here. I would like to talk to somebody who works with the mine. I think it is very interesting” (Peter, 2015).

The end of quotation could be considered as support for my “industrial tourism” idea. Peter has shown interest in the mining industry, however, as we said before the mine is closed to visitation by tourists. From my point of view, this is a significant disadvantage of the settlement. Finally, he concluded:

“I think for tourists who come to Longyearbyen or to Svalbard, Barentsburg will always be number two. I mean you come here for the scenery, for the scootering or in the summertime you can go sailing, see the polar bears, see the mountains. And Barentsburg is the something that you can add on. And for that the most interesting thing is Russian. We want to go there because it is Russian. It is very interesting. It is very exotic. It is Russian. Very few people travel in Russia the people who come here. I am from Western Europe. Here you can actually visit a little piece of Russia in a very exotic location. So if there is somebody here who could

... speak to you, somebody who can tell you about this place (a guide) or somebody who could be ready to talk. If you can come here for the evening and somebody will tell you in a Russian prospective (the history of Barentsburg). If you can come here to spend a night and in the evening there is a talk about Barentsburg in English by somebody who is Russian. That would be very nice. Next year, I will come back with 15 people from Denmark and we want to meet somebody here who speaks English” (Peter, 2015).

Peter considers Barentsburg as a number two after Longyearbyen. It sounds right by now and supports my thesis about Barentsburg losing its uniqueness and authenticity. He emphasized the Russian identity of the Barentsburg and I suppose that Timofey has to save this identity; otherwise, it would lose attractiveness and tourists. Hence, my statement about uniqueness still remains reasonable. According to McKercher (2000), Peter’s instance could be considered as a casual cultural tourist who learns about cultural heritage in a supplementary way.

The second respondent, Sindre (2015), came to Barentsburg on behalf of a travel community at work. It was his first time in the archipelago and he had never heard about Barentsburg before he visited there. Unfortunately, Sindre did not have any expectation about Barentsburg and visited it by accident. To conclude, there was no change in perception of the destination image. Thus, the lack of information leads to “nothing – satisfaction”. In other words, a “nothing – satisfaction” is an experience, which he or she cannot share with others because there are few emotional experiences. In addition, I would like to emphasize that I had more respondents who had no expectations like Sindre; therefore, I have not considered them. According to McKercher (2000), Sindre’s instance could be considered as an incidental cultural tourist who did not have any specific cultural reasons and subsequently received shallow experiences of cultural heritage.

Unfortunately, one part of my fieldwork was rather limited concerning respondents. I prepared a theoretical conceptualization applicable for perception and related concepts; however, it was not possible to determine its effectiveness. Nevertheless, a negative result is still a result of research, and I have reported it. In general, tourists do not have any specific interest in the destination. They visit it by accident; therefore, it is impossible to examine expectations and destination images before perception. However, I can clarify at least the destination image and the level of satisfaction. In particular, I found that there are two possible variants, such as, unchanged perception or disappointment. The most important

reason for that, from my point of view, is a lack of information from either the Internet or other sources. Fortunately, authorities' efforts are directed to change this situation. These tendencies I noticed in the interview at the tourist office:

“Just two days (data on 28.02.2015) ago, we launched the Russian version of the site. In the near future, the English version will come. Now we put the information in groups through “Facebook”. Experience has shown that it is a very effective and fast way of disseminating information” (Tourist Office in Barentsburg, 2015).

In addition, I would like to consider the short film called ‘Into the unknown. Episode 2’ published by ‘Aftenposten’ (11.01.2015) again. The film presents Barentsburg just from one terrifying angle. From my point of view, it is possible to find empty buildings in any town, and show it incompletely. My experience was completely different because I had no intentions to observe the destination deliberately in a good or bad way. However, this film is an example of false representation of a destination.

5.4 Limitations

All scientific research has various limitations and mine is not an exception. I would like to begin with the situation concerning tourist flows in Barentsburg. When I planned my research, I expected groups of tourists to be accommodated in Barentsburg. However, I was alone among people who overnights there. It was the most complicated side of my fieldwork. After a while, I received reliable knowledge of tourist flows. There are visitors who have a 2-hour long excursion as a part of snowmobile tour. Furthermore, these visitors were rather busy due to the intense program of the excursion. The only possibility to get an interview was a quarter after dinner in the cantina, mentioned previously. Thus, it was the most complicated part of my research concerning limitations. Therefore, sampling of research decreased quantitatively. Fortunately, I had chosen qualitative research where the number of respondents does not influence the relevance of results.

The next limitation was lack of information among informants. I explained that Barentsburg is not the main destination among tourists. It is only an optional excursion from Longyearbyen. Anyway, it was necessary that informants had expectations of Barentsburg's destination image; otherwise, it would be impossible to apply my methodology to them. Therefore, my sampling decreased again. Thus, I have collected two complete interviews concerning my research question.

The last limitation that I would like to highlight is time. I planned to stay in Barentsburg for six days. After arrival, I discovered, as a rule, that tourists visit the settlement on weekends. At the same time, it was too expensive and senseless to stay longer; therefore, I decided to move to Longyearbyen for the rest of my trip. Although I collected some interviews there, it was still useless due to a lack of information. If I had more time and money, I could avoid all these limitations during fieldwork. For example, if I had one month, I would have had twelve days of weekends that would have increased my chances to meet informants, who had expectations and a destination image in their minds. It sounds obvious but the duration of fieldwork relates to the probability to meet such people. I did not have such opportunities during my fieldwork.

Thus, there are three main limitations such as “hard-to-get” informants, “hard-to-get” relevant respondents, and a time/money limitation.

5.5 Ethical issues

For any research there are some important principles concerning ethical issues. These can vary from one research to another. That being said, I have chosen two, which, from my point of view, are most suitable to my research. These are the principles of “confidentiality” and “anonymity” (Wiles, Crow, Health, & Charles, 2008). The first one refers to guaranteeing availability of collected information only for persons involved in the research. The guarantee of privacy is provided by the principle of anonymity. These two principles are basic and were properly used in my research.

In practice, I followed the principle of confidentiality in this way. All collected data (recorded interviews, taken notes, and transcripts of interviews) was available only for me and I did and will not share it with anybody else.

In my thesis, I use proper nouns of the informants; however, only Timofey Rogozhin is existing name, since I received permission to use it. In addition, he is a public person concerning tourism issues in Barentsburg. All other names are fictitious. All informants agreed to voluntary participation and were informed about confidentiality and anonymity. Thus, I followed the rules strictly; therefore, all presented data in my thesis could be used for other research.

6. Analysis Part II

6.1 Introduction

Unfortunately, the data collection of my first fieldwork was insufficient, so I furthered my research via the Internet using TripAdvisor, Google Forms, and Skype as additional tools for my research. First, I identified tourists, who had been to the destination of Barentsburg, and who had written reviews as feedback. They demonstrated awareness about the main places of interest of the destination, which added to my data collection. I contacted them via TripAdvisor's private messages in order to distribute my survey (see Appendix 4 for this survey). The last question of the survey was an invitation to participate in an interview in order to provide me with further informants, who might be ready to share their impressions about the destination. The next section is devoted to my data set, and my empirical report. The data analysis section provides my interpretation of the collected data.

6.2 Data collection

I begin with my empirical report, which shows the schedule of the second set of fieldwork. I started this fieldwork on the 11th June 2016 and finished it on the 7th August approximately two months later. This part of my research was well organized and was successfully finished in a number of ways. I had not expected that my informants would be so active and quite informed about the destination. Herein follows an empirical report of the second part of my research:

Table 4. An empirical report of the second set of fieldwork

| Date | Content during the day |
|--|--|
| 11 th June 2016 | I found Barentsburg's visitors via TripAdvisor webpage. |
| 13 th June 2016 | Drawing up a survey (English and Russian versions) for tourists via TripAdvisor, in order to evaluate the destination image (Barentsburg). |
| 14 th - 15 th June 2016 | Sending surveys to visitors. |
| 16 th – 24 th July 2016 | Waiting period. |
| 24 th July – 30 th July 2016 | Interviewing those who were willing to be interviewed. |
| 3 th July – 1 st August 2016 | Analysis of the surveys. |

| | |
|--|---|
| 2 th August – 4 th August 2016 | Transcription of all the interviews. |
| 5 th August – 7 th August 2016 | I organized the data collection of the second set of fieldwork. |

During my second set of fieldwork, I found 24 reviews about Barentsburg. The reviews were written by 8 English-speaking, 10 Russian-speaking, 4 Norwegian-speaking tourists, and 2 others; however, I only contacted English- and Russian-speaking tourists. Sixteen of twenty-four people completed my survey (6/16 English-speaking and 10/16 Russian-speaking). Seven of the sixteen gave me interviews, 5 of whom were Russian-speaking. I represent this data set in the following table:

Table 5. Three stages of the data collection

| All tourist with feedback | | Answered the survey | | Gave interviews | |
|---------------------------|----------|---------------------|----------|-----------------|---------|
| 22 | | 16 | | 7 | |
| 8 (Eng) | 14 (Rus) | 6 (Eng) | 10 (Rus) | 2 (Eng) | 5 (Rus) |

The next section is devoted to analysis and interpretation of my data set, wherein I have represented the results with the help of tables and graphs. From my point of view, these forms are most suitable for visual representation in my case.

6.3 Data analysis

My data set can be considered in three stages. The first stage focuses on reviews accessible on TripAdvisor’s webpage. The second involves quantitative data from my survey. The third stage gathers data using interviews. First, I discuss my quantitative data; and then consider and analyze the first and the third stages together.

The following table represents the statistical data of my survey. The template for the table is Pearce’s (2005) theoretical concept of destination analysis. Labels are listed in the same way as in the first set of fieldwork. The first column of numeric data represents my evaluation, which I have formed based on motive items calculations (Appendixes 2 and 3) and my own experience. I examine the result on these calculations and numbers determined in the survey. The next three columns provide evaluations by Russian- and English-speaking tourists, and then average values.

Table 6. Results of the survey

| Label | My | Rus. | Eng. | Average |
|-------------------------------|------|------|------|---------|
| 1. Snowmobile tour | 9.4 | 8.7 | 7.2 | 7.9 |
| 2. Bar in hotel 'Barentsburg' | 7.6 | 8.2 | 5.7 | 6.9 |
| 3. Pomor heritage | 10.0 | 8.3 | 7.7 | 8.0 |
| 4. Soviet heritage | 10.0 | 7.8 | 8.7 | 8.2 |
| 5. Mining industry | 7.0 | 6.4 | 5.7 | 6.1 |
| 6. Facilities | 9.0 | 8.7 | 6.3 | 7.5 |
| 7. Service | 7.0 | 8.7 | 5.5 | 7.1 |
| 8. Hosts | 6.0 | 9.1 | 5.7 | 7.4 |
| 9. Management | 5.0 | 8.4 | 5.8 | 7.1 |

6.3.1 Quantitative data

This numerical data is visualized in the next graph. It shows that values of Russian- and English-speaking tourists are rather close to each other, when they evaluate activities and setting. Only the 'Bar' looks like an exception that could be explained by personal interests. In general, values are rather close in the first block of questions. Considering the second block, general labels such as facilities, service, hosts, and management are evaluated in different ways. I explain this as being related to Russian tourists' Soviet background and experience with lower levels of standards in Russian tourism spheres. In other words, Russian-speaking tourists are not so sophisticated and demanding as English-speaking tourists regarding traveling and destination conditions.

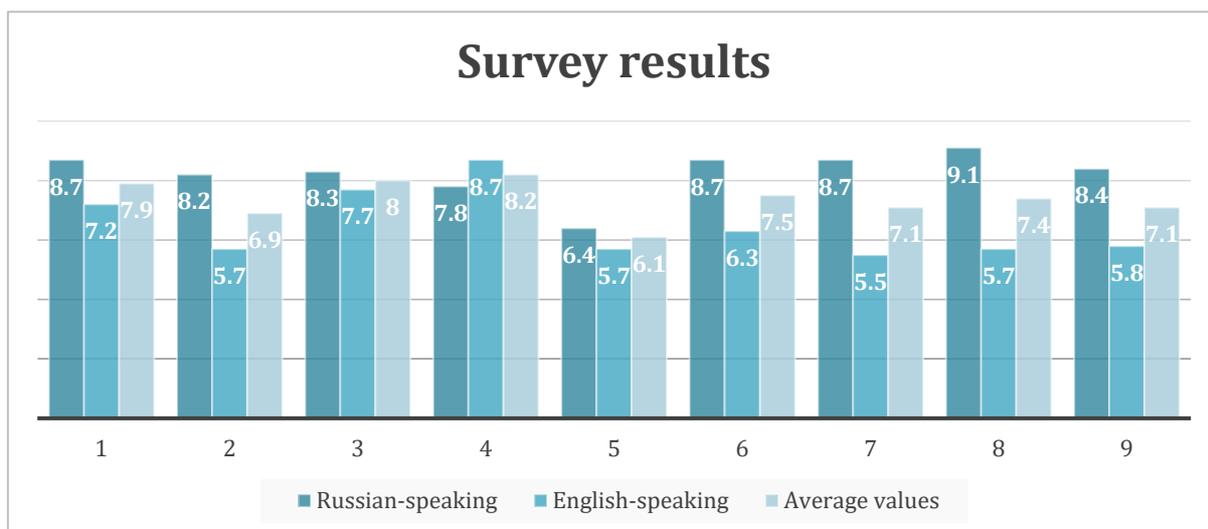


Figure 17. The visual representation of survey results

The following figure shows the difference in Russian- and English-speaking evaluations. Both sets of tourists agree with the importance of Soviet and Pomor heritage at the destination. According to the informants, the mining industry is a less attractive element of the setting.

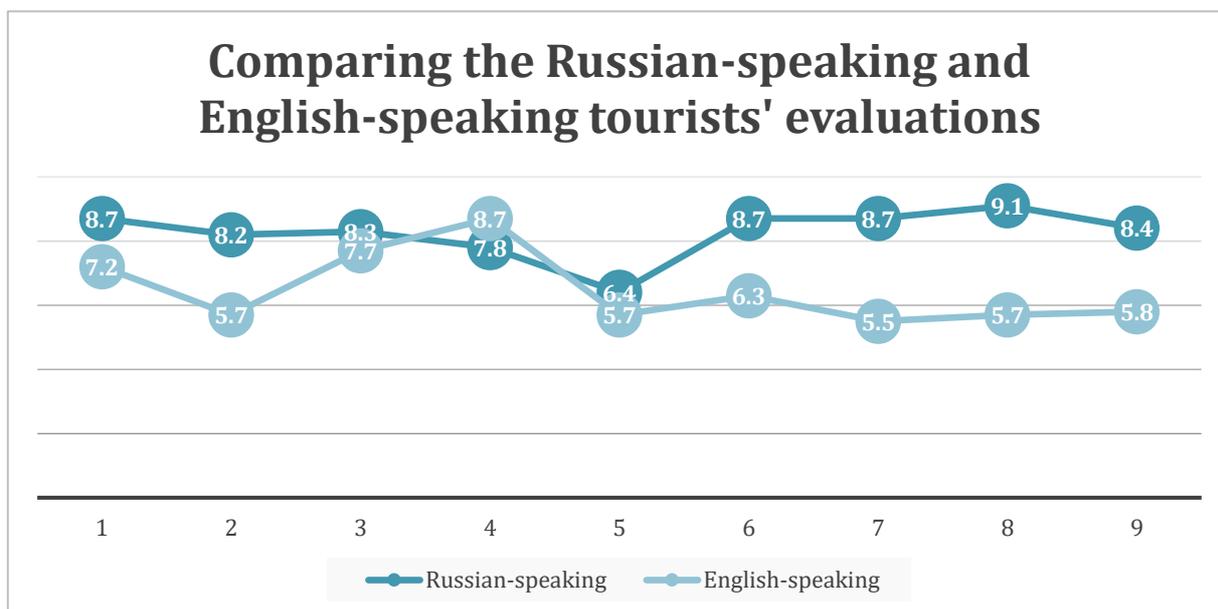


Figure 18. Comparing the Russian- and English-speaking evaluations

In the next figure, I highlight the correlation between my evaluation and the survey results. There is a similarity between the first five points. I based my evaluation on Pearce's (2005) theory, which I modified for my research (Appendix 3). I calculated PCAs in order to get more or less an objective result, and this approach was highly relevant. Doubtless, 16

evaluations are not enough for a scientific conclusion; however, it could and should be tested on bigger data sets in future research.

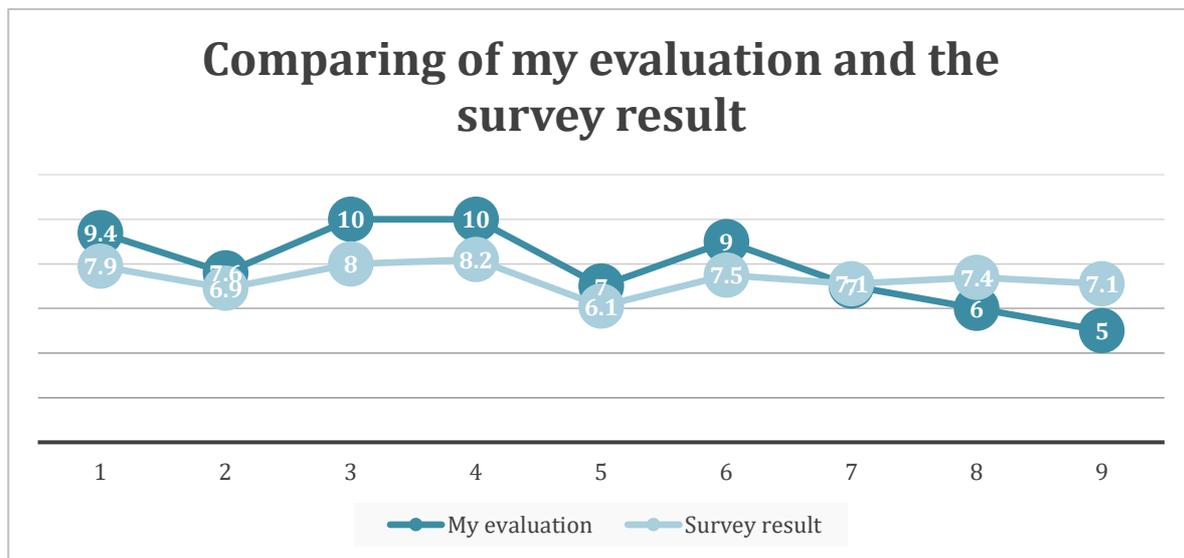


Figure 19. Comparison of my evaluation and the survey results

6.3.2 Qualitative data

My first set of fieldwork occurred towards the end of February, while the only way to Barentsburg had been through snowy landscapes. However, in other seasons that is not the only way there. Some of my informants traveled around Svalbard by cruise ships with a one-hour stop in Barentsburg. One of them was highly impressed by this journey and described it as a pleasant experience to the destination (Oleg, 2016). I think that a cruise voyage could be a solution for elder tourists and would suit them even better than transport using caterpillar traction. However, another informant described a completely opposite experience. She said that she was used to storms and waves but Barentsburg is located in very windy place, so she became seasick there (Sarah, 2016). The key word in the cruise trips to the destination is weather. According to statistics, the sea there is seldom calm and quiet. Thus, this means of transport is also tricky to some extent, and weather can influence the destination image in many ways. Nevertheless, cruise trips could be considered as an activity related to the destination.

For the most part, tourists had just an hour in Barentsburg for sightseeing and dinner. The traditional “Russian cousin” made English-speaking informants (Sarah, & David, 2016) impressed and provided a feeling of home for Russians (Svetlana, Olga, & Elena, 2016). Specific food traditions are very important in the formation of destination images. This

sensation does not need a translation – it is direct experience that makes tourists experience comfort and satisfaction. Gastronomy tourism is rather popular nowadays. It is simple and joyful. One English-speaking informant said that he did not know about the “Russian cousin” and identified it as a positive recollection. Despite being a subjective opinion, I want to emphasize that food traditions are very important in tourism discourses and we should treat them as a comfort side of a destination’s image. The traditional Russian cousin is served in the restaurant ‘Barentsburg’. Moreover, this restaurant serves breakfast and lunch, but international tourists only experience dinner. Thus, Barentsburg’s authorities should offer and advertise overnights in the destination in order to present traditions in different ways. There are not so many places of interest; however, the one hour walk is hardly enough for full image formation.

The international tourists did not have any pre-images of Barentsburg. They received some information in Longyearbyen; subsequently, I consider their motivation as spontaneous. There were no expectations; hence, there was no modification of the destination image on the one hand. On the other hand, every representative of the Western world has an image of Russia or the Soviet Union in his or her mind. This image is formed by mass media and usually it is weird and controversial. One of English-speaking informants shared with me that he has totally surprised when he observed the peaceful life of Russian people in the Norwegian territory. Moreover, this coexistence had begun in the middle of the twentieth century, while the Soviet Union had been the main enemy of Western world. The Cold war, Empire of evil and other terms were used then, although western people had the possibility to visit Barentsburg and conclude that people are the same everywhere, regardless of political regime and ideology. Additionally, I note that Barentsburg is a place of peaceful coexistence not only of West and East, but also of Russians and Ukrainians, given the political climate in East Europe. This side of the destination image seems to be unique and valuable for all sides. Thus, the pre-image of the destination was modified in the mind of English-speaking informants: *“This experience shows me that we can trust each other in the long term”* (Sarah, 2016). Nevertheless, the lack of information is the barrier that resists to pre-image formation, and it is a pity given we live in the information age. However, Russian-speaking informants (Svetlana, Olga, & Elena, 2016) said that they had enough information about the destination to create pre-images and expectations. Most of the images were related to the tourism sphere. They received their information from their colleagues and partners. Although they agreed that the lack of information pushed them to rely on the subjective impressions of others and which

could have influenced their own decision-making. They implied that it is very important to have accessible, objective information about any destination, not only about Barentsburg. One of them emphasized that Barentsburg is not an exception nowadays – there is plenty of small places that do not have accessible information about themselves and it does make sense from my point of view.

All my informants agree that the cultural background of Barentsburg is very important. The English-speaking tourists paid attention to the ‘Pomor’ museum, which was closed during my first set of fieldwork. They said that it was a highly interesting addition to the museum in Longyearbyen, which made the image of Svalbard wider and deeper (David, & Sarah, 2016). One of them thought that it was senseless to consider Svalbard without the Russian settlements, because the histories of Norwegians and Russians were intertwined in Svalbard: *“One must see the Pomor museum”* (Sarah, 2016). Considering the Soviet heritage, the international respondents advised tourists to visit Pyramid, because there were more accessible Soviet constructions that could be entered and seen. Thus, cultural tourism is very important in the destination, and it is maintained in Svalbard. The Russian-speaking tourists agreed with this and concluded that there were not so many things remaining of the Soviet times. One of them had been to Pyramid and she was disappointed because there were some empty Soviet buildings and *“scary child’s pictures on the walls”* that could convey an incorrect image of the Soviet Union. That is a *“bad instance”* of Soviet heritage (Olga, 2016).

My informants were not interested in the mining industry at all, because their occupations were not related to that. Therefore, their comments were very discreet.

As I said before, facilities in Barentsburg were evaluated in different ways. This was evident in my survey. The interviews of English-speaking tourists demonstrated that there is nothing special or unusual in the facilities at the destination (David, & Sarah, 2016). However, Russian-speaking informants had different opinions and evaluated facilities highly (Ivan, Svetlana, Oleg, & Olga, 2016). It is natural that different groups of tourists perceive a destination variously and it makes sense when reflecting on the marketing strategy of authorities. If authorities choose European quality and ignore cultural heritage, they will lose international tourists and build conditions for Russian tourists, which in general have no opportunities to visit the destination. However, I know from informants that the hostel ‘Pomor’ has a unique interior that relates with Pomor heritage and adds to the museum exhibition to some extent (David, & Svetlana, 2016). In other words, authorities try to

maintain the historical and cultural backgrounds, while the quality of offerings rises. I am very glad that the destination has developed so wisely.

In my opinion, service is always a weak side in the Post-Soviet territory; however, Russian tourists emphasize that service in Barentsburg is much more pleasant than in other Russian towns. I agree with them in this particular case. Although for Europeans, smiling personnel are not something special or surprising. This is the same with hospitality at the destination. There is one thing that I want to emphasize – language is a huge barrier for international tourists to communicate with locals and to feel the hospitality of local people. However, Russian-speaking informants commented that local people were rather friendly and open-minded (Ivan, Svetlana, & Olga, 2016). It is very common that Russians in small towns do not speak foreign languages. Nevertheless, despite a lack of qualified staff, the official bodies try to hire multi-lingual guides who are able to share the uniqueness of the destination.

To conclude this analysis, I acknowledge that the management of Barentsburg makes sense and tries to develop weak sides and highlight the strong. Thus, I agree with my informants that authorities do their jobs well.

6.4 Limitations

This fieldwork was limited by the small number of informants. The destination that I chose as the object of my research is very little studied; therefore, there is a lack of information in the Internet and other sources. Consequently, I expected that there were only a few reviews on TripAdvisor's webpages. Nevertheless, despite my short-term research, it was enough for this particular fieldwork in order to access relevant data sets and generate informative conclusions.

I experienced some technical limitations during my second set of fieldwork. I used Skype for my interviews. It was rather complicated to set up acceptable times as my informants and I lived in different time zones. Therefore, the majority of respondents were from Russia. The voice recording process was quite complicated too, when using Skype as the communication tool.

The methodological limitation primarily was the small number of informants involved in the quantitative analysis. That being said, the survey was an additional, optional method, and a transitional stage to generate further interviews. Although interviews were fruitful, visual

representation of the quantitative data provided extra comprehension and further foundation for my research.

In the end, compared to the first set of fieldwork, the second was structured and calm. Ethical issues will be considered in the next section.

6.5 Ethical issues

TripAdvisor's webpage is public, and all informants are accessible via the website's tourists' portal. However, I changed names in order to protect the privacy of my informants, so all names are fictitious. All informants agreed to voluntary participation and were informed about confidentiality and anonymity. I strictly followed the rules; consequently, all presented data in my thesis could be used for other research. In addition, I have used the texts of reviews that are easily accessible on the webpages; however, I have avoided direct citations, and have used indirect speech or paraphrases. In addition, it should be noted that all names are fiction, and that these names are listed in the Bibliography chapter. Any relation to real persons is coincidental

The next chapter is devoted to my finding as a common result of my two sets of fieldwork. The structure of this chapter is based on Gunn's (1988) and Pearce's (2005) theories.

7. Findings

7.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to theoretical foundations. Herein, I define and detail the notion of destination image. Formations regarding destination image and additional notions, such as, motivation, expectations, perception, and satisfaction are considered in detail. The chapter serves to define the frameworks of my findings and to structure the collected data. The chapter focuses on my findings and summarizes my two sets of fieldwork. The chapter is organized into two main parts, specifically, ‘formation of destination image before participation’ and ‘experience of destination image’.

The first part is divided into two sections – ‘Previous information’ where I consider preconditions of destination image formation, based on collected data, and ‘Image before tourists arrival’ which discusses pre-images of the destination, sets of motivations and expectations. I identify the turning-point where the image of destination is modified dependent on direct experiences of participation and post-travel accumulations. The qualitative data is used in a united way. In other words, the opinions and impressions of informants are generalized and structured according to my theoretical basis. Findings are presented with supporting quotations; however, the names of informants are not used due to ethical issues already mentioned in previous chapters.

7.2 Formation of destination image before participation

Considering the preconditions of destination image formation, I would like to present my own experience of searching the information before undertaking my first set of fieldwork. Three channels of information were relevant for my research. These were Internet sources, libraries, and direct contact with authorities.

7.2.1 Previous information

First, I found some photos of Barentsburg after entering a request in a search engine. I became very excited when I saw Soviet architecture and sculptures similar to those portrayed on old Soviet postcards. I had an image of the Soviet Union based on various stories from my parents. It was a tough epoch; however, my parents were in their younger years then, so their impressions were very warm and satisfied. Inspired by them, I was looking forward to one day when I would have an opportunity to visit or to connect with past Soviet times. Thus,

these photos formed my pre-image of the destination. There were a few sources on the Internet. These provided general information concerning geographical position, complex history, and descriptions of the mining industry. Unfortunately, current information was not presented. Next, I located lots of literature devoted to Barentsburg in the Regional Murmansk Library; however, it was hardly contemporary. Despite all these complicated sides to my research, I was able to write a description about Barentsburg and also traveled there. When I arrived, I was totally surprised by the colored and modern buildings, compact placement and the surroundings-mountains on one side, and a cold sea on the other. My pre-image was broken up, because of its obsolescence. It was a worthwhile experience albeit confusing and shocking in many ways, so I tried to find the same experience in my respondents' texts. However, it was hard due to several reasons. I will discuss those reasons in the next section.

7.2.2 Image before tourists arrival

Formation of a destination image can be considered with the help of Gunn's (1988) stage model. I follow the model's sequence in order to structure my collected material. First is the accumulation stage where mental images of previous experience, influenced by motivation create a pre-image of a destination. It is blurred and abstract; however, motivation forms these or other sides of the image. Then the potential tourist chooses from accessible offerings of this or that destination.

In this stage, there is usually plenty of sources, such as, webpages on the Internet, tourist reviews and tourism agencies' materials. In addition, it could be informal communication with people who have already visited this or that destination. Special interests could give in-depth information concerning a chosen place. There could be libraries, travel agencies consultations, videos and TV-programs. This is great for destinations, but Barentsburg is an exception. All those sources, listed above, are not applicable for my destination due to the novelty of this tourism object. An advantage of this novelty is that we can observe and examine this new-born object, underline its eminent properties in order to generalize collected data into a theory. A disadvantage is that tourists do not have any concrete pre-images of the destination: *"Well, I had no idea about Russian settlements there! I've seen a brochure in Longyearbyen. It was a snowmobile trip to Barentsburg, a Russian mining town, so I became excited and decided to visit it"* (David, 2016).

In particular, the accumulation, modification, and decision stages were simultaneous and spontaneous. Spontaneous pre-images were formed in a limited period of time, and used

general mental images like ‘Russia’, ‘mining town’, ‘long snowmobile trip’, etc. The combination of these images formed a desirable pre-image of the destination that lead to decision making.

However, the above-mentioned sources were not the only sources for establishing a pre-image of the destination in my data set. Russian-speaking respondents mainly related to tourism spheres, and indicated that they had informal channels of information, such as, recommendations and verbal review of colleagues.

“One of my colleague told me about it. She was so surprised by this voyage that she said she would visit it one more time. She praised the hotel most of all. So, it’s true. And people are friendly there. It’s a pity that I was there just for a couple of days” (Svetlana, 2016).

That concludes my consideration of the formation stages of destination image.

7.3 Experience of the destination after arrival

Experience of the destination is organized according to Pearce’s (2005) classification, which was considered in the theoretical chapter. The same sequence of labels used in the evaluation table in the first set of fieldwork is used here. That sequence is:

1. Activities;
2. Settings;
3. Facilities;
4. Service;
5. Hosts;
6. Management.

As I mentioned above, the quantitative data will support this reflection of quantitative data.

7.3.1 Activities

Activities at Barentsburg include snowmobile trips and cruise voyages. As I mentioned before, the snowmobile trip was my most exiting experience on the way to the destination. However, it is rather limiting for some groups of tourists. The alternative could be transport by caterpillar traction. During my second set of fieldwork, I found that some tourists reached Barentsburg by sea. There are a number of cruise ships and boats. I would like to note in this context that the sea at the destination is not a calm one; therefore, it could be also complicated

for elderly people. According to my quantitative data, the way to the destination received a high score and was confirmed by responses to interview questions: *“It is a thrilling way to get to Barentsburg surrounded by picturesque nature – cold Arctic beauty itself”* (David, 2016).

7.3.2 Settings

The first setting considered by me was the bar ‘Barentsburg’. The quantitative data did not evaluate it quite so highly; however, interviews demonstrates the uniqueness and significance of this place for locals as well as tourists:

“You can visit the bar with its own ‘Red Bear’ brewery and cocktail called ‘78 parallel’. Feel free to go to Barentsburg, I’m sure you will not be disappointed by the special atmosphere of this place. Local folk-rock suits this place. I would recommend it” (Olga, 2016).

Moreover, all local events and informal meetings happen there. In other words, the bar ‘Barentsburg’ is like a center of social attraction at this destination. Considering this discreet evaluation, I would like to underline that such settings depend on subjective opinion and sphere of individual interest. Thus, this setting plays a very important role for the destination’s image.

The next settings are related to cultural heritage of the Soviet Union and Pomor. The quantitative data shows us that these two settings are most important for tourists, and both English- and Russian-speaking informants agree with that. It is not easy to disclose the culture and traditions to foreigners; however, informants emphasized that *“If you want to learn a lot of new and unexpected things about Pomory and their life in Svalbard do not miss an excursion with Timofey Rogozhin”* (Elena, 2016).

I totally agree with this statement, because I enjoyed his comprehensive excursion, which was rich with details and historical roots. During my first set of fieldwork, I met him and interviewed him there, and he discussed many plans that were just plans. However, the interview with the tourists shows that many of the plans were implemented at the destination and that this formed a complex destination image in many ways. It is not so often that the words of the authorities are fulfilled and fully implemented.

“The museum is in a Soviet-style. The excursion is extremely interesting. Timofey, our guide, is a very enthusiastic and competent guide. The exhibition has a hall dedicated to the development of a Pomor archipelago, and modern history. So the museum in Barentsburg is a good addition to the museum in Longyearbyen” (Ivan, 2016).

Thus, cultural heritage is very significant in destination image formation, so authorities have to treat it patiently and carefully, and so they do. All informants highlighted the importance of this phenomenon. In my particular case, all cultural places were closed; therefore, my destination image was incomplete and blended with dissatisfaction. In addition, there was a review made by one international tourist:

“Relics of the soviet era are everywhere - from the statue of Lenin to the photos of employee of the month in the main town square. Other attractions include a small orthodox chapel and a large cultural hall with a gift shop selling an odd selection of musical instruments, soviet badges, Matryoshka dolls and portraits of Lenin” (Sarah, 2016).

This quotation shows us the significance of cultural heritage in the formation of the destination image. In addition, I would like to note that traditional Russian cuisine is presented at the destination. It is also a part of cultural experience that forms the image of destination in a sensory way – generating multiple dimensions of the image. Some informants were impressed by the local food and identified it as a special, unique experience.

The last setting to be considered is the mining industry of Barentsburg. It was not so highly evaluated by tourists and some of them reflected that the mining industry itself just spoils the destination image, and ecological status in particular:

“In the special environment of Spitsbergen this is a somewhat special place with a completely different culture (Russian) which reflects everywhere - buildings, people, industry etc. It seems odd to get coal here and transport it all the way to civilization, this activity seems very polluting and dirty to me which doesn't match the general perception of Svalbard” (David, 2016).

Ecological discourse is highly important and significant in Norway. It is one of the few national states, which maintains the environment regardless of high levels of industrialization. Therefore, it is good example of nature being treated carefully. Thus, the tourism potential of mining industry seems to be controversial.

To this point, all noted activities and settings were significant for the formation of the destination image of Barentsburg. All my informants recognized this or that setting; therefore, all of them have their own place in the destination. Next, I consider other labels, such as, facilities, service, hosts, and management.

7.3.3 Facilities

There are well-developed facilities and infrastructure in Barentsburg. First, my informants highlighted the hotel ‘Barentsburg’ where I also stayed overnight. I was surprised that there was such a comfortable and renovated hotel located so close to the North Pole. There was rather a high standard given its Russian origins. My informants agreed with this statement:

“The hotel at Barentsburg is the result of the repair of the old Soviet hotel, so I can say only one thing - well done! The hotel is clean, warm, and comfortable. The Internet works pretty quickly. There was a good sauna. All the staff are very friendly and helpful. I liked my time in Barentsburg” (Svetlana, 2016).

I found positive feedback in all interview transcripts. The next quotation is from another respondent:

“We stayed at the hotel in Barentsburg during a tour of the company "Arcticugol". The hotel “Barentsburg” was the best hotel of our trip. There were excellent rooms with comfortable beds, warm and cozy, delicious home food. There was a great restaurant on the ground floor. Wi-Fi was only available in the reception area, but it was good quality. For the settlement with about 500 people and for the place far above the Arctic Circle the hotel “Barentsburg” is more than very good. I liked it” (Elena, 2016).

However, hotel ‘Barentsburg’ is not the only accommodation at the destination. For instance, I stayed overnight on the last night of my first set of fieldwork in the hostel ‘Grumant’. Unfortunately, my informants did not stay there; therefore, I did not get any feedback on the hostel. From my point of view, it was an usual hostel with 10 beds in a common room. On the one hand, it was nothing special compared to other destinations. On the other hand, this cheap offer provided an opportunity for different groups of tourists, and not every small place gives that. Another accommodation option is the hostel called ‘Pomor’ closed during my first set of fieldwork. As far as I know, it is a middle range accommodation offering at the destination. As I noted previously, rooms at this hostel will be in Pomor style and thereby reflect Pomor heritage.

There were some extra facilities in Barentsburg, such as, post office and souvenir shop. One of my Russian-speaking respondents was pleasantly surprised by these two offers, and he told me that it is seldom for a settlement with 500 inhabitants to have such facilities. I was surprised also and sent some postcard from there; however, the souvenir store was closed

then. Thus, facilities are variously evaluated dependent on the cultural background of informants – English-speaking tourist perceive the development of Barentsburg calmly, whereas Russian-speaking are shocked by this Arctic oasis with Russian origins. However, one international tourist interviewed during the first set of fieldwork, expressed surprise:

“I thought it was a mining town. I did not know that there was a hotel or restaurant. I did not know there was anywhere you can sleep. This is a beautiful hotel. Next time I want to stay here at least for one night” (Peter, 2015).

7.3.4 Service

In general, service is not a strong element in post-Soviet territory. I grew up in Russia and have got used to rude attitudes in the service sphere both state and private. However, Barentsburg could be considered an exception. People involved in the tourism business are open-minded and polite. They smile and help form a new destination image of Russian tourism, and Barentsburg in particular. It is very important to observe smiling personnel at a hotel or restaurant because this type of detail helps shape a destination’s image through non-verbal communication; and, in a most ‘powerful’ manner.

7.3.5 Hosts

Hospitality is a very limited option as noted earlier. With regard to hospitality, I note that communication is limited by knowledge of the English language; hence, it is difficult to perceive hospitality by English speaking international tourists. However, it is not only a Russian specific thing – the same impression could emerge in France or Italy where English-speaking people are rare. This impression was shared by one of the international tourists:

“The fact that this place is Russian is very interesting. The location, of course, is beautiful. I wished that somehow one could talk to the people who work here. I would like to talk to somebody who works with the mine. I think it is very interesting” (Peter, 2015).

Thus, the destination image is incomplete to some extent and this underscores the importance of international communication. Nevertheless, I hope that well qualified guides will provide this medium for future tourists.

7.3.6 Management

All the labels in the sequence of Pearce’s (2005) theoretical concept have been considered. There is only element of management that needs to be addressed. During my first set of

fieldwork, I was quite disappointed concerning a few places of interests where prices bit. However, Timofey Rogozhin shared with me his own plans regarding Barentsburg's destination development. It seemed to be amazing, but not applicable or too ambitious. Politicians and authorities are used to talking about high hopes and promise golden mountains; therefore, I was skeptical until conducting my second set of fieldwork. Most parts of Timofey's plans were implemented at the destination, so I am going to call him an 'icebreaker' of Russian tourism. Barentsburg is still losing its Soviet front side; however, it has become a unique tourism object with post-Soviet origins. Thus, there has been remarkable work done at the destination that will shape the destination's image in a positive way.

"Our task is to make sure that after a year not one foreign guide could not be characterized in this way Barentsburg. We have two or three years to make a completely modern city of Barentsburg. But in Barentsburg we should see good interesting museum tours, different types of recreation - hiking tours, boat trips, snowmobile tours, dog sledding, and kayaking. Concerts, small festivals, delicious food and hotels for different categories of tourists, and, of course, Barentsburg is the heart of the Pomor culture. The archipelago also contains objects of Pomor culture. The exposition of the museum - a unique history - deep. We are looking forward to moving to the museum. Of course, it is a question of financing, time and coordination, but next winter we will have a master class in Pomor crafts. Always the repertoire of local initiatives will present a large component of Pomor folklore" (Rogozhin, 2015).

It was surprising for me that Timofey had almost completed all his plans at the destination. In conclusion, I would like to note that he is a very efficient manager of the destination.

8. Conclusion

In the research for this thesis, I aimed to answer the question: “What is the difference in tourists’ destination image before they arrive and after they have visited the Russian settlement of Barentsburg in the Svalbard archipelago?” During my research, I located information about the destination, Barentsburg, and presented this in Chapter 2, “Description of the Arctic region”, using experience received from my previous education. Despite limited information, I understood that the destination was little studied and I needed a clear methodology and theoretical foundation in order to examine and evaluate the destination and formulate and answer my research question. In Chapter 3, “Theoretical foundations”, I used Gunn’s, and Pearce’s approaches in order to build up my theoretical conceptualization. I modified them in order to develop my own approach to match the specifics of my research objective. Following my methodology and ethical issues strictly, I collected and analyzed the data and answered the question, regardless of the limitations of the fieldwork. In addition, I note my own recommendation that may develop the tourism situation in the destination of Barentsburg to some extent. First, I consider five tourists’ units in Barentsburg. In addition, I have considered myself as an informant and observer during my research.

8.1 The difference in the destination image of Barentsburg

In the previous chapter, the destination image of Barentsburg was considered in a comprehensive way emphasizing a pre-image and post-image of the Russian settlement. In order to answer my research question, I would like to briefly depict the key points of the pre-image. First of all, there is lack of information about the destination that makes pre-image very blurred and unclear. There are few relevant sources providing information about Barentsburg; therefore, tourists use their imagination and associations with familiar destinations. In most cases, they visit the destination incidentally. Another group of travelers may access subjective information by communicating with people involved in tourism.

Considered pre-image could be easily modified or transformed by real experiences participated in during visitation to the destination. In other words, the person who knows a bit about the destination gets most picturesque and unexpected impressions that could be easily examined by a researcher.

I have considered and analyzed both pre-image and post-image in the previous chapter, and the difference between them is described in detail. Thus, I conclude that I have answered the

raised question in a comprehensive way. Further, I present my recommendations to make Barentsburg more tourist friendly.

8.2 Recommendations to make Barentsburg tourist friendly

Tourists could “have fun” in Barentsburg in different ways. First of all, I note again, the snowmobile trip from Longyearbyen to Barentsburg because this event was closely related to “being close to nature”. It is a two-hour long full value observation of exotic Arctic nature with open space and elements of ecological and adventure tourism. In addition, I recommend the development of such tours using more comfortable means of transport, such as, transport by caterpillar traction. There are several places for food and beverages, such as, restaurants (one of them has its own brewery), bar with scene and dance floor, and a Soviet style canteen. There are good facilities for local entertainment. I consider that national Russian cuisine, festivals and concerts with folk music (Pomor music) are advantages for the destination. These advantages could be properly developed if authorities emphasized Pomor culture.

Pomor and Soviet heritages are significant tourist’s units at the destination. Authorities attempt to maintain the Pomor culture. This is reflected in several settings, such as, a new hostel, “Pomor”, and, the museum “Pomor”, thus, the Pomor heritage is carefully treated. There are important reasons why Pomor heritage should be enhanced to elevate the cultural history of Svalbard and increase its importance as a tourist destination, which could assist in cooperation between nations. Research continues to provide possibilities of showing Svalbard’s unique history through websites and videos in order to promote peaceful co-existence. Unfortunately, Post-Soviet roots are partly lost and authorities’ initiatives have led to a complete disappearance of Soviet background. Further, modern buildings and constructions are made in Norwegian style, which hide the unique atmosphere and Russian style of appearance. If Barentsburg’s authorities do not want to receive “disappointed” feedback, they should offer a full value tourist product and associated entertainment. Besides, there is extra potential concerning Pomor culture. From my point of view, a good attempt appears to have been made to demonstrate this culture in the hostel and museum. Unfortunately, it was closed during my fieldwork.

Industrial tourism has potential, which could attract tourists from all over the world. However, it may take a long time to realize this potential with respect to the significance of safety. In industrial tourism, it is important to counter high expenses and a lack of sightseeing.

The second set of fieldwork demonstrated that tourists perceive the mining industry as something unsuitable for the image of the destination. To some extent, fears were expressed regarding the importance of maintaining the ecology of the whole of Svalbard.

With regard to destination labels, such as, activities, settings, facilities, service, hosts, and management, comments must be made with regard to final evaluation scores of the destination. My research scored Barentsburg 7.4 points on a scale of ten. In my opinion, this is rather high, however, I cannot compare this score with other destinations. I plan to use this scale in further research. In addition, I would like to discuss management by authorities. I consider marketing strategies as part of management. I would like to emphasize that the marketing orientation of the Russian tourism needs revising due to the economic reality of the Russian Federation. Finally, authorities should enter easily accessible information on the Internet, not to mention advertisements using different media channels, and engage in partnerships with tourist operating companies all over the world.

My final reflection is that this research was very exciting for me and I hope to continue my research in the Arctic region. I am very thankful for my informants and Timofey Rogozhin, who kindly helped me to collect data and to arrange my first set of fieldwork with benefits.

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Appendix 1

Interview guide for tourists

The purpose of this interview (survey) is to find out what is the difference in tourists' destination image of the Russian settlement called Barentsburg on the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard before and after their arrival.

I have a number of questions that will help me to get a fuller picture of the issues and give a more detailed answer to the thesis question of my research.

All personal data will be handled anonymously and confidentially. I, alone, will use this data during the research.

At first, I would like to ask you some general questions about yourself.

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. Where are you from?
4. What is your occupation?

The following questions are related to the Russian settlement of Barentsburg:

1. With whom are you traveling on your visit to Svalbard/Barentsburg?
2. How many days are you staying in Barentsburg during your visit?
3. How many days do you plan to spend in Barentsburg during your visit on Svalbard?
4. Have you ever visited Svalbard/Barentsburg before this year?
5. Why did you decide to visit the Russian settlement of Barentsburg? What was the reason for your visit?
6. Were you looking for information about Barentsburg before your visit?

If so, where did you find this information?

7. Were you interested in Barentsburg before you visited it?
8. What was your image of Barentsburg before you came here?
9. How did your image of Barentsburg change after arrival?
10. Were you interested in Russian history, culture or society before you visited Barentsburg?

If so, what kind of interest?

11. Did you learn something new and interesting for yourself here?

If yes, can you name it?

12. What do you think, is Russian culture here quite clear or not?

If not, can you explain your opinion?

13. What are the positive things that relate to your visit here as a tourist? Can you name them?

14. Are there any problems or negative things that you can name?

15. In your opinion, how could the settlement area be more attractive for tourists from different countries?

16. Is there anything else that you want to say about which I have not asked? I would be very interested in any other comments you may have about your visit to Barentsburg and your experience with Russian culture.

Thank you for your help and enjoy the rest of your stay in Barentsburg!

Appendix 2

Table 7. Motive items (Pearce, 2005)

| Factors | Motive items | Importance mean (PCA) |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Novelty | having fun | 8.23 |
| | experiencing something different | 7.61 |
| | feeling the special atmosphere of the vacation destination | 7.45 |
| | visiting places related to my personal interests | 7.2 |
| Escape / relax | resting and relaxing | 7.34 |
| | getting away from everyday psychological stress / pressure | 7.33 |
| | being away from daily routine | 7.3 |
| | getting away from the usual demands of life | 7.23 |
| | giving my mind a rest | 7.57 |
| | not worrying about time | 7.44 |
| | getting away from everyday physical stress / pressure | 7/24 |
| | Relationship (strengthen) | doing things with my companion(s) |

| | | |
|--|--|------|
| | doing something with my family / friend(s) | 6.83 |
| | being with others who enjoy the same things as I do | 6.83 |
| | strengthening relationships with my companion(s) | 6.58 |
| | strengthening relationships with my family / friend(s) | 6.54 |
| | contacting with family friend(s) who live elsewhere | 6.34 |
| Autonomy | being independent | 6.92 |
| | being obligated no one | 6.42 |
| | doing things my own way | 6.38 |
| Nature | viewing the scenery | 7.11 |
| | being close to nature | 6.42 |
| | getting a better appreciation of nature | 6.29 |
| | being harmonious with nature | 5.94 |
| Self-development(host-site involvement) | learning new things | 7.24 |
| | experiencing different cultures | 6.82 |
| | meeting new and varied people | 6.53 |
| | developing my knowledge of | 6.48 |

| | | |
|--|---|------|
| | the area | |
| | meeting the local | 6.29 |
| | observing other people in the area | 5.61 |
| | following current events | 4.42 |
| Stimulation | exploring the unknown | 7.05 |
| | feeling excitement | 6.59 |
| | having unpredictable experience | 6.46 |
| | being spontaneous | 6.38 |
| | having daring / adventure some experience | 5.92 |
| | experiencing thrills | 5.78 |
| | experiencing the risk involved | 5.15 |
| Self-development (personal development) | develop my personal interests | 6.43 |
| | knowing what I am capable of | 6.2 |
| | gaining a sense of accomplishment | 6.19 |
| | gaining a sense of self-confidence | 6.11 |
| | developing my skills and abilities | 6.09 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|--|------|
| | using my skills and talents | 5.93 |
| Relationship (security) | feeling personally safe and secure | 6.36 |
| | being with respectful people | 6.23 |
| | meeting people with similar values / interests | 5.99 |
| | being near considerate people | 5.95 |
| | being with others if I need them | 5.45 |
| | feeling that I belong | 5.16 |
| Self-actualize | gaining a new perspective on life | 6.52 |
| | feeling inner harmony / peace | 6.15 |
| | understanding more about myself | 5.53 |
| | being creative | 5.39 |
| | working on my personal / spiritual values | 5.32 |
| Isolation | experiencing the peace and calm | 6.71 |
| | avoiding interpersonal stress and pressure | 5.94 |
| | experiencing the open space | 5.79 |
| | being away from crowds of | 5.15 |

| | | |
|--------------------|--|------|
| | people | |
| | enjoying isolation | 5.1 |
| Nostalgia | thinking about good times I've had in the past | 5.51 |
| | reflecting on past memories | 5.35 |
| Romance | having romantic relationships | 5.32 |
| | being with people of the opposite sex | 4.87 |
| Recognition | sharing skill and knowledge with others | 4.9 |
| | showing others I can do it | 4.23 |
| | being recognized by other people | 4.14 |
| | leading others | 4.07 |
| | having others know that I have been there | 4 |

Appendix 3

$$MPCA = \left(1 + \frac{n}{10}\right) \cdot \frac{1}{n} \cdot \sum_{i=1}^n (PCA_i), n \geq 2$$

Figure 20. The value with multiple PCA

This formula shows my approach to calculating the score of the PCA. In this formula, “MPCA” refers to Multiple PCA. The first part of the formula is a coefficient taking into account the quantity of motive items. The last part is the average value of the PCA of an activity/setting. The value of “n” means the number of PCA applicable for one activity or setting. I used this formula when the amount of PCA was more or equal 2.

$$S = \frac{MPCA}{MPCA_{\max}} \cdot 10$$

Figure 21. The score on the scale of ten

The final score on the scale of ten was achieved using Equation 21. I divided the Multiple PCA by the maximal value of the Multiple PCA, and multiplied it by 10. Thus, I achieved a relational evaluation of an activity or setting in the destination. I would like to underline, that these scores are not absolute, but relational. Literally it means that I can compare and contrast different tourism items in order to predict the reaction of tourists. These predictions could be relevant for the marketing of tourism.