

Film-induced Tourism: Charting the Consumer Perspective using Grounded Theory Approach

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to conduct an investigation into the first-hand experiences of film-induced tourists, and thereby to map the consumer journey of such individuals by identifying the underlying motivations and triggers behind various behaviours. The study involves in-depth telephonic inter-views of 20 individuals who were classified by prior behaviour as film-induced tourists. A snowball sampling approach was used, and a grounded theory approach was applied to analyse the data. Through open coding inductive analysis conducted on the experiences and memorable events discussed by these individuals, common themes and drivers of behaviour were identified. Instagram posts were also used to derive themes and thus enable triangulation. The research charts out the motivators and influencing factors behind the decisions taken by the film-induced tourists at each step of their experience, creating a theoretical framework which can be tested by future research for behavioural divergences from its occidental counterparts. Due to the relatively niche nature of the subject of study, snowball sampling method was used, which presented the best alternative for the research required, in spite of its limitations to generalize the findings. By examining the individual experiences of Indian film-induced tourists, the paper probes into uncharted territory due to both the Indian origin of the subjects of the study, as well as the qualitative nature of the interviews conducted.

Keywords

Film-induced tourism, Social validation, self-validation, Film-specific markers, Local culture, Tour Guide, destination marketing, Film-specific factors, Location-specific factors

Introduction

As early as 1989, academicians have been anecdotally attributing spikes in tourism to films, case in point being the effect of the film *Crocodile Dundee* on visitor numbers to Australia [1]. Initial studies into the phenomenon of what is now referred to as film-induced tourism focused primarily on investigating and attributing increases in tourist numbers at specific locations to influential films which featured these locations [2]. Cinema was considered to have a significant impact on viewers due to cultural reasons [3], much more so than textual literature [4]. Over time, television series also came under the scanner of researchers in this field [5; 6] and were thus included in the consideration set of tourism-influencing media.

The term “film-induced tourism” is henceforth used broadly to encompass all domestic and international movements spurred by the use of specific locations in films. While film-induced tourism may be an inadvertent (albeit in some cases welcome) phenomenon, there have been studies which comprehensively expound on the potential benefits arising out of active “destination marketing”. Leveraging a film’s popularity to increase tourism through conscious marketing efforts is shown to benefit a number of stakeholders [7], not least of all the local economy of the site [8].

Empirical studies proving the occurrence of film-induced tourism have been conducted on a variety of films and television series, including but not limited to *Game of Thrones* [9], *Lord of the Rings* [10] and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* [11]. Such films and television series can successfully expose hitherto unheard-of locations to viewers, which in turn creates favourable impressions in

their minds as possible travel destinations [12].

Given the cultural framework within which film-induced tourism is generally perceived to occur [13] and the commercialised perspective of modern-day tourists as consumers [14], an attempt has been made to ascertain from film-induced tourists whether they would classify themselves as such, and whether they are aware of the motivations – cultural, commercial and otherwise that prompt them to shape their travel preferences based on the influence of film and/or television media.

Despite a booming film industry in India (valued at 180 billion Indian Rupees as of 2019), very little analysis has been conducted on the effect of film on tourism patterns of Indian tourists. Thus, this study will arrive at certain inferences regarding Indian film-induced tourists, with emphasis on their motivations and experiences, before, during and after their respective visits.

Literature review

The manner in which locations featured in films are “consumed” assumes significance in the understanding of the consumption journey of film-induced tourists. It has been established that levels of satisfaction [15] and emotional attachment with the film/television series [16] significantly impact this journey, where a film-induced tourist attempts to bridge the experiential gap between the real location and the hyper-real on-screen representation [17]. This prompts further research into the questions of whether emotional investment is thus fulfilled [18], and the manner in which film-induced tourists interact with such locations, a largely under-researched field [19].

The majority of studies on film-induced tourism focused on the effect of a single film or television show on tourist numbers, as was the case with the 2001 film Captain Corelli's Mandolin and international tourism to the island of Cephalonia [20]. However, certain authors attempted to club into a single work, the effect of multiple television series or films on tourism [21; 22]. The literature on the subject of film-induced tourism has since grown, with the majority of the work following the aforementioned case-study format [23] linking a specific film with its impacts on the location of filming.

Arguably the most popular of all such films to have been investigated in connection with film-induced tourism is the Lord of the Rings franchise. Several studies, both empirical [24] as well as qualitative [25] have outlined the increases in tourist numbers to New Zealand, the filming location of the famed film trilogy. The latter studies furthered the understanding of film-induced tourism as one which involves an emotional investment [26], and a "romantic gaze" held by film-induced tourists of the landscape, sustained via their consumption of the influencing media [27]. This presents a unique, post-modern scenario wherein the tourist consumption of the location is secondary – a comparison to an initial virtual experience on-screen [28].

As research into the subject of tourist motivations progressed, so did the understanding of locations not merely as sites to fulfil tourists' travel needs, but also as a means of cultural identification [29]. This, in turn, led researchers to demarcate the differences in tourists visiting locations for their intrinsic qualities, and those who visited these locations due to the presence of "markers", i.e., culturally significant symbols having deeper meaning to film-induced tourists [30;31]. In the same direction of research, quantitative studies have also empirically proven the differences between "film-specific tourists" and "incidental or serendipitous tourists" [32], thereby further sub-categorising what was earlier considered a homogenous phenomenon.

In the range of disciplines which film-induced tourism covers, however, it remains broad. Anthropological perspectives on the influence of tour guides [33] and media studies on the role of genre [34], have, among others, established the field of film-induced tourism as a confluence of tourism, business, media and cultural studies. The focus of the research on the subject has been diverse [23]. Psychological studies have analysed tourist motivations [35], while economics and marketing-based studies have examined the socio-economic impacts of tourism increases on the local economy of the site [36], including issues of active destination image management [37; 20]. The influence of celebrity on film popularity and consequently on film-induced tourism has also been analysed [38]. Film-induced tourism as a field of research has therefore evolved from speculation to a multi-disciplinary field [39].

Until recently, the bulk of the literature regarding film-induced tourism was dominated by case studies surrounding American and British films [23]. With film production now no longer centred in Hollywood due to the emergence of Indian and South-East Asian film industries [40], the literature has shown a similar shift. In particular, Korean television dramas and their tourism-inducing effects in South-East Asia have been well documented and analysed [41; 16; 42; 43]. With regards to India, however, the literature remains scarce. While the effect of British-Indian

films such as Slumdog Millionaire have been examined with respect to their effect on the image and perception of India [44], purely Indian productions have not been given the same treatment as often, with films such as Krrish [45], Namastey London [46] and 3 Idiots [47] being a few notable exceptions.

The gaps which prevail in the existing literature are therefore with regards to charting the journey of Indian film-induced tourists as consumers, with particular focus on the "drivers" of motivation behind their actions and behaviour, which this paper aims to enumerate upon. Such motivations, once identified, will help to explain the consumption journey of these tourists, and improve understanding of the same for those in the profession of destination management and tourism marketing.

Methodology

A qualitative approach was used for this study, both due to its ability to throw light on complex social phenomena through interpretation [48] as well as the fact that it facilitates revelatory exploration [49]. In order to further analyse patterned influences between film-induced tourists and different facets of their tourism experience, grounded theory analysis [50] was considered most appropriate, with an inductive coding approach used [51] due to the applicability of the technique to understand complex phenomena through the exploration of themes [52] while simultaneously referring to themes already present in the literature, if and when suitable [53]. The grounded theory approach method is particularly used for understanding a new phenomenon or replicating an existing study in a new setting, to study the uniqueness in the new context [54]. This study used grounded theory approach to derive theory based on past literature and the lived experiences of the respondents who have travelled to tourist locations which are depicted in a movie.

The data for this qualitative study was collected during the months of April to June, 2020. The respondents in the research study were people, residing in various Tier 1 cities of India. These included individuals from different occupational backgrounds and middle income and above economic strata, all of whom were sampled through a snowball sampling process, following which preliminary enquiries were conducted to classify the subjects as film-induced tourists based on prior behaviour. This was achieved by filtering respondents on the basis of their responses to questions regarding the degree of influence of the film/television series. The respondents studied had engaged in a mix of both domestic and international travel to such film-induced destinations. This was then corroborated by a close examination of the interview transcripts, which conclusively established all interviewees as having been moderately to extremely influenced in this regard.

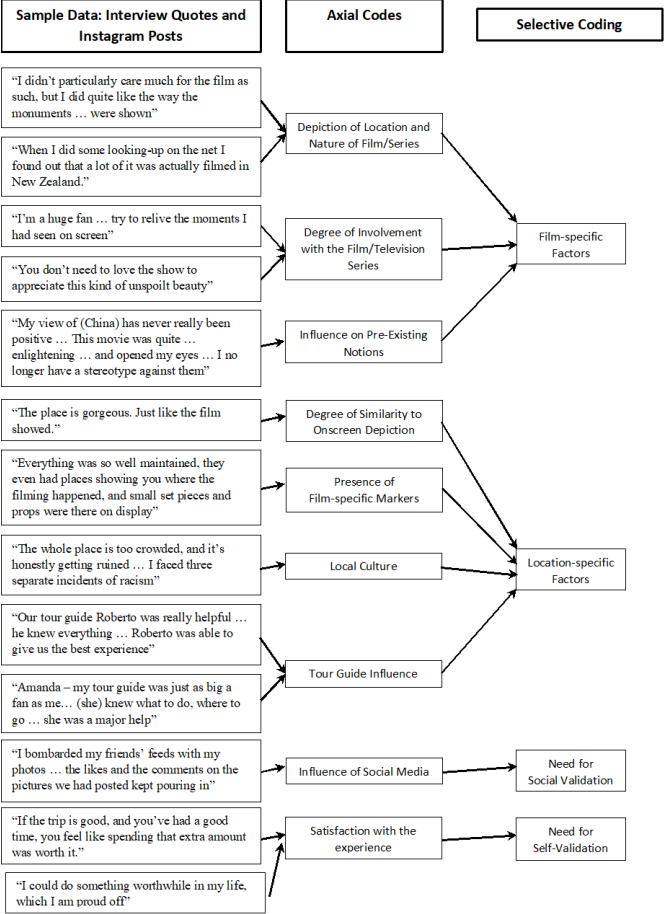
Traditional in-person semi-structured interview method along with interviews over ZOOM or google meet were employed to understand the interviewees' experiences. Respondents were encouraged to share details of their vacations, and a pre-constructed list of questions was used to guide the conversations in a pre-determined manner. These questions were formulated using important trigger points and areas of study highlighted by prior research in the field, along with some novel questions inserted to fully capture a holistic and detailed image of the respondents' consumer journey.

The interviews were conducted in English, a language all the interviewees were proficient and comfortable conversing in,

following which recorded audio and video files of the interviews were transcribed to text form and then cross-checked for accuracy. The respondents were interviewed on an individual or one-to-one basis, with the exception of those who had undertaken vacations to the same destination, or had been influenced by the same film/television series. In the case of the latter, respondents were interviewed simultaneously over a zoom or google meet link in order to aid each other's recall of places. Due to the dissimilar nature of the experiences recounted in such cases, it was determined in an ex-post examination of the transcripts that the potential risk of interviewees influencing each other's accounts had not taken place.

The researchers also extracted evidence of this – the posting of photos and videos on popular social media platform Instagram, which was corroborated by the researchers through an analysis of posts regarding film-induced tourism by a variety of film-induced tourists. The data was collected from 40 Instagram posts with hashtags #movietourism and #filmtourism. Two types of noise were removed. The first is the media publicity posts by tourism companies, where the consumers experience has not been captured. The second is the misleading terms and phrases, used in film-induced tourism as a rhetoric, such as “Hope I travel to Dubrovnik to visit the location of Game of Thrones” – is clearly about film induced tourism intention but not about the actual experience. The strong emotions that came out of the posts along with the quotes and pictures were used to substantiate the understanding of the phenomenon and thus enable triangulation.

Data Analysis – An open coding driven inductive approach was used to analyse the events recounted and narratives disclosed by the tourists, with a combination of predetermined categories and novel ones which were recorded as they made themselves apparent. The data analysis was undertaken as soon as the first interview was conducted. The theory emerged after going through each interview recording and background literature on the topic of study in line with the process of conducting grounded theory [54]. During the process of coding, the operational definitions from the extant literature were taken into consideration. The process was iterative and the different themes which were identified were compared with the themes that emerged during the analysis. The process continued until no additional themes emerged from the analysis. Themes which had similar meanings were coded as a single theme. Instagram posts were also included while coding the themes. In the process, nine themes were found as being significant and consistently present, following which a further examination of the axial codes was conducted in an attempt to uncover aggregative patterns among these themes that would help to further chart and account for vagaries in the film-induced tourism experience [55]. Through this process, a further four selective codes were identified as given in Table I.



In the process of reporting findings and quoting excerpts from the transcripts, all attempts were made to maintain fidelity to the actual words and phrases used by the interviewees to describe their journey and recount their experiences, although minor grammatical corrections were made to the excerpts for the purpose of clarity in comprehension. Finally, the interviewee names as they appear in this paper are pseudonyms, created and used so as to maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents of the study.

Findings

A number of insights were drawn from the conversations about the respondents' accounts, most notably the drivers and motivators influencing their decisions to visit a location inspired by a film or television series and overall level of satisfaction. The study identified associations between the various themes that emerged during the course of analysis. The conceptual model of film induced tourism grounded in data is depicted in Figure I.

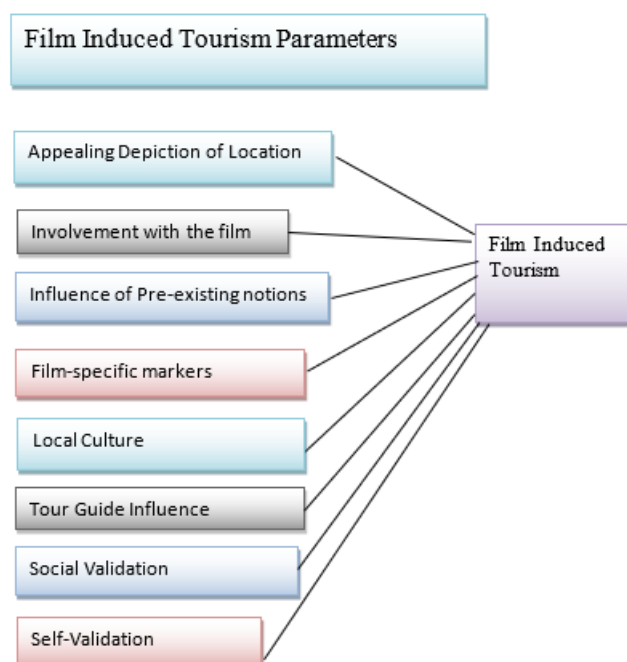


Figure 1

Although the interviewees had travelled to different destinations, their experiences were similar to the degree that a large majority of them raised similar points about key aspects of their trips, which differed only in details pertaining to the specifics of their destination. The target group can thus be considered homogenous to a certain degree, and conceptual hypotheses can be formed without indulging in generalisation, to be tested later through an empirical study. Each theme identified has been presented in chronological order of their occurrence in the interviewees' accounts.

Depiction of Location and Nature of Film/Series:

Respondents generally felt that the depiction of the location in the film/television series had a strong impact on their decision to travel there, regardless of genre. While the latter might have played a role in influencing their initial decision to consume the film/series, it had no influence on their overall impression of the locale. This is established by Meru in the following excerpt:

"I had watched this movie way back, called Sphinx, which is set in Egypt. And I didn't particularly care much for the film as such, but I did quite like the way the monuments – the pyramids and the Sphinx itself – were shown. Quite breath-taking. So that was the movie that put this location on my radar. Of course, I had always known about Giza and the historical significance of the place, but this was one of the first places I had seen where it was shown so well, in all its glory".

The conversations also showed that the respondents were well-researched on filming locations prior to travel, and were aware of cases where the location depicted differed from the actual shooting location. This was explained by Moiz:

"So I'm not a fan of historical dramas or anything. But my wife loves Tom Cruise, so she wanted to watch The Last Samurai. The movie itself was okayish, nothing I would put on my best-of lists. She liked it a bit more than I did, but the one thing we actually really agreed on was the beauty of the locales which it showed. I really had no clue Japan was that beautiful. I was really taken in. Later when I did some looking-up on the net I found out that a lot of it was actually filmed in New Zealand. But the parts which really stood out to me, like that one – the cherry blossom

one – were actually filmed in Japan itself. And then of course when I saw photos of Japan online, I was totally convinced".

Influence on Pre-Existing Notions: It was found that in most cases, films can shape the perceptions of viewers, thereby eroding or reaffirming pre-existing ideas about specific locations. It was found, however, amongst all respondents who admitted to having preconceived notions in the form of biases for or against specific sites, that post-viewing research, as conducted by Moiz, resulted in a "broadened perspective" about these locations and their offerings to tourists as holiday destinations. The insight therefore drawn is that in most cases, tourists with uninformed but negatively-biased opinions regarding the landscape and cultural elements of locations had their opinions changed to more favourable stances about the same. This was experienced most noticeably by Abhijeet, who visited The People's Republic of China after watching the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*:

"I never knew much about China beyond what I heard about the country in the news. And my view of them has never really been positive, no. So this movie was quite – I guess you could say enlightening – for me. Not just the landscapes, which are very picturesque, but because it's got a historical setting, so you see glimpses of ancient Chinese culture, which is quite fascinating, and – how do I say it – opened my eyes to their past. All of that together made me do some reading on China, for the first time in my life. It's good in a way because I no longer have – I guess you could call it a stereotype? Yes, a stereotype against them. And also, the trip itself was worth it, so overall I'm very happy".

Degree of Involvement with the Film/Television Series: While the location itself was a primary motivator for the respondents, their degree of emotional investment with the film/television series played an important role in distinguishing the motivations of "hardcore fans" from those of other travellers. This was made evident by the differences in actual on-site locations visited by the travellers, wherein fans of the film/television series included a visit to set locations, while other film-induced tourists were more engaged in appreciating natural beauty rather than places and objects of significance in popular culture. On a conference call with Jibin and Rajeshwari, both of whom had travelled to different locations featured in the hit series *Game of Thrones*, the fan aspect was talked about in detail by Jibin:

"I'm a huge fan of GoT (Game of Thrones). Not just the story and the characters and all, which are awesome and I love them, but also the way the whole thing is filmed. You see these sprawling expanses of landscape which have just been so lovingly shot. And I knew the only way I could come even close to actually experiencing Game of Thrones for real was to visit some of these locations and try to relive the moments I had seen on screen. Just go there, stand where my favourite characters stood and just imagine for a moment that you're a character in the story. For me and my group, that was the biggest reason".

For such tourists, often referred to as "specific film tourists" [34], the primary motivator is therefore not natural beauty or the aesthetic value of the landscape, but the need to bridge the gap between reality and fiction by visiting places of fictionalised significance. This is contrasted by Rajeshwari's experience, wherein the extent of her involvement with the show, though much less than Jibin's, nonetheless resulted in her travel to North Ireland, as described:

"No, I'm not really a fan of the Game of Thrones series, unlike Jibin. But the natural splendour of those hills and that countryside was not lost on me. I mean, you don't need to love the show to appreciate this kind of unspoilt beauty. The show may be

fictional but the places are real. Plus, I'm someone who loves trips and who's always very enthusiastic about discovering new places, and for that reason, you could say I'm kind of glad I watched a bit of Game of Thrones, because it got me thinking about Ireland as an actual destination for a family trip".

Rajeshwari thus falls under a subset of film-induced tourists termed "general film tourists" [34], whose motivations are entirely different from that of specific film tourists. This distinction was important as it significantly influenced the consumption patterns of the two groups in different ways.

Degree of Similarity to Onscreen Depiction: When asked about how similar the location looked in reality as compared to its reel counterpart; the responses elicited indicated that respondents felt their overall trip to be more enjoyable when there was a close resemblance between the two. Rishika explains: "After watching 3 idiots I was adamant that I must visit Leh and Ladakh, and visit soon. I planned my next holiday there, and I was so glad. The place is gorgeous. Just like the film showed. I was so afraid that it wouldn't look like what they showed – I mean, ultimately it is their job to trick us, and I understand that, I get it. But this was like I was walking into the movie itself, if that makes sense. It made me realise I don't even need to go abroad when I have something just as good as any European destination right here in India itself".

Presence of Film-specific Markers: The verisimilitude of the locations depicted play a major role not only in the respondents' general level of satisfaction with the trip, but also significantly influenced the amount spent by "specific film tourists" on film-related merchandise being sold near markers and sites of film-related significance. This was confirmed by Urvi, who explains how her happiness at having visited locations from a beloved childhood franchise *Harry Potter* increased the amount of money she spent on such items:

"I had to do it on a budget, a tight budget where I would have to restrict myself obviously from spending too much. But when I got there, all the memories and the magic and everything just came flooding back to me. Everything was so well maintained, they even had places showing you where the filming happened, and small set pieces and props were there on display, like even the half-trolley at the entrance to Platform 9¾. It was overwhelming. And there was so much merchandise everywhere, that I just couldn't resist splurging a bit. I was really, really impressed by how immersive they had made the whole thing".

For Urvi, a specific film tourist, the presence of "site markers" as referred to in the literature had the effect of reinforcing positive memories, which, coupled with the strategically placed visibility of franchise-related merchandise prompted her, as a fan of the films, to indulge in purchases. These markers do not possess historical significance in the traditional sense of the term, but due to the popularity of the *Harry Potter* franchise books and films, have assumed cultural importance to the fans and admirers of this franchise. As a result, attempts have been made, as per Urvi's account, to maintain these locations by mounting appropriate props and ensuring that the appearance remains true to the onscreen depiction.

Influence of Social Media: The majority of the respondents claimed to have thoroughly documented their trip by capturing photographs and videos, and posting them on a variety of social media sites. Nearly all respondents claimed to have posted these photos and videos on social media during the trip itself, with a small minority claiming to have posted them after the completion of the trip. The former group was observed to have benefitted

from the positive reaffirmation received by posting this content online, even those who described their trips as "less than ideal". Sonita, who travelled to Kashmir after watching the film *Jab Tak Hai Jaan* elaborates about the impact of social media on her trip experience:

"Of course, I bombarded my friends' feeds with my photos. The scenery in the movie was great, and even then, I'm the biggest SRK (Shah Rukh Khan) fan I know, so naturally, I had to post about it. Not just because everyone knows I love Shah Rukh but because these were some genuinely pretty places. Unfortunately, the weather didn't cooperate with our plans, which was pretty sad for our group because it meant we ended up being indoors most of the time. But the likes and the comments on the pictures we had posted kept pouring in, and I know it sounds shallow, but it actually helped to lift our spirits and feel a little better about the whole thing".

A search through the social media platform Instagram platform using the keywords #movietourism and #filmtourism revealed that apart from these hashtags present in the post, film-induced tourists specifically mentioned the film which led to their travel, as shown below:



Sample1

In description: "Best of Belgium: this is Bruges. I wanted to go there because of this amazing movie "In Bruges".

It is evident by an elementary examination of the above post, that the individual was influenced by the film *In Bruges* to visit the eponymous location. The photograph posted features a general look at the landscape of the city of Bruges. This is contrasted by posts from other film-induced tourists who make conscious attempts to visit specific spots featured in films. Such tourists are then given to superimpose the shot of the site with a handheld image of a still from the film/television series in question, a trend followed by a large number of self-professed movie enthusiasts and film-induced tourists. Below is an example of such a post about the 2019 film *Joker*, which features two photos – one in the aforementioned style, and a second one featuring a person dressed in complete *Joker*-style attire, striking a pose similar to that of the protagonist in what has become one of the most well-recognised scenes of the film:



Sample 2 Sample 3

Another instance of specific film tourism, this time on an international scale, is provided below, of a US resident travelling to Sad Hill Cemetery, Spain to recreate an iconic shot from the film *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*, thereby attempting to bridge the experiential gap between the real and the fictional:



Sample 4

Local Culture: While the presence and maintenance of film-related markers and sites can lead to greater satisfaction of film-induced tourists, the lack of management of sites by government or private entities can negatively impact the experiences of film-induced tourists, as evidenced by Kaustav's account of his travel in Venice after watching the film *Casino Royale*:

"The government really needs to do something if they want to preserve Venice. The whole place is too crowded, and it's honestly getting ruined. Considering how it's not even a natural setting, Venice is the last place you'd expect to get spoilt like that. It's really, really expensive anyway when you start converting, but you don't mind if you have a good overall experience, which I didn't. And the locals! I faced three separate incidents of racism, which really put me off the whole trip".

It can, therefore, be observed that excess tourism coupled with inhospitable local culture due to bigotry can have strong negative impacts on an individual's impression of a destination, thereby lowering their likelihood to visit again or recommend the site to friends and family.

Tour Guide Influence: The most common similarity

between all the respondents was their use and satisfaction with tour guides while touring. Nearly all interviewees used a tour guide at some point during their trip, with some using one or multiple tour guides over the entire course of their travel. The impact of tour guides on overall satisfaction levels of these film-induced tourists, whether general or specific, has been identified as one which is almost always positive. This is explained by Romel, who visited Rome and the Vatican City after watching the movie *Angels and Demons*:

"There are a lot of things which you need to know before you go to Vatican City. It's a holy place, so you need to be covered up. All this I knew because I did some preparation, but our tour guide Roberto was really helpful. Not only all the rules about dress code and photography, he knew everything. Even the details about the monuments and the statues, he knew so much about. small things which made the whole thing very informative and interesting. And he was never boring. He even helped us modify our itinerary and daily plans by telling us places where we should be paying and should not be paying for things, and how much. It was really helpful. Our trip was much better because of him. He guided us the whole way. When you're standing in front of a church you don't have time to take out your phone and read about it there – that ruins the feeling. But Roberto was able to give us the best experience, making the trip worth it".

The influence of tour guides was observed to have an even greater impact amongst specific film tourists. An example is taken of Craig, who is a "self-professed lover and ardent fan" of the *Lord of the Rings* film franchise, which motivated him to travel to New Zealand, where the majority of the films in the series were shot:

"As much as I know LOTR (*Lord of the Rings*) in and out, I thought I might be better served by hiring a tour guide to help me navigate New Zealand. And Amanda – my tour guide – was just as big a fan as me, which was perfect. She knew everything about which places to go, where specific scenes were shot, the whole nine yards. I was very impressed with her knowledge, and we bonded majorly over our shared love for Tolkien. If I were to put it in brief – direction. That's the invaluable element she contributed to my time in New Zealand. She knew what to do, where to go, and since you asked, yes, she was a major help in helping me direct my money to its best use".

All respondents who had hired a tour guide rated their influence on the trip as being 'very positive' to 'extremely positive', thus establishing tour guides as the single most influential factor determining tourists' satisfaction levels with their trips.

Satisfaction with the experience: Satisfaction levels were shown to have a significant impact on expenditure levels, word of mouth and willingness to revisit destinations. Of the twenty respondents interviewed, sixteen claimed that their trips were moderately to highly enjoyable. Of these sixteen respondents, fifteen professed to having overshot their budget, with all fifteen showing little to no regret with regards to the same, primarily due to a perceived "one-time enjoyment" nature of their holiday. Denise, who visited Petra, Jordan after watching *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* echoed this sentiment, saying:

When you're on vacation, you're there to enjoy yourself. So

yes, you need to watch your wallet and check how much you're spending, but a little extra here and there is okay. I mean, at the end of the day, how often do you really get to visit these beautiful places, isn't that so? So you know, if you're with friends or family, and you're having a good time, it's only natural that you're going to end up spending a little extra. And if the trip is good, and you've had a good time, you feel like spending that extra amount was worth it. An association was thus observed between levels of satisfaction and expenditure on goods and services in the respondents' accounts. This was in turn corroborated by the fact that only one of the four interviewees whose experience was described as less-than-enjoyable (Kaustav) reported having overshot his budget. The same individual also reported a low perceived feeling of "value for money" on the trip.

All sixteen respondents who reported high levels of overall satisfaction with their trip also reported strong tendencies to 'strongly recommend' their respective destinations to friends and family. Fourteen of these sixteen interviewees also expressed a strong desire to revisit their respective destinations in future, while one respondent (Sonita) among the four who rated their trip as 'less than enjoyable' also expressed a desire to visit her destination again.

Using the aforementioned first order themes, aggregative patterns were identified upon further examination to arrive at five second order themes. These have been enumerated in the figure below, along with the first order themes aggregated into each of the second level themes.

Discussion

The research conducted diverges from and adds to the existing literature in its applicability of recognised as well as novel findings. For instance, while specific film tourists attempted to relive movie-specific moments whole on-site, general film tourists also reported tendencies to picture themselves in the landscape depicted, giving rise to a need to assess the tourists' perceived levels of similarity between the real location and the onscreen and online depiction. Considered one of the metrics for measuring "value for money" by several respondents, higher degrees of similarity between the two often correlated positively with higher levels of satisfaction. This, however, was impacted significantly by factors beyond the respondents' control, including weather, crowds and hospitality of local cultures.

Another largely unexplored field – social media – was also found to have a mitigating effect on respondents who were having experiences described as less than ideal, fuelled by what the research identified as a need for social validation. At the same time, pre-tour research regarding places seen in the film was found to result in a changing of negative stereotypes, across almost all respondents.

Expenditure on goods and services across respondents was shown to be most directly influenced by overall satisfaction levels, which in turn was justified by respondents due to a need for self-validation. Apart from having a direct impact on expenditure levels, satisfaction also played a key role in determining the word of mouth spread by the respondents to potential future tourists. Being an aggregate measure of their

overall tourist experience, satisfaction levels thus had the most direct positive relationship with the respondents' desire to revisit their destinations at a future time.

Conclusion

The insights arrived at offer important implications for stakeholders in the field of destination marketing, both from an academic as well as a commercial standpoint. The latter becomes relevant especially in light of the fact positive tourist experiences have been shown to translate not only into higher expenditures (which have been proved to impact both local as well as film-related beneficiaries), but also to result in higher probabilities of positive recommendations and repeat visits.

Moreover, an examination of the negative experiences as presented in the study highlight important pitfalls of tourists' consumer journeys. While some of the factors are uncontrollable, others indicate areas of improvement as well as avenues of opportunity for destination marketers. These actions can thus be taken post the release of a film/television series, as opposed to the suggestions made by the existing literature which focus primarily on steps to be taken during the production and pre-production stages of filmmaking.

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