

# Film-Induced Place Attachment: A Study of Emotional Connection that Tourists Develop with Destinations Depicted in Films.

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## Abstract

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The intersection of film and tourism is a recognized driver of destination exploration and traveler motivation. This study delves into the concept of Film-Induced Place Attachment (FIPA), which signifies the emotional bond tourists develop with real-world destinations portrayed in films. This research aims to comprehensively understand the mechanisms behind FIPA, its influence on tourist behavior, and its implications for destination management and marketing strategies. Methodology: This study employs qualitative approaches to gather insights from a diverse range of participants, including film tourism stakeholders and tourism experts. Surveys and descriptive analysis of relevant films and their impact are utilised to uncover the multidimensional nature of FIPA, exploring factors such as cinematography, storytelling, cultural representation, and personal resonance that contribute to the emotional engagement tourists experience. Findings: Findings from this research highlights the profound impact of films in shaping tourists' perceptions and motivations to visit specific destinations. The emotional connection established through film-induced narratives often results in heightened curiosity and desire to experience the depicted locations firsthand. The study further explores the potential for FIPA to influence not only travel decisions but also the length of stay, expenditure patterns, and repeat visitation behaviors. In conclusion, this study sheds light on the intricate relationship between film-induced narratives and the emotional attachment tourists develop towards depicted destinations. By understanding the underlying mechanisms of FIPA, destination marketers, policymakers, and stakeholders can harness its potential to shape positive and lasting tourist experiences, ultimately contributing to

sustainable tourism development.

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**Keywords:**

film tourism ,destination attachment ,tourist behaviour ,product placement ,tourist emotional attachment

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## Introduction

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Travelling is only one aspect of tourism; another is the emotions that tourist destinations evoke in travelers. People look for vacation experiences that will leave them with enduring memories. The impact of films and TV shows on tourist's desire to travel is an intriguing facet of contemporary tourism. TV shows and films have the capacity to stir strong emotions, intriguing people's curiosity, and encourage them to travel to particular places. This paper investigates the relationship that exists between films, emotions, and the destinations.

It is essential to dive into the psychology of place attachment in order to comprehend why particular vacation places are appealing to travelers. Tourist's feelings towards a location have an impact on their emotional connection to the destination. People's attachment to places is greatly influenced by their feelings, such as love, a sense of identity, and overall wellbeing. Through this research, the researchers intend to explain how tourist places play a role in activating tourist's emotional appeal and foster a sense of community among visitors.

Film and television have a power to depict locations in an astounding way. They have the ability to take individuals to new eras and places with their gripping tales and immersive cinematic experiences. A film that strikes an emotional chord with viewers can motivate them to travel to the depicted locations. It is impossible to overstate the influence that narrative and cinematic inspiration have on individual choice of destinations.

Loyalty is one of the main results of this emotional bond with travel locations. Visitors are more inclined to come back to a location when they have close emotional ties with it. The long-term viability of tourist places depends on this loyalty (Patwardhan et.al, 2020). Researchers also discuss how important it is to

create customised experiences, embrace sustainable and locally driven tourism, and strike a balance between familiarity and novelty. An examination is done to measure the emotional impact of these events in order to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between feelings and travel choices. Further, the purpose of this study is to examine the complex connections that exist between individual's emotions, the films that one watches, and the places one decides to travel to.

## Review of Literature

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Film-Induced Product Attachment (FIPA) is a concept that underscores the emotional and psychological connection individuals establish with products or goods depicted in films and television programs (d'Astous & Chartier, 2000). It involves viewers developing a sense of attachment and a desire to own or experience the products they encounter on the screen, ultimately impacting their consumer behavior and purchasing decisions. FIPA highlights the potent influence of visual media, such as movies and TV series, in shaping consumer preferences and choices.

Companies often recognize the potential of FIPA and employ product placements in films and TV shows to harness its power (Roy et al., 2020). These strategic placements involve showcasing their products in a positive and appealing context to captivate a broad and engaged audience (Lin & Atkin, 2018). When effectively executed, FIPA can result in tangible benefits for companies, including increased sales, heightened brand recognition, and enhanced customer loyalty (Russell, Norman, & Heckler, 2004).

The literature focuses on seven variables that impact the film induced place attachment (FIPA), leading to influence on tourist decision making and an emotional bond with the showcased destinations.

## Enhancing Destination Appeal

Place attachment psychology is essential for understanding destination appeal to the tourist (Scannell & Gifford, 2017). Emotional variables of place attachment include affective ties, sense of identity, and emotional well-being (Knez & Eliasson, 2017; Lewicka, 2011; Stylidis, Mygdalas and Vougiatsis, 2017). To enhance destination appeal, destinations should engage visitors emotionally, cultivate identity, and prioritize visitor well-being (Scannell & Gifford, 2017).

## Storytelling and Cinematic Inspiration

Storytelling and cinema can breathe life into a destination's history (Mittell, 2015). Emotional resonance in storytelling connects viewers to historical events (Zollo, 2018). Compelling stories centred on a destination's history can significantly impact tourism. When travelers form emotional connections with a destination's history, they are more likely to visit and explore its heritage sites. This not only boosts tourism revenue but also fosters a deeper appreciation for the destination's cultural and historical significance (Schroeder, 2018). Examples like the film "Love in the Villa " which was set in the backdrop of Verona, Italy. Movie based on Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet was also shot here. This led to tourists making emotional connections to Verona Films like these impact tourism (Woodhouse,2022; The Economic Times, 2022).

## Fostering Loyalty and Repeat Visitation

Creating a sense of belonging and attachment is crucial for visitor loyalty (Kim, 2018; Xiang, Du, Ma and Fan, 2017). Recent research reinforces the importance of attachment and community engagement (Wang & Pizam, 2020; Kim, 2018). Central to fostering loyalty is an emotional bond between visitors and a destination (Kim, 2018). When visitors feel emotionally connected to a place, they are more likely to return. This emotional connection can result from positive experiences, memorable moments, or a deep sense of attachment. A destination that

successfully evokes these emotions in its visitors is more likely to benefit from repeat visitation. For example, a mountain resort can create an emotional connection by offering a range of outdoor activities, such as hiking, skiing, and mountain biking, ensuring that visitors form lasting and positive memories.

## Balancing Familiarity and Novelty

Wanderlust whispers of far-off lands and exotic cultures, but for travelers, the ideal destination often lies at the intersection of the known and the unknown. We crave a delicate balance between familiarity, the comfort of the predictable and relatable, novelty, the thrill of the new and unexplored (Fesenmaier, Gretzel & Werthner 2019; Boni & Buhalis, 2018).

Familiar shores offer a sense of ease and security. Returning to a favorite spot allows us to relive cherished memories and reconnect with what feels like home away from home.

Novelty, on the other hand, stirs our curiosity and ignites the explorer within. Immersing oneself in diverse cultures, breathtaking landscapes, and unfamiliar customs broadens horizons and challenges one's perspectives (Lewis, Whitfield & McCole, 2017). These experiences, whether savoring exotic cuisine, navigating bustling markets, or scaling snow-capped peaks, leaves an indelible memory and a deeper understanding of the world and oneself.

Striking the perfect balance between these seemingly opposing desires is what ultimately defines a fulfilling travel experience. It's about finding destinations that resonate with the past journeys while offering just enough of the unexpected to keep one enthralled and forever yearning for the next adventure.

## Tailored Experiences

Travelers have diverse emotional preferences, hence customization based on emotional preferences leads to enhanced satisfaction and loyalty (Seddighi, Theocharous, Arvaniti & Chadjipadelis, 2020; Gretzel, Sigala, Xiang & Koo, 2015; Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019). Emotional experiences play a significant role in shaping

travelers' memories and perceptions of a destination or service. Positive emotional connections lead to greater satisfaction and loyalty.

## **Sustainability and Community Engagement**

Sustainability includes social, cultural, and environmental aspects (Buckley, 2012; Dredge & Jamal, 2015) that foster responsibility and stewardship towards Community engagement (Gössling et al., 2012). Engaging local communities in the tourism decision-making process promotes social inclusivity and ensures that the benefits of tourism are equitably distributed (Buckley, 2012). Sustainable tourism practices involve the preservation of local cultures and traditions (Dredge & Jamal, 2015). Community engagement in cultural conservation efforts instills a sense of stewardship over cultural heritage. When residents are actively involved in preserving their own culture, it not only ensures the authenticity of the destination but also enhances the sense of responsibility and pride within the community.

## **Measuring Emotional Impact**

In the dynamic world of tourism, understanding and measuring the emotional impact of travel experiences is paramount. Positive emotional experiences often lead to higher levels of satisfaction and loyalty among travelers. Sentiment analysis is a powerful tool that involves the computational analysis of text data (Munar, Gyimóthy, Cai & Cai, 2017). It allows tourism stakeholders to gauge the emotional tone of online reviews, social media posts, and other written content related to destinations or services. Destination marketing organizations often employ sentiment analysis tools to monitor social media platforms (Xiang et al., 2017). By analyzing traveler-generated content, marketers can tailor their campaigns to align with the emotional preferences of their target audience. Understanding sentiment is critical for reputation management. Addressing negative sentiment promptly and effectively can mitigate potential damage to a destination's image (Xiang et al., 2017).

# Research Methodology

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This research aims to investigate the emotional variables that influence the travel experiences of a diverse range of participants. It focuses on a qualitative approach to gather insights from film tourists. The study employs a purposive sampling method for data collection and utilizes narrative analysis to understand the relationship between emotional variables and travel experiences. A qualitative research design is used to collect and analyze data related to emotional variables and travel experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The use of random sampling enhances the generalisability of the study's findings to a broader population. Questionnaire was designed to capture a wide spectrum of emotional responses, including joy, excitement, relaxation, and nostalgia, among others. It also gathers information on travel frequency, destinations, and the nature of travel experiences. A total of ninety film tourism stakeholders and tourism experts were involved in the interviews conducted for this research.

Descriptive analysis is used to sort the collected data with an idea to gain a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between emotional variables and travel experiences (Saunders et al., 2019). Descriptive analysis has been used in this study to understand the various emotional variations people experience that attach them to the destinations. Richer data emerges, revealing unexpected emotions, subtle nuances, and personal narratives that qualitative methods might miss (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Cross-tabulation is used to explore relationships between different emotional variables and travel experiences. It allows for the identification of patterns and trends within the data (Field, 2013).

Participants were informed about the research's purpose and their voluntary involvement. Informed consent was obtained from each participant before data collection. Participants' identities are kept confidential. Data is anonymized and reported in a way that ensures individuals cannot be identified. All collected data is securely stored and protected to prevent unauthorised access or disclosure.

# Results

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To draw a result for this research four motivational variables were considered to analyse the impact of films in shaping tourists' perceptions and motivations to visit specific destinations, further to these 28 emotional variables were identified and top nine variables have been considered to conclude the findings

The study reveals a profound influence of emotional variables in shaping tourists' perceptions and motivations to visit specific destinations portrayed in films. The top nine emotional variables that have been considered for further understanding emotional connections of tourists, plays a distinct role in motivating individuals to explore new destinations. (refer to table 1)

**Excitement:** The emotion of excitement, characterized by a strong sense of anticipation and enthusiasm, emerged as a powerful motivator for tourists. When travelers encounter destinations featured in films, the cinematic portrayal generates a heightened sense of anticipation, driving them to experience the place firsthand. This emotional factor ignites the desire for adventure and exploration, making the destination more appealing (Schmitt, 2018).

**Nostalgia:** Nostalgia, associated with a sentimental longing for the past or a sense of familiarity and fondness, plays a pivotal role in influencing travel choices. Tourists often find themselves drawn to destinations that evoke a sense of nostalgia, whether due to personal connections or cultural familiarity. The emotional resonance of nostalgia bridges the gap between the known and the unknown, making a destination feel like a homecoming (Routledge Wildschut, Sedikides, Juhl & Arndt, 2016).

**Curiosity:** Curiosity, characterized by a desire to explore and learn more about places, serves as a key driver for travel. Films often pique viewers' curiosity about the destinations they portray, sparking a thirst for exploration. This emotional variable fosters intellectual and cultural engagement, motivating individuals to embark on journeys of discovery.

**Happiness:** The portrayal of idyllic locations, heartwarming stories, and joyful experiences in films has a profound impact on eliciting feelings of happiness in viewers. The emotional variable of happiness generates a sense of positivity and



contentment, which, in turn, influences the decision to travel to destinations associated with such emotions (Fredrickson, 2004).

**Sense of Belonging:** The emotional variable of a sense of belonging indicates a feeling of being connected to the places depicted in films. This emotional attachment can be a decisive factor in travel decisions. Tourists often seek destinations where they perceive a sense of belonging, where they can connect with the local culture and heritage, and feel like part of the community (Jamal & Budke, 2016).

**Cinephilia :** Cinephilia, characterized by a deep appreciation or affinity for cinema, is a distinct emotional variable. Individuals with a strong affinity for cinema are more likely to be influenced by the cinematic representation of destinations in their travel choices. Their appreciation for the art of filmmaking can motivate them to seek out the real-world locations depicted on screen (Pramaggiore, 2016).

**Déjà Vu :** Tourists often experience a feeling of déjà vu or familiarity when visiting destinations they have previously encountered in films. This familiarity can serve as a comforting factor, reducing the uncertainty associated with travel. It is as if they are revisiting a place they have been to before, even if only on the screen (Brown & Dyer, 2015).

**Realism:** The connection between the place and its portrayal in the media is crucial. When films depict a destination realistically, viewers are more inclined to believe in the authenticity of the experience. This sense of realism can be a significant factor in their travel decision-making process. Authenticity in media portrayal enhances the perceived value of a destination (Lee, 2019).

**Satisfaction:** The emotional variable of satisfaction is expressed by travelers who have experienced destinations depicted in films. These tourists often report contentment and fulfillment, as the cinematic portrayal aligns with their actual travel experiences. This positive emotional connection can lead to repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth recommendations (Tung, 2014).

Table 1: Emotional variables affecting tourist travel motivation.

Emotional Variables	Identified Indicator	Responses used to identify the variables
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Excitement	A strong sense of anticipation and enthusiasm	<p>.....I wanted to call up my friends and share the excitement.</p> <p>.....share the excitement.</p> <p>.....Felt excited</p> <p>.....We are excited to visit the place</p> <p>.....I felt a mix of excitement</p>
Nostalgia	A sentimental longing for the past or a sense of familiarity and fondness.	<p>....Nostalgia, Unsettling, Sad</p> <p>....nostalgia, and wonder as I explored iconic locations</p> <p>....Anxious and Nostalgic</p> <p>....Great history of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is nostalgic</p>
Curiosity	A desire to explore and learn more about the places.	<p>.....Think with curiosity</p> <p>.....Happy, anxious, curious</p> <p>.....Eager, Curious</p> <p>.... Happy, Curious.</p>
Happiness	Positive emotions and contentment.	<p>.... Happiness, correlate the place and scene in the movie</p> <p>....Happy and Joyful</p> <p>....Happy and emotional Mix feeling</p> <p>....self love, happy</p> <p>.....Happy, anxious, curious</p>
Sense of Belonging	A feeling of being connected to the place.	<p>.....It gives nature connect feeling</p> <p>.....Sense of belonging</p> <p>....I could feel the place and could relate it</p> <p>...accomplishment and feeling of being related</p>
Cinephilia	A deep appreciation or affinity for cinema.	<p>....I felt cinephilic towards one of the movie characters.</p> <p>.....Felt fortunate to have visited the place shown in movie</p>
Deja Vu	A feeling of déjà vu or familiarity.	<p>.....I could imagine the magnanimosity &amp; grandeur of Rajamouli film with the erected set there.</p> <p>.....It felt like I already know the place</p> <p>....The place felt ethereal deja vue</p> <p>... but somehow it gave me a sense of familiarity.</p>

Realism	A connection between the place and its portrayal in the media.	<p>....I could feel the place          .....realistic approach towards the life of people living in Chandni Chowk.          ..... trying to remember the scene from movie &amp; then recognise the location.          ...got same sense of place which I got while watching in movie.          .....corelate the place and scene in the movie</p>
Satisfaction	Expression of contentment and fulfillment.	<p>.....I cried a lot when I saw shivling there.          ....It was somewhat surprising and mix kind of feel overall.          .... A sense of achievement          .....Feeling of accomplishment and feeling of being related          ...Revival, Peace, Relaxed on the beach of Mumbai</p>

## Discussions

The results of this study have far-reaching implications for destination management and marketing strategies. Understanding the profound influence of films and emotional variables on travel experiences provides destination managers and marketers with valuable insights that can be leveraged to enhance visitor engagement, attract tourists, and promote repeat visitation.

Firstly, the findings highlight the importance of fostering emotional connections between tourists and the destinations showcased in films. Destination management organizations (DMOs) should consider collaborating with the film industry to ensure that cinematic portrayals align with the destination’s authentic identity (Lee, 2019). By working together, these entities can create compelling narratives that resonate with viewers and inspire them to embark on real-life journeys. This alignment between cinematic representations and real experiences can have a lasting impact on travelers’ perceptions and motivations (Tung, 2014). Secondly, DMOs and marketers can use these emotional variables as cornerstones for crafting targeted marketing campaigns. By recognizing that excitement,

nostalgia, curiosity, happiness, a sense of belonging, cinephilia, déjà vu, realism, and satisfaction play pivotal roles in travel decisions, destination promotion efforts can be tailored to evoke these emotions (Schmitt, 2018). For instance, DMOs can create marketing content that highlights the exhilarating adventures awaiting travelers or the nostalgic charm of a destination's historical sites. These strategies resonate with travelers' emotional needs and inspire them to choose specific locations for their journeys.

Moreover, since films play a significant role in influencing travel decisions, DMOs can capitalize on their destination's potential as a cinematic backdrop (Kim, 2018). By actively promoting their locations to filmmakers, destinations can increase their chances of being featured in movies and television shows, subsequently enhancing their appeal to a broader audience. In the age of social media and digital marketing, destination managers can harness film-induced tourism's power to reach a global audience.

The emotional variables explored in this study offer a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between cinema, emotions, and travel. DMOs and marketers can use this knowledge to design visitor experiences that align with these variables, ensuring that tourists find a deep sense of belonging, familiarity, and satisfaction during their visits (Jamal & Budke, 2016). Whether through tailored tour packages, immersive experiences, or local engagement initiatives, destinations can create travel experiences that cater to travelers' emotional preferences.

Additionally, the findings emphasize the role of authenticity in film portrayals. DMOs and filmmakers should prioritize realistic depictions of destinations, as these resonate more strongly with viewers and enhance the perceived value of the location (Lee, 2019). This authenticity not only attracts tourists but also ensures that their experiences match their expectations, resulting in greater satisfaction and repeat visits.

Lastly, the results of this study reinforce the importance of monitoring sentiment and traveler-generated content on social media platforms (Xiang et al., 2017). DMOs should utilize sentiment analysis tools to gauge the emotional tone of online reviews and posts related to their destinations. This information can inform

marketing strategies, help address negative sentiment promptly, and manage the destination's online reputation. By actively engaging with travelers on social media, destinations can foster a sense of community and belonging.

In conclusion, the research findings underscore the influential role of films and emotional variables in shaping travel experiences and decisions. Destination management and marketing strategies should consider these insights to create memorable and emotionally resonant travel opportunities. By fostering emotional connections and authenticity, collaborating with the film industry, and leveraging the power of social media, destinations can enhance their appeal, attract more tourists, and promote loyalty and repeat visitation. This study contributes to the evolving field of film-induced tourism and the critical role emotions play in travel experiences.

## Conclusion

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In this comprehensive research, the concept of Film-Induced Product Attachment (FIPA) has been thoroughly explored, revealing how viewers establish emotional connections with products featured in films and television programs, influencing their consumer behavior. The literature review has highlighted seven key variables shaping Film-Induced Place Attachment (FIPA), emphasizing the significance of emotional elements, storytelling, fostering loyalty, balancing familiarity and novelty, crafting tailored experiences, embracing sustainability, and utilizing sentiment analysis.

The study's results have uncovered a compelling link between films, emotional variables, and tourist motivations. It demonstrates that films have a profound impact on travel-related decisions, with a significant proportion of respondents expressing a heightened interest in destinations featured in movies and an increased desire to visit these locations. Moreover, the research identifies nine crucial emotional variables – excitement, nostalgia, curiosity, happiness, a sense of belonging, cinephilia, déjà vu, realism, and satisfaction – that serve as key motivators for tourists when choosing destinations depicted in films. These emotional connections play a pivotal role in inspiring individuals to explore new

places and fostering repeat visitation.

The implications of this research for destination management and marketing are substantial. By collaborating with the film industry to ensure cinematic portrayals align with a destination's authentic identity, destinations can inspire travelers to embark on real-life journeys. Crafting marketing campaigns that tap into the emotional variables identified can create more resonant and engaging visitor experiences. Leveraging a destination's potential as a cinematic backdrop and prioritizing authenticity in film portrayals can significantly enhance a location's appeal. Furthermore, monitoring sentiment and traveler-generated content on social media platforms can help destinations engage with travelers, manage their online reputation, and foster a sense of community.

It can be suggested to the government agencies and tourism stakeholders to utilise this marketing strategy to brand undiscovered destinations through film placement and use the emotional variables to attract more and more tourist to these destinations. Local stakeholders can also play a significant role in this marketing endeavours. This study can be further explored to identify various research topics that relate to emotional, physical and personal variables that attach tourists to the destination place.

In conclusion, this research underscores the powerful influence of films and emotions on travel experiences and decisions. By recognizing and leveraging these insights, destination management and marketing strategies can enhance visitor engagement, attract tourists, and promote loyalty and repeat visitation. This study contributes to the evolving field of film-induced tourism and emphasizes the pivotal role of emotions in shaping travel experiences and choices.

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## Notes

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No notes.

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