

**MEDIATING EFFECTS OF PREFERENCE,
ATTITUDE AND ATTACHMENT ON
DESTINATION FASCINATION AND
BEHAVIOUR INTENTION IN INDIAN
FILM-INDUCED TOURISM**

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FILM-INDUCED TOURISM**

by

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**Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements
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In Cherished Memory of My

Beloved Mother

ASHA CHAURE

(A constant source of inspiration)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FMI	Future Market Insight
TCI	Travels Competitive Index
FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
DMS	Destination Marketing Strategy
ART	Attention Restoration Theory
PRS	Perceived Restorativeness Scales
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior
TRA	Theory of reasoned action
NTO	Non-Governmental Organizations
RPM	Reasonable Person Model
DMO	Destination Management/Marketing Organization
WTO	World Tourism Organization
GDP	Gross domestic product
TAT	Tourism Authority of Thailand
PPE	Post Production Effect
ACI	Airports Council International
BTA	British Tourist Authority
CAGR	Compound annual growth rate
VFX	Visual effects
CCTV	China Central Television's
WOM	Word-of-mouth
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling
CB-SEM	Covariance Based Structural Equation Modeling

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**KESAN PERANTARA KEUTAMAAN, SIKAP, DAN PERTAUTAN KE ATAS
TARIKAN DESTINASI DAN NIAT PERLAKUAN DALAM PELANCONGAN
TERHASIL FILEM INDIA**

ABSTRAK

Media, terutamanya filem, telah menjadi fokus utama dalam penyelidikan pelancongan, kerana ia memainkan peranan besar dalam membentuk persepsi destinasi pelancongan. Namun, konsep daya tarikan destinasi yang merupakan sebuah konstruk aras kedua, masih kurang dikaji dari segi kesannya terhadap niat tingkah laku individu untuk melawat lokasi yang ditayangkan dalam filem. Disebalik pengiktirafan kajian pelancongan terhasil filem, pemahaman tentang bagaimana daya tarikan destinasi beroperasi dalam konteks pelancongan terhasil filem masih tidak signifikan. Kajian ini berteraskan Attention Restoration Theory dan Reasonable Person Model yang mengkaji pengantara kognitif, afektif, dan konatif; serta keutamaan destinasi, pertautan, dan sikap berkaitan antara daya tarikan dan niat untuk melancong. Walaupun konstruk keutamaan destinasi, pertautan, dan sikap telah dikaji dari segi individu, kesan pengantara gabungan semuanya mengikut konteks pelancongan terhasil filem masih belum diterokai sepenuhnya. Kajian ini mengutamakan pasaran pelancongan domestik India, di mana filem memainkan peranan signifikan sebagai inspirasi perjalanan leisure di sana. Keutamaan ini mengurangkan jurang kritikal dari literatur sedia ada yang banyak memfokuskan konteks Barat, mengakibatkan wilayah bukan Barat seperti Asia dan Afrika kurang diwakili. Pelancongan domestik adalah penyumbang penting kepada pertumbuhan ekonomi di negara membangun, namun ia masih kurang dikaji walaupun impaknya signifikan. Dari kajian tentang bagaimana daya tarikan terhadap destinasi yang ditayangkan dalam filem mempengaruhi tingkah laku pelancongan domestik, ia dapat

menambah pemahaman tentang pelancongan terhasil filem. Dengan penggunaan kerangka teori yang kukuh, kajian ini menyumbang konsepsi tentang dimensi kognitif, emosi, dan motivasi tentang fenomena ini. Reka bentuk eksperimen dengan 418 responden yang digunakan dalam kajian ini menyiasat mekanisme pengaruh daya tarikan destinasi terhadap niat tingkah laku. Hasil kajian membuktikan keutamaan destinasi, pertautan, dan sikap penonton berperanan sebagai pengantara yang signifikan, memperkukuh perkaitan antara daya tarikan dan niat melawat. Secara khusus, individu yang menganggap destinasi yang ditayangkan dalam filem sebagai menarik lebih cenderung untuk membentuk keutamaan, hubungan emosi, dan sikap positif terhadap lokasi terbabit, secara langsung memperkukuh niat mereka untuk melawat. Kajian ini menyumbang kepada bidang pelancongan terhasil filem dengan mengupas secara khusus tentang pengaruh media dalam proses membuat keputusan pelancong. Hasil kajian juga menyoroti pentingnya daya tarikan destinasi sebagai konstruk utama dalam strategi pemasaran pelancongan. Pemasar destinasi boleh mengambil manfaat dari respons emosi dan kognitif yang didorong oleh filem untuk menghasilkan kempen yang efektif bagi menarik pelancong domestik. Seterusnya, kajian ini memperjelas kepentingan memberi tumpuan kepada pelancongan domestic negara-negara membangun kerana mereka mempunyai potensi yang tinggi dalam pembangunan ekonomi. Kajian ini menambah pemahaman mengenai psikologi persekitaran dalam domain pelancongan dan mengemukakan cadangan kepada pengamal yang ingin memanfaatkan kelebihan filem sebagai daya tarikan destinasi dan penglibatan pengunjung.

**MEDIATING EFFECTS OF PREFERENCE, ATTITUDE AND
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INTENTION IN INDIAN FILM-INDUCED TOURISM**

ABSTRACT

The role of media, particularly films, in shaping perceptions of travel destinations has been a focal point in tourism research. However, the concept of "destination fascination" a second order construct remains underexplored, especially in its impact on individuals' behavioral intentions to visit movie featured locations. While film-induced tourism is gaining recognition, significant gaps persist in understanding how destination fascination operates within this context. This study is grounded in Attention Restoration Theory and the Reasonable Person Model to examine the cognitive, affective, and conative mediators; destination preference, attachment, and attitude that connect fascination with travel intentions. Although constructs like destination preference, attachment, and attitude have been studied individually, their combined mediating effects in the film-induced tourism context remain insufficiently addressed. The research focuses on India's domestic tourism market, where films play a pivotal role in inspiring leisure travel. This focus addresses a critical gap in existing literature, which has predominantly concentrated on Western contexts, leaving non-Western regions like Asia and Africa underrepresented. Domestic tourism, a vital contributor to economic growth in developing countries, remains under-researched despite its significant impact. By exploring how fascination with destinations portrayed in films influences domestic tourists' travel behaviors, this study fills a crucial void in the understanding of film-induced tourism. By employing a robust theoretical framework, the study offers

insights into the cognitive, emotional, and motivational dimensions of this phenomenon. Using an experimental design with 418 respondents, the study investigates the mechanisms through which destination fascination affects behavioral intentions. The findings reveal that destination preference, attachment, and viewers' attitudes serve as significant mediators, amplifying the relationship between fascination and intent to visit. Specifically, individuals who find destinations featured in films fascinating are more likely to develop a preference for, emotional connection to, and positive attitude toward these locations, all of which significantly enhance their intention to travel. This research contributes to the field of film-induced tourism by offering nuanced insights into how media influences tourists' decision making processes. The results highlight the importance of incorporating destination fascination as a key construct in tourism marketing strategies. By leveraging the emotional and cognitive responses elicited by films, destination marketers can create impactful campaigns to attract domestic tourists. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of focusing on domestic tourism in developing countries, where it holds substantial potential for economic growth. This research advances the understanding of environmental psychology in the tourism domain and provides actionable recommendations for practitioners aiming to harness the power of films to enhance destination appeal and visitor engagement.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an introductory overview of the current study, offering background information. Chapter one delineates the research problem, questions, and objectives, while defining the study's boundaries and orientation. Furthermore, it emphasizes the study's significance, scope, and contributions, while also outlining the key terminologies used in this research. Finally, at the end of chapter one, the organisation of the research approach is introduced.

1.1.1 Background of the Study

Behavioral intention to visit refers to a tourist's likelihood or plan to travel to a specific destination in the future. It is widely regarded as a precursor to actual travel behavior, making it a critical focus for destination marketing strategies (Ajzen, 1991; Bi et al., 2022; Chi & Phuong, 2022). Positive behavioral intention to visit is influenced by factors such as perceived attractiveness, emotional attachment, and favorable attitudes, which collectively shape the destination image and the decision-making process of potential tourists (Wu & Lai, 2023; Vila et al., 2021). Destination image, defined as the collective perceptions, knowledge, and emotional associations individuals have about a specific place, is pivotal in influencing tourists' travel decisions (Rellores et al., 2022; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). Destinations with a strong and positive image are more likely to inspire confidence and generate higher visitation intentions (Vila et al., 2021; Rellores et al., 2022).

The term "destination" is commonly used to describe a specific place or location that people travel to for a variety of reasons. It could be for leisure, tourism, business, or other purposes (Herbert, 2001; Wu & Lai, 2023). A "tourist destination"

could refer to a particular attraction or landmark, such as a famous museum, historical site, city, region, province, or country (Hall & Lew, 2009; Wu & Lai, 2023). The term is often used in the tourism industry to describe the places that people visit for tourism purpose.

Managers of tourist destinations may utilize a variety of image-inducing techniques, such as the promotional video for tourists. Rather than conventional marketing strategies, films can be employed as an efficient, successful, and influential instrument in destination marketing (Rajaguru, 2013). Films may help the depicted regions by attracting the attention of viewers and by influencing their tourist destination choices (Wu & Lai, 2023; Vila et al., 2021). The formation and promotion of a positive destination image and attracting tourists to locations associated with movies is known as film-induced tourism (Wu & Lai, 2023).

Film-induced tourism is an emerging phenomenon where cinematic and television content significantly impacts tourists' behavioral intentions (Tian et al., 2021; O'Connor, 2010; Oshriyeh & Capriello, 2022). Films have the unique ability to bring destinations to life through storytelling, showcasing captivating landscapes, cultural richness, and iconic landmarks (Rajaguru, 2013). This type of tourism extends beyond traditional marketing by emotionally engaging viewers and embedding a desire to visit the locations depicted onscreen.

Unlike other types of tourism, which are typically based on natural attractions or historical sites, film-induced tourism is intrinsically linked to specific movies or TV shows. This form of tourism often involves visits to locations that may not traditionally be considered tourist destinations. For example, a small town used as a filming location for a popular film may suddenly become a tourist hotspot, even though it lacks other major attractions (Riley & Doren, 1992; Iwashita, 2006). Such exposure not only enhances destination awareness but also shapes perceptions that

positively influence behavioral intention to visit. Film and TV have the power to elevate a previously overlooked location to fame, often without the aggressive marketing strategies associated with traditional advertising, allowing visitors to discover these destinations in a more organic, passive manner (Vila et al., 2021).

The film tourism industry has grown rapidly, with its value estimated at US \$66.7 billion in 2022, projected to reach US \$128.78 billion by 2032, reflecting the increasing interest in destinations featured in films (Future Market Insights [FMI], 2022). This sector is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.8% from 2022 to 2032, driven by the growing trend of tourists seeking out filming locations of their favorite films and TV shows. As the industry expands, it is anticipated to positively impact local economies by increasing visitor numbers and benefiting businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and tour operators. Additionally, film tourism can create new job opportunities and help diversify local economies (Ferreiro, 2021; FMI, 2022). Table 1.1 indicates that film production's economic benefits in various areas signal a noteworthy surge in visitor volumes post movie release. Overall, the future looks bright for the film tourism industry, and it will be interesting to see how this sector evolves over the next decade (Ferreiro, 2021; Nieto-Ferrando et al., 2024).

Though film tourism gained little academic attention before the 1990s, scholars like Riley and Doren (1992) and Clarke and Beck (1999) began exploring its role in destination marketing. Recently, there has been a surge in academic interest in film-induced tourism, with numerous studies examining its impact on destination branding and marketing (Nieto-Ferrando et al., 2024; Wu & Lai, 2023; Kim et al., 2019; Tian et al., 2021). Different terminologies, such as film-induced tourism, film tourism, and movie-induced tourism, have emerged due to linguistic differences, but they all refer to the same underlying concept of tourism driven by cinematic exposure

(Tian et al., 2021; O'Connor, 2010; Oshriyeh & Capriello, 2022; Najjarzadeh et al., 2022; Ananda et al., 2021).

Table 1.1 Film Induced Tourism Increases at Selected Destinations

Title	Location	Increase in tourism
<i>Crocodile Dundee</i> , 1986	Australia	20.5% increase in U.S. visitors
<i>Bull Durham</i> , 1988	Durham, North Carolina	25% increase in visitors
<i>Steel Magnolias</i> , 1989	Natchitoches, Louisiana, USA	48.1% increase
<i>Bailando con lobos</i> , 1990	Fort Hays, Kansas, Badlands Park, USA	25% increase
<i>Thelma and Louise</i> , 1991	Arches National Monument, Utah, USA	19.1% increase
<i>To The Manor Born</i> , 1991	Cricket St Thomas, UK	37% increase
<i>Dances With Wolves</i> , 1991	Fort Hays, Kansas, Badlands Park, USA	25% increase
<i>The Last of the Mohicans</i> , 1992	Chimney Rock Park, North Carolina, USA	25% increase
<i>JFK</i> , 1992	Book Depository, Texas, USA	45% increase
<i>Last of the Mohicans</i> , 1992	Chimney Rock Park, North Carolina, USA	25% increase
<i>Forrest Gump</i> , 1994	Savannah, Georgia	7% increase in tourism
<i>Four Weddings and a Funeral</i> , 1994	The Crown Hotel, Amersham, England	Fully booked for at least 3 years
<i>Little Women</i> , 1994	Orchard House, USA	65% increase
<i>Saving Private Ryan</i> , 1998	Normandy, France	40% increase in American tourists
<i>Notting Hill</i> , 1999	Kenwood House, England	10% increase in 1 month
<i>The Beach</i> , 2000	Thailand	22% increase in youth market
<i>Mission: Impossible-2</i> , 2000	National parks in Sydney	200% increase
<i>Captain Corelli's</i> , 2001	Cephalonia, Greece	50% increase over 3 years
<i>The Lord of The Rings</i> , 2001-2004	New Zealand	40% surge
<i>Troy</i> , 2004	Turkey	73% increase to Canakkale
<i>Miami Vice</i> , 2006	Miami	150% increase in German visitors
<i>Harry Potter</i> , 2001-2007	Various locations in U.K.	50% increase in tourism to all filming locations (in some cities/towns as much as 200%)
<i>Sense and Sensibility</i> , 2008	Lyme Park in Cheshire, U.K.	150% increase in visitors
<i>Game of Thrones</i> , 2011-2015	Dubrovnik	37.9% increase
<i>Frozen</i> , 2013 & 2019	Norway	57% increase in tourism
<i>Stranger Things</i> , 2014	Hawkins (mysterious locations)	73% increase
<i>Black Panther</i> , 2018	Wakkanai in Japan (city), Wakanda in Fiji (theme park)	More than 25%
<i>Nomanland</i> , 2019	Wall Drug Store	92% increase
<i>The Crown Effect</i> , 2016-2022	Burghley House, Lincolnshire	Chinese (44%) and in the US (26%)
<i>All Creatures Great and Small</i> , 2020	Yorkshire Dales	Generated 5 million pounds for Yorkshire Dales

Source: Ferreiro (2021); O'Connor (2010); Riley et al. (1998); Own elaboration

According to Azcue (2021), American studies accounts for highest articles examined in film-induced tourism i.e. 33.3% of all, where 23.3% have been undertaken in Europe. Oceania accounts for 7.8 percent of all publications. Research on significant factors in film tourism highlights elements such as setting prominence, narrative engagement, audience reach, destination image, marketing, and destination representation, all of which play a crucial role in linking films to tourism (Nieto-Ferrando et al., 2024; Wu & Lai, 2023; Najjarzadeh et al., 2022; Ananda et al., 2021). As shown in Figure 1.1, the majority of studies have focused on film destinations (21.2%), marketing (16.9%), film-induced tourism effects (16.1%), and destination image (14.4%).

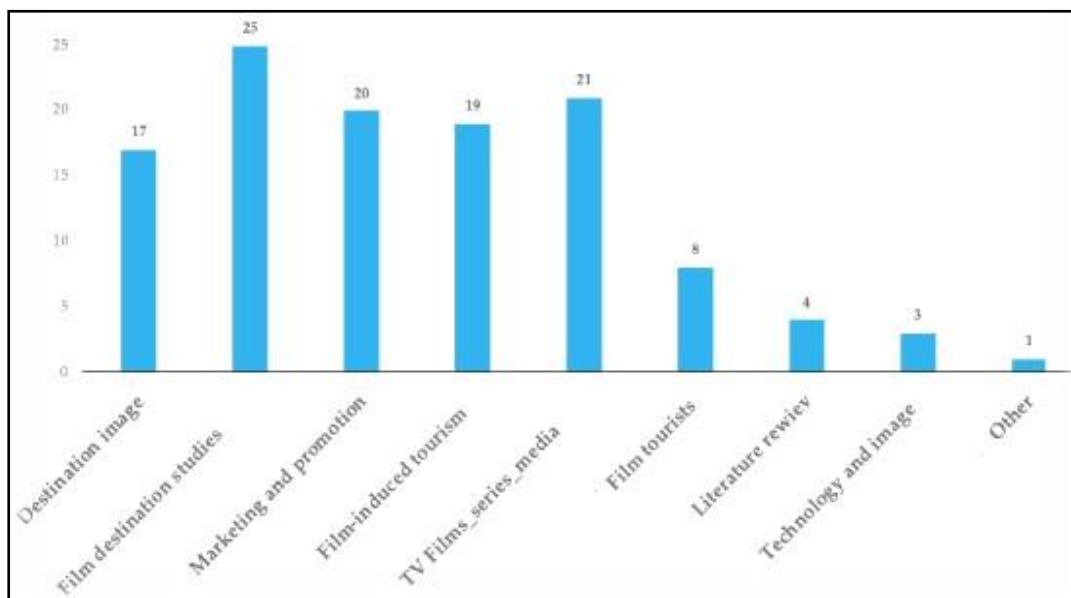


Figure 1.1: Studies on film tourism destinations (Source: Azcue, 2021; Wu & Lai, 2023)

The rapid expansion of film tourism and places specialized in film tourism has paralleled the development of marketing strategies and destination images (Wu & Lai, 2023). This industry is highly dynamic and subject to changes in trends, expectations, and support systems, all of which significantly impact destination management. Regular assessments are crucial to understand the intricate relationships between destinations, the images they portray, and the multimedia

industry (Azcue et al., 2021; Wu & Lai, 2023; Nieto-Ferrando et al., 2024). Understanding the current state of the art in film tourism is essential to developing an in-depth understanding of this very dynamic academic topic. By aligning cinematic narratives with destination branding, this study aims to address critical gaps in understanding how film-induced tourism influences behavioral intentions to visit. Insights from this research will provide practical guidance for destination managers seeking to harness the power of films to attract tourists and foster sustainable tourism development.

India, renowned for its diverse landscapes, holds immense potential in the tourism sector. It stands as the third-largest contributor to foreign exchange in the country, employing around 12.38% of the nation's workforce. The Indian film industry, globally significant, captivates audiences with its vast array of productions. As per a report by EY and PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2019), film tourism in India is predicted to yield USD 3 billion by 2023, potentially drawing around 1 million film tourists to explore various regions. Despite gaining attention, academic literature on film-induced tourism in India remains relatively sparse compared to countries like the United States, New Zealand, and Spain, indicating a promising opportunity for researchers to delve deeper into this field and enrich the existing understanding of film-induced tourism in the Indian context (Zompa, 2020).

1.1.2 Overview of the Film Induced Tourism in India

The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) projects that by 2025, India would have 15.3 million foreign tourist visits, making it one of the Mega-Opportunities for destinations in the Twenty-First Century. Between 2016 and 2026, tourism's contribution to capital investment is predicted to grow at a pace of 6.3 percent per year, above the worldwide average of 4.5 percent. Film tourism has the potential to generate an estimated \$3 billion and attract 1 million global and local visitors by

2023. All of this is possible if the film tourism sector is prioritized in terms of marketing and facilitation (Zompa, 2020).

India is expected to raise five positions by 2030 to become one of the world's top five business travel markets. The Indian film industry is anticipated to expand significantly with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.9 percent, culminating in an estimated worth of INR 206.6 billion by 2023, as reported by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in its 2023 Frames report (Figure 1.2). Earlier, the film industry generated Rs 16,600 crore (US\$ 2.5 billion) and expanded at a CAGR of more than 10% over the last several years. Despite these limitations, India has the world's biggest film production sector. Every year, India produces between 1,500 and 2,000 films in over 20 languages (FICCI, 2023). The film tourism sector has been valued worldwide at USD 66.7 billion in 2022 and is expected to grow to USD 128.78 billion in 2032 (FMI, 2022). This growth has had a positive impact on India's tourism industry in recent years.

The Bollywood film industry is a major economic force in India, contributing 43% of the total revenue from the country's film sector (Hong, 2021). Since the early 20th century, Bollywood has significantly influenced cultural perceptions and travel behaviors (Jana & Goswami, 2024). Through its rich storytelling, vibrant visuals, and emotional appeal, Bollywood has shaped how viewers perceive destinations and cultures, often inspiring travel to the locations featured in films. With an expanding global audience, Bollywood transcends geographical boundaries, captivating millions of viewers worldwide (Suryawanshi & Ragde, 2024; Norhidayah & Ahmad, 2024). This widespread reach makes Bollywood a powerful tool in tourism marketing, as films can serve as a catalyst for tourism by creating a connection between audiences and the destinations showcased on screen (Suryawanshi & Ragde, 2024). India provides a wide array of landscapes and sites in its different States and Union

Territories, making it an attractive choice for both international and domestic film production. Indian cinema has an influence on Indian tourism, both directly and indirectly (Croy et al., 2021; Jana & Goswami, 2024). This is because people in India are becoming more interested in theatres and celebrities (Hong, 2021; Jana & Goswami, 2024).

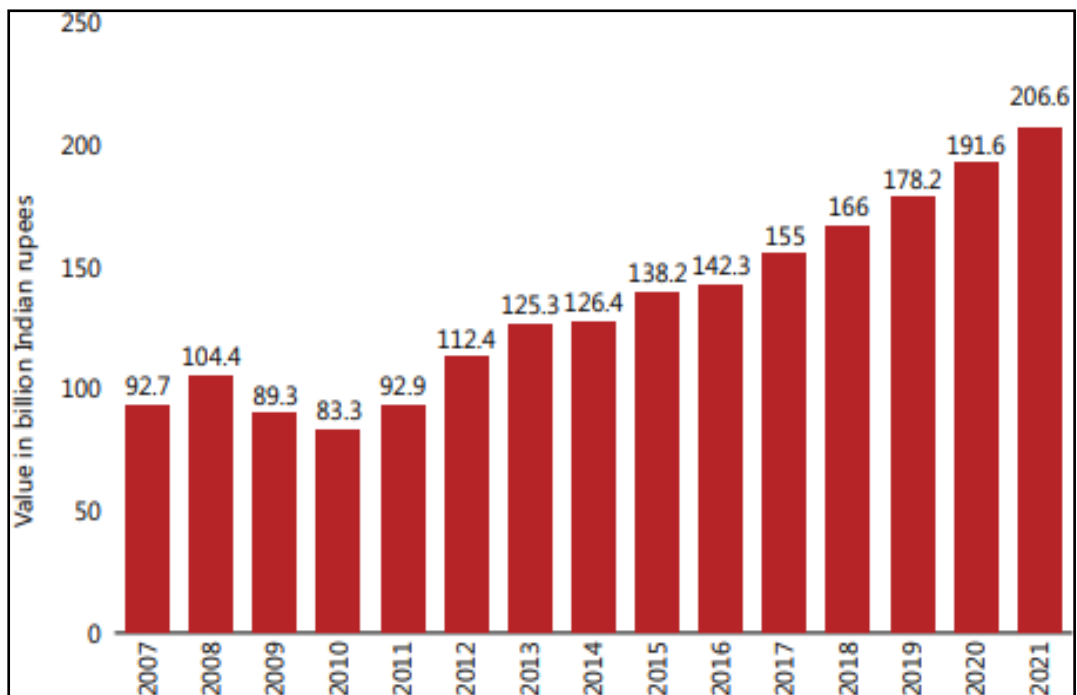


Figure 1.2: FICCI frames report (Source: ficci, 2023)

According to recent studies (Pattanayak et al., 2025; Norhidayah & Ahmad, 2024; Lavaredas, 2023; Bandam & Kumar, 2021; Nakayama, 2021), the government in India has recognized the considerable impact of movies on travel destination selection worldwide and has therefore been actively revising their tourist strategies to promote film tourism. The ministry of information & broadcasting and the ministry of tourism are providing significant support to boost the "Incredible India" campaign. The popularity of movies can therefore serve as a tool to promote hidden tourist destinations and bring them into the limelight. Film-induced tourism thus holds immense potential for shaping behavioral intentions, attracting domestic and

international tourists, and contributing to India's socio-economic development. With the right policies and marketing efforts, India stands to capitalize on its cinematic legacy to establish itself as a global hub for film tourism.

1.1.3 Problem Statement

There is a significant lack of research on film-induced tourism in non-Western regions, as most studies predominantly focus on Western countries, often overlooking regions such as Asia and Africa (Zompa, 2020). The growing influence of films on travel motivations and destination perceptions, fueled by global film industries and digital platforms, highlights the need for study. Despite the rise of film-induced tourism, key psychological and behavioral mechanisms, as well as the role of media exposure, remain underexplored. Understanding these factors is crucial for effective destination marketing and sustainable tourism development. While some studies have examined the effects of film-induced tourism, Indian films hold immense potential for promoting both domestic and international tourism. However, there is a noticeable gap in the literature specifically addressing film-induced tourism in the Indian context (Zompa, 2020; Omar & Tiwari, 2021).

Bandyopadhyay (2008) investigated the nostalgia Indian emigrants experience when watching Bollywood movies. Singh and Azeez's (2021) study examined the influence of film-induced tourism on motivation, focusing on the characteristics of Indian Diasporas residing abroad and their inclination to visit India for tourism experiences. Josiam et al. (2015) explored the impact of Bollywood movies on the perception of destination image, tourist activities, and purchasing behaviours among Indian Viewers travelling to foreign destinations. Various case studies have underscored the significance of film-induced tourism within India (Angmo & Dolma, 2013; Mitta & Anjaneyaswamy, 2013; Kumar, 2022). However, while Bollywood has effectively driven tourism to certain locations, it has also raised critical yet

underexplored challenges related to over-tourism, environmental degradation, safety concerns, and uneven tourism distribution.

A key issue associated with film-induced tourism is over-tourism and carrying capacity, where excessive tourist influx leads to overcrowding, resource depletion, and infrastructural strain (Kaur et al., 2025; Sehgal, 2016). The Taj Mahal, a prime example, has seen a surge in visitors due to its romanticized portrayal in films like *Mughal-e-Azam* and *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (Bhattacharjee, 2023). The monument's iconic white marble is deteriorating due to pollution and the sheer volume of visitors, prompting the government to impose entry restrictions and conservation measures (Kaur, 2022). Similar challenges are evident in places like Rohtang Pass and Manali, which frequently appear in Bollywood films (*Jab We Met*, *Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani*). These destinations face road congestion, adventure sports accidents, and increased environmental stress from uncontrolled tourism (Jana & Goswami, 2024; Oberoi & Thakur, 2004).

Another significant concern is tourist safety and security in film-promoted destinations. Goa, a popular setting for Bollywood films (*Dil Chahta Hai*, *Dear Zindagi*), has experienced rising crime rates, including harassment, drug-related incidents, and risks to solo travelers, particularly women (Bhardwaj, 2023; Rishi, 2012). The region's nightlife culture and unrestricted tourism have posed law enforcement challenges, raising concerns about responsible tourism management.

Additionally, tourist attitudes and emotional attachment to film locations contribute to environmental degradation (Liu et al., 2024). Leh-Ladakh, made famous by movie *3-Idiots*, has witnessed a dramatic rise in visitors (Pellicciardi, 2021). However, many tourists engage in irresponsible behaviors, such as littering, disturbing fragile ecosystems, and ignoring conservation guidelines (Thakur & Singh, 2018). The waste management crisis in such regions, exacerbated by

discarded plastic and non-biodegradable waste, not only affects the local environment but also threatens indigenous communities dependent on natural resources. Furthermore, Bollywood's selective portrayal of destinations has led to unequal tourism distribution. While locations such as Udaipur, Jaipur, and Kashmir frequently appear in films and attract overwhelming crowds, culturally rich yet underrepresented regions like Meghalaya, Chhattisgarh, and Northeast India remain largely ignored. This imbalance results in commercialization, cultural erosion, and resource strain in over-promoted locations while other potential tourism hubs struggle for visibility and economic growth. Such biased representation perpetuates a cycle where only a handful of locations benefit from film-induced tourism, leaving many ecologically and culturally significant sites unexplored.

Despite these challenges, there is a lack of research on how tourism boards, marketers, and the film industry can collaborate to balance destination promotion with sustainability efforts. Addressing these concerns is crucial to ensuring that film-induced tourism benefits not only the tourism industry but also local communities and environmental conservation. Future research should focus on developing sustainable strategies to mitigate the negative effects of over-tourism while fostering responsible travel behaviors among tourists (Srisangkaew, 2024; Pandey et al., 2024; Hoang, 2024).

Although academic discussions and conceptual analyses exist, the academic literature lacks a substantial focus on empirical studies that rigorously examine the impact of film-induced tourism, specifically within India. Empirical studies involve direct observations, experiments, or data-driven research that offers evidence-based insights into this phenomenon. Therefore, there is a pressing need for robust empirical research in this domain to comprehensively understand the dynamics, motivations, and ramifications of film-induced tourism in the Indian context.

While India's annual production of hundreds or thousands of films, the impact of film-induced tourism experiences on attracting visitors to Indian destinations remains notably low (Clini & Valančiūnas, 2023). The inadequacy of these films in promoting tourism and enticing travellers can be attributed to the absence of high-quality experiences within them. These experiences, as noted by Singh and Azeez (2021), lack immersive and authentic representations of destinations, hindering their potential to captivate and inspire Viewers to visit showcased locations. The substandard quality of film-induced tourism experiences in India stems from various factors. These encompass inadequate collaboration and coordination between the film industry and the tourism sector, insufficient research and planning to synchronize films with destination marketing objectives, and a general lack of awareness regarding the potential influence of movies on travel decisions.

To address this problem, it is crucial to develop strategic initiatives that enhance the quality of film-induced tourism experiences. For instance, analyzing how a Bollywood film showcasing a picturesque locale affects tourist influx or examining the relationship between well-promoted regional films and increased interest in specific areas offers actionable insights. Such insights empower marketing practitioners to craft informed promotional strategies that significantly influence Viewers' intentions to visit featured locations. By bridging the gap between film production quantity and tourism experience quality, India can leverage its film industry as a potent tool for promoting tourism, elevating visitor numbers, and positively impacting the tourism economy.

Another notable problem is the lack of studies addressing the domestic tourist market, encompassing individuals who travel within their own countries for vacation. In many developing nations, domestic tourists constitute a significant portion of the overall tourist market (Li, 2004). Existing research has predominantly centred on

international tourists or the broad influence of movies on tourism, neglecting to examine the specific behaviours and motivations of domestic tourists. From a theoretical standpoint, comprehending the subtleties of domestic tourists' attitudes and behavioural intentions is crucial. Domestic tourists exhibit different attitudes and behaviours in selecting tourist destinations than do international tourists (Krakover, 2015). Thus, studying domestic tourist behaviour is vital for comprehending the economic, environmental, social, and cultural impacts of tourism in a country, as well as for creating effective strategies and policies to promote sustainable tourism development. Based on the available film-induced tourism literature, there is limited empirical study on domestic tourists in India. By focusing on this overlooked area, this research contributes to the understanding of Indian film-induced tourism and provides valuable insights into sustainable tourism development and promotion. This research will add to the literature on Indian film-induced tourism.

The problem identified in the film-induced tourism context is the variation in films' impact on destination image and tourist behaviour. This problem prompted destination marketing practitioners and organisations to better understand how film tourism can be utilized as an effective tool to improve a place's image and attract visitors. In situations where there is a lack of preparation, specifically regarding the management and coordination of film tourism activities, adverse effects of film tourism can emerge (Gao et al., 2019; Nagar, 2019). The way movies depict destinations, their people, customs, or overall ambiance can significantly shape Viewers' perceptions and subsequently influence their travel decisions (Thelen et al., 2020; Hong, 2021).

Scholars such as Wu and Lai (2023), Oshriyeh and Capriello (2022), Kumar (2022), Omar and Tiwari (2021), and Hong (2021) argue that there is a need for greater attention to research to understand how watching films affects the images

people have of destinations. With the continued growth of movie-induced tourism and the increasing participation in leisure activities, it is expected that more people will be exposed to films that depict various destinations globally (Hong, 2021). Hence, it is important for tourism agencies to recognize the potential benefits of positive destination images portrayed in films (Kumar, 2022; Hong, 2021).

The field of movie-induced tourism still has many unexplored areas and topics for research (Kumar, 2022; Wu & Lai, 2023; Oshriyeh & Capriello, 2022). To address these gaps in knowledge, this research aims to explore the concept of second orders construct “Destination fascination” and its influence on viewers’ behavioural intentions to visit destinations featured in Indian Bollywood films. In tourism research and practice, behavioural intention to visit is a crucial concept since it can predict an individuals’ likelihood of visiting a specific destination. As it is difficult and expensive to track actual travel behaviour, behavioural intention to visit is often used as a substitute measure (Pandža, 2015; Bi et al., 2022; Chi & Phuong, 2022).

Through assessing behavioural intention to visit, researchers, destination managers and marketers can gain insights into the factors that motivate or discourage people from visiting a particular destination (Lam & Hsu, 2006; Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). Therefore, by examining how destination fascination, influenced by the portrayal of destinations in Bollywood films, affects viewers’ behavioural intentions to visit those destinations, the study aims to contribute to the understanding of film- induced tourism and provide insights for destination marketing organisations to effectively utilize films as a tool for attracting tourists and improving destination images.

Studies suggested the applicability and feasibility of destination fascination in both natural and urban destinations. Since there are still limited studies conducted on destination fascination (Liu et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2020; Lee, 2023), in prior film

induced tourism research, the aspects of destination fascination construct have not been investigated. Previously there has been a single study (Pessoa et al., 2022) conducted to analyze the link between destination fascination and intention to visit in natural environment, whereas there were lack of research available in the context of movie induced tourism. The present study tries to make up for this gap by experimentally studying the effect of destination fascination factor in film induced tourism.

The significance and relevance of investigating destination fascination have been emphasized in earlier research studies (Lehto, 2013; Kirillova & Lehto, 2016; Liu et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2020; Lee, 2023). Previous studies have suggested that fascination within a restorative environment is a singular experience characterized by components like being away, extent, and compatibility (Laumann et al., 2001; Lehto, 2013). Historically, measuring fascination has been a complex task, particularly within the scope of travel and tourism research (Lee, 2023). However, Liu et al. (2017) introduced the concept of destination fascination, merging the terms destination and fascination.

Liu (2017) proposed the destination fascination as a second-order multidimensional construct. This provided researchers and practitioners with a more comprehensive framework to understand the underlying dimensions of fascination in the context of destinations (Lee, 2023). Researchers can now use quantitative methods to measure and analyze the various dimensions of fascination that contribute to a travellers' overall perception of a destination (Lee, 2023). This means that destination fascination is a broader and more complex concept than fascination and should be viewed as an important construct in research (Lee, 2023; Wang et al., 2020). The study aims to examine how destination fascination, as a broader and more complex concept than fascination, can be utilized in the context of film-induced

tourism to attract visitors to a particular destination. By understanding the relationship of destination fascination with dominant factors of the film induced tourism, this research will assist tourism agencies to recognize how to get the potential benefits of tourist destination portrayed in films.

The tourism industry has long recognized the importance of various psychological constructs, such as destination attachment, attitude, and preference, as significant variables influencing tourist behavior intention and decision-making (Kim et al., 2019; Michopoulou et al., 2022; Bakiewicz et al., 2022; Jiang & Yu, 2019; Metcalf et al., 2018; Quintal & Phau, 2015; Chen, 2018). These constructs play a pivotal role in shaping how tourists perceive and interact with destinations. For organizations, ineffective strategies in leveraging film-induced tourism could lead to missed economic opportunities for tourism boards and businesses. However, despite their recognized importance, there remains a notable gap in the literature regarding the interrelations among these variables, particularly in relation to destination fascination, a concept that has garnered increasing attention in tourism research. Notably, the only study directly addressing the connections between destination attachment, fascination, and loyalty is that of Wang et al. (2020), which highlights the role of destination attachment as a mediating factor between destination fascination and loyalty.

The lack of research exploring the intricate relationships between destination attachment, attitude, preference, destination fascination, and behavior intention to visit presents an opportunity for further investigation. Understanding these constructs in greater depth is crucial, as they can significantly enhance our comprehension of the connection between destination fascination and the intention to visit, particularly within the context of film-induced tourism. Film-induced tourism is a unique sector where the portrayal of destinations in movies has a profound influence on viewers'

perceptions and behaviors. Specifically, the way a location is depicted through its psychological and visual representation can have substantial impacts on tourists' preferences, attitudes, and ultimately, their travel behavior intentions (Bakiewicz et al., 2022; Jiang & Yu, 2019; Hudson et al., 2011).

Previous studies in movie tourism have established that destination attachment can boost tourists' intention to visit (Kim et al., 2019; Michopoulou et al., 2022). The emotional and psychological bond that a tourist forms with a destination, often influenced by its portrayal in films, has been shown to foster stronger intentions to visit. Moreover, media portrayals, especially in the context of movies, are powerful tools that shape viewers' attitudes toward a destination. These portrayals can influence a wide range of travel preferences, from destination selection to the willingness to visit, demonstrating that film representations have tangible effects on tourism outcomes (Metcalf et al., 2018; Quintal & Phau, 2015).

In this context, it is crucial to examine the mediating effects of key constructs such as destination attachment, attitude, and preference on the relationship between destination fascination and the intention to visit. These mediators collectively provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how cognitive, emotional, and behavioral factors interact to influence destination fascination and shape behavioral intentions to visit.

The cognitive mediator reflects the mental processes through which individuals perceive and interpret a destination. This is measured through variables such as destination knowledge and preferences, which guide tourists' evaluations of a location (Qiu et al., 2022). The affective mediator, on the other hand, captures emotional responses to a destination, such as feelings of excitement or nostalgia, often assessed through constructs like emotional attachment (Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2017; Tu et al., 2020). Lastly, the conative mediator emphasizes the behavioral

dimension, focusing on individuals' intention to visit a destination. This is often measured through attitudes toward the destination, which reflect a predisposition to act in a certain way based on prior knowledge and emotional experiences (Kim & Stepchenkova, 2015).

Understanding how these mediators interact and influence the relationship between destination fascination and travel intentions provides valuable insights into the psychological mechanisms driving tourist behavior. For example, while destination fascination may have a direct impact on the intention to visit, constructs such as destination attachment can act as amplifiers, enhancing or modifying the strength of this relationship. Similarly, attitudes and preferences may determine how tourists interpret destination fascination, shaping their overall decision-making process.

By exploring the mediating effects of destination attachment, attitude, and preference in the context of destination fascination, researchers can gain a nuanced understanding of the mechanisms driving the intention to visit film-induced destinations. This knowledge has practical implications for the tourism industry, particularly in the design of marketing strategies. For instance, campaigns can leverage the emotional and psychological connections formed through cinematic portrayals of destinations, creating more engaging and impactful promotional content. Ultimately, such insights can help industry stakeholders capitalize on the unique allure of film-induced destinations to attract and retain tourists.

Therefore this research aims to investigate the correlation between the independent variable (IV) and the dependent variable (DV) by incorporating destination attachment, destination preference, and viewers' attitude as mediating factors. Through a representative sample from India, this study contributes fresh insights into destination fascination within film-induced tourism. The increasing

influence of Indian population towards film induced tourism, theoretical gaps, and the lack of literature that specifically focused on understanding Indian peoples' behaviour have motivated the researcher to analyze and examines the multipath effects of destination fascination on behavioural intention to visit.

1.1.4 Research Questions

The study aims to address following research questions derived from the previously outlined issues. These research questions are tailored to resolve the identified problem effectively.

1. To what extent does destination preference mediate the relationship between destination fascination and the behavioral intention to visit?
2. How does destination attachment mediate the relationship between destination fascination and the behavioral intention to visit?
3. To what degree does viewers' attitude mediate the relationship between destination fascination and the behavioral intention to visit?
4. What is the impact of destination fascination on the audience's behavioral intention to visit the depicted destination in movies?
5. How does watching a movie influence the behavioral intention of domestic audiences to visit local destinations portrayed in the movie?

1.1.5 Research Objectives

The primary aim of this research is to develop an inclusive model that can function as an exemplary framework for incorporating film-induced tourism into a destination marketing strategy (DMS). Creating such a framework is crucial for evaluating the substantial impact that film-induced tourism can have on the growth of a destination (Wu & Lai, 2023; Oshriyeh & Capriello, 2022; Tian et al., 2021). This research aims to bridge a gap in the existing literature by investigating the impact of movies entertainment on viewers' inclination to visit the portrayed

locations. Moreover, the study specifically targets areas that have received inadequate attention or remain unexplored within the literature. Based on these considerations, the research objectives are outlined as follows.

1. To measure the mediating effect of destination preference on the relationship between destination fascination and behavioral intention to visit.
2. To assess the mediating role of destination attachment between destination fascination and behavioral intention to visit.
3. To evaluate how viewers' attitudes mediate the relationship between destination fascination and the behavioral intention to visit.
4. To examine the effect of destination fascination on the behavioral intention to visit the portrayed destination in movies.
5. To investigate the influence of watching a movie on domestic audiences' behavioral intention to visit local destinations.

1.1.6 Scope of the study

The scope of this study centers on the exploration of how films influence tourist behavior and destination choices within the Indian context, with a strong emphasis on domestic tourists and the role of Bollywood films. By delving into the concept of "destination fascination," the research examines how the portrayal of destinations in films sparks interest, shapes preferences, fosters emotional connections, and ultimately influences tourists' attitudes and intentions to visit. These aspects are critical for understanding the psychological and behavioral mechanisms that drive film-induced tourism in India.

Key filming locations, such as Himachal Pradesh, featured in films like *Brahmāstra*, are analyzed to assess their localized economic and cultural impacts. These locations serve as case studies for understanding how cinematic representations can transform ordinary places into iconic tourism hubs, driving

footfall, enhancing the local economy, and influencing cultural identity. This geographical focus allows the study to offer practical insights into the tangible effects of film-induced tourism on regional development.

The research adopts an interdisciplinary approach by integrating theories and methodologies from tourism studies, marketing research, and media analysis. This comprehensive perspective ensures that the study not only highlights the interplay between film and tourism but also provides actionable recommendations for stakeholders. These stakeholders include destination marketers, who can leverage the findings to create targeted promotional strategies; policymakers, who can develop supportive frameworks to encourage film tourism; and filmmakers, who can collaborate in showcasing destinations in ways that resonate with audiences.

A key objective of the study is to address the existing gap in research on film-induced tourism by focusing on domestic tourists a segment that has been largely overlooked despite its significant contribution to India's tourism industry. The study delves into constructs such as destination attachment, preference, and attitude, investigating their mediating role in the relationship between cinematic exposure and tourists' behavioral intentions. By explicitly detailing the population and unit of analysis individual viewers, the research gains a sharper focus, allowing for a granular understanding of how these constructs influence tourist behavior. The study also explores the historical and theoretical underpinnings of film-induced tourism to provide a comprehensive framework for understanding its evolution and relevance in a globalized, media-driven world. Through this lens, the research evaluates the potential of film-induced tourism as a tool for sustainable growth, addressing how it can be harnessed to boost destination image, attract diverse tourist demographics, and promote long-term economic and cultural benefits.

Furthermore, the research emphasizes the importance of collecting credible data on both the supply and demand sides of the tourism sector. Such data is crucial for guiding effective branding strategies that align with the interests of both tourists and stakeholders. By offering a systematic analysis of the dynamics between the film industry and tourism, the study highlights the potential to foster a robust synergy between these sectors. Ultimately, the findings aim to enhance India's film-tourism integration, providing a pathway for sustainable economic growth, cultural preservation, and enhanced tourist experiences. By leveraging the emotional and visual appeal of films, India can create unique tourism narratives that not only captivate audiences but also contribute meaningfully to the development of its tourism and cultural sectors.

1.1.7 Significance of the Study

This research intends to add to the existing body of literature by considering untouched domains and incorporating such characteristics into the present study. Despite prior research that looked at increasing tourist numbers and the effects of movies, this research establishes the role of movies in forming and influencing an individual's destination image and desire in visiting from a more theoretical approach. This research empirically examined how a movie scene is influencing viewers' travel choices. It is also observing the associations between audience demographics, tourist destinations, and behavioural intentions. Ultimately, this research is shedding light on the significant influence that movies exert on destination image and tourism. Additionally, it is exploring destination-oriented movies that may function as tourist attractors for the government, organisations, agencies, and all sectors involved in tourism. This exploration is offering the government and tourism organisations an opportunity to consider supporting filming in their area to reach more prospective visitors and promote tourism in the region.

1.1.7(a) Theoretical Contribution

This research makes several significant theoretical contributions to the field of tourism, particularly in the context of film-induced tourism, by providing a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between destination fascination and visit intention. First, the study enhances our understanding of the multipath relationship between destination fascination and visit intention by identifying intermediate variables destination attachment, attitude, and preference that have not been previously discussed in the literature. The originality of this study lies in demonstrating the full mediating roles of these variables, providing new insights into the mechanisms that link destination fascination to visit intention. The findings contribute to the knowledge of destination fascination within tourism and movie-induced tourism, extending previous research by Wong et al. (2015), Wang et al. (2020), and Tian et al. (2021). Moreover, by examining these variables through the lens of environmental psychology, the study expands our understanding of people's relationships with places, building on the work of Gifford (2014), Lewicka (2011), Scannell and Gifford (2017), and Wang et al. (2020). This nuanced approach not only enriches the tourism industry's conceptualization of destination fascination but also deepens insights into environmental psychology.

Secondly, the research integrates two prominent psychological theories Attention Restoration Theory (ART) and Kaplan and Kaplan's Reasonable Person Model (RPM) to build a theoretical framework for understanding how destination preference, attachment, and attitude act as mediators in the relationship between destination fascination and visit intention. The integration of ART with RPM provides a unique theoretical lens that links cognitive and emotional responses (such as fascination and attachment) with behavioral intentions. By proposing this integration, the study not only enhances our understanding of how these theories can

complement one another but also illustrates how they can be applied in the context of tourism. The study also evaluates the effectiveness of RPM in explaining the meaningful connection between individuals' experiences with fascinating destinations and their subsequent behavioral intentions, highlighting the importance of both intrinsic (emotional attachment) and extrinsic (destination attributes) aspects in driving intentions to visit. This comprehensive framework enriches both ART and RPM, contributing to their application in the tourism sector (Wang et al., 2020).

The third theoretical contribution of this study is its application of ART to explain how natural and fascinating characteristics of a destination can lead to restorative experiences that shape tourists' preferences. ART posits that environments with restorative qualities provide psychological benefits, such as relaxation and mental restoration. In the context of tourism, destinations that exhibit fascinating features can create a preference among visitors, which influences their intention to visit. The study further extends ART by recognizing that individual preferences and past experiences play a crucial role in shaping this process. By examining destination preference as a mediator, the study expands the theoretical discussion on place relationships within environmental psychology and tourism research. This broadens the understanding of the antecedents of tourists' destination preferences and highlights the psychological factors that influence tourists' choices (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Korpela et al., 2001).

Fourth, this research incorporates attachment theory to explore the interaction between place attachment and visitors' characteristics, such as their emotional and cognitive engagement with a destination (destination fascination). The theoretical model suggests that place attachment, an emotional bond formed through repeated interaction with a destination, strengthens the influence of destination fascination on visit intention. The study emphasizes how tourists with a deep emotional connection