

**An Exploratory Research on Perceived Destination  
Attractiveness from Viewing Korean Film of Thai Private  
University Students: A Case Study of Bangkok University**  
การวิจัยเพื่อสำรวจการรับรู้ด้านความดึงดูดใจของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวจากการ  
ชมภาพยนตร์เกาหลีของนักศึกษามหาวิทยาลัยเอกชนไทย:  
กรณีศึกษามหาวิทยาลัยกรุงเทพ

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**Abstract**

Korean wave phenomenon is an emerging area in film tourism research since it is an important driver of tourism demand to Korea. Past research found that Korean films had been very popular among Thai young viewers and suggested that films were powerful strategies to portray appeals of destinations, to reinforce destination image and to increase number of tourists to the destination. This study aimed to explore the dimensions of perceived destination attractiveness from viewing Korean film among Thai young viewers. This exploratory study employed in-depth interviews with Bangkok University students. The results showed that Korean film elements such as celebrities, plot, locations and songs created positive destination attractiveness, and destination preference. The study proposed a conceptual model, contributions of the study and future research avenues.

**Keywords:** *Film Tourism, Korean Film, Destination Attractiveness, Thai Youth*

**บทคัดย่อ**

ปรากฏการณ์กระแสคลื่นเกาหลีเริ่มเป็นหัวข้อวิจัยด้านการท่องเที่ยวเชิงภาพยนตร์ เนื่องจากเป็นแรงขับเคลื่อนที่สำคัญในการดึงดูดนักท่องเที่ยวไปยังประเทศเกาหลี งานวิจัยในอดีตพบว่าภาพยนตร์เกาหลีได้รับความนิยมอย่างมากในกลุ่มเยาวชนไทยและได้ระบุว่าภาพยนตร์เป็นกลยุทธ์ที่มีอิทธิพลในการนำเสนอเสน่ห์ของแหล่งท่องเที่ยว ตอกย้ำภาพลักษณ์ของสถานที่ และเพิ่มจำนวนนักท่องเที่ยวให้แก่แหล่งท่องเที่ยวได้ งานวิจัยนี้จึงมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อสำรวจมิติการรับรู้ด้านความดึงดูดใจของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวจากการชมภาพยนตร์เกาหลีในกลุ่มเยาวชนไทยดำเนินงานวิจัยโดยใช้การสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกกับนักศึกษามหาวิทยาลัยกรุงเทพผลการวิจัยแสดงให้เห็นว่าองค์ประกอบของภาพยนตร์เกาหลี เช่น นักแสดง เนื้อเรื่อง สถานที่ถ่ายทำ และเพลงประกอบ ทำให้เกิดความดึงดูดใจของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวในเชิงบวกและความชื่นชอบในแหล่งท่องเที่ยว งานวิจัยนี้ได้นำเสนอกรอบแนวคิดประโยชน์ของการวิจัย และแนวทางสำหรับการวิจัยในอนาคต

**คำสำคัญ:** *การท่องเที่ยวเชิงภาพยนตร์ ภาพยนตร์เกาหลี ความดึงดูดใจของแหล่งท่องเที่ยว เยาวชนไทย*

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## Introduction

In this century, watching film has been one of the most popular forms of leisure activities that provide a temporary relief from realities (Carl, Kindon, & Smith, 2007) we are facing in our everyday life. Film can be conveniently and pervasively viewed from many different channels such as internet, CD or television. Through film, various representations of places and destinations are consumed by worldwide audience (Kim & O'Connor, 2011). To date, there has been an increasing interest that tourists visit places which have been featured on films. This phenomenon is called film-induced tourism or movie-induced tourism or film tourism (Beeton, 2005). Past studies (Iwashita, 2006; Su, Huang, Brodowsky, & Kim, 2011) showed that film could help increasing the number of tourists to the filmed destinations. Examples of successful film destinations are from the leading countries such as UK, USA, New Zealand, Australia and Korea. For example, New Zealand is very well known from the film called 'Lord of the Rings' while Korea is famous for the film called 'Daejangguem'.

Hallyu or Korean wave became the phenomenon in early of the 2000s (Korean Tourism Organization, 2017). An increasing popularity of Korean culture including films, television series and pop songs has been very well received by countries like Japan, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand and many Asian countries. The rise of this popular culture has been a successful cultural export for Korea and has benefited Korea in various aspects; revenues for creative industry, awareness of Korean culture, sales of Korean products, and number of tourists visiting Korea (Kim & Nam, 2016). Film tourism researchers have recently paid

attention to Asian film due to the emergence of Korean wave or Hallyu (Connell, 2012; Shim, 2006).

In recent years, Korea has created new international tourism patterns closely linked to Korean wave or Hallyu phenomenon in which more places of Hallyu-related tourism are being planned to cater Hallyu tourists (Kim & Nam, 2016). Moreover, the number of tourist activities or shops that are related to Hallyu is increasing and becoming the must-do and must-visit when tourists visit Korea (Korean Tourism Organization, 2017). Examples of new forms of tourist activities are visiting Hallyu celebrities' own restaurants and coffee shops, shopping for cosmetics as well as attending 'meet and greet' Hallyu celebrity events. This emerging pattern of tourist activities led to the research question on attractiveness of Korea and preference for Korea perceived from viewing Korean film. To date, there are various studies on the influence of viewing a particular film on the visit to specific filmed locations (e.g. Kim & Wang, 2012; Ryan, Yanning, Huimin, & Song, 2009). Although these studies provide insights to film-induced tourism, they cannot fully explain the phenomenon that Korean film has driven new tourism demands, patterns, and activities to Korea. Therefore, there is a need to call for new research designs and methodologies (Connell, 2012) such as qualitative research to explore new concepts and to provide better understanding in film tourism studies (Karpovich, 2010).

At present, the number of youth travelers or student travelers is rapidly growing and is one of the increasingly important segments in the world. According to World Tourism Organization (2016), student travelers were

accounted for 23% of all international tourists in 2015 and this particular group indeed has defined new ways of travel and new tourist activities for many tourist destinations. It is not surprising that youth travelers are the target source of many travel destinations due to the fact that young tourists are rich in time, and always look for new places to visit and new activities to do. At present, overseas trips are cheaper and more convenient than in the past years which to a certain extent benefit young travelers in particular to explore the world and to fulfill their bucket lists.

In Asia, students are easily and continuously exposed to Korean popular culture particularly Korean film. Of all Hallyu fans, the age group ranging between 20 and 30 (47%) and mostly female (90%) has the biggest share and is considered as the main target group of Korean pop culture (Korean Tourism Organization, 2013). Furthermore, Inchan (2013) found that Thai viewers aged between 15-27 years old (53%) as well as those who were studying for or holding a bachelor degree (55%) watched Korean film the most. Therefore, university students can be a group of interest to initially explore perceived destination attractiveness and destination preference since they have similar characteristics as discussed earlier.

Film tourism is a growing phenomenon. Filmed locations are increasingly popular and have become contemporary cultural tourist attractions. While there are several studies on the influence of film on tourism demand, there is still much to be learned on the impact of film on viewers' perception and behaviour (Hudson, Wang, & Gil, 2011). As this study further argues, there are needs for studies to explore further attributes to explain the

phenomenon. This research therefore aims to explore how dimensions of destination attractiveness and destination preference are perceived from viewing Korean film. This exploratory study particularly focused on Thai young viewers in their 20s since they were majorities of Hallyu fans, had potentials and resources to travel and were able to make their travel decisions. The insights could advance knowledge of film tourism and provide suggestions for government, DMOs or film companies to work together to increase the competitive advantages through film marketing strategies.

### **Literature Review**

Watching film is one of the easy and popular ways to enjoy leisure time at anywhere and anytime. Film is regarded as a powerful tool to enhance awareness and appeals of the destination through the story that film portrays (Macionis, 2004). Film provides destinations with real or imagined meanings, identity, image and cultural representation from which viewers can experience the scenery, people, atmosphere and landscape and form attitudes towards places (Beeton, 2005).

Visiting film locations is a growing worldwide phenomenon in tourism research (Connell, 2012). Film-induced tourism is defined as tourist visits to the destination featured on television, video, or cinema screen (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006). Film is a visual language that can create the meaning of a place and establish motivation for visiting the filmed destinations (Beeton, 2005). The success of film involves various factors which lead to film-induced tourism (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006). The story line and site should be closely related and film should

present a memorable experience which links perfectly with the location (Tooke & Baker, 1996). Location and film experiences can be further enhanced in memories by associating them with the actors, events and setting (Iwashita 2006; Riley & Van Doren, 1992). Such associations can turn ordinary places into meaningful places (Schofield, 1996). Whether film and characters can significantly influence viewers' attitudes about the destination depend on character, place, viewer and the relationships between them (Su et al., 2011). Although these studies provide knowledge of the power of film elements, there is a lack of understanding on how these elements can influence or enhance perceived destination attractiveness.

Product placement is considered as an effective marketing strategy since it subtly presents and promotes product appearances through film or media without attempting to deliver persuasive messages to the viewers (Russell, 2002). Film as a form of product placement strategies can effectively present the destination attractiveness (Butler, 2011) through exposures to scenery, atmosphere, city, people, culture, ways of life and local food of the featured destination. When tourists make decision to travel, there is a well-known theory of push and pull factors to explain tourist behaviour. Tourists are driven to travel by internal motives called 'push factors' and attracted by destination attributes called 'pull factors' (Dann, 1977). Pull factors, the attractiveness of the destination perceived by tourists, enhance and reinforce the push factors and are useful to explain the actual choice of destination (Uysal & Jurowski, 1994). One of the advantages of employing film marketing strategies for tourism is that destinations can

be presented to the audience without any sell forces on viewers like any other forms of paid promotional strategies (Riley & Van Doren, 1992).

Past research supported the power of film in inducing number of tourist arrivals to worldwide filmed locations (Tooke & Baker, 1996) and suggested that there was a relationship between the emotional involvement and the actual visit experience to the film locations (Carl et al., 2007). The higher the emotional involvement, the higher the satisfaction with the film locations and certain attributes of the film are likely to attract the viewers to the destinations. Landscape, iconic features, story and characters can be important attributes to induce visits (Riley, Baker, & Van Doren, 1998). Butler (1990) suggested that films could influence travel preference of those who were exposed to the destination attributes and create favorable destination image through their representation. Ideal film locations that inspire film tourists should have extraordinary landscape qualities, unique social and cultural identities and the image that the tourist identify with and wish to explore (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006). To date, there are still limited studies examining how these film elements influence destination attractiveness and inspire intention to visit the destination.

Past studies showed that film could be a marketing tool to raise destination awareness and familiarity of the destination (Croy & Heitmann, 2011), to enhance destination image of the unknown destination to popular film destination (Frost, 2010; Karpovich, 2010) as well as to increase film tourism to the filmed destination (Balli, Balli, & Cebeci, 2013; Hao & Ryan, 2013; Ryan et al., 2009). Moreover, film can help viewers to imagine the activities that

they can do at the destination (Couldry, 2005). Thus, film can be regarded as a widely used tool to build destination attractiveness (Lee & Bai, 2016). There are several studies published in international journals investigating the effects of Korean film. Kim, Agrusa, Lee, & Chon (2007) found that Korean drama series could help forming the image of Korea. Visual and vocal effects of Korean film influenced intention to visit Korea (Rajaguru, 2014). Emotional attachment to Korean film would turn viewers into specific film tourists (Kim, 2012). Specific film tourists showed higher travel motivations associated with a particular film than the general film tourists (Rittichainuwat & Rattanaphinanchai, 2015).

Korea has gained many benefits on the values of national brand and cultural export through film in Thailand. It attracts studies on the effects of Korean film on various aspects. These studies provide insights into the understanding of the successful elements of Korean film and the impact of film on Thai society in many ways. Inchan (2013) found that most respondents liked the plot and film setting presented in Korean film. Storylines, scripts, locations, costumes, food and daily life played important roles to introduce and transfer Korean culture. Continuity and duration of watching film significantly related to culture imitation and value assimilation (Chuttsakulphairatch, 2014). The main factors inspired the viewers to visit Korea were beautiful sceneries and film settings (Barameeratanachai, 2008; Bunnag & Sabaiwan, 2016). Furthermore, film influenced South Korean brand preference which led to purchase intention of Korean products (Srisurin, 2016). Positive attitude towards film would lead

to appreciation of Korean culture and intention to visit Korea (Wongkhao, 2007).

Although there is a progress of research in Korean film tourism with Thai viewers, this research argues that there is still limited understanding on the perceived destination attractiveness and destination preference from viewing Korean film among Thai young viewers. Qualitative techniques are considered beneficial to outline the complexities of the tourist behaviour (Karpovich, 2010) and there are recent calls for qualitative studies to explore and better understand film-induced tourism research (Bolan, Boy, & Bell, 2011) particularly on the influence of viewing Korean film. Cultural issues (Kim & O'Connor, 2011) as well as demographic factors should also be taken into account in order to fully understand Korean film-induced tourism phenomenon.

### **Research Methodology**

This study applied a qualitative method since it was considered as an appropriate technique to provide constructs and their relationships as a basis for further research (Strass & Corbin, 1998) to be conducted later in a larger scale which would consume more time and resources. The findings of the qualitative study can be useful to provide future research avenues (Creswell, 1998). As mentioned, this study was exploratory by its nature intending to discover the perceived destination attractiveness and destination preference from viewing Korean film through the eyes of young viewers. The study aimed to present the conceptual model for future quantitative studies to empirically test and validate the proposed relationships.

Snowballing technique was used to recruit key informants who watched Korean film. The participants were first recruited from a few students of whom the researcher was aware that they watched Korean film. Regardless of gender, these students introduced the researcher to their friends who also watched Korean film and were interested in sharing their experiences of viewing Korean film in the interview. The key informants covered 24 respondents who were Thai nationals, were studying at Bangkok University, viewed Korean film from any sources and voluntarily participated in the study. University students were selected due to the fact that they were the target group of Korean wave, could be easily influenced by media and friends and were able to make their travel decisions. Private university students were chosen since they were from families with reasonably good financial backgrounds which provided them with possibilities to travel overseas. Studying the actual destination preference and choice should include only those who have the potentials to travel (Butler, 1990). Recruitment was complete when data from the interviews saturated. The number of key informants fell into the acceptable range which is between 20 and 30 (Creswell, 1998).

This study took full account of the ethical considerations by valuing the informed consent of the key informants. Moreover, the key informants were guaranteed that their personal details such as name, age and major of study would not be made public or used for any other purposes. Profiles of the key informants would be presented in an aggregate form. Only gender would appear on the results of the study.

This study employed an in-depth interview technique. The interviews were conducted in a friendly manner at relaxing places such as coffee shop, student lounge and garden to familiarize the respondents and to facilitate the ease of conversation on the topic. The interview employed semi-structured questions including the followings; past visits to Korea, sources of Korean film watched, types of Korean film watched, years of watching Korean film, and favorite elements of Korean film. Open-ended questions were used to explore the two key domains relating to viewing Korean film; perceived destination preference and perceived destination attractiveness. The questions were consulted with three experts to check content validity and congruency between research objectives and questions. The interviews included clarifying questions and prompts. Each interview took approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. For data analysis, the study employed thematic content analysis in which themes were observed from the data. The first ten interviews were read, reread and summarized and the rest of the interviews followed the same process and were used for verifying and refining the themes with further details. The results were presented according to the themes extracted from the findings.

## **Results**

The results of the study are presented in three main sections; profiles of key informants, perceived destination preference, and perceived destination attractiveness.

### **Profiles of Key Informants**

The key informants were comprised of Thai students in Bangkok University including

18 women and 6 men. The age of key informants ranged from 19 to 23 years old. The number of past visits to Korea ranged from 0 to 10 times. Key informants studied in different majors such as English, Tourism Management, Communication Arts, and Business Administration. Sources of Korean film watched by the key informants included television, DVD and internet. The types of Korean film watched included romantic, romantic comedy, and history related. The number of years that the key informants had been watching Korean film ranged from 2 to 7 years.

#### **Perceived Destination Preference**

The results showed that film was perceived as an effective strategy to influence destination preference. One female informant reported that 'Korean film is a much more powerful strategy to draw people to visit the country than any advertising campaigns'. Korean film, however, is one of the successful examples of film-induced tourism as mentioned by one informant that 'Korean film is a kind of creative art. All film elements blend in so well. I really want to go to Korea.'

From the study, plot appeared to be one of the strengths of Korean film that kept the viewers interested in the film as one informant mentioned 'I love the plot of Korean film. It is close to real life and fits the taste of young people. Once I start watching Korean film, I get addicted to it'. The plot of Korean film was perceived by different key informants as 'interesting', 'variety', 'unpredictable' 'sentimental' and 'romantic'. Three key informants felt 'attached to the key locations in the film because the films are so romantic'. The second factor referred to the celebrities in the film as a female informant said 'once the

audience love the film and love the actors/actresses, they want to meet them and to see the filmed places'. The third factor was the film setting. A female informant mentioned that 'scenery presented in the film was exceptionally beautiful and dreamlike'. Song was regarded as another important factor in enhancing the visual effects of film as one of the informants mentioned 'the song is so beautiful and complements the film' while another informant expressed that 'I can't understand lyrics but the vocal effects help me to understand the feelings of the characters particularly in romantic film'. Last but not least, one of the male informants reflected that 'some of filmed locations and scenery look unreal... however, I want to go and see the places even though some of my friends said that they were not as beautiful as presented in the film'.

#### **Perceived Destination Attractiveness**

The results showed that film could provide knowledge of certain attractiveness of the country. This section presented perceived destination attractiveness from viewing Korean film in four aspects; Korean food, Korean products, scenery and landscape as well as language and culture.

##### **Korean Food**

Food was perceived as one of the main elements portrayed in Korean film. Food was mentioned by one informant that 'frequently presented through almost every Korean film'. A female informant reported that 'the influence of Korean food in Thailand started with the launch of the TV series named Daejangguem'. Different key informants mentioned that Korean film presented 'a lot of Korean dishes', 'Korean way of cooking', 'ways to enjoy Korean food',

'many scenes that actors or actresses would eat out' and 'the food that looked delicious'. A female informant expressed that 'I really want to try the dish that the celebrities have in the film. I want to try authentic Korean food in Korea'. Korean film provided knowledge about Korean food when a male informant said 'Kimchi appeared in almost every meal in the film'. It also made the audience interested in Korean food as one of the female informant expressed 'I first tried Korean food because of Korean TV series and introduced friends and families to Korean restaurants....they enjoyed the food too'.

#### **Korean Products**

In this study, celebrities were perceived as the influence on purchase intention as one of the female informant said 'I like to go shopping in Korea... the products are cute... I saw the actresses used these cute stuff in film.' Two female key informants, in particular, mentioned that they would like to shop in Korea for various items they had seen in the film such as 'cosmetics', 'clothes', 'daily products'. A male informant said 'I want to visit Korea to buy mobile phones and electrical equipments presented in the film'. Through film, a female informant learned about 'the markets that the locals shop in their everyday life'. One of the female informants concluded the power of presenting Korean products through film that 'any items labeled Korean made could be easily sold... I mean it'.

#### **Scenery and Landscape**

Scenery and landscape featured in Korean film were positively perceived by key informants. One of the informants stated that 'the nature and different seasons presented in the film were very beautiful and romantic.' A female

informant said 'I want to experience the popular film sites such as Jeju island as it appears in many romantic films' while another female informant reported 'I like to visit filmed location to feel the atmosphere featured in the film and be part of a film'. A female informant concluded the power of emotional attachment with Korean film as follows:

'Once I have the emotional attachment with the films, I then love the film locations and really want to be there to feel the scenes featured in the film.'

#### **Language and Culture**

The findings showed that Korean film was perceived as a source to provide knowledge for Korean language, Korean people and Korean tradition. One of the male informants mentioned how he perceived the characteristics of Korean people through film as 'they are polite, warm and respectful to the elderly'. A female informant was interested in traditional Korean costumes and expressed that 'I want to experience Korean culture and wear Korean traditional dress, Hanbok.' while a male informant said that 'Korea has beautiful home design and decoration'. Film inspired one of the female informants to travel to Korea when said 'I love watching Korean films in Korean version with Thai subtitle... I can understand Korean words now and... I would love to go to Korea to study Korean language'.

#### **Discussion**

Tourism destinations have been traditionally presented through paid promotion such as newspapers, magazines, brochures and advertising campaigns. These incurred high cost for promoting tourism destination to the audience. The results of this study found that

film could be the effective drawing power for viewers to visit the destination (Iwashita, 2006). Viewing Korean film could increase destination attractiveness of Korea and destination preference. It appeared from the study that the important factors of Korean film that impressed Thai young viewers were plot, film setting, celebrities and songs, while Inchan (2013) found plot and film setting to be significant. The success of film depends on plot, characters and film setting that makes the film become memorable and influential in the viewers' mind (Beeton, 2005). This study suggested that plot, celebrities and film setting increased the visual effects while songs enhanced the vocal effects of film. These elements complemented one another which successfully created destination attractiveness and inspired the young viewers to visit Korea. This research provided new insights to film tourism research that the effects of song on young viewers should not be overlooked. Songs presented in the film could complement the effects of other film elements and increase the emotional attachment with the characters and places in the film. Thus, film could provide both visual and vocal effects on the film viewers (Rajaguru, 2014) and the findings further found that vocal effects helped the viewers to understand the feelings of the characters and to enhance viewers' emotional attachment with film elements. These emotional attachments could provide meanings to not only filmed locations but also other destination attributes such as food, tradition and products. To date, this factor has not yet been received much attention from past research in film tourism arena.

This study further revealed that Korean films created awareness and provided knowledge for those who were exposed to the featured destination attributes. They enhanced a favorable destination image towards the country (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006). The findings of this study showed that film could familiarize viewers in various aspects of destination attributes and enhance viewers' positive perception towards food, products, scenery and landscape as well as language and culture. Besides visiting film locations, the study showed that presentation of these elements in film could lead to different forms of tourism activities linked with Korean film e.g., food tourism, shopping tourism, educational tourism and cultural tourism. Korean films have successfully introduced Korean food and products and inspired young viewers on the purchase intention of Korean food and products. Many film fans are now travelling a long distance to Korea for the authenticity of the products (Tang, 2014). Dining Korean food and shopping for Korean products are becoming the key tourist activities in Korea which are the influences of Korean film (Kim & Nam, 2016).

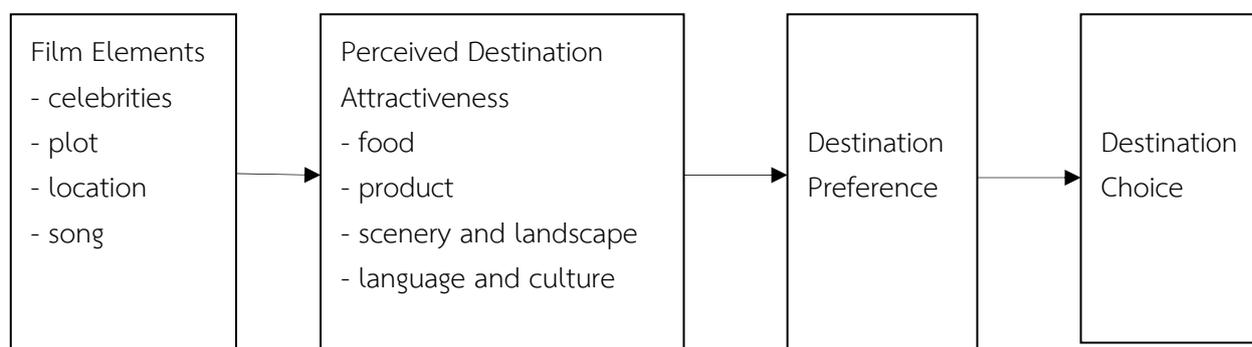
The study found that film created a preference for Korean brands. Korean brand preference would lead to purchase intention of Korean products (Srisurin, 2016). In this study, preference for Korean brands would successfully apply to all Korean products presented in the film such as cosmetics, clothes and daily products. Female viewers, in particular, tend to have strong interest in shopping Korean products to follow the styles and appearances of Korean celebrities (Kim, Lee, Chon, 2010). Due to the influence of film, there is an increasing number

of stores presenting film characters' products and shops owned by Korean celebrities displaying their favourite items (Korean Tourism Organization, 2017). The findings of the study also suggested that film could also be an effective tool to provide knowledge and transfer culture to viewers. It could create awareness of and interest in Korean language and culture among Thai viewers as well as preference for Korea as a holiday destination.

Film could shape the viewers' attitudes towards portrayed destination through the relationships between celebrities, filmed locations and viewers (Su et al., 2011). Spectacular landscape and scenery are considered by Thai viewers as important factors that inspired the viewers to visit Korea (Bameeratanachai, 2008; Inchan, 2013). Viewers

are interested in visiting filmed destinations due to their emotional associations with the film (Beeton, 2005; Kim 2012). This study showed that beautiful landscape and scenery enhanced emotional attachment and provided the meanings for the places featured in film. Korean film has been successful in applying the elements of landscape and scenery to the film and created niche tourism patterns and activities related to film.

Korean film has influenced what people eat, buy, wear and do and many film fans are inspired to travel to Korea. The findings of the study can be depicted in a conceptual model below showing how viewing film elements can enhance destination attractiveness which then leads to destination preference and choice.



**Figure 1** A Conceptual Model

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

Challenges for tourist destinations are to find ways to employ film strategies and film elements to capture viewers' attention and induce them to visit the destination. This exploratory study suggested that the key elements portrayed in the film be carefully chosen to induce the young viewers to visit the destinations. The results showed that

celebrities, plot, filmed locations and songs were the important factors that young viewers were impressed with Korean film and inspired them to visit Korea. All elements should blend nicely together to create the emotional attachment towards the film since the success of film can lead to film-induced tourism (Grihault, 2003) and new tourism patterns and activities.

This study provided findings on the extent to which film could enhance perceived destination attractiveness which would be very beneficial to film-tourism research and interested parties such as government, DMOs, and film companies. By looking into Korean film tourism, this paper has shed some lights on the power of film on perceived destination attractiveness which possibly led to various tourism activities connected to film such as food tourism, shopping tourism, educational tourism, and cultural tourism.

To date, film tourism is often developed without a full understanding of the impact of the phenomenon on the destination (Kim & O'Connor, 2011). Turning film locations into film-induced locations or the diversity of tourism products happening in Korea cannot happen by chance, it actually needs the strong support from government policies and planning as well as private sectors involved to push the strategies forward (Kim & Nam, 2016). From the findings of the study, there are several recommendations to all concerned parties in employing film marketing strategies to effectively provide destination knowledge regarding places, food, culture and way of life. Film can be used to enhance destination image, present new places, provide meanings to places, build emotional attachment with places, and attract tourists to the country. Thailand should be proactive in employing film marketing strategies to promote the country. First, film tourism department can be set up to research on the effects of film on tourism and focus on implementing film marketing strategies to promote tourism. This department should bring

all experts who could effectively create effective and powerful film to attract visitors to the destination. Second, campaigns can be launched to encourage young filmmakers to launch their ideas through film to attract their overseas peers as they understand better the needs of their age. This can be done on free channels. Third, tourism industry should look for opportunities to welcome overseas film companies to film the country in positive ways and encourage filming on new or unknown destinations. Last but not least, all film elements such as plot, celebrities, places, songs and setting should be carefully selected and complement one another to induce film-induced tourism and other tourism activities.

Film-induced tourism in Asia is an emerging research topic and there are still plenty of avenues to conduct further research. This study is an exploratory research by its nature to understand how dimensions of destination attractiveness and destination preference are perceived from viewing Korean film. A conceptual model proposed from this exploratory study should be empirically tested with quantitative studies. Recommendations for future research therefore would encourage similar studies conducted with quantitative studies using probability sampling of similar age group, different demographic factors such as different age group of Thai viewers or different nationalities of Korean film viewers. Qualitative studies can also be further conducted to explore new issues or attributes relating to viewing Korean film or other types of pop culture on tourist decision, cultural assimilation and purchase intention.

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