

Bollywood, a medium for Tourism Promotion

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Abstract

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The Appeal of Tourism destinations has to be maintained through regular tourism promotion. In the Past, emphasis was laid on more conventional methods of tourism promotion to lure tourists and to explain the attractiveness of destinations. The role of media has been greatly enhanced for the growth, development of tourist attractions and in creating positive images which need to be cemented in the minds of potential tourists.

Bollywood is one of the biggest film industries in the world with a production of over 1000 films every year which are being watched by approximately 14 million people per day. Bollywood has an incredible mass appeal and is known to affect the lives of Indians, week in and week out. The choices of the Indian traveller and the Indian tourism industry have known to be influenced by many popular Bollywood movies as was seen after the release of "Kashmir Ki Kali" and "Aaradhana," making Kashmir and Darjeeling one of the favoured romantic destinations of that time.

This research paper will study the growth of visual media in the imaging process in terms of entertainment, films, as opposed to direct marketing. Through secondary research it will assess the strategies used by Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) to attract Bollywood directors to the destinations and will aim to evaluate the role of Movie induced tourism through Bollywood, to understand the allure that movies induce to make people travel to destinations portrayed in them.

This research concerns both the supply and the demand side so it will be based on constructive ontology, which will assume that DMOs use Bollywood as a medium for promotion. Since this research will be Constructive in nature, it will be highly subjective and will not aim to provide any definitive realities. It will assume the realities of those interviewed. The population groups will be based on random sampling methods assuming that people of age 25-40 years are fascinated by movies and have jobs to support travel. An

exploratory research will be carried out to gain new insights and discover new ideas about how Bollywood influences their travel activities.

Keywords: Bollywood and Tourism Industry, Tourism Marketing Strategies

1. Background of the study

“**Tourism** is the temporary short term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work and their activities during the stay at these destinations; it includes movement for all purposes as well as day visits or excursions” (Tourism Society, 1976).

Travel motivation relates person’s need to travel to a particular destination, according to Pizam, Neuman, 1978. Studying the motivations behind travel is an essential factor in the management of the tourism activities. It governs the need to travel to a particular location and has a direct effect on the demand and supply. Tourism motivation thereby impacts the decision making factor and choosing a destination of choice. It works as a mediator between stimulus and response behaviour (Catoiu, 2004).

1.1 Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) and Motivation

The sustainability of tourist destinations in the progressively rivalrous markets and the effects of globalisation has a put a lot of pressure on destination marketing techniques (UNTWO, 2011). A large number of cities, states and nations are appointing Destination Marketing organisations to compete in the global markets

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and attract more and more tourists to their visitor space. They now need to entice tourists by effective marketing to sustain the market shares and attract new segment markets (Ashworth & Goodhall, 1990) by emphasizing on destination positioning and differentiation.

Hence, DMO's should be aware of the new trends and guide the development of their tourism product to take account of the trends which may directly or indirectly effect consumer behaviour and consumer choices (UNWTO, 2007, p. 53).

1.2 Role of Visual Marketing in Promotion of Tourism

Motion pictures play a great role in enhancing the consumer's awareness of tourist destinations and inspiring them to travel. The concept of "Tourist Gaze" is constructed with the interpretation of what one sees and hence a visual experience (Burns, Palmer, Lester, 2001). Image making media deeply determines the tourism sightseeing concept (Beeton, 2004). The visual, vocal and celebrity effects emanated from movies are expected to influence traveler's intent to visit a destination.

1.3 Bollywood Industry

Bollywood finds its place in one of the top industries of the world with a yearly production of over 1,000 movies. The selling of tickets amounts to over six billion in a year with an annual earning of \$72 billion (Desai, 2005; Lovgren, 2004).

Yash Chopra, who is known as a major producer/director of Bollywood movies, idealized Switzerland as a romantic destination in his films and consequently played an important role in increasing the outbound travel from India to Switzerland by 30% (Dubey, 2008). Over last two decades, Bollywood cinema has been gradually more evident (Hassam & Paranjape, 2010).

2. Questions to be Researched

This exploratory study will be concerned with the following research questions:

- a.) What is the appeal of Bollywood to the DMOs?

This study aims to study the attractiveness factor that

Bollywood carries, to the destination marketing organisations.

- b.) What strategies are used by DMOs to attract directors to the destinations?

This study aspires to explore the methods adopted by DMOs to lure Bollywood directors to shoot movies in their tourist locations .

- c.) What is the appeal of Bollywood to the potential tourists ?

As a result of this study the researcher will aim to understand the reach of the bollywood industry and their impact on the people to encourage travel.

- d.) Does Bollywood influence travel decisions and choices?

This research will attempt to understand if viewers travel destinations and the places chosen by them to travel are effected Bollywood movies.

2.1 Postulations on which the Study is Based

This research will be based on a few beliefs which will be used as a the basis of the research.

The research will speculate that DMOs are using Bollywood as a medium to promote tourist destinations because of its' reach.

It is assumed that the respondents who will be interviewed for the purpose of this study will give significant insights which will help in giving a clear picture of the topic at hand.

The research will assume the realities of those interviewed as there will not be any definitive realities as the research problem is highly subjective in nature.

It is speculated that the information gathered from the series of interviews will be ample for the research project and would be enough to give a generalisation on the topic.

3. Research Methodology

This research papers studies the impact that visual media has on the imaging and branding of tourism destinations. It assesses both the demand and the supply side of the tourism marketing process. It evaluates the strategies used by DMOs in attracting popular Bollywood directors

and actors to the tourism destinations through secondary research.

It also aims to analyse the role of Movie induced tourism through Bollywood, to understand the allure that movies induce to make people travel to destinations portrayed in them. Since this research is Constructive in nature, it is be highly subjective and does not aim to provide any definitive realities. It assumes the realities of those interviewed. The population samples are based on random sampling methods. An exploratory research is carried out to gain new insights and discover new ideas about how Bollywood influences their travel activities.

4. Literature Review

According to the global benchmarking survey conducted by TRAVELSAT Competitive Index, 40 million international tourists chose their destinations mostly because they saw a film shot in a country in 2012. The same survey also revealed that regions and destinations can benefit for attracting first time visitors, young travellers and city breakers.

CEO Olivier Henry-Biabaud added: “Supporting film shooting in a destination can offer higher ROI than traditional communication campaigns and may offer an indirect yet efficient promotional media for destinations as part of their marketing mix. DMOs have therefore all interest in tightening their relationship with the cinema industry if they wish to rival better vs international competition”.

Morgan and Pritchard (1998) state that films provide a conclusive platform to destinations to place their tourism product. According to Business dictionary, the term Product placement is used to promote products subtly through appearances in film, television or other forms of media rather than explicit advertisement. Priceonomics analyzed that the products that are placed in films have more chances of being successful than conventional ways of advertising such as TV ads. Chances of making the consumer buy your product which is embedded into the story line increase more rather than selling a viewer who is watching an advertisement during which the viewer might skip the advertisement completely.

Hudson and Ritchie (2009), state that just as product placement influence the viewer’s attitudes in the purchase behavior, films too will impact the destination images of

the locations shown in the film and will thus influence tourist behavior. Kim and Richardson (2003) conducted an experimental research to study the alterations of the cognitive and effective images of viewing a place shown in a film. They studied that the destination images and interest in the destination increased significantly after watch Vienna and Austria in the film Before Sunrise (1995, Hollywood film).

Destination Promotion through Bollywood

Bollywood has been famous for it’s beautiful locations. Ever since Yash Chopra popularized Switzerland in various films, Bollywood directors have been known to flock to exotic locations for their films. Bollywood directors have shoot their destinations and involve the destinations in the script.

This trend has become popular with most directors whether the films are shot within India or abroad, the locations are made appealing to the viewers. Director Kabir Khan recently showcased a film Ek tha Tiger which has been shot accross three continents from Afghanistan to Dublin.

Similarly director Zoya Akhtar in her movie Zindagi na Milegi Dobara, not only focuses on the beauty throughout Spain but also focuses on adventure activities and cultural Spanish traditions such as running with the bulls and the famous Tomatina festivals.

To add to the glamour quotient of the films, comparatively, smaller, less popular countries are also being chosen for their exotic appeal like as is seen with Race 2 which is shot in Cyprus and Turkey or Rockstar, which was set in Prague, capital city of Czech Republic or even Saif Ali Khan’s movie Agent Vinod which is set in Latvia and Morocco.

Not only foreign locations, but even Indian locations gain popularity after the release of movies which strike a chord with the audiences.

6. Strategies Implemented by DMOs to Attract Bollywood Directors

Because of the wide reach of Bollywood, DMOs are keen to collaborate with production houses to showcase their destinations in films (CanagaRetna, 2007). But the same

needs to be done in a controlled manner so only those sites appear in the films, that are approved by the DMOs as destinations need to be showcased in a positive light so as to attract tourists. For example Visit Scotland provides training for tourism professionals that desire to attract film crews in order to develop on the long-term impacts of “location tourism” (VisitScotland, 2007).

DMO’s see bollywood as an opportunity to promote desitnations. Countries like Switzerland, Ireland, The Netherlands, Australia, and New Zealand attract Bollywood production houses to shoot in their regions (Hassam & Paranjape, 2010). One of the main reasons behind is that placing a destination in a film is the ultimate in tourism product placement. A significant example can be given by the recent flow of Indian tourists towards Spain after the release of the blockbuster movie named *Zindagi Na Milegi Dohara* that has set against Spanish backgrounds (Harjani, 2011).

Foreign tourists boards offer incentives ranging from tax rebates, free stays, visa facilitation, subsidies of various kinds, discounts on travel and sometimes even bearing production costs and are pitching their locations to production houses and directors in India (Ambwani, 2011).

According to Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ASSOCHAM) of India, filmmakers get varied benefits from shooting movies abroad. Most foreign governments offer subsidies ranging from 10% to even 70% for directors to shoot at location. These are based on the budget spent and the locations chosen by the directors. For example, during the making of *Yamla Pagla Deewana 2*, UK offered a subsidy of 20% to the crew members.

Radka Neumannova, India director of the Czech Republic Tourism board states that Czech needs to be made visible to the people of India through Bollywood because of the

strength popularity of celluloid in the country. For this up to 20% rebate on expenses made are rebated to the film companies.

The Spain tourism board after the success of *Zindagi na milegi Dubara*, Madhu Salyankar the marketing head of the board claims to offer better visa facilitation, hotel and travel discounts, 18% VAT refunds and faster approvals and similar sops.

According to trade analyst Komal Nahata, Fiji islands offer a subsidy of 50% and UK offers from 25-30% subsidies to filmmakers. *Don- 2* got a subsidy of Rs 12-15 crore from the German government and *Ra.One* got a subsidy of Rs 20 crores. South Africa offers about 30% and Australia about 40% with additional incentives states like Queensland.

New Zealand, signed a co-production treaty with India in 2011 to gain from the Bollywood market.

7. Viewers Point of View

An exploratory research was carried out from a population group of 60 persons to assess the impact of Bollywood in impacting the travel decisions of people in the age group 15-40. The hypothesis for the study was that the travel destinations portrayed in the Bollywood have an impact on the viewers and create travel motivations.

At-test was conducted assuming that the response amongst the female and male respondents would differ. However as a result of the analysis of date it was seen that gender or marital status, occupation does not effect the choice of viewers. As assumed at the start of the research that the realities of those interviewed would be accepted as real and no definitive realities would be given as a result of this research as this is highly objective.

This was proven as a result of the t-test which is present in the following table.

Variable	M_1	SD_1	M_2	SD_2	dm	SE	t
Frequency of watching Bollywood films	2.7	1.03	2.75	1.15	2.75	.23	11.66
Age	2.6	1.10	2.50	1.02	2.50	.20	11.99
Occupation	3.5	1.43	3.30	1.47	3.20	.30	10.66
Education	3.6	.85	3.45	.58	3.45	.12	28.8
Religion	3.1	1.44	2.62	1.52	2.62	.31	8.42
Family Income	3.7	.60	3.75	.73	3.75	.15	24.92

Variable	M_1	SD_1	M_2	SD_2	dm	SE	t
Marital Status	1.6	.49	1.70	.46	1.70	.09	18.02
Enjoyment Level	3.9	.75	3.37	.92	3.37	.18	17.89
Focus on scenic locations	3.7	.72	3.70	.95	3.70	.19	19.03
Shoot in different parts of the world	3.8	.84	3.58	1.05	3.58	.21	16.56
Attraction to destinations	3.7	.67	3.33	1.04	3.33	.21	15.56
Foreign Locations	3.2	.81	3.16	1.00	3.16	.20	15.40
Choice of Travel Destinations	2.9	1.12	2.62	1.20	2.62	.24	10.63
Education	3.4	1.05	3.08	1.24	3.08	.25	12.10
Internet	2.6	1.09	2.58	1.24	2.58	.25	10.13
Creation of travel Needs	3.4	1.10	3.04	1.12	3.04	.22	13.28
Spare Money on Travel	2.6	1.41	2.66	1.12	2.66	.23	11.56
Dream Destination	2.4	1.18	2.41	1.24	2.41	.25	9.48
Travel Motivation	3.2	.98	2.91	1.10	2.91	.22	12.98
Medium for destination promotion	3.6	1.05	3.75	.98	3.75	.20	18.57
Cultural Awareness	3.0	1.02	3.00	1.25	3.00	.25	11.74

From the table it can be seen that the value of t is highly significant.

8. Conclusion

It can be concluded from the results of the surveys according to which mostly all respondents Bollywood proves to be a good medium of destination promotion and helps in creating travel needs and motivates people to travel. Bollywood also creates awareness of new destinations in the world which adds to the glamour quotient.

This can also be verified further by looking into the statistics provided by CNN travel, 2011, which state that the tourist numbers flocking to Spain after the success of *Zindagi Na Milegi Dubara* increased to 32% in the first year after the movie release and also the tourist footfall from India to Switzerland after the popularity these countries gain after the release of the movies.

The same is true for Indian locations. Bollywood has been known to put many Indian locations on the tourist map. Fort Aguada, Goa found a special place in the Indian celluloid and has been featured in many prominent movies like *Dil Chahta Hai*, *Rangeela*, *Golmaal*, *Dhoom* etc making it a must see destination for many travelers to Goa.

Manali had been a popular muse of many a directors of the bygone years. It regained its lost appeal after

being showcased in *Yeh Jawani hai Deewani*, especially amongst the youngsters who also put the Hadimba temple in their travel itineraries.

Even smaller unheard places like the royal city of Patiala, featured in films like *Tere Naal Love ho gaya*, *Bodyguard*, *Mere Brother ki Dulhan*, *Love Aikal* has become a popular choice for directors and sites like *Neemrana*, *Patiala fort*, *Bagrian haveli*, have become popular tourist attractions for excursionists.

After the popularity of the movies such as *Dev D*, *Highway*, *Jab we met*, *Jab Tak hai Jaan & 3 Idiots*, places like *Rohtang Pass & Pangong Lake*, *Leh* has become an important bike rides trail for adventure tourists.

Munnar tea plantations got a lot of attention after the success of *Chennai Express*, *Life of Pi* and *Nishabd*.

Bollywood directors have not only portrayed beautiful locations in the movies but have also woven interesting tales around the destination as a whole as was seen in the case of *Haider*, *Fitoor* and *Rockstar* which captured the beauty of the *Kashmir Valley* and its serene lifestyle.

Doraha fort near *Ludhiana* has come to known as the *RDB (Rang de Basanti) fort* got overnight fame after only one epic scene that shot here.

We can thus say, that the both the DMOs and the Bollywood directors enter into a win win situation by

place placement of the destinations. Where Bollywood directors get trained manpower and tax rebates and other such benefits, the DMOs get a popular medium of promotion.

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