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“Namastey London”: Bollywood Movies and Their Impact on how Indians Perceive European Destinations

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“Namastey London”: Bollywood Movies and Their Impact on how Indians Perceive European Destinations

Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyze the perception of European destinations through the eyes of Indian Bollywood film viewers to determine how perception is influenced by what is viewed in films. Researchers surveyed Indian consumers and collected 670 usable surveys. European destinations were divided into top five and bottom five destinations for Indian tourists, and data was then compared to world tourism statistics. Results indicate differences in destination preference among Bollywood viewers and worldwide tourist trends. Findings indicate that prominently featuring a landscape within Bollywood films can significantly impact Indians' perception on the destinations' image. European countries frequently portrayed in films have higher marks on multiple perception categories than those not featured in blockbuster Bollywood films.

Keywords

Bollywood Movies, European Destinations, Indian Tourists, Movie Induced Tourism, Travel Motivations, Destination Marketing

“*Namastey London*”: Bollywood Movies and Their Impact on how Indians Perceive European Destinations

Introduction

Bollywood films are making waves across the international stage, not only with their perfectly synchronized dancing, but also in their depiction of Indian travel behaviors. This industry is one of the largest film industries in the world, producing over 1,000 movies every year. It is a \$72 billion industry selling six billion tickets annually (Desai, 2005; Lovgren, 2004; Minocha & Stonehouse, 2006). Its commercial size grew at the robust rate of 58% in the five year period between 2001 and 2005 (Lorenzen & Täube, 2008). Film exports also expanded 30–50% year on year during the same period and were forecast to increase by a further 20% to 2010 (2008). A large chunk of this movie output from India comes from the city of Mumbai, formerly known as Bombay. Hence, the moniker of *Bollywood* was given to the Indian film Industry.

As a rapidly developing country, India has seen tremendous growth in its 300 million strong middle class (Rempel, 2007) and their purchasing power in the past two decades. This growth boom has impacted all sectors of the Indian economy, including outbound international tourism. The combination of these forces has created an opportunity for growth in overseas tourism destinations, often influenced by Indians' perception of Bollywood films. A noteworthy piece of evidence of the Indian market potential is the recent surge of Indian tourists to Spain after the release of the Bollywood film – *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*, set against a Spanish backdrop (Harjani, 2011). Six months after its showing, the Spanish tourism board saw a 32% upswing of visitors from India to Spain (Harjani, 2011). Similarly, Mr. Yash Chopra, a major producer/director of Bollywood movies, idealized Switzerland as a romantic destination in his films and subsequently caused an increase in outbound travel from India to Switzerland, increasing the outbound travel from India by 30% (Dubey, 2008). With the proliferating number of consumers of Bollywood films, destination marketers are eager to capitalize on this crown jewel of the Asian market.

Evoking positive perceptions of the destination through image presentations has become an effective way to catapult the target destination into the tourist's consideration set. Images of film locations affect the audience's selection of one destination over another and their subsequent behaviors in the destination (Bandyopadhyay, 2008; Han & Lee, 2008; Young & Young, 2008; Kim & O'Connor, 2011). Not surprisingly, the tourists who travel to a place depicted in a movie arrive with expectations and images about the location similar to what is shown on screen (Butler, 2011). The images of the film thus affect some destination image components and heighten tourists' interest in visiting

(Kim & Richardson, 2003). Beverley and Niki (2009) suggested that media-induced tourism helps tourists fulfill fantasies of being in the films via the vicarious experience of actually traveling to the sites where they were filmed.

Tsiotsou and Ratten (2010) advocated that tourism marketers should heed general shifts in the population in order to identify the changing habits and demands of tourists. A number of convergent trends make it imperative to study the Indian outbound tourism market. First, with its swelling 300 million plus middle class (Rempel, 2007), India has become an important member of the global consumer market. Second, there has been a tremendous growth of outbound international tourism from India, which is expected to continue for years to come. Millions of Indians now not only aspire to travel abroad, but actually possess the means to do so. Third, the size and scale of the multi-billion dollar Bollywood movie industry, and its role in filming movies in Europe, thus showcasing international destinations to Indians for decades, is now enabling Indians to move from the fantasy world of films to the real world of travel to featured destinations. Given the potential growth of Bollywood and its growing clout on the Indian audience, a close look at their perceptions of European destinations, as seen through Bollywood films, will help open the door of European tourism wider for the Indian market. The purpose of this paper, thus, is to investigate the profiles of Indian film viewers and their perceptions of major European destinations through the images of Bollywood cinema. The in-depth analysis of this growing segment can help destination marketers gain insight into the travel needs of this growing middle class Indian market.

Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To determine the demographic profile of Indians who watch Bollywood movies.
2. To determine Indians' engagement with Bollywood movies.
3. To explore the linkage between Bollywood movies and select travel destinations in Europe.
4. To determine perceived images of European countries as destinations, and the attractions and activities they present to tourists.

Literature review

Film-induced tourism

Film tourism is defined as "tourist visit to a destination or attraction as a result of the destination's being featured on television, video, or the cinema screen"

(Hudson & Ritchie, 2006b: p. 387). Evidence from around the world affirms that tourists are increasingly visiting destinations as a result of those places being depicted or featured in film or television (Connell, 2005; Im & Chon, 2008; Iwashita, 2008). "Destinations, landscapes, events and their contained cultures can be significant factors in the communication of tourism" (Crouch, 2007: p.72). Films not only influence destination choice, but also impact the tourism industry. "Film-induced tourism is partially based on tourist demands to escape reality to a better world represented in films" (O'Connor et al., 2008: p. 434). This makes it important for destination marketers to carefully craft their role in the filming process in order to portray an image that best reflects the location.

Motivations for traveling to screened locations

Generating interest in a destination is key to increasing visitation. Films can act as a means of marketing a destination to millions of viewers. Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987) identified two motivational forces or dimensions of *escaping* and *seeking* that operate simultaneously to stimulate and result in tourist behavior. An individual's travel behavior is influenced by the desire to escape from one's routine personal and/or interpersonal environment while seeking rewarding personal and/or interpersonal experiences (Iso-Ahola, 1983). Furthermore, according to Maconis (2004), the two primary motivators for traveling to screened locations are novelty and fantasy.

Hudson and Ritchie (2006b) indicated that 8 of 10 residents of the United Kingdom remarked in a 2004 survey that they got the idea for their vacation destination through movies, and 1 in 5 is planning a trip to the location their favorite movie was filmed. Suni and Komppula (2012) have asserted that movie-induced tourism in United Kingdom is worth about 1.6 billion pounds. Though no established methods yet exist to measure film-induced tourism, film influences on tourism are evident in the increase in visitor numbers after a movie has been released (Singh & Best, 2004). Their study followed the film-induced tourism prompted by the release of the Lord of the Rings trilogy. The authors found that the main motivation to visit Hobbiton (movie set/backdrop) was to experience the natural scenery of that place. This indicated that travelers motivated by a movie expect to see the views/sceneries as shown in the movie. After the release of the Lord of the Rings trilogy, marketing material produced by Tourism New Zealand was created connecting locations from the films to the scenery of New Zealand, displaying a documented effect on how movies can impact tourism (Croy, 2004; Maconis & O'Connor, 2011; Suni & Komppula, 2012).

New Zealand, a film-friendly destination, is a prime example of a place that has successfully collaborated and leveraged off the success of The Lord of the Rings trilogy. Industry integration and collaboration between stakeholders is

crucial for sustainable film-induced tourism to occur. The tourism and film stakeholders should work closely with each other to help promote their destination tourism and marketing strategies as well as their product differentiation more effectively.

Movies seen and places visited

The tourism literature is replete with studies that identify specific movies and then examine how they have induced tourism to destinations worldwide. O'Connor, et al. (2008), have studied the relationship between film induced tourism and destination branding of Yorkshire in the UK. Frost (2010) has studied the impacts of movies on the Australian outback on tourist perceptions. Im and Chon (2008) studied the long-felt impact of the classic musical – *The Sound of Music* on tourism to Salzburg, Austria. Frost (2006) has studied the impact of the historical film – *Braveheart* and its' impact on the destination image of Scotland, UK. Iwashita (2008) has examined how Japanese tourists to UK are motivated by films and television dramas. O'Connor (2011) has examined film-induced tourism to Ireland.

In addition to studies on movie-induced tourism to UK and Australia, scholars have also studied how Korean TV dramas have attracted tourists from the Middle-East to Korea (Kim, et al., 2009); while Shani (2009) and Hudson, et al. (2011) have both studied the impact of movies on tourism to and image of South America. Soliman (2011) has examined the impact of movies on domestic tourism within Egypt; and Law, et al. (2007) have critically examined the role of foreign tourists in Thailand.

In summary, this section of the literature has shown the impact that movies have had on increasing tourism to the locations shown. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the studies cited earlier show evidence of movie-induced tourism world-wide in Asia, Continental Europe, the Middle-East, South America, and the UK.

Bollywood films and tourism

In the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, romantic sequences in Indian films were primarily shot in the mountainous region of Kashmir in India, widely regarded as 'heaven on earth'. Bollywood directors were mesmerized by the beauty of Kashmir, so much so that the mountains in Kashmir became synonymous with romance in Bollywood. However, when the terrorism threats of the late 1980s made the region difficult to reach, and later inaccessible, Bollywood directors

began seeking substitute locations overseas (Macionis, 2004; Macionis & Sparks, 2008).

Fascination with foreign locations within Bollywood began in the mid-1960s when Raj Kapoor (Bollywood Producer/Director/Actor) shot his first color film, titled *Sangam*, in Italy, France, and Switzerland. This started the foreign locations trend in Indian cinema. The trend accelerated in the 1970s to 1990s when actors were transported to striking foreign locations like the Swiss Alps and Britain's Summer Isles, which were the primary backdrops of many Yash Chopra productions (Shah, 2012). More than 200 Bollywood titles have been shot in Switzerland over the past two decades alone ("Bollywood drives...", 2008). "Most of the Swiss sequences are dream scenes in which lovers dance or romp on Alpine meadows strewn with flowers or roll in the snow in unlikely flimsy Indian garb on wintry slopes" (Tagliabue, 2010). Many Indians flock annually to Swiss locations in which popular Bollywood films were shot to recreate and relive scenes from their favorite films (Tagliabue, 2010).

Veteran Bollywood director Mr. Yash Chopra, noted as one of the greatest filmmakers in the history of Indian cinema, singlehandedly boosted tourism in Switzerland by regularly featuring the country's lakes, misty valleys, and snow-capped mountains as the backdrop for his song and dance sequences during his career spanning 53 years (Dubey, 2008). So grateful was the Swiss Tourism Authority that they named a lake after him. The director also played a part in promoting Britain as a glamorous destination. His classic film *Lamhe* (1991) was shot in London and the Lake District. When he produced *Mujhse Dosti Karoge* a decade later, Chopra again returned to England's Lake District to film aboard one of the steamers which ply between Glen Ridding and Pooley Bridge, reveling in the twisting lake, rolling hills, and winding roads of the national park (Macionis, 2004; Macionis & Sparks, 2009).

Some of the biggest blockbusters of Bollywood, shot in Western Europe, that impacted Indian Bollywood viewers are *An Evening in Paris* (France and Switzerland) *Chandani*, *Lamhe*, *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (UK, mainly Switzerland), *Bachna Ae Haseno* (Italy & Switzerland), *Taal* (Britain), *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham*, (UK), *Tal* (UK), *Namastey London* (UK), *Cheeni Kum* (UK), and *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* (Spain). Many articles in the popular press have reported that Indian audiences and even non-Indian audiences who watch Bollywood movies on a regular basis visit the destinations shown in the movies (Tagliabue, 2010; Munshi, 2012; Lovgren, 2004; Padmanabhan, 2010). To capitalize on this film-induced tourism, destination marketers must creatively advertise to these Bollywood viewers. An example of this type of creative marketing occurred in England when the Britain's Tourism Authority created a

“Bollywood map” (Bollywood movies shot in Britain) depicting the most visited destinations by Indian tourists in Britain (‘Bollywood gives a boost’, 2008), pulling Indians directly to locations shown in Bollywood films.

Another major attraction and integral part of Bollywood movies are the elaborate song sequences. Almost every Bollywood movie has song sequences and dance numbers contributing to its earnings/profit and these elaborate numbers are often a major deciding factor in determining whether the movie will be a hit or a flop. Often, movie songs are shot at a scenic destination outside India, even though the rest of the movie is filmed within India. This creates an exotic appeal within the movies and plays a major role in attracting viewers. Movie soundtracks, music videos, and even remixed versions of songs of the Bollywood movies released in India and abroad are major pull factors to attract viewers to the theater (Padmanabhan, 2010).

Top tourist destinations in Europe for Indian travelers

With over 81 million visitors worldwide in 2011, France ranks highest in tourist arrivals among all European destinations. Besides France, among the top five most commonly traveled to European countries are Spain, Italy, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. Germany, ranked at #6 in tourist arrivals, had just over 28 million inbound visitors in 2011. Interestingly, Switzerland ranks at #16 among European countries in terms of tourist arrivals, with a 2011 total of 8.3 million worldwide visitors (Ministry of Tourism, 2011).

When looking at outbound travel, Indian tourists show different travel preferences to Europe. In 2010, outbound Indian tourists totaled just fewer than 14 million, a 7.7% increase from the previous year (Ministry of Tourism, 2011). The most popular European countries for outbound travel from India vary from those of the rest of the world. Not surprisingly, the UK is listed as one of the top destinations for Indian tourist. This preference for travel to the UK by Indians is likely because India and the UK have linkages going back to the 1800s, with England as colonial master until 1947. Furthermore, there are millions of Indian immigrants living in the UK. Additionally, the UK is also prominently featured in many Bollywood films. These factors each amplify the levels of exposure most Indians have to the UK. Even though there are strong perceived ties between the UK and India, France attracts 50% more Indian tourists than UK (*UK Tourism Statistics*, 2012), giving it top rank among most traveled to countries by outbound Indian tourist.

Though listed at #16 among worldwide rankings, Switzerland ranks as a top five destination for Indian tourists, with over 135,000 outbound travelers during 2009, finishing just behind Italy among outbound Indian travelers (Ministry of Tourism, 2011). Spain, also a current top five global destination,

reported 52 million international visitors in 2009, but a surprisingly low number of only 12,800 were from India. However, numbers increased dramatically after the 2011 release of the Bollywood blockbuster *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*. The number of reported Indian tourists in Spain in 2011 topped 115,000, increasing the arrivals from India by nearly 1000% (Munshi, 2012).

Need for the study

The literature review has shown a number of convergent trends that contribute to increasing tourism to Europe from India. However, this phenomenon has not been addressed in the tourism literature. Furthermore, while there have been many articles of the impact of movies on international travel and tourism, no study has addressed the impact that Bollywood movies may have on outbound Indian travelers to Europe. Furthermore, no study has attempted to link a *genre* of movies (such as Bollywood)-and their impact on the image of multiple countries. These gaps in the literature on film induced tourism need to be addressed. The purpose of this paper, thus, is to investigate the profiles of Indian film viewers and their perceptions of major European destinations through the images of Bollywood cinema.

Methodology

The population of this study consisted of Indians 18 years old or older. A total of 670 respondents participated in this study. A survey questionnaire was constructed on the basis of previous studies on movie induced tourism, destination image, and tourist consumption activity. Using a convenience sampling method, students in a post graduate marketing class, under the supervision of one of the co-authors, were employed to collect data. Students approached potential respondents at malls and metro stations in the national capital of India, New Delhi. Respondents were screened for their ability to complete a survey in the English language and by age.

The questionnaires included sections about movie preferences, levels of involvement with foreign travel/tourism, destination choices based upon movies viewed, and perceptions of attractions and activities at the destination based upon the influence of Bollywood movies/TV. The instrument consisted of six parts, all ranked on a 5 point Likert scale from 'strongly disagree' (1) to 'strongly agree' (5). The survey explored: (a) Indian Movie/TV preferences, (b) Sources for travel ideas, (c) Movies/TV influenced travel activity. Respondents also were asked about their perceptions or images of countries in Europe and what they offer for Indian tourists. Within this question, respondents were given ten Western

European countries and asked to choose from varied perceptions such as great fun, great shopping, relaxing, and cultural and historic sites, among others. In the last three sections of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to (d) rate their level of involvement in international travel and tourism; (e) to recall up to three Indian movies/ TV programs and the corresponding place that have inspired their choice of a travel destination abroad (outside of India); (f) to complete questions regarding personal demographics, which would be used to determine the general characteristics of the sample. Descriptive statistics were used in the analysis of the survey results.

Findings

Objective 1: Demographic Characteristics

The survey was successfully completed by 670 respondents. Table 1 illustrates demographics of the sample. Results show that 59% of respondents were male. The largest age cohort included respondents aged 22 to 29 years (58.1%). Most respondents were married (57.2%) and spoke Hindi, the national language of India (68.7%). The majority of respondents were employed full time (58.2%), though nearly a quarter indicated that they were students who were unemployed (24.0%). Furthermore, over 80% of respondents had a bachelor's degree or higher. More than half (55%) of respondents had monthly household incomes between U.S. \$1,000 and U.S. \$2,000. Table 1 also shows that almost half of the respondents have previously traveled outside India (48.5%). The sample demographics reflect the urban, English-speaking, upper middle class of the Indian population who have the means and ability to travel to international destinations.

Objective 2: To determine Indian's engagement with Bollywood movies

Results indicate that Indians are highly engaged with Bollywood movies (Table 2). Over half of respondents (51.5%) seek information and gossip about new Indian movies *before* their release, and 39.1% of respondents indicate they watch movies in the theatre as soon as they are released. In addition, respondents were asked the number of Indian movies they watch per week in movie theatres, on TV, and on the internet. Nearly half (48.1%) of respondents watched Indian movies on TV three or more times per week, and 25.1% indicated that they watched three or more films weekly in movie theaters.

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondents.

	<i>N</i> (670)	%
Gender		
Female	275	41.0
Male	395	59.0
Age		
Under 21 years old	75	11.2
22-29 years old	389	58.1
30-39 years old	130	19.4
40-49 years old	50	7.5
50-60 years old	26	3.9
Marital status		
Married	383	57.2
Single	286	42.6
Mother Tongue		
Hindi	460	68.7
Punjabi	68	10.1
Bengali	42	6.3
Other	100	14.9
Employment status		
Not Employed (Student)	161	24.0
Not Employed (Non-Student)	55	8.2
Employed Part-Time	64	9.6
Employed Full-Time	390	58.2
Monthly household income		
Less than U.S. \$1,000	175	26.1
U.S. \$ 1,000 to U.S. \$2,000	372	55.5
More than U.S. \$1,000	123	18.4
Highest level of education		
High school or lower	21	3.1
Some college	88	13.1
Bachelor's degree	323	48.2
Graduate degree	228	34.0
Have traveled to		
Asia	71	10.6
South East Asia	25	3.7
Middle East	36	5.4
Africa	41	6.1
Australia/New Zealand	22	3.3
Europe	58	8.7
North America	22	3.3
South America	13	1.9
Traveled to multiple continents	37	5.5
I have not traveled outside India	345	51.5

Table 2. Enthusiasm and engagement with Bollywood movies.

	<i>N</i> (670)	%
<u>Movie Viewing Preference</u>		
Seek information/gossip about new movies before release	345	51.5
Movie ‘Buff’ or ‘Super-fan’	194	29.9
I watch movies on the first day of release in theatres	193	28.8
I watch movies as soon as they are released in theatres	264	39.1
<u>Weekly Consumption Behaviors:</u>		
Watched 3 or more movies in Movie Theatres	168	25.1
Watched 3 or more movies on TV	322	48.1
Watched 3 or more movies on the Internet	171	25.6

Objective 3: To explore the linkage between Bollywood movies and select travel destinations in Europe.

To explore the relationship between Bollywood movie watching behavior and international travel and tourism, respondents were asked to recall names of three movies that have inspired their choice of travel destinations in Europe. As illustrated in Table 3, almost a third (30.7%) of respondents said that *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* was one movie motivating them to travel to Europe. In the open-ended section of the survey, multiple respondents indicated that this Bollywood film specifically influenced travel plans. One respondent stated “[Bollywood films are a] great influence! Specifically from Indian movies, one of my friends had gone to Europe and planned another trip for Spain just after watching *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*.” Another respondent states “one of my friends went to Europe after watching *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*” and a third said “my family has been to places seen in the movies. My father has been to Europe and brother plans to go to Spain.” Table 4 shows that 45.7% of respondents wanted to travel to the UK after they watched movies, while 40.9% of respondents were motivated by Bollywood movies to travel to Switzerland.

Table 3. Top Bollywood movies inducing travel to Europe.

<i>Name of Indian Movie</i>	<i>Filming Location</i>	<i>N</i> (670)	%
<i>Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara</i>	Spain	206	30.7
<i>Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge</i>	Switzerland, U.K.	182	27.2
<i>Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam</i>	Italy	102	15.2
<i>Namaste London</i>	U.K.	101	15.1
<i>Don2</i>	Germany, Switzerland	79	11.8
<i>Bachna Ae Haseeno</i>	Italy, Switzerland	75	11.2
<i>Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham</i>	U.K.	48	7.2
<i>Rockstar</i>	Czech Republic	46	6.9

Table 4. Top European countries Indians want to visit after watching Bollywood movies.

Country	N (670)	%
U.K.	306	45.7
Switzerland	274	40.9
Italy	256	38.2
Spain	164	24.5
France	107	16.0
Germany	65	9.7

Objective 4: To determine perceived images of European countries as destinations, and the attractions and activities they present to tourists.

One of the main objectives of this study was to determine respondents' perceptions of European destinations; researchers wanted to understand what image comes to the respondent's mind when they think of a particular country. Respondents were presented with a list of ten Western European countries and a list of attributes for each of these countries. To facilitate concise presentation, this discussion categorizes the ten countries into two groups – the five most popular and the five least popular among Indians (Table 5 & Table 6).

Table 5. Top five European countries & their destination attributes as seen by Indians.

	Good Shopping	Romantic	Good Recreation	Relaxing	Nature/ Scenery	Cultural Sites	Great Fun	Things to See
Switz.	192	422	213	150	361	103	219	202
UK	356	223	178	161	200	226	224	271
Italy	202	260	147	141	194	202	184	118
Spain	143	192	229	144	223	163	191	173
France	211	253	151	171	189	140	138	107

Table 6. Bottom five European countries & their destination attributes as seen by Indians

	Good Shopping	Romantic	Good Recreation	Relaxing	Nature/ Scenery	Cultural Sites	Great Fun	Things to See
Germany	126	141	162	133	153	164	154	104
Austria	143	187	170	154	167	53	90	76
Greece	92	145	101	106	162	219	82	80
Netherlands	82	111	113	107	135	82	78	64
Portugal	64	81	97	89	103	163	83	86

It is intriguing to note that the UK was perceived to be the best place for shopping followed by France and Italy. Over 60% of respondents perceived UK to be their favorite shopping destination.

Over 69% of respondents said that they perceived Switzerland to be a romantic destination. Just over 40% perceive France and Italy as romantic destinations. It is noteworthy that Switzerland has nearly twice as many references as a romantic destination as its nearest competitor further suggesting that Switzerland has been romanticized in Bollywood films.

Additionally, more than 69% of respondents said they perceived Switzerland to be the best location in Europe for scenery, followed by Spain (35.8%) and the UK (32%). Again, Switzerland was referenced by twice as many Indians for its scenery, likely because it is frequently used within Bollywood films.

About one third of respondents indicated Spain and Switzerland as destinations with good recreation. Similarly, the UK, Switzerland, and Spain are perceived by approximately 30% of respondents as “great fun”. Often, recreational activities at these destinations are featured in Bollywood movies, enhancing Indian’s perceived image of the country in which they witness the activity. For example, the scuba diving, sky diving, and *Running with the Bulls* in Spain are featured in *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*, likely enhancing Indian’s perception of Spain as ‘great fun’ and a destination with good recreation.

Again, the UK, Switzerland, and Spain all rank highest among the ‘things to see’ category, with a significant portion of Indian’s indicating that each of these countries have things to do and see (25-40%). This study also found that over 35% of respondents perceived Greece, Italy, and the UK as excellent cultural sites.

Overall, it is seen that countries in the Top 5 list in unaided recall are cited most often and in multiple categories (Figure 1). They are perceived to be destinations that offer a rich and varied palate of places to see and activities to do. Furthermore, as seen in Figure 2, they also have a very low ranking in the category of ‘no image.’ The strength of the perceived image of the UK, Spain, and Switzerland is likely due to the prevalence of these top three attribute-rich locations as backdrops for many Bollywood films. Because exposure to these settings is high in Bollywood films, Indian viewers can formulate stronger opinions of their perceptions of these countries.

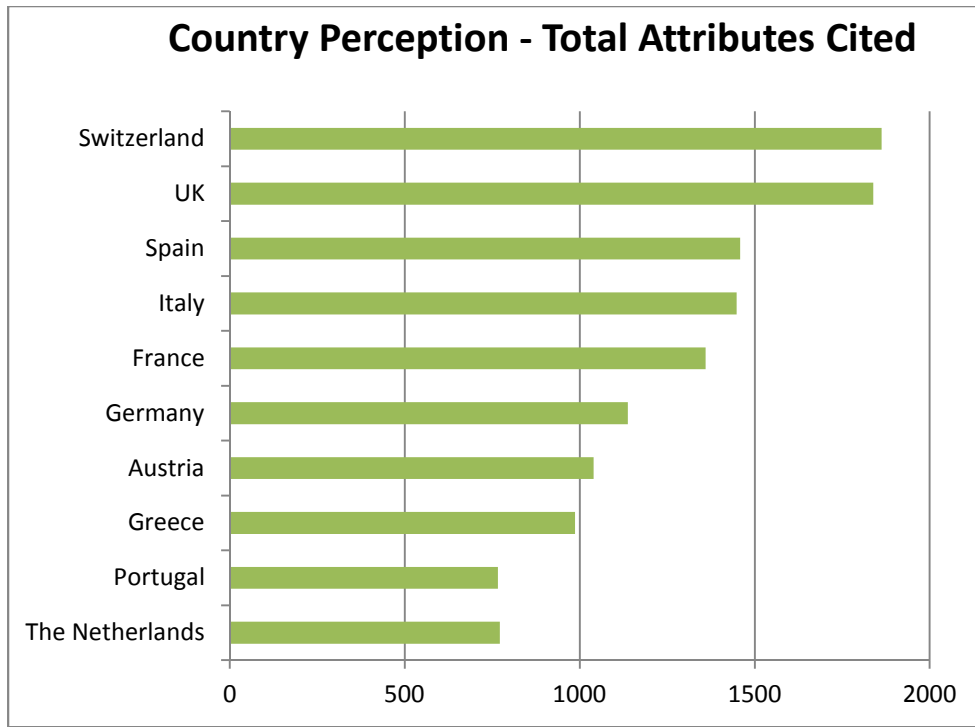


Figure 1. Total attributes cited by country

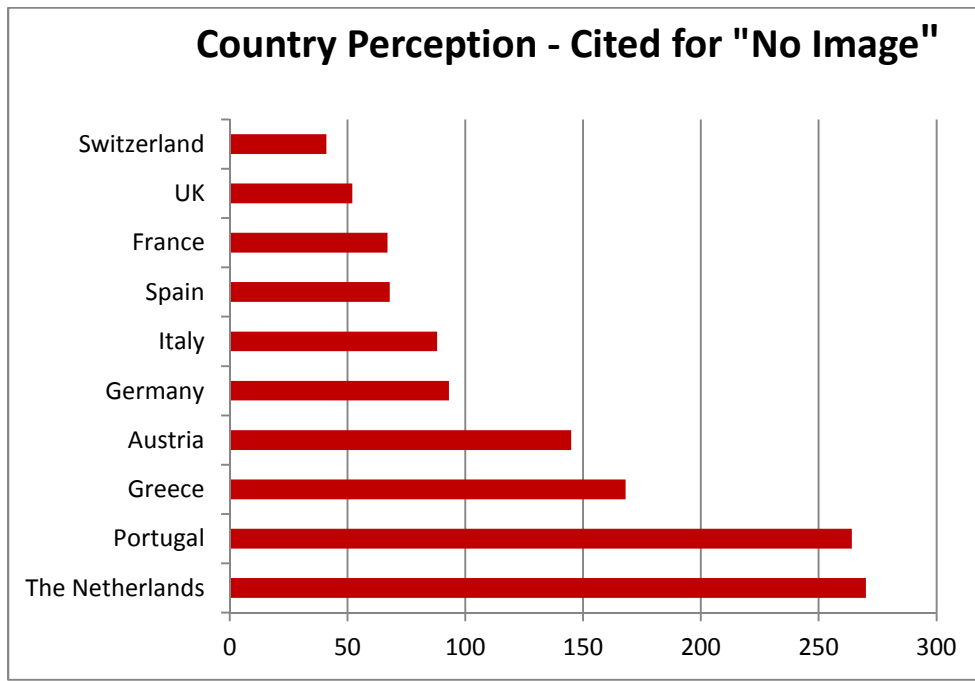


Figure 2. Countries cited for 'no image'.

Summary and Implications

The findings of this study are consistent with the literature. Hudson and Ritchie (2006a, 2006b) have pointed out that some films are more successful than others in inducing tourism. They have also identified some critical factors that contribute to destination promotion. If the story line and the site are inter-linked, the audience is more likely to be emotionally involved with the film (Tooke & Baker, 1996). The box-office success of a film can be a good predictor of movie-induced tourism (Grihault, 2003). It seems that the popularity of Spain with Bollywood movie fans as a result of a single recent blockbuster hit (*Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*) supports both of these contentions. Filmed primarily in Spain, the film played as a full length advertisement for Spanish Tourism, featuring the Bollywood actors participating in the *La Tomatina* Festival and the *Running of the Bulls* in Pamplona. Though not financing the film, the Spanish tourism board contributed location support and an additional \$660,000 in subsidies (Munshi, 2012). Since the release of the film in the Indian market, Spain witnessed a marked increase in Indian tourist, increasing numbers by 65% from 2011 to 2012 (Munshi, 2012). Subsequently, the movie boosted Spanish tourism directly from India by more than 30%, especially in locations shown in the film (Harjani, 2011).

Repeating exposure to the destination would lead to a higher level of engagement, familiarity, attachment, and identification. The popularity of Switzerland, UK, and France with Bollywood audiences is not surprising, given the number of movies that have showcased these countries over the decades, starting with the 1960's. Furthermore, many of these Bollywood movies were blockbuster hits in India.

Alarming, 35% of respondents said that they had 'no image' of Portugal or the Netherlands as tourism destinations (Figure 2). Though the scenery in Portugal is similar to its neighboring country of Spain, this effect is likely because no major blockbuster Bollywood hit has been filmed to date in Portugal. Similarly, no major Bollywood blockbuster has been filmed in the Netherlands to date, thus the image of the country has not been portrayed to most Indian Bollywood viewers.

Interestingly, Portugal has seemed to take a cue from the success of its neighboring country. PicturePortugal signed an agreement with a Mumbai company for the production of Indian films in Portugal in the hopes of spurring tourism growth of Indians to Portugal (New Protocol with Bollywood, 2012), a country of which most Indians currently have little to no perceived image. Indian visitor numbers are low, at around 13,000 annually (Dev, 2012). Depending on the success of future Bollywood movies filmed in Portugal, future research can compare and contrast Indian perceptions from the current study with the future.

Though featured in past Bollywood films, countries such as Greece, Austria, and the Netherlands have yet to be featured within a successful Bollywood blockbuster, or have failed to be identified as the correct country. For example, *Silsila*, directed by the famous Yash Chopra, was not a box office success, but since has risen to cult status among Bollywood viewers (Jha, 2011). Filmed partially in the Netherlands, the scenes of the Keukenhof Tulip Gardens are intertwined with mountains covered in snow with the main characters running about, potentially confusing the audience with images similar to those shot in Switzerland. Likely due to the confusion of country identity, the Netherlands has a high prevalence of Indian Bollywood viewers rating 'no opinion/image'. Similarly, multiple Bollywood films have featured Grecian backdrops, including *Chalte Chalte*, *Tashan*, and *Wanted*, though only one was commercially successful – *Wanted* reached blockbuster status as the highest grossing film in Bollywood in 2009. It is likely that the limited exposure of Greece in films has contributed to the lack of image among Indian viewers.

Looking at the graph of 'no image' countries (Figure 2), it is evident that those countries with little to no blockbuster Bollywood movie exposure were noted as 'no image/opinion' more often than those frequently featured in Bollywood films, or in major Bollywood blockbusters. Taken together, the two graphs (Figure 1 and Figure 2) seem to be an inverse of each other, with countries high on one list, being low on the other.

Conclusions

This study makes a strong and unique contribution to the literature on movie-induced tourism. First, Bollywood movies, as a major global movie genre, have not been addressed in the literature. Second, few studies have examined the impact of outbound tourism from India as major trend in global tourism. Third, no studies have linked multiple movies to tourist perceptions of multiple attributes of destinations in multiple countries. The current study is the first one to address these three major gaps in the literature.

The findings of this study suggest that perceived destination image of European countries is strongly influenced by Bollywood films among a large segment of the Indian population. As noted earlier, through immersion in Bollywood films, Indian moviegoers vicariously experience an alternate fantasy world set in Switzerland or France within Bollywood films (Nayar, 1997). Thus, many viewers become immersed in a fantasy film world and use the portrayal of the country on film as a representation of what that country offers in reality. This is consistent with the assertion by Macionis (2004), that the two primary

motivators for traveling to screened locations are novelty and fantasy. Indeed, Tagliabue (2010) has discussed how many Indian tourists in Switzerland re-enact scenes from Bollywood movies while touring the Swiss Alps, literally acting out their fantasies.

Hudson and Ritchie (2006a) have shown that if destinations proactively engage in efforts with movie producers and studios to film at their location, it can result in successful film tourism. As Bollywood films seem to have such a significant influence on perceived image and travel intentions of Indian viewers, it is critical for destination marketers to concern themselves with Bollywood films in order to tap into an emergent affluent market of Indian tourists.

Limitations and Future Studies

Though a large sample was obtained, this study utilized a convenience sample to gather data. Thus, the findings of this study may not be generalizable to the entire Indian population. Future studies should utilize a random sampling procedure to gather a sample more representative of the entire population. Additionally, no verification procedures were utilized to check perceptions or travel behavior; the survey simply asked respondents to specify personal perceptions, intentions, and behavior, which could have been exaggerated, understated, or incorrectly recorded. Adding more specific questions in future data collection could aid in the verification of the influences of media on travel intentions and image perceptions.

This study was exploratory and descriptive. Future studies should use a more sophisticated empirical design, providing for deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Future studies could use a longitudinal design to look at how perceptions of destination image vary over the years as more and more Bollywood movies are filmed abroad. Additionally, the study design can be adapted for use in other Asian countries to see how Bollywood films influence the destination perceptions of other Asian populations and compare the effects to the results identified in this research. Furthermore, the scope of the study can be expanded to analyze the perception of worldwide destinations featured in Bollywood movies, including the United States, Malaysia, Australia, and New Zealand.

As increasing numbers of Indians travel worldwide, future studies can examine if Bollywood movies play a lesser or greater role in motivating Indians to travel to specific destinations. As movie producers shift location shooting to Spain, Portugal, and other countries, the country rankings found in this study will certainly change. For example, the impact of one movie as a motivation to visit Spain is likely to fade over time. Future studies can examine these issues.

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