

FILM TOURISM IN THE PROMOTION OF SELECTED TOURIST DESTINATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Film tourism is a phenomenon which is not very well known but developing together with new film productions and people's increasing interest in this area. The film is to some extent a new promotion tool which uses a filmed image to show places and stories on purpose and in a way which is adjusted to the audience. This can later encourage people to go to a certain destination.

The aim of the article was to find out whether film tourism influenced the promotion of selected tourist destinations. It was done by means of the method of diagnostic survey with the use of the technique of a standardized questionnaire. The results of the research in reference to film tourism in the promotion of tourist destinations indicate that it is a phenomenon that should be further promoted. It is because nearly 50% of the respondents encountered the term "film tourism".

Key words: promotion, film tourism, tourist destination


INTRODUCTION

Film tourism has a huge potential and the area of research on this phenomenon, which is emerging now, reflects its interdisciplinarity [Beeton 2010]. Film tourism is of the interest of tourism sciences (investigating the effects of growth, management), cultural geography (where focus is put on landscape, the nature, culture of a particular place), psychology (social psychology and neuropsychology), marketing (watching customers' behaviour, the influence of brand, image and promotion) or film and media studies (cinematography, film theory, media studies) [Beeton 2011]. The phenomenon of visiting places known from the screen is called set-jetting. Its goal is above all to reach locations where one's favourite films are set, search for their atmosphere and climate or visit the facilities, constructions and areas shown in a film. Out of many definitions of film tourism which are presented in

the source literature, the one stating that film tourism covers tourist flows caused by a film/film production is the most recognized. These flows are related to a particular geographical space of a place, region (landscape, scenery), the location of a film production studio or attributes connected to a specific film or series [Beeton 2005].

Film tourism can be considered as an element of the broadly understood cultural tourism, which is at present a significant factor as far as travelling motivation is concerned. Apart from monuments and historical sites, people are also interested in the aspects of high and popular culture. Apart from tradition, it is also important to get to know the atmosphere of a place. There are numerous definitions which describe culture as the totality of human products, both tangible and intangible ones, which influence people's personalities and their lives. Cultural tourism is developing in various forms, they are: trips to cities, field

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trips, language trips, theme trips and theme routes. The development of new media is of great importance to cultural tourism: using the Internet can give easy access to any kind of products and cultural events [Gaworecki 2007]. The source literature breaks down cultural tourism in many more or less detailed ways. In older publications, there are no greater mentions of film tourism or film art itself as an element of cultural tourism. It happens, however, that a breakdown covers literary tourism, which is a part of high culture tourism. Many films are adaptations of well-known books, so some authors take the liberty of combining both forms in literary-film tourism [Stasiak 2009].

Film tourism can be broken down into [Stasiak 2009]:

- biographical tourism, which is travelling to visit biographical museums of film stars, locations in which they were born, lived and died, locations in which they worked, seeing actors' monuments and memorials, visiting actors', directors' and cinematographers' graves, participating in film festivals as well as meeting with actors, idols, etc.
- film fiction tourism, which is visiting places related to film production, film settings, participating in performances or film workshops, watching films in the natural environment, the so-called open-air cinema, travelling to film theme parks and following film heroes' routes, etc.

Film tourists are tourists whose motivation to travel was triggered by a film. Tourist destinations are exclusively related to places, locations, events and characters promoted on the cinema screen [Gjorgievski and Trpkova 2012]. It is difficult to define a specific group or create a characteristic of a film tourist. People motivated to travel by a film are also people governed by various other motives when they choose a particular tourist destination. Film tourism participants can be divided into three groups:

- film lovers – conscious cultural tourists, having sophisticated taste, preferences and a mind of their own, knowing the ropes of films and filmography, with great knowledge on this topic, travelling the most often individually rather than in a group to get to know places and sites connected to film production and having a desire to experience an adventure related to a film that they have seen.

- school trip participants – the trips are organized, related to the school curriculum and education through getting familiar with film and such aspects as culture, language, history and arts; the trips are related to set books and the participants have a very limited choice as far as the organization and schedule of the trip are concerned.
- mass film tourists – people who are not very much interested in film, but because of a particular film popularity, pushed by fashion and their friends' and family's reviews, which encourage them to go to the cinema, they take into account travelling to a place connected to a film production while they are planning their holidays. Desire to travel can be considered as film-motivated, but people are also frequently influenced by such factors as fashion, willingness to impress friends – to show that they have been in a particular place or seen a famous actor, or the effect of “screen magic” – considering things seen and heard on TV or at the cinema as exceptional [Stasiak 2009].

To encourage potential tourists to visit various film production locations, it is important to promote them. Promotion in tourism is of great importance: it is a significant aspect in the tourist market. It is an element which, while the decisions on the type of services and price are being made, makes it possible to develop a strategy that a producer wants to execute to encourage customers to buy a service, product or trip. One should consider the best combination of promotional activities which will bring the greatest effect. These activities should lead to creating the image of a particular service, place, product so that they will meet customers expectations [Panasiuk 2013]. Showing the advantages of a region and tourist attractions related to a destination makes it possible to build an image of this tourist location as a fashionable place. Promotion can be addressed to various target groups both domestically and abroad, but it can be also addressed to locals and the region employees, namely the people who do not like to travel to remote places, but they look for a holiday destination [Oleksiuk 2009].

Films can offer perfect marketing and promotional opportunities because they work as virtual holiday brochures. A strong film industry also contributes to successful film tourism both domestically and region-

ally. One does not know much about the influence of film on domestic tourism. It is not always possible to estimate how much it is films that impact tourists' decisions and how much it is the other determinants¹.

Getting a promotional effect is often connected to a wider concept of city or town placement. Including a destination in a film is an ultimate placement of a tourist product. Product placement is a new phenomenon and it has been defined as scheduled introduction of products into films or television programmes, which can have a positive influence on consumers' attitudes and behaviours. Product placement increase was caused by a declining effectiveness of traditional advertising techniques. One can think that communication by means of product placement can be more effective, more targeted and more widely perceived than traditional advertising methods. Analogically to how product placement will influence a viewer's attitude to brand, films will have an impact on the destination image if this location plays a role in a film. If a destination image is to have a positive influence on tourists, it has to be shown in an outstanding way and well perceived by viewers. Local authorities are more and more convinced about the advantages of promotion through films. For some locations, such projects can be more beneficial than promotion through billboards and television spots. The effectiveness of such an undertaking depends above all on film attractiveness: the more the viewers like the film, the more eagerly they will go to a particular destination. Such a flow of information can be strengthened by characters presented in a film. One can achieve even greater benefits in the promotion of tourist destinations by combining the beauty of landscapes with acting than by showing an average advertisement already known to tourists [Żemła and Zawadzki 2014].

Film tourism is more and more often perceived as good advertisement of tourist destinations. This is why it has become an element of promotion. With time, it may happen that more people will travel because they will be encouraged by a film, and such a form of promotion will be more and more valued.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The main objective of the research was to find out whether film tourism influenced the promotion of selected tourist destinations. Moreover, the research looked for the answers to the following questions:

- What tourist destination is chosen the most eagerly after watching films?
- What film genre is of the greatest importance to promoting a particular tourist destination?
- What film is chosen the most often as an incentive for going to a particular film tourist destination?
- What sources of information (promotion) influence the decisions on travelling to a particular film tourism destination?
- What were the respondents' motives when they were taking decisions on travelling to a particular film tourism destination?

The research was run from April to August 2018² among people who stayed in Warsaw at that time. Therefore, random sampling was applied in the study. It was done by means of the method of diagnostic survey with the use of the technique of a standardized questionnaire, which was the source of information necessary to accomplish the goal. The study covered 748 people, but after verifying the correctness of questionnaires which had been filled in, 732 respondents were qualified for the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research was done to find out whether film tourism influenced the promotion of selected tourist destinations. Respondents were asked questions concerning film, film tourism and the sources of information influencing promotion.

To make a more effective presentation of the outcomes, the research population was analysed, i.a., from the point of view of the following characteristics: gender, age and income sources.

55% of the respondents were women and 45% were men. The respondents' age was as follows: 3%

¹ www.journals.sagepub.com.

² The survey was partly done by Ms. Katarzyna Tomaszewska.

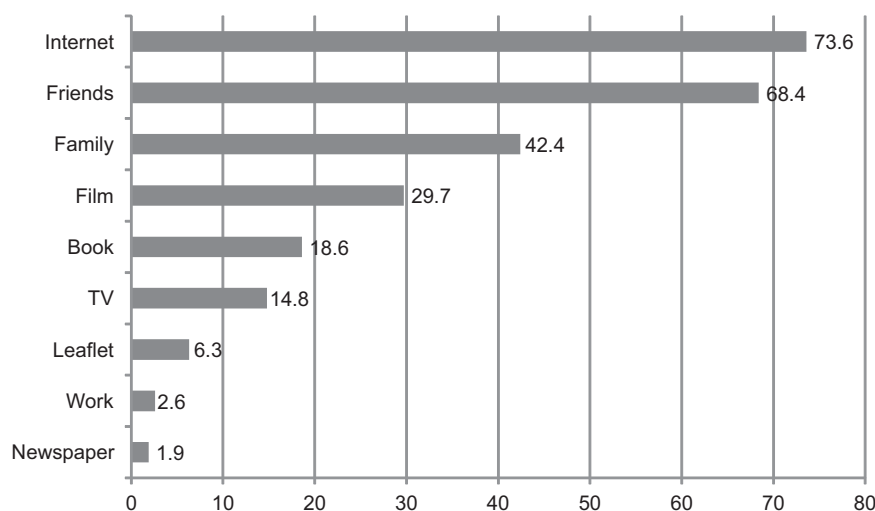
were under 18, 66% were between 18 and 25, 13% were between 26 and 35, 3% were between 36 and 45, and 15% were over 46. Asked about their level of education, the respondents indicated secondary education the most often (52%), which can reflect the fact that they were mostly young people. The fewest people declared elementary education (4%) because a part of the respondents were under 18, and NVQ (4%). Fewer than a half of the respondents had university education (40%). As far as monthly income per person in a household is concerned, nearly ¾ of the respondents declared that it was over PLN 1,001, 24% indicated that it was between PLN 500 and PLN 1,000, while 4% said it was below PLN 500.

Asked if they had ever heard of or tried film tourism, more than a half of the respondents (58.1%) answered that they had not heard of this term, which meant they had not used this form of tourism. This may be caused by, i.a., a lack of information on the development or opportunity of travelling to film production locations. While visiting a particular place, many people could have been unaware of the fact that they were visiting a place where a particular film was set. However, 41.9% of the respondents knew the term “film tourism” and they had happened to visit such

a place, which indicates that they were aware of the fact that such a phenomenon existed. Among those who declared that they had tried film tourism at least once in their life (41.9%), there were more people between 36 and 45 years of age and they accounted for ¾ of the respondents. People under 25 years of age were the smallest group.

To find the determinants of the decision to travel to a film production site, the respondents were asked what sources of information influenced their choice of destination. The detailed data are presented in Figure 1.

The Internet appeared to be of the greatest importance for the respondents as regards the source of information (promotion) contributing to a desire to travel to a film tourism destination. While looking for a travel destination, many tourists seek information on the Internet first because they want to know the opinions on a particular place and whether it is worth visiting in general. This answer was indicated by nearly ¾ of the respondents. That is why the Internet is an appropriate medium where a particular location should be promoted. Friends were slightly less important as regards the decision to travel. This answer was selected by 68.4% of the respondents.



A respondent was allowed to indicate more than one answer.

Fig. 1. The influence of sources of information (promotion) on the decisions on travelling to a particular film tourism destination (%)

Source: The author’s own research outcomes.

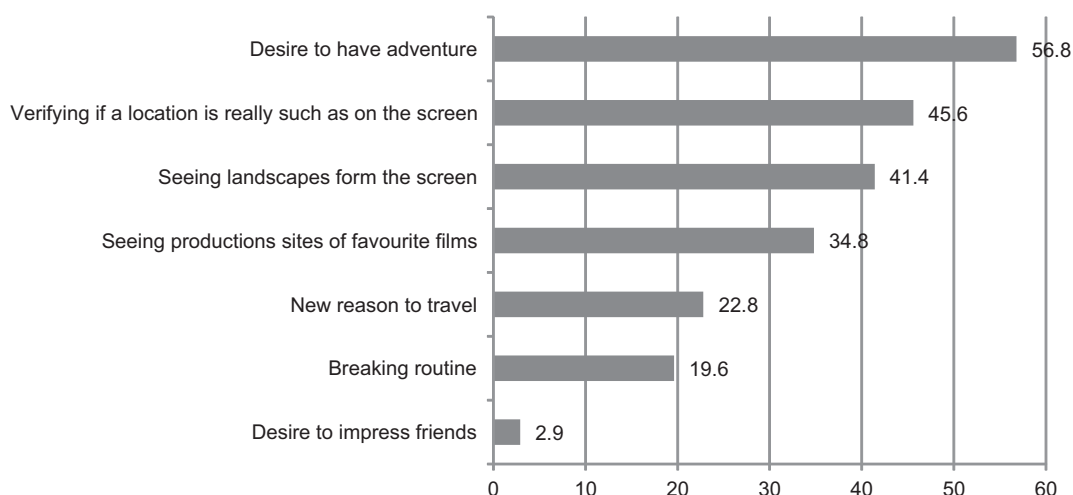
Family was also indicated as a significant determinant of this decision. It suggests that the Internet has the greatest impact on people at present. The responses taken into account less frequently included film, book and TV – these information carriers were considered by the respondents as less significant to their decision. Leaflet, newspaper and work had the least value for the respondents. At present electronic carriers are more significant and there is a greater chance that they will convey the message than in case of paper ones. That is why a leaflet or information in a newspaper are not so important. A part of the respondents also added that their dreams, interests and location sightseeing values influenced their decision to travel. Moreover, the majority of the respondents (90%) thought that film tourism promotion was not sufficient.

Another aspect of the survey covered finding out what motivated the respondents to decide to travel to a particular tourist destination and what films and tourist destinations the respondents considered to be attractive as regards film tourism. This is presented in Figure 2.

The motives of journeys are one of the important determinants of choosing the destination. These are the desire to explore, impress and experience something new that make people more interested in trav-

elling. Internal and external motivations push tourists towards new locations and make them look for unusual experiences. Asked what motivated them to choose a destination connected to a film production site, the respondents the most frequently indicated the desire to experience an adventure. Slightly less frequently the respondents answered that they wanted to verify if a location was really such as on the screen and to see the landscapes from the screen. The smallest number of respondents answered that they chose a particular destination to impress their friends.

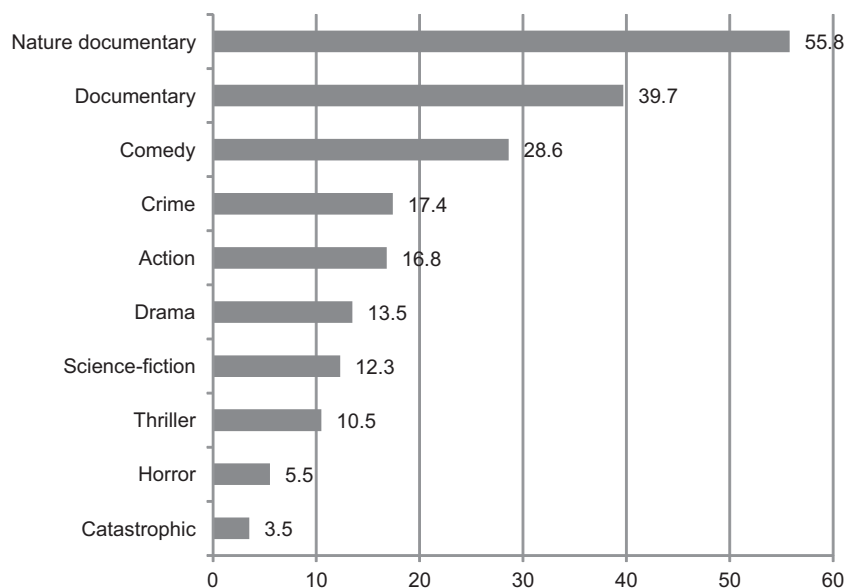
A film genre is of great importance as regards showing an interesting destination in a film. In some films, one can see fictional locations; in other – beautiful natural landscapes or historical places. Not each film genre presents what is thought to be attractive as far as film tourism is concerned (Fig. 3). The research showed that nature documentaries encouraged people to travel to film production locations the most. It is the desire to see the landscape, scenery in which a film was set, locations with attractive nature that made people travel. Other genres also selected by the respondents were documentaries and comedies. Films which were set in reality are very popular, that is why documentaries are top-rated. Fictional places are often located in the real world, which gives tourists a possibility to see them live. Genres such as action film, drama, science



A respondent was allowed to indicate more than one answer.

Fig. 2. Motives of travelling to a particular film tourism destination (%)

Source: The author's own research outcomes.



A respondent was allowed to indicate more than one answer.

Fig. 3. Film genres encouraging people to travel (%)

Source: The author's own research outcomes.

fiction film were not frequently selected because in those films, the location of a place is usually not the most important aspect. A film is often made only in a set which is especially prepared for this particular film. The genres that were the least frequently selected included thriller, horror and catastrophic films. This can be caused by the fact that fear does not necessarily encourage people to travel to a particular destination. The survey also checked what film genres were preferred by women and men. The result is not surprising: $\frac{3}{4}$ of women chose nature documentaries, documentaries and comedies. Men preferred science fiction or horror films more often than women.

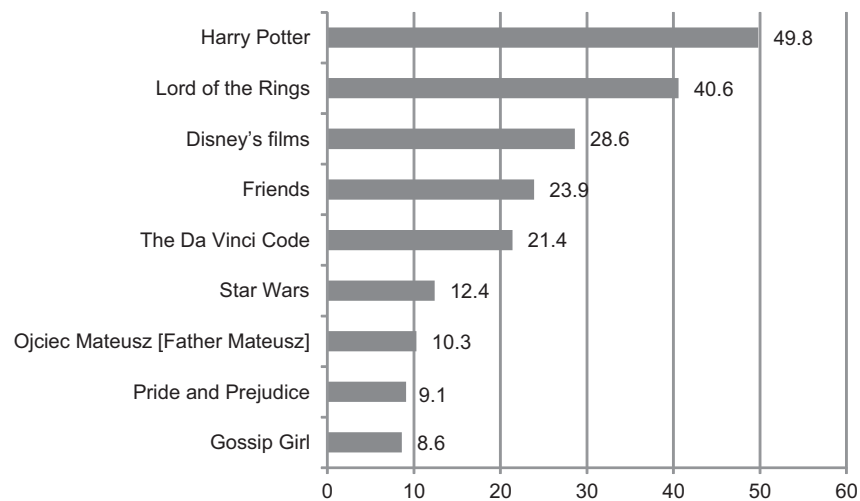
There are many popular films which have already encouraged or will encourage tourists to see their production sites. The respondents had a choice of several examples of films belonging to those perceived as the most attractive ones related to film tourism. The detailed data are presented in Figure 4.

“Harry Potter” and “Lord of the Rings” were the most often selected by the respondents as the films which encouraged them to travel to their production locations. These films are also mentioned in publications on film tourism. The UK and New Zealand

profited from the popularity of these films. Disney's films were also valued. Maybe because images presented in a cartoon sometimes look similar to real locations or maybe due to the popularity of Disneyland. The series “Friends” was next. It gained numerous fans all over the world and the threads of the film plot were an inspiration for many other films and series. “The Da Vinci Code” was also selected by a considerable number of people: it was popular among film tourists due to interesting locations in Italy and France. The other films, which gained less attention among respondents included “Star Wars”, “Ojciec Mateusz” [“Father Mateusz”], “Pride and Prejudice” and “Gossip Girl”.

In the survey, there were several examples of film tourist destinations selected according to film tourism popularity. The listed countries were the background for numerous film productions and the stories presented in films were set, i.a., in these locations. The data on this aspect are presented in Figure 5.

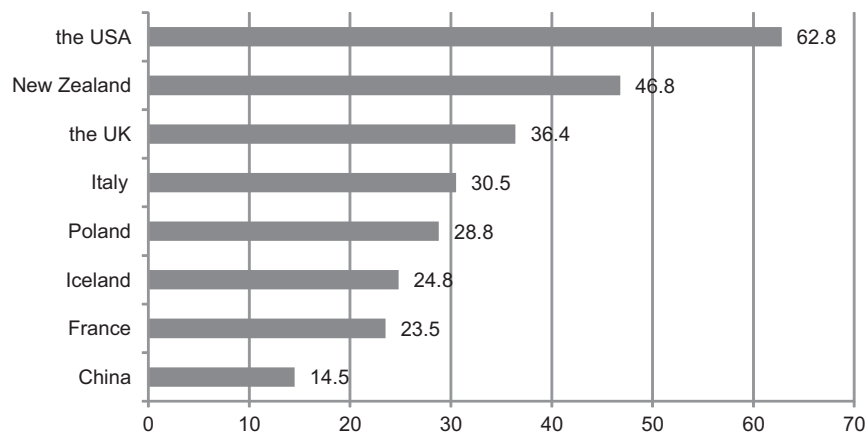
The USA was the most often selected country. The USA is a location where numerous worldwide popular films were produced. American films are the best known and the most frequently watched ones,



A respondent was allowed to indicate more than one answer.

Fig. 4. Films chosen by film tourists (%)

Source: The author's own research outcomes.



A respondent was allowed to indicate more than one answer.

Fig. 5. Film tourism destinations (%)

Source: The author's own research outcomes.

especially in Poland. New Zealand was another country attractive as far as film tourism is concerned. It was probably due to the film “Lord of the Rings”. The UK was also popular thanks to the famous film “Harry Potter”. Other frequently, but to a smaller extent, chosen countries included Italy, Poland, Iceland and France. The least frequently, the respondents selected China as a country which they would like to visit.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the research referring to film tourism in the promotion of tourist destinations indicate that it is a phenomenon that should further be promoted. It is because fewer than a half of the respondents (41.9%) had heard of it. This can be influenced by new film productions and the fact that people are more and more interested in new forms of tourism. The popularity

of film as an advertisement of tourist destinations is increasing and it is becoming a recognizable promotion tool. Film productions can bring huge benefits to a country in which they are made.

The research made it possible to find out whether film tourism has an influence on the selection of tourist destinations. It is not significant because this form of tourism has been still developing. The USA appeared to be the most eagerly chosen destination, and the target group which is the most influenced by film covers people over 35 years old. Nature documentaries are the most significant in promotion and “Harry Potter” is the film which was the most frequently selected as the reason to travel. The desire to experience an adventure was the most frequently chosen tourists’ motivation.

However, one should bear in mind that the study makes it possible to show only the behaviours of consumers who are part of the widely understood film tourism, which means that it should not be treated as research representative for the whole population of Polish consumers.

It should be also pointed out that film tourism can be significant to the local and regional social and economic development of selected areas of tourist reception, being at the same time a new contribution to the research on the developing film tourism field, including in Poland [Tucki 2016].

The issues presented led to the conclusion that film tourism can be included in promotion, but it needs promulgating to a greater extent.

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TURYSTYKA FILMOWA W PROMOCJI WYBRANYCH DESTYNACJI TURYSTYCZNYCH

STRESZCZENIE

Turystyka filmowa jest zjawiskiem dość mało znanym, lecz rozwijającym się w miarę powstawania nowych produkcji filmowych i zainteresowania ludzi tą dziedziną. Film jest w pewnym stopniu nowym narzędziem promocji, wykorzystującym nakręcony obraz do pokazania w sposób zamierzony i dostosowany do widowni miejsca i historii, które później mogą zachęcić ludzi do wyjazdu do danej miejscy.

Celem artykułu było określenie, czy turystyka filmowa wpływa na promocję wybranych destynacji turystycznych. Posłużono się metodą sondażu diagnostycznego z wykorzystaniem techniki ankiety według standaryzowanego kwestionariusza. Wyniki przeprowadzonych badań odnoszące się do turystyki filmowej w promocji destynacji turystycznych wskazują na to, iż jest to zjawisko, które należy jeszcze bardziej promować, gdyż niespełna 50% badanych spotkało się z pojęciem turystyki filmowej.

Słowa kluczowe: promocja, turystyka filmowa, destynacja turystyczna