

Original Research Article

An Investigation of Film-Induced Tourism in Iranian Cinema

(Case Study: The 43rd Fajr Film Festival)

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Abstract | In today's world, cinema is a multilayered and impactful industrial phenomenon. In recent years, the association between cinema and tourism has never ceased to attract the attention of filmmakers to film-induced tourism and tourist destinations. By fostering an appropriate image and mentality, many destinations have managed to attract tourists and boost the industry. The present study employed a descriptive-analytical method to investigate film-induced tourism in Iranian cinema. A set of observations was used to collect the data, and the Soda-ye-Simorgh section of the 43rd Fajr Film Festival was selected as the case study. The results of this study show that film-induced tourism has been overlooked in Iran, and travel and tourism have not received much attention in most films, or films do not have the necessary capacity to motivate the audience to travel to a specific destination. Only two films, "Whisper My Name" (in Persian Ziba Sedayam Kon) and "Sonsuz", have managed to blend attractive factors to intrigue the desire to travel in their form and content, by creating appropriate images, desirable characterization, and a pleasant narrative. It implies that more attention should be paid to the relationship between cinema and tourism in Iran.

Keywords | *Film-Induced Tourism, Cinema, Fajr Film Festival, Observation, Iran.*

Introduction | With the advent of technological development, new media such as cinema have emerged (Kohanpour et al., 2023, 126). Serving as a medium, cinema is an intricate phenomenon (consisting of cultural, artistic, and social dimensions), including a variety of works, roles, and functions. Such an art or industry has had many alterations and transformations over the past century, and the consumption of its products, regardless of whether being a supreme art or just an entertaining and recreational industry, is a cultural matter and its consumption is regarded as cultural (Mirfardi et al., 2020, 2). Cinema and television, as the first and most prevalent visual media, play a prominent role in all knowledge-expanding systems. Cinema reflects a nation's assets and needs, ideals, social conditions, and lifestyles, and for this reason, issues such as power, politics, economy, culture, and thought are better portrayed in cinema (Shirini et al., 2021, 8). Films are a significant part of popular

culture. Apart from that, going to the cinema and watching television series are some of the most important leisure activities across the world (Najjarzadeh et al., 2022, 118).

Tourism is currently an impactful factor contributing to expanding cross-nations and contributes to job opportunities in the economic sector and the creation of socio-cultural interactions (Pourmahabadian & Afshari, 2021, 53). Tourism requires effective tools in different fields to introduce, promote, and develop itself. Photos, films, brochures, and environmental advertisements are all efforts to show things better and let them be seen (Farzizadeh & Panahi, 2022, 215). When it comes to marketing a tourist destination, media, especially films, serve as a way to promote tourism and make tourist destinations known. Film-induced tourism is a new subject in tourism studies (Najjarzadeh et al., 2022, 118). The development of cinema and television entertainment has sped up the rapid growth of film-induced tourism in recent years (Teng, 2021, 2588). The impact of film on consumers' lives is so great that it has influenced the choice of tourism

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destinations. The images that films present remain for decades; they bring fame; they create identity; and since the monotony found in other types of advertising media, such as print, is not evident in films, it can better win people's trust. The effect of a film on a city, province, or country can be as strong as an advertisement being watched by millions of people. However, targeted tourism promotional activities cannot encourage the attendance number of spectators (Salehdoust & Tajzadeh Namin, 2016, 190). Film and cinema have a special place in human life today, and many destinations have been able to attract more tourists by taking advantage of the film and cinema industry and have promoted the tourism industry in the destinations and their cultural, social, and economic demography. Numerous films have boosted a new tourist destination in recent years. Therefore, it is essential to examine to what extent tourism in Iran has been able to unlock the potential of cinema to advertise, market, introduce, and promote destinations, how much this idea has been welcomed by filmmakers, and how these two important cultural phenomena are associated. This article aims to examine the position of tourism in Iranian cinema and a thematic analysis of film-induced tourism in Iran. The author analyzed this issue by watching the films of the Soda-ye-Simorgh section of the 43rd Fajr Film Festival in Bahman 1403 (2025) and examined the connection between the tourism industry and cinema in this case study.

Research Background

Movies can provide tourists with vast data in the shortest time frame. While they are watching and enjoying a movie, they can observe tourist attractions, learn about the weather, the cultural conditions, and many different factors, and decide whether they want to travel to that location or not (Hosseini & Moshiri Langroudi, 2024, 16). Various studies have examined the impact of media and films on travel and tourism.

Drawing upon a set of data from 88 countries from 1996 to 2020, Kwabi et al. (2023) examined the impact of media on tourism development. They concluded that in countries where the media is less censored, tourism development has faced less income inequality. The study concluded that a favorable media environment would promote tourism development, while factors such as media bias, harassment of journalists, and media corruption hamper its development.

Jović (2015) examined the role of diplomacy and media diplomacy in tourism development in Croatia and concluded that diplomacy plays an important role in tourism growth and that more attention needs to be paid to this issue.

Mekonen (2016) studied the role of media in promoting tourism in Ethiopia, where there are 12 UNESCO World Heritage Sites and is rich in natural and cultural attractions, but many of which are underutilized. In this study, which

employed a mixed method, the results showed a large gap between the country's potential and its actual use. The study highlighted that the underlying cause of the promotion of the destination was the insufficient media.

Macionis (2004) designed the factors of attraction and motivation for film tourists in a model. He introduced factors such as place (scenery, landscape), character (actors, people), and performance (subject, genre) as attracting factors and considered internal stimuli such as ego enhancement, social interactions, credibility, imagination, nostalgia, pilgrimage, experience, novelty, and escape as motivating factors.

Yahya zadeh et al. (2023) presented a model for the development of the tourism industry with an emphasis on the role of media management in their research. Using a mixed-method approach, the researchers investigated the opinions of 15 professors and experts in the qualitative phase and scrutinized 200 tourism managers in Mazandaran province in the quantitative phase. The results of the study showed that the main components that affect the tourism industry include advertising, service quality, policy-making, participation of local people, tourism culture, appropriate use of the environment, income generation in the tourism destination, and infrastructure facilities were identified as

Gharaati et al. (2023) examined the views of experts and media people in this regard to identify the relationship between media diplomacy and the dimensions of the tourism industry. They examined six indicators of the tourism industry, including foreign investment, production of health tourism content, brand of urban symbols, soft power, sense of security, and urban identification. The results of the analysis indicated that the dimensions of media diplomacy have an impact on the tourism industry.

In their study, Moussavi Neghabi et al. (2021) examined the effect of film nostalgia on tourism marketing by examining the case of the film "What Time Is It in Your World?". The findings of this study showed that the nostalgia of this film had a positive effect on the motivation to travel, creating and maintaining tourism attractions.

Najjarzadeh et al. (2022) examined how film-induced tourism can influence the perceived image of the destination and the motivation to travel to East Azerbaijan Province. The results of this study indicated that this effect was significant.

A study in the UK showed that 8 out of 10 Britons got their holiday travel ideas from movies, and 1 out of 5 people had traveled to a location in a movie (Hahm & Wang, 2011, 168). Various studies have shown that many films have changed the behavior of tourists regarding tourist destinations or altered their attitudes towards destinations. Some of these films are:

"Deliverance", directed by John Boorman in 1972, caused a boom in rafting on the River in the US state of Georgia.

"Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade", directed by Steven

Spielberg, in 1989, caused a boom in the ancient site of Petra in Jordan in the year after the film's release. The site was identified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site four years before the film was released.

"Braveheart", directed by Mel Gibson in 1995, contributed to a 300% surge in tourism in the first year after its release in the filming location, Scotland.

"Brassed Off", directed by Mark Herman (1996), raised the number of visitors to the small town of Grimthorpe by 50%.

"Saving Private Ryan", directed by Steven Spielberg (1998), increased the number of American tourists to Normandy by 40%.

"Mission Impossible 2", directed by John Woo (2000), which was released the same year, increased visits to Sydney's national park by 200%.

"Gladiator", directed by Ridley Scott (2000), turns Ait Ben Haddou, between the Sahara Desert and Morocco, into a tourist attraction where the film's hero is sold into slavery.

"Cast Away", directed by Robert Zemeckis (2000), is about a man who is stranded on a remote island after his plane crashes. The film was shot on the tropical island of Monuriki in Fiji, which has since become a tourist destination.

"Motorcycle Dairies", directed by Walter Salles (2004), is about Ernesto Che Guevara's journey in the 1950s. The stories are set in countries such as Chile, Colombia, Peru, and Argentina, the film explores the transformations that travel can bring to a person's perspective and attitude.

"The Da Vinci Code", directed by Ron Howard (2006), set a new attendance record at the Louvre in Paris and Rosslyn Chapel in Scotland.

Sean Penn's "Into the Wild" (2007), based on Christopher McCandless's travels in North America and his life in the Alaskan wilderness, changed the perception about the region and highlighted the importance of preserving its pristine nature.

"Slumdog Millionaire", 2008, made the Zarrawi neighborhood in Mumbai a tourist attraction. However, it attracted much criticism for its portrayal of India.

Peter Jackson's "The Lord of the Rings (series)" changed the perception of tourists towards New Zealand, which used to be a low-traffic area of Australia before the films. Between 1998 and 2003, there was a 10% rise in the number of tourists from the UK each year (Busby & Klug, 2001; Beeton, 2006; Nanjangud, 2019; Macionis, 2004).

Theoretical Foundation

• The cinematic medium

Media literally means conveying and modifying a means for transmitting information, ideas, and thoughts of individuals to establish communication (Zarei, 2024, 363). In social communication sciences, the term media stands for a means of conveying a message from the sender to the receiver

(Karami, 2024, 73). Mass media introduce methods of mass communication by which information, ideas, support, advertisements, works of art, entertainment, and other forms of expression are transmitted to a large audience. In the most general sense, mass media include printing, radio, television, film, video, the Internet, etc. (Yahya zadeh et al., 2023, 112). Since the emergence of media, they have had different and new functions (Sadati, 2014, 101). They are among the phenomena that overshadow and affect all aspects of human life, and by transmitting new information and exchanging public thoughts and ideas, they have been assumed to play a great role in the path of progress, culture, and human civilization (Karami, 2024, 72). The media plays an important role in modern societies, being the main source of information for most citizens on issues from international to local levels (Seraj & Emamifar, 2024, 63). People use the social, political, economic, educational, and entertainment content of the media day in and day out. The current generation of society has grown up with the media, and in today's information and communication world, they receive a large part of the culture, values, and norms of their society from the media (Soltani et al., 2023, 152). The role of mass media in all aspects of life has become a complex issue in the modern world. This is due to both the role of the media in the modern world and the impact of the modern world on the mass media. Therefore, a reciprocal interaction is seen between social forms and the media (Talebi Dalir & Akbari, 2015, 127). The media offer a means of conveying information in general and the ideas and thoughts of their owners in particular in society. In the modern world, the media is an objective and practical intermediary in the process of establishing communication. Man needed the media to communicate and create an agreement between minds with his fellow human beings, he created the media (Zarei, 2024, 363). In today's society, an individual can only obtain the best and most reliable facilities and means of living for group life when he has sufficient information, correct policies, and healthy thoughts and beliefs, and this can be achieved by using the media (Karami, 2024, 72).

Cinema is one of the significant cultural and social pillars in every society. The growth of cinema in many countries has caused this art industry to play a key role in their gross domestic product and economic growth (Amini & Nekooeezadeh, 2021, 28). Cinema is a space replete with the illusion of reality, something imaginary, fabricated, and mental, or something objective and real, reflecting reality, and such dual approaches can affect spectators (Zinalabedini, 2022, 48). With its wide audience and effective techniques, cinema can play an effective role in representing the other and cultural relations between social groups (Moradi et al., 2013, 132). Cinema is a tool for storytelling.

It is also one of the most important and accessible media for exploring the world, engaging, and evoking human emotions and feelings is memory and imagination. Now it is the time when cinema and film are part of human habitation (Azad Aramaki & Khaleghpanah, 2011, 72).

• Film-induced

In the modern and post-modern era, rather than philosophers and university professors, the ones who determine the perceptions, orientations, and lifestyles of individuals while contributing to the nature of social life are actors, producers of artistic goods, and investors in the field of art (cinema) and the media (Azad Aramaki, 1999, 7). Nowadays, the tourism industry is associated with the media and global communications. By influencing behavioral variables, the media can draw the attraction of domestic and foreign tourists to various destinations. The media provide information about the possibility of traveling and its pros and cons by presenting textual, audio, and visual information to enable them to decide on this trip easily (Gharaati et al., 2023, 176). For a destination to be successful in competing with other tourist destinations, it must first attract the attention of potential tourists who decide to travel (Enright & Newton, 2004, 778). Beaton (2006) believes that the use of media can influence people's travel behaviors and, for instance, determine what activities people do, what food they eat, which hotels they stay in, and how they communicate with other people (Nematbakhsh Abkenar et al., 2021, 36). On this basis, a concept called media-oriented tourism has been formed. Media-oriented tourism includes visiting a set of places that have become famous due to their association with books, authors, television programs, and films (Busby & Klug, 2001, 316). Iwashita defines popular media-induced tourism as the association of places that have become famous or important as tourist destinations with those popular cultural products that have been widely disseminated to the general public. Examples Iwashita refers to include the locations for films or literary works, places introduced by composers, and places associated with television programs (Macionis, 2007, 27).

Tourist destinations can indirectly contribute to the development of the destination image in a variety of ways, such as the media and imagery in literature, works of art, movies, and television programs (Cohen-Hattab & Kerber, 2004, 63). The power of film in imagery and its ability to display tourist attractions can play an important role in attracting tourist attention (Cruz & Lacap, 2023). Unique and attractive features such as sound, image, music, color, and movement. TV series and movies make films always more effective than other means of mass communication in increasing the chance of encouraging tourists to opt for tourist destinations. In addition, they can generate a positive image in the minds of tourists (Alizadeh et al., 2024, 220). The placement of

destinations in films creates a positive mental image of them; destinations act differently from competitors and create a long-term interest in travel. This is in line with the idea that films, by familiarizing spectators with the destination as a commodity, encourage a potential market to visit it (Saltik et al., 2011, 44). Film-induced tourism is one of the experiences that has been considered since the 1990s, and some countries have actively tried to promote it. The United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, and Korea are among the countries where films have been a boon to their tourism industry (Nematbakhsh Abkenar et al., 2021, 34). Film-induced tourism is related to visits made to a tourist destination due to the successful release of a film or series in that particular location (Beeton, 2005, 9). Connell (2012) defines film-induced tourism as a type of tourism activity that intrigues interest in visiting a specific destination following a moving image in a cinema or on television using audio-visual systems and other broadcasting and display platforms.

According to Beeton (2006), film-induced tourism falls into the following categories: on-location film-induced tourism (such as film-induced tourism as the main motive for travel, film-induced tourism as part of a vacation, etc.), commercial (film-made attractions, film tours, etc.), misplaced locations (film-induced tourism in locations where filming is needed to have taken place), off-location (theme parks, visits to film studios, etc.), and one-off events (film screenings and film festivals) (Moussavi Neghabi et al., 2021, 180).

• Fajr film festival

The Fajr Film Festival is the most prestigious one in Iran, held every year in Bahman in Tehran since 1982 by the Farabi Film Foundation under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. The festival has various sections, of which the Soda-ye-Simorgh section, the Iranian Cinema Competition, has been one of the main and fixed sections of its various periods. In this section, films compete in various fields, and awards (Simorgh) are awarded to the winners. The 43rd edition of the Fajr Film Festival was held in Bahman 1403, and 32 films were present in the Soda-ye-Simorgh section.

Method

The research is descriptive-analytic. This study employed a literature review and document analysis approach to examine the existing reliable documents related to tourism and cinema. The primary data were described descriptively. Data was collected by the researcher in the form of observation over ten days of the 34th Fajr Film Festival (12 Bahman to 21 Bahman 1403 or January 31, 2025 to February 9, 2025) in the Soda-ye-Simorgh section, and by examining the data, analytical inferences were made to examine the position of film-induced tourism in Iran based on the case study. This

attempt to answer this question: What is the relationship between tourism and film in Iranian cinema?. To answer the question, the researcher examined and analyzed the position of travel and tourism in film, the extent of use of tourism infrastructure, and the attracting factors in films for travel and tourism.

Data Analysis

To examine the status of film-induced tourism in Iranian cinema, the data for a descriptive-analytical study were collected through observation. Observation refers to gathering first-hand data from the phenomenon under study through the senses in depth (Karimi et al., 2017, 72). Observation is one of the most significant and effective methods for collecting data in social studies and allows the researcher to examine the phenomenon under study and understand reality directly and based on personal intuition. The films shown in the Soda-ye-Simorgh section of the 43rd Fajr Film Festival were observed, and the analysis was carried out. This study is presented in several sections. First, the films were introduced, and then an analysis was conducted based on three criteria: the status of travel and tourism, the level of use of tourism infrastructure, and the factors attracting travel and tourism (based on the Macionis model) in the films of the Soda-ye-Simorgh section.

• Introduction to movies

The characteristics of the films are shown in Table 1. It can be seen that six films in the genre of sacred defense, nine films in the social genre, ten films in the social drama genre, three films in the social comedy genre, two films in the contemporary historical genre, one film in the fantasy comedy genre, and one film in the historical genre were produced and broadcast. Therefore, the expression of social issues and narratives of sacred defense has had the largest share in these films.

In addition, seventeen of their main locations are in Tehran, four films use rural settings for filming, two films, "Taxidermy" and "Khati", feature nature in a specific way, and the film "Abestan" was filmed next to a river. Location refers to the space in which the film's story is set.

• The status of travel and tourism in the movies

One of the important components of film-induced tourism is the thematic and content analysis of films in terms of tourism and travel. In the films "Daad", "Raha", "Esfand", "Tear of Reedbed", "Moses", "Kill the Game", "Highway Deers", "Deep Crack", "Lonely", "Key role", and "Loli", the issue of travel and tourism is not specifically mentioned in the film. The narrative of travel and tourism in other films is presented in Table 2.

In an analytical study of the place of travel and tourism in films, it is observed that only two films, "Saddam" and Taxidermy, have stories based on travel, and in the rest of the films, travel only forms a small part of the film's narrative. This study is shown in Fig. 1.

Travel and tourism have not been the primary concern of the film's story, except for one film, and in some cases, travel has been underscored or used to move the story forward, and in half of the films, travel has not been mentioned at all. Such an absence highlights that travel and tourism have no place in the stories and scripts of Iranian cinema, and filmmakers show no interest in addressing this issue in the stories and plots of the films for a variety of reasons. In addition, directors have also specifically avoided showing multiple locations in their films.

• Use of travel and tourism infrastructure in the movie

The use of tourism infrastructure or reference to tourism activities in the film is one of the criteria to examine the relationship between the film and tourism. Infrastructures include hotels, travel agencies, airports, and activities such as tour guides, etc. Examining the locations in the films showed that only in the following films, tourism infrastructures, such as hotels, ecotourism, and historical sites, were seen, and in the rest of the films, these locations were not used in the story. The infrastructures and related activities in the films under review are presented in Table 3. It can be seen that only in 9 films, these activities mentioned in some way.

Only in Sad dam, tourism infrastructure is used as the main location, and various characters in the film are active in the field of tourism, such as hotels. In other films, tourism-associated infrastructure is not used. In other words, tourism-associated activities received very little attention in the analyzed films (Fig. 2).

• Investigating factors that attract travelers and tourists

As mentioned previously, film-induced tourism refers to any tourism-associated activity that is carried out by an individual as a result of watching a film. In examining the films of the 43rd Fajr Film Festival, unfortunately, the majority of the films shown in this period have not conferred the benefits of film-induced tourism and have not created an incentive for spectators to travel. These films have not mainly been shaped by the theme of travel and tourism, and have barely stimulated the spectators to separate from the origin of their story. In addition, a specific presentation of a destination has not been made in these films, which is why tourists have not been introduced to a new capacity. Some of these unsuccessful examples are as follows.

In Khati, where the nature of the Zagros has been filmed, the story has failed to engage spectators in this image. The story is about a woman whose husband was killed by a bear she raised. The scattered story has caused the images of nature to be placed in the background of the narrative and not seen, and only the landscape has been filmed.

In "Almond Eyes", where a trip to the village around Shiraz, and the snowy nature of the village is shown, no attractions have been captured.

In Taxidermy, though very beautiful scenes of nature are

Table 1. Characteristics of the examined movies. Source: Author.

Name	Director	Genre	Location	Period
Sayyad	Javad Afshar	Holy defense	Tehran/west war zones	The early 1960s
The detection	Hossein Mirzamohammadi	Contemporary history	Amol/surrounding forest	The early 1960s
Sonsuz	Reza Jamali	Social	Rural surrounding Ardabil	Contemporary
Daad	Abolfazl Jalili	Social	City/outskirts of the city	Contemporary
Antique	Mohammad Hadi Naeji	Social comedy	Tehran/surrounding village	The late 1950s
Raha	Hossam Farahmand	Social drama	Tehran	Contemporary
People's Child	Mahmoud Karimi	Social drama	Tehran/southern war zone	Late 1950s and early 1960s
Abestan (Pregnant)	Mostafa and Mohammad Tanabandeh	Social	Riverside/Astara	Contemporary
Almond eyes	Ebrahim Amini	Social drama	Shiraz/surrounding village/ Tehran	Contemporary
Khati	Fereidoon Najafi	Social drama	Zagros nature zone	Contemporary
Esfand	Danesh Eghbashawi	Holy defense	Southern war zone	1960s
Tears of Reedbed	Mehdi Jafari	Holy defense	Tehran/southern war zones	1960s to 1980s
Cloture	Soheil Mowafq	Social comedy	Tehran	Contemporary
Guardian of the Field	Seyyed Mohammad Reza Kheradmandan	Social drama	Golestan	Contemporary
A Calm Man	Behnush Sadeghi	Social	Tehran	Contemporary
Whisper my name	Rasoul Sadr-Amely	Social drama	Tehran	1500 BC
Moses, Kalimullah	Ebrahim Hatamikia	Historical	-	Contemporary
Kill the Game	Mohammad Ebrahim Azizi	Social drama	Gilan	The early 1960s
Sad dam	Pedram Pouramiri	Social comedy	Iraq/Iran (Tehran)	Contemporary
Setareh's Husband	Ebrahim Iradjad	Social	Tehran	Contemporary
Maria	Mehdi Asghari Azghadi	Social drama	Tehran	The early 1960s
The Devotee	Ali Ghaffari	Holy defense	West war zones	Contemporary
1986	Amir Mehdi Pouravizi	Contemporary historical	Tehran	Contemporary
The Cry	Mohammad Reza Ardalan	Social	Desert surrounding Karaj	1940s
Highway Deers	Abolfazl Safari	Social drama	Tehran	Contemporary
God of War	Hossein Darabi	Sacred defense	Tehran/Kermanshah	Contemporary
Taxidermy	Mohammad Paydar	Fantasy comedy	Tehran/Golestan	The late 1950s
Deep Crack	Arman Zarrinkoob	Social	Tehran	Contemporary
Lonely	Amir Hossein Saghafi	Social drama	Tehran	Contemporary
Key role	Shahid Ahmadlou	Social	Tehran	Contemporary
North by Southwest	Hamid Zargarnejad	Sacred defense	Mazandaran and Gilan	Contemporary
Looli	Reza Farahmand	Social	Kashan	Unspecified

Table 2. Travel in the examined movies. Source: Author.

Name of the movie	Tourism-related infrastructure
Almond Eyes	In one scene, it is revealed that the father’s job is related to a historical site. A short part of the film takes place at the airport.
A Calm Man	A short sequence of the film takes place at the passenger terminal.
Whisper My Name	The mother’s character is said to live in a hotel.
Sad dam	A major part of the film takes place at the hotel, and one of the female characters is the hotel manager. There are also several shots of the airport in the film. One scene was filmed at Azadi Square as a city attraction.
Setarh’s husband	A view of the airport is shown in the film.
Taxidermy	The main character visits various embassies to obtain a visa. Several shots of the film are filmed at the airport.
1986	The exterior of the hotel is shown.
God of War	Part of the film takes place at the guesthouse.
The Devotee	Views of the airport are shown in the film.

shown in the film, the poor presentation of the story, as well as the limited tension of the story, seems to have failed to create motivation in spectators’ minds. However, the director of photography of the film has made it a candidate for the Simorgh because of its quality.

Films such as Looli, “The Cry (Faryad)”, and Daad are narrated in a way that does not have a very specific time and place, and except for one or two references throughout the film that talk about the geographical location, the images do not express anything about the location.

Films like Cloture, “Lonely”, and Highway Deers have failed to create an image of Tehran, or the scattered images presented do not provide a proper image of the city.

Films with the Holy Defense genre have been made in reconstructed locations from the sixties, and the set designers

have tried to evoke that period by using relevant elements, and have sometimes been successful in this regard. This has also happened with contemporary historical films like 1986. However, these films failed to find a place in film-induced tourism. For example, the bathroom shown in the 1986 film is ambiguous and cannot create a narrative as successfully as the bathroom shown in the film Caesar, and is forgotten after the film.

This implies that filmmakers do not believe much in the concept of film-induced tourism, or willingly or unwillingly failed to promote this concept in crafting and guiding its narrative. Moreover, tourism destination organizations in different regions have not made any effort in this matter and have not provided any specific direction in this regard through investment or facilitation.

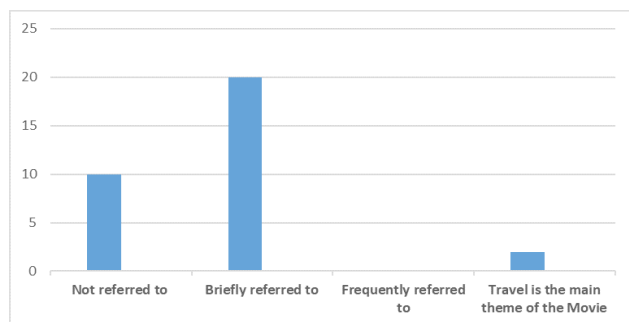


Fig. 1. The status of travel and tourism in the examined films. Source: Author.

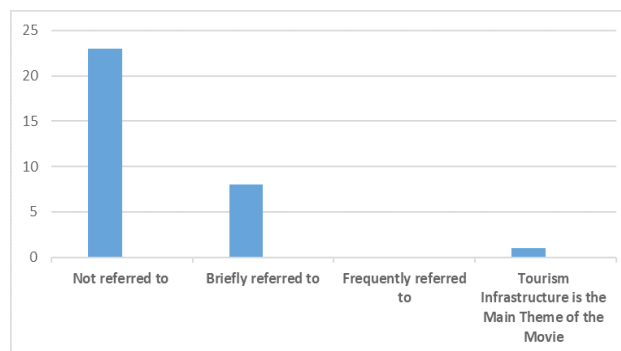


Fig. 2. Utilization of tourism infrastructure in the examined movies. Source: Author.

Table 3. Tourism-related infrastructure in the examined movies. Source: Authors.

Name of the movie	Narration
Sayyad	A dialogue in the film refers to a trip to Mashhad for pilgrimage.
The detection	One of the characters comes from Tehran to Amol to carry out a mission.
Sonsuz	Several trips between the village and the city are shown.
Antique	A trip between Tehran and a village is shown, and the narrative progresses accordingly.
People's Child	The main character of the film goes to the south to be in a war zone.
Abestan (Pregnant)	The story is about the beginning of illegal immigration of a group of young people, which ultimately does not happen.
The Cry	The male character is an Iraqi immigrant who came to Iran to work.
Almond eyes	The female character in the film dreams of traveling to South Korea. In addition, the trip between Shiraz and the village is made several times, and one trip takes place from Shiraz to Tehran.
Khati	The female character travels to another forest at the end of the film.
Cloture	The male character is returned from Turkey at the beginning of the film. The female character has come to Tehran from another city.
Guardian of the Field	A large group of people gathers to help find a missing child in Golestan Province. The negative character of the film is trying to go on a permanent journey that ultimately does not happen.
A Calm Man	The female character of the film comes to Tehran from another city. The male character came to Iran from Afghanistan.
Whisper My Name	It is only stated in the dialogues that the mother character has always been trying to travel and roam.
Maria	At the beginning of the film, there is a reference to a journey that never happens.
Sad dam	In an abstract narrative, the male and female characters travel from Iraq to Iran (Tehran) to carry out a mission, and at the end of the film, the male character travels to Iraq and back to Iran. The narrative of the film is based on these trips.
Setareh's Husband	The female character has come to Tehran from Hamedan by force, and the male character is trying to emigrate, which is eventually done.
The Devotee	The film presents a narrative of the main character's numerous trips to various cities in the west of the country to carry out missions.
1986	In the 1940s, the Israeli football team came to Tehran to play the Iranian national team.
God of War	A group of military advisors from Libya comes to Iran. Several trips between Tehran and Kermanshah occur throughout the film.
Taxidermy	The main character of the film is trying to leave the country on the eve of the revolution. A trip to the nature of Golestan is shown in the film.
North by Southwest	The film's narrative is about the search for a truck that has entered Iran from Iraq.

Based on what has been presented and using the model of Macionis (2004), the attraction factors in the films were analyzed. In this model, three main factors are considered to stimulate the spectator to travel.

The location factor (scenery, landscape) examines the subject of the locations filmed in the film to see to what extent they can be effective in attracting tourists and stimulating spectators to travel to the destination introduced in the film. In examining the observed films, two beautiful films, “Whisper My Name” and “Sonsuz”, are worth considering from this perspective.

In *Whisper My Name*, the movie begins at the beginning of Valiasr Street in Tehran, at Rah-e-Ahan Square, and ends at Tajrish Square. The film is a realistic depiction of modern-day Tehran. The final shots of the film, shot from atop a crane, offer beautiful images of the metropolis of Tehran.

Sonsuz offers beautiful views of the villages around Ardabil and their beautiful nature. The beautiful framing of the images, along with the pleasant narration of a local story, can engage the spectator (Fig. 3).

Character (actors, personality) refers to the characterization of the film, to what extent the characters in a film are capable of creating the appeal of the film and creating motivation to travel. The character factor depends on the actor’s performance, characterization, and the connection between the spectator and the film. From this perspective, the two beautiful films, *Whisper My Name* and *Sonsuz*, have been able to narrate characterization in a way that can act as an attractive factor in the screening.

In *Whisper My Name*, the good performances of the actors make this film perform well in introducing the capita (Fig. 4).

In *Sonsuz*, the film’s presentation of the real atmosphere of people’s lives in the village, providing a very pleasant and psychological performance, unlocks this film’s potential in introducing an attractive tourist destination, even though the actors are not professional.

Function (theme, genre) deals with the theme of the film, the storyline, and the place of travel in the film. As mentioned,



Fig. 3. A scene from the *Sonsuz* Movie. Photo: Vahid YousefKhani, 2024.



Fig. 4. A scene from the ‘*Whisper My Name* Movie’. Photo: Majid Talebi, 2024.

the two films, *Saddam* and *Taxidermy*, have the theme of travel. Although in *Saddam*, most of the film is spent in Tehran and at the destination, and only in *Taxidermy* is the theme of travel more prominent throughout the film. However, there is a lot of ambiguity regarding whether this travel can be considered an attractive factor. In this regard, the two films *Whisper My Name* and *Sonsuz* can be examined.

In *Whisper My Name*, the film’s hopeful story, which is told in the form of a one-day trip from the south to the north of Tehran, has a significant impact on attracting the audience.

In *Sonsuz*, the film’s different narration of events that occurred in a village creates a suitable attraction for the spectator to follow the story.

Discussion and Conclusion

Cinema, as an important medium, can have a significant impact on tourism destinations by creating a suitable image or mindset in its audience. A better image of the destination in the minds of the audience means greater motivation for them to travel. Simply put, the relationship between tourism and cinema is mutual. Tourism can be the subject of a film, and the narrative can be formed based on travel, and cinema

can cause the motivation for tourism to be formed, and travel and visitation to take place. Tourist attractions can create unique locations and landscapes for cinema, and cinema can act as an introduction to tourist attractions. Film-induced tourism has developed a deep connection between these two important cultural and social phenomena in recent years and has received attention around the world. In Iran, despite some limited cases, no attempt has been made to connect travel, tourism, and cinema, nor have any effective events in the tourism process been taken care of. For example, the depiction of the city of Isfahan in the films "Ganj-e-Gharun" (1965), "Pari" (1994), or "Farsh-e-Baad or The Wind Carpet" (2002) has been forgotten in the context of the work and does not create a specific motivation. The film "When the Moon Was Full", made by Narges Abyar in 2018, despite presenting beautiful images of Sistan and Baluchestan province, makes the spectator fret about traveling to this region due to its content. However, there are cases in this regard where either the film is based on travel and tourism or leads to the introduction of a destination in the course of the film. For example:

The "Navab Bath", which was one of the filming locations for the film "Qaiser" directed by Masoud Kimiai in 1969, is currently an attraction in the historical Oud Lajan neighborhood of Tehran.

A major part of the film "Low Height", made by Ebrahim Hatamikia in 2001, takes place on an airplane and during a trip.

The film "Too Far, Too Close", made by Reza Mirkarimi in 2004, introduced the Egyptian desert and was influential in the prosperity of this attraction.

The film "Every Night, Loliness", made by Rasoul Sadrameli in 2007, was successful in introducing and creating a suitable image of the spiritual atmosphere of the city of Mashhad as a religious tourism destination.

The story of the film "About Eli", made by Asghar Farhadi in 2008, is based on a journey as a trend-setting film.

The film "What Time Is It in Your World?" Safi Yazdani's film, produced in 2014, has succeeded in creating desirable and pleasant images of the cities of Rasht and Anzali port.

The film "A Dragon Arrives", produced by Mani Haghighi in 2016, does a relatively good job of introducing the charm of Qeshm Island.

In other words, in the history of Iranian cinema, there are very few cases that have been able to create or promote a tourist destination. In the research section, limited studies have been conducted on the impact of several films on introducing a tourist destination.

The films screened at the 43rd Fajr Film Festival are a selection of films made in the last one or two years. In examining the films in the Soda-ye-Simorgh section of the 43rd Fajr Film Festival as an important window into Iranian

cinema, it is observed that filmmakers, directors, and writers of Iranian cinema films have not paid special attention to this issue. This issue has been examined from several angles.

The topic of travel and tourism has not had an effective presence in the stories of Iranian films, and in some cases, this topic has been used on the sidelines and merely to advance the story and narrative.

Tourist attractions do not have a special place in Iranian cinema, and the tourism industry has not paid attention to introducing destinations and attractions in the cinema industry.

Tourism infrastructure and related activities are not considered in the stories and locations of the films. This indicates the distance between the cinema and the field of tourism.

The films examined in the festival, except for two cases, *Whisper My Name* and *Sonsuz*, have failed to create an image to attract the audience and create motivation for travel. In examining the attracting factors, the two films mentioned, considering the combination of the three factors of place, character, and performance, are capable of creating a suitable image and mentality for the spectator in tourism. In the rest of the films, the three factors of place, character, and subject do not play a role in stimulating the spectator to travel.

Based on this, it can be concluded that in Iranian cinema, as one of the important cultural platforms, tourism does not have an effective and clear position, and on the other hand, the tourism industry has not been able to use the important capacity of cinema to introduce and create attractions. Establishing a connection between these two important industries can bring economic prosperity in addition to cultural development. This is an issue that has been planned and implemented in other countries for years and has caused film-induced tourism to develop day by day and play an important role in the field of culture and tourism. This is an issue that should be considered by policymakers, decision-makers, and investors of both industries in Iran in the first place. Promoting film-induced tourism and creating effective and efficient interaction between cinema and tourism can bring prosperity to both industries. In this regard, the following suggestions can be considered:

Introducing, explaining, and examining film-induced tourism in the form of case studies in theses and dissertations for postgraduate studies, Developing and implementing events and conferences to introduce film-induced tourism to film and tourism industry activists

Holding joint meetings between tourism and film industry activists, Defining film festivals related to tourism, Holding tourism tours to various destinations for film activists to introduce the country's tourism capacities and Supporting the government sector in interaction by providing appropriate facilities to define joint projects.

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