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影迷涉入、偶像崇拜與目的地意象關係之研究 -- 影視觀光之觀點

The relationship among celebrity fan involvement, celebrity worship, and destination image in film tourism

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ABSTRACT

Film tourism is a growing phenomenon worldwide. Past research failed to provide evidence for the linkage between celebrity involvement and destination image. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image as well as to clarify the role of celebrity worship. Survey data from 390 tourists in Taiwan indicate that celebrity involvement is positively related to destination image. Moreover, celebrity worship mediates the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image. The result of the study can provide strategic directions for destinations in terms of tourism advertising. Implications of these findings for managing marketing strategy as well as future research directions are subsequently discussed.

Keywords: celebrity involvement; destination image; celebrity worship

INTRODUCTION

Film tourism is a growing phenomenon worldwide, fueled by both the growth of the entertainment industry and the increase in international travel (Connell, 2005; Frost, 2006; Hudson and Ritche, 2006a; Kim and Richardson, 2003). Film-induced tourism is defined as tourist visits to a destination as a result of the destination being featured on television, video or the cinema screen (Evans, 1997). Destination exposure through television can achieve high market penetration, stimulate interest and change the perceptions of destination image (Connell, 2005; Kim and Richardson, 2003). Destination image refers to a set of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that individual have of a destination or place (Crompton, 1979). Previous literature indicated that destination image is a key antecedent of travel intention and revisit intention (Chen and Tsai, 2007; Chi and Qu, 2008). Therefore, destination image plays an important role in travel decision-making process.

Glover (2009) stated that in order to understand the effect of film travel on destination image, one must consider the impact of celebrity image because it is an important factor affecting the image of the endorsed product (Kamins and Gupta, 1994; Misra and Beatty, 1990; Till *et al.*, 2008). Kim and Richardson (2003) proposed the construct of empathic involvement, which denotes a visceral feeling about someone else's life which allows an individual to participate in the posture, motion, and sensations of someone or something other than the self (Stern, 1994). However, the relationship between empathic involvement and destination image was not fully supported. Moreover, Lee *et al.* (2008) proposed that the construct of celebrity involvement, which refers to the tendency to develop a heightened affection and attachment to a celebrity, originated from leisure involvement. However, the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image was also not supported.

Kim and Richardson (2003) and Lee *et al.* (2008) failed to clarify the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image. What is the relationship between the two variables? Lee *et al.* (2008) considered that celebrity involvement may indirectly influence destination image, indicating

that there may be mediating variables present in the relationships between the two dimensions. Since film stars or actors could become a recognized target of fans and become the favorite model or target of fans, they are referred to as celebrities (Raviv *et al.*, 1996). When audiences become fans, they would generally develop empathy with the film and evoke the celebrity worship phenomenon. Celebrity worship refers to an unusually intense admiration and reverence of a celebrity (McCutcheon *et al.*, 2002; Raviv *et al.*, 1996). Celebrity involvement may be translated into the level of celebrity worship, which will in turn affect destination image. According to the above literature, celebrity worship may play a mediating role in linking celebrity involvement and destination image. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to fill the gap in literature by examining the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image as well as to clarify the role of celebrity worship.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Film-induced tourism

Film-induced tourism can be seen as a new form of cultural tourism (Jewell and McKinnon, 2008). Known also as movie-induced tourism (Beeton, 2005; Riley *et al.*, 1998) or media-related tourism (Busby and Klug, 2001), this new form of tourism involves tourist visits to a destination or place which has strong connections with films or television programs. Since Riley and Van Doren (1992) proposed the concept of movie-induced tourism, numerous studies have attempted to explain reasons for the popularity of film locations as visitor destinations (i.e., Buchmann *et al.*, 2010; Iwashita, 2008; Kim *et al.*, 2007; Su *et al.*, 2011; Tooke and Baker, 1996).

The study of film tourism is relatively new in tourism research (Hudson and Ritchie, 2006a). However, recently there is a growing body of research related to film tourism. This can be classified into four broad categories: the influence of film on the decision to travel (Bolan and Williams, 2008; Busby and Klug, 2001; Connell and Meyer, 2009; Frost, 2010; Shani *et al.*, 2010; Young and Young, 2008), film tourists themselves (Im and Chon, 2008; Macionis, 2004; Singh and Best, 2004), the impacts of film tourism on visitation numbers and on residents (Busby *et al.*, 2003; Kim and Richardson, 2003; Schofield, 1996), and destination marketing activities related to film tourism (Beeton, 2004; Connell, 2005; Frost, 2004; Grihault, 2003; O'Connor *et al.*, 2008; Woodward, 2000) .

Hudson and Ritchie (2006b) proposed that the film tourist is motivated to visit a destination through push or pull motives, which are inspired by one or more of three factors: destination marketing activities, film-specific factors, and the destination attributes. Push factors are internal drivers such as the need for socialization and the need for escape. Other film tourists may be motivated by externally driven pull factors derived from the screen. Macionis (2004) classified these into three types: place (location, attributes, landscapes, scenery), personality (cast, characters, celebrity), and performance (plot, theme, genre).

Celebrity involvement and destination image

Involvement studies in leisure and recreation settings have focused on the impacts of involvement on leisure participants' attitudes and behaviors (Gross and Brown, 2006; Hwang *et al.*, 2005). Lee and Scott (2009) suggested that people's attachment to a celebrity can be understood as a novel form of leisure activity. The Parasocial theory proposes that viewers have a tendency to be attached to or distanced from the fictional character (Russell and Stern, 2006). The viewers' attachment to a performer produces positive attitudes toward a placed product.

Gartner (1993) identified eight image formation agents and indicated that the covert induced I represents a traditional advertising projected by second-party spokespeople, which implicitly suggests the role of a celebrity in changing people's images of a destination. Destination promoters are not relying on the celebrity projected through their advertisement to convince prospective visitors of the destination's touristic attributes but instead rely on the credibility of the celebrity spokesperson to do this for them.

Film stars, actors and celebrities are very powerful ingredients of mass media and they are able to draw powerful meanings from the roles they assume in their movie or television characterizations

(Hudson and Ritchie, 2006a). Riley *et al.* (1998) suggested that film tourists may be motivated by vicarious involvement and identification with locations through movie storylines which allow greater personal meaning to the beholders of the gaze. This notion of vicarious experience can be understood through the concept of empathy (Kim and Richardson, 2003).

Kim and Richardson (2003) indicated that the level of empathic involvement with film characters can affect the perceptions viewers have of the place depicted in the film. Therefore, they hypothesized that the degree of empathic involvement with film characters will be significantly related to perceived destination image. However, this hypothesis was not fully supported. The result suggested that empathic involvement with the film characters was only related to two dimensions of affective image.

Petty and Cacioppo (1986) suggested that positive images that audiences have of celebrities may be transferred to the products that celebrities represent. Within the context of movies and TV dramas, it may be the filmed locations that celebrities signify. Hence, Lee *et al.* (2008) hypothesized that celebrity involvement is positively related to destination image. However, this hypothesis was also not supported. On the other hand, Lee *et al.* (2008) supported the contention that the traits of celebrity can actually help fans shape their perceptions of the destination associated with the celebrity. Celebrities are cultural icons that can act as a proxy for shaping the perceptions and needs of many audience members in a postmodern society.

Since fans' higher degree of involvement would affect consumers' image of the celebrity (Lee *et al.*, 2008) and converts this positive image into the shooting location or the product endorsed by the celebrity, when the film or the movie scenes are intertwined with the travel location, fans would connect their affections with the travel location through empathy, thus forming the destination image. According to the above research, it could be theorized that celebrity involvement may be positively related to destination image. Therefore, the following hypothesis is presented:

H1: Celebrity involvement is positively related to destination image.

Mediating effect of celebrity worship

Celebrity worship has been conceptualized as a normal part of identity-development, facilitating identity-development and providing a sense of fulfillment for some individuals (Boon and Lomore, 2001; Giles and Maltby, 2004; McCutcheon *et al.*, 2002). McCutcheon *et al.* (2002) proposed the Celebrity Attitude Scale which contains three sub-scales: entertainment social, intense personal, and borderline pathological. Entertainment social celebrity worship reflects the attitude that fans are attracted to a favorite celebrity because of their perceived ability to entertain and become a social focus. Intense personal celebrity worship involves the participant feeling that he/she has a strong personal connection with the celebrity. The most extreme expression of celebrity worship is borderline-pathological, thought to reflect an individual's social-pathological attitudes and behaviors.

Kim *et al.* (2007) found that a high level of interest and empathy for leading actors and actresses were the key reasons for their preference for Korean dramas. People's high level of interest and empathy for the celebrity is a key reason for changing their destination image. Celebrity involvement may serve as a catalyst for people's desire to visit destinations associated with the celebrity. Celebrity involvement may be translated into the level of celebrity worship; visiting the destination associated with the adoring celebrity can be perceived as a sort of pilgrimage (Lee *et al.*, 2008).

When audiences become fans, they frequently generate empathy for the film and celebrity worship. In addition to collecting the related peripherals, identifying with the country or regional history and culture, and learning the language, fans hope to experience it for themselves and visit the shooting location. Therefore, celebrity worship plays an important role in the relationship between film tourism and destination image. In other words, fans' higher degree of involvement with their idol can be transformed into celebrity worship and affect destination image. Celebrity worship may play a mediating role in linking celebrity involvement and destination image. Therefore, we theorize that the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image will be mediated by celebrity worship.

H2: Celebrity worship will mediate the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination

image.

RESEARCH METHOD

Sample and data collection

This study sampled audiences who became travelers after watching TV drama. In recent years, Taiwan has caught on to the Korean Wave (Hallyu). Many Taiwanese audiences develop a craze for Korean film and idol TV drama. After a popular Korean drama was played in Taiwan, fans that developed a love for Korean artists traveled to Korea. In addition, in a study focused on Korea as the travel destination, Lee *et al.* (2008) discussed the effect of film-based tourism on the perceptions of travel destination from the perspectives of Korean film or drama fans. Currently, major Taiwanese Internet community groups of Korean drama include KoreaStar and Yahoo's Korean drama discussion board. This study placed an Internet survey URL on these sites and asked fans to complete the questionnaire. To fit the sample of film-based tourism, respondents were first asked if they had previously watched Korean films or TV dramas.

Prior to data collection, we pre-tested our questionnaire with a sample of 50 celebrity fans. Based on the pre-test, several items were revised and some changes were made to the questionnaire format. The study collected data from September to November, 2010. In total, 422 questionnaires were returned. Only 32 surveys were excluded because of missing data; usable questionnaires totaled 390.

Measures

Celebrity involvement was measured with the leisure involvement scale developed by McIntyre and Pigram (1992). The scale has three dimensions, including attraction, centrality to lifestyle, self-expression. Each dimension was measured with four items (a total of 12 items). Respondents indicated their agreement with each item, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." Celebrity involvement was measured with items such as "Participating in celebrity activity is one of the most satisfying things I do" and "When I participate in celebrity activity I can really be myself." Higher scores reflect a greater degree of celebrity involvement. Further, all items were subjected to a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS 7.0 (Arbuckle, 2006). The three-factor model fits the data well ($\chi^2 = 836.17$, $df = 54$, GFI = 0.95, AGFI = 0.91). The reliabilities of multi-item scales were determined by computing Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.93, which is an acceptable value and greater than the suggested cut-off level of 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978).

Destination image was measured using 18 items from Baloglu and McCleary (1999). Cognitive image was measured with 14 items. Respondents indicated their agreement with each item, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." Affective image was measured with four bipolar items on a five-point semantic differential scale. Destination image was measured with items such as "South Korea has many interesting cultural attractions" and "South Korea has many interesting and friendly people." The two-factor model fits the data well ($\chi^2 = 1203.45$, $df = 229$, GFI = 0.94, AGFI = 0.90). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.93.

We measured celebrity worship using a 22-item, five-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" (Maltby *et al.*, 2002; Maltby *et al.*, 2003). Items used included: "My friends and I like to discuss what my favorite celebrity has done" and "I share with my favorite celebrity a special bond that cannot be described in words." A higher score on this scale indicate a high degree of celebrity worship. The single-factor model fits the data well ($\chi^2 = 951.42$, $df = 119$, GFI = 0.93, AGFI = 0.89). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.95.

Previous literature indicated that destination familiarity is an important antecedent of destination image (Baloglu, 2001; Lee *et al.*, 2008). In other words, familiarity plays an important role in destination image formation. Destination familiarity refers to a combination of previous travel experience and the level of information obtained about a destination (Baloglu, 2001; Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999). We measured destination familiarity using a 16-item, five-point Likert scale, ranging

from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree” (Prentice, 2004). Destination familiarity was measured with items such as “I often read the introduction of South Korea in books” and “I often read South Korea’s information from the internet.” The single-factor model fits the data well ($\chi^2 = 854.60$, $df = 68$, $GFI = 0.97$, $AGFI = 0.92$). Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was 0.83. Questions relating to demographic data such as gender, age, education, marital status and personal monthly income, were also included in the questionnaire.

RESULTS

Characteristics of the sample

Table 1 provides the demographic characteristics profile of the sample. Among the 390 respondents, 153 respondents (39.2%) were male and 237 respondents (60.8%) were female. 62.1% of the respondents were aged between 21 and 30 years. Educational levels were fairly high, with 86.9% having college experience or above. The majority (83.6%) of the respondents was single and 52.8% had personal monthly income below NT\$10,000.

Table 1. Demographic characteristic profile of respondents (n=390)

Variable	N	%
Gender		
Male	153	39.2
Female	237	60.8
Age		
20 and below	70	18.0
21-30	242	62.1
31-40	45	11.5
41-50	27	6.9
51 and above	6	1.5
Education level		
Junior high school and below	5	1.3
Senior/business high school	46	11.8
College and University	251	64.3
Graduate school	88	22.6
Marital status		
Single	326	83.6
Married	64	16.4
Personal monthly income		
NT\$ 10,000 and below	206	52.8
NT\$ 10,001-20,000	52	13.3
NT\$ 20,001-30,000	61	15.6
NT\$ 30,001-40,000	34	8.7
NT\$ 40,001-50,000	15	3.9
NT\$ 50,001-60,000	10	2.6
NT\$ 60,001 and above	12	3.1

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis

Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations of all variables, which provide an initial examination of the proposed relationships. Celebrity involvement was positively related to destination image ($r = .37$, $p < .01$) and celebrity worship ($r = .71$, $p < .01$). Celebrity worship was positively related to destination image ($r = .43$, $p < .01$). Finally, destination familiarity was positively related to destination image ($r = .45$, $p < .01$).

Table 2. Means, standard deviations and correlations of all variables

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1.Celebrity involvement	2.76	0.70				
2.Celebrity worship	3.03	0.73	.71**			
3.Destination image	3.61	0.50	.37**	.43**		
4.Destination familiarity	3.28	0.65	.26**	.28**	.45**	

Note: N=390.

* $p < 0.05$

** $p < 0.01$

To test the hypotheses more adequately, a series of regression analyses was conducted. This research adopted celebrity involvement as the independent variable, destination image as the dependent variable, and established multiple regression models to test the hypotheses of this research. Control variables were entered in two steps. In step 1 destination familiarity was installed and in step 2 celebrity involvement was installed. In addition, we followed the three-step procedure to test the mediating relationships described by Baron and Kenny (1986). The first step was to test the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The second step was to test the effect of the independent variable on the mediator variable. The third step was to test the effects of both the mediator and independent variable on the dependent variable. If significant relationships emerge in all three regressions, then a partial mediation exists. If the independent variable in the third step is not significant, then a full mediation exists. The results of each step are shown in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3. Regression results of celebrity involvement on destination image and celebrity worship

Independent variable	Destination image		Celebrity worship
	β	β	β
Step 1: Destination familiarity	0.45**	0.38**	
Step 2: Celebrity involvement		0.27**	0.71**
R^2	0.20	0.27	0.51
Adjusted R^2	0.20	0.27	0.50
ΔR^2		0.07	
F	98.97**	72.64**	396.93**

* $p < 0.05$

** $p < 0.01$

Table 4. Test of the mediating effect of celebrity worship

Independent variable	Destination image	
	β	β
Step 1: Destination familiarity	0.45**	0.35**
Step 2: Celebrity involvement		0.09
Celebrity worship		0.27**
R^2	0.20	0.31
Adjusted R^2	0.20	0.30
ΔR^2		0.10
F	98.97**	57.25**

* $p < 0.05$

** $p < 0.01$

Overall, the model predicted that destination image was significant ($F = 72.64$, $p < .01$), explaining 27 percent of variance (see Table 3). After celebrity involvement was entered in step 2, the

increase in explained variance was 7 percent. The result indicated that celebrity involvement is positively related to destination image ($\beta = .27, p < .01$). Thus, H1 was supported.

The hypothesis that celebrity worship will mediate the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image was tested with mediation analysis (Baron and Kenny, 1986). The first step of mediation analysis is to show that the independent variable (celebrity involvement) affects the dependent variable (destination image), as shown in Table 3. The second step is to show that the independent variable (celebrity involvement) affects the mediator (celebrity worship). In the second step, the relationship between celebrity involvement and celebrity worship was tested in a regression model that included celebrity involvement as independent variable. This model with celebrity worship as dependent variable was found to be statistically significant ($F = 396.93, p < .01$). Celebrity involvement was thus positively related to celebrity worship ($\beta = .71, p < .01$).

The final step is to show that the mediator (celebrity worship) affects the dependent variable (destination image) when the independent variable (celebrity involvement) is included in the equation. If celebrity worship has a mediator effect, a significant relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image should disappear or be reduced when celebrity worship is added to the model. This analysis is shown in Table 4.

The regression model that included celebrity worship and celebrity involvement as the independent variable were found to be statistically significant. In the model with destination image as the dependent variable, the effect of celebrity involvement was reduced to $\beta = .09 (p > .01)$, whereas celebrity worship was positively related to destination image ($\beta = .27, p < .01$). Hence, H2, which states that celebrity worship will mediate the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image, was supported.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research is to examine the effect of celebrity involvement on destination image as well as to clarify the role of celebrity worship. Past literatures offered uncertain explanations on the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image. Empirical results of this research demonstrated that celebrity involvement significantly and positively affects destination image. Moreover, celebrity worship mediates the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image.

The result of this research indicated that celebrity involvement is positively related to destination image. Given fans' higher degree of involvement, the aura of a celebrity can be directly transferred to the individuals' destination image. The finding implicitly supports Gartner's (1993) argument that autonomous image formation agents can change destination images in a short time period. The finding also extends previous studies on destination image through the impact of celebrity involvement (Kim and Richardson, 2003; Lee *et al.*, 2008). Lee *et al.* (2008) indicated that the direct impact of celebrity involvement on destination images was not found. The unexpected result may be due to the distance between Japan and Korea. Crompton (1979) suggested that geographic proximity affects the formation of destination images. As geographical distance increases, tourists are likely to have less solid images of a destination due to decreased opportunities for both first- and second-hand experience with the destination. Relatively to Japan, Taiwan is closer to Korea. As a result, the power of celebrities in shaping destination image may be more significant within this research context (Taiwanese's evaluation of Korea).

In addition, the finding of this research indicated that celebrity worship fully mediates the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image. Higher celebrity involvement is associated with celebrity worship, which affects destination image. Past studies failed to establish the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image and thus the effect of potential mediating variables was proposed. Lee *et al.* (2008) provided a plausible explanation that celebrity involvement may indirectly influence destination images via destination familiarity. However, this research incorporates the mediating role of celebrity worship into the model bridging celebrity

involvement and destination image. In other words, this study identifies another mediating variable of destination image and fills the gap in destination image literature.

Results of this study possess several managerial implications. First, the finding implies that celebrities shown in a movie or drama can act as a positive pull factor for destination. Celebrities can be an effective promotional tool that forms the image of a destination. It is important for destination marketers to maintain a celebrity aura that helps create the destination image, and more frequently utilize celebrity icons in promoting a destination. Second, from the viewpoint of a featured destination in a movie or TV drama, the program helps provide publicity and create an identity for the destination. A carefully constructed special event that involves celebrities may be a useful tool to enhance the image of a destination. Third, the marketing plan of movies or dramas should not be limited to cultural export. Rather, it should incorporate the filmmaking and tourism industries and make them a useful tool of city marketing by introducing the shooting locations at the end of the movies. This could help shape a good destination image and stimulate visits from tourists. Finally, understanding destination image is important to the destination marketer. Destinations could give films or TV dramas control over what productions to be made at their locations. The authorities concerned should forcefully promote and sponsor the shooting of TV dramas, consolidate the marketing elements of the shooting location, and promote celebrity image and reputation through travel spokesperson in order to evoke tourists' positive evaluation of the destination and raise their travel motivation and intention.

This research has several limitations. First, the research design could not rule out the effects of common-method bias, since all the data were acquired using the same questionnaire. Second, the cross-sectional design limits the extent to which cause-effect relations can be inferred from our research findings. Third, the use of an online survey may result in sample bias since people with particular characteristics may be more likely to respond to online surveys. Finally, this study surveyed fans in online Korean drama discussion boards and sampled only those that loved to watch Korean TV drama. Moreover, samples for the main survey were drawn from Taiwanese. This might limit the generalization of the results to other countries.

From a scholastic viewpoint, several areas for further research arise from this study. First, we suggest future studies to make a comparison between other countries and conduct more in-depth discussions on the effect of celebrity involvement on destination image. Second, future research that adopts a longitudinal design would be better suited to addressing the causal status of the variables examined in this research. Third, future research can be conducted in more countries in order to empirically validate the transnational social-cultural phenomenon. Finally, we suggest future studies to examine whether other mediators or moderators exist in the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image. According to the cultural proximity theory, audiences prefer media that reflect their own culture, both regionally and nationally (Straubhaar, 1991; Su *et al.*, 2011). Cultural proximity requires additional attention because the extent to which cultural proximity works between two countries may moderate the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image. Therefore, we suggest that future research incorporate the moderating role of cultural proximity in examining the relationship between celebrity involvement and destination image.

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