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The image of India as a Travel Destination and the attitude of viewers towards Indian TV Dramas

Usep Suhud

Gregory B. Willson
Edith Cowan University, g.willson@ecu.edu.au

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Usep Suhud*
Faculty of Economics
Universitas Negeri Jakarta
Indonesia
Email: usuhud@unj.ac.id

Greg Willson
School of Business and Law
Edith Cowan University
Australia

Corresponding author*

Abstract

For a few decades now, various television stations in Indonesia have been broadcasting foreign drama series including those from a range of Asian countries, such Korea, India, Turkey, Thailand and the Philippines . This study aims to explore attitude towards Asian drama in those countries and the destination image of the country where the drama emanates from as perceived by the audiences. This study applied a mixed-methodology approach in order to explore particularly attitudes towards foreign television drama productions. There is a paucity of study exploring the attitudes of audiences towards Indian television dramas and a limited study focussing on the image of India as a preferred travel destination. Data was collected using an online instrument and participants were selected as a convenience sample. The attitude towards foreign television dramas was measured using items that were adapted from the qualitative study results, whereas for measuring destination image, an existing scale was employed. This study found that the attitudes of audiences towards Indian drama and their image of India had no dimension (one factor). The study also reported that attitude towards Indian dramas had a significant impact on the image of India as a travel destination and vice-versa. Recommendations for future study and tourism marketing are discussed.

Keywords: Indian drama, destination image, television drama, attitude,television

Introduction

A television set is for most Indonesians, their best friend. One of the favourite programs they tend to view are foreign dramas. Nowadays, the most popular dramas among Indonesian viewers are those from Korea, India, Turkey, and the Philippines (Chandra, 2017; Utami, 2016). These dramas are broadcasted by national television stations and are generally free to watch. Some of them are retitled from the original, and all of them are dubbed into the *Bahasa* language of Indonesia.

This study will hopefully broaden the knowledge of studies of countries as suitable t travel destinations. Preceding scholars have explored the destination image of India (Tessitore, Pandelaere & Van Kerckhove, 2014), Korea (Lee, Lee & Lee, 2005), and Turkey (Sönmez & Sirakaya, 2002). Others studied the image of Australia (Murphy, 2000), Brazil (Rezende-Parker, Morrison & Ismail, 2003), China (Gibson, Qi & Zhang, 2008), Hong Kong (Law & Cheung, 2010), Mauritius (Phau, Shanka & Dhayan, 2010; Prayag, 2009), and Russia (Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2006).

Although audiences in many countries love television dramas, unfortunately, their attitudes towards drama or foreign drama is lacking any scholarly attention. This study hopefully filled some of the gaps. Some scholars have conducted studies relating to, for example, attitude

towards Nollywood (African) films (Akpabio, 2007), TV advertising (Chittithaworn, Islam, & Thooksoon, 2011), and motion pictures (Panda & Kanungo, 1962). According to Peterson and Thurstone (1932), watching a film will affect one's attitude towards a country. Furthermore, a film can also affect social attitudes and destination image (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006b; Kim & Richardson, 2003; Thurstone, 1931). A film or television drama can also attract tourists (Connell, 2005; Hudson & Ritchie, 2006a; Kim, Agrusa, Lee, & Chon, 2007; Tooke & Baker, 1996).

The authors chose attitude towards Indian drama as the independent variable and destination image as the dependent variable. The researchers found the impact of destination image, for example, on travel intention, tourist satisfaction, revisit intention, and tourists' loyalty (Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Puh, 2014; Samsudin, 2016; Tessitore et al., 2014). Therefore, this study aims to explore the attitudes of viewers towards Indian drama, destination image or image of India as a tourism destination, and also the impact of viewers' attitudes towards Indian drama on the image of India as a favoured travel destination.

Literature Review

Attitude towards Indian television dramas and destination image

In general, there are primary elements of a drama or fiction including characters, plots, setting, point-of-view, theme or genre, and tone (Rappaport, 2008; Roberts & Jacobs, 1998). In most television dramas, the settings took place both indoors and outdoors (Kanda et al., 2006). The film-makers chose studios as an alternative to save on a budgets (Walker, 2014).

In the last ten years, there has been a paucity of studies looking at the one's attitude towards television drama. However, there have been some classic studies assessing attitude towards motion picture and drama play. Thurstone (1930) established a scale of attitude towards motion pictures that consisted of 40 indicators. The scale has been adopted and adapted by other scholars. For example, Panda and Kanungo (1962) involved higher secondary and college students when measuring their attitudes towards motion pictures. These scholars employed 30 of 38 statement indicators. They found that male participants were more favourable towards motion pictures than female participants.

Man and Lewis (1977) employed university students in the USA to measure attitude towards motion pictures. In their study, the scale of Thurstone (1930) was applied. They found that the attitude of university students tended to be favourable. Further, Austin (1981) tested 40 indicators of attitude towards motion pictures. They compared male and female participant groups of samples. They found that male participants showed more favourable attitudes towards motion pictures when compared to female participants.

Another study was conducted by Austin (1982) measuring college students' attitudes towards motion pictures. This scholar adapted Thurstone (1930)'s scale and used a factor analysis. He found that the attitude consisted of factors including movie haters, movie lovers, harmless pastime, valueless diversion, non-educational, valuable diversion, aesthetic experience, vice and crime, and uncertain content. In the tourism study, attitude was used to predict visit and revisit intention, word-of-mouth intention, and satisfaction (Lee, 2009; Rizky, Kusdi, & Yusri, 2017; Zarrad & Debabi, 2015). However, there is a paucity of study measuring the impact of attitude of viewers towards television dramas.

Destination image and attitude towards Indian drama

Destination image is defined by Crompton (1979:18) as "the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has of a destination". Sources include promotional items, movies, and other publications affect people to have a certain perception of a destination. Image of destination is shaped by a perception before and after visiting a destination (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991). In general, (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999) mentioned that destination image is formed by

personal factors (physiological and social) and stimulus factors (information sources, previous experience, and distribution). Destination image contains attributes including attributes related to shopping, people, historical and cultural attraction, safety and security concerns, and scenery (Chon, 1991).

Tourism destination authorities work hard to attract visitors. Some of them whether locally or nationally, have created videos to promote their various destinations. Involving employees in the USA, Shani, Chen, Wang and Hua (2010) empirically revealed that a promotional video had a significant impact on destination image. Some of the authorities created TV commercials to promote image and according to (Pan, 2011), thses had an influence on destination image.

Scholars examined the influence of destination image on attitude towards destination, tourist satisfaction travel intention, and decision making (Al-Kwifi, 2015; Lee, 2009; Rizky et al., 2017). In this study, attitude was linked to destination image and destination image was linked to attitude. However, the authors found a limited study when exploring this interplaying modality.

Jalilvand, Samiei, Dini and Manzari (2012) studied the impact of electronic word of mouth on destination image, attitude towards destination, and travel intention. They also examined the impact of destination image on attitude. These scholars usedtourists who visited several tourism destinations in Iran as participants. One of the findings they presented was that destination image significantly affected attitude towards a destination.

Therefore, this study hypothesise the study above as follows:

H – Image of India as a travel destination will have a significant impact on attitude towards Indian drama

Methods

Sample

In general, participants in this study were Indian drama viewers who viewed both on a regular or irregular basis.

Measure

Although Thurstone (1930) has established a scale to measure attitude towards the movies, in this study, the authors preferred to develop a new scale by conducting a qualitative study. The main question of the qualitative instrument was asking the participants' opinions on Indian dramas they may have watched. The results of the qualitative study were adapted into quantitative indicators. In total, there were 21 indicators to measure attitude towards Indian drama. Further, to measure Indian image as a travel destination, the authors adapted indicators from Echtner and Ritchie (1991). Some of the indicators were added by the researchers including 'Tourism spots in India appeal to selfie" and "India offers halaal tourism spots". In total, there were 33 indicators to measure Indian image. All indicators of the two variables were measured using a six-point of Likert scale and in were in the *bahasa* language of Indonesia.

Data analysis

There were three steps of data analyses conducted in the course of this study. The first step was an exploratory factor analysis, to validate items and see whether there was any dimension for each variable tested. The second step was a confirmatory factor analysis. This was for confirming which items were more valid among others when all variables were inter-correlated. The third step was structural equation model. It's aim was to examine the impact of attitude towards Indian drama on the image of India as a tourism destination. The path was considered fitted if it had a probability score of ≥ 0.05 (Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Müller, 2003),

CMIN/DF score of ≤ 2 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), CFI score of ≥ 0.97 (Hu & Bentler, 1995), and RMSEA score of ≤ 0.05 (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Results and Discussion

Participants

The profile of the participants is as seen on the table below. Predominant participants were female (75.6%), less than 20 years old (86.9%), unmarried (94.8%), unemployed (86.4%), and Muslims (92%). Religion was asked as an item, as the researchers included items relating to halaal tourism in order to more effectively measure destination image.

Table 1. Profile of participants

		Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	52	24.4
	Female	161	75.6
Age	<20 years	185	86.9
	20-29 years	20	9.4
	30-39 years	2	.9
	≥40 years	6	2.8
Marital status	Unmarried	202	94.8
	Married	7	3.3
	Separated/divorced	4	1.9
Occupation status	Unemployed	184	86.4
	Employed	24	11.3
	Owned business	1	.5
	Retired	4	1.9
Religion	Islam	196	92.0
	Non-Islam	17	8.0

As required, all participants were required to have experience watching an Indian drama on television. More than 46% of participants (99) watched a drama within the last week. More than 70% of participants (156) indicated that they had watched a drama based on uncertain times. This aspect is understood ssince most foreign television dramas are broadcast everyday between 7.30 to 17.00 when most participants have activities away from their homes.

Table 2. Frequency of watching a television drama

	Frequency	Percent
Everyday	23	10.8
3-4 times in a week	14	6.6
1-2 time in a week	20	9.4
Sometime/uncertain	156	73.2
Total	213	100.0

Exploratory factor analysis

Attitude towards Indian drama

In total, there were 21 indicators of attitude towards Indian drama which survived during exploratory factor analysis calculation (please see Table 3) and which shaped a component.

This construct had a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.982 and factor loadings ranging from 0.736 to 0.933.

Table 3. EFA result of attitude towards Indian drama

	Indicators	α= 0.982
A16	Indian dramas have an interesting plot	0.933
A14	Indian dramas have interesting conflicts	0.918
A13	Indian dramas are touching	0.914
A12	Indian dramas are inspiring	0.903
A21	The costumes worn by the actors/actresses are interesting	0.901
A11	Indian dramas are not boring	0.897
A2	Indian dramas are exciting	0.890
A17	Indian dramas are rational	0.886
A9	The actors/actresses in Indian dramas played well	0.871
A6	Indian dramas are romantic	0.861
A5	Indian dramas took shooting at interesting places	0.861
A10	Indian dramas are not long-winded	0.860
A20	Indian dramas were made with good drama making techniques	0.856
A4	Actors and actresses played in Indian dramas have a nice face	0.855
A8	Indian dramas have a moral message	0.854
A1	In general, Indian dramas are interesting	0.840
A15	Indian dramas have an element of humour	0.840
A3	Indian dramas have unpredictable plots	0.804
A7	Indian dramas are dramatic	0.774
A19	The life shown in Indian dramas is not similar to the life that takes place in Indonesia	0.736
A18	Indian dramas have different stories from the dramas from other foreign countries	0.736

Image of India as a travel destination

Thirty-three indicators to measure Indian image were saved from the exploratory factor analysis calculation. These indicators formed a factor with a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.989 and factor loadings ranging from 0.691 to 0.925.

Table 4. EFA result of Indian image as a travel destination

	Indicators	α= 0.989
D31	Tourism spots in India appeal to selfie	0.925
D30	Tourism spots in India offer relaxation	0.920
D23	India has good service quality for tourists	0.915
D28	India has an interesting nightlife	0.913
D33	India has typical culture	0.908
D27	India is a family-oriented travel destination	0.908
D32	India has ethnic and cultural diversity	0.906
D8	India hosts many festivals	0.904
D29	India has complete accommodation facilities	0.903
D26	India offers adventure	0.898
D34	India offers opportunity to increase knowledge	0.896

D6	India has historical sites of interest	0.889
D16	Foreign tourists who visit India are friendly	0.880
D10	Tourism spots in India are visited by many tourists	0.880
D20	India has unique traditional dresses	0.878
D17	India has information facilities on its country's tourism	0.875
D5	India has buildings with interesting architectural designs	0.863
D25	The atmosphere in the tourism spots in India is generally familiar to tourists	0.858
D24	Political conditions in India are stable	0.854
D7	India has extensive shopping facilities	0.847
D11	Tourism spots in India are easily accessible	0.844
D3	India has a national park	0.843
D19	India has a good reputation as a travel destination	0.842
D18	The major urban cities in India are densely populated	0.836
D1	India has an interesting natural landscape	0.833
D21	The cost of vacation to India is affordable	0.830
D14	The country of India is friendly	0.820
D15	Indian residents are friendly	0.820
D9	Tourism spots in India are clean	0.819
D13	India offers halal tourism spots	0.811
D22	India has typical food and drinks	0.803
D35	India has a complete Islamic history	0.764
D4	India has a good transport infrastructure	0.691

Structural equation modelling

Figure 1 below demonstrates a structural model of the hypothesis testing. The model tested the impact of Indian image as a travel destination on attitude towards Indian television drama. This fitted model had a probability score of 0.053, CMIN/DF score of 1.253, SFI score of 0.993, and RMSE score of 0.035. Additionally, this path had a C.R. score of 7.716.
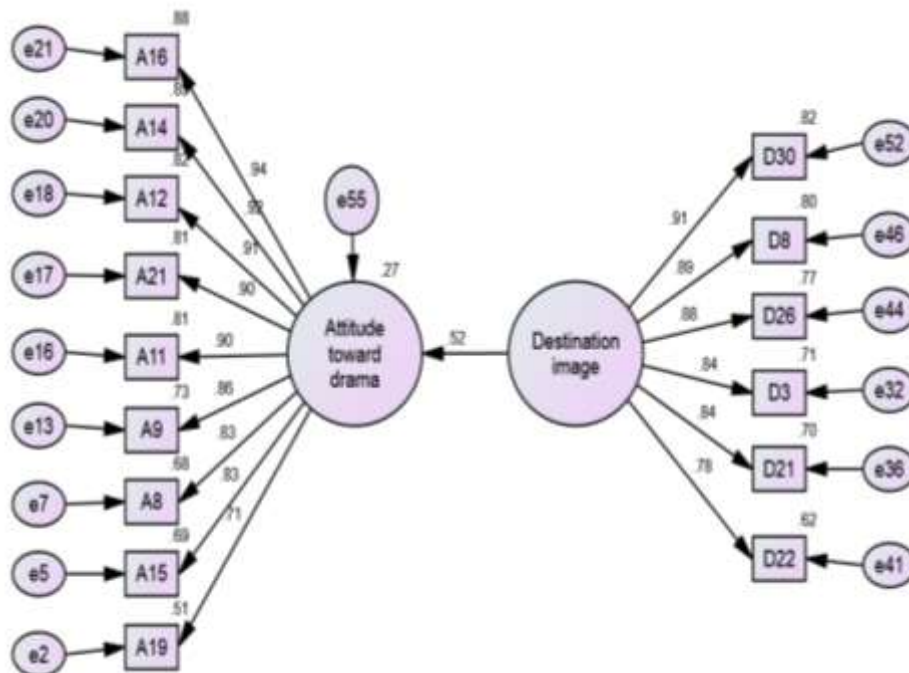

Figure 1. The impact of destination image of attitude

Furthermore, another model was modified to examine the impact of attitude towards Indian television drama on the image of India as a travel destination. This model obtained a fitness with a probability score of 0.053, CMIN/DF score of 1.253, CFI score of 0.993, and RMSEA score of 0.035. Nine of 21 indicators of attitude towards Indian dramas survived. In addition, six of 33 indicators were retained. The impact of attitude towards Indian drama on destination image had a C.R. score of 7.725 that indicates a significance. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted.
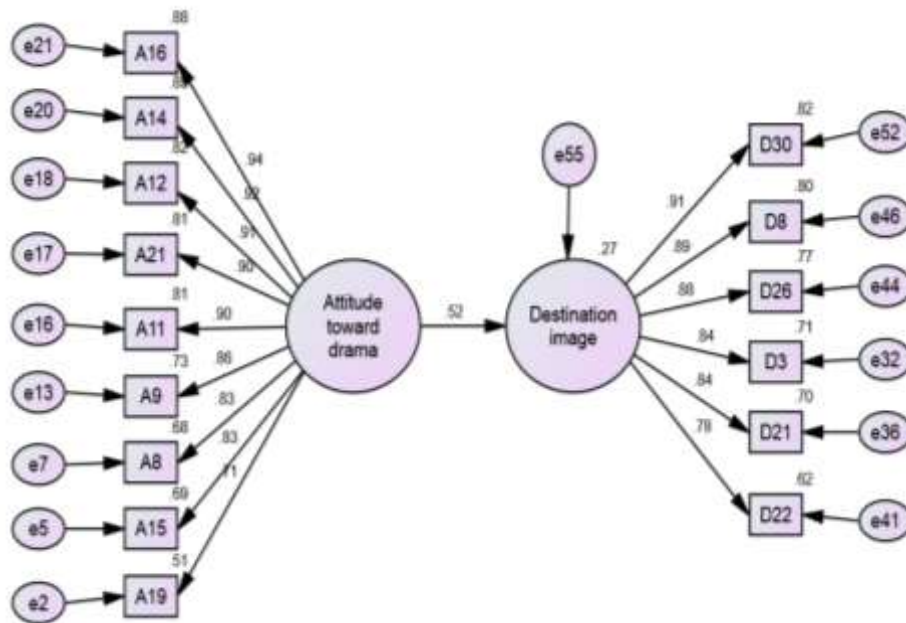

Figure 2. The impact of attitude on destination image

Discussion

This study explored three main points: attitude towards Indian drama, perception of Indian image as a tourism destination, and the impact of attitude towards Indian drama on image of India as a tourism destination. The first finding, items of attitude towards Indian drama can be classified into three groups of attributes including the story, the actors and actresses, and general attributes. The classification is as follows:

(a) The story
- Indian dramas are dramatic
- Indian dramas are exciting
- Indian dramas are inspiring
- Indian dramas are not boring
- Indian dramas are not long-winded
- Indian dramas are rational
- Indian dramas are romantic
- Indian dramas are touching
- Indian dramas have a moral message
- Indian dramas have an element of humour
- Indian dramas have an interesting plot
- Indian dramas have interesting conflicts
- Indian dramas have unpredictable plots
- Indian dramas have different stories from the dramas from other foreign countries

(b) The actors and actresses
  - Actors and actresses playing in Indian dramas have a nice features
  - The actors/actresses in Indian dramas perfom well

(c) General attitude
  - In general, Indian dramas are interesting
  - Indian dramas involved shooting at interesting places
  - Indian dramas were created using good dramatic art making techniques
  - The costumes worn by the actors/actresses are interesting
  - The life shown in Indian dramas is not similar to the life that exiustsin Indonesia.

The second finding, the construct of attitude towards Indian drama produced no dimension. This result is insignificant with prior studies that tended to have two or even more dimensions (Basaran, 2016; Iarmolenko, 2010; Karlsen, 2012). Nevertheless, in general, attitude towards Indian drama contains six attributes including attributes related to infrastructure and amenities, natural attractions, historical and cultural attractions, people in India, safety and security concerns, and general attitude. The attribute classifications are as follows:

(a) Infrastructure and amenities
  - India has extensive shopping facilities
  - India has complete accommodation facilities
  - India has information facilities on its country's tourism
  - Tourism spots in India are easily accessible
  - India has a good transport infrastructure
  - India offers halaal tourism spots
  - India has interesting nightlife

(b) Natural attractions
  - India has an interesting natural landscape
  - India has a national park
  - India offers adventure

(c) Historical and cultural attractions
  - India has a complete Islamic history
  - India has buildings with interesting architectural designs
  - India has historical sites of interest
  - India has ethnic and cultural diversity
  - India has typical culture
  - India has typical food and drinks
  - India has unique traditional dresses
  - India hosts many festivals

(d) People in the country
  - Foreign tourists who visit India are friendly
  - Indian residents are friendly
  - The major urban cities in India are densely populated
  - Tourism spots in India are visited by many tourists

(e) Safety and security concerns
  - Political conditions in India are stable
  - The country of India is friendly
  - The atmosphere in the tourism spots in India is generally familiar to tourists
  - India is a family-oriented travel destination

(f) General attributes
  - India has a good reputation as a travel destination

- India has good service quality for tourists
- India offers opportunity to increase knowledge
- The cost of a vacation to India is affordable
- Tourism spots in India appeal to the 'selfie'
- Tourism spots in India are clean
- Tourism spots in India offer relaxation possibilities

The third finding concerns the impact of destination image on attitude towards Indian television drama. This finding supports a prior study undertaken by Baloglu and McCleary (1999). The more positive the image of India is perceived to be by participants, the more favourable their attitude towards Indian television drama. This is based on an assumption that participants had been exposed to India through promotional items and publications as well as other Indian dramas, video clips, and/or movies.

Another attempt was made to measure the impact of attitude towards Indian television drama on Indian image as a travel destination. The finding is considered to be innovative and contributes to the study field of media and tourism studies, as well as consumer behaviour study in general. Viewers who were exposed through watching Indian dramas were found to have a certain perception towards India and were generally motivated to travel there. The more favourable their perception towards Indian drama, the more positive image they would have on India as a travel destination.

Conclusion

There were three main findings emanating from this study. Firstly, attitude towards Indian drama. There were 21 items retained and no dimension. Secondly, destination image or image of India as a tourism destination. This variable owned 33 items and no dimension. Lastly, the impact of image of India as a travel destination on attitude towards Indian television drama. The path has a significant and positive direction. This study also determined another finding, namely, that attitude towards Indian television drama had a significant impact on the image of India as a travel destination.

These findings are useful and may serve as a recommendation and as advice for destination managers even tourism boards to be more creative when working with cinema or television drama creators and especially when showing attractive places. Considering such aspects may develop a good perception in the eyes of cinema and television drama viewers towards the places seen, and in general terms place the country in a favourable light. When taking shoots in certain areas, cinema makers are mostly required to pay a certain amount of money to the local authorities (Rose, 2015). Sometimes, they face a long, unsupported, difficult, and unclear bureaucracy to obtain needed permission when using places for film-making for dramas (Pangerang, 2016; Virgianti, 2014). By understanding the impact of such massive promotions, this inquiry's findings should be considered to be free and easy to adopt. Besides, there are various television programs that can be used to promote a destination such as for example, sport and culinary shows.

Future research may look at other foreign dramas as the research objects, such as those that are regularly broadcasted by television stations. Through such research, the items of the two variables tested in this study would most likely be confirmed..

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