

## Film Tourism: Causal Factors of Place Attachment

### การท่องเที่ยวเชิงภาพยนตร์: ปัจจัยเชิงสาเหตุของความผูกพันกับสถานที่

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#### Abstract

Popularity of TV drama is regarded as a predictor of film tourism, a contemporary phenomenon, constantly attracting tourists to visit film locations. A recent film tourism in Thailand and a research gap found in film tourism literature called for studies to investigate how a popular Buppessannivas (Love Destiny) TV drama created emotional attachment with a screened location. This study aims to examine causal factors of place attachment. The sample includes 415 Thai tourists who viewed Buppessannivas drama series and visited the main screened location in Ayutthaya. The results indicate that drama likeability, attitudes towards a screened location and tourism motivation positively affect place attachment. Tourism motivation mediates the relationship between drama likeability and place attachment as well as the relationship between attitude and place attachment. The study provides both theoretical contributions and practical implications for film tourism.

**Keywords:** *Film Tourism, Likeability, Tourism Motivation, Attitude, Place Attachment*

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## บทคัดย่อ

ความนิยมลามครอท์ทัศน์นับว่าเป็นปัจจัยนำพาการท่องเที่ยวเชิงภาพยนตร์ ซึ่งเป็นปรากฏการณ์สมัยใหม่ที่ดึงดูดนักท่องเที่ยวให้เดินทางไปยังสถานที่ถ่ายทำภาพยนตร์ การท่องเที่ยวเชิงภาพยนตร์ล่าสุดที่เกิดขึ้นในประเทศไทยและซ่องว่างของการวิจัยทางด้านการท่องเที่ยวเชิงภาพยนตร์นั้น สะท้อนให้เห็นว่า ควรได้มีการศึกษาผลกระทบบุพเพสันนิวาสที่ได้รับความนิยม ว่าสามารถสร้างความรู้สึกผูกพันกับสถานที่ถ่ายทำได้อย่างไร งานวิจัยนี้จึงมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อตรวจสอบปัจจัยเชิงสาเหตุของความผูกพันกับสถานที่ กลุ่มตัวอย่างของงานวิจัยนี้คือ นักท่องเที่ยวไทย จำนวน 415 คน ที่รับชมลามครอท์บุพเพสันนิวาสและเดินทางไปท่องเที่ยวสถานที่หลักของการถ่ายทำละครในจังหวัดอยุธยา ผลการวิจัยชี้ให้เห็นว่า ความชื่นชอบละคร ทัศนคติที่มีต่อสถานที่ถ่ายทำละคร และแรงจูงใจในการท่องเที่ยวส่งผลในทางบวกต่อความผูกพันกับสถานที่ แรงจูงใจในการท่องเที่ยวเป็นตัวแปรค้นกลางความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างความชื่นชอบและความผูกพันกับสถานที่ และความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างทัศนคติและความผูกพันกับสถานที่ งานวิจัยนี้จึงเป็นประโยชน์ต่อทฤษฎีและข้อเสนอแนะต่อการท่องเที่ยวเชิงภาพยนตร์

**คำสำคัญ:** การท่องเที่ยวเชิงภาพยนตร์ ความชื่นชอบ แรงจูงใจในการท่องเที่ยว ทัศนคติ ความผูกพันกับสถานที่

## Introduction

Film tourism or film-induced tourism has been a very powerful modern tourism to experience the film environment in many screened locations around the world such as Korea, UK and New Zealand, USA and Australia (Li, Li, Song, Lundberg, & Shen, 2017). Film tourism refers to visits to the destination due to the influence of television, DVD, cinema screen, internet and digital media (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006). Film locations can be film studio sets, theme parks, or places featured on the screen (Beeton, 2010). Film is a notable tourism marketing driver since it shapes how people imagine about places, people, and culture (Waysdorff & Reijnders, 2017). Film viewing can therefore motivate viewers to visit film locations (Wen, Josiam, Spears, & Yang, 2018) and form strong emotional attachment with places (Chen, 2018). When TV drama series or films gain popularity among the audiences, they can lead to a sudden film tourism to the screened locations (Du, Li, Pan, & Zhang,

2020). Film tourism has provided many benefits for screened locations such as destination awareness, destination image, and economic impacts (Kim & Kim, 2018).

Buppessannivas (Love Destiny) has been successfully launched in Thailand and was so popular that it could create a film tourism to Ayutthaya particularly at Wat Chaiwatthanaram, the most popular film location among the drama fans (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2018). Buppessannivas, Thai historical romantic TV drama series, is set in the seventeenth century during Ayutthaya period. The story portrays a young modern woman accidentally going back into the past and having a cultural crash between two different periods (Jory, 2018). At present, there are plenty of studies focusing on western films but research on Asian films is still scarce (Rewtrakunphaiboon, 2017). Furthermore, there is a need to explain an association between viewing TV drama and film tourism experience and engagement (Kim, 2012). To better understand film tourism, this

paper asserts that a relationship between viewing TV drama and place attachment should also be researched.

Recent studies relating to Buppessannivas mainly focused on culture or tourism promotion (e.g. Chuntong & Chutintaranond, 2021; Siriphon, 2020). Although place attachment is widely researched in other disciplines, it has been a neglected area in tourism research (Chen, Dwyer, & Firth, 2014). The relationship between viewing TV drama and place attachment appears to be even a less explored research area. By acknowledging a recent Buppessannivas film tourism and a research gap in film tourism literature, the aim of the study is to examine the causal factors of place attachment in the context of film tourism. The study focuses on testing the three key factors causing place attachment including drama likeability, attitude towards a screened location, and tourism motivation. The findings would provide theoretical contribution for film tourism and practical contribution for interested destinations to use film as promotional strategies.

## Literature Review

### *Likeability*

Likeability plays an important role in consumer choice since consumers purchase a brand that they like while they may have doubts with a brand they dislike (Nguyen, Melewar, & Chen, 2013). Likeability has been defined as affection for the source as a result of the source's physical appearance and behaviour (McGuire, 1985). Marketing efforts have thus been invested to become likeable brands and to build good relationships with customers since likability can positively affect customer

preference, customer attitude, and behavioural intention (Teng & Tsai, 2020).

A few recent tourism and hospitality studies have tapped into the area of likeability. Lee, Ham, and Kim (2015) found that likeability of Korean celebrities and Korean drama positively influenced the country image and preferences for Korean restaurants. Akarsu, Foroudi, and Melewar (2020) suggested that Airbnb likeability influenced tourists' behavioural intentions. Teng and Tsai (2020) demonstrated that tour leader likability positively affected tour leader attachment and tourist participation. In the area of film tourism, likeability would depend on several dimensions such as plot, characters, film setting, and song (Rajaguru, 2014). Film likeability can enhance memorable and emotional attachment and provide meanings to screened locations (Beeton, 2005). Although past literature seems to suggest that film likeability can lead to place attachment, empirical studies focusing on the said relationship are very limited.

### *Attitude*

Attitude refers to a tendency expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Attitude is a function of belief about an object and evaluation that people have when thinking about the object (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000). Attitude has recently received attention in tourism research since it can increase the bond with places and become a significant predictor for place attachment (Reitsamer, Brunner-Sperdin, & Stokburger-Sauer, 2016). Attitude towards a place or a tourism destination is very crucial as it indicates the propensity the tourists express their positive or negative feelings

towards a place (Lee, 2009). To gain insights into tourist attitudes, Um and Crompton (1990) suggested that the measurements should pay attention to the actual travel to a specific place.

Through TV drama, viewers can experience the scenery and landscape and thus shape their attitude towards places. Attitude towards screened locations cannot be formed simply by the mere exposure to the locations but it can only be fully formed when viewers experience the screened locations through the story lines and the characters' interactions (Su, Huang, Brodowsky, & Kim, 2011). Attitude was found to be a predictor of various variables such as travel motivation, place attachment, choice formation, tourist satisfaction, and future behavioural intentions (Mohsin, 2005). Although, studies on the impact of attitudes are growing in many tourism research streams, there is still limited attention on place attachment in film tourism research.

#### *Tourism motivation*

Tourism motivation refers to a meaningful state of mind, which adequately disposes an actor to travel and is subsequently interpretable by others as a valid explanation for such a decision (Dann, 1981). Tourism motivation explains reasons of making a trip, experiences sought, and tourism activities at the destination (Kim, Lee, & Klenosky, 2003). Tourism motivation can be the push factors driving tourists to travel to a specific destination (Macdonald, 2004). There are various tourism motivation measurements for different forms of tourism (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

Film can add meanings and appeals for places (Croy & Heitmann, 2011) as well as motivate viewers to visit screened locations

(Josiam et al., 2015; Wen et al., 2018). Through their favourite film, viewers can make their fantasy, enjoy the screened locations (Rittichainuwat & Rattanaphinanchai, 2015) and consequently decide to visit the screened locations without much marketing efforts or sell forces (Bolan, Boy, & Bell, 2011). Film tourists travel to the screened locations to emotionally experience and to relive the scenes on the screen (Tooke & Baker, 1996). Film tourism is considered as an opportunity for fans to bring film to life and emotionally connect with the film (Beeton, 2010). Such strong attachment has been developed from plot, actors, screened locations or setting (Iwashita, 2006). Despite the prevalence of tourism motivation studies, research focusing on the relationship of tourism motivation and place attachment is still lacking.

#### *Place attachment*

Place attachment is defined as a bond between people and places (Kudryavtsev, Stedman, & Krasny, 2012). Operationalization of the term is various across disciplines (Ramkissoon, Smith, & Weiler, 2013). Chen et al. (2014) conceptualized place attachment into two main streams; 1) an outcome of an individual evaluation towards a place based on knowledge, and 2) a bond an individual has with a place through experience. The latter was recommended for tourism research to measure the place attachment construct.

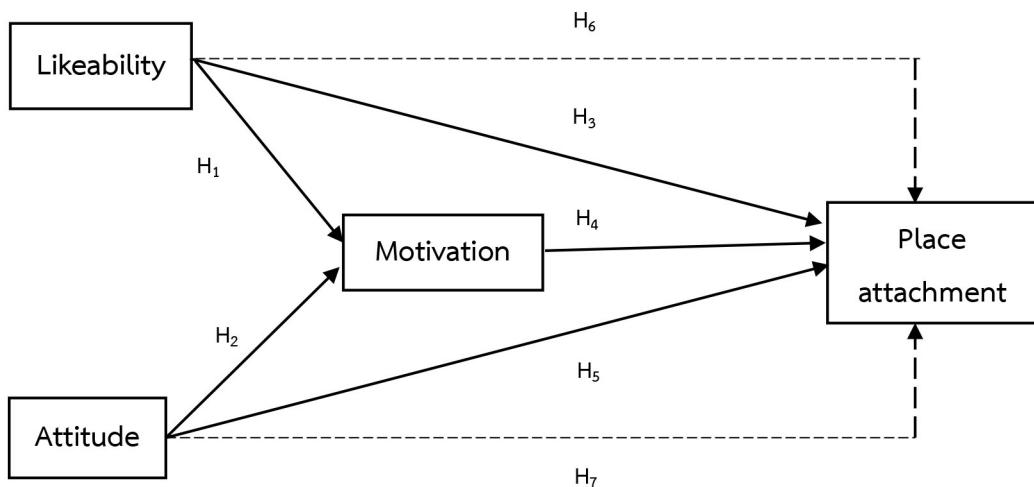
Popular film is becoming a major factor for an unexpected tourism flow to a specific screened location (Balli, Balli, & Cebeci, 2013; Hao & Ryan, 2013). Emotional place attachment and film experiences are enhanced in the viewers' memories by associating them with likeable film elements (Iwashita, 2006) that

tie the bond with the place (Connell, 2005). Film viewers tend to have strong emotional attachment with places (Chen, 2018). The strong emotion will generate forces to visit the destination and consequently form attachment to the places (Pestana, Parreira, & Moutinho, 2020). Based on the past literature, film can potentially create place attachment in two stages as follows; after viewing film and after visiting a film location. At the screened locations, film tourism experiences vary on one's imagination and memories that they have with the film (Kim, 2012). This would provide a competitive edge for the destination marketing since tourists will be more likely to visit and re-visit a destination they feel strongly attached to. Taking these advantages into account, tourism researchers (Reitsamer et al., 2016) recently called for more research into the area of place attachment.

### Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

Past literature suggest that drama likeability can motivate viewers to visit screened locations

(Josiam et al., 2015; Wen et al., 2018) and enhance memorable and emotional attachment with screened locations (Beeton, 2005). Furthermore, attitude can become a predictor of travel motivation and increase the bond with places and (Mohsin, 2005). Therefore, viewers who like the drama and have positive attitude towards screened locations are likely to be motivated to visit the screened locations and consequently form a strong emotional attachment with the places. The level of place attachment would depend on drama likeability, attitude towards screened locations and motivation to visit the places. Based on the past literature, a conceptual framework for this study (see Figure 1) and hypotheses incorporate four main variables as discussed (likeability, attitude, tourism motivation, and place attachment) to examine the causal factors of place attachment in the context of film tourism.



**Figure 1** Conceptual framework

To test causal relationships between the four main variables shown in the conceptual framework, seven main hypotheses are formulated as follows:

$H_1$ : Likeability positively affects tourism motivation.

$H_2$ : Attitude positively affects tourism motivation.

$H_3$ : Likeability positively affects place attachment.

$H_4$ : Tourism motivation positively affects place attachment.

$H_5$ : Attitude positively affects place attachment.

$H_6$ : Tourism motivation mediates the relationship between likeability and place attachment.

$H_7$ : Tourism motivation mediates the relationship between attitude and place attachment.

## Methodology

### *Sample and data collection*

The sample of the study included Thai tourists who viewed Buppessannivas drama and were at least 20 years old who could independently travel. To avoid repeating the same sample visiting several locations in Ayutthaya, data were collected at Wat Chai Watthanaram since it was the most popular and must-visit screened location among drama fans (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2018). When the research aims to explain a specific type of tourism, sampling of a particular setting is appropriate (Pearce, 2011). Data were collected in June 2018. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to recruit the sample including 1) a simple random sampling to select 5 days in a month, and 2) a systematic random sampling

by selecting every fifth tourists visiting Wat Chai Watthanaram. The researcher requested a permission before collecting data at the temple. Data collection was conducted at the only one temple exit gate after the tourists had experienced the screened location. Only voluntarily participants were included in the study.

For structural equation model analysis, the ratio of sample size to estimated parameters should be 20:1 (Jackson, 2003), or a minimum sample of 200 respondents (Kline, 2011). To determine a minimum sample size, power analysis can be used since it includes power, effect size, and significance level (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2019). This study used G\*Power, a statistical power analysis, to perform a priori sample size estimation of the study since it could handle different types of statistical tests commonly used in social and behavioral research (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). With alpha = .05, power = 0.95, and effect size = medium (0.3), a priori power analysis suggested a required minimum sample size of 280 respondents. To ensure consistency of the parameters, a larger sample size was taken into account. A total of 430 questionnaires were distributed and 415 questionnaires were usable for data analysis. Thus, the sample size was more than adequate for the objective of this study.

### *Instrument development*

This study used a cross-sectional self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire contained five main sections including drama likeability, attitudes toward a screened location, tourism motivation, place attachment, and demographic profiles. A screening question first

checked whether the respondents had watched any episodes of Buppessannivas drama series. Only those who watched Buppessannivas drama series were included in the study.

Measurements of the four variables were adopted from the past studies. First, drama likeability focused on nine dimensions drawn from Lee et al. (2015) including actors, food, setting, scenery, plot, history, way of life, culture, and song. Second, attitudes towards a screened location were adapted from Lee (2009) and Reitsamer et al. (2016) including four items; 1) I would like to travel to Ayutthaya, 2) I would like to visit the drama location in Ayutthaya, 3) I have a good impression of the drama location in Ayutthaya, and 4) I would invite others to visit the drama location in Ayutthaya. Third, tourism motivation was measured with the following eight items drawn from Macionis and Sparks (2006) and Kim (2012); 1) to experience the scenery featured in the drama, 2) to imagine oneself in the drama, 3) to experience drama atmosphere, 4) to take photographs at the screened location, 5) to tell others about visiting the screened location, 6) to have experience of visiting screened location, 7) to relive the scenes from drama, and 8) to experience the screened location that people talk about. Fourth, place attachment

used the following four items adopted from Lee, Kyle, and Scott (2012), Prayag and Ryan (2012), and Ramkissoon et al. (2013); 1) I feel excited to visit the screened location, 2) I am impressed with the screened location, 3) I am happy to visit the screened location, and 4) I feel attached to the screened location. The questions employed 10-point Likert scale ranging from agree the least (1) to agree the most (10). A pilot test and item-checking by a panel of experts were conducted for content validity of the instrument. Furthermore, the questionnaire was approved by the Ethics committee for human research prior to the main data collection.

The reliability of the measurements was further tested and the Cronbach alpha values of all constructs were greater than 0.85, a proof for high reliability of the questionnaire. For the evidence of convergent validity, average variance extracted (AVE) of all constructs were found greater than 0.50 and composite reliability of all constructs were found greater than 0.70, thus meeting the requirements (Hair et al., 2019). Table 1 presents correlation, alpha coefficients, average variance extracted, and composite reliability. Tourism motivation and place attachment is a pair of scales that has high correlation (0.840).

**Table 1** Correlation, alpha coefficients, average variance extracted, and composite reliability

Construct	Likeability	Tourism motivation	Attitude	Place attachment	Alpha	AVE	CR
Likeability	1.000				0.887	0.532	0.909
Tourism motivation	0.611***	1.000			0.960	0.783	0.967
Attitude	0.656***	0.698***	1.000		0.926	0.819	0.948
Place attachment	0.601***	0.840***	0.665***	1.000	0.942	0.853	0.959

\*\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To assess discriminant validity, Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that average variance extracted for each construct must be greater than the squared correlations between the construct and the other constructs in the model. Table 2 shows the evidence of discriminant validity between each pair of the constructs. First, the average variance extracted for likeability is 0.532 while the shared variance between likeability and other constructs ranges from 0.361 to 0.430. Second, the average variance extracted for tourism motivation is 0.783 while the shared

variance between tourism motivation and other constructs ranges from 0.373 to 0.706. Third, the average variance extracted for attitude is 0.819 while the shared variance between attitude and other constructs ranges from 0.430 to 0.487. Lastly, the average variance extracted for place attachment is 0.853 while the shared variance between place attachment and other constructs ranges from 0.361 to 0.706. These evidences prove that the discriminant validity is achieved.

**Table 2** Discriminant validity matrix

Construct	Likeability	Tourism motivation	Attitude	Place attachment
Likeability	0.532			
Tourism motivation	0.373	0.783		
Attitude	0.430	0.487	0.819	
Place attachment	0.361	0.706	0.442	0.853

The average variance extracted for respective constructs are shown in bold.

### *Data analysis*

Data were first screened for irregularity and checked for both normality and multicollinearity. Path analysis was employed to test causal relationships among variables using Covariance based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) with maximum likelihood method of estimation. The study assessed a good model fit based on the following fit indices; RMSEA < 0.08 (MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996), GFI and AGFI > 0.95, CMIN/df < 3 (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004), CFI > 0.95, SRMR < .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999) and NFI > 0.90 (Byrne, 2001).

### **Results**

#### *Characteristics of respondents*

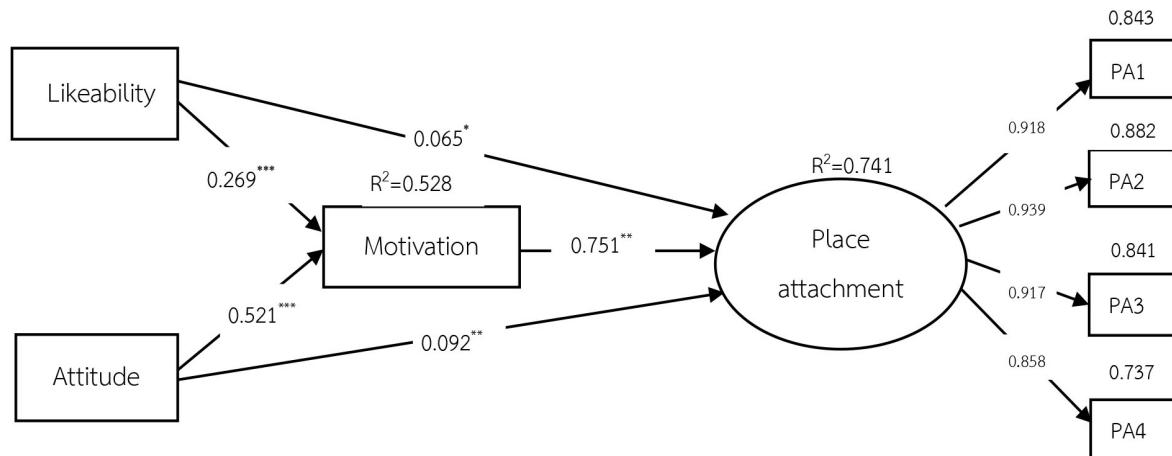
The sample consisted of 415 respondents. Descriptive findings suggested that 70.4% of the respondents were female and 60.4% of the respondents were between 26 and 45 years old. A little over half of the respondents (58.3%) were single while almost two-thirds of the respondents (71.4%) held at least a bachelor degree. Over half of the respondents (57.6%) worked in the business sector and almost half of the respondents (49.2%) had monthly income more than 20,001 baht per month.

Regarding the number of episodes that the respondents watched, 86.0% of the respondents watched at least 10 out of the total 15 episodes of the drama series. The respondents were from 63 different provinces around Thailand. The top 7 provinces that the respondents came from were as follows; Bangkok (23.4%), Nonthaburi (5.5%), Chonburi (4.1%), Nakhonrachasima (3.6%), Chacheongsao (2.9%), Pathumthani (2.9%), and Nakhonsawan (2.7%). Over four-fifths of the respondents (86.7%) had previously visited Ayutthaya at least once.

#### *Structural model and hypothesis tests*

Based on the criteria of fit indices, the results suggested that the proposed structural

model fit the data well. The fit indices of the structural model were as follows: chi-square = 12.552 ( $p = 0.128$ ); CMIN/df = 1.569; GFI = 0.992, AGFI = 0.970; RMSEA = 0.037; CFI = 0.998, SRMR = 0.009, NFI = 0.996. Once the structural model was considered as reliable, the path coefficients from the structural model could be further interpreted for their causal relationships. Figure 2 shows the structural model between the four variables and their standardized regression coefficients, squared multiple correlation, factor loadings and squared loadings.



Note: \*, \*\*, \*\*\* = significant at the 0.10, 0.05, 0.01 level, respectively

PA1 = I feel excited to visit the screened location. PA2 = I am impressed with the screened location.

PA3 = I am happy to visit the screened location. PA4 = I feel attached to the screened location.

**Figure 2** Structural model

From Figure 2, the results show that likeability ( $\beta = 0.269, t = 6.007, p < 0.01$ ) and attitude ( $\beta = 0.521, t = 11.643, p < 0.01$ ) positively affect tourism motivation. As drama likeability and positive attitude towards the screened locations increase, tourism motivation to visit the screened locations will increase. Squared multiple correlation ( $R^2$ ) indicates that 52.8% of the variance in motivation to visit screened locations can be explained by drama likeability and attitude towards a screened location. Therefore, both  $H_1$  and  $H_2$  are supported.

Regarding place attachment, 74.1% of the variance in place attachment can be explained by the three variables including likeability, attitude, and motivation. Tourism motivation shows a strong positive effect on place attachment ( $\beta = 0.751, t = 17.738, p < 0.01$ ) followed by attitude ( $\beta = 0.092, t = 2.214, p < 0.05$ ) and likeability ( $\beta = 0.065, t = 1.741, p < 0.10$ ). The results indicate that when drama likeability, tourism motivation, and attitude towards the screened locations increase, the attachment towards the place will also increase. Hence,  $H_3$ ,

$H_4$  and  $H_5$  are also supported. Furthermore, the analysis further reveals that squared loadings of PA2 indicator (0.882) mostly reflect place attachment, followed by PA1 indicator (0.843), PA3 indicator (0.841), and PA4 indicator (0.737) respectively.

To further investigate the mediator, Sobel test (Sobel, 1982) was applied to examine whether tourism motivation significantly mediated the relationship between likeability and place attachment, and the relationship between attitude and place attachment. The results confirmed that tourism motivation significantly mediated the relationship between likeability and place attachment ( $Z = 5.703, p < 0.01$ ) as well as the relationship between attitude and place attachment ( $Z = 9.710, p < 0.01$ ). Therefore,  $H_6$  and  $H_7$  are supported. Since direct and indirect effects are significant and point in the same direction, tourism motivation is regarded as a complementary mediator (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017). Table 3 shows the results of path relationships, direct effects, indirect effects, and results of hypothesis tests.

**Table 3** Path relationships, direct effects, indirect effects and hypothesis tests

Hypotheses	Paths	Direct effects	Indirect effects	Results
$H_1$	Likeability --> Motivation	0.269***	-	supported
$H_2$	Attitude --> Motivation	0.521***	-	supported
$H_3$	Likeability --> Place attachment	0.065*	-	supported
$H_4$	Motivation --> Place attachment	0.751***	-	supported
$H_5$	Attitude --> Place attachment	0.092**	-	supported
$H_6$	Likeability --> Motivation --> Place attachment	-	0.381***	supported
$H_7$	Attitude --> Motivation --> Place attachment	-	0.552***	supported

\* , \*\*, \*\*\* = significant at the 0.10, 0.05, 0.01 level, respectively.

## Discussion

This study aims to examine the causal factors of place attachment by focusing on the three main variables; likeability, attitude, and tourism motivation. All proposed seven hypotheses are accepted. The findings will be discussed to enrich film tourism literature in three main aspects. First, the results suggest that drama likeability and attitude towards a screened location positively affect tourism motivation to visit screened locations. The findings are consistent with the past studies (Bolan et al., 2011; Josiam et al., 2015; Wen et al., 2018) that when viewers like the drama and have positive attitude towards screened places, the drama can potentially motivate viewers to visit screened locations. Second, drama likeability, attitude towards a screened location as well as tourism motivation to visit screened locations positively affect place attachment. The findings confirm the past research (Chen, 2018) that drama fans tend to have strong emotional attachments with screened locations. Third, tourism motivation mediates the relationship between likeability and place attachment as well as the relationship between attitude and place attachment. The results are in line with Pestana et al. (2020) that strong emotion with places generate desires to visit the destination and subsequently form strong attachment with places. Hence, drama likeability and attitude positively affect place attachment through tourism motivation.

At present, there are still limited tourism studies on place attachment (Chen et al., 2014). The study therefore provides several theoretical contributions to film tourism literature. First, the present study made an attempt to incorporate and test causal factors of place attachment

emerging from the past literature. Past film tourism studies mainly focused on motivation to visit film locations (e.g. Rittichainuwat & Rattanaphinanchai, 2015; Tooke & Baker, 1996). The study further includes likeability, attitude, and place attachment into the model. Second, the results suggest that tourism motivation and place attachment should not be studied separately since tourism motivation to visit screened location can be a mediator for place attachment. Strong desires to visit a screened location would heighten the emotional attachment with the place (Pestana et al., 2020). To date, the role of tourism motivation as a mediator for place attachment has hardly been tested in film tourism. Third, the present study suggests that popular TV drama does not only motivate viewers to visit overseas screened locations (e.g. Kim 2012; Rajaguru, 2014; Rewtrakunphaiboon, 2017) but it also influences viewers to travel to domestic screened locations.

There are several practical implications for film tourism marketing strategies. First, tourism marketers should realize the potentials of popular TV drama in forming emotional attachment with screened locations. Second, tourism marketers should work closely with film producers to enhance likeability through drama elements. Third, popularity of TV drama can provide meanings for screened locations (Beeton, 2005) and build positive attitude towards the destination. Both drama likeability and positive attitude are the important predictors leading to motivation to visit screen locations and consequently bond strong attachment with places. This can increase the potentials of repeat visits to the destination. Since popular TV drama reveals the power of promoting

intended destinations to the audience, this study suggests a strong collaboration between both film and tourism industries to maximize the full potentials TV drama to create film tourism.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of this study provide several empirical evidences to film tourism literature. First, drama likeability and attitude towards a screened location positively affect tourism motivation. Second, drama likeability, attitude towards a screened location as well as tourism motivation positively affect place attachment. Third, tourism motivation mediates the relationship between drama likeability and place attachment as well as the relationship between attitude and place attachment. Popular drama can generate desires to visit screened locations (Du et al., 2020; Wen et al., 2018) and form strong emotional place attachment (Pestana et al., 2020).

There has been plenty research on how foreign films particularly Korean films influence overseas travel to screened locations in Korea (e.g. Kim, 2012; Rajaguru, 2014). When the local Thai TV drama, Buppessannivas, became a big hit in the country, it has shown a soft power to create a film tourism to Ayutthaya. At present, Buppessannivas is now broadcasted outside Thailand and can be watched from anywhere in the world either on YouTube or Netflix. If the combination of the drama is right in creating likeability and positive attitude, it can also attract international tourists to visit the screened locations as well as create place attachment for future repeat visits. To successfully create a film tourism, close collaboration and well planned

strategies to utilize the soft power of TV drama are encouraged.

Since film tourism is still a growing area of research with its potential benefits for the local community, the study thus calls for more research to examine how film or TV drama can create film tourism for screened locations. To date, film tourism in Asia still needs to be further explored. This study has made an attempt to examine the causal factors of place attachment. There are still more avenues to research in this area. Similar quantitative studies can be conducted with different TV drama, settings, countries, or nationalities. In addition, qualitative research can also be applied to explore new variables leading to place attachment.

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