



COMMUNICATING TOURISM IN *DOCTOR STRANGER* MOVIE

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Received : (April)

Accepted : (May)

Published : (June)

Abstract

The tourism sector in Indonesia has great potential, both in terms of its natural resources and its people. Tourism has become a unique and enjoyable activity for almost everyone. Films, as a communication medium, are quite effective in promoting tourist destinations and exploring the potential of various regions. This research aims to explore the positive impact on tourist destinations that are affected by the phenomenon in films, leading to their recognition by the general public and an increase in tourist visits to those destinations. The data source for this research is the film *Doctor Stranger* in 2016 and 2022, including images and film scripts. The results of this research show that films can be used as a medium to promote and boost the popularity of tourist destinations. They can be considered as an alternative promotional tool due to their implicit nature, which tends to resonate more with the target audience. Promoting tourism through films can have positive effects on the featured tourist destinations, including significant improvements in the tourism sector, ranging from increased public awareness of the destinations, increased popularity, to an increase in the number of tourist visitors.

Keywords: Dr. Strange film, media, promotion, tourism

INTRODUCTION

Literary analysis places a strong emphasis on the written word and textual elements, with scholars and critics scrutinizing language, literary devices, and narrative structures employed by the author (Klarer, 2005; Kasih, 2020). By exploring imagery, symbolism, figurative language, and other literary techniques, they delve into the work's deeper meanings and thematic elements. This perspective delves into the characters' internal world, capturing the nuances of their thoughts, emotions, and the intricacies of the author's writing style. Conversely, film analysis directs its attention to the audiovisual elements of cinema. It encompasses visual storytelling techniques, cinematography, editing, sound design, and performances to examine how meaning is conveyed on the screen (Wardaningsih & Kasih, 2021 & 2022; Mansyur, Fithratullah, Kasih, 2023). Film analysis scrutinizes the artistic choices made by the director, the collaborative efforts of the production team, and the impact of technical aspects on the overall narrative experience. By considering these elements, it investigates the ways in which the medium delivers its intended message.

The perspectives of literature and film analysis intersect and complement each other, particularly when studying film adaptations of literary works (Kasih, 2018; Sikov, 2007). By comparing the adaptation to its source material, a deeper understanding of the translation from one medium to another can be achieved. This analysis evaluates the fidelity to the original text, explores any changes or additions made during the adaptation, and considers the influence of visual elements on the narrative. By combining these two perspectives, scholars and critics gain a comprehensive understanding of the artistic choices, thematic elements, and narrative interpretations present in both literature and film. This interdisciplinary approach fosters a coherent comprehension of the unique qualities of each medium and the ways in which storytelling techniques are adapted and reimaged to engage audiences in distinct ways."

Film is a potential tourism promotion tool because its symbols and meanings have the ability to influence the responses of audiences and motivate them to visit the featured locations (Cardoso.*et.al.*, 2017). Indonesia has also experienced the benefits of tourism promotion as a result of the popularity of a film (Lukitasari & Putra, 2017). In 2010, a film titled *Eat Pray Love* tells the story of a woman's journey as she travels to Italy, India, and Bali in search of self-discovery. The film showcases the vibrant streets and lush landscapes of Bali. It inspired many viewers to embark on similar travel adventures and explore these destinations. The number of

foreign tourists visiting Bali reached 2.5 million people in 2010, surpassing the target, partly due to the film *Eat Pray Love* strengthening Bali's image as a tourist destination and boosting the level of visits (Detiknews, 2023).

Some films also exposed popular places and the destination of tourism. *Notting Hill* (1999), a romantic comedy film, is set in the vibrant neighborhood of Notting Hill in London. The film's depiction of the charming streets, colorful houses, and the iconic Portobello Road Market highlighted the area's unique character, attracting visitors to explore and experience the neighborhood firsthand. *Lost in Translation* (2003): Set in Tokyo, this film captures the bustling energy and cultural contrasts of the city. The neon-lit streets, traditional temples, and vibrant nightlife depicted in the film showcased Tokyo's dynamic atmosphere, intriguing many viewers and sparking interest in visiting the city. Thus, film is considered important to communicate tourism and this can be seen in *Doctor Stranger* film.

Doctor Stranger is a Marvel superhero film released in 2016, part of the Marvel Comics character. This 14th film of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) specifically tells the story of the character Doctor Strange. Directed by Scott Derrickson, the movie is based on the Marvel Comics character of the same name. Benedict Cumberbatch in the lead role as Dr. Stephen Strange, a brilliant but arrogant neurosurgeon, who suffers a severe car accident that leaves him with irreparable damage to his hands. Desperate to regain his former skills, Strange travels to Nepal in search of a rumored mystical place called Kamar-Taj. There, he encounters a powerful sorcerer known as the Ancient One, played by Tilda Swinton. Under her tutelage, Strange begins to learn the mystical arts and discovers parallel dimensions, time manipulation, and other supernatural abilities. As Strange delves deeper into the mystic arts, he becomes entangled in a conflict against a former disciple of the Ancient One, Kaecilius (played by Mads Mikkelsen). Kaecilius seeks to gain immortality by summoning Dormammu, an interdimensional entity. Strange, aided by his newfound allies, including fellow sorcerers Wong (played by Benedict Wong) and Mordo (played by Chiwetel Ejiofor), must harness his powers and stop Kaecilius from unleashing Dormammu's dark forces upon Earth.

Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness is a sequel to *Doctor Strange* (2016) released on May 6, 2022. The film is directed by Sam Raimi and stars Benedict Cumberbatch as Stephen Strange/Doctor Strange. To restore a world where everything is changing, Strange seeks help from his ally Wong, the Sorcerer Supreme, and the Avengers' most powerful Scarlet Witch, Wanda. But a terrible threat looms over humanity and the entire universe that no longer can be done by their power alone. *Doctor Stranger* film has brought the viewer to different landscapes regarding the mythical world. Those landscapes are considered as the best places for visitors.

There has been research on The Marvel movie, but it does not include research in the field of tourism. Tourism in film refers to the portrayal of destinations, landmarks, or specific locations within a film that can inspire or attract viewers to visit those places in real life (Cardoso.*et.al.*, 2017). It often involves showcasing the beauty, culture, or unique features of a location, serving as a form of promotion for tourism. *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, the stunning landscapes of New Zealand served as the backdrop for the fictional Middle-earth in these films (Jones & Smith, 2005). The picturesque scenery, including the rolling hills of the Shire and the majestic mountains of Mordor, captured the attention of viewers worldwide and led to a significant increase in tourism to New Zealand. Pratama (2020) explored Indonesians' perspectives on the film *Doctor Stranger*. Other studies (Efizahane & Afriana, 2022; Hai-Hua, 2021; Hapsari, 2018) on *Doctor Stranger* films still focus on how films are presented as part of literary works and the issue of tourism in the two films have never been done.

Theoretical Framework

According to Pratista (2008; 2017), film is one of the forms of mass communication, serving as a medium for conveying messages. As a powerful medium of mass communication, films contain audiovisual elements that can influence the emotions of the audience. As a message transmitter, films possess important elements, namely narrative and cinematic elements (Sikov, 2007). The narrative element in a film refers to the material that will be developed. The script is something that is written and serves as a blueprint for the film. The script determines how a film will tell its story and unfold. Besides the narrative element, there is also the cinematic element, which pertains to the techniques and styles used in its creation. Within this element, several key components exist, one of which is *mise en scène* (Mis Ang Sin).

The term *mise en scène* is a widely used French term in the theater world, which translates to "placing on stage." According to Abrams et al. (2001, p. 93) and Sikov (2007), the term encompasses several key elements. Firstly, the setting refers to the location where the events in a film take place. Secondly, properties are the set decorations and props utilized in a film, which should support the established setting. Thirdly, costumes play a crucial role in shaping the characters and conveying the story through the clothing worn by the actors. Additionally, performance involves the actors' expressions and movements, serving as a means of communication within the film. The actors' body language and facial expressions can effectively convey various messages. Lastly, lighting contributes to the specific meaning conveyed in a film. All these elements together form the *mise en scène*, which is what is presented in front of the camera.

Communicating tourism through movies involves incorporating tourism-related elements into a film's narrative, semantics, or visuals (Niziol, 2019; Saltik, Cosar, and Kozak, 2011). This includes showcasing destinations, attractions, or tourism experiences to captivate and inspire audiences, potentially generating interest and attracting visitors. One aspect of communicating tourism is through destination showcasing. Films often feature stunning landscapes, iconic landmarks, or culturally significant sites as backdrops for their stories. Through visually captivating cinematography, these films highlight the beauty and allure of certain destinations, arousing curiosity and interest among viewers (Wijaya & Rosikha, 2020; Rittichainuwat & Rattanaphinanchai, 2015). The portrayal of these locations can serve as a promotional tool, encouraging audiences to consider visiting those places (Gjorgievski, and Trpkova, 2012). Some movies incorporate tourism experiences into their storylines, making travel and exploration central elements. Characters may embark on adventures, visit new places, or encounter diverse cultures, showcasing the transformative and enriching aspects of travel (Imanjaya and Kusumawardhana, 2016). Such narratives can inspire viewers to seek out their own travel experiences and engage in tourism activities. In the movies *Doctor Strange* (2016) and *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022), although the primary focus is on the superhero narrative rather than tourism, there are elements that can be seen as communicating tourism in certain aspects.

METHOD

This study will employ a qualitative descriptive method to analyze the tourism issue in the film "*Doctor Strange*". The qualitative method is chosen as it aims to focus on understanding and description, while exploring a particular phenomenon (Kasih, Amelia, & Fithratullah, 2021). The primary data sources for this research are the films *Doctor Strange* (2016) and *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022). The analysis will focus on elements related to the narrative and semantics of the films. Additionally, journals and other research will be utilized to support the analysis (Kuswoyo et al., 2016). The method employed to collect data is document research, involving the collection and selection of relevant data. The researcher followed several necessary steps, including observing the films, gaining a better understanding of the materialism elements, reading related references to observe the theory, data, and information used, making notes of important parts in the document research sources, and categorizing the data into relevant categories.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Superheroes possess unique skills or supernatural abilities, not acquired through magic, but through the wonders of modern science (Winterbach, 2006, p. 115). It can be said that superheroes are individuals with powers exceeding those of ordinary humans, and these powers are used for the greater good of all living on Earth. Each superhero-themed film has its own development in the world. Pratista (2010) explains that superhero films can be divided into three eras: pre-80s era, 80s-90s era, and 2000s era.

Before the 80s era, during the 50s to 60s, it was a gloomy period for superhero films due to the declining popularity of superhero serials, coupled with turmoil in the comic book industry. The only superhero television series at the time was *Adventures of Superman* (1952-1958). However, *Batman* (1966) emerged as a feature film from its short-lived series, becoming the first full-length superhero film released in theaters. After a decade of absence, superhero films made a grand comeback with the release of *Superman* (1978).

In the 80s and 90s, DC Comics dominated the 80s era with its flagship superhero characters. It was during this era that the first female superhero film, *Supergirl* (1984), was released. The first superhero comic adaptation to the big screen was *Captain Marvel* (Fawcett Comics). The Captain Marvel film itself consisted of 12 short series, starting with *The Adventures of Captain Marvel* (1941). In the 90s, digital engineering technology (CGI) emerged, enabling filmmakers to visualize many things that were previously unachievable. This was followed by the emergence of 3D technology in the 2000s. Superhero films were still dominated by adaptations of two popular DC and Marvel comics. From the early millennium until now, Marvel has surpassed DC in the number of film adaptations of superhero comics, such as *X-Men* (2000), *Spiderman* (2002), *Hulk* (2003), *Fantastic Four* (2005), *X-Men: The Last Stand* (2006), *Ghost Rider* (2007), and others. Marvel embarked on a long-term project called The Avengers, which was a collaboration of major superheroes such as Hulk, Iron Man, Thor, and Captain America. Some characters were redesigned to meet the requirements of this project, starting with *Iron Man* (2008), *The Incredible Hulk* (2008), *Thor* (2011), and *Captain America: The First Avenger* (2011). *The Avengers* was finally released in 2012, becoming one of the most anticipated films and part of Marvel's Phase One production.

Doctor Strange (2016), adapted from the Marvel Comics, was produced as part of Phase Three of Marvel's comic adaptations and was released in the same year as *Captain America: Civil War*. Following that, from 2017 to 2019, films like *Thor: Ragnarok* (2017), *Avengers: Infinity War* (2018), *Avengers: Endgame* (2019), and other films like *Spiderman*, *Ant-Man*, *Black Panther*, and *Captain Marvel* were released. Meanwhile, *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022) was produced as part of Phase Four of Marvel films and released in the period from 2021 until now, along with other characters such as Black Widow, Shang-Chi, and Eternals. While

tourism is not the primary intention of Marvel films, the visual appeal and immersive storytelling often ignite a desire among fans to explore the real-world locations that inspired or resemble the film settings. Marvel films have played a significant role in generating curiosity and interest in these places, resulting in increased tourism and economic benefits for the locations showcased in the films.

Films are categorized into genres based on the narrative they present. A film usually consists of a combination of genres, with one dominant genre that forms the substance of its storyline (Pratista, 2008). The film *Doctor Strange* (2016 and 2022) falls into three genres. Firstly, it is categorized as action due to the numerous chase and fight scenes depicted in the film. Secondly, it can be classified as an adventure film because it involves a journey with various puzzles to be solved. Lastly, it is considered a fantasy film as it portrays imaginative elements, including characters and storylines that do not exist in real life. The film also showcases numerous visual effects, particularly during the characters' combat scenes, highlighting their extraordinary powers.

In the film *Doctor Strange*, tourism is prominently featured as it showcases various locations and captivates the audience's imagination. Through visually stunning scenes and captivating storytelling, the movie effectively communicates the allure of different tourist destinations. It takes the viewers on a mystical journey, allowing them to witness the mesmerizing beauty of these locations. Starting from the bustling streets of New York City, the film then transports the audience to the ethereal landscapes of Nepal. It further explores the heart of Manhattan, where the iconic skyline serves as the backdrop for thrilling adventures. Additionally, the film showcases architectural wonders like the towering Empire State Building and the majestic Brooklyn Bridge, emphasizing human ingenuity and adding to the appeal of these destinations.

In the further scene, the film featured several location shoots to bring the story to life. This can be seen in the scene at minute 53:05 film *Doctor Stranger* (2016), where several cities are mentioned in the film's dialogues.

Agamotto built 3 Sanctums in places of power, where great cities now stand. That door leads to the Hong Kong Sanctum, that door to the New York Sanctum. That one, to the London Sanctum.



The images in the film begin with the opening of the Sanctum, and then the audience is taken to the areas of Hong Kong, London, and New York. As the images enter these three famous cities, the audience is invited to enjoy the views of Hong Kong, London, and New York. Brief glimpses of these images and settings adequately showcase the beauty of these cities. Many scenes were filmed in London, including the Sanctum Sanctorum, which serves as Doctor Strange's residence. The film highlights the city's iconic landmarks, such as Westminster Bridge, the Millennium Bridge, and the Royal Observatory in Greenwich.

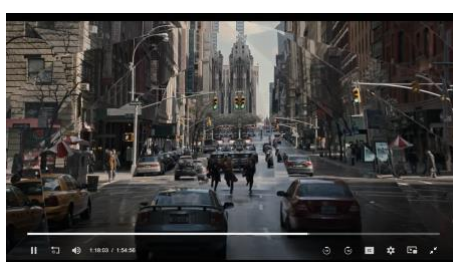


In the next scene, the film also exposed Kathmandu, Nepal and showed scenes set in Kamar-Taj, a hidden enclave where Doctor Strange undergoes training in the mystical arts. The Kathmandu scenes were shot on location, capturing the city's vibrant streets, architecture, and cultural heritage. at 21:16, the name Kathmandu, Nepal, and a description of the city are clearly written. The scene continues when at 21.51 minutes, the figure of Doctor Strange is seen walking through the city of Kathmandu, at 21:16 minutes shows the name of the city of Kathmandu in Nepal.



The three pictures above depict Kathmandu, Nepal from various perspectives. The chosen locations are tourist spots. Kathmandu, Nepal is a renowned religious tourist destination even today. In this scene, the filming locations become the main title of the scene. The other filming locations in the movie are not prominently featured with the mention of their names. It seems the director deliberately highlights the name "Nepal" as the core of the film's story. The bustling atmosphere in Kathmandu is a common sight in this city.

Several key sequences take place in New York City, portraying Doctor Strange's life as a surgeon and later as a superhero. The film showcases notable locations such as the New York Sanctum, one of the three Sanctums that protect the Earth from mystical threats.



Hong Kong, The climax of the film takes place in Hong Kong, with sequences filmed on location. The film showcases the city's unique skyline, vibrant street scenes, and its blend of traditional and modern architecture.



The film *Doctor Strange*, which was released in 2016, with one of the shooting locations in Nepal, provides distinct advantages for the region. Nearly 70% of *Doctor Strange*'s filming locations are in Nepal. In 2015, Nepal experienced an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.8 on the Richter scale. This earthquake became a national disaster with a high level of damage, killing more than 8000 people of Nepal. Epicenter point is in the Gorkha district of Nepal, approximately 77 kilometers northwest of Kathmandu, the capital city. Historic monuments, cultural sites, and infrastructure were severely damaged or destroyed, including ancient temples, palaces, and UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Kathmandu and other affected areas. Its influence on the tourism industry is enormous. Many tourists canceled or postponed their trips due to safety concerns and the extensive damage to infrastructure.

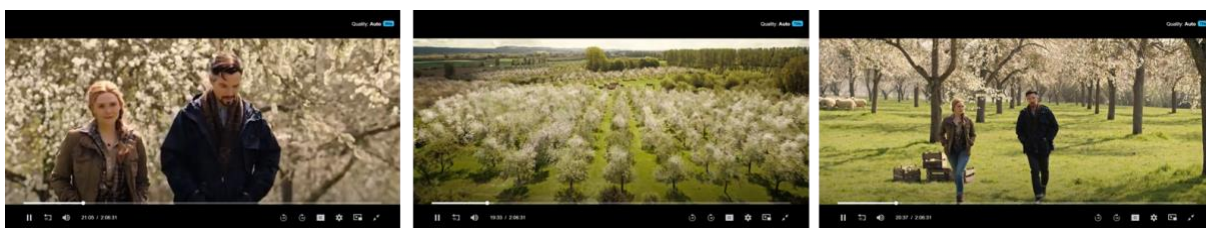
The film *Doctor Strange* which was released in 2016 did not directly impact the increase in tourist visits to Nepal after the 2015 earthquake. Although the film features several locations in Nepal, including Kathmandu, it focuses more on superhero stories and fictional aspects than promoting Nepal tourism directly. However, films featuring popular locations can give a destination positive exposure and encourage tourists to visit the place (Saltik, Cosar, Kozak, 2011). In the case of Nepal, the film *Doctor Strange* can introduce audiences around the world to the beauty and cultural appeal of Kathmandu, which may interest them in seeing first-hand the places featured in the film. The movie *Doctor Strange* may provide a positive exposure to Nepal as a tourist destination, continuous efforts in post-earthquake recovery and active promotion are needed to significantly increase tourist visits to Nepal.

The selection of filming locations for *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* in 2022, as a sequel to the 2016 film *Doctor Strange*, still includes the same filming locations. The dominant filming locations in the film are in Nepal and New York, as seen in the captured images in the film. The natural beauty and places in these two locations remain the focus of the director's attention, using the film as a means to indirectly promote these places.



New York Scene

At 09.15 minutes, this is when American Chaves, a teenage girl who has similar powers to Dr. Strange shows her strength against a giant octopus. In the scene when Dr. Strange confronts a giant octopus, there is the name of the famous mancini's pizza restaurant, as well as yellow taxi vehicles that characterize the city of new york. At 38.37 minutes, American Chaves has powers that help Dr. Strange move around. New York City looks beautiful with its tall buildings neatly arranged. This scene is also supported by the words of Doctor Strange, "*It's not my first weird trip, kid. So, this is New York in the Multi...*".



Burrow Hill, London Scene

At 19.05 minutes, the choice of location when Doctor Strange is walking demonstrates how this scene is created to showcase the natural beauty that can be found in London, besides the tall buildings. Burrow Hill lies a cider apple farm in London. It serves as a backdrop for the scene in which Doctor Strange (Cumberbatch) and Wanda Maximoff (Olsen) talk about the idea of a multiverse. In real life, the apple orchards provide vintage apples that the owners use to produce their cider drinks. Interestingly, the company has a 200 years old tradition of cider production. The film's message to communicate the tourism destination is successful because viewers will certainly feel taken to enjoy the beauty of nature.



Katmandu, Nepal Scene

The next scene at 26.47 minutes, which still focuses on Kathmandu, Nepal, also successfully showcases the beauty of the mountains. In this scene, Doctor Strange standing against the backdrop of the mountains serves as an attractive subject for anyone to take photos there. The typical housing in Kathmandu also becomes an interesting sight alongside the story of the hero, Doctor Strange, saving lives on Earth. The snowy region in Kathmandu also appears to show that snow can also be found in this area.

Furthermore, the inclusion of Doctor Strange in the scene not only enhances the visual appeal but also highlights the potential of tourism in Kathmandu, Nepal. As tourists witness the majestic beauty of the mountains and the unique architecture of the city, they are drawn to explore the cultural richness and natural wonders that this destination has to offer. By showcasing Doctor Strange amidst these captivating surroundings, the film inadvertently promotes the idea of Kathmandu as a must-visit location, inviting travelers from around the world to experience its enchanting blend of history, spirituality, and breathtaking landscapes.

CONCLUSION

In the movie *Doctor Strange* (2016) and *Doctor Strange in Multiverse of Madness* (2022), there are elements that indirectly communicate tourism. The film takes viewers on a journey to exotic locations, such as Kamar-Taj and the Dark Dimension, which can evoke curiosity and interest in exploring similar destinations. The

film automatically proves the deeper connection of film as literary work and tourism. Literature and tourism, two seemingly distinct realms, are intricately interconnected and influence each other in profound ways. While literature has the power to ignite the wanderlust within us, tourism provides the backdrop and experiences that shape and enrich literary works. Literature and tourism seemingly have intersect and mutually enhance our understanding of the world. The film also touches upon Eastern mysticism, offering cultural exploration and showcasing diverse beliefs and practices. The personal transformation of the main character reflects a desire for self-discovery often associated with travel. The stunning visual effects and captivating sequences create a sense of wonder, inspiring audiences to seek out destinations with similar experiences. While primarily a superhero film, *Doctor Strange* indirectly sparks an interest in new and exciting travel opportunities.

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