



An Effective Research Methodology for Studying Film Tourism in Iran

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Abstract

Abstract

One out of five destination tourists have been attracted by a film [1]. This means tourism research needs to experience more research at this remarkable growth area in future. To produce scientific research in this research area, it is essential to develop skills in the specific research area or method. It is not only need to understand tourism research method, but also, we need to find and merge research method in the field of media's research area. The goal of any researcher is to find a solution for a gap with sufficient knowledge of understanding. Research design and methods are used for data collection. First part of this paper is to highlights what is research and research methodology. Second part focuses about qualitative and quantitative methods and approaches on data collection methods in this area. In fact, this article summarizes basic steps and methodological prerequisites and principles for the research area of film tourism as the research guide throughout the research period for research areas including cultural studies, tourism, and media.

Keywords: Film tourism, Research Methodology, Qualitative method, Quantitative method

1. Introduction

According to the CEO and president of the World Travel and Tourism Council, Gloria Guevara, the tourism industry is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in all over the world [2].

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Numerous methods can attract visitors to a new destination and increase the economic benefit for a community and people of a city, country, or region. Film tourism is one of the most effective ways to inspire audiences to explore a new location and bring an economic benefit either at the time of production or after the release [3]. This is based on the power of a film that can send a positive destination image to induce an audience to visit a location [3]. The primary purpose of this paper is to describe and justify a research methodology for film tourism based on specific case study which is Iran. The main goal of this paper is to develop a model to be used as an effective practice for research methodology of film tourism.

2. What is Research?

Tourism research is a systematically organized investigation into various aspects of the industry, aimed at discovering facts and deriving logical conclusions. In the realm of social science, research is intricately linked to human activities, with its type of contingent upon the specific dimensions and intended applications of the findings. These dimensions encompass how research outcomes will be implemented, and the primary users, driven by the underlying purposes for conducting such inquiries. Additionally, considerations such as the scope of issues under examination, the temporal framework involved, and the selection of methodologies for data collection play pivotal roles in shaping the type of research conducted. Within this context, "pure research" or academic research emerges as the genesis of most scientific ideas and principles. Its primary focus lies in establishing and advancing research concepts and principles, with a dedicated emphasis on the theoretical underpinnings of the researched phenomenon [4].

3. Research methodology in tourism

Methodology is akin to a comprehensive framework that encompasses the various methods employed within the house of research. This term encapsulates a profound comprehension of the entire research process, delving into aspects such as its social-organizational context, philosophical assumptions, ethical principles, and the societal implications arising from the generation of new knowledge through the research endeavor. Methods, on the other hand, pertain to the specific techniques constituting the toolkit employed in a study. These techniques span the selection of cases, the observation and measurement of social phenomena, the collection and refinement of data, the analysis of gathered information, and the subsequent reporting of results. In essence, methods constitute the tangible tools and procedures that operationalize the broader methodological framework in the conduct of research. [4]. A research methodology can be a model of theoretical principles to give a guideline about how a research context will be carried out by a specific paradigm [5]. The clear message behind any epistemological view's primary purpose is to find the answer to the research questions [6]. Research methods are used by researchers to collect evidence to examine existing and new information. At the same time, a paradigm is a way the world works to determine the questions' answers [5].

3.1. Quantitative Research

Quantitative research is explained as the well-designed inquiry about a phenomenon through numerical data collection and execution of statistical, mathematical or computational techniques. Quantitative research is under

the umbrella of positivism paradigm that “calls for methods grounded in statistical analysis and include such techniques as inferential statistics, hypothesis testing, mathematical analysis, experimental, structured protocols, and questionnaires with limited range of predetermined responses” [7].

3.1.1. Characteristics of Quantitative Research

- Information is gathered through systematic research tools such as questionnaires and polls.
- Results are contingent on substantial sample sizes, representing the entirety of the population under scrutiny.
- Research questions are explicitly formulated by the investigator.
- Hypotheses and theories undergo empirical testing.

3.1.2. Varieties of Quantitative Research

- Descriptive Research
- Correlational Research
- Experimental Research

3.1.3. Advantages of Quantitative Research

- **Simplicity of Analysis:** Quantitative research data, being in numerical and statistical formats, facilitates straightforward analysis.
- **Consistency:** The research instruments exhibit an exceptionally high level of reliability, which can be verified through statistical computations like Cronbach Alpha Coefficient and others.
- **Generalization of Results:** Quantitative research findings are intended for generalization. Samples, carefully chosen through methods such as convenience sampling, non-probability sampling, and random sampling, represent the entire selected population, and the outcomes are extrapolated to the entire population.

3.2. Qualitative Research

Qualitative Research deals with gathering and interpretation of non-numerical data for the purpose of understanding research aims in tourism. Ashley [8] stated that qualitative research is structure to disclose the meaning that form actions of the people and their relationship with research fields for example tourism and media.

3.2.1. Characteristics of Qualitative Research

Research Questions: Qualitative research incorporates research questions, though it diverges from the inclusion of hypotheses. Answers to research questions are provided, but without the constraints of predefined hypotheses.

- **Focus on Meaning:** The emphasis is on participants' interpretations of meanings within a specific context.
- **Alignment of Objectives and Theoretical Structures:** There is a direct correlation between the researcher's objectives and theoretical frameworks.
- **Comprehensive Approach:** Rooted in a comprehensive approach, qualitative research generates results not primarily intended for generalization.
- **Inductive, Descriptive Data:** Data collected and analyzed inductively are descriptive in nature. Sources

include interview notes, observation papers, and documents like brochures, pamphlets, and leaflets.

3.2.2. Types of Qualitative Research

- Narrative Research
- Phenomenology Research
- Grounded Theory
- Action Research
- Case Study
- Ethnographical Research
- Historical Research
- Content and Text Analysis

3.2.3. Pros and Cons of Qualitative Research

According to Louise Gaille [9], there are uniqueness in both merits and demerits of qualitative research, and this uniqueness are techniques employed by the researcher for data gathering, the type of data collected and researcher's unique observations that are liable to affect information.

3.2.3.1. Pros of Qualitative Research

- Flexibility: Qualitative research allows for the adaptation of mechanisms if the available data does not yield desired results.
- Human Experience & Observation: It complements both subconscious and analytical aspects of human thinking, covering instinctive observations and data assessment before decision-making.
- Open-ended Process: Captures emotional reactions that influence human decisions and behavior through an open-ended process.
- Creativity: Encourages participant freedom, fostering creativity and enhancing data accuracy.

3.2.3.2. Cons of Qualitative Research

- Extreme Subjectivity of Data: Data gathering relies on the personal mental activity of the researcher, introducing a level of subjectivity.
- Time Wastage: The extensive data collected requires time-consuming collation and sorting activities by researchers.
- Disappearance of Unseen Data: Effectively managing the large volume of unseen data relies on the researcher's abilities; failure to do so initiates another round of qualitative processes.

3.3. Research Paradigms in tourism

In general, this paper can fit into the interpretivism and positivist paradigm. In the past, most of the researches have been conducted based on the quantitative methodology which is the sub-section of the positivism paradigm,

while in recent years' researchers filled the gap of knowledge of qualitative research in this filed at the deeper meaning level for this phenomenon [5, p. 140]

4. The approach of the research

The appropriate approach for this research paper is a mixed method. The sequential exploratory design will be applied for this paper, which means the qualitative method is followed by a quantitative method in the required support research method [10], however, there are some arguments against the mixed method. Some researchers believe that this method is a fundamentally technological issue, and it may not be straightforward to have a successful mix method and the next one is sometimes there are some clashes between the various paradigms [5]. In quantitative methodology, positivism ideology explains that reality is objective and singular, while interpretivism is a subjective reality and multiple where researchers can interact. Positivism measures the numeral data information related to the phenomena, while interpretivism seeks to understand and interpret it [11]. Because there is an unclear hypothesis or one does not exist, exploratory research will be carried out during this research project [5]. Also, as an extension of exploratory research, descriptive research will be applied. Descriptive research will use to answer the research questions in a massive amount of business research [5]. However, qualitative methods cannot remain objective, so the second appropriate research method for this proposed research is quantitative [8]. It is required that the researcher be empathetic. Indeed, the researcher should involve him/herself to understand the individual's subjects' experiences fully. This action can create a personal relationship between researcher and participants, interviewers to interpret information at a sufficient and deeper academic level [12].

5. Analysis of the selected methodology

In recent years there are two main existed traditions theory which is the empiricist and the hermeneutic. The empiricist tradition tries to explain human action while another one tries to find the concept of human realities. The deductive approach involves the development of a theoretical structure while on the hermeneutic tradition (inductive theory) the researcher preferably enters the research site with less or zero theoretical preconceptions [5]. This research paper will use an inductive approach, followed by a deductive approach. This study will use location observation to see an in-depth exposure of different views for existed film's location. Some field trips will be done as well in different locations based on the required action at the time of qualitative data collection. Other methods will be implemented to find an appropriate response to questions. With this, the collected data will be analyzed in association with secondary research from existing research, books, and academic journals. In support, the deductive method will be implemented for this research to collect data in the required discourses. For example, in political discourse, some interviewers prefer to answer the questionnaire instead of the interview because of some private security reasons. The quantitative method will be conducted mainly by professional interviews in person or by telephone or online with at least ten interviews. These interviews will be held with directors, film consultants, tourism industry managers, and marketing and communication officers in the tourism industry, tourism economic developers, academic researchers, and other professional bodies. This method may require following by some questionnaires at the time of the research project, which can be designed by the Survey

Tool.

Primary data will be collected in the regional level and quantified with different types of questions at questionnaire:

1. Open-ended questions to summarize distinguishing features.
2. Dichotomous questions to gather demographic and behavioral information.
3. Likert style rating scale to measures attitudes and comprises statements with which the respondent has to agree or disagree.

For example;

- The question should be able to help to meet the object of the research paper.
- The respondent can understand to concept of the question or the language of it
- The question should be able to extract the required data to generate new information by details

The qualitative method needs a small sample size to concentrate deeply on details of information, however, it is advised that the sample size of the quantitative method should be at least 100 for a statistical problem-solving research paper [5]. These participants can be selected from the academic staff, and professional staff working in this field. To export the result of interviews and questionnaires', the collected data can be analyzed by software such as NVIVO, Minitab, and Excel. It is expected that the export report can support the conceptual framework for this research topic. The data result will be deliberate and reveal in different tables, graphs, and charts to extend the visibility of the result. Also, there are five films that can be considered and as a case study for this research paper. These films are *So Far So Close* directed by Reza Mir Karimi [13], *Fish and Cat* directed by Shahram Mokri [14], *Once Dragon Arrives* directed by Mani Haghighi [15], *The Main Idea* directed by Azadeh Mogouyee [16] and *When the Moon was Full* directed by Narges Abyar [17]. These films have been selected based on the nature of the film's story. In recent years, there are more limitations compare to the past years, such as the number of the targeted sample, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some restrictions were in place in Australia, Iran, and all around the world. Moreover, the previously mentioned studies are all cross-sectional research limiting the cause-and-effect relationships and finally a qualitative study is required to indicate the emotional experiences as a major factor in film tourism [18].

6. Research Questions

Limited research has been undertaken into the film tourism industry in non-western countries. More research is needed on film tourism in Asia and middle east such as Iran, Africa, and Latin America because this type of research frequently ignored by researchers, and this does not mean this phenomenon does not exist in these countries [5]. Despite the fact of the potential opportunity of the tourism industry in Iran that over the last thirty years Iran has established one of the most distinguished film industries in the world, there has only been limited research into the potential benefits for tourism [19, p. 191]. A gap in knowledge exists in understanding the value of the film tourism industry in the Iranian context. To fill this gap, the following research sample questions are

usable to find this gap:

- How does the film industry and tourism industry improve business success by film tourism in Iran?
- What images do filmmakers use to portray the contemporary face of Iran?
- How do audiences and visitors receive the message of the image of Iran?
- Have people been motivated by Iranian film to visit locations?

The outcome of this research paper can help academics who are interested in this field can review this paper and identify the strength of this research methodology and use it for future research projects in this era or towards forward-thinking and cross-disciplinary film tourism study.

Table 1

Questions:	Expected Outcomes:
How does the film and tourism industry improve business success by film tourism in Iran?	Develop the basic understanding of film tourism in Iran
What images do filmmakers use to portray the contemporary face of Iran?	Determine the film tourism opportunity in Iran
How do audiences and visitors receive the message of the image of Iran?	Finding the existed outcome of released film for future planning
Have people been motivated by Iranian film to visit locations?	Finding the potential locations based on the released films

7. Conclusion

This paper has focused on the research methodology of the film tourism phenomenon in Iran. The research questions were created to investigate the connected literature review of film tourism in Iran. The formulation of research questions was a key step in exploring the existing literature related to film tourism in Iran. The detailed exposition encompasses the methodology, research design, and the development of a comprehensive model tailored for film tourism in the Iranian context. Moreover, beyond its theoretical utility, this research methodology is designed to resonate in practical contexts. By integrating perspectives from various stakeholders, there is potential for collaborative efforts aimed at implementing a long-term strategic approach to tourism. The inclusivity of different viewpoints ensures a well-rounded strategy that addresses the multifaceted dimensions of film tourism, paving the way for sustained growth and development in the industry. This paper also describes the details of the methodology, research design, and developed a model of methodology for film tourism in Iran. The details of secondary and primary research techniques are detailed in this paper. This paper is designed for research methodology for tourism industry practitioners that can use the same narratives repeatedly in different aspects to find a solution concerning long-term association of film tourism. Furthermore, in the practical context, different stakeholders' perspectives can be integrated to collaborate for the implementation research methodology for the long-term strategy in tourism. In essence, this paper contributes not only to the academic understanding of film tourism in Iran but also offers a practical guide that can foster collaboration and informed decision-making among industry practitioners and stakeholders. The goal is to establish a framework that facilitates a lasting and successful relationship between practitioners and stakeholders.

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