

## Director Shankar films and its influence on film tourism

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**Abstract:** *Film induced tourism has been regarded as one of the growing area of research as it impacts are yet to be studied in the developing countries. Many countries have used film to promote tourism in their respective countries. Few examples of films helped promote tourism were Lord of the rings in New Zealand, Brave Heart in Scotland, Hang over in Thailand. This paper tries to find out whether Indian film director can persuade people to travel and create interest in the minds of his audience through his exemplary visualization and storytelling. Director Shankar films were used for the study to analyze the extent which the director travels to add breathtaking visual which suites his script. An in depth interview was also conducted to understand how much does his films influence people to travel. The findings from the in depth interview proves that his works are highly appreciated and his film does influence people to travel to famous tourist destinations.*

**Key Words:** *Films, Film Tourism, Shankar films.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

The Indian film Industry which has evolved over 100 years have had a tremendous impact on millions of people in India as well the entire world. Film industry is one of the biggest industry in India which contributes close to 183 billion Indian rupees in revenue. The Indian Film Industry has spread across the Indian sub-continent. Based on the terminology derived from Hollywood many films Industry in India were classified based on the languages that they had. The Hindi Film Industry which is called as Bollywood. The Tamil Film Industry which is located in Kodambakkam is called as Kollywood also supports film making with various studios, It also has MGR film city located in Chennai. The Telugu film Industry is otherwise called as Tollywood which has famous studio like Ramoji film city which is located in Hyderabad. The Malayalam film Industry which is called as Mollywood and sandalwood which represent the Kanada film Industry. Since India has huge land mass and other wise called as sub-continent derived borders based on the language that the region spoke. It has film industry based on the regional language which contribute to the concerned states economy in terms of jobs, revenue and entertainment. Sometimes some of the important south Indian movies were dubbed in the various languages across India and the rights were also bought to remake the entire film in their specific state languages. India has got the population and an immense fan base. It is lucrative business which might bring in millions in revenue based on the audience interest. The never ending demand of the audience keeps the producer and the director to make films to quench the thirst and appetite of the audience who seek something new, refreshing and entertaining. The list of commercial films produced in India are more compared to its competitor art films. India has a huge fan following regardless of any region or language. Some of the directors have created a reputation for themselves that they have a fan following which push the directors to venture into new frontier in choosing different and new stories every time so that their films receive a mass appeal and remains a commercial success so that the producer can earn their invested money. Due to the Internet era and online subscriptions many films rights are sold to many online portals such as Amazon prime and Netflix before the release in theatres making sure the films are a commercial success. One such director is Shankar. Who has a huge fan following and reputed actors waiting for his call to work with him. This paper aims to find director Shankar as a visual tour guide for the masses. The film fraternity has praised the commitment and dedication that he puts in for his films are tremendous. It might be an overstatement that the Director Shankar puts in an extra effort in bringing awesomeness to his fans who are his film viewers. His films are by itself a marketing strategy in promoting to the mass. This paper aims to find out the lengths and breadths that the director have crossed to woo his audience while watching his films. This paper also dwells extensively on secondary research to find out more about the shooting locations in his films over the years. Whether it is within India or outside India director Shankar visualization is considered to be the best in the south Indian film Industry.

#### 1.1. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Visiting places where movies/ film, Television programs have been filmed for that matter is to visit of production studio's which in advertently includes theme parks which are related to films as film tourism [1]. Interpret movie induced tourism, film induced tourism are also called as film tourism when a tourist explores the destination or attraction which are shown in film, television episodes [2]. Film has the capacity to make a place into a tourist attraction without involving high budget to promote the destination for the ministry of tourism or the department [3]. Promoting a place as a tourist destination as part of the film which is otherwise called as product placement [4]. DMO

or destination marketing organization cannot deny the contribution of films towards tourism or tourist sites which are part of the full length feature film [5]. Film increases the curiosity of the viewers. Films creates an irreplaceable image of the destination and the sites in the minds of the viewers which later can become a tourist destination by itself [6]. Films are the vision and work of an artist who visualizes a vision of storytelling who works with a mission to bring out the best experience for his movie viewers [7]. The contribution of the directors and points out that the “Directors are the heart of motion picture”[8].

## 2. METHODOLOGY:

For the purpose of the this research the researcher used a Textual analysis method to understand the lyrics and the creative aspect of the director in brining best location and tourist spots in the world to enthrall his mass audience for his film songs. By doing so the researcher can understand the importance given to the story, screenplay and the lyrics of the songs. To add value to the director works and understand its influence on the audience a qualitative in depth interview was conducted to understand the reach of the songs, films and its influence on travelling. The various film song and the links of the YouTube were copied and was sent to group of 15 participant who volunteered for the study. The participants were given 2 days to watch the songs in their leisure time and were told few question will be asked about the songs. All the participants agreed and obliged to be part of the study. They were told the purpose of the study is to understand the influence of film and their intention to travel.

## 3. ANALYSIS:

Director Shankar films were chosen which were shot outside India and in some of the famous location all around the world. The screenshot of the song were taken for the pictures. Analysis of the location were carried out in reference to the story, screenplay and the song lyrics which were part of the outdoor locations. The first movie which was used for the study was film Jeans released in the year 1998 written & directed by S. Shankar and produced by Ashok Amritraj and Murali Manohar. The film was extensively shot In the United states of America. All the songs in this film had exotic location, world wonders and UNESCO world heritage sites. To further our understanding of the director’s visualization pictures were used to analyze the location which was taken from the songs. Jeans had a variety of location across the United States of America and around the world too. The first song used for the analysis was “Varayo tholi” The primary goal of the song it to take the Indian friends who came for medical surgery around the most famous location around the United States of America. Location used in the songs were Universal Studios, Disney land and Las Vegas. Appendix 1(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkz9UzyZJV> – Picture 1, 2, 3)



Picture 1



Picture 2.



Picture 3.

The second song used for the analysis was “Haira Haira Hai rabba”  
The primary goal of the song is to show the blossoming of love between the main characters of the film and the lyrics are about the wonderful natural beauty of the world. The location used in the songs were MGM grand, Grand Canyon located in Arizona United States of America which is one of the 7 wonders of the world, Airplane graveyard and statue of liberty. Appendix 2(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pbfVzIRAA-o> – Picture 4, 5, 6).



Picture 4.



Picture 5.



Picture 6

The third song used for the analysis was “Athisayam” The primary goal of the song is to talk the beauty and the wonders of the nature compared to the protagonist love for his girl accompanied with wonders of the world. The film was shot in Italy, which had colosseum, Leaning tower of Pisa, Great wall of china, Taj Mahal in India, Eiffel tower in paris, pyramid of Giza and sphinx, Empire state building. Appendix. 3(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pbfVzIRAA-o-Picture> 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14).



**Picture 7**



**Picture 8.**



**Picture 9**



**Picture 10**



Picture 11



Picture 12



Picture 13



Picture 14

The next film used for the analysis is Indian. The film was shot in Australia.

The song used for the analysis was “Telephone manipol” The primary goal of the song was to depict the beauty of the protagonist love interest as he wonders about the beauty of his lover. The song was shot in Sydney harbor, Sydney bridge, Sydney opera house and some of Australia’s country side. Old museums and ships used by

British sailors were also part of the songs. Appendix 4(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWxCMkxWcg> – Picture 15, 16, 17).



Picture 15



Picture 16



Picture 17

The next film used for the analysis is Anniyan. The film was shot in Netherlands and Malaysia.

The song used for the analysis was “Kumari” The primary goal of the song is to show the struggle that the protagonist go through to confess his love to his lover interest. The song was shot in the streets of a small town in Netherland representing the Agragharam of south India. The song was shot during the flower festival in Netherlands. For each pallavi the directors takes us to different Tuplip garden making us to experience different types of Tulips. Windmill also is highlighted in the song which are special feature of Netherland. Appendix 5(<https://youtu.be/VpIukDvZUZYv>- Picture 18 19, 20).



Picture 18



Picture 19



Picture 20

The next song used for the analysis is “Kannum Kannum Nokia”. The song was shot in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia Airport and as well in the Iconic KICC suria towers. The film depicts the architecture of the airport and the petronas tower. Appendix 6(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGKySHFjl3s> – Picture 21, 22)



Picture 21



Picture 22

The next film used for the analysis is “Sivaji” The song used for the analysis is “Style”

The primary goal of the song is to depict the style and mannerism of the protagonist. For this the director used stylish architectural buildings in the world. The song was shot in Spain Bilbao, valnecia & Madrid. The song shot

at the location of Guggenheim de bilbao Museoa Bilbao, Puerto de Europa, Madrid, The city of Arts and Science, Valencia. Appendix 7(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ESAXsMYMMa8> – Picture 23, 24).



Picture 23



Picture 24

The next film used for the analysis is “Enthiran” The song used for the analysis is “Kadhal anukal”

The primary goal of the song is to depict the reasons for the love and the protagonist question her love interest to know whether she is the reason because of all the beauty she poses. This song was shot in the world’s only fresh water lagoons or otherwise called the fresh water desert Lencois Maranhenses National park in the North east Brazil. Appendix 8(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gpVA5mx73UE> – Picture 25, 26).



Picture 25



Picture 26



The next song used for the analysis is “Kilimanjaro”

The primary goal of the song is to depict the protagonist love interest as an archeological invention which was entirely shot in Mount Kilimanjaro in Peru. The song had depiction of the native people and the native dance. Appendix 9(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E21CJi7R9JM> – Picture 27, 28).



Picture 27



Picture 28

The next film used of the analysis is “I”

The song used for the analysis is “Pookalae Satru oivedungal” The primary goal of the song is that the protagonist is arriving the arrival of one of the most beautiful thing in the world who is her love interest and advice flowers and the other beauty in the world to take rest. The location used in the songs are Red Seabeach in Panin, Li river in Guilin and Dongchuan Red Land Yunnan, Hongcun Village Anhui, Huanglong Valley, Sichuan, China. Shooting locations and the pictures are attached. Appendix 10(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKDWXC4o5nA> – Picture 29, 30, 31, 32, 33).



Picture 29



Picture 30



Picture 31



Picture 32



Picture 33

#### 4. RESULTS:

All the participants have seen all the films of Director Shankar which help the researcher to conclude that the director is one of the most popular among the Tamil film audience. The wonders of the world was the theme of the second question. All the fifteen participant accepted it was one of the visual spectacle done during the 90's. Five respondent told that the wonders of the world could be seen only in school books and magazine. It was the first time that an Indian director almost caught all the major wonders of the world. They also told that the era was the starting time of Internet and not many video were available then such as YouTube or blogs or portals to see the travel video. All the responded agreed that the film Jeans influence them to see at least one wonder of the world and it is their bucket list to see at least 2 in their life time. Seven respondent told that they forced their parents to visit Taj mahal after seeing the song and cherished their memory. One respondent told that since he is a software engineer he had an opportunity to visit America for offshore. He told that he made sure to visit his childhood dream of visiting Statue of Liberty in New York. All the respondent told that they all wanted to visit Europe since the Eiffel tower is still part of many films and heard it to be the most romantic place in the world but couldn't visit as it is very expensive for the entire family. The participant agreed unanimously by saying Director Shankar films are the best which includes, story, message, actors, locations, Songs etc., etc., They all said you don't need great and famous actors for Shankar films. Even though he takes lot of time to make a film it is a must watch. Three respondent said that the director make sure to give a visual treat to his audience no matter what ever film you take. They highlighted that in Indian he show cased Australia, Sivaji he show cased Spain, Jeans was filmed in America. He travel to the best location which are suitable for his films and songs. Only two respondent could identified the location in the film Enthiran and told it was shot in Brazil. The rest all could not recognize the location. All the tourist recognized Machu picchu in peru and said it is

virtually impossible to go to Brazil and climb up the hill to visit the destination and said they were happy to watch in the TV itself. One of the participant said it was the first film that he saw with his wife after his marriage. The film made a deep impact to go on International tour with his wife and family. Only four participant responded to know the places of all the location in Shankar films. On questioning the reason they said they are his biggest fan and do some research on his movies and locations before seeing the film and said thanks to the Digital era as many information about the films are marketed through various Internet portals. On questioning about their travel intentions all the participants told that it all depends on the financial factor as many exotic locations are pretty far from India and requires a huge bank balance. Even though each respondent told some of their favorite place after watching the videos which came to their mind. All the respondent first wish was to go to Europe. The reason behind it is the nearer and could see many places at one go. Their preferred location to go first is to Paris and to Italy. Surprising to note that no one had any key interest in visiting Netherland and the Tulips flower. On questioning the same they said it is just flowers. All the respondent were also not keen in visiting the Great Wall of China and the other exotic locations in China. Their answer was it is just long wall. Questioning further said that China is never considered to be their dream holiday or destination. They said thanks to various English and Indian film always showed Europe to be the most beautiful locations. They said they would like to visit Malaysia and Singapore which are more cost effective and has strong cultural routes. One of the respondent told that Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, Germany were also showcased in Tamil films. He has been to Malaysia & Singapore and cited the film "Ura vitu Uru vandhu" which had Malaysia & Singapore as its main theme. Questioning on the travelogues and YouTube influencers all the respondent said they can use their videos as source of additional information to know about the places its drawbacks and positive. Few of the respondent said that what we are seeing is his or her travel video and enjoyment. Sometimes it is just his or her point of view and the story and the basics does not connect to the audience or the viewer in influencing them as much as a film can do. They said films takes you as part of the story as it is carefully structured and screenplay has a justification to it. One of the respondent said the you tubers and influencers are more of a backpackers and hippies going around the world sharing their stories which it does not influence him to travel. Influence of Film in visiting tourism destination all the respondent believe that the films are an effective medium to bring out exotic locations and tourism spots to the masses. It also influence many people to plan their holiday. But it all boils down to the fact that whether the family can afford the foreign travel. 80% of the respondent told they are already counting on Shankar for his next film Indian 2 and said it is going to be one of the best films.

## 5. CONCLUSION:

From this study the researcher could conclude that the efforts of the director does not go unnoticed. The efforts of the director are highly appreciated and the interest of the audience grow to watch more of his films. The director's visualization requires a high level of appreciation as told by the respondent. Films are still consider to be the effective medium to promote and develop tourism. The directors travel wish and intention could be seen as he takes his audience to the wonders of the world and to the exotic and lesser known destination of the world. At the end of the day it is the affordability of the tourism places makes the people to visit a spot which is showcased in a movie and all tourist spots shown in the film does not influence people to visit a destination. A lot has to be depend on the Destination image and the build up by the Destination Marketing Organization.

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