Investigating Film Tourism and Destination Branding, Case Study Of Game of Thrones in Dubrovnik City, Croatia

Jessies Ndzebomenyi Kedju

Tourism

Aalborg University

June 2025

ABSTRACT

Background: This study examines how film-induced tourism shapes destination branding by exploring the impact of the television series Game of Thrones on the city of Dubrovnik, Croatia. Through narrative immersion and international media exposure, Dubrovnik has transformed from a historic coastal city to a globally recognized destination for film. The study investigates how visitors view and experience Dubrovnik as both a real and fictitious location, drawing on theoretical frameworks such as film-induced tourism, place branding theory, and idea of symbolic layering.

Objectives: This study's goal is to examine how Game of Thrones influences travelers' perspectives, motives, and emotional bonds with Dubrovnik as a destination for tourism, helping to shape the city's changing brand identity.

Methods: Drawing from netnographic data—user-generated videos, YouTube vlogs, and images from a tourism website—content analysis and thematic analysis were employed to identify recurring themes in travellers' motivations, perceptions, and experiences. Thematic analysis was used to interpret how "Game of Thrones" has influenced the branding of Dubrovnik, Croatia. This research employed a qualitative and inductive research design.

Results: The findings revealed Six Themes: 1) Exploring the Value and worth of Dubrovnik, the destination city. 2) Experience and Travel Motivation 3) Visibility and Cultural Recognition. 4) Understanding the Essence behind Film-Induced Tourism 5) Croatia as a Key Filming Location 6) Exploring Lesser-Known Locations.

As viewers associate Dubrovnik's historic architecture, fortified walls, and scenic vistas directly with iconic on-screen locations, describing their visits as "worth every penny" and "unforgettable." This emotional and cultural resonance has elevated Dubrovnik's symbolic capital, with tourists reporting a desire to immerse themselves in "King's Landing" through guided and self-guided tours, themed excursions, and photo opportunities at key sites, such as Fort Lovrijenac and Pile Gate.

Moreover, influencers and commercial tour operators leverage evocative imagery and narrative cues from the series to lower information barriers and stimulate travel intent, thereby

reinforcing the city's brand identity. While acknowledging that film exposure acts as a secondary motivator alongside economic, social, and political factors,

Conclusion: The study confirms that screen fame can function as a powerful branding megaphone, amplifying destination visibility without the need for paid advertising. It also demonstrates how Game of Thrones has profoundly changed Dubrovnik's reputation throughout the world, transforming it into a fantasy-driven travel destination and cultural icon. The results show that both well-known and lesser-known metropolitan areas may benefit from the use of visual storytelling as powerful means for creating place identity, drawing in new viewers, and maintaining interest.These insights underscore the need for policymakers and industry stakeholders to integrate film tourism into strategic planning, ensuring sustainable development and long-term growth in competitive destination markets.

Future Research: Future research may explore the impact of actors and actresses on travel decisions. Understanding whether certain performers influence audience inclinations to attend filming locations enriches the existing film tourism literature. This might be investigated via interviews with foreign tourists, providing insight into how celebrity affiliation affects location attraction over time.Future research can be done to investigate how Dubrovnik has managed tourism post Game of Thrones Era.

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Films in the entertainment industry are used to convey emotions by telling intriguing stories that capture people, places and events. These films capture the attention of their audiences with fixed or moving images, accompanied by sound, and featuring either real or fictional characters. As a result, it helps portray the beauty of the places and people filmed, thereby significantly influencing audience perception and their decision to visit such places (Cardoso, 2017).

Policy makers in countries, scholars and the industry adequately recognise the ability of films and their production strengths to influence people's decisions on places to visit. According to (Mostafanezhad and Promburom, p. 81–101, 2018)

These tourism-induced films can impact the choice of tourist destinations due to the branding effect of those movies. By implication, it demonstrates the multiple roles and impacts of film tourism on destination decision-making among travellers (de Albuquerque, pp. 22–41, 2017). According to Pike (2008, as cited in Hankinson, 2010, p. 301), the first branding articles concerning mainstream branding were not published until the end of the twentieth century. Despite tourism being an activity for a very long time, it only became so dominant when the destination industry became very attractive in the tourism sector. Defining the term 'tourism' poses a significant difficulty, as it comes up with different definitions. However, tourism can be considered a service whose production and consumption co-occur. This is because it has increasingly become about experiences rather than just about places and things in those destination areas.

Pike (2008) explains that the origin of the word "tour" is from the Latin word tornus. To him, this represents the circular journey away from home, which takes people from place to place, then back to the departure destination (Shaffer & Shaffer, 2001).

As a complement to the concept of tourism, the World Tourism Organisation (2011) predicted in its forecast report that by 2020, 1.6 billion people would travel annually. The organisation further added that of this number, 1.2 billion will be engaging in travelling for tourism within regions (intraregional), while 378 million will engage in long-distance tourism travels. This materialised as, by 2020, the total number of tourists to destinations upon arrival indicated

that Europe had 717 million visitors, while East Asia and the Pacific had 397 million visitors; meanwhile, America had 282 million tourists as a destination country.

Furthermore, as time passed by, film tourism over the years has had enormous changes through research investigations due to its vital capacity to enhance brand travel perceptibility of destination through its branding, to be able to attract more tourist visitors in particular destinations for work or vacations (Mendes, 2017, p. 424 and Teng and Chen 2020).

According to Vagionis (2011), people's desire to visit places in the world has been significantly influenced by films and television programs that prompt them to feel like living the experience in real-life situations. In essence, it is like Cortón and Ebrahimpour (2014) collectively agree on the ability of films to impact the number of tourists visiting a particular destination.

According to Kemp, E., Childers, C. Y., and Williams, K. H. (2012, pp. 508–515), branding is a crucial component in every business sector, especially when it comes to devising strategies that encourage people to adopt a product, service, or institution. Additionally, at the city and country levels, branding destinations is of great importance (Kemp et al., 2012).

Among the many film-making and tourism destinations in the world, Croatia has been considered a booming global film tourism country for years, thanks to its sustainable and increasing growth in the film and tourism industries. As a matter of urgency, the concept of tourism and branding in destination-related studies remains a recent subject matter. This explains why, as far as 1988, Pike (2008) first tourism destination branding articles started coming up with scholars showing much interest in the area.

This academic study, with a focus on Film Tourism and Destination Branding, attempts to depict the Icelandic film and motion picture sector, which began a century ago, as highlighted by Moller (2013) in relation to Iceland's competitive nature as a global destination country. Thus, the arrival of movies like Game of Thrones in the city of Dubrovnik, Croatia, brought an increase in film tourism and the country's presence in the film industry, thereby underscoring the important role movies play in destination branding.

Blanke, J., and T. Chiesa (2013, p. 3) note that as part of developing the tourism sector in the country, the Croatian government, through its parliament, adopted a new tourism strategy document in 2013 targeting the years 2014 to 2020 under the Croatian Ministry of Tourism. This was adopted in collaboration with the country's tourism institute. The objective of this

policy document was to provide strategic principles and guidelines for the future development of tourism in Croatia.

Similarly, emphasis was placed equally on the effective improvement of facilities and accommodations that can attract more tourists to the country. This was particularly important because the government noticed that more than 75% of tourist activities in Croatia were generated during the summer months (Blanke et al., 2013).

Just like Croatia, (Greipsson, 2012) is of the view that Croatia just like Iceland is a country susceptible to erosion, vegetation loss, Victory, 2015), the motion pictures as argued by (Victory, 2015) gives a special touch during the production of movies by presenting movies being shot in natural environments with little technical works on the environment.

According to Irdeto (2015), Game of Thrones, a United States-oriented television series written by George R. R. Martin, which is under study in this research, is one of the most successful Television series in the world throughout its history. To him, the series comprises 8 seasons, with an additional 73 episodes along the way. To him, the production of this series began in 2000 and concluded in 2018, ten years after its global broadcast from 2011 to 2019.

Overall, the series experienced tremendous worldwide success in terms of viewership, with many subscriptions years after the original film was broadcast. In 2011, the series was streamed and watched by 2.2 million viewers in the United States of America alone during the broadcast of the first episode of the first season of Game of Thrones. However, the first episode of the eighth season was watched by 11.67 million viewers in 2019 alone (Ibid, 2015).

The last episode of the series was consistently and globally projected in a total of 171 countries, respectively, giving the series a Guinness World Record for global broadcast. This series has previously won numerous global leading awards in the film industry, including 8 Screen Actors Guild Awards, a Peabody Award, and 59 Emmy Awards (Irdeto, 2015). Additionally, the Game of Thrones episodes and seasons from seasons 1 to 4 were illegally downloaded from the internet between 5th February 2015 and 6th April 2015. This illegal download was performed more than 7 million times in one year. This means that it had an average of 116,000 illegal downloads per day in 2015. Game of Thrones has been filmed in various countries, including Croatia, Iceland, Northern Ireland, Malta, Morocco, and Spain.

Regarding the above point, O'Connor (2010) insists that Iceland, like other film-producing countries, uses film tourism as a strategy to effectively brand its country through its culture, leisure, and people, thereby marketing it through image campaigns to stand out from other destination countries in the film industry.

Motivation

The primary motivation for this research is the remarkable transformation of Dubrovnik into a globally recognised tourist destination following its portrayal as King's Landing in Game of Thrones. According to Tkalec, Zilic, and Recher (2017), Dubrovnik had a considerable boost in visitor arrivals following the show's premiere, with the majority of the increase attributed to its participation in the series. The relationship has had a tremendous impact on the city's prominence, tourism growth, and symbolic identity. As film tourism obtains scholarly and industry attention (Beeton, 2016; Cardoso et al., 2017), understanding how media exposure influences location branding is critical for long-term tourist growth.

Dubrovnik is an interesting case study due to its clear, measurable link to a worldwide recognised television series. This research, unlike generic studies on film tourism, focuses on a single site that has experienced a confirmed increase in tourism due to its movie representation (Depken, Globan, & Kožić, 2020). Furthermore, while a growing body of literature exists on film-induced tourism, there remains a notable lack of empirical research into the mechanisms by which media content influences destination perceptions, particularly through the lens of user-generated content (Kozinets, 2020).

Problem Formulation

Film-induced tourism has emerged as a significant influence on how locations are perceived and experienced in the global tourism sector. As film and television productions reach large international audiences, the sites portrayed in these media frequently become popular tourist destinations (Beeton, 2016; Cardoso et al., 2017). This phenomenon is particularly pertinent in the case of Dubrovnik, Croatia, which has witnessed a significant boost in international tourism as a result of its prominent position as King's Landing on HBO's Game of Thrones (Tkalec, Zilic, & Recher, 2017).

While much research has been conducted on the impact of film tourism in countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States, where locations such as Oxford (Harry Potter) and Notting Hill (Notting Hill) have become synonymous with their cinematic portrayals (Iwashita, 2006), there is a relative gap in scholarship addressing how such branding mechanisms operate in smaller European cities such as Dubrovnik. This is especially crucial because these places may not have the same marketing infrastructure or worldwide brand awareness as their Western equivalents. However, they are increasingly featured in high-profile films.

Despite the apparent impact of Game of Thrones on Dubrovnik's tourist industry, there has been little qualitative research into how media exposure has affected the city's brand identity through the lens of passenger impressions. Most studies focus on statistical data on tourist numbers, leaving a gap in understanding the psychological, emotional, and symbolic connections viewers form between the program and the real-world destination (Kozinets, 2020).

This study aims to investigate how user-generated content, such as vlogs, reviews, and social media discussions, reflects and strengthens Dubrovnik's branding as a film tourist destination. It examines how the show influences travellers' motives, emotional experiences, and perceptions of the location. The study addresses the following research question.

Research question

RQ. How has Game of Thrones influenced the destination branding of Dubrovnik?

Structure of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters, consisting of: the introduction in chapter one, which contains the background of the study and contextualisation of the research problem, as well as highlighting the aim of the study and the research questions by further explaining the problem statement, objectives, and research questions of the study.

Chapter 2 of this study covers information related to theories on film tourism and branding, which support the research objectives. In this section, emphasis is also placed on understanding film-induced tourism, destination branding and how these key issues can be

synchronised. Therefore, the information reviewed by the authors helps to further understand the research problem and identify applicable theories.

In Chapter Three, the focus will be on the research methodology, which involves data collection techniques in the chosen research approach. Elements covered include identifying the research method, research design, and ethical considerations that constrain the research study.

Chapters four, on the other hand, include reporting and discussion of results. It will present the study's findings and the interpretation of the analysed data.

Finally, the work concludes with a summary, recommendations, and suggestions for future research to further enhance the understanding of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study's chapter brings together the critical aspects of the study, which involve examining the theory and its relationship to the research. It also takes time to review other related literature on film tourism and destination branding.

Theoretical Framework

This study will use various theories, starting with

Film-Induced Tourism Theory by Beeton (2016)

According to Beeton (2016), TV shows and movies serve as effective marketing vehicles that influence the expectations and motives of tourists. The Theory investigates how films increase tourists' attention by fostering an emotional bond with a location.

Even in cases when a venue has been modified for film, tourists still want authenticity and immersive experiences. For instance, Game of Thrones transformed Dubrovnik into King's Landing, attracting tourists seeking a connection between fiction and reality (Roesch, 2009, pp. 6-7).

Regarding the above, Shepherd (2003, p. 133) on the question of what motivates people to travel insists that tourist destination locations are among the key contributing factors to why people visit. To him, the motivation of tourists in terms of decision-making on where to visit has grown exponentially due to the influence of movie-oriented content.

On the other hand, based on scholars like Parinello (1996), no single theory, including the film-induced tourism theory discussed above, can possibly encompass the different individual reasons for travelling to particular destinations. This is because the heterogeneous nature of tourism and the unpredictable nature of human behaviour and decision-making make issues more challenging to comprehend.

Similarly, it is worth noting that film viewers typically watch movies from the comfort of their homes and sets without relying on advertising to encourage them to visit a film destination (Riley & Van Doren, 1992). Therefore, the motivation to visit a destination as showcased in the film can influence viewers more on choice of destination. Thus, by watching the movie, people have the decision to make about whether to choose a particular destination

or not, based on aspects in the movie that attract them. These aspects can be scenes, the landscape in the film, the storyline, or the music in the movie.

This study will not be complete without a clear link between film-induced tourism and destination travel. Regarding the Game of Thrones series, the country-level location during the production phase and the series' broadcast helped create a clear branding of the movie, ultimately promoting the destination city of Dubrovnik. Due to the Game of Thrones, much travelling to the area increased within that period of 2011 to 2019, when the series ended (Roesch, 2009, p. 10).

This is because the contribution of tourism to the country's GDP in Croatia was even more significant, accounting for 19.6% of the entire GDP in 2018. In the same period, the international tourists were estimated at 16.6 million people, with 83.2 million nights spent in all Croatian destinations. This explained why the Croatian government in 2013 adopted their tourism strategy plan aimed at improving the impact of tourism on the national economy. All this demonstrates the importance of destination branding.

Film Tourism

Film-induced tourism, a type of cultural tourism, refers to the phenomena in which viewers visit destinations highlighted in movies or television shows. This type of tourism has received increased scholarly attention due to its ability to affect destination image, attract foreign tourists, and improve local economies (Jewell & McKinnon, 2008). It converts passive watching experiences into active encounters with real-world locations reinterpreted via cinematic storytelling.

Connell (2005, p. 763) points out that cinema tourism allows people to connect with faraway places through visual and emotional familiarity. When viewers see films set in familiar or desirable locations, they frequently create emotional ties that inspire them to go. This process is influenced not just by storyline and characters, but also by the portrayal of location, which has become an important aspect of the media experience (Tomala & Faber, 2020).

There are various types of film tourists, ranging from those who want to see real filming locations to those looking for immersive experiences in themed attractions, studios, or cultural settings. Teng (2021) defines cinema-oriented travel as a chance for viewers to engage with a film location on a personal and symbolic level, utilizing the trip as a means of identification, nostalgia, or imagination.

Yoon (2015) contributes to the argument by examining community perspectives of film tourism, highlighting that local participation and destination management are essential for success. Similarly, Tzanelli (2021, pp. 147-149) gives an example of Avatar's influence on Zhangjiajie National Forest Park in China. The film's imaginary universe resulted in an increase in real-world tourism, proving the ability of visual media to rebrand natural settings.

A key component of the success of film-induced tourism is strategic branding. According to Frost and Laing (2015, p. 288), film exposure increases visitor engagement and improves the whole experience when combined with successful marketing initiatives. Wray and Croy (2015, p. 313), however, warn that movies by themselves are rarely enough to draw tourists unless they are included into larger tourism initiatives. Their study emphasizes how crucial accessibility, infrastructure, and consistent message are to maintaining long-term attraction.

A location might nonetheless gain from symbolic or thematic links even if it is not the official location of a movie. Reijnders (2015) investigates how media representations may connect historical and cultural narratives to current tourist trends, whereas Yamamura (2015, p. 3) shows how fictional narratives can enhance a site's tourism image through character-based storytelling. These portrayals function as a kind of contemporary mythology, facilitating connections across locations and viewers worldwide in terms of both time and culture.

In conclusion, the research indicates that film tourism occurs at the intersection of media, emotion, and place-making. Successful film locations use cinematic exposure, clever branding, and community involvement to change perceptions and increase attendance. However, crucial gaps exist in understanding how user-generated media material contributes to destination branding, particularly in less researched European environments such as Dubrovnik—which this study seeks to answer.

Tourism in Croatia

Croatia as a film destination country is located in the Southern part of Europe, and on the Eastern Coast side of the Adriatic Sea with a total area of 54,470 m2, and a population of 4.3 million people.

The history and development of tourism in Croatia can be traced to the end of the nineteenth century when one of its towns called Opatija became the first destination place in the country.

Presently, tourism has contributed enormously in terms of positive economic impact in Croatia. As a consequence, in 2013 alone, the fallouts of tourism in Croatia generated 9.5 billion US dollars (Croatian National Bank 2014). As a tourism country, Croatia has an indented coastline of about 3,900 miles. It has a mild Mediterranean climate condition, a rich culture with attractive areas. As a country, Croatia is endowed with tourism potentials like the sun, sex, health, city break, and the sea. While its tourism is dominated by small and medium size enterprises and hotels, in 2013 the country recording over 12.4 million visitors and 64.8 million tourist nights.

According to Gatti (2013), the tourism sector in Croatia contributed 8.3 % of its GDP meanwhile direct and indirect contribution to the gross added value in tourism stood at 14.7 %.

Furthermore, based on Blanke and Chiesa (2013), with a relatively competitive tourism sector ranking 35th out of 140 analyzed countries, tourism in Croatia generated close to 7% of total employment percentage in the country in 2013.

Understanding Film Tourism and Destination Branding

Destination Branding

The history of destination branding as told by Oppermann Weaver (2000; p.178), indicate that destination branding started gaining increase attention from the world in the late 1990's. This visibility was gained during the Travel & Tourism Research Association 1998 Annual Conference (Ritchie & Ritchie; p. 388)).

Despite the fact that destination branding concepts appeared as new ideas, (Hernández et al 2016), held that it had been developed previously by Is under destination image studies. These ideas were developed into strategies through image building marketing (Morgan et al 2011).

As anticipated by those strategies, destinations countries followed a strategic approach towards the development of the brand, thereby adopting the strategic approach. These responses were fuelled by the need to compete more effectively, establish a decision-making framework that increases accountability (Morgan et al 2014).

On the other hand, another group of scholars underscored that the relationship between movies the decision of a visitor to travel to a particular destination was not due to movies since only a few number of people are influenced by movies to travel to those destinations (Qiao et al 2016).

In addition, films can be considered a secondary motivator as to why people decide to travel to particular destination area (Macionis and Sparks 2009; D'Alessandro, 2015).

For instance, a movie like Gomorra gives a negative image about the city of Naples. This shows how the image conveyed through movies can cause someone not to travel to the destination (Josiam, 2020).

At this level, Tkalec et al (2017 p. 3) in their study examined the impact of Game of Thrones (GoT) on the number of visitors who visited the city of Dubrovnik. Through a synthetic control approach on the number of arrivals, findings indicated a positively significant effect of Game of Thrones on tourism flows in Dubrovnik. However, it is not evidently visible whether Game of Thrones has had the same impact on other locations.

One of the countries that fit a destination branding in relation to Game of Thrones is Iceland. The country has; the destination marketing organization (DMO), responsible for the tourism marketing. This institution has as objectives to provide policy on tourism while working in collaboration with private sector umbrella tourism industry associations (Pike, 2008).

Through the national tourism office (NTO) Iceland has experienced a tremendous growth in tourism in years with an annual increase of foreign visitors to 5.3 percent on average (Icelandic Tourist Board, 2011).

On the basis of analysis and implementation Sun and Abraham (2020), hold that we cannot exclude that the treatment effect differs across counties thereby influencing how a country becomes an active destination area through films.

Notwithstanding, policymakers need to analyze the cross-border perspective by examining whether there is a positive effect of film tourism on destination by visitors. However, the positive impact of Game of Thrones on tourism arrivals in streamed countries has been previously examined for the city of Dubrovnik by (Tkalec et al. 2017).

Destination Branding Theory by Anholt, 2007; Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005)

Destination branding theory by Anholt, 2007; Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005) describes how places create and preserve a distinctive character. Looking at how a location is portrayed in movies affects how others view it. The function of destination branding and narrative in travel advertising are techniques for utilizing media attention to maintain a destination's attractiveness after the production is over. The difficulty facing Dubrovnik is reverting to its true cultural character after being "King's landing" while leveraging the publicity it received from Game of Thrones.

As a system (Anholt, 2010, p. 23), further argues that destination branding theory in itself supports the promotion of particular images or symbols in order to better establish a favourable brand reputation.

Scholars like (Govers & Go, 2009; van Ham, 2008) have argued that the destination branding theory's progress is possible through creating and maintaining a significantly positive image about the destination's brand.

Therefore, as a valuable aspect, destination branding relies on the brands ability to pull visitors into the particular destination centre (Hanna & Rowley, 2008).

To issue is echoed by Morgan and Pritchard (2000) who collectively noted that the battle to gaining more visitors or customers in destination places will be a battle over the hearts and not the price.

In understanding this theory and its link to the study it is important to focus on areas where the Game of Thrones was filmed. Tourism remains an important economic sector in countries like Spain and Croatia where the series was also filmed. For instance, in 2017, as a destination country generated 11.8% of GDP through tourism, while in 2018 the country had 82.8 million tourist arrivals generating 89.8 billion Euros in international funds.

The Concept of Branding

To have a clear understanding of the concept of destination branding in destination zones, it is important to take time and review this concept. According to the American Marketing Association (1960), a brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, intended to identify the goods or services of sellers, thereby differentiating them from their competitors.

To Wood (2000), this definition over the years has simultaneously drawn much criticism from scholars for being too product oriented. However, other updated version of this definition has stood the taste of time as highlighted by (Waitkins, 1986; Aaker, 1991).

In addition to this product orientation, Ambler (1992pp. 10-19), provides a consumer-oriented definition by considering a brand as the promise of the bundles of attributes that someone buys and provides satisfaction. To him, the attributes that make up a brand may be real or illusory.

According to Berthon (2011), the word has evolved from act of marking something with fire to denote the mark itself, because products can be almost identical. Therefore, much emphasis on branding has become more important (Hans, 2008) as a product might satisfy a customer´s need through attention or acquisition.

In contrast a brand is what adds other dimensions that differentiate a product from other products that are designed to satisfy the same need (Keller et al, 2008). The construct of a brand and how a brand is established have been key questions since the 20th century (Hans, 2008)

Synchronising Film-Induced Tourism and Destination Branding

While investigating the impact film Tourism has on Destination Branding, it is important to put their connection into perspective. The focus on this study has been on how film contributes to branding destinations with emphasis on the Game of Thrones on Dubrovnik City, Croatia.

The Game of Thrones as a movie has contributed enormously as already identified in the work in projecting the Dubrovnik City in Croatia as a destination place for tourists due to the ability of the movie to influence tourist decision making.

It should be noted that tourism and destination have a symbiotic relation with the branding of the movie in question. This is evident with Game of Thrones because when the film series was streamed in the United States it was watched first episode of the first season was watched by 2.2 million, while the first episode of the eighth season was watched by 11.67 million viewers in 2019 alone as presented by (Irdeto, 2015).

One of the implications of the viewership patterns by millions was its ability to present the Dubrovnik City as a destination place in the movies. The different scenes, landscapes, and vegetation used in the series demonstrated the high-level branding opportunities for the movie in projecting Dubrovnik as a destination city to visit after watching it.

Without using the paid form that goes with advertising and marketing, through film induced tourism, the movie had the power to create; alter and reinforce a significantly positive image about Dubrovnik City.

This explains why Beeton (2005), argued that effective branding through motion movies provide particular locations, by highlighting objects, subjects, people and many other issues that people could not have seen if not through movies, thereby inducing them to travel to those specific destinations. The Game of Thrones therefore represents one of those movies that adequately contributed to people visiting the city of Dubrovnik in Croatia due to the movie game of thrones.

However, despite the fact that many people visit destination places after haven taken town to plan without necessarily relying on films in deciding their destination location, the importance of visiting those places already branded in movies cannot be ignored.

Thus, although movies are not produced with the primary objective to induce people to visit those locations, the medium through movies very much does enhance, create awareness through the appealing nature of movies as seen in screens. This can be said of Dubrovnik as a city in Croatia which through the Game of Thrones played a key part in influencing tourists' decision to visit the place.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This Chapter deals with the method used in the study, which constitutes; the Research Design, data collection, limitations of the study, ethical considerations, instrumentation, research methods, data analysis, study validity and reliability. It illustrates the logical and systematic way in which research is carried out. Based on (Udo, 2001), any serious methodological

consideration in the framework of social science should regard the nature of the investigated phenomenon first, and thereafter address the question which method may be adequate to describe, explain or understand this phenomenon.

Research Design

This study makes use of the qualitative research design with a small sample size. Qualitative research design is wide-range research that focuses on people and their opinions. In this perspective, it concentrates on where the target group is chosen to suit the purpose of the research, rather than taking a random sample, which is common in quantitative research (Hirsjärvi, 2005).

This is because the study's objective is to examine how *"The Game of Thrones"* as a film has been able to influence the destination branding of the city of Dubrovnik in Croatia. This research design permits me to analyse the opinions of tourist influencers on selected social media sites on how the film has induced the city as a destination location as branded by the movie. Through this design, it is possible for me to get deeper into the opinions, thoughts and feelings of the respondents. (Davies, 2007).

Research Method

Content analysis is the research method used in this study to be able to understand how film induced tourism through branding influences the destination of a particular location, in this case the city of Dubrovik, Croatia. This is because the purpose of this study aims at analysing video content in social media sites in order to better understand film tourism and destination branding using the "Game of Thrones" as the starting point.

This method permits me to analyse and interpret video content. I develop and utilize this method based on the fact that perceptions, stories, and media representations are closely linked to film tourism, a qualitative method will offer a deep understanding of how "Game of Thrones" has changed Dubrovnik's brand as a destination city from the video content displayed in social media sites by tourists.

This research methodology has enabled me to investigate the extent to which "Game of Thrones" has contributed through branding to making Dubrovnik, Croatia a destination centre for people to visit (Eskola & Suoranta, 1999).

This method through its approach also helps in data collection to examine how different tourists have reacted to the movie contributing to the city regarded as a tourist destination area.

At the level of data collection, the video itself served as an instrument of collecting sample video data from the different social media sites. This is because I use the same method as an instrument of collecting data already existing in content form which acts in itself as the source of data.

This study employs document review as a data gathering strategy, since Bowen (2009) says that it provides for a thorough comprehension of existing information linked to the main issue. According to Hsieh (2005), it enables Is to find and evaluate essential ideas. In this study, content analysis reveals visitors' experiences, views, and motives about Film Tourism and Destination Branding in Croatia, as well as the problems that impact their decision to visit movie sites.

Philosophical Stance

Epistemological perspectives- Interpretivism

This perspective helps the I to make use of interpretivism by actively engaging with the content of the data to better understand the experiences of the tourists. Through epistemology, it is clear that knowledge is not standard. This therefore entails that on its own, films have the ability to construct images in the minds of people whose interpretation varies. This is because epistemology raises critical questions on how reality can be deciphered through research since it is not normative but seeks to understand universal knowledge (Schmidt, 2001, p.136).

Bearing in mind that film-induced tourism and destination branding study of "Game of Thrones" is within the context of the present global tourism and destination domain, the stance taken by the I has been made clear. This is because at the level of film and tourism, the method of content analysis used permits the I to interpret the data, and recognise the subjective experiences of each tourist as concerns the reasons behind visiting particular destinations. Although philosophical ideas remain largely hidden in research (Slife & Williams, 1995), they still influence the practice of research and need to be identified. In this

section, the I makes explicit the philosophical ideas, which further explains why the qualitative method was chosen.

Ontological Stance-Relativism

Ontology refers to reality being linked and created by social activities, as stipulated by (Andrews, 2012). In this study, the perception of Dubrovnik as a tourist destination is investigated as made and mediated by media representations, particularly the Game of Thrones series.

The link between Dubrovnik and Game of Thrones exemplifies a multifaceted social reality in which fictional narratives impact real-world perceptions, behaviors, and tourist incentives. Tourists perceive and interact with the city via their own subjective lens, frequently considering it as both a historical city and a fictitious setting, such as "King's Landing." This dual view indicates how destination meaning is changeable, negotiated, and influenced by cultural and personal settings (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Beeton 2005).

Therefore, the study's emphasis on examining many interpretations and experiences is backed by the relativist ontology. It enables the I to explore how people create realities and meanings via their engagement in film-induced tourism and how these creations influence the changing character of Dubrovnik as a destination brand (Anholt, 2007; Beeton, 2016).

Research Approach-Inductive

This study uses an inductive reasoning approach, which is ideal for qualitative research that seeks to uncover emergent patterns and meanings from real-world data. Inductive reasoning entails progressing from individual observations to larger generalizations and theoretical discoveries (Thomas, 2006). In the context of this study, the data—which includes user-generated videos, comments, and tourism-related information regarding Game of Thrones and Dubrovnik—forms the basis for identifying themes linked to tourists' views, Unlike deductive reasoning, which evaluates existing ideas or hypotheses, inductive reasoning allows for the development of theories based on facts (Patton, 2015). This study does not begin with a preset framework; rather, it tries to understand how media-induced visuals affect destination branding by analyzing patterns revealed by thematic content analysis. The inductive method is consistent with the interpretivist paradigm, which recognizes that knowledge is formed via

individual experiences and societal interactions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Thus, inductive logic contributes to the goal of this study: to get a knowledge of film-induced tourism and branding through the lived experiences and representations shared by visitors and media viewers.otives, and emotional connection with the place.

METHOD

Data Collection-Document Review

Data were gathered through netnographic data collection, a form of online ethnography that captures naturally occurring material from digital communities (Kozinets, 2020). In practice, this meant collecting already existing, non-numerical content; YouTube travel vlogs and tourist websites where tourists publicly share their thoughts about "Game of Thrones" settings in Dubrovnik. Because these texts, images, and videos are produced by real users in real time, netnography provides an unobtrusive window into visitors' behaviours, experiences, and perceptions shaped by film-induced tourism.

Data for this study was gathered only from YouTube and a tourism website. The emphasis was on promotional content and user-generated content, notably those in which people discussed their motivations for visiting Dubrovnik. Special emphasis was placed on how "Game of Thrones" affected their travel selections, as seen in these publicly available movies and promotional materials.

To be more explicit, I proceeded with collecting the data (videos) using what is called video elicitation. Video elicitation in qualitative data collection involves collecting existing video footage to gather deep insight information about a situation; in this case, about "Game of Thrones" and the ability to induce tourism in Croatia. These videos were picked through the use of hashtags #GoT,#dubrovnik,#Kingslanding and those with the highest views were selected.

A total of 3 videos were selected from YouTube, and one website (getyourguide.com) in this website 3 post were selected. These videos were selected because their content has a direct link with "Game of Thrones" and destination branding.

The website selected for this study is "Get your Guide," a platform founded by 4 classmates in 2009 focused on tourism. According to the About us section of the website, it is a platform

that gathers the best activities across the globe, all in one place, opening the world to everyone.

"GetYourGuide is a German online marketplace for travel activities. Based in Berlin, the company sells tours and excursions, activities including cooking classes, and tickets to tourist attractions. It offers more than 100,000 products worldwide from more than 20,000 supply partners," (GetYourGuide website).

The website captures beautiful pictures and videos of tourist experiences in different countries. It contains sections like places to see, things to do, wishlist, culture, food and many more. This website was chosen because its established status as a prominent worldwide tourism platform that curates and promotes travel experiences, including themed tours and destinations related to film tourism. As a commercial marketplace popular among international travelers, it provides extensive, publicly available promotional and user-generated content directly tied to Dubrovnik's status as a Game of Thrones filming site.

The three Youtube channels selected are "Exploring with Cody," "Michael Hortin" and "David Cao." All three channels are run by people enthusiastic about travelling, who share updates about travelling the world.

"Hey, I'm Cody. On this channel, you can expect to see adventure travels from around the globe as I explore the Secrets of the World. My passion is bringing you along with me to some of Planet Earth's most beautiful places while chasing high action experiences, so subscribe to Explore the World," (@CodyBuffinton 2012).

Bucket list travel ideas—because life's too short. Real adventures. Honest tips. Unforgettable moments. Whether you travel or just dream of it, you're in the right place. Subscribe and join the journey.(@MichealHortin2012)

20 years old adventurer and thrill seeker. student at Harvard College class of 2023. originally from Montreal, Canada. photography enthusiast. hit me up and let's fly somewhere(@DavidCao 2014)

These creators routinely offer travel-related video that focuses on immersive, first-person experiences. Their vlogs on Dubrovnik included extensive visual narratives and personal insights, with a focus on the city's link to Game of Thrones. Furthermore, these films were

freely accessible, extensively seen, and rich in subject substance relevant to film-induced tourism. Their posture as independent travelers rather than commercial tour organizers contributed to ensuring genuine user viewpoints, making them important data sources for investigating how visitors encounter and interpret destination branding.

Images were analysed by focusing on image recognition (places, people) and specific features like colours.

1. Transcribing the videos, this was done taking the already available transcript from the description of the videos.
2. Coding the video by identifying the different themes in the film induced movie
3. Exploring the themes in the data
4. Finally, providing a detailed explanation of the results and how they align to the study's questions and objectives.

I interpreted the content from the data collected by identifying key points of interest in the data. At this stage, content is interpreted and presented in writing as part of the study results.

DATA ANALYSIS

Content Analysis

In this section, the research explains how data collected from YouTube comments and official tourism websites was analyzed using thematic analysis. The aim was to identify recurring themes that reflect how *Game of Thrones* has influenced Dubrovnik's destination branding.Of all the different techniques of analysis in qualitative research, content analysis remains top in terms of content interpretation and construction. One of the advantages of content analysis is its ability to analyse specific issues that has to do with human behaviour, attitude, reactions and perspectives of different angles. Another aspect is its ability to adapt to different research approaches by applying to different types of qualitative data available (Kyngas, Mikkonen, Kaariarinen, 2020).

As systematic as it is, content analysis in this study will help for better understanding and video analyses of data present. To this regard, video content was analysed by reviewing video insights from tourists in film induced tourism and destination branding sites concerning the film game of thrones. This group of people constitute those who have a comprehensive

knowledge about game of thrones, decision-making ability in their tourist destinations and have a comprehensive knowledge on the subject matter in the research Sweeny (2008).

Data analysis in this section focused on transcribing the content of the videos by keenly watching the videos and transcribing word by word. There is also examining the reactions of tourists, interpreting their reactions and understanding proper the content of the videos in context. This analysis permits for a deeper understanding of the issues in communication involving the verbal and non-verbal cues of tourists.

Data analysis with the use of documented themes as the instrument involves systematically examining and interpreting non-numerical data (video, image content of tourists) to be able to understand trends, patterns, themes and why a particular issue or phenomenon is the way it is. Therefore, while removing any unwanted scientific error from the data. The aim of this analysis is to go beyond basic description, and further explore the underlying meaning, contexts, and creating a coherent narrative that answers the research questions. The following phases were taken into consideration before analysing the content.

Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis (TA) as a flexible and systematic method for identifying and organising patterns of meaning across qualitative data. It is well-suited for this study's goal of exploring public sentiment, travel motivations, and branding effectiveness through user-generated content and online tourism materials. This enabled a more thorough analysis of the data and contributed to the development of themes that link exposure to online media with travelers' actual interest in Dubrovnik as a Game of Thrones-inspired destination.

Phase one: Data Familiarisation
The first phase in the investigation was to carefully watch and re-watch the selected videos, as well as examine the viewer comments. This technique allowed the I to become intimately familiar with the content and begin analyzing patterns and meanings related to how Game of Thrones promotes Dubrovnik's tourism branding.

To ensure thoroughness, it might be essential to employ a consistent strategy to map out key themes and patterns. By applying phase one to the dataset, the I establishes a firm data foundation which is useful for the other phases to come (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 5).
There are six datasets collected, including videos and images, three from YouTube videos and three from the tourism site getyourguide.com. These videos are titled, exploring how to find

the Game of Thrones destination location in Debrovnik, Croatia, " and " Determining Dubrovnik: Full-Day Total Game of Thrones Experience. Evaluating Dubrovnik: Game of Thrones Tour & Optional Lokrum Island: Dubrovnik: Epic Game of Thrones Tour & Lokrum Island Option. Croatia is a key filming location for the popular TV series Game of Thrones, and lastly, exploring the lesser-known filming locations of Game of Thrones in Dubrovnik, Croatia. This process took the I 1 day of going through each video for perfect scrutiny, because the I wants to have a perfect mastery of the data. The I used the first five comments because they were more than 100.

Phase two: Generating initial codes

During this step, the I used coding to carefully assess the video content and audience comments, grouping comparable thoughts and giving descriptive labels. These codes provided as both a summary of significant themes and an interpretative lens for determining how Game of Thrones adds to Dubrovnik's tourism branding (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

To generate initial codes, the I identified comments with similar meanings, ensuring the selection process was guided by the research question. The I used different colored pens to group similar ideas. For example, comments that explained the value and worth of the destination were coded (VW) because most of the audience had a lot to say about the cost and Value of the destination. Comments like;

"Vacation is worthy of every euro and efforts of driving on a motorcycle from Austria..."
"Worth the money,"
"Worth every penny!"

Were grouped to form the above code.

Phase three: Searching for themes

The purpose of this theme generation is then to identify a coherent and meaningful pattern within the data which then can be used for further interpretation (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 7). During this phase, I presents and interprets the main results from the data. This stage is the heart of the analysis, when results are discussed in connection with the research questions and applicable theoretical frameworks established previously in the study. After a careful assessment of the coded data, six significant patterns emerged. These Themes will then be linked to the theories and literature review. From the previous stage, I was able to come up with six themes

Phase four. Reviewing potential themes.

 This phase is involved with examining the unearthed topics concerning the established codes. Using the codes as a guide, we analyze the themes to see whether they "function" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 8). Consequently, a certain degree of consistency and alignment between the codes and motifs must be created in order to extract reliable and pertinent patterns. Naturally, these themes have to relate to the main study topic (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 9).

I went over the codes once more to make sure the themes and the codes matched and to check if the themes addressed the research questions in order to verify whether the themes relate to the study. I still have 6 thematic themes which are

 Exploring the Value and worth of Dubrovnik, the destination city.
 Experience and Travel Motivation
 Visibility and Cultural Recognition.
 Understanding the Essence behind Film-Induced Tourism
 Croatia as a Key Filming Location
Exploring Lesser-Known Locations

Phase five: Defining and naming the themes

This phase entails describing each theme's originality and relevance in a few phrases. This involves choosing appropriate themes that align with the study objectives. To ensure thorough coverage, the analysis should relate to topics.
To ensure comprehensive coverage, the analysis should reference themes
from the entire dataset, demonstrating that key points are addressed broadly and meaningfully (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 9) found that the dataset addresses crucial themes in a comprehensive and relevant manner.
 Exploring the Value and worth of Dubrovnik, the destination city: It combined tourists' opinions that the city was "worth every penny" with their emotional fulfillment, which was frequently linked to their prior experience with Game of Thrones. These feelings were fueled by a sense of narrative immersion, reaffirming Dubrovnik as a valuable trip due to its cinematic significance.

Experience and Travel Motivation: It captured how emotional and symbolic relationships to Game of Thrones influenced many travelers' vacation plans. The excerpts focused on

individual tales of 'living out' situations, demonstrating that the show's images had an important motivating role.

Visibility and Cultural Recognition: Extracts illustrated how viewers frequently identified the city before visiting because of visual familiarity gained from the series. This certifies Dubrovnik's brand as both physically appealing and culturally relevant.

 Understanding the Essence behind Film-Induced Tourism: Highlight the ways in which Game of Thrones turns real-world settings into emotional experiences. The central thesis— that film-induced tourism evokes complex cultural and affective ties rather than merely providing sightseeing—remains resolute.

Croatia as a Key Filming Location: Emphasized how Croatia's architecture and scenery made for perfect filming settings. The importance of place-setting in boosting branding was validated by tourists' awareness of certain locations, such as Fort Lovrijenac and Trsteno Arboretum.
Exploring Lesser-Known Locations: Shows how the movie attracted viewers to previously unnoticed locations in addition to famous sites. A common theme throughout these studies was how story familiarity encourages more in-depth, exploratory travel habits.

Phase six: Producing the Report.

The goal of thermatic analysis's last phase is to smoothly combine writing and analysis. The writing should make sophisticated and persuasive use of references and expound on analytical components (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 11). Six themes were established for this study to meet the research question, based on relevant theories and literature. For clarity, I opted to offer the ideas here rather than in phase three. I will name it the analysis part.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter provides a thematic analysis of data collected from user-generated video content and web sites related to Game of Thrones tourism in Dubrovnik. Guided by the key research question—How has Game of Thrones influenced Dubrovnik's destination branding?—the analysis investigates how tourists understand, interact with, and respond to the city's portrayal in the television series.It involves tracing and interpreting the identified thematic results that aligns with the study's research questions. After tracing and interpreting the data, the purpose is to ensure that effective and clean data is effectively verified and interpreted. Six major themes were found, based on netnographic data and transcript evidence these themes are already mention above. Each theme is thoroughly examined, along with supporting quotes and interpretations.

Theme 1: Exploring the Value and worth of Dubrovnik, the destination city.

The research question investigates how the Game of Thrones has influenced Dubrovnik's destination branding. To answer this, tourists frequently link Dubrovnik to excellent value and unforgettable experiences, mostly because of its connection to movies.

Tourists conversationally expressed themselves in a happy mood, how interesting it is to finally visit Debrovnik Croatia."A truly unforgettable experience walking the steps of Cersei's Walk of Shame.""Seeing King's Landing in real life gave me goosebumps—worth every moment." (Users Comments)

Dubrovnik as a destination was influenced by how the movie 'Game of Thrones' helped to brand the place. They saw the film as a link between fiction and reality as tourist meander themselves in the journey of exploring the city which was key in the film series.

"Being here felt like I was inside the show. It's something I'll never forget."(Users Comments)

The videos and images demonstrate a deep respect for Dubrovnik's architectural and scenic aspects. Visitors describe the ancient town as compact and charming, with many mentioning the beauty of the walls and stronghold. Many tourists, in particular, attribute the city's importance to its depiction in Game of Thrones, cementing Dubrovnik's reputation as a culturally and emotionally rich destination. This is evident in the video in the following time

stamp."You can see the whole old town of Dubrovnik… it's all pretty close together." *(Cody, 3:04–3:12)*

"Walking the walls around Dubrovnik was the best part." *(David Cao, 5:45–5:50)*

"On top of the fortress right now… Meereen, the slave city." *(Cody, 2:10–2:19)*

"This is where Joffrey was poisoned during the purple wedding. That's Gradac Park, and now this spot is full of tourists kayaking around the bay." *(Cody, 3:30–3:36)*

Tourists experience emotional thrill and contentment after visiting Dubrovnik, particularly due of its participation in Game of Thrones. The city's film-induced status increases its worth above that of a regular historic site. Social media influencers contribute to this notion by highlighting every significant filming site in Season 8, converting cinematic excitement into real-world trip motivation.

This behavior is consistent with Beeton's (2016, p. 86) statement that media exposure "elevates the value of a destination by layering cultural and emotional meaning onto its physical environment." Similarly, Yo (2024) asserts that visual material, such as video tours and photos, has a greater impact on visitor decisions than traditional reading. In this setting, Dubrovnik's cinematic exposure functions as both an emotional anchor and a convincing marketing tool.

all the top, there was a lot up here.

2:27 / 11:38 · Fort Lovrij...

HOW TO FIND Game of Thrones LOCATIONS - Dubrovnik, Croatia (2019)

Exploring With Co...
418K subscribers

Subscribe

4K

Share

192,119 views Jun 16, 2019
Traveling to Dubrovnik, Croatia I set out to see all of the Game of Thrones Locations all the way up through Season 8 to see if visiting is worth it or not This video contains spoilers up through the entire show!

Patreon Community: ⊘ / exploringwithcody
The Music I use from Epidemic Sound: https://goo.gl/f8rzCB
The Music I use from Music Bed: http://bit.ly/MusicBedCody

Follow Me:
Instagram: ◉ / exploringwithcody
Facebook: ⓕ / exploringwithcody
Twitter: ✖ / codybuffinton

Finally, travelers' assessments of the city as "worth every penny," "unforgettable," and "absolutely amazing" demonstrate the importance of Game of Thrones in building

Dubrovnik's brand identity. According to the study, the film had a significant impact on how tourists perceived, prioritized, and emotionally connected with the place, highlighting media's transforming potential in modern tourism branding.

Theme 2: Experience and Travel Motivation of tourists to the city of Dubrovnik

The investigation also discovered that many tourists recognized Dubrovnik from Game of Thrones episodes before they arrived, showing that the city's symbolic capital is expanding as a result of screen exposure. Anholt (2007, p.6) asserts that "a place's brand is the sum of its narratives, images, and associations as perceived globally."

The Game of Throne in the study from analysis has been revealed to be the primary reason why tourists decide to visit Dubrovnik, Croatia."I'd really recommend coming on this trip and getting a flavor of Game of Thrones." *(Michael Hortin, 2:17–2:20).*

 According to the tourist, they feel the need to personally explore the city through travels in other to live the experiences they could only see in the film series."Seeing King's Landing in real life gave me goosebumps—worth every moment." (Users comment).

Therefore, by embarking on a self-guided Game of Thrones tourist destination visit to Croatia, the tourists who travels due to the fact that they watched the movie took a closer look at real life scenes and locations which was filmed in Dubrovnik. He goes further by comparing how it looks like in the film and in real life location.

Dubrovnik: Full-Day Total Game of Thrones Experience

Top rated ★★★★★ 4.9 103 reviews

♡ Add to wishlist   ⬆ Share

Dive into an unforgettable experience of 'Game of Thrones' on the spot where it all took place in real life — Dubrovnik. Don't miss the chance during your stay in the city to visit the most memorable scenes from the 'Game of Thrones' locations.

About this activity

From
DKK 634.00
per person

[Check availability]

About this activity

per person

⏱ Reserve now & pay later to book your spot and pay nothing today

📅 **Free cancellation**
Cancel up to 24 hours in advance for a full refund

🔄 **Reserve now & pay later**
Keep your travel plans flexible — book your spot and pay nothing today.

⏱ **Duration 7 hours**
Check availability to see starting times

↪ **Skip the ticket line**

👥 **Live tour guide**
English

Highlighted reviews from other travelers

★★★★★

Darko was our guide and he did an excellent job showing us the sites around old town, the history of Croatia and Game of Thrones significance. He also did photo shoots for our group at some of the key sites. Additionally he...
Read more

★★★★★

Great tour. Covered a lot of sights and background to show and the history of the area.

See more reviews

Select participants and date

👥 Adult x 1 ▼   📅 Select date ▼   [Check availability]

Despite watching the film series, finding these locations was not easy and required a lot of research and one of my main sources of guidance was tourist coming to the users generated content that explains how to move from one location to another as well as the cinematic link behind each location.

This tourist takes time and explores the city potentials by inviting those who have watched the film series to dive into an unforgettable experience of 'Game of Thrones' on the spot where it all took place in real life, the city of Dubrovnik.

"Watched the scene with Sansa and Baelish... had lunch at that same place" and "Damn this looks so familiar"(Users Comments) demonstrate how media exposure contributes to worldwide familiarity with the site. Game of Thrones has served as a branding megaphone, influencing how international audiences see Dubrovnik, making it a known and appealing trip even for individuals who have no prior connection to the city.

Don't miss the chance during your stay in the city to visit the most memorable scenes from the 'Game of Thrones' locations.
Following the experience and Travel Motivation of tourists', the study reveals that most of the tourist had a lot to say about the walking experience. Dubrovnik's association with Game of Thrones was a major factor in the decision of many tourists. Comments highlight how the world of the show has blended with actual travel experiences, describing themed trips, customized excursions, and a deep emotional connection to the filming sites.

"One of many vacations I treasure," "Walking in Dubrovnik while getting to know so much about the backstage of our favorite show..."

In this regard, people travel for different purposes, some of which could be; the need see film related places as showed in movie scenes. Thus, they try as much as possible to visit areas that have a close link to a particular movie they watched. By doing this, the Games of thrones tour explore to tourists all the built locations in Debrovnik. Thus, from top of the city wall you can have a perfect view of the town.

As evident from the analysis, the decision to travel to a particular destination is due to the different scenes, sites, images in films that push people to want to experience the place in real life.

These findings on its own align to initial literature from Tkalec et al (2017 p. 3), film induced tourism, and branding theory which indicated that there was a significant the impact of Game of Thrones (GoT) on the number of visitors who visited the city of Dubrovnik. This is consistent with Beeton's (2016, p. 120) claim that film tourism promotes behavior by generating a strong emotional connection to locations. The familiarity produced by regular

visual exposure enhances both visitation and story engagement. The comments interpreted in this study show how the interaction of cinematic memory and real-world discovery influences visitor decisions.

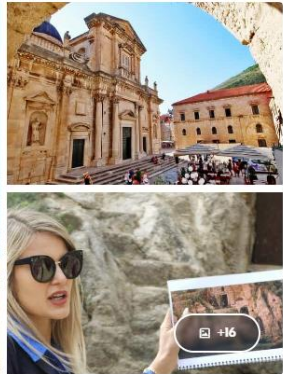**Theme 3: Examining the visibility and cultural recognition of Dubrovnik through Game of Thrones**

Through the movie, it paints the picture of the necessity to visit legendary sites like Blackwater Bay, the Red Keep, and the City of Qarth ensuring every visitor takes his or her place on the Iron Throne.

About this activity

📋 **Free cancellation**
Cancel up to 24 hours in advance for a full refund

🔄 **Reserve now & pay later**
Keep your travel plans flexible — book your spot and pay nothing today.

🕑 **Duration 2 - 3 hours**
Check availability to see starting times

📱 **Skip the ticket line**

👥 **Live tour guide**
English, German

Highlighted reviews from other travelers

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

The tour was so fascinating and not rushed at all, we learned a lot and had plenty of time to take photos at each stop. Our guide, Petra, was amazing and very knowledgeable. I highly recommend everyone...
Read more

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

our tour guide dubravka was amazing 👋 she was so friendly and very knowledgeable on all things GOT and even gave us lots of other facts about the city and the old town. this tour is definitely a must do for all game of...
Read more

See more reviews

Select participants, date, and language

👤 Adult x 1 ▾   📅 Select date ▾   🌐 English ▾   **Check availability**

From DKK 220.00
DKK 176.00   **Check availability**
per person

🔄 Reserve now & pay later to book your spot and pay nothing today

With tour guides ready to meet tourists' expectations from film to real life realities, a tour guide in front of Nautika Restaurant leads visitors through the majestic Fort Lovrijenac, soaking in its grand architecture and breathtaking views, before venturing into the renowned Immerse yourself in the city of "King's Landing" with a guided tour of Dubrovnik's most iconic attractions, as seen in Game of ThronesExplore Westeros' capital city with local specialists who will show you the most renowned filming locations and uncover the secrets behind its development.

Visitors may experience the thrills of King's Landing on the Ultimate Game of Thrones City Walking Tour, which visits prominent filming locations such as the Red Keep and the Iron Throne. These tours highlight major places while also providing insight into the production's behind-the-scenes processes.. Quotes such as "Saw the scene with Sansa and Baelish... dined at that very spot"pier of Pile Bay, a key filming location for Game of Thrones as Blackwater Bay.

 "Wow, this looks so recognizable" demonstrate how media exposure has fostered a sense of global familiarity with Dubrovnik.Game of Thrones has been an effective promotional tool, altering the city's international image and attracting visitors who had no prior links to Croatia.

Game of Thrones has acted as a branding megaphone, altering the international perception of Dubrovnik and making it appealing to individuals with no prior connection to Croatia. Social

media platforms—among the most commonly downloaded internationally (Newberry, 2023)—play an important part in this process. Travel influencers and content makers frequently share movies and vlogs that highlight Dubrovnik via a cinematic lens. Cody recommends visiting filming places early to avoid crowds: "Best time to come is before 8 a.m…after that, it gets too busy" (Cody, 0:33-0:38), highlighting the site's popularity and media impact.

These interactions show that Dubrovnik's brand has expanded beyond its architectural and historical significance, to become a well-known cultural destination. It now serves as a destination with several symbolic layers, where memories from films and the real environment intersect, as addressed by Reijnders (2015) in his theory of media and location. This research demonstrates how film-driven tourism, enhanced by internet involvement, plays an important part in destination branding, with Game of Thrones having a considerable impact on Dubrovnik's international perceptions.

Theme 4: Understanding the essence behind film-induced tourism.

Video analysis from social media sites reveals the essence of visiting iconic Game of Thrones locations in Dubrovnik, such as King's Landing, Blackwater Bay, and the Red Keep, and even get a photo on the Iron throne. It explains that the tour starts with a short walk to the first filming location, which is known in "King's Landing" as Blackwater Bay. It's one of the major settings where several scenes were shot.

Dubrovnik: Epic Game of Thrones Tour & Lokrum Island Option

Top rated   ★★★★★ 4.9 4147 reviews   ♡ Add to wishlist   ⬆ Share

Dive into the world of Game of Thrones in Dubrovnik on a walking tour. Enjoy fascinating insights, breathtaking views, fun facts, and a picture with the Iron Throne on an optional Lokrum Island visit.

About this activity

From
DKK 186.50   Check availability
per person

---

views, fun facts, and a picture with the Iron Throne on an optional Lokrum Island visit.

About this activity
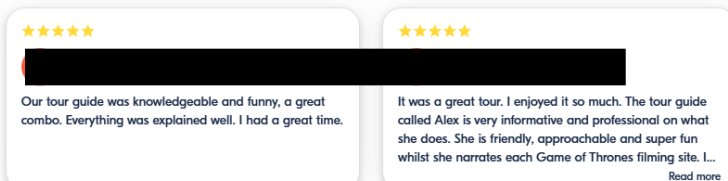
From
DKK 186.50   Check availability
per person

☑ Free cancellation
Cancel up to 24 hours in advance for a full refund

📅 Reserve now & pay later
Keep your travel plans flexible — book your spot and pay nothing today

🕐 Duration 2 - 3 hours
Check availability to see starting times

👥 Live tour guide
German, English

Reserve now & pay later to book your spot and pay nothing today

Reserve now & pay later
Keep your travel plans flexible — book your spot and pay nothing today.

Duration 2 - 3 hours
Check availability to see starting times

Live tour guide
German, English

Highlighted reviews from other travelers

★★★★★

Our tour guide was knowledgeable and funny, a great combo. Everything was explained well. I had a great time.

★★★★★

It was a great tour. I enjoyed it so much. The tour guide called Alex is very informative and professional on what she does. She is friendly, approachable and super fun whilst she narrates each Game of Thrones filming site. I...

Read more

See more reviews

Select participants, date, and language

👥 Adult x 1 ▼   📅 Select date ▼   🌐 English ▼   Check availability

Visitors may learn more about the Game of Thrones production process behind the scenes through guided tours, which frequently use screen grabs and film trivia to ground their investigation of the actual world. These trips combine fiction and reality by allowing visitors to repeat famous situations, such ascending the stairway to the "Red Keep" for expansive

38

views of the Adriatic Sea and Dubrovnik's old town. "This is the Red Keep—although most of it was CGI, this is the core," according to one transcript, for example. Cao, David, 3:47–3:55. This immersive experience exemplifies the ability of visual storytelling to uplift places by showcasing individuals, monuments, and cultural components that may otherwise be overlooked (Beeton, 2005).

Additionally, the data demonstrates that visitors exhibit good spatial and emotional recognition. Tourists regularly highlight visual familiarity in the transcripts: "The scene with Sansa and Baelish looks so familiar," and "Had lunch at that same place." These instances show how travelers establish a connection with places prior to their arrival, resulting in a feeling of déjà vu and narrative involvement. Another visitor remarked in amazement, "It was worth every moment to see King's Landing in person—it gave me goosebumps." This lends credence to Reijnders' (2015) idea of "symbolic layering," in which fictitious meaning is added to real-world locations via cinema.

Anholt's (2007, p. 24) place branding theory, which highlights the importance of value and perception in destination branding, is similarly consistent with the way Game of Thrones changed Dubrovnik's brand identity. By transforming it from a historic harbor to a globally recognized fantasy resort, Dubrovnik's portrayal as King's Landing has significantly improved its cultural capital. In addition to its architectural and historical significance, the city is now seen through a cinematic framework that influences visitors' expectations and experiences before they ever arrive.

Theme 5: Examining Croatia as a key filming location for the Game of Thrones

One of the implications of the viewership of Game of Thrones by millions was its ability to present the Dubrovnik City as a destination place in the movies. The different scenes, landscapes, vegetation used in the series demonstrated the high-level branding opportunities for the movie in projecting Dubrovnik as a destination city to visit after watching the movie. As a country, Croatia is endowed with tourism potentials like the sun, sex, health, city break, and the sea. While its tourism is dominated by small and medium size enterprises and hotels.

ALL Game of Thrones SCENES in DUBROVNIK (Guide)

David Cao
644 subscribers

Subscribe

👍 2.4K 👎

↗ Share

•••

241K views 5 years ago #gameofthrones #croatia #dubrovnik
Embarking on a self-guided Game of Thrones tour, we take a look at ALL the real life locations
where the show was filmed in Dubrovnik and compare it to what it looks like in the show.
  ...more

As showcased in the film series, data from the findings indicates that tourists are able to witness Dubrovnik Locations like the Minceta Tower which represents the House of the Undying, where Daenery in the film attempted to retrieve her stolen dragons. This tower offers stunning views of the Old Town's red roofs and surrounding walls with many iconic sites featured throughout the show.

Another major aspect common with the photos and videos posted by tourists' influencers on social media share colourful insights concerning the Game of Thrones and the destination city of Dubrovnik. Since some of our chosen influencers are photographers, their pictures are even more outstanding and make people feel good just by looking at them.

Another key filming location discovered by tourists is the Fort Lovrijenac (The Red Keep). This 16th-century fortress served as the residence of the King of Andals and the First Men. It's where the tournament was held in King Joffrey's name and features in several key scene.

These findings as presented align with the branding theory as presented by (Anholt, 2010, p. 23), which states that destination branding theory in itself supports the promotion of particular images or symbols in order to better establish a favourable brand reputation. By implication,

how the images and videos are projected by tourists' influencers has a positively significant influence on people visiting the destinations.

There is equally the Pile Gate & Harbor: Featured as Blackwater Bay, with Pile Gate being the site of a pivotal scene where Joffrey orders the killing of everyone in the crowd, resulting in a riot.

These findings agree with Vagionis (2011), who insisted that people's desire to visit places in the world has very much been influenced by films that prompt people to feel like living the experience in real life situations.

This is the situation in Croatia with tourists eager to see the Bokar Fortress: Representing King's Landing, particularly in a conversation between Tyrion and Lord Varys, Trsteno Arboretum: The palace gardens of King's Landing, where Lady Olenna and Lord Varys discuss Sansa's safety and plot to poison King Joffrey; and Lovrijenac Fortress: Featured in the tournament to honor King Joffrey's name.

Theme 6: Exploring the lesser-known filming locations of Game of Thrones in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

One of the key issues worth examining in film induced destination branding is how movies can contribute to people exploring places that before then were not popular. While aspects like the real-world stand-in for King's Landing. Has been explored, beyond the popular tourist spots, tourists uncover tucked-away alleys, hidden courtyards, and off-the-beaten-path sites used in the show.

Through travel tourists' experts, the lesser sites also highlight local insights and behind-the-scenes stories, offering a fresh perspective on how the city's medieval charm helped bring the fantasy world of Westeros to life.

This aligns with the branding theory and the views of (Hanna & Rowley, 2008) who opine that as a valuable aspect, destination branding relies on the brands ability to pull visitors into the particular destination centre with the objective being that of making people to explore places little known to them before.

Thus, in understanding this study as the theory presents, it is important to focus on areas where the Game of Thrones was filmed which before then were considered less popular places to visit.

This explains why Beeton (2005), argued that effective branding through motion movies provide particular locations, by highlighting objects, subjects, people and many other issues that people could not have seen if not through movies.

Uncovering Dubrovnik's Hidden Game of Thrones Locations

Michael Hortin
3.33K subscribers

Subscribe

👍 32 👎 | ↗ Share | ⋯

Below is a brief summary of notable sites in Kings landing.

Dubrovnik. The primary stand-in for King's Landing from Season 2 onwards:

City Walls: Used for many exterior shots of King's Landing.

Fort Lovrijenac: The Red Keep.

Pile Gate & Jesuit Staircase: Iconic scenes like Cersei's Walk of Shame.

Lokrum Island – A lush island near Dubrovnik, used as Qarth, the "greatest city that ever was or will be.

Trsteno Arboretum Served as the Red Keep gardens, where characters like Olenna Tyrell and Margaery often conversed.

Klis Fortress (near Split) Portrayed Meereen, one of the cities Daenerys Targaryen conquers.

Diocletian's Palace (Split) Filmed as part of Daenerys's throne room and scenes involving her dragons.

Šibenik depicted the city of Braavos, especially where Arya Stark trains with the Faceless Men.

The Game of Thrones as a movie based on the findings has contributed enormously in projecting the Dubrovnik City in Croatia as a destination place for tourists due to the ability of the movie to influence tourist decision making.

The study results align adequately with the view of (Roesch, 2009, P. 6-7) who in the film theory highlights that in movies, when a venue has been modified for film, tourists still want authenticity and immersive experiences. A typical point in place is the Game of Thrones that turned Dubrovnik into King's Landing, attracting tourists looking for a link between fiction and reality.

This is because Croatia served as one of the key filming locations for Game of Thrones, particularly for scenes set in King's Landing, the capital of the Seven Kingdoms. Therefore, in most cases, influencers use hashtags on social media platforms with well selected keywords to be able to market and brand destinations. This aspect is strategic in enhancing destinations visibility (Factow Digital, 2023).

Reliability

Reliability in Content analysis from a qualitative research perspective looks at the extent to which this study follows a rigorous and transparent procedure. To ensure the study is reliable, this procedure which must be respected and clearly followed to ensure accuracy ensuring the research question and objective of the study is well defined. Additionally, reliability of a study like this is ensured if there is a systematic coding process of themes while documenting the analysis, and seeking feedback from other Is.

Furthermore, conducting a through peer review from colleagues and other professionals, and ensuring that the results of the study aligns clearly with the data collected is an important aspect that guarantees the reliability of the study.

Thus, in other to better understand validity, it is important to get the appropriateness of the data material, tools and selected methods in relation to the study's research questions (Grønmo, 2004), or, as (Muijs, 2004).

Validity

Construct validity is the first method of ensuring the validity of the research instruments used in the study. In this case, the document analysis which was used. Validity in qualitative research refers to the trustworthiness, credibility, and integrity of the findings.

At the level of validity, the I used so many sources of information from the beginning of the work, to review of content on film induced tourism and destination branding. This aspect of checking research validity is with the use of triangulation which permits for the use of multiple sources as a way to check the validity of the study.

While acknowledging aspects of personal biases, it is important to enhance validity or trustworthiness of findings by consulting policy documents that aligns to tourism in Croatia as highlighted with a strategy policy document on enhancing tourism in Croatia by the government. Another aspect of validity done was discussing the findings of the study with other Is, thereby permitting them to put in their inputs.

Additionally, validity was realized by ensuring that the questions and words used by the tourists actually measure the exact issue the study is out to investigate (influence) as validity was also assured from the rigor of the instrument.

Content validity was checked by the I in the domain of social media sites that clearly demonstrates the influence of film induced tourism and destination branding through the reactions, perspectives of the tourists. This was done by ensuring that the video content adequately addressed the objective of the study and research questions. Based on their observations, some themes in the content could be restructured (Amin, 2005).

Another aspect of checking content validity was done by using experts to review the content in the study. This includes peer Is, the supervisor, to ensure that the videos sites accurately reflect the research issue being investigated.

Ethical Consideration

This Research commenced after obtaining authorization from the Department and supervisor in charge of the work. Therefore, a letter authorizing the I was obtained to enable the I access

the various research areas. Emphasis was made indicating that the study was for purely academic purposes. This, therefore means that during data collection proper, the demographic data of those informants or interviewees will be treated in strict confidence, thereby ensuring that the study is purely academic.

Limitations of the study

This research has a few limits that readers should keep in mind. First, it only looked at six online videos and the comments under them. Because of this small sample, the findings cannot be generalized. Second, the fact that I did not use interviews implies that all the material came from the internet. People who post or comment online may be more enthusiastic or vocal than quiet tourists who never share their thoughts. This means some voices are missing. Another limitation is that fact that all of the videos and comments were in English. Travelers who speak other languages or who watched the show in a different cultural setting may have different views that are not captured here. Lastly, our thesis focuses on one television series and one city. Results cannot automatically apply to other films, shows, or destinations without further research.

Discussion/Reflection

This study aims to investigate how the HBO series Game of Thrones affects the tourist branding of Dubrovnik, Croatia. Thematic analysis of tourist-generated social media content, influencer videos, and secondary literature revealed six key themes: the perceived value and worth of Dubrovnik, tourist motivations and experiences, the city's visibility and cultural recognition, the essence of film-induced tourism, Croatia as a filming location, and the discovery of lesser-known sites. These topics show how strong media can be in establishing and modifying place identity.

One of the analysis's main results is that Game of Thrones serves as a powerful emotional and symbolic point of reference for viewers. Dubrovnik's portrayal in movies as King's Landing has led to tourists frequently arriving with unrealistic expectations. When they visit the actual filming sites, many people experience astonishment, exhilaration, and a sense of personal

accomplishment. This supports Beeton's (2005) claim that media tourism enhances the appeal of physical places by giving them a "layer of meaning." By allowing visitors to reenact famous events like the "Walk of Shame" or the "Purple Wedding," Dubrovnik transforms from a city into a fantasy setting, increasing its perceived worth and distinctiveness.

In addition to the urge to see locations linked to significant narrative events, tourists were often motivated by their emotional connection to the series. This confirms the findings of Tkalec et al. (2017), who discovered that Game of Thrones considerably raised the number of tourists visiting Dubrovnik. Crucially, research participants also participated in performative tourism, which includes reenacting episodes, snapping photos on the Iron Throne, and following the paths of fictional characters. As visitors actively create and share their experiences online, these performative components highlight the connection between branding and identity creation and strengthen Dubrovnik's branded image.

The study also discovered that the branding effect is enhanced by social media, especially through influencer content. Influencers act as go-betweens, extending the destination's online presence while also validating it. This is in line with Anholt's (2007) idea of "place narrative," which holds that globally shared pictures and tales influence branding. Digital storytelling is a crucial part of contemporary destination promotion, as seen by the crucial role that visual platforms like Instagram and YouTube play in converting cinematic curiosity into actual travel.

Furthermore, Dubrovnik's fame has spread beyond its well-known filming locations to encompass lesser-known ones. This illustrates the ability of movies to spread tourism awareness and enhance a location's brand identity. Travelers who visit lesser-known locations connected to the series add to a more varied travel experience, which is consistent with Hanna and Rowley's (2008) focus on branding as a complex process that incorporates emotional, visual, and cultural components.

Lastly, the results are consistent with Anholt's (2010) branding theory, which postulates that a place's brand is created by a confluence of emotive stories, visual symbols, and global awareness. Once a historic harbor city, Dubrovnik is today well-known as a dream travel destination, a development made feasible by international media exposure and movie portrayal.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study on the impact of film induced tourism on destination branding with the case of Game of Thrones reveals that movies have a powerful role in terms of revolutionising the travel industry. A case in point is the Game of Thrones which has in its own way contributed significantly in influencing the decision-making of tourists in visiting Dubrovnik, Croatia due to the series they watched.

Going by the video analysis of social media sites used by travel tourists' majority of them visited the destination city and country because of their previous knowledge or haven watch the movie Game of Thrones

In places that already were popular among tourists, some of them still decided to visit other less popular sites as used in the scenes.

Additionally, the language used in terms of verbal and non-verbal gestures are illustrative of the anxiety and eagerness to visit Croatia as a destination country due to the Game of Thrones.

Going by the findings, it is safe to conclude that the film series has had a great fame of influence in Dubrovnik, Croatia, and in other similar destination countries due to the high level of streaming in televisions, cinemas, and the internet.
Therefore, based on the study, the eagerness to visit the place is as a result of the film series called "The Game of Thrones".

However, it will be inappropriate or biased to rely solely on the movie Game of Thrones has the reason why tourists visit Croatia. This is because there are many reasons that pushes one to visit a place (economic, social, political).

Notwithstanding, we can consider that the methodology of measuring film induced tourism and destination branding by use of document analysis of videos in social media sites used by

tourists' can be a very significant and useful approach in understanding the influence film tourism has.

 This is because these sites are an easy and free way to access data relevant to the impact of films on destination branding.

From the analysis in the study, it can be concluded that tourists' influencers on social media make use of their platforms to adequately showcase the beauty of Dubrovnik as a destination location as displayed in the movie "Game of Thrones". These tourists' Influencers focus on attracting potential visitors by highlighting the different places in the movie, while calling on people to witness the experience in real life by visiting these areas.

Overall, influencers emphasize the beauty of these destination countries and or cities by making use of visual content such as photos and videos in social media which remains an important a medium for social interaction by people (Rainie, Brenner, & Purcell, 2012).

Recommendations

Despite evidently the evident analysis from the study which shows that tourists' influencers have helped in using the movie Game of Thrones to present the city of Dubrovnik, Croatia as a destination for tourists to visit, and after a thorough cross-examination of the study, the following recommendations have been derived.

To the government (policy makers)

Policy is at the center of every nation. In this regard, this study will enable the government of Croatia through its designated structures from the executive, legislative and judiciary to be able to develop an updated and cohesive tourism project that takes into consideration the significant role of movies and their ability to influence visitor's decision to visit the country. To this regard, this study serves as a reference for them to make inform choices on the importance of film induced tourism. Thus, a range of policy responses will be required both in the short term as well as in the long term. In the short term, the government needs to make sure that it invests a lot in film tourism.

To Tourism Influencers

Despite the potentials in the tourism sector, it is important to look at the role influencers can play in making the sector vibrant. As a recommendation, this study proposes that tourism influencers in Croatia like in other destination countries should make use of social media platforms (Instagram, Tiktok, LinkedIn, Facebook etc) to effectively market tourists' destinations especially those places displayed or showcased in films. This is because through their pictures, videos, text, potential visitors can easily get the attention and take the decision to visit these destinations.

To Researchers

A lot of studies have been carried out on film tourism and how films have impacted brandings of destinations. Therefore, it is recommended that more research be carried out by Is in the areas of film induced tourism by identifying the different contributions of different stakeholders in branding destinations through movies. Therefore, as a contribution, this study shall add to the already existing literature and data on film induced tourism and destination branding in Croatia and the world at large.

Suggestions for Further Research

This is not pioneering research in the domain, but film induced tourism has so many other areas that can be investigated by Is. The results of the present study provide a number of potential avenues for future research. This future study therefore includes the differences in opinion of the stakeholders in movies like (actors, film directors, tourists) in marketing destinations. Based on this, a study, a survey study sampling the reasons why people travel to visit places should be carried out. This study shall explore other reasons while they visit places apart from film induced factors.

Additionally, a study on a deeper understanding of the role film actors/actresses play in the decision-making by potential tourists on places to visit should be carried out. This can focus on or may be achieved by collecting longitudinal interview data over time, rather than just web content. Also, research that investigates how the destination managed and sustained the location post Game of Thrones should be carried out and How the people of Dubrovnik, Croatia changed to the aftermath of Game of thrones.

REFERENCES

Aaker, D. A. (1991). *Managing brand equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand name*. Free Press.

Aaker, D. A. (1996). *Building strong brands*. Free Press.

Ambler, T., & Styles, C. (1996). Brand development versus new product development: Towards a process model of extension decisions. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 14(7), 10–19.

American Marketing Association. (2016). *Definition of marketing*.

Anholt, S. (2010). *Places: Identity, image and reputation*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Beeton, S. (2005). *Film-induced tourism*. Channel View Publications.

Beeton, S. (2016). *Film-induced tourism (2nd ed.)*. Channel View Publications.

Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. Anchor Books.

Berthon, P., Chakarabarti, R., Berthon, J.-P., & Pitt, L. F. (2011). Brand worlds: Consumer-based brand equity in a digital world. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 51(1), 182–188.

Blanke, J., & Chiesa, T. (2013). *The travel and tourism competitiveness report 2013*. World Economic Forum.

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27–40.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.

Cardoso, L., Estevão, C. M., Muniz, A. C. F., & Alves, H. (2017). Film induced tourism: A systematic literature review. *Tourism & Management Studies*, 13(3), 23–30.

Connell, J. (2005). Toddlers, tourism and Tobermory: Destination marketing issues and TV-induced tourism. *Tourism Management*, 26(5), 763–776.

Cortón, M. L., & Ebrahimpour, M. (2014). Forecasting film-induced tourism: The Dolphin Tale case. *Tourism Economics*, 20(6), 1349–1356.

Croatian National Bank. (2014). *Bulletin No. 204*. Croatian National Bank.

D'Alessandro, L., Sommella, R., & Vigagnoni, L. (2015). Film-induced tourism, city-branding and place-based image: The cityscape of Naples between authenticity and conflicts. *Almatourism – Journal of Tourism, Culture and Territorial Development*, 6(4), 180–194.

de Albuquerque Meneguel, C. R., Santos, A. M. A., & Lima, B. C. G. (2017). Cineturismo: La percepción de la ciudad de Rio de Janeiro en base al film Rio por parte de los potenciales turistas. *Estudios y Perspectivas en Turismo*, 26, 22–41.

Depken, C. A., Globan, T., & Kožić, I. (2020). Television-induced tourism: Evidence from Croatia. *Atlantic Economic Journal*, 48(2), 253–262.

Frost, W., & Laing, J. (2015). On the trail of Errol Flynn: Explorations in autoethnography. *Tourism Analysis*, 20(3), 283–296.

Gatti, P. (2013). Tourism, welfare and income distribution: The case of Croatia. *Tourism*, 61(1), 53–71.

Govers, R., & Go, F. M. (2009). *Place branding: Glocal, virtual and physical identities, constructed, imagined and experienced*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Greipsson, S. (2012). Catastrophic soil erosion in Iceland: Impact of long-term climate change, compounded natural disturbances and human-driven land-use changes. *CATENA*, 98, 41–54.

Grønmo, S. (2004). *Samfunnsvitenskapelige metoder*. Fagbokforlaget.

Hanna, S., & Rowley, J. (2008). An analysis of terminology in place branding. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 4(1), 61–75.

Hans, M. T. (2008). Branding, cheating the consumer and other heretical thoughts. *Journal of Brand Management*, 16(1), 105–109.

Hernández, M. R., Talavera, A. S., & Parra López, A. (2016). Effects of co-creation in a tourism destination brand image through Twitter. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 2(2), 3–10.

Hocker, J., Schindler, C., & Rittberger, M. (2020). Participatory design for ontology: A case study of an open science ontology for qualitative coding schemes. *Information Services & Use*, 72(4), 671–685.

Irdeto. (2015). *Game of Thrones: Viewership and piracy statistics*. Irdeto Insights.

Keller, K. L., Apéria, T., & Georgson, M. (2008). *Strategic brand management: A European perspective* (2nd ed.). Pearson Education.

Kemp, E., Childers, C. Y., & Williams, K. H. (2012). Place branding: Creating self-brand connections and brand advocacy. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 21(7), 508–515.

Kozinets, R. V. (2020). *Netnography: The essential guide to qualitative social media research* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Kyngäs, H., Mikkonen, K., & Kääriäinen, M. (2020). *The application of content analysis in nursing science research*. Springer.

Mendes, J. (2017). Film-induced tourism and the creative industries: The case of Portugal. *European Journal of Tourism Research*, 15, 424–426.

Mostafanezhad, M., & Promburom, T. (2018). Film tourism and the experiential economy of place: The case of The Beach. In *Tourism Experiences and Animal Consumption* (pp. 81–101). Routledge.

Muijs, D. (2004). *Doing quantitative research in education with SPSS*. SAGE Publications.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Pike, S. (2008). *Destination marketing: An integrated marketing communication approach*. Butterworth-Heinemann.

Rainie, L., Brenner, J., & Purcell, K. (2012). *Photos and videos as social currency online*. Pew Research Center.

Roesch, S. (2009). *The experiences of film location tourists*. Channel View Publications.

Schmidt, M. (2001). *Wissenschaftstheorie für Einsteiger*. UTB.

Shaffer, T., & Shaffer, C. (2001). *Tourism: The business of travel*. South-Western Educational Publishing.

Slife, B. D., & Williams, R. N. (1995). *What's behind the research? Discovering hidden assumptions in the behavioral sciences*. SAGE Publications.

Sweeny, G. (2008). *Understanding media users: From theory to practice*. SAGE Publications.

Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237–246.

Udo, R. K. (2001). *Geographical regions of Nigeria*. Heinemann Educational Books.

Vagionis, N. (2011). Tourism and visual culture: The marketed image. *Tourismos: An International Multidisciplinary Journal of Tourism*, 6(1), 103–124.

Victory, T. (2015). *Nature and film production: The ecological implications*. Green Earth Publications.

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). (2011). *Tourism Towards 2030/Global Overview*. https://www.unwto.org

GetYourGuide. (n.d.). *Dubrovnik: Epic Game of Thrones Tour & Lokrum Island*

GetYourGuide. (n.d.). *Dubrovnik: Game of Thrones Tour & Optional Lokrum Island*.

GetYourGuide. (n.d.). *Dubrovnik: Full-Day Total Game of Thrones Experience*.

YouTube. (n.d.). *Game of Thrones Tour Dubrovnik*.