

# Love Me, Love My Dog: Study on the Effect of Affect Transfer of Movies

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## Abstract

Owing to the growth in income and leisure consciousness, it has now become increasingly popular for tourists to travel abroad. More and more local governments are therefore actively promoting their cities to increase the number of incoming tourists, thereby bringing in substantial contribution to the local economy. At present, the most popular method to promote a city image is to combine the famous scenes with a movie or a film, with the expectation that the audiences will long to visit the scenic spots showcased in the movie and, most importantly, visit the city as tourists and consumers.

This study used the French movie 【Fauteuils d'orchestre】 as the research target to go into the practical city promotion via the abovementioned manner. By adopting affect transfer hypothesis as theoretical basis and explored the relationships among four constructs—film attitude, place attitude, tour intention, and place loyalty of the audience after watching the movie that reveals the city image. The authors presented related explanations for the results and, according to the conclusion, practical and future suggestions are thus provided.

**Keywords:** Affect Transfer Hypothesis, Film Attitude, Place Attitude, Tour Intention, Loyalty,

## 1. Introduction

With the increase in average income and promotion of leisure consciousness, overseas sightseeing tours have become popular. Many countries and cities have taken advantage of this commercial opportunity by combining the positive attributes of city

image with film and television culture. They have built a distinct city atmosphere that increases city awareness and attracts more visitors, thereby leading to improvement of the local tourism business and real economic benefits. For example, *Harry Potter* chose London as its primary filming scene. In place of a traditional tourist handbook, the British Tourist Authority made a *Harry Potter* Map of the filming scenes to advocate local tourism (Alick, 2006). In addition, *Sex and the City* brought numerous visitors to New York. Tourists from other countries account for a third of all the tourists in the local tour group scene. This film successfully spread the image of fashion city to the whole world (Wenig, 2008).

National governments and organizations recognize the positive contribution of city marketing in films. However, no previous study has been conducted on this subject. No existing study investigates whether or not city image placement has any effect in terms of encouraging viewers to visit the featured city. Moreover, there is no factual basis to promote city marketing by method. Most previous studies on placement in film were based mainly on product placement. City images were seldom shown in films in studies of the attitude of audiences. The current study probes into the relationship between four constructs: film attitude, place attitude, tour intention, and loyalty of the audiences generated after watching films that show a city image. First, film attitude and place attitude generated from watching a film will be examined. Second, whether the film attitude of audiences directly impact on their place attitude will be evaluated by establishing the presented city image to identify the country or city in the film. Third, whether the film attitude of audiences generated from watching a film or the place attitude to the country or city showed in the film increases their intent of visiting that country or city will be investigated. Finally, this paper probes whether the audiences would recommend the featured place to other people because of their attitude after watching a film. Based on the affect transfer hypothesis (ATH), the present study applies a structural equation (Lisrel 8.45) to analyze the relationship between the film attitude, place attitude, tourism intention, and loyalty of audiences generated from watching the film *Fauteuils d'orchestre*; the city was considered a product to be placed in the film.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Product Placement and Film-induced Tourism**

This study focus on the effect of product placement with film induced tour. We find product placement often put emphasis on products. With emerging tourism consumption, the marketing mode of product placement has been extended to place marketing (Riley, Baker and Doren, 1998). The modes of presentation are the same

essentially. But strictly speaking, film tourism was not equal to result of placement marketing at the beginning. Product Placement is minded operation of marketing staff and producers. Originally film tourism should be tourism benefits brought by movie and TV products by chance. But, with prevailing film tourism, local marketing staff realized influence of movie and TV products on audiences and they applied it to tourism marketing positively. Therefore, current film tourism is no longer an unexpected result, but an accomplishment created by local marketing staff.

Riley, Baker and van Doren (1998) found that, 12 films they studied had impact on local sight spots for a long time and increased 54% tourists for the sight spots in films within five years after films being released. These continuous influences were the reason why local sight spot made connection with film intentionally and sightseeing tour was advertised through the film. We can see from the above, in addition to value of main box office and trade of outer products, film can bring economic effects of tourism for spots in film.

Place is considered as brand to place into movie and TV products, it is called film with film tourism effects which is considered as advertisement in this study. This study probed into attitudes of advertising mediation hypothesis of audiences generated from this type of film advertisement. Advertisement attitude is defined by Lutz, Mackenzie and Belch (1986) as below, audiences give response to a certain adsturbation, a behavioral intention such as like or dislike, during exposing to specific advertisement. They arranged 4 kinds of attitudes mediation hypothesis concerning brand and advertisement based on previous related literatures. The key factors included in attitudes of advertising mediation hypothesis are: advertising awareness, advertising attitude, brand awareness, brand attitude and purchase intention.

## **2.2 Attitudes of Advertising Mediation Hypothesis**

The place is considered as a brand to place in movie and TV products. This is called film with film tourism elements, which is considered an advertisement. The current study examines attitudes of advertising mediation hypothesis of audiences generated from this type of film advertisement. Advertisement attitude is defined by Lutz, Mackenzie, and Belch (1986) as a case where audiences respond to a certain adsturbation, a behavioral intention such as like or dislike, when exposed to a specific advertisement. They arranged four kinds of attitudes mediation hypothesis concerning brand and advertisement based on previous related literature. The key factors included in attitudes of advertising mediation hypothesis are advertising awareness, advertising attitude, brand awareness, brand attitude, and purchase intention. The four main modes composed of the above factors are described below.

### **2.2.1 Affect transfer hypothesis (ATH)**

According to related literature, there is a positive relationship between advertising attitude and brand attitude (Mitchell and Olson, 1981; Moore and Hutchinson, 1983). In this hypothesis, there is a one-way causation between advertising attitude and brand attitude (Lutz, MacKenzie, and Belch, 1986). Its theoretical basis is the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) proposed by Petty and Cacioppo (1981). This model explains that information processing occurs through the central and peripheral routes. In the central route, a process forms brand attitude resulting from cognitive reaction generated after audiences think rationally and treat advertising information (i.e.,  $Cb \rightarrow Ab$ ). In the peripheral route, audiences apply other peripheral cues or hints to decide on the reliability of information without fully considering advertising information, and audiences generate advertising attitude leading to forming brand attitude (i.e.,  $Aad \rightarrow Ab$ ). Affect transfer hypothesis refers to the transfer of the advertising attitude of audiences to brand attitude by means of the peripheral route.

Mitchell and Olson (1981) express that the central route in the ELM model symbolizes a causal relationship between brand recognition and brand attitude. The peripheral route symbolizes a causal relationship between advertising attitude and brand attitude. Existing literature supports their positive relation from the affect transfer viewpoint. The affect transfer hypothesis is considered a rational intermediary factor in the advertising attitude mediation model.

In the current study, film tourism is the theoretical basis and the affect transfer hypothesis (ATH) is the research framework. ATH suggests a positive relationship between attitude toward the ad, Aad, and attitude toward the brand, Ab. Related studies have also verified this hypothesis. Aad impacts on the attitude of audiences towards the brand and on purchase intentions (Mitchell and Olson, 1981; Moore and Hutchinson, 1981). City images in movie and TV products are considered advertisement and tourism, and the reaction of consumers is defined as the purchase intention. Aad is an important factor when consumers generate purchase intentions (Mitchell and Olson, 1981). During consumers' exposure to advertisement, they respond to specific adsturbation, and this is defined as their attitude toward the ad (Lutz, 1985). Film attitude is defined as behavioral intention in response to film stimulation, whereas place attitude is based on brand attitude and is defined as preference intention response to specific adsturbation under specific exposures. The film, which shows the city image, is considered an advertisement. The city in the film is regarded as a brand and is the dimension of place attitude in the present study (Lutz, 1986).

Therefore, we propose related hypotheses H1, H2, and H3 based on previous literature on ATH.

*H1: A positive relationship exists between film attitude and place attitude.*

*H2: A positive relationship exists between film attitude and tour intention.*

*H3: A positive relationship exists between place attitude and tour intention.*

### **2.3 Loyalty**

loyalty defined in the study, refers to loyalty in attitude. This paper aims to probe into loyal attitude to place tourism. Loyalty is recognition behavior of tourist to leisure activity. It indicates tourist would like to choose a certain activity or recreation resources. Loyal tendency would have impact on future tourism choice behaviors of audiences (Backman and Shinew, 1994). So, after making a comprehensive view of literatures concerning loyalty, this study believed that, Tourism Intention of audiences would have impact on Loyalty. Thus this construct was added into research framework. Thus, we put forward hypothesis H4.

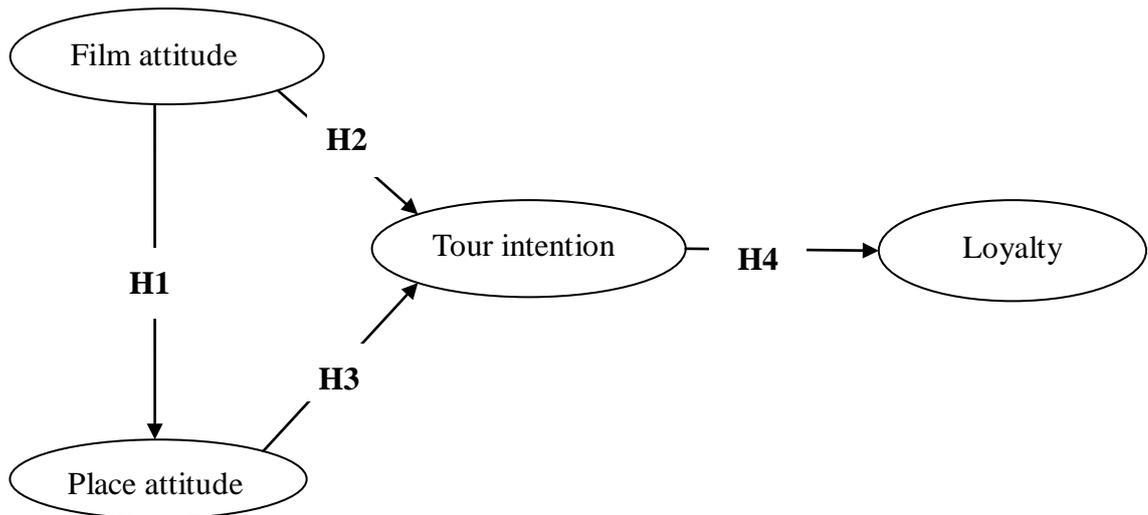
*H4: A positive relationship exists between tour intention and loyalty of audiences*

## **3. Methodology**

### **3.1 Research Framework**

Based on the affect transfer hypothesis (ATH), we propose four constructs to probe into the relationship between attitudes and predisposing factors of tourism intention: film attitude, place attitude, tourism intention, and loyalty. The current study indicates an interactional relationship among these four constructs through the use of questionnaires and the structural equation model. The framework is shown in the following figure 1.

Figure 1. Model of Affect Transfer Hypothesis (ATH)



### 3.2 Questionnaire survey and sample

Four constructs were designed in the questionnaire survey. Twenty-five items were included in the measuring scale; of these, seven items were on film attitude, seven on place attitude, six on tourism intention, and three on loyalty. These 25 items were designed based on the Likert five-point scale questionnaire, where the responses ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree in connection with the attitude of audiences on advertisement.

Our sample was a group of college students from a university in Taipei. The participants were requested to watch a film *Fauteuils d'Orchestre* and asked to answer the measuring scale items. A total of 110 questionnaires were distributed. A total of 91 questionnaires were used in generating statistical data and analysis.

## 4. Results

To verify the hypothesis, the linear structure relation (LISREL 8.30) developed by Jöreskog and Sörbom (1993) was used as the analytical by means of maximum likelihood estimation (MLE). Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to avoid confusion resulting from the interaction of the measurement model with the structure model. The reliability and validity of the measuring construct were established. The analytical procedure was divided into two verification parts, namely, the measurement model and the structure model by adopting two-step analysis. In the measurement model of the first step, based on the correlation matrix of every measurement item, the fitness of the latent construct was ascertained through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). In the second step, one-way causal relationship among the variables was

present in the path model. Upon verification of the hypothesis, we found a positive relationship among film attitude, place attitude, tourism intention, and loyalty.

#### **4.1 Measurement Model**

25 scale items in the model to measure every latent construct and verify the validity of each construct. The fitness of the whole measurement model and discriminant validity among known latent constructs were ascertained through CFA. The scale items were modified to 13 measuring items..

In the entire model, the factor carrying capacity of individual items was mostly more than 0.7, and t value was quite significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). The validity of every construct inspected by Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was over 0.8, indicating that this construct had higher internal consistency. In the fitness inspection of the independent mediation hypothesis model, for every item of the fitness index, each index (GFI=0.83; AGFI=0.75; CFI=0.95; NFI=0.90; NNFI=0.93) was more than 0.8, except for AGFI, showing that the measurement model of the current had differential validity.

## 4.2 Verification of the Structure Model

We verified the hypothesis of the structure model by means of LISREL 8.31. Table 2 lists the measurement results and model fitness of the hypothesis of the study based on path analysis. In the model fitness of the hypothesis model (Fig. 1), the result shows that the affect transfer hypothesis model has the best fitness level ( $\chi^2=16.94$ , Degree of Freedom=3, RMSEA=0.228, GFI=0.91, AGFI=0.71, CFI=0.89, NFI=0.87, NNFI=0.78). The verification results of the affect transfer hypothesis model show that in the four proposed hypotheses, H1 and H2 are not statistically significant, whereas H3 and H4 are statistically significant. This is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Hypothesis Measurement Results of the Independent Mediation Hypothesis Model

Path Analysis/Model Fitness	Independent Mediation Hypothesis		
	Hypothesis	Estimated Coefficient	t-value
FA→PA	H1	-0.07	0.70
PA→BI	H2	0.77	11.37***
BI→LOY	H3	0.69	8.96***

Note: \*p<0.10; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

FA=Film Attitude, PA=Place Attitude, BI=Tourism Intention, LOY=Loyalty

From the above results, audiences believed that place attitude on the film would impact on their tourism intentions. There is a positive relationship between tourism intention and loyalty. This result is similar to those in previous literature. Brand attitude positively influences purchase intention. In addition, brand attitude impacts loyalty (Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal, 1991). Consequently, place attitude impacts the tourism intention of audiences, and impacts loyalty through tourism intention.

## 5. Conclusion, limitations, and directions for further research

The results also indicate that the place attitude of the audience generated from watching the film affected on their tourism intention to the sightseeing spot shown in the film. Moreover, tourism intention influenced audience loyalty. According to empirical evidence, a better attitude to the spot can generate the tourism intention of audiences, which would be manifested in their travel to the spot or recommendation to other people to visit it. Moreover, the results show that film attitude had no significant impact on place attitude, which may be due to diversified sources of information and

the audience is no longer a passive recipient. The style presented in a single film cannot be summarized nor change the audiences' fixed impression of the spot. For instance, Paris is perceived by audiences as a romantic and graceful place, thus, film attitude is not the single factor that influences place attitude.

### **5.1 Managerial implications**

The results show that the place attitude of audiences generated from watching a film affects their tourism intention as reflected in their subsequent visit to the place or recommendation to other people to visit this place. To attract audiences to the place, place attitude should be established in the film as a brand, and this place should be shown continuously. To sustain the audiences' tourism intention, other promotional activities need to be undertaken. We propose that a series of travel routes be planned with film promotion to sustain its impact and continuously deliver tourism benefits to the local city.

Film attitude was not the single factor that influenced place attitude, which may be due to the influence of fixed impression of this spot more than the style presented in the film. Evidently, showing a lot of spots in the film improves audience memory. In other words, when marketing practitioners employ film placement as a marketing strategy, they should ensure that the film type and story meet the audiences' fixed impression of this spot to improve audience memory, which influences future decisions in choosing the sight spot.

### **5.2 Limitations and Future Research**

As the current study only focused on college students of a university in Taiwan, there may be insufficient external validity. To make the research results applicable to other segments of the population, further evidence must be generated. We propose that future studies be extended to other age groups. In addition, other demographic variables should be taken into consideration, or affect involvement of audiences, preference of stars, and other constructs should be included as analysis variables. Marketing practitioners or agents for film placement can apply and study this strategy by understanding the characteristics of audiences.

Finally, this paper probed only a single film, which meant lesser benefits. Different movie and TV products have different effects on audiences in different age groups. Variety shows, TV soaps, and music videos, among others, have different influences on different age groups. Therefore, sequential studies can apply this model to other movie and TV products to verify its general effect.

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