

## Film and literature as a tool for the promotion of Greek tourism

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### Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the various dimensions of the phenomenon, modern, film tourism and its contribution to the local development of cities with the arrival of cinema tourists. For the needs of the study, a quantitative survey was carried out in the form of questionnaires, which were distributed in cinemas and in a central metro station in the Athens area.

**Keywords:** Cinema; Literature; Tourism; Greece; Local development

### 1. Introduction

Film tourism or cinematic tourism is a phenomenon that is rapidly expanding in the tourism industry. The researchers, Riley & Van Doren (1992), define film tourism as a novel approach to the tourism industry that is inextricably linked with the screen. This is because film tourism enables the locations where the films are set to be shown, while also creating potential visitors (Araujo, 2012), (Bolan & Williams, 2008), (Busby & Klug, 2001), (Chen & Tsai, 2006), (Christopherson, & Rightor, 2009). As defined by Macionis (2004), film tourism is a relatively recent phenomenon that involves visiting a destination, with the specific purpose of creating a film or television series. The creation of an attraction for the viewer to visit the location in question is influenced by the individual's own perceptions and desires, with the objective of providing an opportunity to escape from the demands of daily routine (Manola & al., 2021), (Manola & al., 2023), (Manola & al. 2022).

### 2. Film and Literature

According to Hudson & Ritchie (2006), the development of new industrial facilities and the growing demand of the tourism market have contributed to the rapid development of film tourism. According to Busby & Klug (2001), film tourism has been heavily influenced by literature and history, as many films are derived from stories, novels and novellas from books. Furthermore, film tourism has experienced a significant surge worldwide, not only due to the dissemination of films, but also through the utilization of television and cinema, as well as the internet (Connell, 2012), (Connell, 2005b).

The researchers, Riley & Van Doren (1992), observed an increase in tourist visits to locations where films were shot. Similar research demonstrated that locations were featured in films exhibited heightened popularity, attracting a greater number of tourists (Tooke & Baker, 1996). Accordingly, researchers Beeton (2005), Busby & Klug (2001), define film tourism, as the increasing number of visits to a destination following the screening of a film or series.

Iwashita (2003), argues that the emergence and expansion of film tourism is not only due to the location, but also to the history and literature behind that location. It therefore recognizes the crucial importance of literature, considering that

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the creation of films or series owe their existence to it, and demonstrates the interconnection between literature and cinema. Literary texts are responsible for the start of travel, especially in Europe from the 17th to the 19th century. Nobles, scions of wealthy families and aristocrats began travelling to destinations described within literary texts, thereby initiating what is known as "literary tourism" (Manola, et al., 2021).

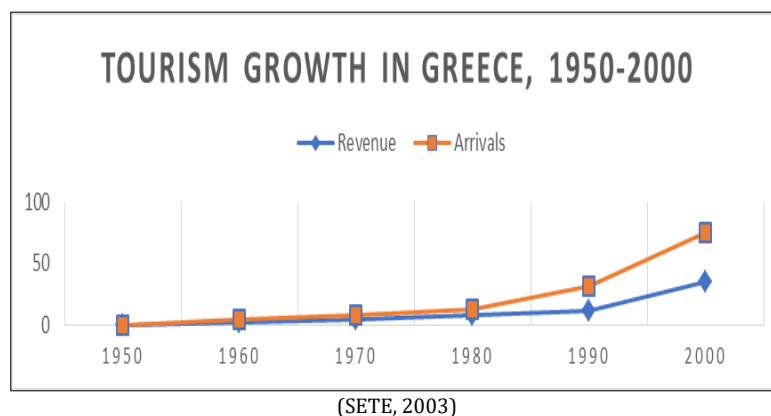
Evaluating the aforementioned, it can be concluded that cinema and literature play a catalytic role in the promotion and visibility of a location. Films are regarded as powerful media with a significant impact on individuals, as they utilize facts and narratives from everyday life in order to influence the viewer's mental and cognitive perception, thereby generating an interest and desire to visit the projected location, even unconsciously. Consequently, there is a sustained interest in the locations that have been depicted in films or television series and have consequently become popular (Manola, 2022).

Acting as a facilitator, ICTs nowadays enhance and foster educational procedures and practices in every domain of education, as well as in literature understanding and film promotion. Social media and Network applications, Mobile applications and Games, [35-41] speedup the distribution of knowledge globally through improving education, and even more enhance the literature availability and films promotion, fostering the penetration for literature and film knowledge into the global citizens.

### 3. Cinema and Tourism

The act of watching a film or series can be considered a form of tourism, as it allows the audience to gain an appreciation for the location and its attractions and is motivated to make a trip (Manola & Vergi, 2022). The growth of film tourism is a global phenomenon with the continued proliferation and emergence of occult destinations (Milman, 2008), (Richards, 2011). Large, medium and small enterprises, such as cultural theme parks, with a film element, create special sensations for visitors and contribute to local development (Maniou,2023), (Maniou,2024a), (Maniou,2024b), (Maniou,2024c). Georgopoulos and Varelas (2021), argue that literature and history play an pivotal role in the creation of theme parks, which not only aim to entertain, but also to educate visitors (Manola & all, 2024), (Manola & al.,2023b).

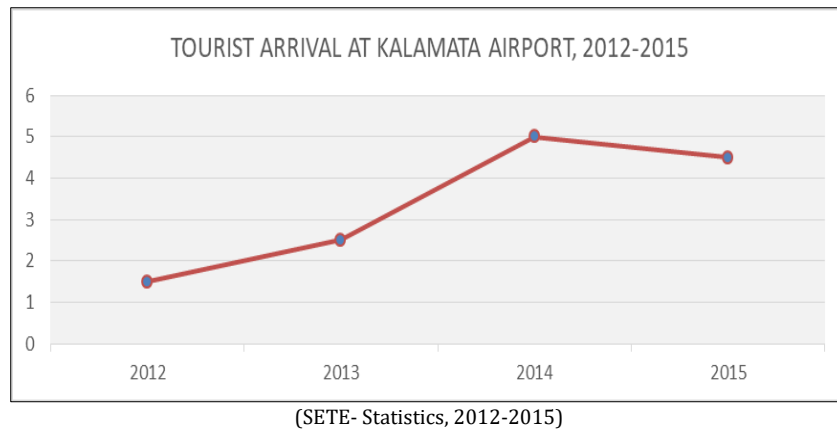
According to SETE (2003), between 1950 and 1990, the growth of Greek tourism exceeded both European and global growth rates, as illustrated in Figure (3.1). In particular, between 1990 and 2000, film tourism experienced a significant surge, contributing to Greece's ranking among the countries with the highest tourism growth (Buhalis, 2001). Consequently, the tourism industry in island destinations is experiencing a period of growth. Figure 3.1



**Figure 1** Tourism growth in Greece, 1950-2000

As posited by researchers Manola (2024) and Assadourian (2011), the impact of specific films on the growth of tourism in various locations, such as Matera, has been pivotal in the evolution of these destinations (Manola & Tsatambassoglou, 2021).

In 2002, Greece was the 13th most popular travel destination, worldwide, and the 8th most popular European destination (WHO, 2003). The film *Before Midnight*, served as a catalyst for tourism in Greece, with various regions of Messinia selected for filming. Following the release of the film, a surge in tourist arrivals at Kalamata Airport was observed between 2013 and 2014, as illustrated in the following Figure (3.2).



**Figure 2** Tourist arrival at airport, 2012-2015

**Table 1** Comprehensive survey of films shot in Greece between 1957 and 2014

Film	Location	Year
Boy on a Dolphin	Athens, Hydra	1957
Never on Sunday	Athens, Piraeus	1960
The Guns of Navarone	Rhodes	1961
Phaedra	Hydra	1962
Zorba the Greek	Crete	1964
The Greek Tycoon	Athens, Mykonos, Corfu	1978
J. Bond: For Your Eyes Only	Corfu	1981
Summer Lovers	Crete, Delos, Santorini	1982
The Big Blue	Amorgos	1988
Pascali's Island	Rhodes, Symi	1988
Shirley Valentine	Mykonos	1989
Mediterraneo	Kastellorizo	1991
Captain Correlli's Mandolin	Kefalonia	2001
Boat Trip	Hydra	2002
The Bourne Identity	Mykonos	2002
Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life	Santorini	2003
The Sisterhood of the Travelling Pants	Santorini	2005
Mamma Mia!	Skiathos, Skopelos, Pelion	2008
My Life in Ruins	Athens, Peloponnese	2009
Arcadia Lost	Peloponnese	2010
Before Midnight	Peloponnese	2013
The Two Faces of January	Athens, Chania	2014
Bing Bang	Santorini	2014

Source: (Romy Assadourian / Journal of Tourism Research, 2011)

#### 4. Methodology - Quantitative survey

A total of 140 individuals were surveyed using a questionnaire. The 70 questionnaires were distributed outside a well-known cinema in Athens, namely Village Cinemas, which is located in the Athens Metro Mall, in the area of Agios Dimitrios. The remaining 70 questionnaires were distributed outside the Monastiraki metro station, in order to obtain a representative sample of different nationalities. The questionnaires were written in English.

The questionnaires were completed on the spot, after it was explained to the participants that the survey is voluntary, the results will be presented only in the form of statistical figures and Figures and the answers will remain confidential and anonymous.

The Microsoft Excel program was utilized for to statistical analysis of questionnaire data, which was subsequently analyzed in the form of tables and Figures.

All 140 participants provided responses to all inquiries.

##### 4.1. Question 1: What is your gender?

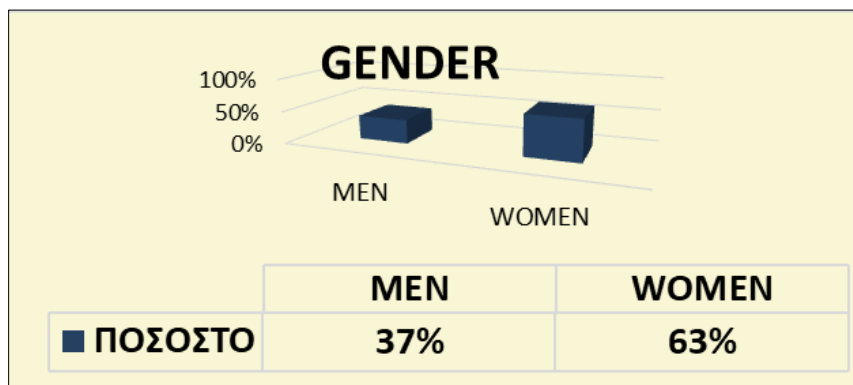


Figure 3 Gender Distribution

As illustrated in the accompanying Figures, the majority of survey participants were women, comprising 63 of the total. Conversely, men constituted only 37% of all participants.

##### 4.2. Question 2: What is your age?

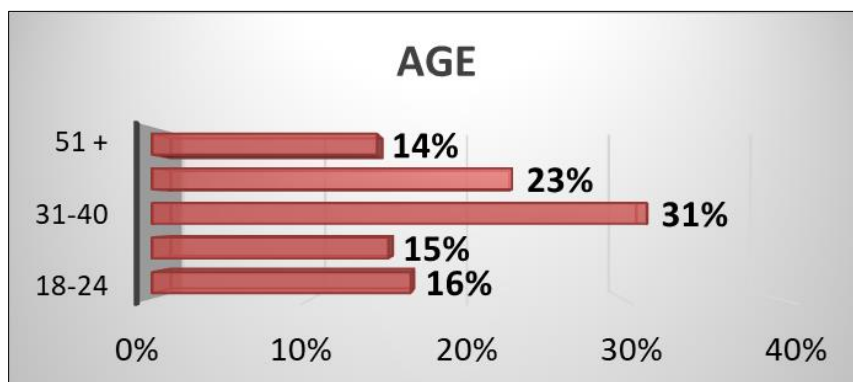
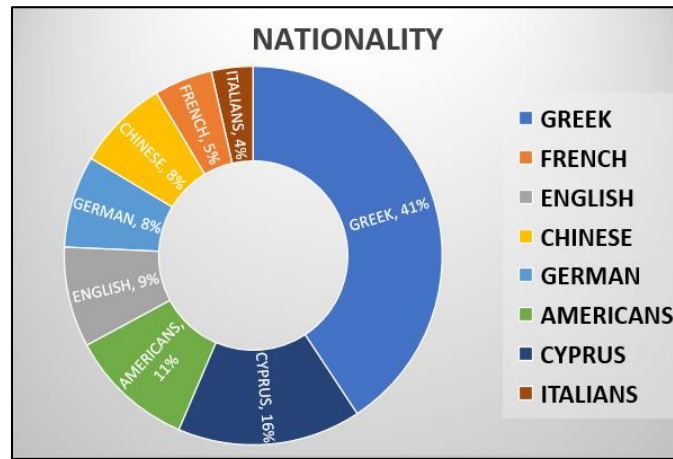


Figure 4 Age Distribution

The above Figure illustrates that the largest percentage of responders to our survey fell within the age groups of 31-40 and 41-50 years old with respective percentages of 31% and 23%. The next large age group is that of 18-24 years old with a percentage of 16%. This is followed by the 25-30 years old with a percentage of 15%. Finally, the age group of 51 years old and above received 14% of the respondents.

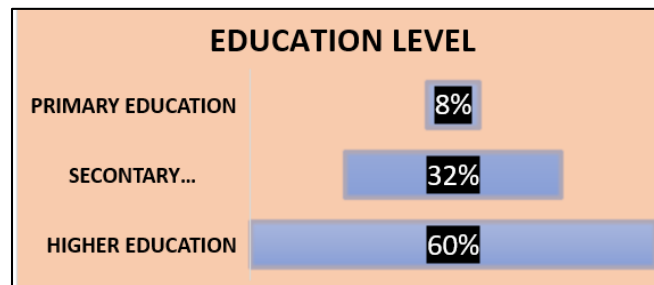
**4.3. Question 3: What nationality are you?**



**Figure 5** Nationality Distribution

Question 3 sought to obtain a sample of respondents from different nationalities in order to obtain as many thorough and objective answers as possible at the international level. To this purpose, questionnaires written in English were also distributed. The results of the analysis indicated that the majority of the respondents were Greek (41%), while Cypriots also held a high percentage (16%). The next most prevalent nationality was that of is Americans with 11% of respondents identifying as such. English nationals constituted 9% of the sample, while Germans and Chinese respondents made up 8% of the total. French nationals accounted for 5% of the sample, and Italians constituted 4% of the total.

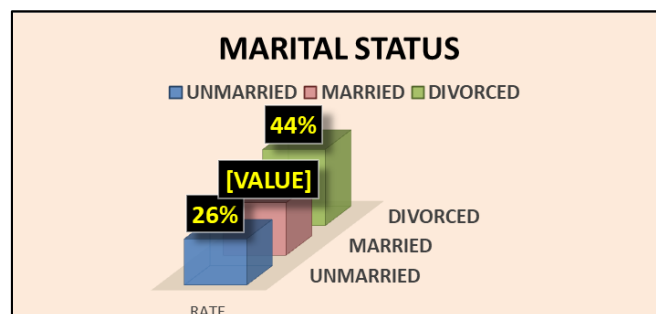
**4.4. Question 4: What is your Education Level?**



**Figure 6** Education Distribution

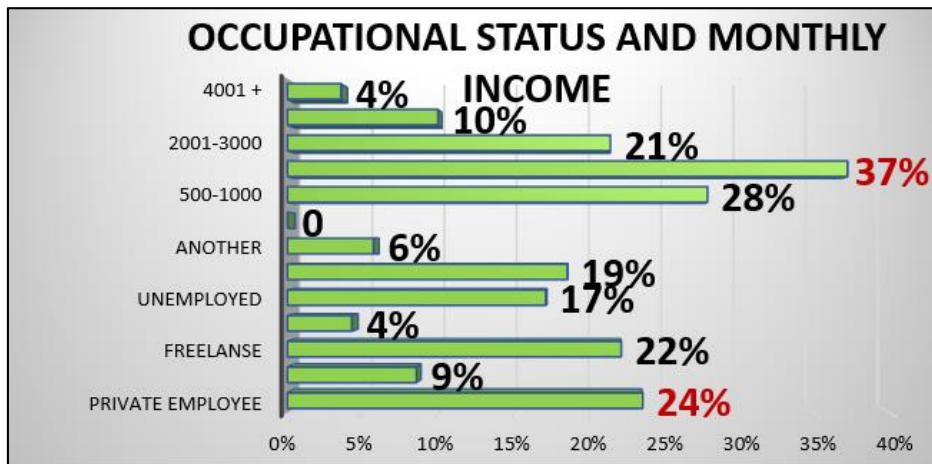
The above figure indicates that the educational level of the participants was relatively high, with 60% having completed higher education and obtained a degree. It can be observed that 32% of the participants had completed secondary education, while only 8% had completed basic education (primary education).

**4.5. Question 5: What is your marital status?**



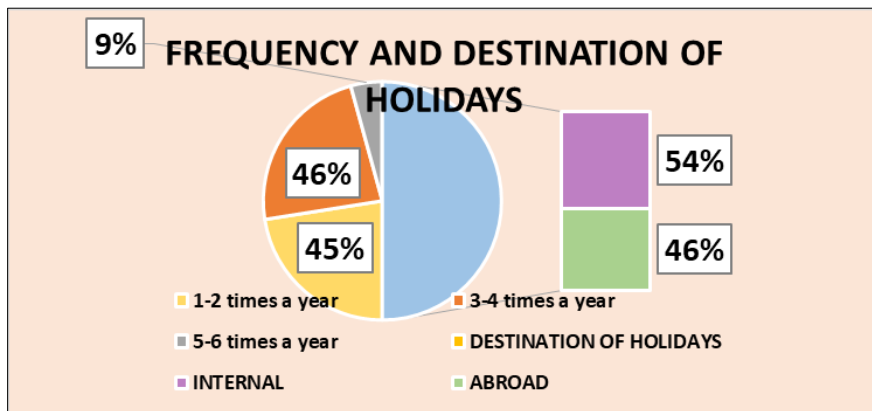
**Figure 7** Marital Status Distribution

The survey results indicated that 44% of the participants were divorced, 30% were married, and 26% were unmarried.



**Figure 8** Summary Figure of the participants' occupational status and monthly income

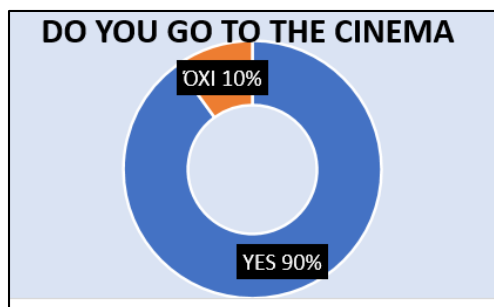
The results of the survey, as illustrated in the summary Figure above, indicate that the majority of participants (24%) are employed in the private sector as private employees. The monthly income of respondents was found to be in the range of 1,001 to 2,000 euros, with a percentage of 37%



**Figure 9** Summary Figure of Frequency and Destination of Respondents' Holidays

The above figure illustrates that the majority of participants, specifically 54% of the respondents, express a preference for traveling more frequently to various destinations within the country. Moreover, the majority of participants (46%) indicated that they take multiple holidays per year, with 3 to 4 trips per year being the most common frequency.

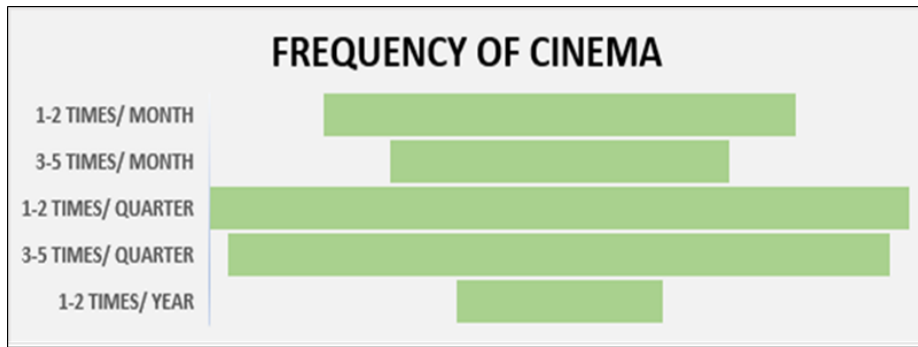
**4.6. Question 8: Do you go to the cinema?**



**Figure 10** Going to Cinema Distribution

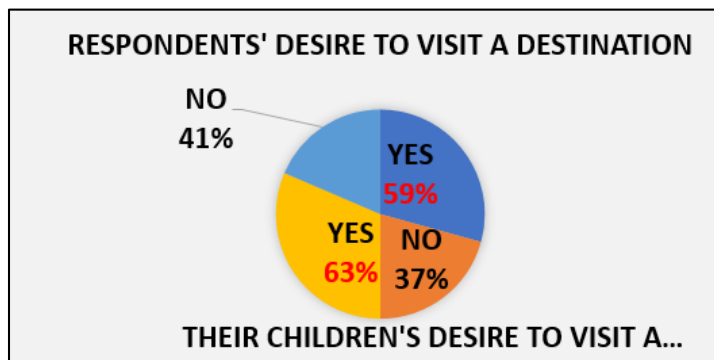
As illustrated in the figure above, the majority of participants (90%) report going to the cinema, in contrast to 10% of those who do not.

**4.7. Question 9: If yes, how often do you go to the cinema? [If no, go to the next question.]**



**Figure 11** Frequency of Cinema

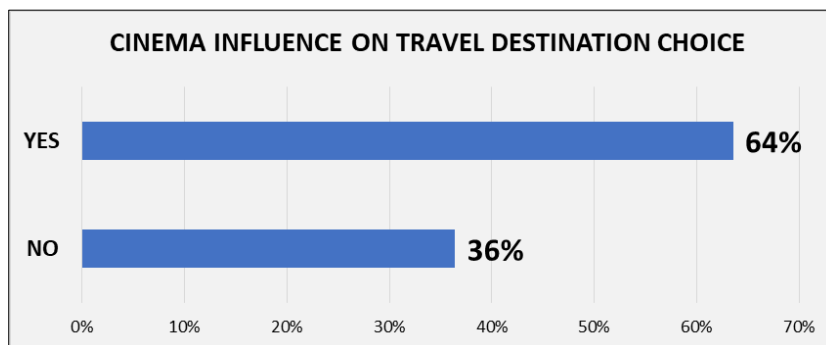
When queried about the frequency of their cinema attendance, the majority of respondents indicated that they attend between one and two times per quarter (29%), or between three and five times per quarter (28%). Twenty percent of respondents indicated that they prefer to attend the cinema one to two times per month, while 14 percent attend three to five times per month. Finally, only 9% of respondents indicated that they attend the cinema rarely, with an average of 1-2 times per year.



**Figure 12** Summary Figure of respondents' and their children's desire to visit a destination after seeing it in a film

The data presented in the above figure indicates that both the participants who took part in our research and their children have a desire to visit a destination after watching a film. In particular, 59% of respondents indicated that their destination choice is influenced by seeing it in a movie, and 63% of their children expressed a desire to visit the destination they see through a movie.

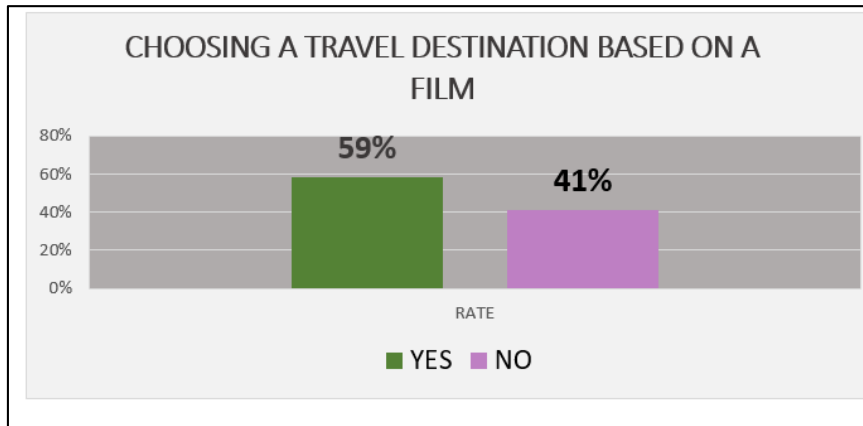
**4.8. Question 11: Do you think that cinema has a positive effect on the choice of travel destination?**



**Figure 13** Cinema's Influence to travel Destination

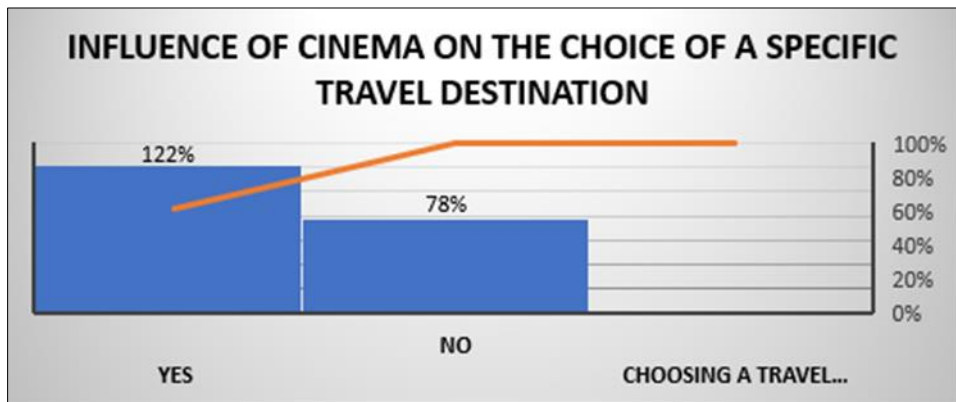
The results of the survey indicate that the majority of participants, 64%, believe that cinema has a positive impact on the choice of a travel destination through its promotion. Conversely, only 36% of respondents indicated that the promotion of a particular destination through cinema is not related to an increased inflow of tourists to that destination.

**4.9. Question 12: Have you ever chosen a travel destination based on the place you saw in a movie?**



**Figure 14** Film’s Influence to travel Destination

As illustrated in the Figure above, a considerable proportion of participants (59%) appear to have selected a travel destination based on the occurrence of a film screening. A similarly noteworthy proportion of respondents (41%) appear to be indifferent to the association between the destination chosen and the viewing of a film.



**Figure 15** Aggregate Figures on the Choice of a travel destination after viewing a film and the Impact of Cinema

As previously stated, the impact of cinema on the selection of a destination is considerable. In aggregated Figure 13, the majority of participants (122%) indicated that cinema does indeed have a positive effect on the choice of a travel destination, with many stating that they would visit that destination.

**4.10. Question 14: Which of the following films have you watched (up to 3 answers)?**

The results of the study indicated that the participants had viewed a significant number of foreign films, particularly those produced in the past 15 years. The following major film productions were observed to have a strong global appeal: Mamma Mia (16%), Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The films The Cradle of Life, My Life in Ruins, James Bond: For Your Eyes Only, Before Midnight, and The Two Faces of January were observed to have a strong global appeal, with the latter two films achieving particularly high ratings. Nevertheless, older foreign films also appear to be widely popular with audiences, as evidenced by the survey results. In particular, the films Captain Correlli's Mandolin (6%), Zorba the Greek and The Guns of Navarone (5%), Never on Sunday and Mediterraneo (4%), as well as the legendary film Boy on a Dolphin (3%), appear to be well known, albeit by a small percentage of the population.



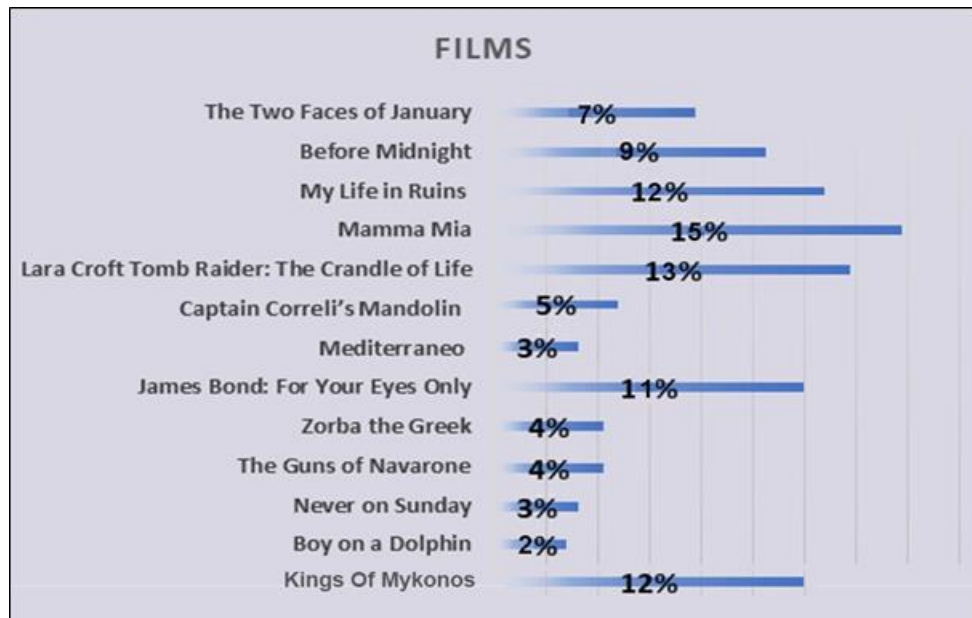


Figure 16 Film's Influence to travel Destination

## 5. Conclusions

The contribution of film and literature appears to be a significant factor in the development of tourism in the areas depicted and in the socio-economic benefits gained by local communities.

The research approach employed led to the conclusion that, despite Greece not being a prominent location for international film production due to the lack of major studios, it is nevertheless regarded as one of the most cinematic countries in the world, due to its long history and geophysical wealth. Consequently, it has been utilized by numerous filmmakers and has served as the setting for numerous prominent cinematic productions. Our research has demonstrated that viewers of films are inclined to associate themselves with the locations depicted in the film. Nevertheless, tourists who visit film locations do not merely seek to re-experience the emotions evoked by the film; they also endeavor to gain insight into the local culture, having previously encountered it through the film.

## Compliance with ethical standards

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### Disclosure of conflict of interest

The Authors proclaim no conflict of interest.

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