

LOVE IN TOURIST MOTIVATION AND SATISFACTION

INTRODUCTION

A while ago Singh commented that “the subject of love and tourism appears to have no place in the minds of social scientists” (2002, p. 1). Singh’s (2019) most recent analysis of love and tourism, provides a rare and quite comprehensive coverage of this topic, but equally points to a dearth of research in this area. Although the topic of love, understood in lay terms as intimacy, attachment, companionship and passion, has recently been explored in tourism studies (Conran, 2011; Singh, 2002; 2019; Trauer & Ryan, 2005), this topic is by and large missing in examinations of tourist motivation and tourist satisfaction. Yet an understanding of tourist experiences through the concept of love, may enhance future interpretations of motivation, appraisals of on-site experiences, and post hoc tourist satisfaction. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to explore how the concept of love can be integrated into tourist motivation and tourist satisfaction research.

Love is a fluid, complex and multifaceted concept (Berscheid, 2010; Hatfield, Bensman, & Rapson, 2012). This multidimensionality is well illustrated in Lee's (1973) influential work who suggests six different types of love: *Mania* (obsessive, dependent love), *Eros* (passionate love), *Pragma* (compatibility-seeking), *Storge* (affection, companionship), *Ludus* (playful, hedonistic love) and *Agape* (altruistic love). These types of love reflect people's attitudes towards or/and experiences of love (Lee, 1977; Singh, 2019). There are biological theories of love, cultural theories of love and numerous psychological theories that include various taxonomies of love. Additionally, love could vary based on personality and over time (Fehr, 2006). It is arguably impossible to cover all explanations in a single paper. In order to

complement Sing's recent analysis of love in tourism however, we decided to explain love in a psychological sense. Fehr (2006) in the discussion of the nature and interrelationships of theories of love from psychology comes to the conclusion that most theories of love can be conceptualised on the basis of a distinction between passion and companionship. In other words, love entails the romance, infatuation, sex drive, sexual intimacy (grouped under the term 'passion') as well as friendship, commitment to a relationship, intimacy in a non-sexual way, compassion and care towards others and a sense of attachment (grouped under the term 'companionship'). Although measures of love exist (for a detailed review, see Hatfield, Bensman, & Rapson, 2012), most of the psychological measures are self-report scales and they primarily assess passionate (or romantic) love, thus neglecting the companionship dimension of love.

To examine how the concept of love can be integrated into tourist motivation and tourist satisfaction research, we broadly followed literature review processes outlined by Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff and Altman (2009). Their processes involved the use of search engines (in our case, Google Scholar) to identify the works that fit the aims by searching for words and phrases such as tourism and friendship, intimacy in tourist experiences, commitment and companionship in tourism, bonding, love, romance through tourism. These terms and phrases broadly resemble the abovementioned conceptions of love. An outcome of the literature review is Table 1. The table is not a comprehensive overview of tourist experience research on this topic. Rather the love types shown in the table serve as examples of the way love has been conceptualised in tourist behaviour literature. The table is meant to generate a discussion on the knowledge gaps and areas where further knowledge is needed. The three travel phases shown in the table (anticipation, on-site experiences, and reflection) are the

three widely accepted tourist experience phases in which tourist motivation and satisfaction are experienced (Larsen, 2007).

Insert Table 1 about here

ANTICIPATION

Tourist motivation theory helps us understand tourist choices and allows for the understanding of meanings of travel to tourists (Mansfeld, 1992; Ryan, 2002). A variety of motivation perspectives has contributed to the development of accepted models of tourist motivation. Plog (1974, 1987, 1991) devised the allocentric-psychocentric model; Dann (1977) suggested that ego-enhancement and anomie are two relevant concepts to apprehending tourist motivations; Crompton (1979) proposed that tourist motivation lies along a continuum of cultural and socio-psychological motives; and Iso-Ahola (1982) introduced an optimal arousal model based on the idea that tourists seek intrinsic rewards and attempt to escape ordinary environments. Building on the above approaches, a Travel Career Pattern (TLP) motivation model, which is an adaptation of the Travel Career Ladder (TCL) approach, established a hierarchical and patterned view of tourist motivations (Pearce, 2005). TCP like TCL was developed on the early works of Pearce and Calabiano (1983), Moscardo and Pearce (1986) and Pearce (1988, 1993). The premise underlying both the TCL and the TCP models is that the more travel experiences tourists accumulate, the more they move upwards through Maslow's (1970) levels of motivation (Filep & Greenacre, 2007; Pearce, 2005).

Although they are all diverse, nearly all of the established models suggested that tourists are motivated by social interaction, kinship or to some degree, relationship enhancement (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Pearce, 2005). Our analysis shows that love (if defined as both passion and companionship), corresponds with the motives for social interaction, kinship and relationship enhancement. This is firstly evident through tourist motivation studies that conceptualise love as passion. The need for love is manifested through romance seeking by tourists (e.g. Winchester, Winchester, & Alvey, 2011) and sex tourism desires at a destination. For example, Bauer and McKercher (2003) investigated romance and sex as motivators for travel (e.g., honeymoon, romantic getaways for couples or commercial sex tours) and established that tourism is a direct or indirect facilitator of romantic and sexual encounters. At other times there is a more genuine desire to engage in romance and to fall in love at a destinations (e.g. Sanchez Taylor, 2001). As table 1 shows, there are also tourist motivation studies in which love is conceptualised as companionship, rather than passion. For example, in his examination of kinship and bonds amongst family members, Singh (2019) explicitly argued love, when not conceived in romantic terms as passion, was a motivator for VFR (visiting friends and relatives) tourism.

Based on the brief review, there are specific opportunities for future research on love and tourist motivation. Aron, Dutton, Aron, and Iverson (1989) identified eleven potential antecedents of falling in love, which could be explored in tourist motivation contexts. They are: (1) *similarity* (similar attitudes and personality traits), (2) *propinquity* (familiarity or having spent time with the other), (3) *desirable characteristics* (e.g. physical appearance), (4) *reciprocal liking* (as expressed through self-disclosure), (5) *social influences* (reference group approval), (6) *filling needs* (e.g. need for attachment), (7) arousal/unusualness (e.g. jointly facing obstacles), (8) *specific cues* (characteristics of the loved one such as voice or posture),

(9) *readiness* (for entering a relationship), (10) *isolation* (from others and exclusivity given to a person), and (11) *mystery* (in a situation and as a perceived trait of the other person). While desirable characteristics and reciprocal liking may largely explain falling in love experiences in general (Aron et al., 1989), we wonder whether other antecedents such as filling needs (like the need for attachment) would not play a larger role in tourist motivation? Therefore, greater attention to examining the needs for tourist-host attachment, tourist-tourist attachment, or tourist–place attachment may be required in future tourist motivation research. In other words, love for hosts, love for other tourists and love for the places visited present an alternative way to consider tourist motivation. So the concept of love can be well integrated into tourist motivation research.

ON-SITE EXPERIENCES

The paper also aims to examine how the concept of love can be integrated into tourist satisfaction research. It appears both love as passion and love as companionship feature in the tourist satisfaction literature. The liminoid character of tourism as extraordinary time and space, in which people seek pleasure, experiences of otherness, and engage in activities which would be considered deviant in other times and places (Ravenscroft & Matteucci, 2003), seems to be a favourable ground for romantic, passionate encounters. Passion is typified by romance or sexual consummation (Sternberg, 1986) and passionate love can be defined as "a state of intense longing for union with another" (Hatfield et al., 2012, p. 144). De Bloom, Geurts, and Lohman (2017) in fact found that a search of literature on love in tourism typically leads to studies about sex tourism (e.g., Herold, Garcia, & DeMoya, 2001; Jeffreys, 2003; Cabezas, 2009). Berdychevsky, Gibson and Poria's (2013) explored women's sexual behaviour in tourism and found that the tourist experiences were perceived as liminoid

through which women explored their sexual behaviours with steady or casual sexual partners and recreated themselves through alternative sexual behaviour. Unlike ubiquitous accounts of Western female tourists as sexually liberated, Frohlick (2009) offers an insightful and nuanced analysis of North American and European women's experiences of love with local men on the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica. Shaped by their ideas of romantic love, Frohlick (2009) describes how many Western females who extended their stay in Costa Rica to pursue romantic relationships with Caribbean men, experienced economic hardship and emotional suffering. It was revealed that many white female tourists who fell in love with Caribbean men transposed their Western romantic relationship ideals of belonging, sexual fulfilment and attachment, onto 'exotic' Latin men who failed to reciprocate the women's feelings of love. Tennov (1979), however, distinguished affectional bonding from limerence. Limerence, which is akin to passionate love or infatuation, is a psychological state resulting from romantic attraction and characterised by a compelling desire to be with someone, feeling of euphoria and fear of rejection. Limerence may be linked to the obsessive, intense emotions felt for idealised Caribbean men by the Western female tourists in Frohlick's (2009) Costa Rican study. In contrast, affectional bonding is said to occur after limerence, and refers to reciprocal affectionate loving, shared goals and results in greater contentment than limerence. There is scope to extend this work on on-site experiences to include examinations of both limerence and affectional bonding.

The on-site experience works that relate to the companionship type of love, include the works on friendship (Heimtum, 2007; Matteucci, Volić, & Filep, 2019) and kindness of strangers (Filep, Macnaughton, & Glover, 2017). Although these works do not investigate tourist experiences in-situ, they examined specific on-site events and activities in tourism settings. From a positive psychological perspective, Filep et al. (2017) researched acts of kindness

from strangers towards tourists in various on-site situations. Based on a sample of twenty Canadian tourists, the study highlighted that hosts manifested an ethic of care and that tourists enthusiastically embraced kindness from strangers. It was revealed that most of the recipients did not remember the name of the donor (who was either a host or another tourist) and none maintained contact. The interactions were temporary, yet the recipients clearly articulated their intention to reciprocate to the donor at any future point in time. This work needs expanding to acts of kindness among travel companions or workers and tourists. This research could therefore help explain companionship love in a broader sense to better interpret fulfilling, satisfying, on-site tourist experiences.

REFLECTIONS

The last part of our examination relates to how the concept of love can be integrated in post-hoc satisfaction research. Dominant post hoc tourist satisfaction conceptualisations are typically tied to service quality but have been criticised on a number of grounds (Ryan, 1995; Kozak, 2001). The following problems with dominant conceptualisation and measures of post-hoc tourist satisfaction have been identified: the excessive and ill-suited attention given to expectations as a major influence on tourist satisfaction; the failure of service quality scales to appropriately measure gaps between service expectations and performance; the inability of the approaches to shed light on travel meaning; and the shortcoming to explain the emotional dimensions of tourist satisfaction. Love can be seen as a key positive emotion in fulfilling, post hoc tourist experiences (Filep, 2008) together with emotions like joy and interest. When love is considered as an emotional dimension of post-hoc tourist satisfaction, the closest examples of works are on the topic of diaspora tourism. With reference to second generation Tongans living abroad, Lee (2004) noted that while remittances and social

networks provided instant support for their homeland, long-term support could only be achieved if Tongans ensured a sense of belonging and care for their loved ones, something which could only be fostered by regular travel to Tonga (Lee, 2004, p. 249). Some families of the diaspora, therefore, sent their children on trips to Tonga for the specific purpose to build up this commitment to maintain social connection (Scheyvens, 2007). Similarly, in an examination of 150 life story narratives across three generations of forty-five families who originated in the former British West Indies, Chamberlain (2017) provided a powerful analysis of family love in the diaspora. Through tourists' visits back to the Caribbean from the United Kingdom, the narratives highlighted the strength of family connections and the commitment of the diaspora to providing ongoing support to their loved ones in their homelands.

Future research could examine the endurance of social bonds through tourism, such as the complex relationships in diaspora tourism, family tourism and similar contexts through which love, and hence satisfaction, is being maintained by the act of travelling. There is also an explicit opportunity for researchers to further evaluate love not as people-to-people love, but also the love of destinations in general (for example landscapes, scenery, culture, climate). The love for destinations emerged as a key theme in Singh's (2019) pilot study of how love mattered to tourists, but there is scope now for this to become an important post-hoc tourist satisfaction topic.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the experience of love has been rarely examined in tourist behaviour studies and much new research is needed on this topic. In this paper we interpreted love as a sense of

companionship and as a sense of passion. We suggested that love, when conceived as both passion and companionship, is a useful concept in understanding tourist experiences, especially motivation and satisfaction. Beyond the further research directions already mentioned, it would be interesting to examine the upsurge of love in established relationships in and through tourism. Additionally, the phenomenon of falling in love in tourism could be further examined. Such new research directions may not only help to advance tourist satisfaction and tourist motivation research, but may open new lines of inquiry in other disciplines in which the topic of love is explored, notably sociology and anthropology.

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Table 1. Love and tourist experiences

Tourist experience phase	Tourist experience concept	Love type	Authors
Anticipation	Tourist motivation	Passion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bauer & McKercher (2003) ■ Herold, Garcia, & DeMoya, (2001) ■ Winchester, Winchester, & Alvey (2011)
		Companionship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Singh (2019)
On-site experiences	Immediate satisfaction	Companionship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conran, M. (2011) ■ Berdychevsky, Gibson, & Bell (2013) ■ Filep, Macnauhgton, & Glover (2017) ■ Heimtum (2007) ■ Matteucci, Volić, & Filep (2019)
		Passion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ deBloom (2017) ■ Berdychevsky, Gibson, & Poria (2013) ■ Frohlick (2009) ■ Kimber, Yang, & Cohen (2019) ■ Pruitt & LaFont (1995) ■ Sanchez Taylor (2001) ■ van Wijk (2006)
Reflections	Post hoc satisfaction	Companionship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lee (2004) ■ Scheyvens (2007)