



THE SNAP-HAPPY TOURIST: THE EFFECTS OF PHOTOGRAPHING BEHAVIOR ON TOURISTS' HAPPINESS

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Are tourists who take more photos happier? Our study investigates the relationship between tourists' photographing and happiness based on two proposed theories: photographing as a behavior that society expects from tourists, and photographing as a mechanism for social interaction. Questionnaires measuring photographic behavior and components of happiness such as positive emotions and life satisfaction were collected from 417 tourists at three destinations in the Netherlands. Additionally, we carried out participant observation to explore the potential roles of fulfilling cultural expectations and social interactions. We found a positive relationship between photography and tourists' levels of happiness. People who take more pictures on holiday and rate photographing to be important experience more positive emotions and a higher life satisfaction, respectively. The participant observation data reveal that this relationship is strengthened when photography is used to build relationships, but weakened when people photograph to fulfill cultural expectations.

KEYWORDS: *tourism; photography; happiness; social interaction; expected behavior*

INTRODUCTION

Whenever I see something beautiful, bizarre or just plain baffling during my travels, I have to photograph it. I love taking photographs during my travels abroad—travel photography is a wonderful hobby that rewards you with images that encapsulate memories for a lifetime. My snap-happy attitude results in me taking home hundreds (if not thousands) of pictures on my SD card. (Kassim Qureshi, 2010)

These are the words of a passionate backpacker who shares his experiences and photographs with an online community. Like many tourists, he takes his camera on his travels and takes numerous pictures of what he sees. Photography may be

regarded as an expected behavior that determines how one should behave on holiday. In his blog, Kassim Qureshi reinforces this social norm, as he feels he *must* photograph anything he finds interesting. The typification of tourists as people with cameras proliferates throughout foundational works of tourism theory (e.g., MacCannell, 1976; Urry, 1990). Furthermore, technological advances in phones and cameras have made photographing substantially easier. However, the effect of taking photos on tourists' subjective psychological experiences is, surprisingly, not well known.

This knowledge would be valuable to make recommendations to destinations and to tourists themselves about how best to integrate photographing into holiday experiences, addressing the "rising tide of interest in visitors' on-site experiences" (Pearce, 2009, p. 45). Destinations make investments to direct and inspire photographing, whereas tourists themselves make decisions about when and how much to photograph. These investments and decisions could be optimized with systematic information about the effects of photography on holiday experiences. Focusing specifically on happiness as an outcome constitutes a more incisive perspective on tourists' experiences than, for example, satisfaction (Pearce, 2009).

The intersection of tourism and positive psychology, the study of mental well-being and enjoyment (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), has been useful in documenting the enjoyment that occurs on holiday (Pearce, 2009; Pearce, Filep, & Ross, 2011). Numerous empirical studies have shown that people are somewhat more happy during their holiday than at home (Filep, 2008, 2009; Krippendorf, 1999; Nawijn, 2010). Holidays are often described a time of relaxing, forgetting the work and stress at home, enjoyment, and feeling happy (Pearce et al., 2011). Individuals often go on holiday with friends or family, reinforcing established social relations (Mitas, Yarnal, & Chick, 2012). Sharing moments and experiences with loved ones are at the heart of many holiday experiences (Haldrup & Larsen, 2003). These positive dimensions of holiday experiences can also have deeply meaningful and transformative elements. According to Fredrickson's (2001) broaden and build theory, relaxation and enjoyment on holiday are likely to increase the level of life satisfaction, enhanced by positive emotions during a holiday as compared with everyday life.

The specific experiences that make a holiday such a positive episode are not well understood. Social interactions and engaging special leisure interests are known to be important (Mitas, Yarnal, Adams, & Ram, 2012), but these are only part of the total holiday experience. What is the effect of the profligate taking of photos? Is photographing part of what makes holidays enjoyable, or would putting the camera away for a moment increase individuals' enjoyment of holidays?

Photography is an activity that a variety of tourists share (Chalfen, 1979; Crang, 1997; Garlick, 2002), and photography could probably be one factor that contributes to a happy holiday. Kassim Qureshi states on his blog that photography is a wonderful hobby that he loves. Qureshi's love, a strong positive emotion (Fredrickson, 2001; Love, n.d.), suggests that happiness derived from holidays

might partly come from photographing, and that frequent photographing should be encouraged to enhance enjoyment of holidays. In the following literature review, we review existing knowledge of the connections among tourism, happiness, and photography to build a theoretical foundation for this proposition.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Much has been written about tourists' photographing behavior and about their levels of happiness. Unfortunately, the literatures on these topics have not intersected. Based on theories from positive psychology, the study of mental well-being and enjoyment (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), research on tourists' happiness has produced valuable findings, but has remained very general, treating vacation taking as a singular activity rather than examining specific activities such as photographing. On the other hand, the literature on tourist photography is almost purely theoretical, with little empirical evidence. Although works of anthropology and psychology offer clues to the role of photos in tourists' happiness, the literature is lacking specific empirical evidence on the topic.

Tourism and Happiness

Positive psychologists identify frequent positive affect, high life satisfaction, and infrequent negative affect as the three primary components of happiness (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005). This definition of happiness is widely accepted throughout current psychological research (e.g., Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005) and is used in much existing research on tourism and happiness (e.g., Mitas, Yarnal, Adams, et al., Mitas, Yarnal, & Chick, 2012; Nawijn, 2010).

According to Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, et al. (2005), a genetically determined set point for happiness explains approximately 50% of variation in happiness between individuals. This component remains stable over time and is immune to influence or control. The circumstances of an individual's life (e.g., place of residence, age, factors from the individual's personal history), explain approximately 10% of an individual's happiness. The remaining 40% that determine a person's happiness are linked to voluntarily chosen activities and practices. In the context of our research, tourist photography practices are considered among these voluntarily chosen activities. Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, et al. found that long-term happiness increased through accumulations of positive daily experiences based on activities and behaviors that fit individual stimulators of positive emotions. Naming sports and religious engagement as examples, Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, et al. assert that engagement in happiness-building activities requires informed decisions and personal effort.

On the other hand, in a more specific view of activities that contribute to happiness, Diener and Seligman (2002) found that exercising and religious engagement were not determinants of increased happiness, nor did his happiest respondents experience more objectively defined good events. Instead,

Diener and Seligman found that social relationships with frequent interactions are a necessary condition for exceptional happiness. Thus, keeping in mind Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, et al.'s (2005) seminal finding that a substantial proportion of happiness can be explained by individually chosen activities, activities with high social interaction seem especially promising. In the case of tourism, photographing within a travel party could be regarded as such a social interaction. However, as psychologists researching happiness have largely ignored tourism experiences, the idea that photographing—or any specific social interaction or activity on holiday—could contribute to happiness is untested.

There is, however, an emerging consensus in tourism research that tourism experiences in general boost happiness. The recent doctoral dissertations of Filep (2009), Mitas (2010), de Bloom (2012), and Nawijn (2012) form a picture of temporary but substantial increases in happiness arising from holiday experiences. Furthermore, Mitas found that socializing and engaging leisure interests contributed to positive emotions on holiday, building tourists' happiness in turn. Similarly, Nawijn found that a positive attitude toward one's travel companions contributed to happiness during a holiday. Although photography may contribute to or interact with these predictors of happiness, these relationships are yet to be clarified. However, photography has long been discussed in tourism research, and the outcomes of this discussion are informative in proposing possible links between tourist photography and happiness.

Tourist Photography

Early tourism research pointed out that tourists vary in their motivations for traveling and, likewise, in their motivations for photographing (Chalfen, 1979). Nevertheless, attempts have been made to create a general theory about tourists' photographing that applies across all contexts of tourism. Sontag (1977) argued that tourists use their camera to control and possess the place that they visit, relieving their anxieties about being in an unfamiliar environment. This notion of "consuming" a place via the camera would become a common sentiment among critics of tourism.

In this vein, Urry (1990) wrote *The Tourist Gaze*, now widely regarded as a seminal work in the conversation around tourists' habit of taking photos. Urry's theory posits that tourists reproduce the iconic images of destinations in their personal photographs, which are displayed at home to show their version of the setting that they had seen originally, before their visit. The image that a tourist has of a destination is formed before visiting the destination, so that people gaze upon ideal representations of their "pre-experience" image. According to Urry, individuals travel to the same, specific shot that they saw in a brochure or on a postcard in order to take the same pictures. As Urry (1990) states, "there are makers which identify the things and places which are worthy of our gaze and

this results in the fact that most tourists are concentrated within a very limited area” (p. 47). According to Garlick (2002), photographs are not only constructed for representation to those who did not travel but also for the tourist himself or herself who may be convinced by the pictures that the holiday was better than it actually was.

Urry's theory has found empirical support in the context of backpacker tourism (Jenkins, 2003) and tourism at a U.K. beach (Garrod, 2008). Garrod found that tourists' photographs reinforce the industry-created tourist gaze and help preserve an attractive image for the destination. Tourists are active players in the production and maintenance of a tourist destination image, as Urry had theorized. However, Garrod found that the content of photos did not match postcards exactly. Although Garrod's participants apparently “enjoyed the exercise” (p. 350) of taking photos, he did not specifically link the tourist gaze to tourists' happiness.

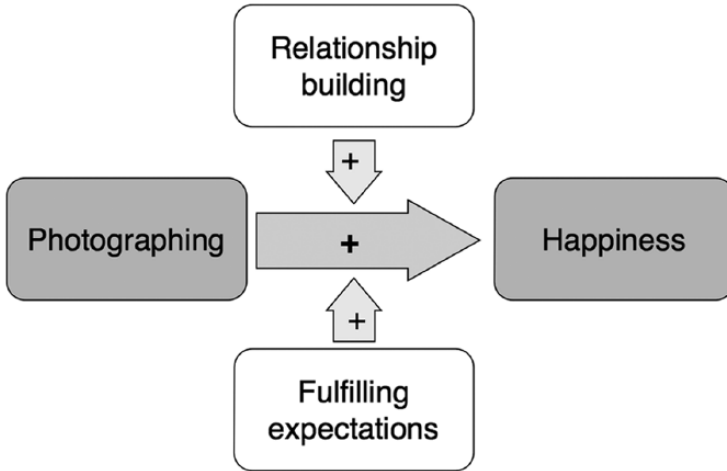
In contrast to the theories of Urry (1990) and Garlick (2002), Haldrup and Larsen's (2003) empirical work on “the family gaze” offers an example of tourist photography that produces social relations rather than consuming places. Haldrup and Larsen found this “family gaze” to be socially organized and concerned with “extraordinary ordinariness.” The families they studied used the camera to display success, unity, and love, preserving memories, personal narratives, and identity. Thus, the authors argue that the most important part of taking pictures is building, reinforcing, and symbolizing family relationships. More than half of their photographs portray one or more family members or friends in the foreground. On the other hand, Garrod (2008) found that the tourists in his research did not take pictures of people. Differences between the samples as well as the methods of these studies may account for the different findings. The findings of these studies leave the relational social dimensions of photographing unclear, and are silent on the issue of tourist happiness.

Tourist Photography and Happiness

Tourists may enjoy either the fulfillment of expectations around tourism (e.g., the tourist gaze, Urry, 1990) or the relationship building that sometimes intersects with photographing (e.g., the family gaze, Haldrup & Larsen, 2003) but such ideas have not yet been tested empirically. Filep (2009) stated that activities with an object focus, personal experience, and discovery are related to higher levels of tourist satisfaction. These three elements of activities could be identified in the action of tourist photography on holiday, supporting the proposition that taking photos may make tourists happier. However, there is no empirical support to show if or how taking (more) photos makes tourists happier.

The answer may lie in the theory that travelers and tourists take photographs because it is an established, culturally accepted and expected tourist behavior.

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework



According to the theory of cultural consonance, individuals feel higher well-being if they behave according to the expectations of their culture (Dressler, Bailiero, & Santos, 1998). Many scholars of tourist photography (e.g., MacCannell, 1976; Urry, 2002) argued that tourists themselves form an own subculture within society with specific values, behaviors, and expectations. These determinants of the tourist culture are reflected in the desires to see new places, seeking authenticity, hedonism, and taking photographs at the destination. Therefore, photographing may make tourists happier by fulfilling expectations that society holds for tourists' behavior.

The finding that relationship building is a meaningful element in tourist photography (Haldrup & Larsen, 2003) and a mechanism of happiness in life (Diener & Seligman, 2002; Fredrickson, 2001) as well as on holiday (Mitas, Yarnal, & Chick, 2012) suggests that interpersonal relationships may also be a mechanism linking tourist photography and happiness. When taking photos, tourists talk, pose, instruct, and show off. These behaviors may reinforce bonds between individuals or introduce relational humor into situations, directly affecting happiness. Thus, the relationship-building effects of the photographing process may make tourists happier.

The purpose of our research is to determine if there is a positive relationship between happiness and tourist photography on holiday. Moreover, we address the idea that relationship building may positively affect the link between photographing and happiness. Finally, we address the idea that fulfilling cultural expectations also positively influences the link between photographing and happiness (Figure 1).

METHOD

Research Design

We used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods in a cross-sectional design to gain broad and deep knowledge about tourists' photographing behavior and happiness. The quantitative portion of the data was collected using survey questionnaires at three different tourist destinations in the Netherlands: Kinderdijk, Scheveningen, and Amsterdam. The researchers decided to collect questionnaires at three different destinations to introduce a variety of tourist types into the sample. In total, 417 usable questionnaires were collected, 113 from Kinderdijk (27.1%), 137 from Scheveningen (32.9%), and 167 from Amsterdam (40%). We used participant observation at the same sites and occasions to assess concepts and meanings that were not readily measurable by questionnaires, mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches in a connected complementary manner (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2006).

Quantitative Measures

The main variables of interest to our study were photographing behavior and happiness. As discussed in the literature review, happiness has been conceptualized in the psychology literature, as well as in tourism research (e.g., Mitas, Yarnal, Adams, et al., 2012; Mitas, Yarnal, Chick, et al., 2012; Nawijn, 2010), as consisting of three dimensions: positive emotions, negative emotions, and life satisfaction. Positive and negative emotions are usually measured using a multi-item scale that is later averaged into two components, such as valence and arousal (Russell, 2003) or, in studies of positive psychology, positive and negative emotions. This "circumplex model" of emotion measurement has broad support among emotion psychologists, as it accounts for subtle differences between emotions (e.g., the distinction between joy and interest) yet is readily interpretable and reflects the neurological structure of emotion (Davidson, 2004). We chose the well-validated circumplex emotion scale mDES (modified Differential Emotions Scale, Cohn, Fredrickson, Brown, Mikels, & Conway, 2009) because it is relatively balanced between positive and negative emotions, potentially reducing response biases. Participants rated the strength of their experience of each of the mDES's 19 emotions at the moment of measurement on a 5-point scale. The positive emotions interested, surprised, amused, loving, awed, proud, joyous, content, grateful, and hopeful were averaged to compute each individual's positive emotion score. Negative emotions usually score low, with very little variation and overwhelming negative skew, in single-occasion measurements on holiday. This response pattern was also the case in our sample. Thus, we proceeded to analysis with positive emotions only.

While life satisfaction has, at times, been assessed with single-item measures, the five-item Satisfaction With Life Scale (Diener, Larsen, Emmons, & Griffin, 1985) is considered a valid, reliable, and suitably complex standard for

the measurement of this variable. Participants are asked to rate their level of agreement on a seven-point scale with items such as “I am satisfied with my life” and “If I had to live my life over, I would change almost nothing.”

Taking the cited literature about tourist photography as a starting point, we developed a number of items to measure photographing behavior. We determined that it was relevant to measure the importance as well as the frequency of photographing, and that multiple settings (on and off holidays) and time frames (on holiday generally, on the current holiday, on the current day) represented relatively distinct components of photographing in participants' holidays. Thus, we asked participants to rate the importance and frequency of photographing in each setting on 5-point scales ranging from “not at all important” to “very important” and “never” to “very often,” respectively. We also used the same response scale to ask participants how often they photographed on the current holiday and day. Although the reliability of single-item measures can be called into question, we found substantial variation within individuals' responses to the various time frames and settings, and thus chose to analyze the responses to each item separately, rather than using them to compute an index. Finally, we included several items to measure demographic variables such as age, country of origin, and gender.

Quantitative Data Analysis

We used descriptive statistics to create a demographic profile of the respondents. Then, Pearson correlations among the variables of interest were computed: average life satisfaction, average positive emotions, frequency of photographing on holiday, frequency of photographing on the current trip, frequency of photographing on the current day, frequency of photographing at home, importance of photographing at home, and importance of photographing on holiday. Furthermore, linear regression models were used to highlight the strongest relationships that emerged between components of photographing behavior and happiness.

Participant Observation

In addition to our quantitative survey, the qualitative research method of participant observation was used at each destination. This method had the purpose of exploring the possible influences of the moderators in our conceptual model, fulfillment of cultural expectations and social interaction. As the literature did not suggest clear expectations for the effects of these variables, much less guidelines for effective self-response measurement, we found it more appropriate to explore these variables in an open-ended manner. By choosing participant observation as a research method, we obtained insights into tourists' behavior that we might not have expected or thought of ourselves. The participant observation rather had the purpose of finding and understanding new perspectives instead of explaining expected and already existing perspectives.

During the participant observation, the researchers attended to tourists' photographing behavior while sojourning in heavily visited locations such as the promenade in Kinderdijk, the pier in Scheveningen, and the Dam square in Amsterdam. Moreover, the researchers engaged in informal conversations with tourists about their behavior and opinions. Observations as well as conversations aimed at deeper insight and explanations into tourists' motivations for their behavior, which could not be assessed in questionnaire form.

Qualitative Data Analysis

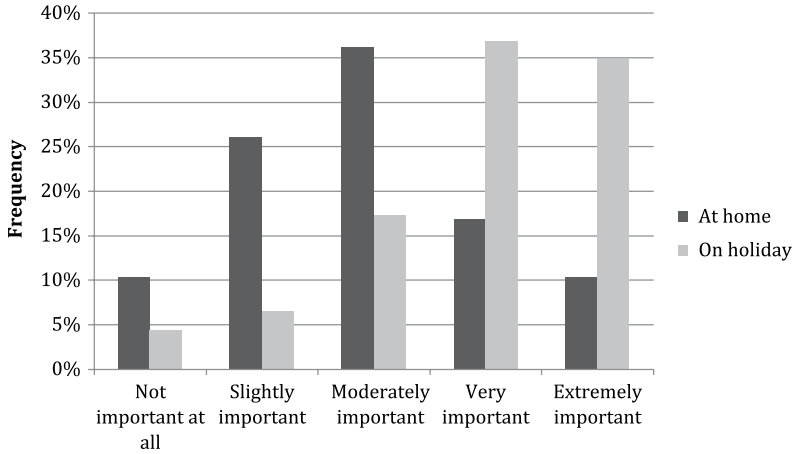
The data derived from participant observation was jotted down in field notes (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). According to the time-tested advice of Emerson et al. (1995), we expanded our jottings to full field notes on each evening of the fieldwork. The final body of field notes yielded 4,500 words of data. These data were analyzed using thematic analysis, an analytical approach that involves repeated reading and coding of related phrases in the data to uncover patterns in participants' behavior (Braun & Clarke, 2006). We implemented thematic coding in two steps congruent with the first two steps of most grounded theory frameworks (e.g., Charmaz, 2002) and "phases" 2 and 3, 4, and 5, respectively, in Braun and Clarke's (2006) "procedure." The first step, open coding, involved detailed readings to first summarize relevant passages. The second step, focused coding, involved creating distinct categories of meaning underlying these passages. This two-stage process led to a variety of themes of tourist photography behavior suited to complement the quantitative data in addressing the conceptual model presented in our literature review.

FINDINGS

Demographic Profile

Of 417 individuals who completed questionnaires at Kinderdijk, Scheveningen, and Amsterdam, 49% were male and 51% were female. The largest age category included participants between 31 and 50 years, followed by participants between 21 and 30 years old. In terms of nationalities, the largest group of respondents was Dutch (31%), followed by Germans (20%), Americans (10%), British (10%), French (9%), Italian (3%), and Spanish (2%). Visitors from other countries were collapsed into categories of Asian countries (7%), other European countries (5%), and other non-European countries (3%). The sample was relatively well educated, with a majority holding a higher education degree. On average, participants stayed in the Netherlands for six nights and their primary purpose of visit was for leisure, recreation, and holidays (86%), followed by small minorities visiting friends and relatives (8%) and traveling for business (6%). Nearly half of the participants were first-time visitors to the Netherlands (44%).

Figure 2
Importance of Photographing



Photographing Behavior

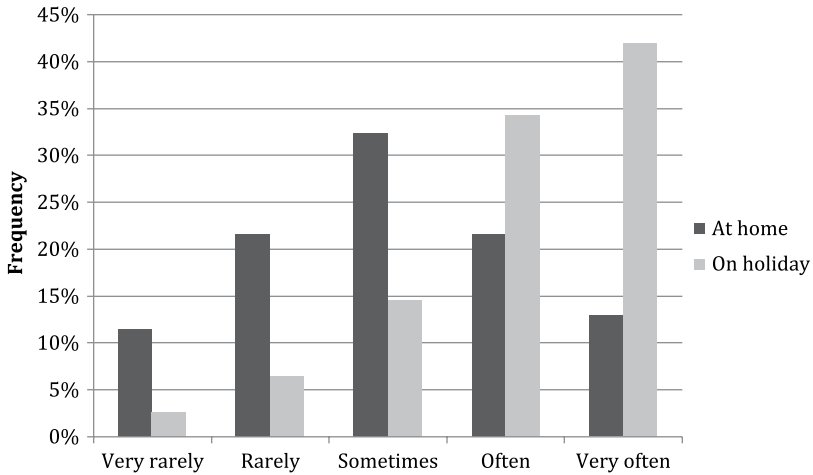
The largest group of the participants, nearly 40%, rated taking photos on holiday as “very important” rather than “somewhat,” “slightly,” or “not at all important” (Figure 2). Taking photos at home, on the other hand, was “moderately important” to a plurality (38%). The mean importance of photographing at home was 2.91 on a 5-point scale (*SD* = 1.12). The mean importance of photographing on holiday was 3.92 (*SD* = 1.08).

Besides the fact that photographing and photos appear more important during the holiday than at home, the frequency of taking pictures on a holiday is also higher than at home. A plurality of participants photograph “sometimes” (32.4%) at home and photograph “very often” (42%) on holiday (Figure 3). The mean frequency of photographing at home was 3.03 (*SD* = 1.19) on a 5-point scale, whereas the mean frequency of photographing on holiday is 4.06 (*SD* = 1.03). Descriptive statistics of photographing behavior are summarized in Table 1.

The Effect of Photographing Behavior on Life Satisfaction

We found significant positive correlations between life satisfaction and the importance of photographing at home and on holiday as well as significant positive correlations between life satisfaction and the frequency of taking pictures on holiday, on someone’s trip, and “today” (Table 2). These correlations are relatively weak, varying between 0.11 and 0.17. Given the theoretical importance of frequency of photo taking on holiday, as well as the finding of the strongest

Figure 3
Frequency of Photographing



correlation of this variable with life satisfaction, we proceeded to model the effect of frequency of photo taking on holiday on life satisfaction with a linear regression. The significant linear relationship and lack of outliers makes linear regression a suitable modeling method here (Field, 2009). Life satisfaction was approximately normally distributed with a mean of 5.45 and a standard deviation of 0.86, making it suitable as a dependent variable for linear regression.

The slope of the resulting regression model was 0.14, meaning that with every one point increase in frequency of photographing on holiday on a scale of 1 to 5, the life satisfaction increased by 0.14 on a scale level of 1 to 7 in an average participant (Table 3). The R^2 shows that 2.9% of the variation in life satisfaction is explained by variation in the frequency of photographing on holiday (Table 3).

Positive Emotions and Photographic Behavior

Besides life satisfaction, we also explored the effects of photographing on positive emotions as a dependent variable (Table 4). As with life satisfaction, positive emotions show an approximately normal distribution, with a mean of 3.85 and a standard deviation of 0.62. The correlations between positive emotions and variables of photographing behavior are significant, positive, and weak, varying between 0.14 and 0.24 (Table 2). Note that these correlations are generally somewhat stronger than those between life satisfaction and photographing behavior.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of the Importance and Frequency of Photographing

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Photo habit at home	3.03	1.189
Photo habit on holiday	4.06	1.030
Frequency of photo on trip	3.41	1.405
Frequency of photo today	2.83	1.513
Importance of photo at home	2.91	1.119
Importance of photo on holiday	3.92	1.080

Table 2
Correlation Between the Average Life Satisfaction and Positive Emotions and the Importance and Frequency of Photographing

Photographic Behavior	Average Life Satisfaction	Positive Emotions
Photo habit at home	0.085	0.160***
Photo habit on holiday	0.170**	0.173***
Frequency of photo on trip	0.110*	0.144**
Frequency of photo today	0.106*	0.142**
Importance of photographing at home	0.135**	0.220***
Importance of photographing on holiday	0.126**	0.236***

* $p \leq .05$ ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$.

Table 3
Regression of Average Life Satisfaction on Photo Frequency on Holiday

Coefficient	Unstandardized β	Standard Error
(Constant)	4.891***	0.170
Photo habit on holiday	0.142***	0.041

Note: Adjusted R^2 for this model = .029.

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$.

Table 4
Regression of Positive Emotions on Importance of Photographing on Holiday

Coefficient	Unstandardized β	Standard Error
(Constant)	2.855***	0.112
Photo habit on holiday	0.135***	0.028

Note: Adjusted R^2 for this model = .056.

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$.

The strongest correlation occurred between importance of taking pictures on holiday and positive emotions. Thus, we modeled the relationship between these two variables using a linear regression. The slope of the resulting regression line was 0.14, which means that when the importance of photographs on holiday increased by one unit on a five-point scale, positive emotions increased by 0.14 (Table 4). The R^2 for the regression model shows that that 5.6% of the variation in positive emotions was explained by the importance of photographing on holiday.

The Processes Linking Photography and Happiness

While our questionnaire reveals the average effects of photographing behavior on components of happiness, participant observation over the course of the data collection afforded deeper insights about tourists' behavior on their trip, tourists' behavior while photographing, their reasons for taking photos, their attitudes toward photographing, and the objects of their interest for photographing. These insights were useful in addressing the conceptual model proposed in our literature review. We created one theme that describes the sequence tourists generally follow in taking photos, and two themes that reveal the emotional content of processes linking photography and happiness.

The Photographing Sequence. We found that the behaviors tourists exhibit around photographing consisted of variations on a sequential theme. The photographing sequence consisted of searching, composing, photographing, and examining. In general, tourists had their cameras in hand or around their neck, in convenient positions to be quickly ready for taking pictures. A distinction could be made between passive and active searching. Passive searching included looking around, listening, waiting, and staring, whereas active searching included social interactions, such as talking, photographing, laughing, and making jokes. Besides these behaviors we also noticed that tourists were excited, curious, proud, enthusiastic, relaxed, and interested with regard to positive emotions, and bored, annoyed, or unsettled with regard to negative emotions.

Once a suitable location for taking a photo was found, the tourists composed to find the best angle with or without someone positioned before the camera. They then made one or several photographs. Finally, a check on the screen of the camera to see if the picture was satisfying typically followed. The tourists would then usually return to the searching stage (looking for something else to photograph) or the composition phase (adjusting the angle to improve the photo). A number of tourists told us that they take "a lot" of pictures because it is "now very easy" as digital cameras make it possible to judge the quality of a photo immediately and delete it or try again.

Photographing as Social Interaction. Many tourists saw photographing as a useful mechanism for social interaction—not an end in itself, but a means to

connect socially. For example, in Scheveningen, we observed and talked to three young Chinese girls around the age of 20 years. The girls laughed frequently throughout the process of composing and taking photos. First, they discussed how they would pose and then took turns photographing themselves and each other. They laughed, in particular, while posing. In this situation, photographing was inextricable from the girls' social interaction, and their enjoyment of the process was plainly visible. A similar example concerned two young Thai men who we met in Kinderdijk. Both men were smiling, appearing excited, curious, and proud. They took pictures throughout our encounter with them at the bus station in front of the entrance of Kinderdijk, the interview we did with them as well as the questionnaire they filled in and the informal talk we had afterward. Moreover, they asked us if we could offer them one of our questionnaires as a souvenir to take home, showing that they considered our moment of interaction worth remembering. They smiled throughout our interaction, asking questions, apparently looking forward to showing their relatives what happened to them.

Such positive emotions spilled over into our interactions with tourists as well. For example, in Scheveningen we met a German woman whom we asked to fill in a questionnaire. Once we began to speak German, she explained that she was happy to be able to talk with someone in German about all kinds of things. The same behavior was noticed in Amsterdam at the Dam, where a man was filming all sides of the monument. He used gestures to ask us to film him (apparently, he did not speak English, Dutch, French, or German). It seemed to be important to him to have himself on the video and to interact with us. He also asked us to take a picture of him. He seemed to be grateful that he found someone who took the video and pictures of him because he did not speak local languages and traveled alone.

As a subtype of social interaction, tourists positioned themselves in front of the lens. In Scheveningen the majority of the tourists that we observed took pictures of themselves without focusing on a specific object in the environment, using the beach or pier as a background tableau. Additionally, tourists also took pictures of themselves in front of various attractions, such as the Kurhaus, a nearby dry-docked boat, and a monument at the end of the boardwalk. In Amsterdam, we observed many tourists photographing standing in front of a fair taking place by the town hall. The nearby Royal Palace was photographed with as well as without the tourists' party. In Kinderdijk, many tourists photographed themselves in front of the windmills and the canals. Tourists also photographed other people they did not know. This seemed to be an attempt to better capture the atmosphere. For example, tourists photographed people sitting on the Dam square as if to document the gregarious character of the place. At the Anne Frank house, tourists photographed the long queue of people waiting to enter. Based on these and other incidents in which we observed or participated in interactions among tourists, when photographing and social interaction was combined, people exhibited signs of greater happiness, with louder and more persistent laughter and broader, more genuine smiles.

Photographing as Duty. Other tourists reported taking pictures automatically rather than mindfully; as something they were supposed to do rather than wanted to do. During our participant observation we noticed that many tourists took pictures without expressing positive emotions, posing for the camera even if they did not enjoy it. For example, in Scheveningen, a woman took a picture of her husband in front of a boat that was placed on the boardwalk. Their behavior took on a stilted, procedural character without laughter, smiles, or conversation. In Amsterdam, two men photographed each other with very serious facial expressions. Although these episodes did sometimes involve the minimal social exchange of one tourist posing and the other taking a photo, they contained none of the contagious positivity or peripheral conversation that we noticed among tourists who used photography as social interaction. To probe how these less-happy tourists saw photographing, we engaged in informal conversations with them.

In these conversations, we often heard that the main reason for photographing is simply because taking pictures is part of the way tourists ought to behave. In fact, reactions often included slight confusion about why we ask such a question, followed by the apparently self-evident response: "Because I am a tourist!" These tourists gave off the sense of fulfilling a duty attached to their touristic identity. Contrary to our expected findings, tourists who gave such reasons for photographing were devoid of positive affect. Apparently, in our sample, photographing as a duty was not linked to happiness, not even to the happiness that is usual in tourists' experiences.

DISCUSSION

The hypothesis guiding the present study was that the practice of photographing on holiday makes people happier. Based on our quantitative results we can conclude that the more people photograph and the higher the importance they attach to photographing, the higher their average life satisfaction and positive emotions. Thus, tourists' photographing does appear to contribute to their happiness. All correlations between life satisfaction and positive emotions and independent variables such as the importance and frequency of photographing on holiday as well as the frequency of photographing on the trip and on the day of data collection were positive. Following up on the strongest correlations, we modeled life satisfaction and positive emotions as effects of frequency and importance of photographing on holiday, respectively.

The R^2 s corresponding to these two linear regression models suggest that photographing explains a small but appreciable proportion of variation in tourists' happiness. According to Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, et al. (2005), 50% of between-individual variation in happiness is believed to be genetically determined, 10% by circumstances of an individual's life, and 40% by voluntarily chosen activities and practices. Our computed R^2 s could be taken into consideration for the last proposed "slice" of the happiness "pie" (Lyubomirsky, 2008),

as photography is arguably a voluntarily chosen activity on holiday. Aspects of photographing explained approximately 5% of variation in positive emotions and approximately 3% of variation in life satisfaction.

These relatively small R^2 values must be understood in the context of the broad, encompassing dependent variables and highly specific independent variables. Numerous daily events and interactions accumulate to affect an individual's emotions and, more gradually and holistically, life satisfaction. Furthermore, with the stimulation inherent in many holiday experiences, even a single day on holiday is a very rich and complex experience for an individual.

Thus, a single specific behavior such as photographing cannot be expected to explain as much between-individual variation in happiness variables as genetic background or family circumstances. Rather, we assert that photographing on holiday is a small but appreciable piece of the puzzle of individuals' happiness, fitting into the larger piece that holidays play (Nawijn, 2011; Pearce, 2009). As such, our findings contribute to the nascent understanding of happiness as a new perspective on tourists' satisfaction with their experiences (Pearce, 2009; Pearce et al., 2011) and to the larger development of positive psychology in tourism contexts.

The Role of Social Interaction

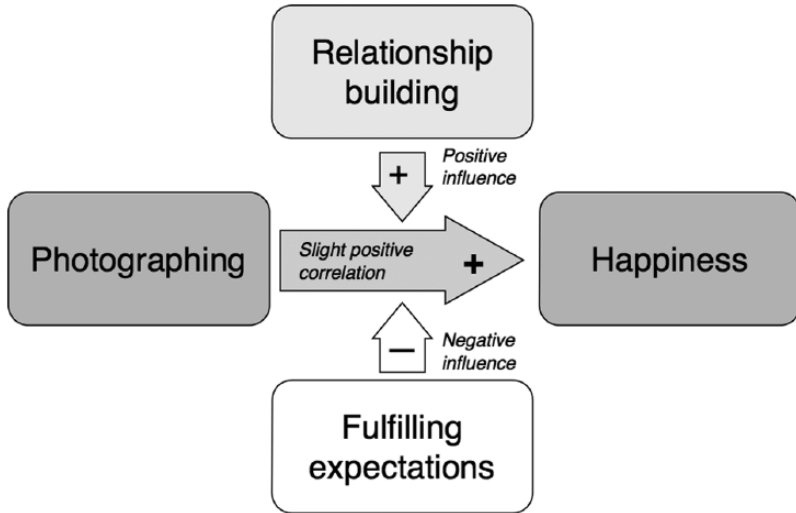
Haldrup and Larsen (2003) wrote that much tourist photography revolves around producing social relations. Moreover, they argue that the most important part of photographing is its social significance. Keeping in mind that happy people spend more time on their relationships (Diener & Seligman, 2002), we suggested that building relationships plays an active role in the link between photographing behavior and happiness.

During our participant observation we noticed that when using photographing as a form of social interaction, people seemed happier than when photographing without social interaction. Furthermore, we noticed that people who travelled alone felt happier when they had the possibility to interact with other tourists—strangers until that moment—through the activity of photographing. In contrast, lack of interaction while taking photos coincided with lack of emotionally positive expressions. Our theme of *photographing as social interaction* derived from participant observation offers evidence that the sort of relationship building described by Haldrup and Larsen (2003) not only creates family stories, but strengthens the relationship between photography and happiness. In short, it appeared that the happiest tourists used photography as a social activity or game, rather than making photos for the sake of photos.

The Role of Photographing as an Expected Behavior

Besides investigating the role of social interaction, we also explored if fulfilling expectations for behavior, in this case photographing, influenced the link

Figure 4
Revised Conceptual Framework



between photographing and happiness. We found that some tourists saw photographing as fun, because it offers instant feedback via the digital camera and offers a way to interact with people. Other tourists photograph because they perceive it as an expectation that comes with being a tourist.

The apparent lack of emotionally positive expressions among the latter group of tourists casts doubt on the applicability of Dressler et al.'s (1998) theory of cultural consonance to the relation between photographing and happiness. When photography is motivated by cultural expectations, tourists treat *photographing as a duty*, without the positive emotions that we saw in tourists engaged in social interactions. Thus, merely fulfilling expected behavior did not result in more happiness. Further research should explore the idea that photographing as duty could be a reason why correlations between photographing and happiness variables are not stronger.

We thus revised our hypothesized conceptual framework. There is evidence for a positive relationship between happiness and tourist photography, even though the strengths of the correlations are relatively weak. Furthermore, relationship building positively affects the strength of the relationship between happiness and photographic behavior. On the other hand, the effort of conforming to a culturally expected behavior, in this case tourists' photographing, negatively influences the relationship between photographing and happiness (Figure 4).

CONCLUSION

We undertook the present study to determine if and how photographing on holiday makes people happier. To address this issue, we used a mixed-method cross-sectional approach, including questionnaires and participant observation, at three frequently visited sites in the Netherlands. The analysis of the quantitative questionnaire data showed that, as expected, people take more pictures on holiday than at home and that they rate photographing on holiday as more important than photographing at home. We also found evidence of positive relationships between the frequency of photographing on holiday and life satisfaction as well as between the importance of photographing and positive emotions. It can be concluded that a combination of taking many pictures and finding this activity important contribute, respectively, to positive emotions and life satisfaction, two substantive components of happiness. Accordingly, our evidence suggests that photographing on holiday does make people happier.

We used the data derived from participant observation to investigate the processes linking photography and happiness. We found that the role of photographing in social interactions fueled its positive effects on happiness, because tourists appeared to be happier when photography was a component of social interactions and less happy when they were photographing alone. On the other hand, cultural expectations for tourists to take photos seemed to weaken the effects of photographing on happiness, as we observed and heard from some tourists that they felt a duty to take photos as tourists, and thus found the activity to be less than enjoyable.

Implications for Practice

Tourism destinations and attractions have found that tourists' photographing behavior can be readily manipulated to a variety of ends—to make flows of tourists on foot move faster or slower, to prompt popularization of certain views and attractions via travel and social media, and to shift the perceived commoditization or "friendliness" of a destination. To these ends, destinations and attractions have long explored strategies to interact with tourists via their photographs. Furthermore, the tourism industry invests in interactions that attempt to increase service quality. Interactions between tourists and industry related to photographing have taken a fairly limited number of forms—professional photographers or photographing devices selling certain forms of photos in particular locations and/or poses, selling of postcards, artificial attractions (figures with faces cut out; pillories) designed to elicit playful photography, signs suggesting photographing existing attractions, and infrastructural changes to facilitate certain kinds of photography.

Our findings suggest that there is room for attraction managers' creativity in designing new, innovative photography-related elements into existing attractions. For example, the dry-docked boat in Scheveningen is a well-liked photo "spot." The boat, however, is a rather static prop. Elements designed for tourist

interaction could make taking photos with this prop more emotionally enjoyable. Furthermore, Internet-based social media interface well with photography as well as with location-based destination information. These social “worlds” could be further interlinked to perpetuate the positive emotions we observed in tourist photographers who used their pictures to build relationships.

Furthermore, our findings suggest that not all photography-related infrastructure is created equal. Some manufactured “photo-ops” take on an inherently social nature (e.g., attractions with(in) which tourists are invited to pose playfully and to interact with each other) whereas others act as mere prompts or reminders to take a photo (e.g., signs). Without the social aspect, some of these elements may appeal only to tourists’ perceived expectations to take photos. We found that tourists motivated by such expectations did not seem to enjoy photographing. In these cases, the reminder to take a photo to fulfill expectations could result in less happy tourists than no reminder at all.

Future Directions

We suggest further research to test the model integrally, as well as targeted interview or focus group research to elicit more complex stories and interpretations of photographing from tourists. It would be interesting to see how much influence each of the two moderators have and which additional moderators may exist. This research was one step in the direction of understanding tourist photography behavior and happiness, but many more steps can and should be taken.

This research positions aspects of photographing as independent variables and aspects of happiness as the dependent variables. However, happiness could influence the amount of photographs tourists take on holiday. In this case happiness would be the independent variable and photography the dependent variable. Longitudinal or experimental research could contribute insights on the complexity of such psychological processes.

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