

Film tourism meets slum tourism: How negative portrayals can foster a controversial tourist phenomenon

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Abstract | Previous literature shows that even negative portrayals of destinations in films can increase the audience's motivations to visit the depicted places. Building on these contributions, more recent studies have shown that films can play a significant role in inducing motivations for slum tourism, that is, tourism to which poverty is part of the attraction. In this context, the present study aims to verify which aspects of films depicting poor urban places are responsible for attracting slum tourists to such destinations. To this end, the investigation builds on previous conceptualisations of how films attract visitors to the portrayed places. Quantitative Data was collected from tourists during their visits to Rio de Janeiro's favelas, and later subjected to Exploratory (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Results corroborate a previously proposed conceptualisation according to which slum tourism motivations are affected by two main film determinants. The study is the first to quantitatively corroborate films' effects on slum tourists' motivation. Findings also point to relevant insights for destination managers dealing with slum tourism, particularly where it is boosted by films.

Keywords | Film tourism, slum tourism, tourists' motivations, favela, Rio de Janeiro

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1. Introduction

The film tourism phenomenon encompasses tourist visits to destinations or attractions motivated by audio-visual products, or including activities related to the cinema world. Recent studies have shown that even films that portray destinations under what could be considered a bad light might awaken viewers' curiosity, and consequently, create or increase visit motivations (e.g., Loureiro & de Araujo, 2015; Shani, Wang, Hudson, & Gil, 2009). Negative aspects of destinations shown in films might include, amongst others, violence, drug trafficking, poor urban conditions and poverty. These are all common traits in the agglomerated of urban poverty found in big cities, especially in developing countries, commonly referred to as slums. Those are also some of the aspects commonly highlighted on internationally successful films that portray those places, such as those depicting Brazilian favelas¹ (Freire-Medeiros, 2011) and Indian slums (Mendes, 2010). In the last decades, such places have been attracting tourists motivated by experiencing the places where poor people live, work and play (Whyte, Selinger, & Outterson, 2011). In other words, for these tourists, poverty is, rather than a negative aspect, a central point of the visit and part of the attraction (Frenzel, 2017). Such phenomenon has been referred to in academia as slum tourism.

The addressed contributions suggest that films that negatively portray destinations, more specifically, those that depict aspects such as urban poverty and violence, might play a special role in generating motivations for slum tourism. Most of the extant literature on slum tourism comes from the fields of geography and sociology, while studies adopting a practical tourism management approach are scarce. In this context, most indications regarding slum tourist's motivations in the literature lack empirical scrutiny. A recent study car-

ried out by de Araújo, Vieira and Costa (2018) however, did propose a theoretical model of slum tourists' motivations and their film determinants based on qualitative data collected from tourists in a slum tourism destination, namely, the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. The mentioned authors propose that slum tourism motivations are formed by a combination of learning and experiential motivations. Also based on favela tourists' impressions, they adapt Macionis's (2004) 3Ps (Place, Personality and Performance) outline, a widely accepted conceptualisation of how films attract visitors to the portrayed places, to the context of slum tourism, which complements their model. Despite this model's originality, it lacks empirical scrutiny, as it has been proposed based on qualitative data, but not yet subjected to verification methods.

The present study empirically tests de Araújo et al.'s (2018) adaptation of Macionis's outline. In this vein, this investigation tackles the question: "Which aspects of films (and other audio-visual products) serve as determinants for slum tourists' motivations?". To this end, the study also adopts tourists visiting the favelas of Rio de Janeiro as research population. Quantitative data was collected through survey questionnaires, which included Likert scale questions that operationalised each of the items comprised in the proposed model's film factors. The collected data was then subjected to Exploratory (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

Results corroborate de Araújo et al.'s (2018) suggestion that, in the context of films shot in favelas, films' aspects responsible for arousing viewers' motivations to visit the portrayed places are grouped in two factors: Place & Personality and Performance. The study provides an original theoretical contribution, since a conceptualisation of how films attract slum tourists to the portrayed destinations had not been previously empirically tested. In terms of managerial implications, the

¹Originally informal settlements with poor organisation and urban facilities and mostly poor populations, normally in hilly areas encrusted amongst middle-high class neighbourhoods.

findings lead to some initial suggestions on how Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) of places that attract slum tourists can establish a mutually beneficial relationship with film makers.

2. Theoretical overview

2.1 Films and tourists' motivations

A seminal contribution on film tourists' motivations was provided by Macionis (2004), who proposed a differentiation between Place, Personality, and Performance (the 3 P's outline) as film elements potentially attracting viewers to the depicted destinations. In this context, Place refers to location attributes, scenery, and destination attributes; Personality relates to the film's cast, characters, and celebrities; and Performance consists in the film's plot, theme, and genre. This conceptualisation builds on the push-pull approach, originally proposed by Dann (1982), according to which tourists' motivations are the sum of push factors (intrinsic motivators), referring to their own needs and wishes; and pull factors, that is, destination attributes that potentially satisfy those needs and wishes. In this context, the 3 Ps are pull factors through which destinations portrayed in films might appeal to viewers' own push factors.

Macionis (2004) also proposes a list of film tourists' internal drivers (push factors), including ego-enhancement; fantasy or escape; status/prestige; search for self-identity; and vicarious experience, which are potentially fulfilled by the film tourism experience. The list was later refined by Macionis and Sparks (2009), and further employed, along with the 3 sets of pull factors, by several studies on the effects of films on destination image and visit intentions (e.g., Hahm & Wang, 2011; Shani et al., 2009) as well as by most subsequent studies on film tourists' motivations. Those studies showed that, depending on the film tourism des-

tinuation or attraction, tourists might be driven by other push factors, such as film site experiences and touring the film (Oviedo-García, Castellanos-Verdugo, Trujillo-García, & Mallya, 2016), or relaxation and nostalgia (Sun & Komppula, 2012). Moreover, Rittichainuwat and Rattanaphinanchai (2015) reinforced the idea, previously pointed out by Macionis and Sparks (2009), that most film tourists are serendipitous – just happened to be in a film location, as their trip was not motivated by the film connection –; and Meng and Tung (2016) concluded that domestic film tourists' motivations are different in nature from those of international visitors, as they are familiar with local culture.

Such body of literature is however still narrow, especially when considering the effects of audiovisual products on specific types of travel phenomena, such as slum tourism. The present study aims to contribute to filling this knowledge gap by testing a previously proposed adaptation of the 3Ps approach to the context of slum tourism and films depicting Rio de Janeiro's favelas. To this end, a brief characterisation of the literature on slum tourism motivations is necessary.

2.2 Slum tourists' motivations

Slum tourism has been described as tourist visits to poor areas with the goal of experiencing the place where poor people live (Whyte et al., 2011), or simply as tourism to which poverty and associated signifiers are a central point and part of the attraction (Frenzel, 2017). Contributions on the motivations of tourists engaging in such type of visits are limited to some initial insights, mostly not supported by empirical data. This scenario justified de Araújo et al.'s (2018) proposition of slum tourism motivation items and dimensions based on first-hand qualitative data. The mentioned study combines such data with some of the previously mentioned initial contributions. Those include suggestions by Frisch (2012) and Dyson

(2012), according to whom authenticity is a central aspect of slum tourism motivations; Mendes (2010), who links slum tourism in India to a fascination with the spectacle of poverty; and Freire-Medeiros (2007), who conceptualises Rio de Janeiro's favela tours as reality tours, further classified into either social tours – based on participation and authenticity – or dark tours – based on the consumption of commoditised poverty and misery.

De Araújo et al.'s (2018) conceptualisation also borrows from other slum tourism studies that suggest a potentially significant role of films in slum tourists' motivations, especially on those visiting Rio's favelas. Those include the conclusions from Williams (2008), who argues that *favelas* became a draw for foreign tourists due to the fascination with the drug culture portrayed in *City of God* (2002), combined with a charitable, if not voyeuristic, desire to gaze upon disadvantaged communities. Other studies providing suggestions of such connection include Freire-Medeiros (2011), Meschkank (2011), Diekmann and Hannam (2012), and Privitera (2015).

In sum, de Araújo et al.'s (2018) adaptation of Macionis's (2004) 3Ps approach to the context of slum tourism is based on a combination of previous literature and first-hand qualitative data, and is therefore a first conceptualisation of films' role on slum tourists' motivations supported by empirical evidence and encompassing specific items and factors. Those factors, however, have not been tested in terms of dimensionality, convergent validity, reliability and discriminant validity, in order to be considered valid scales for measuring such effects, which is precisely the purpose of the present study. In the next section, the methodological steps carried out to achieve such goal are minutely described.

3. Methods

To empirically scrutinise de Araújo et al.' (2018) conceptualisation, within the present study, quantitative data was collected from tourists during their visits to Rio de Janeiro's favelas. Analogous to the mentioned study, the decision for such research population is based on the tourism in Rio's favelas being one of the most expressive examples of slum tourism worldwide. Moreover, as suggested by previous studies (Freire-Medeiros, 2011; Williams, 2008), *favela* tourism is a slum tourism case in which audio-visual products, particularly feature films, arguably play a significant role in attracting visitors. Questionnaires were applied in four different favelas of Rio's south zone: Rocinha, Vidigal, Santa Marta, and Morro da Babilônia. These four favelas were chosen for having very different characteristics, which lead to different profiles of tourist activities.

Regarding the tested conceptualisation, according to de Araújo et al. (2018), in the context of films portraying favelas, Place and Personality attract visitors mostly through a hedonistic appeal, embedded in contemplation and adventure. Meanwhile, Performance elements tend to appeal to viewers by creating empathy with locals. Therefore, Place and Personality are considered a single determinant – Place & Personality –, while Performance represented a second one. The items that comprise these determinants are also adapted to the particular settings of films portraying favelas. The exact items, as well as the measurements employed to operationalise them in the quantitative questionnaire, are listed in tables 1 and 2, in the Results section.

The data was collected via self-administered, pen and paper questionnaires with international tourists during their visits to Rio de Janeiro's favelas. Each item was operationalised in a statement to which respondents were asked to show their level of agreement within a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = Strongly disagree; 5 = Strongly agree). To as-

sess whether respondents were eligible to integrate the research’s sample, they were asked whether they remembered seeing any audio-visual product depicting a favela. Only responses from subjects who remembered seeing such product were considered. A total of 207 valid responses was included in the analysis. The collected data was subjected to both EFA and CFA. In this context, EFA was used for measure purification, while the CFA was further employed to assess dimensionality, convergent validity, reliability, and discriminant validity. IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) 24 was employed for the EFA, while SPSS AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) 22 was employed for the CFA.

4. Results

4.1 Verifying the factors’ structure

The EFA conducted with the 9 items measuring film elements affecting slum tourists’ motivations

rendered a two-factor solution identical to that proposed in the tested conceptualisation. An examination of values for Bartlett’s test of sphericity ($p = .000$) and Kaiser-Neyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy ($KMO = .842$) suggests that factor analysis is adequate for exploring this data. An analysis of the eigenvalues and the scree plot further corroborated the decision to retain these factors. The total variance explained was 63.32%, which according to Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black (1998), is an acceptable value. No item presented particularly low communality values. Moreover, all but one item (PERF1: The violence portrayed in films) had factor loadings higher than .50. Considering that PERF1 correlated significantly with the other items pertaining its factor, this does not represent a cause for its exclusion. The EFA results are summarised in table 1.

The measurements used to assess those items should also be unidimensional, which was verified through the CFA, as described in the next section.

Table 1 | Principal Component Analysis of film factors influencing slum tourists’ motivations

Measurement (<i>item</i>)	F1*	F2*
	Place & Personality	Performance
PERS1: The Friendly people from the <i>favela</i> shown in the film(s) (<i>Friendly characters</i>)	.801	
PLA3: The cultural attractions shown in the film(s) (<i>Cultural attractions</i>)	.794	
PERS3: The hard-working people from the <i>favela</i> shown in the film(s) (<i>Hard-working characters – HWC</i>)	.748	
PERS2: The way of life of the characters in the film (<i>Way of life of characters – WOL</i>)	.731	
PLA2: The physical characteristics of the <i>favelas</i> seen in the film(s) (the houses, the alleys, the geography, the colours...) (<i>Scenery</i>)	.712	
PLA1: The landscapes in the film(s) (<i>Landscapes</i>)	.701	
PERF2: The suffering and poor conditions faced by characters sensitised me (<i>he suffering and poor conditions faced by characters – SPC</i>)		.890
PERF3: The experiences lived by the characters (<i>The experiences lived by characters – ELC</i>)		.746
PERF1: I wanted to see for myself whether or not the violence portrayed in the film(s) corresponded to the truth (<i>The violence portrayed in films – VPF</i>)		.714
*All values significant at $p < .05$; Values $< .04$ have been suppressed.		
Explained variance	48.9%	14.8%
Cronbach’s Alpha	.868	.738

Source: Own elaboration

4.2 Dimensionality, convergent validity, reliability and discriminant validity tests

The overall model fit statistics suggest that the constructs are indeed unidimensional. The chi-square is not significant $\chi^2 = 32.895$; $p = .083$, and the ratio chi-square/degrees of freedom is below 2 ($df = 23$; $\chi^2/df = 1.430$), indicating an acceptable fit (Cote, Netemeyer, & Bentler, 2001).

Moreover, the Goodness of Fit Index ($GFI = .967$), the Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index ($AGFI = .935$), the Non-Normed Fit Index ($NNFI = .961$), the Comparative Fit Index ($CFI = .99$), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation ($RMSEA = .046$) all indicate a good fit (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000). Table 2 summarises the CFA results.

Table 2 | CFA of film factors influencing slum tourists' motivations

Items and standardised factor coefficients*	Place & Personality	Performance
PLA1: The landscapes in the film(s) (<i>Landscapes</i>)	.61	
PLA2: The physical characteristics of the <i>favelas</i> seen in the film(s) (the houses, the alleys, the geography, the colours...) (<i>Scenery</i>)	.63	
PLA3: The cultural attractions shown in the film(s) (<i>Cultural attractions</i>)	.73	
PERS1: The Friendly people from the <i>favela</i> shown in the film(s) (<i>Friendly characters</i>)	.74	
PERS2: The way of life of the characters in the film (<i>Way of life of characters – WOL</i>)	.75	
PERS3: The hard-working people from the <i>favela</i> shown in the film(s) (<i>Hard-working characters – HWC</i>)	.84	
PERF1: I wanted to see for myself whether or not the violence portrayed in the film(s) corresponded to the truth (<i>The violence portrayed in films – VPF</i>)		.70
PERF2: The suffering and poor conditions faced by characters sensitised me (<i>The suffering and poor conditions faced by characters – SPC</i>)		.66
PERF3: The experiences lived by the characters (<i>The experiences lived by characters – ELC</i>)		.99
*All values significant at $p < .05$		
Average variance extracted	.51	.50
Composite reliability	.86	.74
Goodness of Fit statistics		
$\chi^2 = 32,895$ ($p = .083$); $df = 23$ ($\chi^2/df = 1.43$); $RMSEA = .046$;		
$GFI = .967$; $AGFI = .935$; $NNFI = .961$; $CFI = .99$		
Correlation between factors		P&P ↔ PERF: .53
χ^2 differences for Standard vs. Non-discriminant CFA models ($\Delta df = 1$, $p = .000$)		P&P ↔ PERF: - 417

Source: Own elaboration

To further investigate potential threats to unidimensionality, the absolute values in the matrix of standardised residuals and the modification indices have also been examined. Following Gerbing and Anderson's (1988) suggestions, in cases in which AMOS indicated potential dimensionality problems, unidimensionality was improved by tackling the most problematic pairs of items. Therefore, errors of three pairs of items – PLA1 (Landscapes) and PLA2 (Scenery), PERF1 (VPF) and PERF3 (ELC), and PLA3 (Cultural attractions) and PERS3 (HWC) – were co-varied to reduce the

degree of shared variance, and thus, improve the factors' unidimensionality and model fit. After this measure, both standard residuals above 2.58 and modification indices above 5.0 were present in less than 6% of the total pairs (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988). Considering the exposed model fit results and the fact that items loaded significantly to only one factor each, data suggests evidence of unidimensionality for both factors.

The results also point for the factors' convergent validity, as all items loaded significantly to the variable they are supposed to measure (Hair et

al., 1998). The model's general good fit, as well as the loadings all being larger than .50, also reinforce the evidence of convergent validity (Steenkamp & van Trijp, 1991). The CFA model with factor loadings, chi-squares and error covariances is depicted in figure 1. Cronbach's alphas (.868 for Place & Personality and .738 for Performance) of both fac-

tors are above .70, which suggests they are reliable (Nunnally, 1978). Moreover, as shown in table 2, composite reliability test results for both factors is above .60, Bagozzi and Youjæ Yi's (1988) cut-off, which further reinforces the evidence of the constructs' reliability.

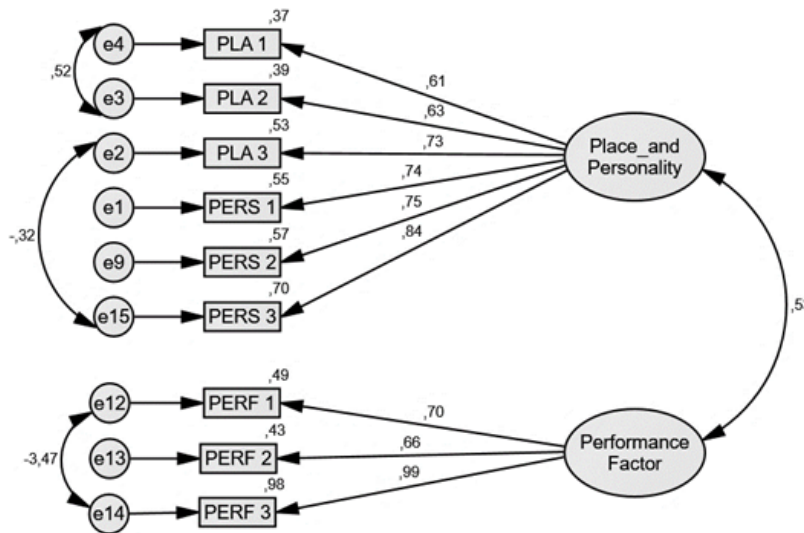


Figure 1 | CFA diagram for film factors slum tourists' motivations
Source: Own elaboration

Results also support the factors' discriminant validity, as the correlation between the them is below .70, which according to Ping (2004), indicates that the measures are distinct. Moreover, as shown in table 2, there is a significant difference in Chi-square between the standard model and the 'non-discriminant' model, which further reinforces the constructs' discriminant validity. Finally, Fornell and Larcker's (1981) more stringent criterion of discriminant validity, that is, average variance extracted above .50, is also met by both constructs.

5. Discussion

The findings show that film determinants of slum tourists' motivations include Place & Per-

sonality, referring destination attributes shown in films, along with the effects of characters; and Performance, related to films' stories and plots, which in the case of films portraying *favelas*, mostly refer to the context of violence and suffering. This factor structure is identical to that proposed by de Araújo et al. (2018), which indicates that such adaptation of Macionis's (2004) 3P's outline is indeed true to the context of slum tourism in Brazilian favelas. More specifically, results show that, as proposed by de Araújo et al. (2018), in the context of films depicting favelas, Place and Personality indeed gather in one factor, as they both exert a hedonistic appeal to viewers. Meanwhile, Performance, which attracts viewers by engendering empathy with characters' stories and experiences, forms the second factor.

The results are partly in accordance with those

of previous film tourism studies (e.g., Shani et al., 2009), in which the Place factor, more precisely, the landscapes shown in films, is the main driver of visit intentions. Within the conceptualization tested during the present study, the Place & Personality factor indeed explained the greatest amount of variance. However, within the items composing this factor, Landscapes had the lowest factor loading. This is somehow expectable, as most films examined in previous film tourism studies portray beautiful landscapes and/or pleasant experiences of characters in the depicted destinations. On the other hand, films shot in favelas are generally centered around themes of violence and social injustice. It could be argued that, within this scenario, the landscapes are less relevant to generating visitors' motivations, which are driven by other elements. Considering the items with the highest factor loadings, these elements could be a sense of empathy with hard-working and underprivileged characters, the curiosity generated by the contact with a different lifestyle, and the thrill lead by characters experiences.

6. Conclusion

The present study aimed to verify how films depicting poor urban places attract slum tourists to such destinations. In other words, the investigation aimed to tackle the question: "Which aspects of films (and other audio-visual products) serve as determinants for slum tourists' motivations?". The findings corroborate de Araújo et al.'s, (2018) conceptualisation of films factors affecting slum tourists' motivations in the context of Brazilian favelas. In this context, the present study was the first to empirically test a list of film elements that are responsible for attracting slum tourists. It was also one of the few initiatives in exploring the effect of negative portrayal in films on visitors' motivations. In this vein, the results here presented

are original and contribute to narrow a knowledge gap on film tourism literature.

Findings also lead to important managerial implications to destinations where slum tourism is a reality, more specifically, those where films are arguably a factor of attractiveness to this type of tourism. In those instances, the findings can orient destination's possible relationship with filmmakers. As concluded by Hahm and Wang (2011), destination managers' relationships with film makers should aim to align the parties' interests in order to seek mutual benefits. In this context, it must be understood that whether slum tourism is beneficial to destinations and visited communities depends on many variables that are beyond the present study's scope. Therefore, it is understandable that, in some destinations, it might be considered undesirable. In this context, the mentioned relationship can aim at either attracting slum tourists – by highlighting film elements that show to motivate them – or discouraging them – by avoiding the depiction of such elements, or preferably, the depiction of local slums in films altogether. Naturally, such implication is highly specific, as it considers the existence of a slum tourism scenario in the destination, as well as of filmmakers willing to use local slums as film locations. In this context, it is particularly relevant to the case of Rio de Janeiro, as for the last two decades, most internationally successful Brazilian films, have depicted the city's favelas.

Finally, the present work has some limitations, which in turn, present avenues for future research. First, the cross-sectional nature of the investigation limits the results' generalisation. In this context, future studies should employ the scale for measuring the effects of film determinants on slum tourists' motivations that has been validated within the present study in other settings. This would allow them to verify whether the factor structure changes in other slum tourism contexts or in other time frames, for instance, shortly after the release of a successful film depicting a favela.

Moreover, in order better understand the addressed effects, a better understating of slum tourists' destinations is necessary. Therefore, future studies should test the dimensions of slum tourists' motivations, also proposed by de Araújo et al. (2018), as well as the relationships between each slum tourism motivation and film factor.

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