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Toward a Theory of Tourism Security

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Learning Objectives

- To understand the process of theory building in the field of tourism security.
- To understand the importance of theory building as part of developing appropriate strategies to control the negative impacts security incidents have on the tourism system.
- To become acquainted with the fundamentals of tourism security theory.
- To become familiar with the nature of security incidents.
- To understand the array of impact security incidents have on tourists, the tourism industry, and the host community.
- To become aware of future research directions needed in order to refine or redefine tourism security theory.

Introduction

Bailey (1982, p. 39) defines theory as "an attempt to explain a particular phenomenon." In his opinion, to be valid a theory must: "predict and explain a phenomenon and be testable, at least ultimately" (Bailey, 1982, p. 40). Therefore, the objective of this chapter is to *start* the process of crafting a "tourism security" theory by constructing its first two building blocks, namely the statement of concepts and propositions.

It is expected that by the time this theory is completed it should be able to answer the following questions:

- Why incidents of security such as crime, terrorism, wars, riots, and civil unrest exist at tourist destinations;
- What are the motives of the perpetrators/offenders;

- What are the impacts of such incidents on the tourists, the tourism industry, the destination, and the community at large;
- How do the tourism industry, the tourists, the destination, the media, and the community react to the crises caused by such incidents;
- What effective recovery methods can be undertaken by the public and private sectors at the destination;
- What methods of prevention or reduction of such incidents can be used by the destination in order to avoid or minimize the impacts of future security crises?

A successful theory will provide explanations and predictions of the phenomenon of "tourism security" by relating some of its components (i.e., the variables of crimes, terrorism, war, riots) to some other phenomena (e.g., the variables of tourism demand, offenders' motivation, victims' behavior, opportunity, location, etc.). Though the ultimate aim of such a theory would be to state the relationship between these phenomena in *causal* terms (e.g., increased rates of crimes against tourists *causes* a decrease in tourist visitation), in the immediate future this theory would at best suggest only the direction of the hypothesized relationships (e.g., a negative direction indicates that the higher the crime rates at a tourist destination, the lower the tourist arrivals, whereas a positive direction indicates that the more uniformed police officers are visible at the tourist destination, the more secure tourists feel about the destination).

As suggested by Bailey (1982, p. 40) the first two steps in theory construction are the statement of concepts and the writing of one or more propositions. "*Concepts* are . . . mental images or perceptions . . . they may be impossible to observe directly," such as fear of being robbed in the case of tourism security, "or they may have referents that are readily observable," such as a gun or knife in the case of tourism security. "On the other hand, many concepts contain several categories, values, or subconcepts, often falling along a recognizable dimension or continuum," such as the number of tourist related robberies in a given year. "Concepts that can take on more than one value along a continuum are called variables" (Bailey, 1982, p. 40).

Propositions are "statements about one or more concepts or variables." Subtypes of propositions include "hypotheses, empirical generalizations, axioms, postulates, and theorems." Hypotheses are propositions that are "stated in a testable form and predict a particular relationship between two (or more) variables. In other words, if we think that a relationship exists, we first state it as a hypothesis and then test the hypothesis in the field" (Bailey, 1982, p. 40). "In contrast to a hypothesis, an empirical generalization is a relationship that represents an exercise in induction. Rather than hypothesizing that a relationship exists and then testing this hypothesis, an empirical generalization is a statement of relationship that is constructed by first observing the existence of a relationship (in one or a few instances) and then generalizing to say that the observed relationship holds in all cases (or most cases)" (Bailey, 1982, pp. 41–42).

For the purpose of constructing a tourism security theory, empirical generalizations rather than hypotheses were developed in this chapter because by now researchers have had the opportunity to observe numerous tourism security crises throughout the world and have examined their impacts on the tourists, the destinations, and the tourism industry. Furthermore, in the aftermath of these incidents,

researchers also managed to study and scrutinize the effectiveness of various recovery and prevention methods that were put in place by the affected destinations. This enables suggesting a group of empirical generalizations that will ultimately lead to the crafting of a comprehensive theory that will predict and explain the tourism security phenomenon.

The following sections will list and define the various concepts of this theory and put forward a set of propositions stated in the form of empirical generalizations.

Tourism and Security: Concepts and Their Respective Variables

To formulate and construct the basis for a theory of tourism security it is necessary, first, to define the major concepts that are derived from the relationship between tourism and security incidents. Once these concepts and their respective variables are defined they will lay the foundations for the theoretical development of over eighty propositions, stated in the form of empirical generalizations.

In the next section we define the relevant concepts and their corresponding variables, grouped by common subjects.

In recent years the theoretical discourse on the relationship between tourism and security has been conducted around three main groups of concepts and their derived variables. These groups are:

- Group A: Concepts relating to the nature of tourism-related security incidents and crises (including types, causes, mode of operation, motives, targets, etc.);
- Group B: Concepts relating to the impacts of security incidents and crises on the tourism industry, the tourists, and host communities;
- Group C: Concepts relating to the short-, medium-, and long-term reactions of all tourism stakeholders to existing and potential security incidents and crises.

A Typology of Tourism Security Concepts and Variables

Based on the grouping of concepts proposed above, we propose the following concepts and their corresponding variables.

Group A: The Nature of Tourism-Related Security Incidents and Crises

Types of Security Incidents

The first and perhaps the most fundamental concept to be discussed under this group is the type of security incident that affects tourism. This concept's centrality stems from its substantial influence on its potential impact on tourism. So far, the literature dealing with these interrelations identified four major types of security incidents that triggered some form of negative impact on the host communities, the tourism industry, and the tourists themselves. The four possible generators of a given security situation that might harmfully impinge on the tourism system are: crime-related incidents, terrorism, war, and civil/political unrest.

Crime-related incidents can be in the form of:

- Larceny;
- Theft;
- Robbery;
- Rape;
- Murder;
- Piracy; and
- Kidnapping.

These crime-related incidents may take place in various scenarios, such as crimes committed by local residents against tourists; crimes committed by tourists against local residents; crimes committed by tourists against other tourists; and organized crime against tourism enterprises.

Terrorism can take the form of:

- Domestic terrorism;
- International terrorism; and
- Cross-border terrorism.

The relationship between tourism and terrorism can be manifested in three possible scenarios: Terrorism that is aimed at civil targets yet sometimes victimizes tourists as well; terrorism that is directed at economic targets that are functionally related to tourism; and finally, terrorism that targets tourism and/or tourists since both are regarded as "soft targets" with relatively high-impact media coverage.

Wars, either full-scale or limited to a given region, have also had major impacts on tourist demand, both for the involved countries as well as on global tourist flows. The outbreak of wars, unlike terror activities, tends to have a negative tourism impact on larger areas and for a longer period of time. Historically, the types of wars that have been found to have an impact on tourism are:

- Cross-border wars;
- Trans-border wars;
- Wars of attrition; and
- Civil wars.

Civil and/or political unrest can be in the form of:

- Coup d'état;
- Violent demonstrations;
- Uprising; and
- Riots.

The above incidents have caused major declines in tourism demand in various parts of the world. Whether it is a coup d'état in Fiji, violent demonstrations against the Group of Seven nations (G7) in several different venues, the uprising of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, or riots in the Chiapas region of Mexico, such incidents paralyzed or severely impacted the local tourism industry as a result of trip cancellation behavior and a shift of bookings to safer alternative destinations.

Frequency of Security Incidents

Empirical evidence so far shows that the higher the frequency of such incidents and the more media coverage they obtain, the greater the negative impact on tourist demand. A high frequency of security incidents causes changes in tourists' booking and cancellation behavior, selective spatial behavior in the affected destination, and other tourism demand characteristics. The frequency of security incidents is usually measured by the following variables:

- Number of security incidents in a given period of time; and
- Scaled frequency pattern within a given period of time.

Motives and Targets of Security Incidents

As previously indicated, to predict the impacts that security incidents have on tourism, it is imperative to understand the motives behind such incidents. An in-depth study of these motives could provide valuable information on potential targets. A greater understanding of this cause and effect relationship can lead to more effective contingency and mitigation plans for affected destinations. Thus, the variables most often used to detect goals and targets are:

- Types of (declared or undeclared) motives;
  - Political;
  - Religious;
  - Social;
  - Economic;
  - Hostility to tourists;
  - Publicity seeking; and
  - Destruction of an area's economy.
- Types of (declared or undeclared) targets;
  - Tourists on the way to and from their travel destinations;
  - Tourists vacationing in a given travel destination;
  - Tourism and hospitality installations and facilities;
  - Strategic and non-strategic transportation facilities serving tourists; and
  - Public and private services and businesses also serving tourists.

Severity of Security Incidents

The evidence so far shows that the impact of security incidents on tourism, tourists, and hosts is directly correlated with the severity of the incidents. Although it is difficult to objectively define the levels of severity of security incidents, we propose the following variables that can be used as measurement scales:

- Extent of overall damage to tourism properties caused by security incidents;
- Extent of damage to private sector tourism properties caused by security incidents;
- Extent of damage to public sector tourism properties caused by security incidents; and
- Extent of damage to life caused by security incidents.

Location

Understanding the geographical dimension of security incidents is of great importance when handling security related tourism crises. Host governments and the tourism industry will do their utmost to ensure that the impacts of security incidents will be confined to the location where the security incident actually took place, and will not spill over to other locations. Mapping the relationship between the location where the security incident occurred and the tourist destination may result in three main situations. The first is when the security location and the tourist destination overlap. The second is when there is a geographical proximity between these two locations. The third situation is when those two locations are far apart. It is assumed that the closer the two locations, the more severe would be the impact of the security incident on the tourism industry. However, this statement sometimes tends to oversimplify the relationship between location and severity of impact on the tourism industry. For example, in some cases, terrorist attacks in major city centers such as Madrid, London, or Paris only marginally affected tourists' demand to these cities and only for a short period of time. However, in other cases the impact was extremely severe and long lasting, such as happened in New York City in the aftermath of 9/11, and in Tel Aviv following frequent suicide bombing of local buses. This lack of coherent reaction suggests that locational factors are only one part of the anatomy of security incidents. The most relevant variables used to examine the geographical dimension of security situations are:

- Geographical range of impact;
- Geographical distribution of affected areas;
- On- vs off-the-premises of tourist enterprises;
- High vs low crime areas;
- Physical characteristics of the urban environment;
- Physical characteristics of the tourist installations; and
- Location of potentially crime-generating tourist activities.

Group B: Impacts of Security Incidents

The accumulated evidence throughout the world shows that the impacts of security incidents on the tourism industry, the destination, the local community, and the tourists are, in most cases, negative and multifaceted. Consequently, impact concepts are grouped here into six subgroups depicting different facets of the impact of security situations on tourism. Each subgroup of concepts also includes commonly used variables that measure these impacts.

Impact on the Destination Itself

When a tourism crisis occurs in a given destination, one of the first actions taken by local decision makers is to assess the damage. This assessment is needed in order to help in formulating contingency plans and policies to handle and mitigate the damage to the local tourism industry in the wake of the security incidents. Some of the more common variables used for the purpose

of assessing the impact of security incidents on a macro-level destination performance are:

- Tourist overall arrivals in a given period;
- Tourist segmented arrivals in any given period;
- Tourist overall receipts in any given period;
- Tourist segmented receipts in any given period;
- Duration of impact (crisis); and
- Destination life cycle.

Impact on Tourists' Behavior

In most cases, security incidents cause changes in tourists' perception of risk, and thus are always translated into travel decisions. These could be in the form of cancellations of booked trips, avoiding booking trips to affected destinations, or, for those already in the affected destination, moving to a safer place or evacuating the destination and returning home. Such decisions are based on a variety of considerations and circumstances that will be discussed later on. However, at this stage it is important to note that measuring tourists' behavior following a major change in the security level of a given destination is imperative in order to formulate crisis-management plans.

The most frequent variables used in pursuit of understanding tourists' reaction to changing security situations are:

- Intention to travel to affected destination;
- Actual cancellations;
- Actual bookings;
- Actual avoidance of unsafe destinations;
- Risk-taking tendency of various tourist segments;
- Change in use of risk-related travel information prior to destination choice;
- Perceived vulnerability to specific types of crimes;
- Characteristics of tourist image projection;
- Familiarity with safe and unsafe areas within a given destination; and
- Involvement in illicit activities.

Impact on the Tourism Industry

In the case of leisure tourists on organized trips, the tourists' travel behavior is facilitated by two stakeholders in the tourism system—tour operators in the generating markets and tour operators in the receiving destination. Both share a common objective of mitigating the almost inevitable damage resulting from a change in the security climate of a given destination. Since these stakeholders do not normally coordinate their reactions to security-oriented crises, each has to perform an individual assessment of the other side's actions taken to mitigate the damage.

The most common variables used to characterize the behavior of the tourism industry in the wake of evolving security situations are:

- Evacuation of tourists by tour operators;
- Local investors' behavior;
- Transnationals' investing behavior;

- Human resource restructuring behavior;
- Inclusion/exclusion of destination in tour operators' brochures;
- Cost of doing or ceasing doing business;
- Cash flow assessment;
- Profitability;
- Projection of destination image by tour operators and travel agents; and
- Extent of economic interest in tourism business at the destination.

Impact on Host Governments

In many communities, tourism serves as an important contributor to the local, regional, and national economies, and in some cases is a major contributor to foreign currency earnings. Because security incidents might have a major negative impact on these economies, such incidents are normally a cause of major concern for local, regional, and national governments. Such concern might change governments' policies towards the future of this sector, its relative role in the economy, and the level of involvement governments wish to exert once they realize the fragility and the potential instability of this economic sector. Host governments in affected destinations usually monitor and assess the impact of security incidents on a dynamic basis. In addition these governments: (a) initiate the implementation of new and/or improved security measures aimed at preventing and/or diminishing the occurrence of future security incidents taking place in tourist areas; (b) assist in the process of damage control when the security situation deteriorates; and (c) provide ad hoc financial assistance to cope with all the major negative ramifications of security induced tourism crises.

To evaluate the impact of security situations on tourism from the governmental perspective the following variables may be used:

- Changes in level of security measures in affected destinations;
- Changes in short-, medium-, and long-term government policies towards tourism;
- Extent of governmental direct/indirect operational involvement in tourism;
- Extent of governmental direct/indirect financial involvement in tourism; and
- Extent of governmental direct/indirect marketing involvement in tourism.

Impact on Governments of Generating Markets

Potential tourists' travel behavior is influenced to a certain extent by the risk assessment conducted and published by some of their respective governments. These governments issue frequent bulletins that assess the risk involved in traveling to affected destinations. Many travelers tend to highly value the accuracy of these assessments as they lack the ability to make their own judgment as to the real risks involved. Affected destinations have learned the hard way that it is extremely important to understand the serious consequences of such warnings and to try to influence governments in the generating countries to make them objective and unbiased as well as update them periodically.

The most common variables used to evaluate the impact of governmental warnings are:

- Availability of travel advisories in given generating markets;
- Level of exposure to travel advisories in generating markets;

- Position on travel advisories' risk scale; and
- Frequency of travel advisory updates.

Media Behavior

Security incidents are regarded by the media as important news generators. Thus, when they take place, the media becomes preoccupied in providing its customers with the most vivid and explicit information and analyses of these incidents. Thus, potential tourists in the generating markets are saturated with up-to-date and real-life information which consciously or unconsciously establishes a perceived high-risk image of the affected destinations. In some cases it was evident that the information and assessment provided by the media about the severity of the incidents were biased and the media exaggerated the real risk involved in traveling to the affected areas.

In order to establish empirical evidence on this possible bias and in pursuit of objective assessment of media behavior in times of security induced tourism crisis, the following variables may be useful:

- Extent of coverage of the incident;
- Types of media coverage;
- Forms of media coverage (informative vs interpretive);
- Relative coverage of security situations by media platforms;
- Level of biased information;
- Level of biased interpretation of security situations;
- The impact of media warnings; and
- Extent of media messages directly aimed at potential tourists.

Group C: Reaction to Tourism Crises by All Tourism Stakeholders

The concepts gathered under Group C represent the expected and actual efforts made by the various stakeholders in the tourism system in response to security incidents that either:

- Might affect tourist destinations in the future;
- Are currently affecting tourist destinations causing a crisis situation; or
- Affected tourist destinations in the past.

For many tourist destinations around the world, security incidents and security crises are not, unfortunately, a matter of a past episode but rather a stage in a perpetual cycle of crises and recoveries. Therefore, the concepts illustrated below, as well as their derived variables, are of a dynamic nature. Although these groups of concepts and variables are discussed separately it is important to emphasize that there are many cross-functional relations between them.

Destination Behavior

In times of security oriented tourism crises, affected destinations play a key role in fighting for their economic and social survival. The key questions to be investigated when evaluating destinations' behavior in times of security crises are: (a) to

what extent are destinations proactive or reactive as the crisis emerges; and (b) are destinations involved in a concerted multistakeholder (the tourism industry, local community, and the local/regional governments) effort to mitigate the consequences?

Following are some of the most frequent variables used to measure and evaluate the performance of each of the destination stakeholders separately and jointly as a concerted destination effort to mitigate the damage incurred:

- Extent of publicity and public relations activities;
- Availability of contingency and crisis plans;
- Availability of marketing campaigns;
- Level of implementation of contingency and crisis plans;
- Level of cooperation among stakeholders on planning and implementation of crisis management operations;
- Characteristics of marketing campaigns;
- Availability of tourist education programs;
- Availability of image enhancement programs; and
- Availability of crisis management funding.

Image and Perception Management

When security incidents take place and the security situation in tourist destinations deteriorates, the result does not always lead to a long-term detrimental effect on the local tourism industry. However, when the situation involves global media coverage, the information it conveys creates a strong negative image among potential tourists. If this negative image is translated by would-be travelers into unacceptable risk levels, potential tourists would most likely cancel their bookings or choose to book alternative and more secure destinations. It is, therefore, in the interest of the tourism industry and host governments to try to balance the negative images by conveying their own more accurate, less biased, and marketing-oriented messages. However, in order to choose the right strategy in pursuit of a better perception management, affected destinations have to detect and analyze the perceived images and their interpretation by their potential markets.

The following variables are to be used in order to unveil the characteristics, image, and risk perception of security affected destinations:

- Nature of perceived destination image following security incidents;
- Levels of perceived risk;
- Effect of mass media on destination image;
- Effect of travel trade on destination image;
- Effect of friends and relatives on destination image;
- Effect of risk-taking tendency on destination image; and
- Effect of risk takers' experience on destination image.

Risk and Crisis Management (Prevention/Reduction/Mitigation) Techniques

Past experience shows that forward-thinking destinations that were concerned about being affected by security incidents dealt with the situation in one or both of the following ways, either (1) before an incident took place, or (2) when an

incident occurred and caused some sort of tourism crisis. In the first case, destinations prepared themselves by developing contingency plans as part of a proactive risk-management policy. In the second case, when an incident occurred, these destinations pulled their crisis-management plans out of the drawer and implemented them. Obviously, the better a destination was prepared the more effective was its response to the security crisis. However, for both cases the effectiveness of its prevention, reduction, and/or mitigation plans was a function of the cooperation between all tourism stakeholders in the affected destinations and between these stakeholders and those in the generating markets.

Common variables evaluating the extent of operational cooperation and success of crisis management plans are:

- Availability of risk related information to tourists and potential tourists;
- Availability of integrated contingency marketing plans for each crisis stage;
- Availability of media and image-management plans;
- Availability of attractive incentives for domestic tourists;
- Level of labor cost reduction in private enterprises;
- Level of dissemination of positive communication;
- Development, operation, and updating of travel advisories among generating markets and host destinations;
- Presence of law enforcement or the military in tourist zones;
- Level of technologically based means of protection in and around tourism installations;
- Availability of dedicated tourist police units;
- Level of dedicated tourism policing;
- Level of visibility of security measures;
- Availability of rewards for information leading to arrests of offenders;
- Facilitation of tourist victims' testimony in criminal cases;
- Training of tourism employees in security matters;
- Public–private cooperation in security provisions;
- Availability of tourism and security education programs;
- Adoption of CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles in the design of tourism physical plants;
- Designating crime against tourists a major criminal offense;
- Maintaining a database of crimes against tourists;
- Educating local citizens;
- Creating and maintaining safe roads; and
- Partnership between the leaders of the local community and governments.

Recovery Methods

Past experience has shown that those destinations that conducted well-coordinated efforts to regain tourists' trust when the crisis was over managed to increase tourist demand and recovered in a relatively short time. Recovery efforts involved various actions taken by different tourism stakeholders. But in all cases these actions were successful only when they were backed by sufficient financial resources.

Measuring the effectiveness of recovery methods uses the following most common variables:

- The effect of price reduction strategies;
- Availability of funds for marketing recovery plans;

- Ability to develop new market segments;
- Availability of new and innovative promotional campaigns;
- Availability of destination-specific marketing strategies;
- Effectiveness of marketing campaigns by the private sector;
- Availability of comprehensive marketing campaigns by Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and governments;
- Scheduling of special events;
- Availability of incentives to tourists;
- Availability of financial assistance from governmental agencies;
- Level of local community involvement in recovery oriented efforts;
- Level of positive public relations campaigns to improve public opinion among the media, tourists, and locals; and
- Level of disseminating positive information to existing and potential tourists.

Empirical Generalizations

The next stage in the development of our tourism security theory was the formation of some one hundred empirical generalizations listed in the form of statements. These statements represent a summary of the current best practices in the field of tourism security. They are organized in groups and subsections employing the same typology used previously. Under no circumstances should this list be considered as exhaustive. As with many other theories that are in a state of development, the following list is a work in progress and as such it is expected that with time new statements will be added, while others may be modified or dropped.

Group A: The Nature of Tourism-Related Security Incidents and Situations

Types of Security Incidents

- When multiple types of security incidents occur over a short period of time at the same destination, the negative impact on tourism demand is more severe than when a single type of incident occurs.
- Destinations that accommodate large numbers of tourists tend to develop more enduring and chronic security problems, mostly in the way of crime.
- Crime incidents at tourist destinations are enduring and more difficult to eradicate, while terror and war related situations tend to be more sporadic and of shorter duration.
- International terrorism is the most destructive type of short-term security incident that impacts tourism destinations.
- Full-scale wars are the most destructive medium- to long-term security incidents, since they often include overwhelming obliteration of tourism infrastructure and natural tourism assets. The consequences of such security incidents on the tourism industry could be in the form of irreversible damage or extremely long and highly expensive rehabilitation processes.

■ Civil unrest can cause major damage to the local, regional, or national tourism industry especially when the insurgent groups are part and parcel of the cultural tourism product (i.e., their culture is of interest to tourists and exposure of their culture is part of the national, regional, and/or local tourist product).

Frequency of Security Incidents

■ All else being equal (AEBE), security incidents occurring more frequently will have a more intense, widespread, and lengthy effect on tourism demand than those occurring less frequently. This is mainly due to high media coverage of these frequent incidents.

■ Frequent and severe security incidents (i.e., loss of life and property) have a more detrimental impact on tourism demand to affected destinations than do less frequent and severe incidents.

Motives and Targets of Security Incidents

■ AEBE, the political and religious motives of the perpetrators of crimes or terrorism at tourist destinations have the most intense, widespread, and lengthy effects on tourist arrivals and can ultimately lead to the demise of the tourist destination. Economic and social motives have the second strongest effect followed by personal motives, which have the lowest effect.

■ At the level of street culture, committing petty crimes against tourists is seen as a way of outsmarting the naïve tourist.

■ Some criminals in economically deprived areas possess a Robin Hood sense of entitlement that justifies in their mind robbing the rich (i.e., the tourists) and giving to the poor (i.e., themselves).

■ Attacks against mass tourist destinations are particularly desirable to terrorists because:
  ● Tourist destinations are easy (soft) targets;
  ● Tourist destinations are symbols of national and cultural identity and a strike against them is a strike against a nation and/or its culture;
  ● The tourism economy at the destination is intertwined with the regional, state, and countrywide economies and its destruction can cause catastrophic damages to these economies;
  ● They result in large number of fatalities; and
  ● They create instantaneous mass publicity.

■ In security affected destinations, the tourists' look, behavior, and lack of awareness of high-risk crime areas make them more vulnerable to street crimes than local residents.

■ In security affected destinations, tourists are much more vulnerable to property crimes (i.e., robbery and larceny) than residents. This is mainly as a result of carrying more money and valuables than local residents.

■ In security affected destinations, tourists are more likely than residents to be victims of violent crimes such as murder, rape, and major assault.

Severity of Security Incidents

■ Tourist destinations are subject to differential severity levels of security incidents.

■ In the short term, the more severe the security incident, the more severe is its negative impact on the local tourism industry and on tourism demand. Acts that cause

mass destruction of life and property—such as war and terrorism—have a more devastating effect on tourist arrivals than acts that cause some loss of life (i.e., murder), which in turn will have a more negative impact than those that cause only bodily harm (i.e., assault and rape). Lastly, acts that cause only loss of property might have only a minimal or negligible impact on tourism arrivals.

■   In many situations, the media portrays the severity of security incidents occurring at tourist destinations more harshly than the actual reality. Likewise, would-be tourists in their own communities perceive the level of severity of these incidents to be higher and more serious than those tourists who are already onsite. However, in some cases the situation is reversed and the level of severity perceived by onsite tourists is higher than that of would-be travelers. The nature of these differences is controlled by various factors such as the level of severity of the incident; its duration; its location relative to distinctive tourist areas; the way it was portrayed in the media; the level of exposure of potential tourists to the conveyed images; and finally, to the level of exposure to the actual security situations by onsite tourists.

Location of Incident

■   The decline in tourist visitation following safety and security incidents is not restricted to the local community in which the incident occurs. It usually spreads quickly to other regions within and outside the country affected. This spillover effect is generated either by the tourists' lack of geographical knowledge, which distorts their geographical image of the conflict area, or by a biased media coverage which does not supply detailed geographical information on the affected area.

■   In cases of very severe security incidents (i.e., terrorism, war) there would be no significant difference in tourist arrivals between acts conducted on or off the premises of tourism enterprises.

■   In cases of less severe security incidents (i.e., crimes), acts conducted on the premises of tourism businesses will have a greater effect on tourist visitation than those conducted off the premises.

■   Crimes against tourists tend to occur more in geographical areas that have a higher level of conventional crimes.

■   Tourist locations are more conducive to crime (hot spots) due to their inherent activities and hedonistic orientation.

■   Most crimes that occur in tourist destinations tend to be on the perimeter and in areas with low pedestrian traffic and no apparent police presence.

■   AEBE, some of the physical characteristics of tourist plants (i.e., dimly lit parking lots, motels with external corridors) may be a contributor to crime.

■   Countries or regions that possess a significant narcoeconomy acquire a tarnished image that creates the impression of an unsafe tourist destination.

Group B: Impacts of Security Incidents

Impacts on the Destination Itself

■   All forms of security incidents that occur at tourist destinations—be they war, terrorism, political upheaval, or crimes—negatively affect their image and can

cause a decline in tourist arrivals. This phenomenon is more evident in long-term trends and more specifically related to long-lasting security situations. Declines in tourist arrivals lead to diminishing tourist receipts and may result in a full-fledged economic recession in destinations that specialize in tourism.

- The longer a security crisis lasts, the higher is its aggregated negative impact on a tourist destination.
- The decline in tourist arrivals following one or several security incidents can last anywhere from a few weeks to indefinitely. The factor that most significantly affects the duration of the decline in tourist arrivals is the frequency of the incidents rather than their severity.
- Instability of the tourism industry in security affected destinations forces many investors in other sectors to pull out when the tourism sector is the most significant contributor to the local economy.
- Different tourist market segments possess different levels of sensitivity to security situations. Some tourists tend to be less concerned with security threats and will continue to travel to affected destinations, while others may either avoid them altogether or postpone their trip until the security situation improves.
- Following security incidents there is usually a change in the risk-taking profile of visitors to affected destinations. More security-sensitive segments of the market are replaced by segments that are highly price sensitive and more risk takers. These segments have less spending power; thus often they do not generate expected levels of income and cash flow.
- The profitability of businesses that partially rely on tourism is negatively affected by security incidents. Thus, frequent security incidents may make them insolvent and hence, negatively affect the quality of life of the entire host community.
- The high cost involved in providing security for both the private and public sectors increases the cost of providing services to tourists and makes the affected destinations far less competitive.
- With the exception of very severe security incidents committed against local residents at tourist destinations (i.e., mass terrorism or war), acts committed against tourists have a stronger effect on tourism demand than those committed against local residents, political figures, famous personalities, or businesspersons.

Impact on Tourists' Behavior

- Personal security is a major concern for tourists. Thus, most tourists will seek safe and secure destinations and avoid those that have been plagued by all sorts of violent incidents.
- The perceived risk of traveling to a security-affected destination is shaped by:
  - The objective facts on the ground;
  - Mass media;
  - The travel trade (i.e., travel agents and tour operators);
  - Personal information sources (i.e., friends and relatives); and
  - The subjective acceptable risk threshold of the individual traveler.
- Following a security incident, the general public and would-be tourists' perceptions about its severity and impact are more negative than the facts or real circumstances.
- Leisure tourists are more prone to taking risks while on vacation than local residents, and less likely to observe safety precautions. This is due to lack of understanding and

awareness of local risks and as a result of common belief that while on vacation nothing bad could happen to them.

- Tourists present lucrative targets to criminals because:
    - They tend to carry much portable wealth;
    - They ignore normal precautions;
    - They are unfamiliar with their surroundings;
    - They are less likely to report crimes;
    - They cannot correctly identify their assailants; and
    - They do not return as witnesses at trial.
- In most cases, the likelihood of prosecuting offenders who victimize tourists is relatively low because the victims/witnesses have returned home and, unless they were seriously injured or experienced a large but recoverable loss, they are not likely to return to press charges.
- Many tourist robberies go unreported to the police because of guilt feelings and the embarrassment of having had a desire for illicit activities that led to victimization.
- In pursuit of risk-free travel, potential tourists use a variety of security-related information sources to facilitate their destination-choice behavior.

Impact on the Tourism Industry

- Peace, safety, and security are the primary conditions for successful tourism development.
- Tour operators are severely affected by unexpected security incidents. This is due to their large investments in purchasing tourist products that might perish following a security incident. Moreover, the cost of finding alternative solutions for tourists who have already booked their trips to affected destinations is high and might even lead to business failure.
- In times of security crises, government-regulated tour operators are the first to react and will either evacuate their guests, exclude the affected destination from their travel brochures, stop operation in destinations already included in their products, or temporarily relocate their traveling clients.
- Security incidents at tourist destinations result in diminishing tourist arrivals. Consequently, affected destinations lose both professional employees and entrepreneurs, who are essential for the successful operation of the tourism industry.
- In destinations that have been affected by security incidents the quality of tourist installations and services may become degraded, since many employees are made redundant and funds for regular maintenance are not available. The long-term implication is a need to reinvest large sums of money on rehabilitation of the affected infrastructure and superstructures once the security situation is over.
- Many transnational tourism companies—mainly international hotel and restaurant chains—tend to cease their operation in security affected destinations, causing major damages to their marketing infrastructure by removing affected destinations from their global distribution networks.
- Following severe or frequent security incidents many tourism companies in affected destinations have to restructure their human resources, which means making many employees redundant and operating their services on a very tight budget. This has major bearing on the quality of service provided and on the level of satisfaction of those tourists who are willing to take the risk and visit these destinations.

■ Airlines and cruise lines tend to cut short or discontinue their service to affected destinations due to a reduction in demand and an increase in insurance premiums, which causes a severe decrease in the profitability level, or even losses. Thus, the accessibility of affected destination deteriorates substantially.

Impact on Host Governments

■ Frequent and recurring security incidents force host governments to usually choose between two possible courses of action. The first option is for governments to reduce their involvement in tourism development and tourism promotion due to the high risk involved and the vulnerability of this industry. Alternatively, they will make substantial investments in improving security measures and tourism promotion to help the private sector overcome the tourism crisis.
■ Some host governments will coordinate their contingency plans with all stakeholders in the local, regional, and/or national tourism system in order to mitigate the negative effects of security incidents.

Impacts on Governments of Generating Markets

■ Governments in major generating markets normally develop and publish travel advisories to help their citizens in assessing the risks involved in traveling to security affected destinations. One of their motivations for doing this is to reduce the need for possible evacuation of their citizens from affected destinations and/or assist them in a foreign territory.
■ One of the consequences of the publishing of travel advisories is that governments in the generating markets often determine the choice space for international tourists seeking tourist destinations. This is done as a result of high insurance premiums levied by insurance companies on security affected destinations. These high rates are based on risk assessments made by these governments through their travel advisories. Once insurance companies raise their premiums, the overall costs of travel to an affected destination increase. Moreover, if a government's risk assessment of a given destination is an overwhelming "Don't go," insurance companies will not issue even an expensive policy, causing potential tourists to drop the idea of travel to such destinations altogether.

Media Behavior

■ Intensive mass media coverage of security incidents contributes to the decline of tourist visitation in affected destinations.
■ In cases of recurrent and frequent security incidents, the media's continuous coverage and interpretation of the conflict deepen the fixation of a long-term negative image of such affected destinations.
■ Unless the media reports on destinations that are traditionally in the forefront of public interest, its level of coverage of security incidents weakens with time. This time-decay function creates a negative image of an affected destination in the short term, but the negative image fades as time goes by.
■ Electronic live media coverage causes the most detrimental effect on tourists' perception of risk and on the image of affected destinations.

- In many cases the news media tends to distort the actual security situation on the ground and to exaggerate the risk involved in traveling to affected destinations.
- The media, though not always objective, tends to report not just on the occurrence of security incidents and their actual impacts on tourism, but also takes upon itself the role of interpreter and assessor of the risk involved in traveling to the affected destinations.

Group C: Reaction to Tourism Crises by all Tourism Stakeholders

Destination Behavior

- Following security incidents, the tendency of DMOs is to assume that the life span of the ensuing crisis will be short and that they can count on tourists' short memories about such incidents.
- The majority of DMOs does not possess contingency plans to handle security-induced tourism crises.
- The involvement of most DMOs in security crises focuses on co-funding and coordinating marketing and PR campaigns to regenerate tourist demand once the security crisis is over.
- DMOs and the tourism industry in security affected destinations provide only reactive situational information when security incidents take place, and sometimes when the security crisis is over.
- Most DMOs in destinations affected by security incidents do not engage their private and public tourism sectors in proactive security information dissemination to tourists and tourist gatekeepers (travel agents, tour operators, meeting planners, the mass media, and governmental travel advisories).
- Many DMOs and private sector tourism enterprises are reluctant to put in place tourist security education programs because of concerns over the potentially negative effect of advertising the existence of tourist security threats.
- Following a security incident the first response of the public and private sector at the affected destination is to claim that the magnitude of the incident is exaggerated by the media and/or other entities outside the area.

Image and Perception Management

- Only a small number of destinations practice image management following a security incident for the purpose of diminishing the negative image created by the media.
- When DMOs, governments, and/or the tourism industry of the host destinations do not issue frequent and up-to-date security-related information during security crises, potential and existing tourists base their perceptions of risk on the images conveyed by external and often exaggerated media sources.
- Risk reduction strategies, such as dissemination of positive communication, can influence the risk perception of not only potential tourists who are engaged in a destination-choice process, but also to those who:
  - Have booked but not already taken their trips;
  - Are in the process of visiting the destination; and
  - Are returning from a recent trip.

Risk and Crisis Management (Prevention/Reduction/Mitigation) Techniques

- Tourism security crises are for the most part unavoidable, since they are generated in many cases by exogenous factors that are beyond the control of the tourism industry or the tourist destination.
- Travel advisories issued by foreign governments are perceived by affected destinations as influential and therefore result in some actions being taken by the tourism industry and/or governmental tourism agencies.
- Improving tourist security by housing tourists in gated all-inclusive resorts has a negative effect on small tourism businesses, which feel shut out and reinforce the perceptions of inequality between tourists and local residents.
- Many tourism practitioners feel that too many visible security measures will cause visitors to wonder if they should be afraid and thus even speaking about these subjects could frighten customers.
- AEBE, tourist destinations that have created special police units aimed at preventing and reducing crimes against tourists have managed to reduce their tourist crime rates and/or have lower tourist crime rates than their counterparts.
- Tourism police units that are effective in the reduction and/or prevention of crimes against tourists normally conduct the following activities:
    - Train their officers in tourism issues;
    - Are visible, accessible, and friendly to tourists;
    - Work closely with the community and tourism industry representatives;
    - Advise and train tourism industry employees in crime prevention techniques;
    - Assist the tourism industry by conducting background checks for employees;
    - Facilitate tourist victims' testimony in criminal cases;
    - Encourage tourism enterprises to adopt crime prevention/reduction practices (i.e., installation of electronic room locks, surveillance cameras, room safety deposit boxes, employing full-time security officers, etc.);
    - Develop and implement tourist education programs aimed at reducing the risk of being victimized; and
    - Increase the presence of uniformed officers in tourist zones.
- Tourist destinations that offer rewards for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those who commit serious crimes against tourists have better records of conviction, and in turn lead to lower rates of crimes against tourists.
- AEBE, tourism enterprises that incorporate the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) tend to have lower rates of crimes committed against tourists than their counterparts.
- AEBE, tourism enterprises that consider the function of security important to the success of their business and allocate a significant portion of their financial and human resources to it, tend to have lower rates of crimes committed against tourists than do their counterparts.
- AEBE, tourist destinations that make their tourists aware of the possibility of becoming victimized by criminals and instruct them in crime prevention methods tend to have lower rates of crimes committed against tourists than do their counterparts.
- Crime prevention/reduction methods—such as security hardware and security policies—that are used by tourism enterprises have varying levels of effectiveness.

- Destinations that collect and maintain tourism crime data at the property and destination levels are better able to evaluate the effectiveness of crime prevention/reduction techniques than their counterparts.
- AEBE, destinations that have made crime against tourists a major criminal offense have lower crime rates committed against tourists than do their counterparts.
- AEBE, destinations that have educated their citizens on the serious impacts that crime against tourists can have on their communities and engaged them in a local neighborhood watch tend to have lower tourism crime rates than do their counterparts.
- AEBE, destinations that have erected special highway signs that provide visitors with directions for travel on safe and well-patrolled routes and provide them with appropriate maps tend to have lower rates of car-related tourist crimes than do their counterparts.
- Tourist destinations that established a partnership between law enforcement agencies, tourism enterprises, the community at large, and the tourists themselves have lower crime rates than do their counterparts.
- Tourist destinations that established a partnership between the leaders of the local community and the national and local governments have been more successful in the prevention/reduction of acts of riot and political unrest at tourist destinations than their counterparts.

Recovery Methods

- In the aftermath of a decline in tourist visitation that is caused by a security incident, most tourist enterprises will try to reduce their operational costs by laying off a proportion of their employees.
- Following terrorist incidents, the tourism industry in the affected destination will seek to compensate for declines in leisure travel by appealing to local, regional, and national governments to promote and encourage government-related business travel.
- In the aftermath of terrorist incidents, tourist enterprises seek to compensate for international tourists' declines by reducing their prices to appeal to domestic tourists.
- To recover from a decline in tourist arrivals caused by security incidents, the public and/or private sectors of the affected destination will in most cases undertake:
  - Intensive marketing campaigns to convince the general public that things are back to normal; and
  - The scheduling of special events to attract local residents and out-of-town tourists.
- To recover from the decline in tourist visitations caused by a security incident, the private sector at the affected destination will in most cases reduce prices and offer a variety of incentives (e.g., package deals) to bring the tourists back to the destination.
- AEBE, following serious incidents of tourism security, tourist businesses that obtained financial assistance (i.e., grants, tax holidays, subsidized loans, etc.) from their local, state, and/or national governments manage to recover faster from declines in tourist arrivals caused by these incidents than do their counterparts.
- AEBE, tourist destinations that secure governmental grants for financing the promotion of their destination following serious incidents of tourism security (i.e.,

terrorist attacks or warfare) manage to recover faster from declines in visitations caused by these incidents than do their counterparts.

■ Following terrorist incidents DMOs in cooperation with other NGOs and governmental agencies will undertake comprehensive marketing campaigns, the purpose of which is to convince local, regional, national, and international travel markets to return to the affected destination.

■ Some marketing campaigns initiated after a terrorist attack aim to encourage area residents within a short drive of the affected destination to visit their region or hometown by appealing to their sense of local patriotism.

■ Destinations that are able to effectively recover from the aftermath of terrorist incidents use a combination of the following strategies:

- Establish a mechanism for sharing information and coordination of publicity and PR activities aimed at creating positive public opinion among the media, local community, and customers;
- Engage their local community in the effort of recovery;
- Reassure and calm their existing and potential clients by providing them with current and updated information aimed at persuading them that the destination is open for business as usual; and
- Secure funding for the development and implementation of a recovery marketing plan.

■ Following one or a series of security incidents, to compensate for the resultant decline in tourist arrivals, tourism enterprises will employ one or a combination of the following strategies:

- Reduce labor costs;
- Decrease prices for their services and goods;
- Initiate new promotional campaigns;
- Develop new products:
- Identify and develop new market segments;
- Postpone major expenditures on maintenance and renovation; and
- Request financial assistance from governmental agencies.

■ AEBE, tourist destinations and/or tourist enterprises that possess and implement crisis and contingency plans manage to recover better and faster than do their counterparts.

■ Destinations that employ a destination specific marketing strategy—a tactic employed by a local destination to dissociate itself from a larger tourist destination that has an undesirable security image—are more successful in avoiding the decline in tourist arrivals caused by a series of security incidents such as repeated terrorist attacks or warfare than are their counterparts.

Summary

The aim of this chapter was to take the initial steps towards developing a tourism security theory. This challenging task involved the creation of the first two fundamental building blocks of the theory. The chapter started with a construction of tourism and security concepts and their corresponding variables as the first building block. Subsequently, as the second block, it assembled a wide array of empirical generalizations that represent the current best practices in the field of tourism security.

With time, these building blocks will be further refined as more and more empirical studies will confirm or refute the proposed empirical generalizations and thus lead to an accepted and tested tourism security theory. Indeed what is needed now in order to improve the paradigmatic basis for a confirmed tourism security theory is a research agenda that develops scientific knowledge in two distinctive directions.

The first research direction is to conduct a set of studies examining the relationship between tourism and security on a destination-specific basis. The aim of this direction is to further deepen the understanding of causes and effects in tourism and security relations. This can be achieved through an inductive research approach that moves from specific observations and measures, to detecting patterns and regularities, formulating empirical generalizations or hypotheses that should be tested and confirmed, and finally leading to general conclusions in the form of a theory.

The second research direction is to encourage the conduct of comparative (i.e., local, regional, national, international) studies to test the level of universalism of the proposed tourism security theory. Achieving this goal is imperative if the tourism stakeholders wish to develop and adopt effective strategies and methods for the prevention, mitigation, and reduction of security incidents at tourist destinations.

Concept Definitions

Theory   An attempt to explain and predict a particular phenomenon.

Proposition   A statement about one or more concepts or variables. Subtypes of propositions include hypotheses, empirical generalizations, axioms, postulates, and theorems.

Hypothesis   Proposition that is stated in a testable form and predicts a particular relationship between two (or more) variables.

Empirical generalization   A statement of relationship that is constructed by first observing the existence of a relationship (in one or a few instances) and then generalizing to say that the observed relationship holds in all or most cases.

Security incidents   An act of violence or threat of violence, such as crimes, terrorism, wars, and civil or political unrest committed at a tourist destination against tourists or local residents.

Travel advisory   A statement issued by a government in a generating market intended to advise its citizens about possible risks involved in traveling to security affected destinations.

Destination-specific marketing strategy   A tactic employed by a local destination to disassociate itself from a larger tourist destination that has an undesirable security image.

Review Questions

1. Why do we need a theory on tourism security?
2. Discuss the means by which it is possible to increase the prosecution rate of offenders who victimized tourists.
3. What are the differences between the impacts of terrorism and the impacts of crime on affected tourist destinations?

4. What is the typical reaction of destinations that suffer from a tourism security crisis?
5. Which has a greater impact on tourism demand, frequency of security incidents or severity of security incidents?
6. Discuss the methods employed by tourism enterprises to survive during serious tourism crises.
7. What, if any, impacts do governments in the generating markets have on recovery from security crises?

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