



TOURISM SECURITY-SAFETY AND
POST CONFLICT DESTINATIONS

SAFETY AND TOURISM

A Global Industry with Global Risks

Edited by

CLÁUDIA SEABRA AND MAXIMILIANO E. KORSTANJE



Safety and Tourism

Tourism Security-Safety and Post Conflict Destinations

Series editors: Maximiliano E. Korstanje and Hugues Seraphin

Since the turn of the century, the international rules surrounding security and safety have significantly changed, specifically within the tourism industry. In the age of globalization, terrorism and conflict have moved beyond individual high-profile targets; instead, tourists, travellers and journalists are at risk. In response to this shift, the series invites authors and scholars to contribute to the conversation surrounding tourism security and post-conflict destinations.

The series features monographs and edited collections to create a critical platform which not only explores the dichotomies of tourism from the theory of mobilities but also provides an insightful guide for policy-makers, specialists and social scientists interested in the future of tourism in a society where uncertainty, anxiety and fear prevail.

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Safety and Tourism: A Global Industry with Global Risks

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Table of Contents

About the Contributors	ix
Chapter 1 Tourism: A Global Industry With Global Risks – Risk Perception Theory in the Age of Extremes	1
<i>Cláudia Seabra and Maximiliano E. Korstanje</i>	
Chapter 2 Tourism Safety and Security: A Bibliometric Approach	11
<i>Dina Amaro, Ana Maria Caldeira and Cláudia Seabra</i>	
Chapter 3 Revisiting and Adapting Slovic’s (1987) Risk Dimensions in the Context of Modern Travel and Post-COVID Era	31
<i>Leonardo (Don) A.N. Dioko</i>	
Chapter 4 Risk of Crime and Violence in Tourism	57
<i>Hrvoje Mataković</i>	
Chapter 5 Terrorism and Tourism: Still Connecting the Dots	77
<i>Cláudia Seabra</i>	
Chapter 6 The Janus Face of Terrorism and Tourism: Terrorism as a Risk, as a Danger and as a Worry	103
<i>Maximiliano E. Korstanje</i>	
Chapter 7 In War We Trust (?) Why Today’s Tourism Does Not Promote Global Peace and Security	117
<i>Fabio Carbone</i>	

Chapter 8 Psychological Risk: The Importance of Place Attachment, Moral Engagement, Planning and Social Support in Tourists Risk Management	133
<i>Bhayu Rhama</i>	
Chapter 9 Comprehensive Review of Physical Risk Perceptions	159
<i>Andreia Pereira, Ana Maria Caldeira and Cláudia Seabra</i>	
Chapter 10 Cultural Differences, Risk and Tourism: A Literature Review	175
<i>Inês Carvalho and Michelle Moraes</i>	
Chapter 11 Hygiene and Health in Tourism, in a Post-Pandemic Context: From Expected Requirement to Mandatory Criterion	195
<i>Pedro Vaz Serra and Cláudia Seabra</i>	
Chapter 12 Tourism and Natural Hazards: Juxtaposition of Tourism Determinants and Hazard's Risk	217
<i>Farhad Nazir</i>	
Chapter 13 How Risky Can a Trip Be for a Guest With Visual Impairments? Evaluation of the Organizational Risks Through a Real Story	227
<i>Sofia Almeida and Susana Mesquita</i>	
Chapter 14 In the Age of COVID-19: Can We Produce New Paradigms in Tourism Research?	245
<i>Peter Tarlow</i>	
Index	257

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Chapter 1

Tourism: A Global Industry With Global Risks – Risk Perception Theory in the Age of Extremes

Cláudia Seabra and Maximiliano E. Korstanje

Abstract

The recent COVID-19 virus outbreak, as well as many other global risks, has put the tourism industry on the brink of collapse. Even if interesting advances have been seen the light of publicity based on risk perception, no less true seems to be that the current theory is not enough to understand and describe the impacts of new global risks that may destroy the industry in question of weeks. This introductory chapter gives a snapshot on the fragile conditions we are moving today and interrogates further the future of tourism.

Since it was adopted from psychology just after the turn of twentieth century, risk perception theory has multiplied and successfully evolved in the fields of tourism research. A dearth of studies has focused on risk perception over the recent decades. We have certainly identified three clear-cut traditions: *demographical school*, *psychological school* and *critical perspective*. With benefits and problems each theory has shed light trying to measure the impact of global risks in the tourism and hospitality industries.

This book keeps the originality to update what has been published in the earlier decades. We are incorporating new topics to the discussion as well as new epistemologies and methodologies. Gathering different high-quality products authored by well-renowned authors coming from different countries, it lays the foundations to a new understanding of risk perception and tourism safety-security debating the next steps and the real challenges posed on the industry in a not so long near future.

Keywords: Risk perception theory; risk in tourism; safety in tourism; risk types; hospitality and tourism; theories and methods in tourism research

1. Introduction

It is tempting to say that risk perception theory has almost more than four decades in applied psychology. This academic paradigm alludes to the study of subjective judgments and interpretations that people have on major or minor risks as well as the immediacy of impacts in their environments. Over the years different theories have been oriented to explain why some risks are maximized whilst others are simply ignored (Beck, 2004; Slovic & Peters, 2006; Sunstein, 2005). One of the pioneering works applied in tourism and hospitality was authored by Roehl & Fesenmaier in 1992. In this seminal paperwork, authors hold the thesis that beyond what literature suggests, pleasure travels are often associated with a set of perceived risks which are mainly identified in three dimensions: physical equipment risks, vacation risk and destination risks. The three dimensions are differentially perceived according to the demographic assets of travellers. Roehl and Fesenmaier infer that risk perception seems to be situation-specific (Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992). Without any doubt, the application of risk perception to tourism research has notably multiplied just after the attacks on the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001. From that moment onwards, a dearth of publications focused on the vulnerability of the tourism industry before different global risks such as terrorism, natural disasters, political instability, virus outbreaks as well as local crime and violence (Yang & Nair, 2014). The turn of the century witnessed a new climate for the industry with extreme vulnerability and volatility. To put the same bluntly, the attacks on WTC followed not only similar attacks in the UK, Spain, France, Belgium and entire Europe (Korstanje, 2018) but also new natural disasters – which have been accelerated by the ecological crisis – placed the industry between the wall and the deep blue sea (Hall, 2010; Gössling & Hall, 2006). Safety and security in tourism become a buzzword and a major concern for specialists and authorities worldwide (Fuchs & Reichel, 2006; Ritchie, 2009; Robinson, Dale, & Evans, 2014). Risk and crisis management occupied a central position in the content of leading journals from 2001 to date. The crisis was precipitated by what experts dubbed the violence, which means the constant impacts of viruses on the culture and daily life, crystallized by the recent COVID-19 pandemic which decimated the industry as well as the global trade (Tzanelli, 2021). Some voices have alerted on the end of tourism, as least as we know it whilst others enthusiastically applauded the idea that the current crisis opens the doors to a new stage of cooperation and sustainability (Fotiadis, Polyzos, & Huan, 2021; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020). Having said this, risk perception studies emphasized not only the nature of risks which are defined as internal or external but also the characteristics of tourists as well as the psychological dimensions that often intervene in risk perception. This explains why some organic image destinations remain intact insofar as others collapse just after a disaster takes hit or a terrorist attack is perpetrated (Floyd and Pennington-Gray, 2004; Seabra, Abrantes, & Kastenzholz, 2014; Wolff & Larsen, 2014). This introductory chapter discusses critically the recent advances, strengths and weaknesses of risk perception theory in the constellations of tourism as well as hospitality. At the same time, the piece summarizes the most salient points

exposed by each chapter forming this book. Risk perception theory remains a fertile ground to explain the current tourism/hospitality crisis as well as its future.

2. Risk Perception in the Fields of Tourism and Hospitality Today

As stated in the earlier section, risk perception theory was originally introduced in tourism research just after the turn of the century. In consonance with this, it is noteworthy that the Emerald Publishing Limited has inaugurated the first book series fully dedicated to risk perception, tourism safety and security in 2019 (Korstanje & Seraphin, 2020; Korstanje, Seraphin, & Maingi, 2022).

As the previous backdrop, risk perception theory is situated as a leading paradigm in the leading indexed journals globally inviting thousands of researchers to share their investigations and advances. In a climate of knowledge fragmentation, we can distinguish three clear-cut theoretical families which have devoted efforts and time to explain the dilemmas of risk perception: the demographic school, the psycho-sociological school and the critical perspective. A short explanation is given in the following sections.

2.1 The Demographic School

This theoretical corpus is main marked by studies and applied research aimed at deciphering the connection between the demographic assets of tourists and their perceptions. Per this paradigm, the demographic characteristics of tourists, which include age, gender, education, class and religious attachment (only to name a few) play a leading role in the correlation with risk perception. To put the same in other terms, these studies have a common-thread argumentation which punctuates that risk perception is vitally determined by the structuration of rules and norms given by the in-group where the subject belongs. Having said this, the demographic assets mark partly to what groups subject take part or direct their loyalty explaining why males perceive fewer risks than females, or educated people perceive further risks than uneducated people (and so forth) (Jonas, Mansfeld, Paz, & Potasman, 2011; Cui, Liu, Chang, Duan, & Li, 2016; Deng & Ritchie, 2018). The demographic school was widely criticized by some psychologists because they ignore or discard the internal psychological drives which lead the subject to risk perception (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006).

2.2 The Psycho-Sociological School

This tradition starts from the premise that risks – far from being a universal category – are often perceived and negotiated individually. Each determined biography or culture says overtly what can be observed as a risk or not. Hence, subjects are prone to perceive risks which are interrogating their emotionality or inner world while others keep on being overlooked. For this school, the psycho-sociological factors such as personality, character, cultural differences, previously experienced traumas or even the levels of uncertainty tolerance

occupy a central position to explain risk perception. In each biography, our emotions, fears and hopes determine the psychological borders of what is being frightened or desired (Chien, Sharifpour, Ritchie, & Watson, 2017; Floyd & Pennington-Gray, 2004; Yüksel & Yüksel, 2007). To set an example, gender does not correlate directly with risk perception. The problem lies in the fact that women are educated to protect their families, whereas men repress often their feelings – above all those associated to fear which affects their sense of masculinity. The opposite is equally true, religious-attached societies (like in Middle East) fear the condemnation of the soul (not death), whereas secular societies are frightening of death (Fuchs & Reichel, 2004; Korstanje, 2020). Of course, although these studies provide a firm background in qualitative methods that ultimately explain the issue instead of measuring larger samples, it was criticized because of two main reasons. On one hand, it lacks a critical basis to understand the ideological nature of risk discourses. On another, risks, which are taken the business as usual by the literature, should be defined as social construes elaborated by the dominant class to protect their interests (Bianchi, 2006; Bianchi & Stephenson, 2013).

2.3 The Critical Perspective

This academic wave is characterized by a bunch of works which highlight the intersection of risk perception and ideology. The concept of ideology, which is borrowed from the neo-Marxist tradition, denotes a set of narratives, beliefs and theoretical elements disposed to give a simplistic answer to vital questions. Ideology not only determines how reality is finally perceived it gives a biased interpretation of reality in favour of dominant classes. The critical perspective in risk perception theory moves in the clouds of a much deeper criticism exerted against what has been published in the field (Bianchi, 2006; Korstanje, Tzanelli, & Clayton, 2014; Tzanelli, 2007). Part of this literature claims that the multiplication of risks and dangers that today put the industry in jeopardy are given by the process of globalization which modified substantially the classic borders. Per their stance, risk perception theory is an ideological discourse orchestrated to impose a unilateral division of the world into safe and unsafe destinations. In this context, the democratic and developed nations issue documents and reports alerting their citizens which are the destinations that need to be avoided. In this way, these countries impose a type of embargo (or censorship) against under-developed economies laying the foundations for a new geopolitical climate based on fear. Hence, the Travel Alert System often used by embassies and different departments of the States is an ideological instrument of control articulated to reaffirm the old centre-periphery dependency in the colonial period (Bianchi & Stephenson, 2014; Bianchi, Stephenson, & Hannam, 2020; Korstanje & George, 2021; Tzanelli, 2018). Although these approaches are very interesting and penetrating, sometimes they throw the baby out with the bathwater. In sum, we have summarized the strengths and weaknesses of each tradition. Chapters gathered in this book centre on a mix-balanced argumentation which helps expand the

current understanding and impacts of risk perception theory as well as the difficult times the industry now faces.

3. How to Read This Book

This edited book aims to provide a broad collection of chapters focusing on the specific topic of safety and risk in tourism and travel industry. This book covers key issues regarding several risk types impacting safety perceptions of tourists and travellers. Papers with new perspectives and approaches for traditional paradigms and theories, as well as new qualitative, quantitative and mix methodologies present an overview of how several types of risk are affecting tourism industry worldwide.

The book *Safety and Tourism: A Global Industry with Global Risks*' relies on the extraordinary contributions of 16 top researchers in the study of Safety and Risks in Tourism and the help of an Editorial Advisory Board composed by leading scholars. The editors want to present a special acknowledgement to Rodanthi Tzanelli, Arie Reichel, Peter Tarlow, Cyril Peter, Ericka Amorin, Jean Henrique Costa, David Baker, Brian Berquist, Babu George, Anthony Clayton and Luke Howie, who have served as reviewers helping to enhance the quality of the submitted works with crucial insights and suggestions.

The book is organized in three main areas. After two introductory chapters with theoretical review on 'Safety and Security' and 'Risk Types' in tourism the following chapters include analysis on the several types of risk in travel industry, namely risk of crime, violence, terrorism and war; psychological, physical and cultural risk; hygiene and health, natural hazards and organizational risks. The last chapter focus on the challenges for the future in the research of risk types.

3.1 Introductory Chapter

The first chapter by Dina Amaro, Ana Maria Caldeira and Cláudia Seabra presents a bibliometric analysis on the research done in the last 34 years on safety and security in tourism and proves that this area of investigation has attracted a substantial and growing interest of researchers, institutions, journals and countries. The authors also discuss the importance of this research field to provide a set of tailored strategies to improve tourists' safe destination environment and increase tourism destinations' competitiveness and attractiveness.

Leonardo (Don) revisits the [Slovic's \(1987\)](#) risk dimensions in the context of modern travel and post-COVID-19 era and to update this seminal work on 'Perception of Risk', with the conceptual foundations for understanding general risk and the psychometric properties underlying how individuals perceive risks. The chapter examines the stability and validity of long-standing categories and taxonomies of perceived travel risks.

3.2 Risk Types Affecting Tourism Industry

Hrvoje Mataković presents the specific connection between tourism and crime, making evident that tourists and tourist areas are very vulnerable to crime. The chapter presents the actual (objective) risk of crime and tourists victimization, visible in statistics on committed crimes and crime victims surveys, and the perceived (subjective) risk of crime, recorded in surveys conducted with tourists.

Terrorism risk and tourism is presented by Claudia Seabra that brings a broad analysis of literature and data to analyse the main connections between terrorism and tourism, specifically by presenting the main terrorist events targeting tourism activity and destinations in the last 35 years and their main consequences for tourism industry.

Maximiliano Korstanje also explores the terrorism and how it affects tourism and travel by discussing the distinctions between risks and threats and the different faces of terrorism. The author also proposes a conceptual model based on three dimensions: terrorism as a risk, terrorism as a threat and terrorism as a worry.

The risk of war analysed by Fabio Carbone discusses how (and if) tourism can contribute to the reduction of global conflicts. The chapter reflects on how the men and women perceive tourism (from both supply and demand side) in this specific period of 'End of History'. Also, the author proposes a possible alternative for the use of tourism in reducing structural and cultural violence.

Bhayu Rhama brings a conceptual background of psychological risk for international tourists. The chapter proposes a framework of psychological risks with six psychological risks that tourists could encounter in foreign destination: destination detachment risk, moral disengagement risk, risk of false risk assessment, burnout risk, risk of loneliness and risk of rumination.

Physical risks are explored by Andreia Pereira, Ana Maria Caldeira and Cláudia Seabra that explore this complex concept by addressing the main literature on physical threats that can harm tourists' physical integrity, such as illness and accidents, health, crime and weather and natural disasters.

Inês Carvalho and Michelle Moraes discuss cultural risks by exploring specifically cultural differences as a factor that can enhance risk perceptions. The authors elaborate a bibliometric analysis of the literature on cultural differences, tourism and risk to quantify its sources and clusters of co-citation and terms.

Hygiene and Health risk is presented by Pedro Vaz Serra and Cláudia Seabra that frame this specific risk from a comprehensive reading and holistic perspective highlighting the impact of globalization, the role of communication and digital content, as well as the combination between climate change, competitiveness, and sustainability. The authors also point the present context as an opportunity to redesign the future, pointing out the main trends and perspectives for the next decade.

Farhad Nazir brings the discussion on the direct and inverse association between tourism and natural hazards. The chapter presents a comprehensive literature-based study to assess the risk factor of natural hazards on the tourist

destinations intending to explore the existing studies drafted on the risks impacts of natural hazards on demand, supply and ancillary segments of tourism.

Sofia Almeida and Susana Mesquita present an evaluation of organizational risks in the hospitality sector using the experience of a guest with visual impairments. A case study presents the experiences, expectations, constraints and risks of a guest with disabilities through a deep-depth interview. The authors present new avenues for the study of organizational risks, more precisely, hospitality risks for disabled people.

3.3 Challenges for the Future

The final chapter from Peter Tarlow questions the new paradigms in tourism research regarding risks and safety. The chapter connects the ideas of tourism research to the humanistic side of tourism and explores the historical roots of tourism research starting from Biblical narratives. Taking a theoretical approach, the chapter notes that in a world filled with science there also exists a parallel universe of mysticism and the reality that tourism research must find a way to reunite not only the quantitative with the qualitative but also the mystical side of reality with the scientific.

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