

TERRORISM AND TOURIST INDUSTRY – MEDIA INFLUENCES IN SHAPING RISK PERCEPTIONS

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Abstract: Since before the end of the Cold War, terrorism acts have had major effects on tourism industry. Tight linkages between terrorism and tourism do not exist in the absence of media attention. Terrorist acts are media events par excellence. Being predominantly profit oriented, some media are irresponsible in reporting on terrorist acts. However media have strong influence on risk perception among tourist, and consequently tourist industry. Risks from activities that evoke fear, terror, or anxiety, like terrorism, are perceived to be greater than risks from activities that do not arouse such feelings or emotions. The way the terrorist act is presented in mass media will shape the perceptions of potential tourists to certain tourist destinations, countries and whole regions and therefore influence tourist industry. Having this in mind, managers in tourist industry should use all necessary crisis communication tools and techniques in order to restore image of stability in tourist destinations affected by terrorist attacks.

Keywords: terrorism, risk perception, tourist industry, crisis communication.

1. Introduction

Human curiosity, need to learn about other countries and cultures, modern transportation, first of all cheap air travel in combination with the package tours, resulted in enormous development of international mass tourism. Tourism has become a popular global leisure activity. In 2008, there were over 922 million international tourist arrivals, with a growth of 1.9% as compared to 2007. International tourism receipts grew to US\$ 944 billion in 2008, corresponding to an increase in real terms of 1.8%. The World Tourism Organization forecasts that international tourism will continue growing at the average annual rate of 4 %. By 2020 Europe will remain the most popular destination, but its share will drop from 60 % in 1995 to 46 %. Long-haul will grow slightly faster than intraregional travel and by 2020 its share will increase from 18 % in 1995 to 24 % (UNWTO, 2009).

Generally speaking safety and security are among major concerns when choosing tourist destinations. Wars and ethnic conflicts, terrorism, high crime rates, dangerous diseases and natural disasters can be factors of deterrence in choosing tourist destinations. In almost all tourist guides there are safety tips to avoid certain countries, regions, neighborhoods or behaviors. Also there are numerous web sites like www.SOS.travel, an online one-stop-shop where users can access the latest critical information and communication tools in anticipation of, or in response to, natural and man-made crises with potential impacts on tourism. The system aims to support crisis preparedness in the tourism sector and to assist in rapid recovery from crisis situations. [SOS.travel](http://www.SOS.travel) also serves as a valuable resource for travelers by providing in one place the tools and information they need in order to make informed decisions about their own safety and security, and to obtain assistance in case of an emergency.

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The tourism sector and popular destinations are inherently vulnerable to disaster and crisis conditions (Pizam and Mansfield, 1996; Sömnez et al., 1999). Adverse situations associated with distress, fear, anxiety, trauma and panic are the antithesis to the enjoyment, pleasure, relaxation and stability often sought in the tourist experience (Santana, 2003). If a prospective destination is associated with any negative images or sentiments, consumers can simply choose to cancel, defer or substitute for alternative locations – such actions may precipitate a tourism crisis.

However, there is evidence that also thrill seeking tourist, and related phenomena like war tourism,² extreme (shock) tourism³ and adventure tourism (Buckley, 2006) exist. But even tourists of this kind are concerned with their own safety, using the specialized tourist guides with advices to staying alive in world's most dangerous places (Pelton, 2003).

Anyway, thrill and danger seekers in tourism are not the main stream. For the majority of tourists safety of their life and property is an important factor when choosing where to spend their holidays. Different levels of concern for safety may influence the decision making process of potential tourists. It is likely that destinations perceived as safe from terrorism and political problems will be considered seriously, while those perceived as risky will be rejected. In that sense in the recent decades in different part of the world tourism industry has been often affected by terror, war and political crisis. Pizam and Smith remark that since before the end of the Cold War, terrorism acts have had major effects on tourism destinations. As a result, the 'shadowy, mobile, and unpredictable' forces of terrorism are becoming an unfortunate part of travel and tourism landscape. Their paper provides a quantitative analysis of major terrorism events around the world during 1985-98, classified by date, location, victims, weapons used, severity of damage, motive, effect on tourism demand, and length of effect. The analysis is followed by a summary and conclusions about the magnitude of the impact of these events on host destinations and the tourism industry worldwide (Pizam and Smith, 2000).

Terrorist acts are often very brutal aiming to gain publicity. The number of innocent randomly chosen victims presented in electronic and print media as a consequence has the rise of fear of crime and anxiety over personal security. Freyer and Schröder note that "again and again the peaceful picture of traveling has shown signs of faltering in the face of unexpected events such as terrorist attacks. In the affected regions, events of this nature often have enormous impacts on the economy and social life of residents. In some cases, tourism flows are interrupted as tourists look for other seemingly safe destinations. However, up to now, terrorist attacks at Luxor, Cairo and Bali, the PKK

2 **War tourism** is a term the media use to describe the idea of recreational travel to war zones for purposes of sightseeing and superficial voyeurism. War tourist is also a pejorative term to describe thrill seeking in dangerous and forbidden places. There has been no proof of the concept in real life but the idea has gained currency in a number of media reports, none of which have actually interviewed or found a tourist who has visited active combat areas as a tourist. There have been a number of tourists caught up in war torn regions, many who visit active war zones like Israel, Lebanon, Myanmar, Algeria, Colombia and other regions at war. There are many freelance journalists who describe themselves humorously as "war tourists" (P.J. O'Rourke is the most famous) and mercenaries who have pretended to be tourists to avoid discovery as in Michael Hoare's attempt to take over the Seychelles disguised as "The Royal Order of Frothblowers". http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_tourism. War tourism is also confused with dark tourism or "battlefield tourism": going to places of historic importance or famous battle sites. Foley and Lennon explore the idea that people are attracted to regions and sites where "inhuman acts" have occurred. They claim that motivation is driven by media coverage and a desire to see for themselves, and that there is a symbiotic relationship between the attraction and the visitor, whether it be a death camp or site of a celebrity's death. Much of their focus is on ancient sites where "acts of inhumanity are celebrated as heritage sites in Britain (for example, the Tower of London, Edinburgh Castle), and the Berlin Wall" (See Foley and Lennon, 2000; Sharpley and Stone, 2009)

3 **Extreme tourism** or shock tourism is a type of niche tourism involving travel to dangerous places (mountains, jungles, deserts, caves, etc.) or participation in dangerous events. Extreme tourism overlaps with extreme sport. The two share the main attraction, "adrenaline rush" caused by an element of risk, and differing mostly in the degree of engagement and professionalism http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extreme_tourism

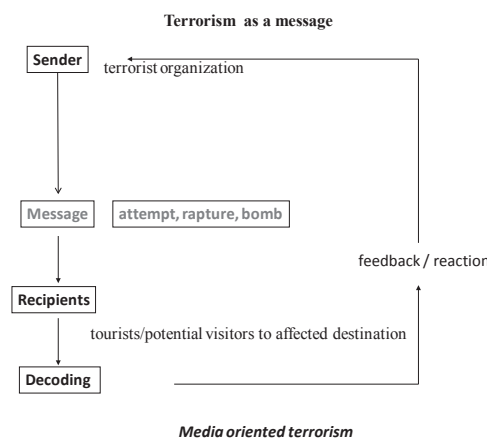
attack in Turkey or the ETA attacks in Spain have not stopped the long-term growth of international tourism. The destinations subjected to terrorist attacks have generally regained lost visitors as holiday-makers quickly forget such incidents and return relatively soon after the occurrences of devastating attacks” (Freyer and Schröder, 2005).

Due to number of victims and the method of the assault the attacks of 9/11 in the USA was world media event par excellence. Although the attack itself was not aimed at tourism primarily, its effect on the international tourism economy, the tourist product and tourists themselves was considerable (Nacos, 2002; Schicha and Brosda, 2002). In certain way media amplified fear of terrorism in order to prepare the public opinion and justify “war on terror” and following intervention in Iraq, as well as new domestic security policy comprising restrictions of human rights and freedoms. Impact on air transportation and tourism industry was inadvertent by consequence.

2. Terrorism and media

Generally, terrorists use extremely violent and inhumane methods against soft targets in order to generate shock, fear and fright. Their goal is to reach a very broad audience, and the media seem to be the best means to achieve it. Regardless of the cruelty of the terrorist act, if it reaches limited public its effect is minor. Nowadays terrorism evolved due to interaction with the modern mass media. Number of authors pointed out the instrumental relationship that exists between media and terrorists (Laqueur, 1976; Jenkins 1983; Nacos, 1994, Wieviorka, 1988; Kratcoski, 2001), although there is no consensus in understanding the nature of this relationship.

The communication dimension in conceptualizing terrorism was first proposed by Karber who argued “as a symbolic act, terrorism can be analyzed much like other mediums of communication” (Karber, 1971:9). He outlines four basic components of the communication process within the context of terrorism: transmitter of message (terrorist), intended recipient of message (target of terrorist’s message), message (terrorist act involving individual or institutional victims), and feedback (reaction of the recipient). In that sense classic communication paradigm can be slightly rearranged.



This symbiotic relationship between terrorism and the media first became possible with the development of the international media. Their development occurred in several stages. In 1830, the first steam printing press was developed, and 3 years later the first newspaper with a large circulation was published in the USA. In 1968, the first TV satellite images were broadcast worldwide, followed later by live reporting. Terrorist

organizations quickly recognized the possibilities of this new means of mass communication to promote their aims, and it is perhaps no coincidence that the 1968 hijacking of a commercial jet by Palestinian terrorists announced the birth of international terrorism (Hoffman, 1999).

Nowadays it is obvious that the media play an important role during the planning and execution of terrorist activities from the viewpoint of terrorists (Biernatzki, 2002). The media transmit the events and also the ideological aims of the terrorists to a broad audience by means of far-reaching and extensive reporting. Without media amplification terrorist activities would fade away and the perception of the events would be limited to the immediate victims. To attract the attention of the local as well as international media, their actions are often carefully arranged. The news content is of great importance to the media, which in turn reach a broad, interested audience. The intensive, sometimes exaggerated and superficial reporting results in an image of unsafe destinations and leads to negative effects not only on the target destinations, but also on those countries that benefit from tourism (Freyer and Schröder, 2007).

3. Risk perception

According to the words of Ulrich Beck, the contemporary-postmodern society is the “Risk Society” where in the first place we become more and more aware of the technological, scientific and other man-made as well as natural risks and hazards we are surrounded by, and, in the second place, the society where such risks are rapidly increasing. The logic underlying modern industrial societies is changing from one based on the distribution of “good” aspects, in the form of material products, to one based on the distribution of “bad” aspects, in the form of risks and unintended consequences (Beck, 1998). The eminent roles in such settings are assigned to the media as a source of information, agenda-setters and opinion makers. Anthony Giddens speaks of “risk culture”, which can be seen as a new imperative for modern society; we live in a society which is no longer turned towards the past, but towards the future, in which individuals have acquired considerable autonomy and are encouraged to take their lives in their own hands (Giddens, 1999).

Even if the experts and professionals accept the theory that we live in the “risk society”, the public is reluctant to adopt the “risk culture” in general. Laymen have their own way of dealing with risks and hazards. Either the public “overestimates” risks considered by the experts to be statistically insignificant or under control (which can lead to various types of social reactions, such as anti-nuclear demonstrations), or else they continue to “under-estimate” the risks and hazards associated with individual behavior (which, on the other hand, can complicate things for experts who are trying to develop preventive policies). Individuals also have a propensity to believe that they are personally immune to risky events. The “it won’t happen to me” phenomenon applies to many individuals when they drive a motorcar or smoke a cigarette. In both cases, perceptions of risk acquire their own strength and sometimes have consequences greater than the risks themselves. Therefore, someone might be willing to engage in a, statistically speaking, rather dangerous activities such as binge-drinking, paragliding or free climbing and at the same time be very reluctant to visit the countries or areas that are perceived to be under terrorist threat.

From the perspective of social sciences, risk perception includes human beliefs, attitudes, judgments and feelings, as well as wider societal or cultural values and dispositions that people adopt towards hazards and benefits coming from them. Such

view on risk perception is deliberately wide, because it takes into account that people rather evaluate hazards as something real and palpable than risk which is but an abstract concept (Pidgeon, 1992:89). Risk perception is above all multidimensional, because one hazard can have different meanings for different persons (depending on, say, their system of values) and in different contexts.

What social sciences generally intend to assess in the risk perception research, includes human cognition and processing of the various information about hazards, as well as the „second hand” information originating from scientific communication, the communication of the „significant other” of the social surrounding, such as peers or other trustworthy figures and, of course, the media. Today’s psychological practice accepts the general position that the outside information are first selected and then interpreted on the basis of the structures of the organized knowledge through which all individuals personalize the world, as well as on the basis of the system of beliefs and significations which is shared between the individuals within a certain culture, society or a social group (Pidgeon, 1992).

Although in defining probability people use various heuristic simplifications or „short-cuts”, they have relatively sophisticated views on certain risks, including important qualitative factors which formal risk assessment techniques very often do not take into account (Pidgeon, 1992). Systematic differences between intuitive and statistical estimates can be seen only in case of the extreme values: people tend to overestimate the fatalities from very low probability events (e.g. nuclear radiation) and underestimate the very probable ones (e.g. cancer, stroke...). One of the explanations of this effect is that people use the availability heuristics, which means that, under certain circumstances, people will judge the likelihood or frequency of an event in part as a function of the ease of recall (availability) of similar instances from memory. It is often said that key impact on the availability from memory are the information from the media. Sensational overreporting of relatively rare accidents such as car bombs, suicide bombers or airplane hijacking can increase the perception of availability of such events. On the other hand, relatively „normal” causes of death such as car accident or a stroke, rarely become the headlines. This can lead to people overestimating the probability of rare but „sensational” events and underestimate very frequent but not so „interesting”.

It shouldn’t be forgotten that one of the important facets of terrorism, if not the most important one, is its psychological impact. Drake has defined terrorism as “the recurrent use or threatened use of politically motivated and clandestinely organized violence, by a group whose aim is to affect one or more psychological targets in order to make them behave in a way in which terrorists desire” (Denney, 2005).

Now, one of the key questions in risk assessment is what makes the risk acceptable or tolerated. We can also pose another question, that is, what makes some risks so unacceptable and intolerable? In the former instance we can speak about attenuation of „objective” risk, whilst in the latter we can speak about the amplification of the risk in question. The term risk acceptability conveys the impression that society purposely accepts the risks as the reasonable price for some beneficial technology or activity (Kasperson, 1983). Race car driving, mountain climbing or, even, adultery are all high-risk activities in which the benefits are intrinsically cross-linked with the risks. These activities are thrilling and exhilarating because they are dangerous. Amplification could be defined as a process during which events pertaining to hazards interact with psychological, social, institutional and cultural processes in ways that can heighten or attenuate public perceptions of risk and shape risk behavior. More recently, amplification has been described as referring to the discrepancy that might exist between expert and lay points of view, or, where there is amplification of impacts, to the discrepancy

between expert assessments of the risk and the magnitude of the impacts that do or do not follow. Where public perceptions are such that the risk is much greater than expert assessments would suggest, we speak about intensification. Conversely, where perception/behavior suggests that the risk is much less than expert judgment would suggest we speak about attenuation (Breakwell and Barnett, 2001).

Some theorists argued that a number of “negative hazard attributes” or “outrage factors” exists which might influence people’s risk perception and therefore cause intensification or attenuation. The 1992 Royal Society Report identified eleven such attributes, whilst Covello and Sandman added nine more. It would be out of the scope of this study to mention all of them, but we can name a few which are linked to the perceived threat of terrorism:

1. Lack of personal control over outcomes (one cannot control a terrorist behavior, the time and place of the possible attack)
2. Lack of personal experiences with the risk (most tourists come from the developed countries where the incidence of terrorist attacks is quite low)
3. Infrequent but catastrophic accidents (high number of victims and great material losses of a terrorist attack)
4. Risks that cause dread - risks from activities that evoke fear, terror, or anxiety are perceived to be greater than risks from activities that do not arouse such feelings or emotions (terrorist attacks are linked with images of dying casualties, burning buildings, panic etc.)
5. Media attention – Risks from activities that receive considerable media coverage are viewed as greater than risks from activities that receive little (extreme interest of media in terrorism normally followed by the very graphic reports and images of the terrorist attacks)

Covello and Sandman argue that these findings reveal that people often perceive and assess “risk” more in terms of these factors than in terms of potential for “real” harm and hazard. For the public $RISK = HAZARD + OUTRAGE$. Thus, risk, is multidimensional and its quantitative size is only one of the dimensions. Since people vary in how they assess risk acceptability, they will weigh the outrage factors according to their own values, education, personal experience, and stake in the outcome. Because acceptability is a matter of values and opinions, and because values and opinions differ, discussions of risk may also be debates about values, accountability and control. Any measurement of risk would, therefore, need to be sensitive to the system of understanding in which that risk is viewed. This also suggests that apparently irrational views may actually constitute logical constructions of a perceived reality (Covello and Sandman, 2001).

4. Terrorism, tourism and risk perception

In modern context both terrorism and tourism are global phenomena. Tourists and tourist destinations become one of favorite terrorist targets. Due to a number of terrorist attacks on tourist destinations peaceful picture of travelling is fading away. People still remember incidents like the explosion that killed three in Paris in 1986, the home-made pipe bomb in Tel Aviv in 1990, the November 1997 massacre of 58 tourists at Luxor’s Temple of Hatshepsut in Egypt, and the Kenyan and Tanzanian US Embassy truck bombings killing 263 in August 1998 (Pizam and Smith, 2000). Attacks of 9/11, due to their enormous dimensions, number of victims, method of assault and media

attention, are in certain way a milestone in understanding and redefining strong links and complex mutual impacts that exist between tourism and terrorism.

On the tactical level tourism is used by terrorists to obtain resources to fund further activities through thefts and robberies. On the strategic level, attacking touristic targets is in function of achieving ideological aims and destabilizing target countries' economy and/or the power and status of the political elite by intimidating potential visitors (Sönmez et al., 1999). Attacks on tourism may also be used by terrorist organizations as a form of 'punishment' for the business community, political system and elements of society for their support of unpopular economic and social policies. Selection of touristic targets is stronger in those countries that are dependent upon tourism and, therefore, where the state is more likely to be susceptible to blackmail from the terrorists' perspective. At a strategic target, tourism is a surrogate; first attack the economy and achieve ideological aims later (Freyer and Schröder, 2007).

Cultural differences might also be a trigger for terrorist to attack tourists. For example tourists' behavior, forbidden in Islam religion, like eating pork, drinking alcohol and gambling may provoke attacks of radical Islamic groups that can see it as a threat to their traditions and value system.

In a number of cases actual target of terrorist are not the unfortunate tourists but rather the general social system, the government or the political order. Tourists are either means to indirectly reach those targets, or just a collateral damage (incidental victims). Of course, there are extreme cases of terror attacks against tourists and tourist facilities in which the violence can be understood as a message, aimed to alarm local, national and international general public through mass media.⁴

Scott argues that linkages between terrorism and tourism would not exist in the absence of media attention. In his paper "Media congestion limits media terrorism" he finds empirical linkages between terrorism and tourism (Scott, 2001).

In today's media world the most people first hear about a major terrorist incident through the media (TV, radio, newspapers or Internet). For omnipresent media, terrorist acts contain the very essence of hard news as they:

- involve ordinary people who have become the victims and with whom everyone can identify,
- represent threat to a lot of people, primarily to the most vulnerable and perhaps valuable (mainly perceived to be children, pregnant women and the elderly), and
- have major, perhaps fatal, long term consequences.

So media are, together with emergency services first at the spot of terrorist act, in order to give first information and follow up.

Usually, media coverage of terrorist attacks is overloaded with emotional overtones. According to the proverb "if it bleeds, it leads" journalists seem to have adopted the notion that the more a terrorist act can trigger viewers' emotions, the more coverage it should get. Inevitably reporting on such events involves human drama, tension, romance, adventure, tragedy and victims (Glaesser, 2006). This element, together with others such as physical proximity and cultural proximity, makes up the total news value of the event.⁵

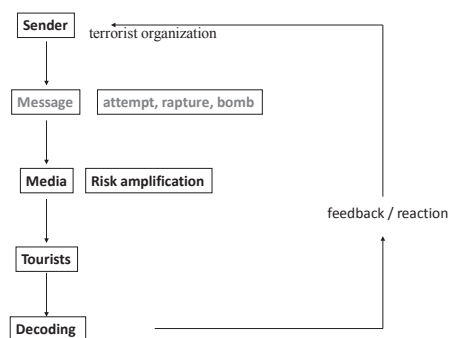
4 Between 1985 and 1998, Pizam and Smith counted about 70 important terrorist incidents at destinations in which 71% of the victims were tourists (Pizam and Smith, 2000).

5 For example Beirman asserts that the Philippines have suffered from terrorism since the early 1990s but only "attacks against foreign tourists have raised the media profile of this problem" (Beirman, 2006:254). If fellow countrymen are victims of terror attacks, the individual's sense of vulnerability increases.

If the foreign tourists are victimized in terrorist act, the situation is instantly magnified by the media, transferring the political conflict between terrorists and their establishment to a much wider scale of international attention. The tourist's country of origin becomes involved in the situation and the subsequent involvement of other countries intensifies the pressure on the government that the terrorists are sending a message to. The widespread media attention focused on the terrorists' political views confirms the usefulness of tourists to terrorists (Richter, 1983).

In social constructed reality the media is a major agent in shaping the public's view on risk. Research, however, shows that public attitudes towards the media are often ambivalent - a blend of attraction and repulsion. While many people really value the information, opinion and the entertainment that the media gives them, they are also very wary of the power they feel it has over them. The degree of cynicism the public have for some of the media means the effects of sensationalist reporting are not inevitable. The key point is trust; if the public trusts the medium, they are likely to treat the messages they receive from it as factually correct (Communicating Risk).

Effects of terrorist attack on tourists and media reporting can be direct and indirect. The direct effects are on the victims, their families and other people more or less involved or concerned. Potentially more damaging is the impact of any indirect effects. A number of following reports and repeating the disturbing images can amplify the effects of a terrorist act and produce a fundamental crisis of confidence in the safety of tourist destination and competence of security system and the Government of the country. Actually they can influence risk perception of potential tourists and their decision where to spend their holidays. As already mentioned, risk perception is not a matter of pure knowledge or precise calculation, but rather complex process including number of psychological, emotional and irrational factors. Although terrorist attacks on tourist are rather rare events, media reporting can influence public risk perception and the associated willingness to travel (Hoffman, 1999).⁶



Terrorism – media – tourism

In integrated decision-making model proposed by Sönmez and Graefe, media coverage of terrorism and/or political instability is the first among external factors that shape risk perception and in the last stage influence decision whether to travel to certain location or not. Media are the most important agent in disseminating information about level of security and possible terrorism at or near chosen vacation region or destination (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998:124).

⁶ Rick Steves notes that odds of being killed by a terrorist overseas or in the air are 1 in 2,200,000, while odds of being struck by lightning are 1 in 600,000 and odds of being killed by gunfire in the United States are 1 in 18,900. (Rick Steves Talks about Safe Travel on <http://www.ricksteves.com/about/pressroom/qa.htm> retrieved on February 10, 2010.)

In ideal world media reports should enable the public to make competent and responsible decisions about risks. But in reality journalistic selection of information and topic selection of special themes for broad public interest may distort the actual situation and create a false perception of public risk (Meier and Schanne, 1996). Under these conditions, such things as trip cancellations and a fall in demand at destinations and regions that are actually safe and unaffected by terror attacks can be understood. As a result of intense coverage of terrorist activities that may be linked to tourism, there may be a substantial short-term fall in demand for tourism in the affected destination. Above all, frivolous coverage can lead to mid and long-term negative public attitudes regarding the risk factor of a destination as well as its associated image, thereby further jeopardizing tourism demand. Even after booking a trip, negative information may still alter a decision, leading to a cancelled trip.

For example German media coverage of Egypt created the impression that the entire country was affected by the fundamentalist terror attacks. A statement from the head of the Egyptian tourist office, Bakier, declared that only the area around Assiut was considered dangerous (Schreier, 1994). Another example is social turmoil in Havana in August 1994, when about 10,000 people demonstrated and counter demonstrated in a peaceful event. Some media reports on this event were completely exaggerated, leading to a considerable number of cancellations of trips to Cuba (Chierek, 1995).

Media coverage of terrorism or political upheaval has the potential to shape the induced image individuals have of destinations. Terrorism has a most dangerous potential for a place's image, and many places seek a real solution to avoid possible crises and prevent future attacks (Avraham and Ketter, 2008:143). "Media coverage of terrorist events has an especially powerful potential influence because media coverage is frequently the only source of information on an issue available to the audience. Media coverage is not only frequently a unique source of information but it may also be a unique source of interpretation. In particular, the general public is apt to rely to an enormous degree on media accounts for an understanding of terrorists' motives, the implications of their actions, and the essential character of the situation" (Weimann and Winn, 1994:154). Effects of media coverage can spread from the tourist place affected to the whole country or even region.

Institute Medien Tenor's research reports make pretty clear how media coverage can negatively affect demand for tourism. In a time period of one year beginning in January 1998, German television reported on hotspots in Israel in every second story. Around 80% of those reports dealt with international crises and terrorism. At the time, in the period from September 2000 to August 2001, there were a similar number of stories in the German media and every fourth story was of a negative nature. Eighty-eight per cent of stories about Israel in the US media were about terrorist incidents, and two-thirds were negatively portrayed (Medien Tenor, 2001).

Receiving information about risks of terrorism at the destination or with the transportation they intend to use, can have a decisive influence on the potential tourists and their decision to travel, so they might decide to substitute planned destinations with a safer alternative. Relevant studies have shown that tourists substitute risky destinations with safer choices, demonstrate a delayed reaction to terrorism and exhibit cultural differences in their reactions to risk. Despite their low probability, risks carrying high costs, such as terrorism, appear to provoke serious consumer reaction. For example, as a result of terrorist activity in 1985, 1.8 million Americans changed their foreign plans the following year (Sonmez and Graefe, 1998).



Source: Forschungsgemeinschaft Urlaub und Reisen (2003).

Perceiving and labeling specific destination as unsafe results in a drop of the number of stays, especially when the groups of better off tourists are in question, and this might present an opportunity for other tourist locations, regions or countries. It was estimated that the Islamic extremist terrorist attack in Luxor in 1997 cost Egyptian tourism approximately 50% of their annual turnover (Glaeser, 2003:48).

However, research on terrorism indicates that the initial effects of terror attacks are severe, but only after a few months the incidents are forgotten and the negative influence on the public diminishes. According to Fleischer and Buccola “tourists last an average of two month since acting to increases in terrorist attacks, while over a longer period, an event’s psychological effect appears to subside” (Fleischer and Buccola, 2002:1339). And, if such negative events occur further, the population’s attitude will drastically change once again.

It should be noted that risk perception is not the only factor that influences decision making process. There are a number of important external (government issued travel advisories; social interactions regarding terrorism and/or political instability), internal (international travel experience; international travel attitude; traveler personality type) and demographic (age; gender; income; education; children in the household) factors that influence motivation and decision to travel (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998).

Al Qaeda’s attacks on the World Trade Centre clearly demonstrate the potential risk which terrorism poses for the tourism industry. 9/11 events in the USA, together with 2003 war in Iraq, SARS and other health-related outbreaks greatly affected tourism industry. According to Travel Industry Association of America since 2000 domestic and international travel expenditures dropped 29.100.000.000 \$ in 2001 (Travel Industry Association of America, 2002). The impact of 9/11 was particularly high in the USA. Society has become more skeptical and more suspicious and watchful (Chura, 2002). According to TIA, travelers are also experiencing a certain degree of uncertainty and continue to be more cautious in their planning (Amarante, 2003).

5. Crisis management strategies

As tourist destinations are vulnerable to politically motivated violence, Sönmez, Apostolopoulos and Tarlow suggest tourist managers should incorporate crisis management planning into their overall sustainable development and marketing/management strategies to protect and rebuild their image of safety/attractiveness, to reassure potential visitors of the safety of the area, to reestablish the area's functionality/attractiveness, and to aid local travel and tourism industry members in their economic recovery. Their recommendations include having a crisis management plan in place, establishing a tourism crisis management task force, developing a crisis management guide book, and partnering with law enforcement officials (Sönmez, Apostolopoulos and Tarlow, 1999).

Based on Israeli experience, Yoel Mansfeld gives some generally applicable advices for recovery of tourism industry. Marketing activities should be dynamic, constantly innovative yet sensitive to various crisis scenarios. Messages regarding security and safety must be spelled out in a realistic manner. In the midst of a given severe and ongoing security situation, all marketing campaigns aimed at international tourism must be stopped as they would be wasting of resources and credibility. An affected receiving country should maintain a constant flow of comprehensive information at the level of security and safety as a travel destination. These data also need to be available at all times through communications channels accessible by the generating markets (newspapers, special TV travel programs, the Internet, travel magazines, etc.) (Mansfeld, 1999).

Places cannot just ignore the crisis trying to portray it as insignificant, irrelevant and marginal. This technique of limiting the crisis often implemented when the media demand explanations or reactions from decision makers. For example, after a terror attack in Djerbe in Tunisia an official said, "There is no terrorism in Tunisia! Why do you always focus on that?" He added that only one synagogue was attacked and that "it is not the end of the world" (<http://www.themedialine.org>). This was also the case after a suicide bomber attack in Cairo, Egypt. Officials tried to convince the media that the terrorist had acted alone and was not a part of a new terror network (*Ha'aretz*, April 10, 2005).

Some countries implemented specific tailor-made strategies after terrorist attacks. A 2002 terror attack in Tunisia near a local synagogue exerted a marked adverse effect on tourism from Israel. Perceiving Israelis as an important target market, the Tunisian government formulated new regulations to enhance the sense of security and to make visits by Israeli tourists safer and easier; measures included providing an escort of local police forces for organized groups (*Ha'aretz*, January 1, 2005). Likewise, following a terrorist attack against German tourists, the Egyptian government took a hard line against radical Islamic groups and reduced the odds of possible future crises (Wahab, 1996). Both Tunisia and Egypt tried to cope with an image crisis indirectly: instead of dealing directly with the negative image they addressed the problem that caused it. Egypt has tried to deal with its terrorism problem through increased security and aggressive marketing and promotion efforts. Egyptian police adopted preventive and proactive measures that eventually helped them find and arrest terrorist leaders (Wahab, 1996).

Mexico lowering the prices and aggressive marketing campaign (Pitts, 1996), while Northern Ireland tried with devising strategies to increase visitation (i.e., developing new tourism products/attractions) supported by heavy promotions (Witt and Moore, 1992) maintaining good contacts with members of the international media; providing comprehensive information to international tour operators, travel agents, and the press (to evaluate travel risks in their proper context); and wisely guiding tourists away from high-risk areas (Wahab, 1996).

6. Conclusion

Today terrorism has become global phenomena and tourist destinations and tourists are high on the scale of possible terrorist targets. Having in mind that security counts as one of the important element of the tourism industry, the threat potential of international terrorism must be taken seriously in every country, not only those that have so far had experiences with terrorism. Influences of those events on tourism industry, amplified through media reports, are not to be underestimated. Managers in tourist industry, in cooperation with wide range of actors, first of all state or regional security agencies, emergency service providers, media and NGOs, should be proactive and develop and implement comprehensive integrated crisis management plans to reduce the risk and influence of serious adversity. Crisis communication has to be important part of these plans, as tourist industry is reliant on image and positive perceptions.

There are no universal recipes that can be simply taken from “cookbook” and implemented after the terrorist attacks have occurred in order to reestablish image of affected tourist destination and regain the confidence of holiday makers. Although all the terrorist attacks have a number of common features, every one of them is a unique event. So in each case of terrorist attack targeted on tourism destination or tourists, all the relevant circumstances (stakeholders, short term and long term consequences, side effects, etc.) should be closely analyzed in order to choose the most appropriate public relation strategy to regain the undermined image and lost international integrity.

General rules and recommendations in crisis communication have also to be followed by the tourist industry when dealing with consequences of terrorist attacks. Honesty, transparency, professionalism, sensitivity and compassion for victims and good communications with the public and media can improve chances of a faster recovery. Very important is passing the information about the type of threat to the transportation and accommodation industries and instructing international tour operators and travel agents about possible dangers. The optimal communication messages based on the knowledge and understanding of the market should be composed and send.

After terrorist attacks in Bali World Tourism Organization recommended pro-active strategies for future crisis communication and preparedness planning should include the development of a dedicated public relations office, establishing a specific media response protocol, the formation of a representative consultative body and basic resource allocation (Gurtner, 2007:87).

It is truth that the communication of risk is not an easy task, but risk assessment and communication should at least be a part of the policy discussion over terrorism, something that may well prove to be a far smaller danger than is popularly portrayed. The constant, unnuanced stoking of fear by politicians and the media is costly, enervating, potentially counterproductive, and unjustified by the facts (Mueller, 2004).

The tragedy of 9/11 has caused communication managers to rethink everything they do. Lisa Fall notices that “messages are constantly being restructured, communication channels are being retooled, and key publics are being retargeted (Fall, 2004). The post-9/11 terrorist attacks demand that communication programs be elaborately, yet strategically revamped. One cannot assume that programs that were successful before 9/11 will continue to be appropriate after 9/11. No “cookie cutter” formulas or “how

to” crisis manuals could be used for such a rare and uncharted circumstance (Fall, 2004). New circumstances require not only communication skills and broad crisis communication knowledge, but creativity, courage and innovations.

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TERORIZAM I TURISTIČKA INDUSTRIJA – ULOGA MEDIJA U PERCEPCIJI RIZIKA

Rezime

Još pre kraja Hladnog rata teroristički akti su imali veliki uticaj na turističku industriju. Tesne veze između terorizma i turizma ne postoje u odsustvu medijske pažnje. Teroristički akti su medijski događaji prve vrste. Neki mediji su, u potrazi za profitom, neodgovorni u izveštavanju o terorističkim aktima. Međutim, mediji imaju jak uticaj na način na koji turisti percipiraju rizike, pa time i na turističku industriju. Rizici koji proističu iz aktivnosti koje izazivaju strah i užas, kao što je terorizam, percipiraju se kao veći od rizika od aktivnosti koje ne izazivaju ovakve emocije. Način na koji su teroristi predstavljeni u masovim medijima oblikuje percepciju određenih destinacija, zemalja i celih regiona u očima potencijalnih turista i time utiče na turističku industriju. Imajući to u vidu, menadžeri u turističkoj industriji treba da koriste sve neophodne alate i tehnike kriznog komuniciranja da bi povratili utisak stabilnosti turističkih destinacija pogođenih terorističkim aktima.