

Crises in tourism industry: Role of tourists and airplane authorities

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Abstract - This paper focuses on role of tourists and airline authorities in managing crises. Crisis is unavoidable, tourism industry is most prone to crisis, but these crises can be reduced and their risk can be lowered if proper steps and actions are taken. Thus this paper talks about important actions and strategies airline industry should adopt in order to control crises and make travellers feel safe. This paper also talks about various safety needs that a traveller should keep in mind before going to a new or unknown destination. It is the responsibility of each and every stakeholder present in this sector to have knowledge about crises management and to be able to overcome any situation.

Key Words: Crises, Management, Crises management, airplane, airport, travelling. Travellers, Tourism, tourists. Safety, strategies, actions, emergency.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism Industry is one of the most vulnerable to crises. With the problems like terror attack, natural disasters, mismanagement it becomes necessary to manage and assess these man made and natural crises. It is important for various stakeholders involved in the tourism sector to come up with solutions, action plans in order to tackle the problem of crises.

2. Study

2.1 Research Methodology

1. Type of Research

The type of research used in this study was Exploratory Research, as it aims to explore the main aspects of an under-researched problem of role that individual tourists and airline authorities play in combating the crisis or mishap that might happen during tours. The study is also aimed at exploring what are the various safety needs of the travellers and corrective actions and steps taken by them to reduce the risk of crisis while visiting a tourist place.

2. Type of Research Design

The Research Design used is Descriptive Research, which is based on case study, observations and survey. Thus it is apt for the purpose of the research study conducted.

3. Population

The main aim of the study is to find what steps tourist and airline authorities take to tackle the problem of crisis while travelling, thus the population of research were employees working in the aviation sector, travel bloggers as well as Individuals and families, who prefers to go on vacations.

4. Sampling Considerations

Following were the sampling considerations for the research study

a) Elements

Employees working in the Aviation Industry, and especially part of aviation security department which includes Airport security personnel, Airline security manager and security ground staff.

Travel bloggers who regularly travel and visit various tourist spots and individuals and Families who likes traveling and going on vacations.

b) Sampling Frame

The Survey was sent to 3564 people, out of which the number of respondents was equal to 547. After going through the data and sorting it, 393 of respondents were selected to carry out the research study.

c) Sampling size calculator and Sampling error

For an accepted margin of error of 5% and a confidence level of 95%, with the population being infinite, the sample size on calculation according to the table comes out to be 384. (Source: <https://www.researchadvisors.com/tools/SampleSize.htm>)

d) Sampling Techniques

The samples were collected using Convenience sampling technique as it was best suited for conducting exploratory research. Representatives were selected on the basis of their interests in answering the given questions and willingness to be part of the study.

5. Variables

The variables used for the research purpose are categorised into dependent and the independent variables. The study consist following variables.

a) Independent variables

- External threats that might happen at a tourist spot or during travelling via airplanes.
- Societal/Political events like domestic unrest
- technological events such as transportation accidents and the failure of IT systems
- The number of people travelling and visiting to a tourist spot

b) Dependent Variables

- Security procedures followed by airplane authorities
- Emergency protocols and infrastructure repair
- Decisions by airlines to reduce flights to affected destinations

- Heightened perception of risk and consequent erosion of customer confidence
- Decisions by consumers to cancel or postpone their trips due to safety issues

6. Scales Used

Following scales were used in the study to collect the relevant data from the respondents

a) Constant Sum Scale- This scale was used to measure importance of various corrective actions and safety protocols followed by Aviation industry and tourists destination to make tourists feel safe. The measure or step which according to them was the most important were given greater points, whereas the steps or actions which were less important were given least points. If a respondent feel that the action which these authorities have taken is not at all important then can give 0 points. Thus the step or action which have greater points will be most important for the tourists to feel safe and the steps with lesser points will be least important.

b) Rank Order Scale- The following scale was used measure the rankings of the various safety factors that travellers keep in mind before travelling or choosing a destination to visit. Respondents were given various measures regarding their safety and were asked to rank them in order of preference and importance. Rank 1 was to be given to the factor that was most important for them and so on.

7) Instruments Use

The instrument used to carry out the research was a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of close-ended questions. Close-ended questions were chosen as the answers to these questions can be analysed with ease. The questionnaire was prepared through Google Forms.

8) Tools to be used

Following tools will be used in the study to analyse the data collected.

1) Bar graphs- Stacked Bar charts have been used to show the importance of various emergency protocols, which measurement taken by airline authorities to combat crisis is most beneficial and effective.

2) Pie Charts- Pie charts are used to analyse safety factors which are most important for the travellers. It also helped in analysing the importance of safety measures that tourists take before travelling to a new destination

2.2 Literature Review

(Santana, 2008) Tourist industry is now one of the most vulnerable industry to crises, with the problem of natural disasters, epidemics, mismanagement to even terror attacks. It is important to manage these crises and assess the impact of such major man made and natural crisis. (Backman, 1992) Tourist destinations are vulnerable to disasters because of their economic dependence on visitors and the need to maintain a positive image of attractiveness and safety for continued success.

(W.Ritchie, 2004) There is a growing need and importance of crisis and disaster management in the Tourism industry.

Though these disasters cannot be stopped but they can be prevented with the proper management by both private and public sectors. The crisis can be managed to great extent if there is a proper planning and a strategic approach to it.

(Pradeep Racherla, 2009) crisis management is a critical factor that decides the sustainability and success of a destination. Such tourism crisis can be solved through knowledge management principles which helps in enhancing the crisis management planning.

(Sausmarez, 2009) Damage that is caused to the tourism industry by crisis and disaster, not only have serious national implications but also threatens the lives of the people visiting or traveling there. To minimise the crisis and disasters, monitoring of the various crisis indicator should be done in order to protect tourism of that place.

(Zissis Maditinos, 2008) Due to the globalisation, our world is getting smaller and smaller, and crisis at one destination, can also affect broader areas and worldwide. All the people and stakeholders involved in tourism business needs to have prior crisis preparedness, which can have significant impact on the industry. (Christof Pforr, 2008) If there is more systematic input by human resources and workers in this industry can be managed properly, then it can help in dealing with and preparing for crises. If the human resources is managed effectively, then vulnerability of industry to meet disasters and crises can be reduced.

(Sevil F. Sönmez, 1999) The cities which are politically unstable have higher chances of tourism crisis in the form of terrorism. Thus it is very important to implement and incorporate crisis planning and marketing the tourist spot properly and build the image of such places as safe and attractive. This can be done with the help of crisis management task force, with the support of law enforcing officials. (Mansfeld, 1999) Such manmade crises such as terror attacks can prominently see in place like Israel. Using where there is need of strict laws and guidelines for tourism industry to grow.

(Althnayan, 2012) It was found that various stakeholder and people were less involved in the stages of crisis management where there was more need of security due to terrorism and on the other hand, people participated more in the crisis management stages where there was police was involved.

(Adam Blake M. Thea Sinclair, 2003) Tourism is badly affected by crisis and people don't come to the destination, it was found that Sector-specific targeted subsidies and tax reductions are found to be the most efficient means of handling the crises, where then people buy tickets to come to your country or destination.

(Hall, 2010) 'The potential effects of crisis events on international tourism are likely to increase in both size and frequency as tourism becomes increasingly hypermobile and the global economy even more interconnected.'

(Jose K Antony, 2019) Social media can play a very vital role in prevention of crisis and can be of a great help in managing

the crises and disasters. Though it has various benefits but its role is very less in managing disasters and crises. (Sigala, 2014) Social media can be used to include various stakeholders and other people in crisis management strategies and activities through networking and collaboration capabilities.

(Jack C Carlsen, 2008) A proper research agenda is needed for planning crisis management effectively. To prevent such crises, there should be a research agenda that should focus on crisis management, communication and market recovery, rather than focusing on preventing such crises. (Alexandros Paraskevas, 2012) It is also very important to look at the aspect of crisis signal detection. It includes scanning, capturing and transmitting to the crises response. This is also important besides crisis preparedness, containment and damage limitation etc.

(Josip Mikulić, 2018) 'Strategic management of crises and disasters is considered a vital ingredient for managing sustainable tourism development.' There should be a strategic planning to be able to assess risk and quantify and prioritize the industrial risks.

(YAVARIGO HAR FATEMEH, 2018) preventive approach is an action against what may happen in the future and obviously, the implementation of remedial measures in the early stages will cost less money and time. (Richa Malhotra, 2009) There need to be an effective contingency plan beforehand to handle the crisis properly, this comes under pre planned crisis management, where a plan is made before the disaster or crisis happens

(Avner Arbel, 1980) Analytical planning is also required to be well prepared with the crisis management. Focus should be on reduction in residual negative effects in each step. The steps should be pre crisis policy measure, second stage is response policies to be implemented and third stage consist of supplementary measure. (Noel Scott, 2008) 'They have also discussed rescue efforts and the complexity of management tasks in the immediate aftermath of an event, often pointing to the need for preplanning to mitigate the consequences of any future disaster.'

(Hanno Michail Martens, 2016) The problem of crisis can also be solved by involvement of each and every stakeholder, which is complex in such a wide industry. Creating action based plan with all preventive measure can solve the problem to great extent. (Giuseppe Alipertia, 2019) Tourism industry mostly involves interactions of various organisations, people and events. There should be connection between organisation, people in this industry with disaster management committees, for better approach and result

(christof, 2009) Recovering marketing requires targeting the customers again and again, through public relation campaigning helping them to rebuild their confidence in the destination again. (Beirman, 2003) Organisations that deal with marketing of destinations have to face various challenges. Various destinations have events that are beyond their control like crime rates, natural disaster, terror attacks Etc, thus it

becomes one of the challenges to market such destinations where there is chances of crisis or disasters.

Research Gap-

Research Question 1: Role of Airline authorities, security force in taking effective steps to combat different crises

Research Question 2: what are the various safety needs and thoughts of people going on a tour or a vacation

2.3 Analysis of data

Table -1: Following table shows categories of tourism crises

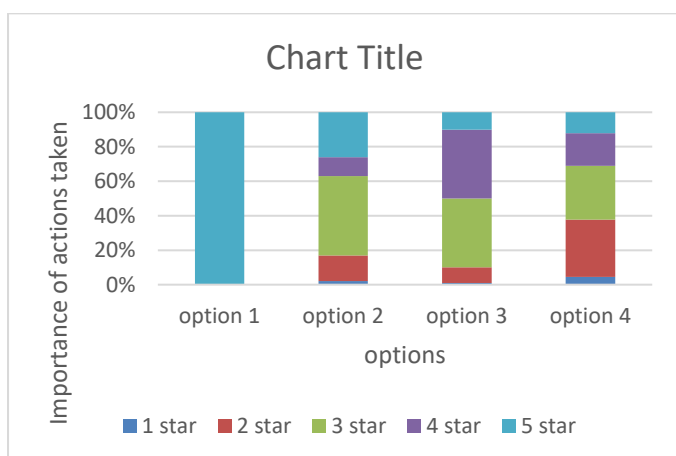
Categories	Events
Environmental	including geological and extreme weather events, and human-induced situations such as climate change and deforestation.
Societal and Political	including riots, crime waves, terrorist acts, violently contested elections
Health Related	such as disease epidemics affecting humans or animals
Technological	including transportation accidents and IT system failures
Economical	such as major currency fluctuations and financial crises.

These are the various notable crises that can occur in any destination. If any of the above mentioned crises happens at a destination then it affects the normal operation of tourism sectors, either because of physical damage to infrastructure or destination being perceived as unsafe.

Role of Airline authorities, security force in taking effective steps to combat different crises-

Actions	option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4	
	%	cum	%	cum	%	cum	%	cum
1stars	0	0	2	2	1	1	4	4
2stars	0	0	15	17	9	10	30	34
3stars	0	0	46	63	40	50	28	62
4stars	0	0	11	74	40	90	17	89
5stars	0	100	26	100	10	100	11	100
SNo	Options							

Option 1	Ensuring safety and welfare of customers by covering their basic needs, followed by evacuation to home country or another area
Option 2	Ensure safety and welfare of staff by transferring non-essential members outside the affected area.
Option 3	strong and open communication with government bodies and tourists
Option 4	Assess and carry out most urgent infrastructural repairs in the airport and airlines



The above chart shows the importance of each action and steps taken by Airline authority and security force. Giving a 5 star to an option means it is the most important action, whereas giving an option 1 star means that it is the least important action. Thus the graph represents that which action according to the respondents was most important.

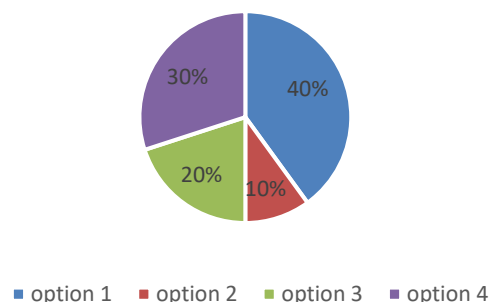
what are the various safety needs and thoughts of people going on a tour or a vacation?

The safety needs of travelers is being categorized into Travel safety, Transport safety, and Hotel safety.

Travel Safety-

Options	%	Degree
Avoid seedier areas of the cities you visit, especially at night.	40%	144
Try to rely more on credit cards and travelers cheques than cash.	10%	36
Keep a photocopy of your passport and all other important documents in a safe place.	20%	72
Avoid incidents such as fights, riots or civil disturbances at all times.	30%	108

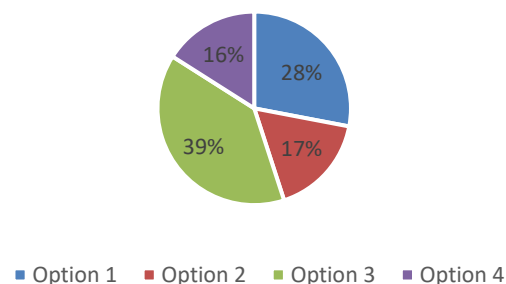
Travel safety needs



Transport Safety-

Options	%	Degree
Don't share taxis with strangers.	28%	101
Avoid changing money at airports, as thieves could be watching you.	17%	61
Make sure you know what official taxi cabs look like.	39%	140
At the airport, watch for your suitcase as it appears on the carousel	16%	58

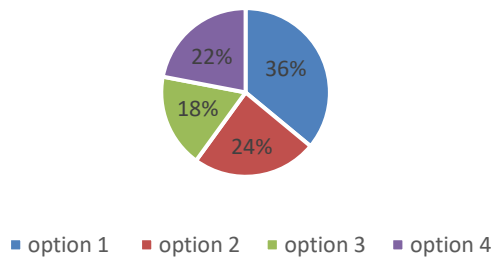
Transport Safety needs



Hotel Safety

Options	%	Degree
Always lock your hotel door when retiring for the night.	36	130
Take note of emergency exits, stairwells, fire escapes and emergency plans, just in case.	24	86
choose accommodation that has unmarked swipe cards rather than numbered keys	18	65
When arranging to meet people you've never met before, wait for them in the lobby. Don't ask them to come up to your room	22	79

Hotel Safety needs



3. CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS

Role of Airline authorities, security force in taking effective steps to combat different crises-

The respondents were given to rate different emergency steps or protocols taken by the airline authorities and security forces during crisis. The respondents had to rate these steps out of 5 stars. If the step according to them was very important and was one of the main steps, then they had to give 5 stars, and if they believe that a certain protocol is not necessary then they can rate it as 1 star.

Following were the findings

1) Option 1- Ensuring safety and welfare of customers by covering their basic needs, followed by evacuation to home country or another area, seemed very important to all 393 respondents, as everyone gave it 5 stars

2) Option 2- Ensure safety and welfare of staff by transferring non-essential members outside the affected area, seemed important to approximately 102 people, whereas 8 people found this option to be least important.

3) Option 3- strong and open communication with government bodies and tourists, was important to almost 39 people, whereas 4 people found it to be least important. Majority of the people gave this option 3 and 4 stars.

4) Option 4- Assess and carry out most urgent infrastructural repairs in the airport and airlines, was important for almost 43 people, whereas the number of people who found this to be least important are 15.

Thus according to the findings option 1 that is Ensuring safety and welfare of customers by covering their basic needs, followed by evacuation to home country or another area, shall be the first step or the prime role of airlines in order to combat the crisis and to control such a situation.

what are the various safety needs and thoughts of people going on a tour or a vacation?

Following were the findings regarding the following research question-

1) Travel Safety

When we talk about travel safety, majority of the people feel that going to unknown areas at night in a new destination is most dangerous as the chances of crisis like thefts, assault, kidnapping etc increases at night. Respondents find option 2- Try to rely more on credit cards and travellers cheques than cash least dangerous. The respondents also feels that avoiding incidents such as fights, riots or civil disturbances at all times improves the safety level and can prevent crises. 20% of respondents also feels that it is very much important for travellers to keep a photocopy of your passport and all other important documents in a safe place.

2) Transport Safety-

Majority of the respondents feel that to maintain transport safety and to avoid any kind of crises, it is important for travellers to know how the official cab of that destination looks like, respondents also believes that it is more safe to travel alone and to share cabs or taxi with strangers. 17% of the people also believed that one should avoid changing money in the airport in order to prevent crisis like theft, 16% of the people responded that it is important to keep a check of your luggage at the airport to avoid mishaps.

3) Hotel Safety-

36% of the respondents feel that locking your hotel door properly at night is very important and is one of the most important safety measure. 24% of the people feel that it is important to take note of emergency exits, stairwells, fire escapes and emergency plans, in case of emergency evacuation. People also believes that it is not safe to invite someone whom you are meeting for the first time to your room for any kind of meeting, some respondents also felt that using unmarked swipe cards are better than key for unlocking the door, as it reduces the chance of theft.

Thus people have various safety needs and thoughts before they travel to a new destination and they need to look at various points before travelling and needs to be sure that what all steps they should take in order to avoid and mitigate the risk of crises.

Crises in tourism industry is unavoidable, this industry is most prone to crisis, but these crises can be reduced and their risk can be lowered if proper steps and actions are taken. It is not only the duty of tourist operators, government, transport companies, airlines etc to manage the crises, but it is also the duty of the traveller to be aware of the various risks and crisis they might face while travelling to a new place. Thus it is the responsibility of everyone to manage the crises at the right time with correct actions, plans and strategies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research was supported by Symbiosis Centre for Management studies. I thank my professors who provided insight and expertise that greatly assisted the research.

I would also like to show my gratitude to Symbiosis Centre for Management Studies for sharing this opportunity with me and supporting me during the course of this research, and I thank International Journal of Scientific Research in Engineering and Management for publishing my work, although any errors are my own and should not tarnish the reputations of the esteemed Journal.

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https://uic.org/IMG/pdf/crisis_management_report.pdf

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