

Travel Risks vs Tourist Decision Making: A Tourist Perspective

Anshul Garg*

Abstract *This paper sheds light on tourist's emotional experiences on holiday, which are central to increase our understanding of tourist behaviour. Tourists usually travel to cities with good impression. Choosing a travel destination is definitely a complicated decision-making process for tourists. For safety concerns, some tourists intentionally visit somewhere familiar and nearby, but avoid nations or areas with high crime rates or political instability. A wide range of perceptions governs the desirability and appeal of a destination to the potential traveler. The importance of investigating perceptions of travel risks has been recognized with in a number of different disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, criminology and marketing. It is often assumed that perceptions of safety and security may influence individuals' destination choice. Consumers use information gathered from various sources like word of mouth, different forms of media, guidebooks, talking to friends and relatives, to form a perception of a particular destination. This is a quantitative study conducted in Malaysia. The respondents who participated in this research were the nationals of Malaysia, India, China, Indonesia, Australia, and France, etc. The study found that most holidaymakers perceive earthquake, tsunami, SARS, terrorist activities, swine flu as risk. The results of the study suggest that safety, peace and stability are major concerns for tourists' while choosing their travel destination.*

Keywords: *Destination, Safety, Risks, Decision Making, Perception*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Tourism is one of the major contributors in many ways to the life of human population, such as creating revenues, jobs, supporting culture and entertainment (Garg, 2013). There are many industries that show positive relations with the growth of the tourism industry, examples are hotel & lodging industry, food and beverage industry, transport industry, travel agencies, tour operators and industries which are dealing with real estate, finance and insurance (Goeldner, Ritchie, and McIntosh, 2006). The developments in technology and transport infrastructure such as jumbo jets, low cost airlines and other more accessible transport systems have made many types of tourism more affordable. Tourism contributes in many ways to the life of human population, such as generating revenues, jobs, supporting culture and entertainment. Although tourism industry has become fastest growing industry, it also has some obstacles due to the world crime activities such as terrorism and war, the spreading of

the epidemic diseases, world natural disasters and recession crisis in the world's economy. These obstacles are giving big impact for the tourism growth and make it one significant term which is travel risks (Murthy, 2008).

The traveler's behavior in the decision making for what destination they are going to visit will always tie up with the travel risks (Henderson, 2007). The history shows that 9/11 attacks, SARS, swine flu, Tsunami, Bali bombing, 26/11 Mumbai attacks over the past few years have vacillated the global tourism industry due to these crises and disasters. Speedy response to any incident of natural or man-made disaster will be cancellation of air/rail tickets and hotel bookings leading to stagnation and slowdown in the hotel and tourism industry (Garg, 2010). As a result, people get temporarily unemployed; countries get deprived of foreign exchange; and tour operators, airlines, taxi owners and all those depending on tourism to earn livelihood suffer serious financial losses (Garg, 2010; Oluwole & Olufemi, 2011). However, few tourists will consider these implications in determining their choice of destination (Oluwole & Olufemi, 2011). Because of this situation, it created a perception from

* Taylor's University, School of Hospitality, Tourism & Culinary Arts, Selangor, Malaysia. E-mail: anshul.garg@taylors.edu.my

the traveler's perspective that the need of safety and security become the main factors while choosing a travel destination (Hall, Timothy & Duval, 2003). The tourism industry should educate or increase the market understanding about the travelers' perception of the safety and security while travelling, also at the same time keep the industry to be stay still in its position or increase in its rapid growth and prevent the unexpected decrease (Henderson, 2007).

There are several external influences on the flow of tourism; some of which are natural in their origin and others very much the result of human activity called human-caused disasters (Amara, 2012). Due to its inherent characteristics, the tourism industry is particularly vulnerable to crises not confined to any geographical region, ranging from natural disasters to epidemics, and from mismanagement to security concerns. Travel research provides ample evidence for the fact that the tourism experience is associated with risk (Bentley et al. 2001). Tourists are generally both more likely to take certain risks while travelling, and more susceptible to hazard and uncertainty in an unfamiliar environment (Amara, 2012). The more a tourist feels unsecured, the less he has intention to visit any particular place (Chiu, 2008). According to Sonmez and Graefe (1998), 77% of tourists only choose safe cities to travel. In comparison with backpackers, tourists traveling with tour group are safer and secured during most of the time. Package tour lessens the risks of tourists accidentally getting into a dangerous place (Chiu, 2010). Risk is an inherent component of travelers' product and destination choice. Individuals have different perceptions of possible destination choices, and tend to be risk-averse or risk-taking to different degrees (Amara, 2012).

Destinations differ in many respects; their location, historical experience, to political instability, ethnic conflicts and crime. Given these differences, the analysis of destination risk and its components is of substantial interest (Amara, 2012). Tourists might have bad impressions to a tourism destination or its near areas where there are reports by media or tourism alert by government about local tourism crimes.

Research Aim

This main aim of this research is to explore and analyze the effect of risk perception on tourists' decision making (TDM) on their choice of destination.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this research is to analyze the influence of tourists' perception of various types of risks on their decision making process. The study will also explore the factors that influence TDM. Based on the discussion above, the objectives of the research will be:

1. To study the factors that influence tourist risk perception and their decision making process.
2. To identify the relationship between the factors influencing Risk Perception and Tourists' decision making process.
3. To examine whether risk perception have an influence on tourist's decision making.

Research Questions

RQ 1: What are the factors that influence tourist risk perception and their decision making process?

RQ 2: What is the relationship between the factors influencing Risk Perception and Tourists' decision making process?

RQ 3: Does risk perception has any influence on tourist's decision making?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Awareness of travel risk

Awareness of travel risk refers to tourists' concern, attention and reaction to safety. According to Zheng (2003), the main reason to endanger travel security is the weakness of travel risk awareness. Male tourists have stronger ability to protect themselves than the females (Chiu & Lin, 2010); tourists are more easily attacked by those who look fierce, stupid, lazy, and drugs addicts (Chiu & Lin, 2010); and there is nothing tourists can do to protect themselves from unexpected crimes (Chiu & Lin, 2010). The concern for travel security relates to the demographic characteristics as well. If a tourism destination is considered unsecured, the female and the elderly tourists tend to cancel travel plans while the younger tourists tend to keep their planed trips. Tourists with high incomes or those traveling with families prefer to cancel travel plans (Zheng & Zhang, 2002). There are tourists who deliberately seek thrill and perceive fear, a common expression attached to safety and security, as a positive emotion (Mura, 2010). They prefer of f-beaten routes and actively participate in adventure tourism activities (Lepp & Gibson, 2008).

Risk Perception

Tourists may be justified in expecting some degree of protection by governments and the industry. However, individuals are responsible for their own decisions and actions (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998). The introduction of risk into touristic decisions has the potential to disrupt routine decision-making. It is intuitively logical for potential tourists to compare destination alternatives according to

perceived benefits and costs. It is rational to be certain of that the danger of terrorism at a particular destination will cause it to be perceived as more costly than a safer destination (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998). Another assumption is that if the destination choice is narrowed down to two alternatives which promise similar benefits, the less costly one-one that is safe from threat-is likely to be chosen (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998).

Risks have mostly been treated as an issue of facilitators versus inhibitors or constraints. For example, time, budget, and physical distance have been identified as important constraints potential tourists use to discriminate between destination alternatives (Cook & McCleary, 1983). Crompton (1977) suggested that destination choice is made after constraints (i.e., time, money) are weighed against destination image. vanRaaij and Francken (1984) added that decisions are made by weighing constraints against current economic situations. According to their premise, tourists might choose less expensive options or decide against travel during economic difficulty. It is likely for perceptions of crime, terrorism, or health risk to cause similar behavior.

Travel experiences in the past offer more senses of safety to tourists as well (Mazursky, 1989; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998). Conversely, negative experiences may make potential tourists nervous about future options (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998). It is rational to accept that those who associate high risk with international travel will prefer vacationing at home-presuming that domestic destinations are perceived as safe (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998). The level of perceived risk may also dictate the amount of information search, which has been identified as a risk reduction strategy undertaken by the potential tourist (Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992).

(Weber & Hsee, 1998) provide evidence that cultural differences may play a role in risk perception, which may, in turn, impact destination decisions. Suggestions from Weber and Hsee supported with the development consideration from (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006) which covered significant differences, in varying degrees, in risk perception, anxiety, safety perception and travel intention among tourists from different countries. Individuals behave depending on their culture from their nature of origin (Suvantola, 2002). It affects the way they perceive the risk perception of a particular destination which suffer risk event on particular time. (Carlsen & Hughes, 2007) studied that after the 2004 world natural disasters of tsunami, the Maldivian tourism industry showed the highest decline on tourist arrivals from the Italians, Japanese and French, while on the other side, tourists from India, Russia and Britain showed the lowest decline.

Sonmez and Graefe (1998) also added that the perception of risks or safety concerns are of paramount importance in the decision making process of tourist since they can alter rational decision making it as consideration to travel modes

and choice of destinations. Terrorist activity and political instability are identified factors that can be major concern and support the risk perception which can affect in the tourist decision making (Hall C. M., Timothy D. J. & Duval D. J., 2003).

Cultural Differences

Culture has inspired a wide array of basic psychological developments (Weber & Hsee, 1999). (Segall, Campbell, & Herskovitz, 1966) demonstrated that members of different cultures have different susceptibilities to optical illusions and colour perception. (Morris & Peng, 1994) observed cultural differences in casual attributions for social and physical events, in particular in the likelihood of committing the fundamental attribution error. Culture has also been shown to affect probabilistic thinking, with resulting variations in the use of probability judgments and the calibration of such judgments (e.g. Wright & Phillips, 1980). A cultural difference is a national (or other subgroup) difference in attitude or behaviour that is the result of group differences in stable social structures and/or longstanding values (Weber & Hsee, 1999). The differences in social structures and longstanding values may have been shaped by group differences in geography, climate, history, economics, politics, and the way of coping with such environmental differences. However, a cultural difference is neither just a biological/racial difference nor a national difference that is the result of only current or transient (economic or political) situational differences (Weber & Hsee, 1999).

One of the factors that define the way people thoughts and act in their daily life is their culture taught since they were born (Weber & Hsee, 1999). Cultural differences distinguish societies from one another (Steers, Sanchez-Runde, & Nardon, 2010). All cultures are known to have their own beliefs that define values for that particular culture. Education, social standing, religion, personality, belief structure, past experience, affection shown at home, and a lot of other factors will affect human behaviour and culture. The events on the past certainly formed the moods and opinions of people living in that specific country.

Reisinger & Turner (2002) defined culture and its relationship to tourism as differences and similarities in values, rules of behaviour and perceptions, which influence interpersonal contact between International tourists and hosts and their satisfaction with each other. According to Moutinho (1987), with its norms and standards, culture guides a consumer's behavior. Cultural norms have an impact on both tourists' expectations and their perceptions of received service quality. One suggestion that supported the relationship between culture and tourist perception is the study from Bonn, Joseph, & Dai (2005) that people from different culture background have different image perceptions of a destination. Based on

Weiermair (2000), culture affects not only the way in which people experience and interpret goods and services, but it also has an impact on decision making process and destination choice. Study from (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006) showed that there are significant differences in perceptions of travel risks and safety, anxiety and travel intentions among tourists from different countries. Tourists from United States, Hong Kong and Australia perceived more travel risks, felt less safe, were more anxious and reluctant to travel than tourists from United Kingdom, Canada and Greece. All of these effects to the influence of cultural differences in perceiving the risk perception are because of the history of their region.

Impact of Media on Travel Decision Making

The media has a very important affiliation with tourism as it has a substantial influence on the image of prospective tourist destinations and so affecting potential tourist's destination choice (Amara, 2012). Today people live in the information age, media tools such as internet, newspaper, television, radio, magazines and many more influence the way of living (Paletz, Owen, & Cook, 2011). Social media influence several components of consumer behaviour such as awareness, information acquisition, opinions, attitudes, but also purchase behaviour and post-purchase communications and evaluation (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Today people live in the information age, media tools such as internet, newspaper, television, radio, magazines and many more influence the way of living. Mass media plays crucial role in forming and reflecting public opinion, connecting the world to individuals and reproducing the self-image of society (Spencer, et al., 2012). Continuous media coverage of political rebellion, military coups, strikes, protestation or regional wars can deter tourists from choosing to travel to specific destinations or even entire regions (Amara, 2012). The general public relies to a vast degree on media accounts for an understanding of terrorists' motives, the implication of aggressive actions, and the essential details of any critical situation the destination may be facing, which as a result may affect tourists' attitudes towards holiday destinations (Amara, 2012).

It is shown that the influence of media is responsible for structuring people's daily routine lives and thoughts (Garg, 2013). Television broadcasting has a large amount of control over the society watches and the times in which it is viewed. The internet creates a space for more various political opinions, social and cultural points of view and a higher level of consumer participation. Common people in the city usually wake up in the morning, checks news on TV or newspaper, continue their daily activities and make some decision based on the information that they had either from

co-workers, family, friends, news (media), financial reports, etc. The media has a massive influence on society and also in public attitude. It can form public opinion in different ways depending on the objective (Garg, 2013). For example, after the attacks of 9/11, media gave a huge coverage of the event and exposed Osama guilty for the attacks as they were told by the authorities. This shaped the public opinion to support the war on terrorism, the same happened with the war on Iraq. The problem is if media receives inaccurate information, then the public opinion supports a wrong cause (Garg, 2013). Media has an effect on the risk perception shown when the negative impact of dramatic news (particular events) released by the media sources (Chan & Chan, 2012; Saunders & Goddard, 2002; Bartlett, 2005). If the dramatic part is edited out, people's recall of the news becomes more accurate and probably a higher dramatic news story could have stronger effects on risk perceptions. The stronger is the message of one particular destination's image security problems released by the media, the stronger risk perception of the tourist generated and also can be result in the changes of the attitude (Garg, 2013).

Tourist Decision Making

Tourists often choose other destinations if they perceive travel to be less pleasing due to actual or perceived risks (Sonmez, Apostopoulos, & Tarlow, 1999; Green, Bartholomew, & Murrmann, 2003). Travel statistics from around the world clearly suggest that tourism demand decreases as the perception of risks associated with a destination increases (Sonmez, Apostopoulos, & Tarlow, 1999; Floyd & Pennigton-Gray, 2004). A common finding in tourism literature is that the presence of risk, no matter if real or perceived, influences the travel decision-making process (Mawby, 2000). Destination choice is made after constraints such as time, budget, and physical distance are weighed against destination image. It is likely for perceptions of crime, terrorism, or health scares including SARS, Asian and Swine flu to cause similar behaviour (Amara, 2012). Many authors analysed risk perception of tourists and found that health, political instability, terrorism, strange food, cultural barriers, a nation's political and religious dogma, and crime were the main identified risk factors. Other researchers have concluded that natural disasters such as the tsunami in South East Asia and hurricanes in the Caribbean are one of the main risk factors affecting destination choice (Huan, Tsai, & Shelby, 2006). As mentioned earlier as well that those undesirable by the tourists (Crompton, 1992). According to (Gartner, 1994), destination choice decision is a function of information available from different sources. As a form of protective behaviour, travellers can alter their destination

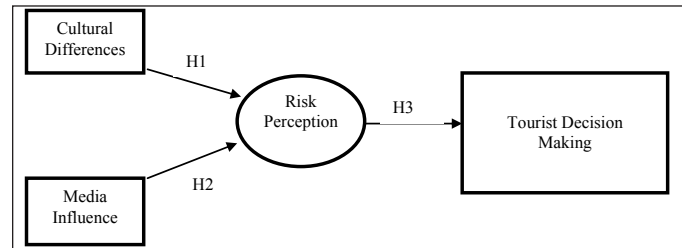
choices; modify their travel behaviour; or if they decide to continue with their travel plans, they acquire information (Amara, 2012). Travellers that love risk and want adventure did not seek a lot of information (Murphy, Mascardo, & Benckendorff, 2007), and those who feared risk not only gathered information from various sources, but also considered particular vacations and lodging facilities (Amara, 2012). According to (Maser & Weiermair, 1998) higher is the perceived risk, the more information search occurs, and the more rational decision-making becomes. Potential tourists rely on others' experiences for their decision making in an effort to decrease uncertainty and increase the exchange utility (Kotler, Bowen, & Makens, 2013). Tourist decisions to stay home or choose safer destinations are translated into significant losses for the tourism industry of the country suffering from terrorism (Sonmez, Apostopoulos, & Tarlow, 1999). Individuals planning their holidays are less likely to choose a destination with a higher threat of terrorist attacks. Host countries providing tourism services, which can be easily substituted are therefore, negatively affected by terrorist attacks to a substantial extent (Frey, Luechinger, & Stutzer, 2007). It is likely that tourists may postpone their visit until the situation appears to have calmed down. But, more likely, activity will be redirected to alternative destinations, which appear to be safer. Some destinations may be eliminated from the decision making process due to their potential costs or perceived risks attached to that destination, especially if associated with negative media images of terrorist threats (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Quantitative research methodology was used for this study as the same set of questionnaire was distributed and collected from 169 respondents who were the tourists visiting Malaysia. The questionnaire of this research had five sections where section one consisted of demographical information of the participants, section two and three, each comprised of five items, regarding cultural differences and media influence. Fourth section asked respondents to answer the questions related to their risk perception while fifth and the last section questions were related to tourists' decision making process. 5 point Likert scale was used for the responses of the participants. The scale consisted of the following statements: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neutral/Undecided, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly Agree. The data collected were entered into Microsoft Excel, and then exported to IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for processing the data. SPSS was used for correlation analysis, regression analysis and descriptive analysis.

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis of the Research



Source: Adapted from Risk Perception Impact on destination decision (Weber & Hsee, 1998; Richter, 1983; Um & Crompton, 1992; Mansfeld, 1992; van Raaij & Francken, 1984)

Research Hypothesis

- H1: Social and Cultural factors have a positive influence on tourist perception of risk.
- H2: Media has a positive influence on the risk perception of the tourists.
- H3: Tourists' Perception of Risk has a positive influence on their final decision while deciding on the choice of destination.

FINDINGS, ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis of Sample

The table 1 below illustrates that from the total sample size of 168, majority of respondents for this survey were male (53%) while 47% were female. 34.5% of respondents were between the age range of 26 and 35 closely followed by 31.5% who were in between the age range of 18 and 25. Majority of the respondents were single (61.3%). Among these respondents, 31.5% were Malaysian, followed by Indian (22%) and Chinese (21.4%). The majorities of the respondents graduated from the college or university and were either bachelors degree, masters or doctorate holders. From the survey, it was also noted that the mainstream of the participants were professionals (36.3%). The annual income was between US\$ 5,000 to US\$ 10,000 in average (47%). According to the travel experiences, most of the respondents go for vacations once (34.5%) or twice (32.1%) in a year and for most of the respondents they preferred to stay in a budget hotel. Majority of the participants of the survey preferred to go for vacations with their family (52.4%).

Table 1. Details of Sample (n = 168)

	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	89	53.0
Female	79	47.0
Total	168	100.0
Age		
Below 18	17	10.1
18 – 25	53	31.5
26 – 35	58	34.5
Above 35	40	23.8
Total	168	100.0
Marital Status		
Single	103	61.3
Married	65	38.7
Total	168	100.0
Nationality		
Indian	37	22.0
Malaysian	53	31.5
Chinese	36	21.4
American	8	4.8
British	6	3.6
Australian	8	4.8
Others	20	11.9
Total	168	100.0
Education Level		
Diploma	51	30.4
Degree	58	34.5
Masters	50	29.8
Doctorate	9	5.4
Total	168	100.0
Occupation		
Professional	61	36.3
Self-employed	13	7.7
Administrative	23	13.7
Managerial	18	10.7
Student	53	31.5
Total	168	100.0
Income/Year (USD)		
5000 – 10000	79	47
10001 – 15000	37	22
15001 – 20000	27	16.1
20001 – 25000	11	6.5
Above 25001	14	8.3
Total	168	100.0
No. of vacations/year		
Once	58	34.5

	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Twice	54	32.1
Thrice	24	14.3
More than Thrice	32	19.0
Total	168	100.0
Travelling Partner		
Alone	15	8.9
Colleagues	12	7.1
Family	88	52.4
Friends	53	31.5
Total	168	100.0
Hotel Preference		
Budget/Motel	68	40.5
Business	33	19.6
Boutique	31	18.5
Resorts	36	21.4
Total	168	100.0

Regression Analysis

Since regression analysis is “the technique used to derive an equation that relates the criterion variables to one or more predictor variables; it considers the frequency distribution of the criterion variable, when one or more predictor variables are held fixed at various levels” (Churchill, 1995). Table 2a shows that the regression analysis was used having ‘Risk Perception’ as the dependent variable and ‘Culture Differences and Media Influence’ as the independent variables while the Table 2b displays ‘Tourist Decision Making’ as the dependent variable and ‘Risk Perception’ as the independent variable. It was necessary to use the regression analysis to predict the implications of ‘Risk Perception’ level and the obtained results showed in table 2a that there was a negative correlation with R^2 of 0.028, F value of 2.334 and p value of 0.165 for culture differences and p value of 0.195 for media influence at the significance level of $p \leq 0.05$. It was found that ‘Culture Differences ($\beta=0.110$)’ and ‘Media Influence ($\beta=-0.102$)’ exerts negative effect on ‘Risk Perception’ level of the respondents, thus making Hypothesis H1 and H2 to be Rejected. This shows that the two factors, culture differences and media influence, does not have any effect on the risk perception of the respondents.

Table 2a. Regression Analysis

Dependent variable: Risk Perception				
Independent Variables	β	t- value	p- value	Hypothesis
Culture Differences	0.110	1.395	0.165	H1 - Rejected
Media Influence	0.102	1.302	0.195	H2 - Rejected

Notes: $R^2 = 0.028$, $F = 2.334$, $p \leq 0.05$

Second regression was analysed by using ‘Tourist Decision Making’ as dependent variable and ‘Risk Perception’ as independent variable. The results shown in table 2b indicate that R^2 was 0.084 and F value at 15.159. β value for ‘Risk Perception’ was 0.289 and the p value was 0.000 at the significance level of $p \leq 0.05$, this illustrates that Hypothesis 3 was also accepted and thus shows that ‘Risk Perception’ significantly influences the Tourist Decision Making process while deciding on their destination of travel.

Table 2b Regression Analysis

Dependent variable: Tourist Decision Making				
Independent Variables	β	t- value	p- value	Hypothesis
Risk Perception	0.289	3.893	0.000	H3 - Accepted
Note: $R^2 = 0.084$, $F = 15.159$, $p \leq 0.05$				

Correlation Analysis

In the present study correlation analysis was employed since “correlation analysis involves measuring the closeness of the relationship between two or more variables; it considers the joint variation of two measures” (Churchill, 1995). The correlation analysis was conducted between Culture and Risk Perception (Table 3a) and Media Influence and Risk Perception (Table 3b), where culture and media influence were dependent variables while risk perception was the independent variable. Another correlation analysis was conducted between Risk Perception and Decision Making (Table 3c) and here risk perception was the dependent variable and decision making was the independent variable. On being analyzed, it was found that both culture and risk perception and media influence and risk perception were not correlated as the correlation found was 0.087 and 0.102 respectively which is higher than the significance level of 0.01. On the other hand, correlation between risk perception and decision making was 0.000 which is less than the significance level of 0.01 as shown in table 3c which demonstrates that there is a correlation between Risk Perception and Decision Making and the respondents accept that risk perception influences their decision making while choosing a travel destination whereas the respondents have rejected any relationship between culture, media influence and risk perception.

Table 3a. Correlation Analysis

Scales	Culture	Risk Perception
Culture	1	0.087
Risk Perception	0.087	1

Table 3b. Correlation Analysis

Scales	Media Influence	Risk Perception
Media Influence	1	.102
Risk Perception	.102	1

Table 3c. Correlation Analysis

Scales	Risk Perception	Decision Making
Risk Perception	1	0.000
Decision Making	0.000	1

Note: ** All the correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2- tailed)

CONCLUSION

Findings of the study highlight that respondents disagree with the statement that culture and media plays important role in influencing people’s risk perception but at the same time the respondents do believe that risk perception has a great impact on their decision of choosing a travel destination. People have different estimates on the dangerousness of risk, when the higher risk perception perceived by the people, it does influence their decision making for travelling. While the questionnaires were not distributed evenly according to respondents’ nationality, gender, age or marital status, but it was found that their perception of risk influences their decision making process is almost same. Safety and security are the primary conditions for normal tourism development of a destination, region or a country. Once a destination is perceived to be risky by the tourist, it will have serious implications on the growth and development of tourism industry of the specific destination. The study has shown the importance of the travel safety, travel risk perception and how it affects in tourist behavior/decision making. It is hoped that the results of this study will facilitate the tourism operators to understand and better provide the travel patterns of travelers’ world widely.

The results of the present study have a number of practical implications for tourism practitioners, representatives from the international tourism industry bodies, international hotel associations, governments, their tourism ministries and United Nations and third party enterprises, who are directly or indirectly engaged in attracting the tourists. United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) along with the local governments, authorities, tourism ministry and the NGOs should take steps in improving the safety and security in every tourist destination and should re-promote and re-construct the places which have been affected by the risk event in the past. By this, it could bring back the positive image of that particular destination, thus reducing the risks perceived by the tourists. The International Hotel Associations should ensure that tourist complexes, five star hotels and restaurants must have upgraded and improved security systems. All the above recommendations above can be implemented to the tourist

attractions worldwide for the long term period and expected to reduce the risk perceived by the tourists so that they can still feel safe while travelling to a particular destination.

One of the apparent limitations of this study is the sample size, which was very small. Another limitation was that only culture and media influence was used to estimate the respondents' perception of risk while other factor like demographics also play crucial role to study the reception of risk. Recommendations for the future research could be that the researchers should include the demographic factors also as one of the major consideration and equally distribute questionnaires to the various nationalities and races, so that the results of the research can be same as expected.

REFERENCES

- Amara, D. (2012). Tourists' risk aversion and willingness to take risks: the case of tourists visiting Egypt after 25th January revolution. *6th World Conference for Graduate Research in Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure*. 22. Fethiye: Routledge.
- Bartlett, J. (2005). *The impact of the media on false public perception of tornado safety precautions*. B.Sc. Thesis, Graduate College of the Oklahoma State University.
- Bentley, T. A., Page, S. J., Meyer, D., Chalmers, D., & Laird, I. (2001). How safe is adventure tourism in New Zealand? An exploratory analysis. *Applied Ergonomics*, 32(4), 327-338.
- Bonn, M. A., Joseph, S. M., & Dai, M. (2005). International versus domestic visitors: an examination of destination image perceptions. *Journal of Travel Research*, 43, 294-301.
- Carlsen, J. C., & Hughes, M. (2007). Tourism market recovery in the Maldives after the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 23(2/3/4), 139-149.
- Cetron, M. J. (2004). *Hospitality in the age of terror*. Retrieved February 23, 2013, from www.hospitalitynet.org/file/152001642.pdf.
- Cetron, M. J. (2006). *How to protect your hotel in an era of terrorism*. Retrieved January from <http://www.wiredhotelier.com/news/4028554.html>.
- Chan, A. K., & Chan, V. M. (2012). Public perception of crime and attitudes toward police: Examining the Effects of Media News. *Discovery-SS Student E-Journal*, 1, 215-237.
- Chiu, S. P. (2008). Tourism and crime. *Police Science Bimonthly*, 39(1), 67-81.
- Chiu, S. P. (2010). Study on the shopping fraud in package tour. *Police Science Bimonthly*, 40(3), 53-76.
- Chiu, S. P., & Lin, S. Y. (2010). A study on myth about tourism crime victim: An example of Taiwan tourists. *Police Science Bimonthly*, 40(4), 201-218.
- Churchill, A. G. (1995). *Marketing Research: Methodological Foundations* (6th ed.). New York: Dryden Press.
- Cook, R. L., & McCleary, K. W. (1983). Redefining vacation distances in consumer minds. *Journal of Travel Research*, 22(2), 31-34.
- Crompton, J. L. (1977). *A systems model of the Tourist's Destination Selection Decision Process with particular reference to the role of image and perceived constraints*. Ph.D. Dissertation. Texas: Texas A&M University, College Station.
- Crompton, J. L. (1992). Structure of Vacation Destination Choice Sets. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 19, 420-434.
- Floyd, M. F., & Pennigton-Gray, L. (2004). Profiling risk perceptions of tourists. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(4), 1051-1054.
- Frey, B. S., Luechinger, S., & Stutzer, A. (2007). Calculating Tragedy: Assessing the Costs of Terrorism. *Journal of Economic Surveys*, 21(1), 1-24.
- Garg, A. (2010). Terrorism - A threat to endurance of Tourism and Hospitality Industry in South Asian Region. *9th Asia Pacific Forum for Graduate Students' Research in Tourism*. Beppu: Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University.
- Garg, A. (2013). A study of tourist perception towards travel risk factors in tourist decision making. *Asian Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 7(1), 47-57.
- Gartner, W. C. (1994). Image formation process. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 2, 191-215.
- Goeldner, C., Ritchie, B., & McIntosh, R. (2006). *Tourism Principles, Practices & Philosophies*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Green, C. G., Bartholomew, P., & Murrmann, S. (2003). New York restaurant industry: Strategic responses to September 11, 2001. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 15(2/3), 63-79.
- Hall, C. M., Timothy, D. J., & Duval, D. J. (2003). *Safety & Security in Tourism: Relationships, Management and Marketing*. New York: Haworth Hospitality Press.
- Henderson, J. C. (2007). *Tourism Crisis: Causes, Consequences and Management*. USA: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Huan, T.-C., Tsai, C.-F., & Shelby, L. B. (2006). Impacts of no-escape natural disaster on tourism: A case study in Taiwan. *Advances in Hospitality and Leisure*, 2, 91-106.
- Kotler, P. R., Bowen, J. T., & Makens, J. (2013). *Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism* (6th ed.). Prentice Hall.
- Lepp, A., & Gibson, H. (2008). Sensation seeking and tourism: Tourist role, perception of risk and destination choice. *Tourism Management*, 29(4), 740-750.
- Mangold, W., & Faulds, D. (2009). Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix. *Business Horizons*, 52(4), 357-365.

- Mansfeld, Y. (1992). From motivation to actual travel. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 19, 399-419.
- Maser, B., & Weiermair, K. (1998). Travel decision-making: from the vantage point of perceived risk and information preferences. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 7(4), 107-121.
- Mawby, R. I. (2000). Tourists' perceptions of security: the risk-fear paradox. *Tourism Economics*, 6(2), 109-121.
- Mazursky, D. (1989). Past experience and future tourism decisions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 16, 333-344.
- Morris, M. W., & Peng, K. (1994). Culture and cause: American and Chinese attributions for social and physical events. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 67, 949-971.
- Moutinho, L. (1987). Consumer behavior in tourism. *European Journal of Marketing*, 21(10), 5-44.
- Mura, P. (2010). 'Scary...but i like it!' Young tourists' perceptions of fear on holiday. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 8(1-2), 30-49.
- Murphy, L., Mascardo, G., & Benckendorff, P. (2007). Exploring word-of-mouth influences on travel decisions: friends and relatives vs. other travellers. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 31(5), 517-527.
- Murthy, E. K. (2008) *Introduction to Tourism and Hospitality ethics*. India: ABD Publishers.
- Oluwole, I., & Olufemi, A. (2011). Perceptions as influencer of consumer choice behaviour: The Case of Tourism in Nigeria. *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, 5(7).
- Paletz, D. L., Owen, D., & Cook, T. E. (2011). *American Government and Politics in the Information Age*. Flat World Knowledge.
- Reisinger, Y., & Mavondo, F. (2006). Cultural differences in travel risk perception. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 20(1), 13-31.
- Reisinger, Y., & Turner, L. W. (2002). The determination of shopping satisfaction of Japanese tourists visiting hawaii and gold coast compared. *Journal of Travel Research*, 41(2), 167-175.
- Richter, L. K. (1983). Tourism politics and political science. A case of not so benign neglect. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 10, 313-335.
- Roehl, W. S., & Fesenmaier, D. R. (1992). Risk perceptions and pleasure travel: An exploratory analysis. *Journal of Travel Research*, 30(4), 17-26.
- Saunders, B., & Goddard, C. (2002). *The role of mass media in facilitating community education and child abuse prevention strategies*. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.
- Segall, M. H., Campbell, D. T., & Herskovitz, M. J. (1966). *The influence of culture on visual perception*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.
- Sonmez, S. F., & Graefe, A. R. (1998b). International vacation decision and terrorism risk. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 25(1), 122-124.
- Sonmez, S. F., & Graefe, A. R. (1998d). Determining future travel behaviour from past travel experience and perceptions of risk and safety. *Journal of Travel Research*, 37(2), 171-177.
- Sonmez, S., & Graefe, A. (1998c). Influence of terrorism risk on foreign tourism decisions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 25(1), 112-144.
- Sonmez, S., Apostopoulos, Y., & Tarlow, P. (1999). Tourism in Crisis: Managing effects on Terrorism. *Journal of Travel Research*, 38(1), 13-18.
- Spencer, J., Lewis, K. X., Sesay, M. M., Turay, P., Douglas, S., & Nwogu, V. (2012). *The Road to Justice. A Handbook for the Media on Reporting Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) Cases in Sierra Leone*. Freetown, Sierra Leone: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- Steers, R. M., Sanchez-Runde, C. J., & Nardon, L. (2010). *Management Across Cultures: Challenges and Strategies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Sivantola, J. (2002). *Tourist's Experience of Place*. England: Ashgate Publishing.
- Um, S., & Crompton, J. L. (1992). The Roles of Perceived Inhibitors and Facilitators in Pleasure Travel Destination Decisions. *Journal of Travel Research*, 30(3), 18-25.
- van Raaij, W. F., & Francken, D. A. (1984). Vacation decisions, activities and satisfactions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 11, 101-112.
- Weber, E. U., & Hsee, C. (1998). Cross-Cultural Differences in Risk Perception, but Cross-Cultural Similarities in Attitudes towards Perceived Risks. *Management Science*, 44(9), 1205-1217.
- Weber, E. U., & Hsee, C. K. (1999). Models and Mosaics: Investigating cross-cultural differences in risk perception and risk preference. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 6(4), 611-617.
- Weiermair, K. (2000). Tourists' perceptions towards and satisfaction with service quality in the cross-cultural service encounter: implications for hospitality and tourism management. *Managing Service Quality*, 10(6), 397-409.
- Wright, G. N., & Phillips, L. D. (1980). Cultural variation in probabilistic thinking: Alternative ways of dealing with uncertainty. *International Journal of Psychology*, 15, 239-257.
- Zheng, X. (2003). *Travel Safety*. Beijing, China: China Tourism Press.
- Zheng, X., & Zhang, J. F. (2002). *Travel Safety Theory and Practice: Case study of Fujian province, China*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Education and Social Scientific Research Society.