



## THE EFFECT OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY ON TOURISM

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### ABSTRACT

*The global economy of the 21st century has witnessed a significant rise in tourism, emerging as a key driver of economic growth and development. However, alongside its growth, the tourism industry faces numerous challenges, with crime emerging as a prominent concern. Crime can have detrimental effects on tourist destinations and the experiences of individual travelers, impacting the industry's overall sustainability and growth. This review article aims to examine the multifaceted impact of crime on tourism, focusing on both macro and micro levels. By analyzing existing literature and case studies, this review seeks to provide insights into the dynamics of crime in the tourism industry and offer recommendations for mitigating its adverse effects.*

**Key words:** Tourism, criminal activity in tourism.

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from international organizations, government agencies, and tourism authorities will be consulted to gather comprehensive data on the topic.

The inclusion criteria for the literature review will encompass studies published in peer-reviewed journals, reports from reputable organizations, and academic books or chapters that provide insights into the impact of crime on tourism. The exclusion criteria will involve studies that do not directly address the relationship between crime and tourism or those lacking empirical evidence. The selected literature will be critically analyzed to identify key themes, trends, and gaps in existing research, which will form the basis for the discussion and conclusions of the review article.

The analysis will be structured around key themes such as the economic impact of crime on tourism, the role of media in shaping perceptions of safety, tourists' behavioral responses to crime, and the effectiveness of strategies to mitigate the impact of crime on tourism. By synthesizing the findings from the selected literature, this review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge on the topic and offer insights for future research and practical implications for stakeholders in the tourism industry.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Macro Level Impact*

Crime at the macro level significantly affects tourist destinations and the countries hosting them. One of the most noticeable impacts is the tarnishing of a destination's image, leading to reduced tourist demand and arrivals. This decline in visitors results in a corresponding decrease in revenue, which can have far-reaching consequences. For example, Egypt suffered a \$1 billion loss in 1992 after an attack on international tourists by extremists. Similarly, Los Angeles experienced a substantial drop in tourist income following riots and gang wars. Such incidents highlight the vulnerability of tourist destinations to the negative effects of crime.

The media plays a crucial role in shaping the perception of tourist destinations. Intensive coverage of security incidents can deter potential visitors, creating a negative image that is difficult to reverse. Recovering from such damage requires extensive marketing efforts and may involve price reductions and the development of new products to attract tourists.

### *Micro Level Impact*

Crime also affects tourists at a personal level, influencing their behavior and decision-making. Fear of crime

can lead individuals to avoid travel altogether or take precautions such as canceling trips or relocating to safer areas. The type of crime and the personal characteristics of tourists, such as age and travel experience, play a significant role in determining the impact of crime on their travel decisions. For instance, violent crimes like assault or robbery have a more pronounced effect on tourists compared to property crimes.

Despite the risks, some tourists are willing to revisit destinations where they have experienced crime. Factors such as the perceived seriousness of the incident and the individual's previous travel experiences can influence this decision. However, the overall impact of crime on tourist behavior underscores the importance of addressing safety concerns in the tourism industry.

### *Tourists as Victims*

Tourists are particularly vulnerable to crime due to factors such as carrying large amounts of money and valuables, engaging in risky behaviors, and being unfamiliar with their surroundings. Property-related crimes like theft and burglary are more common, although incidents of violent crimes against tourists also occur. The impact of crime on tourists' experiences can vary, but it often leads to financial losses and psychological trauma.

### *Case of Georgia*

Georgia, like many other tourist destinations, has experienced an increase in crimes against tourists. Instances of fraud, robbery, and even fatal attacks have been reported, highlighting the urgent need for measures to ensure the safety and security of visitors.

## THE GLOBAL IMPACT OF TOURISM ON CRIME AND SECURITY

The global economy began to take shape at the close of the 20th century. Its unique characteristic is the global nature of all fundamental economic activities, including management, the creation and consumption of products and services, the transfer of knowledge and technological advancements, and the operation of markets. It goes without saying that tourism could not stay outside of these processes.

Tourism emerged as a major economic sector in the 20th century, and similar patterns have persisted into the 21st; despite global challenges such as oil crises, financial market volatility, and armed conflict, the industry is still expanding. At the moment, the tourist sector affects how every continent, nation, and city develops. It has the quickest rate of growth and is predicted to evolve into a significant worldwide sector in the future.



A person travels to different countries both domestically and overseas because he wants to learn something new. As a result, the macro and micro environments are impacted by tourism. There are two ways to look at the effects of crime on tourism: the macro and micro levels. The consequences of crime on a tourist destination, the social community, and society at large are referred to as the macro level impact of crime, whereas the impacts of crime on an individual, or on a visitor, are referred to as the micro level impact of crime. (Holcomb and Pizam 2006).

Large-scale crime has an impact on both the nation hosting the tourist attraction and the destination itself. Because of this, "most tourist destinations try to paint a beautiful picture of their areas in order to entice travelers to visit." The most significant and obvious negative impact of crime on a tourist destination is the negative image of the destination, which results in reduced tourist demand and the number of tourist arrivals (Holcomb and Pizam 2006, p. 109). Reducing the number of tourist arrivals has as a consequence, including a fall in revenues. For example, it is estimated that Egypt lost about \$1 billion in 1992 after Muslim extremists attacked international tourists, and the same year, Los Angeles lost between 1 and 2 billion \$ of tourist income after riots and gang war (Crotts 1996). Alleyne and Boxill (2003) showed that in Jamaica, the increase in crime had a negative impact on tourist arrivals. The drop in tourist arrivals was particularly evident in arrivals of tourists from Europe, which, unlike other Jamaica tourists, mostly from the United States, did not use the all-inclusive resorts that mostly leave foreign tourists without contact with the outside world and also with the crime. More intense contacts with the local community resulted in increased victimisation of European tourists, and consequently, this victimisation influenced their decision to revisit Jamaica.

The degree and duration of illegal and violent activities have different consequences on tourist arrivals, i.e., tourist demand (Pizam 1999). Depending on the type of crime committed, the impact of that crime on demand for travel varies. Minor crimes that happen occasionally won't affect demand for travel, but more serious crimes can cause demand for travel to drop either slightly, significantly, or drastically. The biggest effect is when all tourist trips end, which happens when there is ongoing conflict or terrorist activity. Pizam (1999) classified the duration of the effects of crime or violence on demand for tourism into four categories: short-term (a few weeks), medium-term (two to four months), long-term (more than one tourist

season), and indefinite. Experiences from the recent past have demonstrated that destination recovery can happen really fast in the absence of criminal or violent events that have caused demand to fall.

The destination may experience further negative repercussions from the decreased number of tourist arrivals, such as the loss of staff who are vital to the operation of the tourism sector due to lower income, and possibly even lower-quality infrastructure. Similarly, investors will be enticed to place money in other industries or destinations if they perceive insecurity at their current location (Pizam and Mansfeld 2006). There are additional ramifications for the country where the destination is located: fewer taxes are collected as a result of visitor arrivals, in addition to the initial drop in revenue caused by fewer tourists. This creates a dilemma because taxes paid by citizens provide the significant financial and human resources required for public bodies engaged in crime prevention and enforcement. Citizens will therefore be the ones who foot the bill for these expenses (Holcomb and Pizam 2006).

Since "the tourist's first impression of a destination is likely to come from the media in an increasingly media-saturated society," the media has a substantial impact on both the arrival of tourists and the development of a destination's image (Brown 2015, p. 268). The media truly "has the potential to make or break a destination," given that "intensive mass media coverage of security incidents contributes to the decline of tourist visits to affected destinations" (Pizam and Mansfeld 2006, p. 17) (Boxill 2012, p. 28). A certain city or nation may be seen as more dangerous and hazardous as a result of the media's coverage of local, national, and international criminal acts. The 1990s saw a dramatic drop in the number of tourists visiting New Orleans due to incidents involving the use of weapons in the city, which attracted much attention from the American media and helped to establish the city's reputation as unsafe (Dimanche and Lepetic 1999). Some of Mexico's most popular tourist spots suffered greatly as a result of media coverage of the country's drug-related gang violence (Boxill 2012). Aiming to create a positive public opinion in the media, local community, and with potential consumers, changing the negative image is typically costly and time-consuming (Dimanche and Lepetic 1999). These marketing efforts are often coupled with price reductions and the development of new products in an effort to draw in more tourists (Pizam and Mansfeld 2006).

The behavior and attitudes of individuals, such as





tourists, and their decision to visit or return to a destination where criminal episodes occurred demonstrate the impact of crime on a micro level. In the context of tourism, fear of crime can "cause people to remain in their home, curb activities, and even avoid travel altogether," which has a considerable impact on people's behavior (Holcomb and Pizam 2006, p. 106). In the event of an incident, they will make the following decisions: "cancellations of booked trips, avoiding booking trips to affected destinations, or, for those already in the affected destination, moving to a safer place or evacuating the destination and returning home" (Pizam and Mansfeld 2006, p. 7). Acts of terrorism or criminal incidents impact their perception of risk and are evident in their decision to travel or go on vacation.

### CRIME'S INFLUENCE

#### ON TOURIST BEHAVIOR AND DECISIONS

When studying the impact of crime on visitors' behaviour and attitudes, it is important to keep in mind that the impacts vary greatly depending on the types of crime committed and the individual characteristics of the tourists and the perception of risk and crime is not the same for all tourists - it depends on the personal characteristics of tourists, the most significant of which are travel experiences and age (Lisowska 2017). Some types of crime will have a stronger impact on tourists and will affect their decision to visit or revisit a particular destination, while other forms of crime will not have a significant impact on such a decision. Travelers are impacted differently by violent and non-violent crime. Robberies, assaults, rapes, and homicides are among the violent crimes that have a greater detrimental impact on tourists than property crimes, particularly when the stolen commodities have a lower market value (Holcomb and Pizam 2006). In his analysis of Caribbean tourism, McElroy (2006) contends that the fundamental elements of the region's "narco-economy," which include drug addiction, violence, and corruption, pose a threat to the tourism industry's long-term viability. The emergence of the narco-economy has altered the characteristics of crime in the Caribbean since the 1980s, bringing about a notable rise in homicides, a change from property to violent crime, an upsurge in violence related to drug dealer gangs, and the killing of innocent bystanders. McElroy (2006) discovered that a 1% rise in crime rates corresponded to a 0.5 percent decrease in visitor arrivals in the Caribbean. Property crime has less of an impact on travelers. In a study on journey thefts, Holcomb and

Pizam (2006) investigated whether the experience of journey theft or learning about theft from friends or family members influenced the subjects' decision to return to the location of the theft in the future. According to this study, there was no difference in the likelihood of returning to the location where the theft happened between people who knew someone who had been the victim of theft while traveling and those who had experienced theft themselves. The study also demonstrated that the decision to go to the location of the theft and the decision to return to the site were not significantly influenced by the perceived seriousness of the theft incidence or the passage of time following the crime. The impact of crime on tourists is contingent upon the individual features of the tourist, in addition to the characteristics of the crime itself. Experience traveling abroad has been revealed to be a key determinant in the travel risk assessment by Sönmez and Graefe (1998). Their research revealed that those with more foreign travel experience perceived less risk and had a more favorable attitude toward traveling abroad. It also revealed that people's desire to travel again is influenced by how safe their previous experiences were. Only education and income were shown to be significant variables in this study, implying that those with higher levels of education and wealth had more positive attitudes toward travel when it comes to demographic parameters like age, gender, education, income, and the number of children living in the family. These findings support the findings of Brunt et al. (2000), which showed that people in higher social classes are less likely than people in lower social classes to perceive crime risk and to be fearful or concerned about crime. George (2010) found that respondents age affected how they perceived safety and crime, and he demonstrated that as respondents ages increased, so did their concern for personal safety. The survey examined 303 tourists' perceptions of risk attitudes, safety, and crime. Examinees under the age of 55 showed this regularity, but those above 55 showed a decline in personal safety concerns. Gender analysis revealed no relationship between the respondent's gender and sense of security; this finding is consistent with his previous research (cf. George 2003). Similar findings were obtained by Boakye (2012), who investigated the impression of crime vulnerability in a sample of 336 tourists in Ghana. Tourists under 30 were deemed most vulnerable, with 58% of respondents believing they were at risk of crime, compared to only 25.3% of respondents over 50 who shared the same



opinion. The more seasoned respondents believe that their prior experiences have made them less susceptible to crime, which helps to explain why they have a lower sense of dread of crime the perception of vulnerability was correlated with gender: 49.7% of women and 37.2% of male respondents, respectively, felt that they were more vulnerable to crime. Mawby (2000) also discovered comparable outcomes with a sample of 514 British respondents. Mawby explains the relatively low concern or fear of crime while on vacation by looking at the characteristics of the respondents to this survey: only 8% of the respondents were manual workers; the majority of respondents were older (the sample average age was 55 years), male (65% of respondents were men), and from higher social classes. The decision to return to the location or suggest it to others is another indication of how crime affects tourists' behavior. Although recent research indicates that victimization of tourists or feelings of insecurity are not always an obstacle for a revisit, it could be expected that tourists who have experienced some form of victimization will not show a willingness to revisit the destination where the crime incident happened. In the previously cited poll conducted in Ghana by Boakye (2012), 90.2% of the victims of theft stated they would return to the location, and 94.4% indicated they would suggest it to others. According to a Mawby (2000) poll, 56% of victims stated they would visit the tourist site again, while only 14% indicated they would "probably not" or "definitely not." Holcomb and Pizam (2006) similarly found similar results, with just 22.8% of theft victims or those acquainted with the victims stating that they had no plans to return to the location. In a George (2010) study, visitors expressed a high likelihood of returning to Table Mountain National Park, even though they thought it was insecure. Visitors as Victims Travelers are particularly vulnerable to being victims of crime when they are away from their network of family and friends and other social support systems in their native country (Chesney-Lind and Lind 1986). Because of the nature of the tourism industry, it is simpler for visitors to fall victim to crime and for offenders to go unpunished. Several characteristics of the tourist culture include: a high concentration of visitors staying for brief periods of time in a limited geographic area; a high proportion of seasonal workers; unstable relationships among tourists; and high levels of spending on tourism (Barclay et al. 2015). Tourist victimization can be caused by a variety of social, psychological, and situational variables (Carić 1999). The

following factors, according to Holcomb and Pizam (2006), raise the likelihood that a tourist will be victimized: - Tourists are "lucrative targets" because they frequently carry larger sums of cash, credit cards, and personal items like easily resold cameras and cell phones (Crotts 1996). Due to their greater riches, tourists might become targets of local criminals, particularly in developing nations (Brunet et al. 2000). - Due to their casual attitude while on vacation, visitors run the risk of being victims because they don't prioritize their own safety and instead expect and seek enjoyment and relaxation (de Albuquerque and McElroy 1999). Sometimes, travelers expect the same level of security in the country they are visiting because they are traveling from high-security home countries, particularly if they have not been informed about the crime rate in the destination (Michalko 2003). This can lead to a careless attitude. Given their propensity for riskier behavior relative to the general population, tourists are particularly vulnerable to becoming victims of crime. De Albuquerque and McElroy (1999, p. 970) argue that some tourists "escape for two weeks and indulge in anti-social and self-destructive behavior," which typically involves drug use and prostitution. Travelers occasionally want to try out activities they do not practice at home (Carić 1999). The victimization of tourists is greatly impacted by the unfamiliarity of the surrounding area. Travelers form unique relationships with locals outside of institutionalized tourist facilities like hotels, and their quest for genuine experiences may put them in the path of those who would wish to take advantage of them (Harper 2006). - Because of their clothing, which may differ from that of the locals, tourists are "highly visible targets" (Crotts 1996). Many studies on crimes against tourists (e.g., Jarell and Howsen 1990; Michalko 2003; de Melo et al. 2018) have demonstrated that the majority of crimes against tourists are property-related (car theft, burglary, and theft), with a much smaller number of crimes involving violent elements (assault, rape, and murder). According to police data, Michalko (2003) discovered that 80,000 attacks against foreign visitors occurred in Hungary between 1996 and 2000; given that around 100 million tourists visited the country during this time, one in every 1250 visitors became a victim of crime. Of the attacks listed above, 96.6% involved criminal offenses, the majority of which included pick-pocketing (13.7%), various types of theft (23.1%), and vehicle and burglary theft (50.1%). Harper (2006) also examined the robberies of tourists in New Orleans in



2001 (377 robberies) and 2002 (175 robberies) using actual police data. The victim in the majority of attacks (84%) was a man who was alone himself when the attack occurred. The majority of victims (47%) were in the 25–35 age range. A weapon was utilized in 94% of the attacks, with guns being used in 58% of them. A study on theft while traveling was carried out in the US by Holcomb and Pizam (2006). 215 of the 1017 respondents said they had either been a victim of theft while traveling themselves or knew someone who had. The most frequent locations for thefts were cars (25.1%) and hotels (25.7%). Regarding the foreign visitors who were traveling at the time of the theft, the majority of the thefts happened in Mexico (12.8%), Italy (12.7%), and Canada (10.6%). Using data from the Caribbean, McElroy (2006) discovered that, when it comes to crimes like robbery and theft, international visitors are three times more likely to become victims of property crime than residents of the country. The likelihood of violent crimes like rapes, murders, and attacks happening to members of the domestic population is higher. Brunt & Co. (2000) conducted an analysis of victimization in the UK utilizing a questionnaire on occurrences that occurred over their most recent vacation. Of the 514 survey participants, 18% had experienced some form of crime, with the majority being burglaries, thefts, or attempted thefts. The results of their survey on victimization were found to be significantly more significant than those of the British Crime Survey, indicating that the likelihood of victimization is higher when traveling or on vacation than when living at home. The data collected from this questionnaire was compared with data from the British Crime Survey, a national crime investigation carried out throughout the UK.

#### CRIME AGAINST TOURISTS IN GEORGIA

As for Georgia, unfortunately, Georgia is not an exception in this regard, in recent decades, along with the increase in tourists, the number of crimes committed against them has increased. Georgia's law enforcement agencies have been repeatedly contacted by tourists who have become victims of fraud, which is unfortunate in areas in which tourists are more interested, especially when the tourist has gone on vacation and often visits entertainment and food facilities. In this regard, a number of tourists turned to the law enforcement authorities for help, accusing the restaurant of fraud, which was manifested in the demand for inadequate compensation for the services provided to them, charg-

ing the tourist in the form of a so-called double menu, which was manifested in inflating the amount that they would have to pay in the end, as opposed to the prices that they should have paid from the menu. selected for food. In one such case, the amount was increased 4 times, in the other case, they asked for 10 times more for the drinks selected from the menu, in contrast to the original menus presented to them. There was a case when the restaurant security followed the tourist to the ATM or the hotel and forced him to bring the overpaid amount. Also, there was more than one case when traveling by car when a tourist asked the taxi driver to take him to Vardzia, and the driver took him to Uplistsikhe and lied to him as if he was in Vardzia and paid for the distance to Vardzia. Information channels also publicized the case of a Chinese tourist who woke up in the restroom of a cafe bar and found that 15,000 dollars had been withdrawn from his card. Unfortunately, there were also cases when the life of a tourist ended fatally. Moreover, if we recall the recent past, we will remember many cases in this regard. The brutal murder of an American husband and wife and a young child by a local resident in one of the regions of Georgia was particularly horrifying. Let's also recall the recent murder of a young Australian woman in the Mtatsminda territory, who had gone for a walk in the Mtatsminda mountain area. create introduction, literature review and conclusion for scientific article.

#### CONCLUSION

The impact of crime on tourism is multifaceted, affecting both destinations and individual travelers. At the macro level, crime can damage a destination's reputation and lead to a decline in tourist arrivals and revenue. Media coverage plays a significant role in shaping perceptions of safety and security, making destination recovery a complex and challenging process. At the micro level, tourists' behavior and decisions are influenced by their perceptions of risk and safety. While some are willing to revisit destinations despite experiencing crime, others may be deterred from traveling altogether.

Efforts to address the impact of crime on tourism must consider both preventive measures and crisis management strategies. Collaboration between the tourism industry, law enforcement agencies, and government authorities is essential to ensure the safety of tourists and maintain the industry's growth. By understanding the dynamics of crime and its effects on tourism, stakeholders can work towards creating a safer and more secure environment for travelers worldwide.