

SENSATION SEEKERS, RISK-TAKERS & DARK

HERITAGE TOURISTS:

ARE WE HERE FOR PAIN OR PLEASURE?

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THEMES

Are sensation seekers = risk takers?

Do tourists avoid risk, or are they attracted to it?

What are the risks involved in tourism?

Terror risks:

The case of the Sinai vs. Bil'in

Dead Sea health tourists vs. Scuba divers

who looks for negative feelings in heritage sites?

In 2001, Sensation Seekers tourists:

Pizam, Reichel & Uriely (2001). Jr of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing.

Zuckerman conceptualization (1994), a personal trait.

Scored H on Zuckerman SSS = extreme sports, own travel arrangements.

L scores: cultural/heritage attractions, man-made attractions, view sporting games or travel with guided tour groups, packaged tours, family or friends.

Next, we expanded our research on sensation-seeking and added a measure of Risk Behavior

Pizam, A. et al. (2004). The relationship between risk-taking, sensation-seeking, and the tourist behavior of young adults: A cross-cultural study. JTR. 42(3).

Scores for the Zuckerman's SSS and Jackson's JPI-R were measured.

Correlation SSS and Jackson's JPI-R was .56.

Eleven country comparative study: individuals and cultures.

Risk: “The possibility of experiencing a negative outcome”.

Sensation-seeking: a personality trait, a person’s desire for novelty and intensity of sensory stimulation.

The two can occur independent of each other.

FROM PERSONAL TO DESTINATION RISKS PERCEPTIONS

[Relying on earlier, now considered classical work, of Lepp and Gibson (2003); Roehl and Fesenmaier (1992); Sönmez and Graefe (1998a, 1998b and many others)]

Eight dimensions of destination risk perceptions:

+Site-related Physical

(e.g. physical safety, crime and diseases)

+Sociopsychological

(e.g. what friends and family think)

+Physical harm

(e.g. natural disaster and terrorism)

+Expectations

(e.g. wrong choice, waste of time)

+Socio-political issues

(guests' hostility, political unrest)

+Financial loses

+Masses

(commercialized, overcrowded)

+Self-behavior

(side effects of drugs, negative impression on locals)

(Reichel, Fuchs & Uriely, a study on backpackers, JTR, 2007)

CONFRONTING TERROR

Uriely, Maoz and Reichel (2008) Israeli Guests and Egyptian Hosts in Sinai: A Bubble of Serenity. JTR.

**Avoiding Politics-
apparently,
a must. Ex-territory**

**(not really Egypt, "oriental"
no-mans-land?)**

"making friends"-

**albeit instrumental or
contrived**

Stressing similarities

**Distinguishing
between
"Good Guys" vs.
"Bad Guys"**



Three deadly terror attacks shattered the bubble. (2004-2006): practices provisionally abandoned after terrorist attacks, to be gradually reinstated.



TERROR AND MEDICAL TOURISTS

Health Tourists Visiting a Highly Volatile Destination Fuchs & Reichel (2011), Anatolia

Enclave of very limited risk perceptions:

“financial”

“natural disaster and car accidents”

Rational decision makers?



Personal risk taking

Scuba divers: the thrill of risk or the search for tranquility. Fuchs, Reichel and Shani, (2016), Tourism Recreation Research.

Are they for risk, or risk is the by-product of pleasure?



THESE PRESUMED HIGH RISK TAKERS ACTUALLY:

Six major themes that emerged through the triangulation and content analyses:

- **The search for tranquility**
- **Other motives for engaging in scuba diving**
- **Perceived risks**
- **Divers' means for risk reduction**
- **The significant role of the diving partner - the 'buddy'**
- **Patterns of over-confidence and risky behavior**

The quest for the flow experience

(Feeling so engrossed in the experience, that other needs become negligible-Mihály Csíkszentmihályi).

Finally: Two examples of search for negative emotions

**First, Oren, Shani & Poria (2021), TM,
as well as current work by Oren, Poria and Reichel,
related to dark heritage tourism.**

Site studied: Auschwitz.



Second, "POLITICAL OR AGENDA TOURISTS AND RISK TAKING".

Belhassen, Uriely and Assor (2014).

"The touristification of a conflict zone: The case of Bil'in"

Conclusion: a suitable platform for the performance of political tourism

In sum:

- Risk is not always negative to the tourism experience
- Risk is often sought after
- Risk as a side effect to be controlled
- Risk is often manipulated in our mind to justify our decisions
- Risk is not necessarily irrational

THANK

YOU!