



SAFETY, SECURITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

in Tourism

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Penerbit
UTHM

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Electronic Publication 2021

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Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Velan Kunjuraman, 1990

SAFETY, SECURITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT IN TOURISM / Velan Kunjuraman.

Mode of access: Internet

eISBN 978-967-2975-94-6

1. Tourism--Malaysia.
2. Risk management.
3. Tourism--Management.
4. Government publications--Malaysia.
5. Electronic books.

I. Title.

338.4791595

Published by:

Penerbit UTHM

Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia

86400 Parit Raja,

Batu Pahat, Johor

Tel: 07-453 8698 / 8529

Fax: 07-453 6145

Website: <http://penerbit.uthm.edu.my>

E-mail: pt@uthm.edu.my

<http://e-bookstore.uthm.edu.my>

Penerbit UTHM is a member of
Majlis Penerbitan Ilmiah Malaysia
(MAPIM)

CHAPTER 7 SAFETY AND SECURITY IN COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM: A KNOWLEDGE GAP

Velan Kunjuranan

7.1 Introduction

Tourism has been playing a vital role in the development of economy in many countries. It has also contributed to the community development and becomes a national development agenda in most developing countries including Malaysia. The government of Malaysia has prioritized the community development issues through the national development plans and tourism has been acknowledged as the best platform. Consequently, Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has been recognised as one of the mechanisms to enhance the standard of living among the rural communities in Malaysia. CBT can be considered as a community development approach for poor community in rural destinations (Scheyvens, 1999; Hussin & Kunjuranan, 2014; Kontogeorgopoulos, Churyen, & Duangsaeng, 2014).

Many scholars advocate that CBT provides numerous benefits to the communities who are actively involved such as creating new job opportunities, new business investments, enhancing environmental awareness, and conservation and preservation of natural resources (Afenyo & Amuquandoh, 2014; Ahmad, 2014). CBT has the great potential to develop both national and community issues in developing countries if it is systematically managed with assured sustainability. Among the key element in the sustainability paradigm is the social aspect of tourism which can be related to the safety and security issues. Safety and security in tourism has become a buzzword in this contemporary world where it determines the future sustainability of tourism. In addition, the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019 urges that the safety and security issue is among the critical factor that determines the competitiveness level of a particular country's tourism industry. Safety and security in tourism is the key element in any country's tourism development plans due to the fact that tourists are expecting that their vacation destinations should be free from any violence and natural disasters. In the last two decades, the safety and security issues have been gaining momentum due to the decreased security (Radovic & Arabaska, 2016) such as crimes, terrorism, natural disasters, diseases outbreak which provides a room for necessary studies (Kovari & Zimanyi, 2011).

In this chapter, the author's main focus is to emphasize the knowledge gap that occurs in CBT studies with relation to the safety and security issues. Such knowledge gap needs to be addressed through empirical studies as knowledge on the safety and security issues in CBT studies are still scarce especially in the context of developing countries (Kunjuranan & Hussin, 2017). Since CBT is considered as a development tool for many developing countries, it is pivotal to address the challenges faced by CBT operators especially the safety and security related issues. The most affected stakeholders will be the business owners and the local community who are involved as primary and secondary workers in order to ensure their daily survival.

The chapter begins with a general discussion on CBT and its benefits to the development of the local community as well as the nation. The following sections are devoted to the critical discussion of several concepts related to the topic based on published scholarly works. Through the discussion, the author emphasizes on the importance of

safety and security issues in CBT studies and finally addresses the knowledge gap. Such identification of knowledge gap paves a way for future researchers to conduct more empirical studies within the field. It is the main goal of the author to focus on the issue of safety and security in CBT due to the fact that many CBT operations in most developing countries are managed by the local communities in rural areas and might be affected by unforeseen circumstances related to safety and security. The livelihood of the local communities through CBT is another alternative livelihood activity in many developing countries (Tao & Wall, 2009; Hunt, Durham, Driscoll, & Honey, 2015) and serious attention should be given if there are any potential threats that can jeopardise the CBT operations. With this in mind, this particular chapter is devoted to explain the importance of safety and security in CBT studies and proposes several suggestions and recommendations for future research directions.

7.2 Sustainable Tourism Development

The sustainable development paradigm was introduced in tourism in the 1970s as a criticism to identify the impacts brought by tourism from the environmental perspective (Scheyvens, 2002). Since then, the paradigm was extensively applied in tourism academia and was known as 'sustainable tourism development'. During the early years, the term 'sustainable tourism' was explored comprehensively from its basic concepts, approaches, and frameworks to its application in tourism studies. Zolfani, Sedaghat, Maknoon and Zavadskas (2015) noted that in the first decade, the term 'sustainable tourism' was studied from the perspective of the basic frameworks from different contexts such as tourism, environment, and economics. The second decade primarily focused on re-conceptualisation and a series of critiques were made (Sharpley 2000; Liu, 2003; Saarinen, 2006; Lane, 2009). Since tourism development often leads to unsustainable development impacts to the society, culture, and environment, the idea of sustainable tourism was seen as a solution to create positive changes. Sustainable tourism has played an important role in identifying the positive changes in tourism development when appropriate approaches in regulations and development control take place (Bramwell & Lane, 2012).

In terms of definition, sustainable development in the context of tourism has been defined by the WTO (2001 as cited in Zolfani *et al.*, 2015: 5) as follows:

"Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems."

Butler (1993: 29), for example, defined sustainable tourism as "tourism which is in a form which can maintain its viability in an area for an indefinite period of time". However, Butler's (1993) definition of sustainable tourism was misleading and only focused on the geographical aspect without emphasising other important environment and socio-cultural factors. Liu (2003) asserts that the term 'sustainability' should imply "the significant role of states in preparing a steady progress in life conditions for generations to come; 'sustainable development' is more process-oriented and associated with managed changes that cause improvement in conditions for those involved in such development; and 'sustainable tourism' is defined as all types of tourism that are compatible with or contribute to sustainable development" (Zolfani, *et al.*, 2015: 6).

From the definition, one can conclude that sustainable tourism includes all human aspects and promotes environmental concerns. Similarly, Holloway (2006) explains that sustainable tourism is a tool to decrease environmental impacts as well as local culture if possible. It also provides job opportunities to the local people. In order to realise the objective of sustainable tourism, several appropriate alternatives such as a consistent monitoring system, tourism development plans, and the introduction of several measures are required if needed. Sharpley and Telfer (2002: 242) summarise the concept of sustainable tourism development into three components as follows:

- Tourism should be developed as an industry which pays attention to economic impacts which use resources for the long run;
- The concept of sustainability has become a guideline to re-examine the roles of tourism development in a community where it ensures that the resources used for tourism activities by the local community do not exceed the capacity available which are used as services for the tourists in the future;
- In this section, the goals of sustainable tourism are (1) to fulfil the needs of the tourism host community in terms of enhancing socio-economic development in the short and long term, (2) to fulfil the tourists' demand and gain satisfaction as well as inculcate interest among tourists to visit and stay, (3) to conserve and preserve the surrounding environment to achieve the above-mentioned goals.

Alternatively, Sarineen (2006) studied the usefulness of the sustainability paradigm in the context of tourism and identified three basic traditions: (1) resource-based, (2) activity-based, and (3) community-based. Resource-based is the tradition which exemplifies the notion of limit to growth that cannot be negotiated while activity-based emphasised the needs of the private sector for future sustainability. Lastly, community-based tradition stresses the participation from all stakeholders, especially the tourism benefits that should be accrued to the local community (Sonne, 2010). Such basic traditions can be observed and linked to ecotourism studies where those traditions are always interrelated and difficult to balance.

Like other concepts, sustainable tourism has also been criticised by scholars (Sharpley, 2000; Lu & Nepal, 2009). For instance, Lu and Nepal (2009: 6) argue that "the concept is fundamentally misguided". Sharpley (2000: 1) found that "the applicability of sustainable development to the specific context of tourism is rarely questioned". Butler (1999), for example, views sustainable tourism as a vague concept by indicating that there exists a lack of specificity of human needs and time period on whether the human needs were met and were satisfactory, as well as uncertainties in situations where the needs may be conflicting (Lu & Nepal, 2009). In line with this point, Wall (1997) argues that the concept has been defined as a single rather than multi-sectoral approach where the viability of the economic growth should be sustained. Hunter (1995) also has less belief in the sustainable tourism agenda where he pointed out that even though sustainable tourism shared similar principles of sustainable development, it has its own tourism-centric agenda which may be against sustainable development principles. Thus, a careful examination of the re-conceptualisation of sustainable tourism is needed to avoid misinterpretations and conflicts which may occur in the future.

The objective of sustainable tourism could not be completed if the relevant stakeholders neglect the safety and security in any tourism related projects. The sustainability of tourism also relies on how efficient the tourist destination is safeguarded and free from safety and security issues. It is the author's assumption that the safety and security of the tourists at any destination is a prerequisite to achieve the objective of sustainable tourism. Tourists' expectation towards the safety and security in destinations especially both urban and rural is evident because it is a major requirement before they decide to make visit. In the context of CBT, all relevant parties are aware on the importance of safety and security in order to make the tourists feel satisfied with their vacation.

7.3 Sustainable Development Goals

After the less expected achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the United Nations has adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015 which is an extension of the MDGs. This particular blueprint is developed to share the peace and prosperity for the nation and people among the member states. By having global partnership and cooperation, the United Nations believes that the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can be achieved and considered as an urgent call for adoption in any development plans in both developed and developed countries. The seventeen SDGs comprise all aspects of human lives as well as safeguarding the environment and the planet (see Figure 7.1).



Figure 7.1: The seventeen SDGs
Source: UN.Org, 2020

In the context of tourism, the SDGs have directly and indirectly been linked to tourism where it incorporates the social, economic, and environmental aspects. Since tourism has the potential to contribute to the SDGs, relevant policies are still needed and careful examinations are always a priority. The sustainability concern should be inculcated in every human life and it is our responsibility to make the visions into reality. This was nicely explained by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon:

"Everyone has a role in sustainable tourism. Every action counts. This year (2012), one billion international tourists will travel to foreign destinations. Imagine what one act multiplied by one billion can do."

Source: The Tourism Sector and Sustainable Development Goals Report, (2017: 5)

Tourism has contributed to human development and has helped countries to gain economic benefits. Empirical evidences have proven this proposition. The highest level of international tourists' arrivals contributes to the economic development of countries that use tourism as a development tool, including Malaysia. Evidently, the number of international tourists' arrivals in world countries has achieved a new record, which is 1.2 billion international tourists. Such phenomenon significantly contributes and makes tourism development viable and on par with other growing sectors. On the other hand, the strength of tourism can be realised when it provides many jobs opportunities to the people in world countries. For instance, tourism contributed to social welfare, which currently accounts for 1 in 11 jobs worldwide, 7% of global exports, and 10% of GDP, therefore contributing to the economic growth and development in many societies. For a more concrete evidence, Spain is the perfect example. Spain has been acknowledged as one of the top five destinations worldwide according to the UNWTO. Moreover, tourism is

the number one export in Spain and generates 13 out of every 100 jobs for the people in the country (The Tourism Sector and Sustainable Development Goals Report, 2017: 5). Thus, it is evident that tourism's contributions to the economic and social development of countries are undeniable and have the potential to grow at a great pace.

As noted earlier, tourism is vulnerable to periods of disorder and turmoil. Unexpected events such as crimes, war, state political instability, natural disasters, and human conflicts are some of the events that may become a threat for tourism to perform well. Most importantly, the safety and security of the tourists in any tourist destination at both developed and developing countries is gaining serious attention by the stakeholders and appropriate policy and planning measures are continuously being developed. The SDG 17 is deemed relevant to tackle the issue of the safety and security of the tourists and the destination itself by incorporating multiple stakeholders' approach. In the context of CBT operations in most developing countries, the engagement of multiple stakeholders may be a great platform to curb the problem of safety and security.

7.4 Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

CBT emerged during the 1970s (Zapata, Hall, Lindo & Vanderschaeghe, 2011) as a response to the potential negative impacts of mass tourism in the early years of tourism development (Murphy, 1985; Hall & Lew, 2009; Sharpley, 2014) and was considered as superior alternatives (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009). Several scholars reported that the CBT gained its momentum throughout the 1990s (Pawson et al., 2016). This is particularly true where in Malaysia, CBT projects began with the aim to develop the rural communities (Hussin, 2006; Asker, Boronyak, Naomi, & Paddon, 2010; Tasci, Croes & Villanueva, 2014). On the other hand, Zapata et al. (2011) pointed out that most CBT projects were related to rural communities and nature conservation through ecotourism. The concept was also extended to a wide range of tourism products such as local culture and folklore, gastronomy, traditional handicraft, and managerial models around the world (Zapata, et al., 2011: 726).

In addition, Goodwin and Santilli (2009) claim that CBT schemes have been widely accepted by many countries and most of them are positioned under the guise of ecotourism. Most of the developing countries have started to embrace CBT to promote local community development and infrastructural development. However, without a systematic approach, the potential of CBT as a development tool for the local economy and community may not be realised. This is because CBT and its participants are not free from hassles and challenges which can be categorised as internal and external challenges (Kunjuraman & Hussin, 2017). The internal challenges include passive community, leadership problems, informal organizational structure, conflict in community, lack of trained human resource, lack of financial resource, and lack of English language proficiency. In addition to the internal challenges, homestay operators also face external challenges such as inefficient networking, exploitation of external parties, lack of marketing and promotional activities, and lack of commitment and cooperation among the operators and village's landscape (Hussin, 2008; Mohd Nor & Kayat, 2010; Pusriran & Xiao, 2013; Kunjuraman & Hussin, 2017). These challenges should be identified by the relevant stakeholders in order to sustain the CBT projects in developing countries especially in Malaysia where the rural communities are actively involved with the hope that it could uplift their standard of living.

7.5 Why Safety and Security is Important in CBT?

There is a call from the academic community to start seeking for holistic approaches that could recommend mitigation measures for negative impacts derived from safety and security which affect the tourism destinations (Mansfeld & Pizam, 2006). Consequently, this chapter responds to their call by exploring the safety and security issues within the CBT projects in developing countries where there are limited studies that emphasize on this particular global issue. Before discussing further on the importance of safety and security in tourism, it is vital to explore the definitions of both concept as it may clearly explain the difference between the two concepts to future

researchers. In this regard, Radovic and Arabska (2016) made an attempt to differentiate these two concepts. Generally, it is assumed that both concepts have similar meaning but theoretically, the meaning of both concepts differ from one another where "the safety condition is about being protected, while the security condition is about being free from danger" (Radovic & Arabska, 2016: 72). Figure 7.2 indicates the differences of both concepts based on the scholars' perspectives.

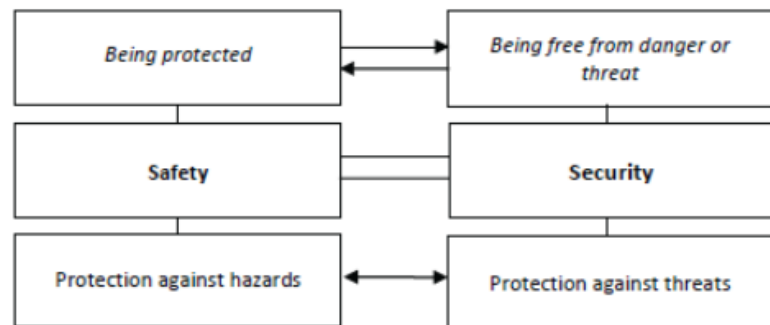


Figure 7.2: Main differences of safety and security concepts

Source: Albrechtsen, 2003 as cited in (Radovic & Arabska, 2016: 72)

Based on Figure 7.2, the importance of security is explained by Radovic and Arabska (2016) as an active element in tourism which incorporates the obligation to protect both tourists and the industry as well as providing a space for discussion on the challenges of globalization. Travel frequencies and patterns of tourists may change if the safety and security issues in travel destinations are paid less attention by the relevant stakeholders. In addition, the perceptions and feelings of tourists towards particular travel destinations may also change and subsequently influence their process of travel decisions. The incidents which are related to tourists' safety and security like the 9/11 incident, crimes, violence, disease outbreak, disasters, and similar incidents are evident to become threats to the tourism industry around the world.

Kovari and Zimanyi (2011) clarify that safety and security are too complex and have multidimensional notions. According to the scholars, the concepts involve all components include consumer protection, public health, political security, environmental security, disaster protection, health and sanitation, and quality assurance of services among others. With regards to tourism, all the above-mentioned components are related and emphasize on the importance of safety and security as the main indicator for successful tourism development. A summary of threats that could impact the travel and tourism industry around the world is depicted in Table 7.1. These threats are the main barrier for tourists to make travel decisions with a peaceful mind and thus affects the overall tourism industries in the world which is considered as an important economic tool for many countries.

Table 7.1: A summary of threats

Terrorism
Environmental
Crime-related incidents
Climate change
Diseases/health hazards
Natural disasters
Unsafe travel conditions/local travel safety
Political situation/military conflicts

Source: Radovic & Arabska (2016)

Throughout the history, there are several diseases outbreaks or epidemics experienced by the world and the people as depicted in Table 2. Most recently, the world is shocked by another dangerous disease outbreak called the Novel Coronavirus or popularly known as COVID-19. Almost all sectors are seriously affected by COVID-19 including the tourism sector with a major and evolving challenge. The safety and security issues in the tourism sector is challenged by COVID-19 and it forces almost all tourism sectors in the world to temporarily stop their operation. As a result, most countries in the world lose its revenues from tourism and record a drastic decline in terms of tourists arrivals. As of 27 March 2020, the United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has published its report on the impacts of COVID-19 towards tourism. Based on the report, tourism has been confirmed as one of the most affected sectors due to COVID-19 and UNWTO has revised its 2020 forecast for international arrivals and receipts (UNWTO website, 2020). However, the same report also explains that it is too early for UNWTO to estimate the full impact of COVID-19 on international tourism. This is because UNWTO takes the SARS scenario in 2003 as a benchmark for its initial assessment while factoring the size and dynamics of global travel and current disruptions. The UNWTO initial assessment on the COVID-19 impact on economy is as follows:

- As for today, UNWTO estimates that in 2020, the global international tourist arrivals could decline between 1 per cent to 3 per cent, down from an estimated growth of 3 per cent to 4 per cent as forecasted in early January 2020;
- This could translate into a loss of US\$ 30 to 50 billion in spending by international visitors (international tourism receipts);
- So far, the Asia and the Pacific region is expected to be the most affected (a decrease of 9 per cent to 12 per cent in international tourist arrivals, down from the growth of 5 per cent to 6 per cent as forecasted in early

January 2020);

- Estimates for other world regions are currently premature in view of the rapidly evolving situation.

As for Malaysia, COVID-19 has become an enemy and brought various negative impacts to the national economy. For an example, a report by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia states that more than MYR9 billion was lost from January to March 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak in the country (MOTAC, 2020). This is considered a big loss to the Malaysian economy and also a potential threat to the national development. The COVID-19 outbreak has been declared as a global pandemic where it has grounded airplanes operation, shutting down hotels and other type of accommodation services, and temporarily stop the people's movement. In the context of CBT in Malaysia, COVID-19 has impacted the sector in terms of income. Resorts, Bed and Breakfast (B&B), and homestay programmes operated by the local community may lose their income for their business survival. It is no doubt that COVID-19 has contributed negatively towards the national tourism sectors including CBT operations in the country. In response to combat the global pandemic, the UNWTO has strengthened its collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other relevant agencies. However, the UNWTO has also called for solid international leadership to find solutions for COVID-19 and include tourism as a priority in future recovery measures.

Table 7.2: Global outbreaks in human history

Year	Diseases	Country of origin	Infected	Deaths	Fatality (%)
1967	MARBURG	Uganda	590	478	81
1976	EBOLA	DRC	33, 687	14, 693	44
1999	NIPAH	Malaysia	496	265	53
2002	SARS	China	8,098	774	10
2003	H5N1-BIRD FLU	China	861	455	53
2009	A(H1N1)pdm09	US and Mexico	1 million	123,000-203,000	Below 0.01
2012	MERS	Saudi Arabia	2,494	858	35
2013	H7N9-BIRD FLU	China	1,568	616	39
Yearly	Seasonal flu	-	1 billion	290,000-650,000	Below 0.01
On-going	2019-nCov	China	724,945*	34,041*	4.69*

Note: *Approximate figures as of March 30, 2020

Source: WHO; Johns Hopkins University last updated 11.30 GMT, March 30, 2020

7.6 Conclusion

The main objective of this chapter is to highlight the importance of the safety and security issues in the CBT literature. As noted by Kunjuraman and Hussin (2017), there is a missing link in the CBT literature emphasizing on the issues of safety and security. Since tourism and more specifically the CBT is vulnerable to any possible threats of terrorism acts, crimes, disasters, and diseases outbreak, such act is related to the tourists' safety and the destination image could be jeopardized which subsequently will limit the tourists to make travel decisions. As for many developing countries, tourism is among the main contributor to the national revenues and a tool for community development.

More research is needed to tackle this particular issue and enrich the current body of knowledge. Tourism, at all countries including Malaysia, is vulnerable to safety and security issues and relevant agencies are the important stakeholders to find appropriate solutions and safeguard its tourism sector with development plans. In this regard, a multi stakeholders' approach is needed to combat the potential threats for destination safety and security. A full support from all parties especially the government should lead the cooperation in trying possible measures to combat the potential threats.

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Editor Biography



Dr. Velan Kunjuraman is currently affiliated with Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) Malaysia as a senior lecturer. He has received his PhD at Universiti Malaysia Sabah, East Malaysia. Dr. Velan Kunjuraman has been teaching a variety of subjects in the tourism field including Tourism Planning and Development, Tourism Product Development, Tourism Marketing and Heritage and Cultural Tourism. His research interests are in Sociology of Ecotourism and Community Development, seaweed cultivation and homestay programme, community-based ecotourism, tourism planning, and tourism impacts. He has numerous awarded publications, research projects, presentations in national and international conferences since 2013.



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