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Introduction

Tourism supply and demand is sensitive to disruptions, which can cause changes in tourist perceptions of risk, induce fear, and impact tourist behavior (Fennell, 2017; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998). The increasing number of disruptions creates concern among current and future international travelers and impacts the tourism industry. International tourism movement perhaps, more than anything else, relies on the assumptions of a predictable, safe, and good world. Although tourist movement is not free from constraints, uncertainties, worries, fear, and risks, disruptions caused by terrorist attacks have unprecedented consequences for both tourists and destinations as they inhibit tourists intending to travel to a recently terrorized destination. Within this framework, the following research questions are put forth:

- RQ1. What are the differences in the perceptions of international travel concern regarding terrorist attacks and destination choice?
- RQ2. What are the differences in attitudes toward international travel in the case of two pre-travel terrorism scenarios?
- RQ3. What factors are influential in the perceptions of, and responses to, international travel concern regarding terrorist attacks and the subsequent destination choice and response?

Literature Review

This study investigates how terrorism concerns affect tourist behavior. Fischhoff et al. (2004) examine risk estimates for terrorist attacks at specific locations, tolerances for terror-attack risks, worries regarding travel-related events, and hypothetical travel decisions. The findings show that greater terrorist risk corresponds to stronger worries about being a terror victim, heightened worries regarding travel problems, and higher vulnerability while traveling. Furthermore, cognitive and affective risk measures predict cancellation decisions, and risk-specific measures show higher correlations with trip decisions.

The relevant research to date tends to focus on perceived travel risks (Rittichainuwat and Chakraborty, 2009; Sellick, 2004), tourist worries (Larsen et al., 2009), anxiety, and fear. Increased incidents (terrorist attacks, epidemics, earthquakes, etc.) and concerns regarding crises and disasters in international travel is a continuous concern for all stakeholders, but provides learning opportunities. In response to disruptions, tourists have four options: cancel, change, continue with, or delay their trip. A majority would cancel or postpone their trip due to events such as a bombing (terrorist attacks), hurricane, or earthquake (Valencia and Crouch, 2008). However, some would not cancel or would still book despite risks and possible fear; for example, tourists who have visited the destination in the past, domestic tourists, and young tourists. (Backer and Ritchie, 2017; Campiranon and Arcodia, 2008; Walters et al., 2015).

Suitable travel information minimizes risk perceptions in the pre-purchase phase (Karl and Schmude, 2017). Tourists rely heavily on information from their family and friends at the affected destination, followed by residents of the affected destination, the destination government, and other tourists (Hajibaba et al., 2016). In a study by Valencia and Crouch (2008), respondents were asked how they would react to a hypothetical bombing scenario occurring prior to a planned international trip. Of the possible reactions, one-third of respondents would go ahead with their

trip as planned (33%), one-fifth of would change their itinerary and choose a different region altogether (21%), and another one-fifth would post pone their trip (19%), with remaining respondents mixed among three choices. Compared to additional scenarios, most respondents would still go ahead with the trip in the event of a bombing, whereas most would delay their trip in the event of a hurricane.

The results from Hajibaba et al. (2015) on crisis-resistant tourists show that behaviorally, resistant tourists exhibit a greater willingness to take risks across all risk categories, and perceive their risk propensity as higher than others. The results indicate that there are two dimensions to behavioral resistance, namely 'going despite' and 'not cancelling because,' which are, conceptually, not exact opposites. This complexity is reflected in the between high-risk propensity and high resistance to change, suggesting that both can be possible explanations for crisis-resistant travel behavior. Importantly, the study also identified that highly crisis-resistant tourists do not necessarily engage in risk shifting.

People from different countries and diverse cultural backgrounds vary significantly in their perception and evaluation of risks. Tourists from the same region may perceive a lower level of risk because of cultural proximity and extended knowledge of destinations from the same region (Karl and Schmude, 2017). For example, Reisinger and Mavondo (2005) tested relationships among cultural and psychographic factors; perception of travel risk; and safety, anxiety, and intention to travel across Australian and international tourist samples. The findings show that perception of terrorism risk is positively associated with anxiety; sociocultural risk is positively associated with anxiety; and anxiety is strongly and negatively associated with safety and intention to travel (Reisinger and Mavondo, 2005). The study also suggests a strong relationship between travel risk-perception and travel anxiety.

Desivilya et al. (2015) examined the impact of contextual effects on the perceptions of travel held by young people. The study found that risk perceptions of students in conflict areas (Israel) were higher than those living outside conflict areas (Poland) and that Israeli students had less intention to travel to Turkey, Egypt, and India than Polish students (Desivilya et al., 2015). Tourists with higher education hold lower perceptions regarding the influence of risk on travel intention. Likewise, Deng and Ritchie (2016) investigated risk perceptions of international students at an Australian university and found that travel experience, repeat visitation, origin, and destination choice strongly impacted risk perceptions. The authors note that there are limited investigations seeking to understand which domains of risk are most concerning for individuals or the impacts of characteristics and travel behavior on risk perceptions.

Word assumptions play a critical role in tourist behavior and are said to lead to optimism, related to positive resilience (Speckhard, 2010). In times of terrorist attacks, destination managers can take action to address world assumptions such as reassuring predictability and safety and acknowledging that society (both host and guest) is still good-natured despite the actions of a few individuals. Additionally, mastery shows that an individual or destination can adequately respond to the adverse consequences of terrorism, and that the individual or destination will be successful in its response and can overcome the effects of future events (Speckhard, 2010). Previous positive experiences of mastery lead to enhanced coping efficacy, resulting in strong feelings of resilience. Locus of control is a central component in the tourism context, and individuals who feel they are able to single-handedly influence a situation develop positive resilience. Furthermore, it is important to note that tourists react to the prospect of risk at two levels: they evaluate the risk cognitively and react emotionally (Karl and Schmude, 2017). Hajibaba et al. (2015) focus on

behavioral resistance and therefore call for future research on the cognitive and emotional processes that enhance behavioral resistance.

In terms of emotion, researchers stress the role of attention on decision-making. For example, as an indicator of attention, tourists' media searching behavior may significantly determine their perceptions of cognitive factors and level of concern, worry, anxiety, or fear in travel. Lee and Lemyre (2009) propose a social-cognitive model composed of cognitive factors such as perceived probability, seriousness, personal impact, and coping efficacy. The model recognizes social contextual factors and includes measures regarding perceived personal impact and front-line preparedness. These factors are similar to destination attributes (pull factors) and significant at times of disruptions when tourists reconsider their planned trips. Finally, behavioral responses are conceptualized with factors of individual preparedness, information seeking, and avoidance behavior. Affective and behavioral response are two domains of individual response to terrorism.

Liu et al. (2016) used the risk-as-feelings hypothesis and drew on cognitive dimensions (perceived severity and perceived susceptibility) and affective dimensions (perceived safety) to form a conceptual model. The model with the strongest fit showed the relationship between travel interest and cognitive risk perceptions was significant, suggesting these perceptions moderate the relationship between travel interest and intentions (Liu et al., 2016). The authors suggest that future research continue investigating conceptual approaches to understand the relationship between cognitive and affective risk perceptions, a secondary objective of the foregoing study.

Finally, a recent study by Schroeder and Pennington-Gray (2016) aimed to develop a theory-based conceptual model adapting constructs from health behavior and psychology. The conceptual model set forth focused on relationships between perceived risk, perceived efficacy, and engagement in risk reduction behaviors, taking into account understudied variables such as perceived severity, affective risk perceptions, self-efficacy, response efficacy, and engagement in risk reduction behavior (Schroeder and Pennington-Gray, 2016). This model aimed to integrate the new variables into existing work related to travel risk. A majority of the proposed variables have yet to be tested in the case of travel, calling for testing of the proposed model in varied settings (Schroeder and Pennington-Gray, 2016).

Overall, the studies presented in the literature review provide evidence that there is a necessity for further investigations of risk perception and travel intentions that have strong theoretical underpinnings and explore both a breadth and depth of concepts to substantially contribute to the body of literature. Additionally, there is a need for further investigation of university students in the United States, as many of the preceding studies targeting university students are set at international universities.

Methods

This study employed an electronic, self-administered structured questionnaire composed of closed-ended questions distributed in November and December 2017. Qualtrics, an online survey platform, hosted the questionnaire and facilitated data collection. All students and employees of a single university in the northeastern United States were targeted for inclusion in this primary phase, leading to a broader investigation. This sample was selected as a preliminary population to gain initial insights to further refine the survey instrument for future sampling efforts. Participants were invited to complete the questionnaire via email, sent through multiple campus email directories. The email invitations yielded 354 total responses, in which 117 were removed through data

purification because of incompletion and responses in progress were omitted. The final sample included 237 usable cases. As a result of time constraints, a convenience sampling approach was employed for the data collection process (Altinay et al., 2015). The design of the questionnaire was guided by the literature. The questions utilized in this study included cognitive factors (perceived probability, seriousness, personal impact, and coping efficacy) and affective response (worry and uncertainty) (Lee and Lemyre, 2009); perceived control (Herzenstein et al., 2015); perceived severity and vulnerability (Schroeder and Pennington-Gray, 2016); risk reduction actions (Chien et al., 2017; Lo et al., 2011); and response to terrorist attacks (Valencia and Crouch, 2008). Quantitative data cleaning and analysis was undertaken with SPSS Statistics 22.

Results

Demographic characteristics

Table 1 displays the demographic characteristic of respondents. Approximately half of respondents were male (51%) with an overwhelming majority aged 18-24 years (78%). Most respondents were United States citizens (85%) and born in the United States (81%). The majority of participants were never married (85%) and most had some college experience (57%) or higher education credentials. Most respondents were students (86%).

Table 1. Demographic and travel experience characteristics

| Demographic characteristics	%
Male	51
Single	85
18-24 years aged	78
Undergraduate	71
Student	86
United States Citizens	85
United States as place of Birth	81

Level of concern and destination choice

When asked about their worries about a terrorist attack when traveling to a foreign country, 37% of respondents indicated no concern, another 37% percent were slightly concerned, 16% were moderately concerned, and 10% were very concerned. Respondents were also asked to indicate their interest in traveling to 24 countries (destination choice) while considering their level of concern regarding terrorism.

Figure *1* shows destination choice stratified by level of concern regarding terrorist attacks when traveling internationally. The countries are sorted by the responses of the very concerned group.

Principal component analysis (PCA) based on varimax orthogonal rotation was utilized for data reduction and to determine the dimensionality of travel interest to the 24 countries and tendency to prefer traveling in the United States. The results indicated five components: Factor 1: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Brazil, India, South Africa, Jamaica; Factor 2: France, Italy, United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Greece; Factor 3: Japan, China, Singapore; Factors 4: Russia, Turkey, Israel, Egypt; Factor 5: Canada and United States.

Figure 1. Level of international travel concern regarding terrorist attacks and destination choice
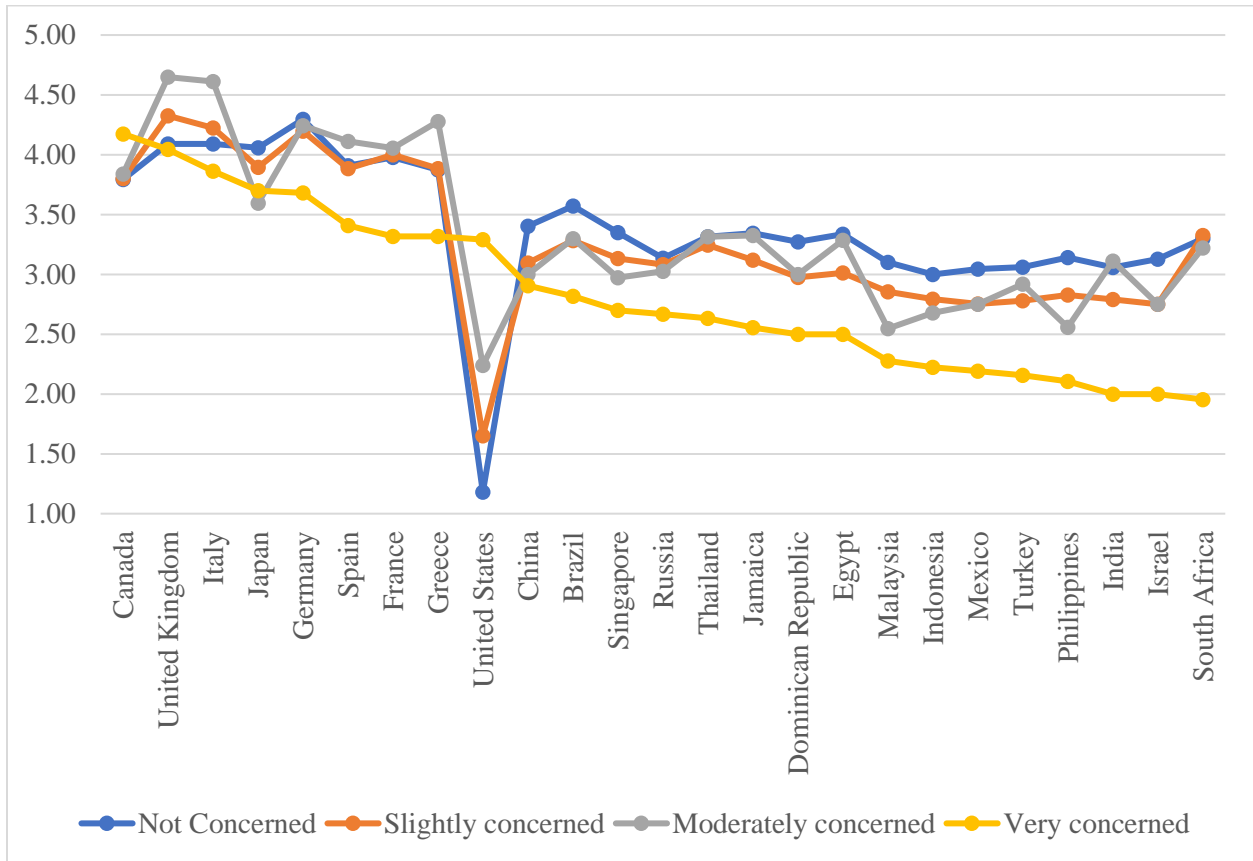
Behavioral responses to terrorist attacks

Behavioral responses to terrorist attacks were assessed through two pre-travel phase terrorism scenarios. The first scenario asked respondents to select which country, on the list of 24 strategically selected countries, they felt was most ideal, based on their travel interest, and least risky. Then respondents were presented a scenario in which a terrorist attack occurred in the country days prior to their planned international trip and their reaction was solicited using six choices. The results in Table 2 show that in the case of scenario 1, the percentage of respondents who would not change their trip gradually declined as level of concern increased, as less than half of very concerned respondents indicated they would not change their trip (46%).

Conversely, as level of concern increased, the percentage of respondents who would cancel or postpone their trip also increased, though not to the same magnitude seen in the no change response. In the case of scenario 2, most unconcerned respondents would go ahead with their trip as planned (60%), but this percentage is lower than in the case of scenario 1. On the opposing end, 25% of very concerned respondents would go ahead with their trip as planned. Scenario 2 yielded an increased number of respondents that would cancel their trip as 54% of very concerned respondents chose to cancel. The slightly concerned group had the greatest percentage of respondents that would change or postpone the trip (48%).

Table 2. Behavioral responses to terrorist attacks by level of concern

Response items	Not Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Moderately Concerned	Very Concerned
Scenario 1: Most Ideal - Least Risky				
No change	84%	74%	60%	46%
Cancel	0%	2%	11%	21%
Change/Postpone	16%	24%	29%	33%
Scenario 2: Most Ideal - Most Risky				
No change	60%	38%	36%	25%
Cancel	6%	14%	22%	54%
Change/Postpone	34%	48%	42%	21%

Antecedents and consequences of international travel concern regarding terrorism

Table 3 compares cognitive factors, social-contextual factors, and behavioral responses by level of concern.

Table 3. Cognitive and social-contextual factors and behavioral responses by level of concern

Response items	Not Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Moderately Concerned	Very Concerned
Cognitive Factors				
Media search behavior	2.73	3.39	3.16	3.54
Perceived probability	1.63	2.20	2.49	2.88
Perceived uncertainty	1.63	2.20	2.92	3.17
Perceived seriousness	3.28	3.83	4.19	4.38
Perceived personal impact	3.07	3.43	4.16	4.08
Coping efficacy	3.48	3.38	2.95	2.88
Perceived control	1.66	1.72	1.65	2.33
Perceived severity	3.91	3.98	4.14	4.04
Perceived vulnerability	2.26	2.94	3.38	3.54
Social-Contextual Factors				
Other countries	3.23	3.05	2.87	1.90
European Countries	4.05	4.09	4.32	3.56
Japan, China, Singapore	3.59	3.36	3.13	3.06
Russia, Turkey, Israel, Egypt	3.22	2.94	2.98	2.32
Canada and United States	2.49	2.72	3.04	3.78
Behavioral Responses				
Individual Preparedness	3.12	3.41	3.68	3.82
Origin Information Seeking	3.47	3.61	3.74	3.98
Destination Information Seeking	4.45	4.30	4.27	4.24
Avoidance Behavior	3.45	3.54	3.78	4.19

Unconcerned respondents had lower levels of media searching behavior regarding terrorist attacks. They also indicated the lowest likelihood of a terrorism event occurring and feelings of uncertainty about possible terrorist attacks when traveling internationally. Overall, the mean scores of perceived probability and uncertainty were below M=2.92, except very concerned respondents had

a rating of M=3.17 on perceived uncertainty. Overall, very concerned respondents showed higher sensitivity to cognitive factors. Unconcerned (M=3.48) and slightly concerned (M=3.38) respondents reported higher levels of coping efficacy in case of terrorist attacks during international travel than moderately concerned (M=2.95) and very concerned (M=2.88) respondents. All respondents except those in very concerned group had very close ratings on the question asking, "How likely do you think being a victim of terrorism is controllable?" (M=1.66, M=1.72, and M=1.65). The rating by very concerned respondents was M=2.33. The perceived severity factor had highest ratings from moderately concerned respondents (M=4.14) and very concerned respondents (M=4.04). Very concerned respondents prefer to travel to European countries, Canada, and domestically in the United States. Unconcerned travelers prefer countries other than Canada and the United States. Similarly, slightly concerned respondents also indicated that they are more interested in other countries rather than Canada and the United States. Very concerned respondents showed highest travel interest in European countries. In terms of behavioral responses, unconcerned respondents place high importance on destination-based information seeking. Individual preparedness was highest for very concerned respondents as was avoidance behavior.

Conclusion and Discussion

This paper sought to investigate some of the antecedents and consequences of the level of concern regarding international travel at times of terrorist attacks. The findings show that there were not significantly different patterns in demographic characteristics regarding the level of concern. However, a higher proportion of males, young, and American respondents indicated no or slight concern. Additionally, single respondents more than married respondents, and students more than employees had slight or no concern. These results are consistent with past research. More concerned travelers show higher media search behavior regarding terrorist attacks. Interestingly, level of concern was higher for international respondents than their American counterparts. Preferred destination choices were concentrated on European countries. Responses to the two scenario questions indicated high proportions of behavioral resistance. Respondents reporting higher behavioral resistance tend to exhibit higher levels of individual preparedness, origin- and destination-based information seeking, and lower likelihood of avoidance behavior. The results indicate that tourists may avoid traveling to certain destinations. However, tourists tend not to change their trip once the destination choice is made, even in the case of terrorist attacks. The most important finding of this study suggests that behavioral resistance only differs slightly between most risky and least risky destination choices. Industry specific accessible research such as this enhances theoretical knowledge about resilient or resistant tourists and informs practitioners about how to formulate strategic responses to disruptions to maintain the level of tourist arrivals. It is encouraging to see that tourists tend to not cancel their trip despite disruptions and choose to travel anyway. This is important for practitioners who need to ensure that they respond quickly to disruptions, which heightens the need for a precise initial response. Finally, destination marketers need to continue to include safety and resilience in their marketing campaigns to reassure tourists intending to travel to international destinations that may pose risks.

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