Book Review

Reviewed by Hélder Silva Lopes

Email: htsltiago@gmail.com

Handbook on Crisis and Disaster Management in Tourism
by: Bruce Prideaux and David Beirman (Editors)
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The Handbook on Crisis and Disaster Management in Tourism is a valuable and timely contribution to an important but understudied area in tourism research.

This book examines a diverse array of geographical locations, offering a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted nature of crises and disasters within the tourism sector. It presents a synthesis of theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches, case studies, and practitioner insights. First, it includes case studies from Indonesia, focusing on local industry perspectives in disaster planning, and Japan, where the Fuji Five Lakes region serves as an example of public-private partnership in crisis response. Also, Australia's resilience s assessed in the context of wildfires and the impacts of COVID-19. Small Pacific Island states are discussed, highlighting their unique challenges in responding to tourism-related crises. In Hawaii, the book examines the digital transformation and management of tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic in emerging economies like Sri Lanka. From Nepal, the response to the 2015 Gorkha earthquake is analysed as an example of turning crisis into tourism opportunities. Further locations include the US-Mexico border, examining international boundary crisis management, and Hong Kong, analysing the collapse of tourism due to social unrest.

This approach to different areas of the globe underlines the importance of integrating crisis preparedness and adaptive resilience into both short-term and long-term strategic planning within tourism management, an aspect historically overlooked. Particularly in an era marked by rising global crises, from pandemics to extreme weather events driven by Climate Change (CC), in first chapter, Prideaux and Beirman argue convincingly for embedding crisis management into the core of tourism operations and policy development. An innovative concept introduced in the volume is the notion of the "next normal" in post-crisis scenarios. This concept provides a strategic perspective on the long-term impact of crises, suggesting that the outcomes of disruptive events often lead to a reshaped "next normal" rather than a return to pre-crisis conditions. Sigala (2020) and Lopes et al. (2021) also underscores this point, noting that the post-COVID environment has permanently altered traveller behaviours and expectations.

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Another notable strength of the handbook is its focus on resilience in tourism and hospitality. Girish Prayag's chapter on organisational resilience (Chapter 2) presents a theoretical consideration that builds on previous literature, expanding resilience from a reactive stance to a proactive approach that emphasises adaptability to future challenges. Prayag connects resilience with the development of organisational flexibility, which allows tourism enterprises and destinations to pivot effectively during and after crises. This chapter resonates with broader resilience theory as proposed by Cochrane (2010), who suggests that resilience is not merely about recovery but about building systems that can endure and thrive in the face of repeated disruptions. This idea is subsequently reinforced in various works, demonstrating the appreciation attracted to the theme of resilience following the establishment of the Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 in Sendai in 2015. Prayag's exploration of resilience enhances our understanding of how resilience can be operationalised within tourism, emphasising the dynamic nature of resilience that evolves with each crisis experience.

In Chapter 3, Riley et al. introduce the tripartite model, which categorises travel risk perceptions into three types: physical risks, relating to health and safety concerns; social risks, involving cultural tensions and uncomfortable social interactions; and psychological risks, linked to anxiety and fear experienced by travellers.

The book also addresses the application of technology in crisis management, which is gaining traction in tourism but remains underutilised. For example, in the Chapter 13, Linnes and Agrusa discusses digital transformation in Hawaii's tourism and hospitality sector, offer comprehensions into how technology can facilitate rapid response and enhance resilience through real-time data analysis and communication. The exploration of digital adaptation provides an actionable framework for integrating digital solutions that strengthen response strategies across tourism operations. The reliance on technology in crisis preparedness is supported by recent studies on artificial intelligence (AI) and virtual reality (VR) in risk management, suggesting that technological integration could transform crisis response capabilities in the future.

One critical theme throughout the handbook is the need for academic research to bridge the gap between theory and real-world application in the tourism industry. The edited book highlights the divide between theoretical models and practical implementation, which limits the accessibility and applicability of academic data. The literature gap is well-documented in existing reviews of crisis management in tourism, such as Mair et al. (2016), who identified communication, marketing, and post-crisis recovery as areas needing robust, practitioner-oriented research. The handbook advocates for stronger collaborations between academics and industry professionals to ensure that research findings are disseminated effectively to those working directly in tourism management.

In this book, Chapter 6 illustrates this through case studies and real-world examples, including the Fuji Five Lakes Tourism Federation's response manual, which outlines a collaborative effort between public and private entities to create an adaptable, comprehensive tourism crisis response.

The case studies presented are particularly informative, offering practical applications of crisis management strategies in diverse geographical and situational contexts. For instance, Chapter 15 details how Nepal transformed the aftermath of the 2015 Gorkha earthquake into a tourism opportunity. Walbeek's chapter on Nepal's crisis response exemplifies how destinations can turn from focusing solely on recovery to leveraging crises as catalysts for revitalised and more sustainable tourism strategies. Similarly, the

collapse of Thomas Cook, covered in Chapter 22 by D. Beirman, emphasises the economic vulnerabilities inherent in tourism enterprises and the systemic risks associated with global financial dependencies. This case illustrates how resilience is equally important at the financial and structural levels, urging destinations and tourism businesses to develop contingency plans that mitigate exposure to economic shocks.

An essential contribution of the handbook is its call for a specialised journal focused solely on crisis and disaster management within tourism. Although several journals occasionally publish research on tourism crises, this book argue that a dedicated publication could consolidate knowledge, fostering a continuous dialogue that addresses the unique challenges of crisis management in tourism. This proposed journal could also facilitate the development of specific methodologies tailored to tourism crises. For example, this gap was noted by Zhang et al. (2023) in their recent review on crisis management literature.

Finally, the handbook addresses significant challenges related to long-term sustainability in tourism, which is increasingly recognised as a crisis issue due to CC. Chapter 7, which discusses the climate crisis and its implications for tourism, explores the intersection of sustainability and crisis management, suggesting that tourism stakeholders integrate climate mitigation and adaptation strategies into their resilience frameworks. The chapter reiterates the UNWTO's emphasis on sustainable crisis management, urging stakeholders to prioritise environmental and social sustainability to safeguard the sector's future.

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