

An Analysis of Tourist Perceptions and Responses towards Disasters: A Case Study of Sichuan after Earthquakes

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship among tourist demographics, tourist risk perception, the perception of the impact of the disasters on tourist destination, tourist motivations, and tourist choice behavior, and then to provide references for tourism policy makers. We conducted on-site questionnaire survey among tourists who travel in Chengdu and Dujiangyan, Sichuan where experienced two main earthquakes, 2008 Wenchuan earthquake (Mw 8.0) and 2013 Ya'an earthquake (Mw 7.0), and achieved some results based on structural equation modeling and analysis.

Introduction

Tourism is vulnerable to a series of disaster occurrences as it is a compressive industry and depends on so many components and individual businesses. Safety and security are the essential conditions for the tourism development and thus are the fundamental determinants for its growth. Without them, tourist destinations cannot succeed in competitive markets, as tourists avoid the places

associated with high risk.

Sichuan experienced two main earthquakes. As Chengdu, as the traffic hub of Sichuan province, even southwest in China, is the provincial capital of Sichuan and located in the intermediate zone of the main quake-hit areas and main scenic spots. Qingcheng-Dujiangyan, which is one of the most famous scenic spots in Sichuan, is close to the epicenter of the main quake of Wenchuan earthquake. So we conducted survey in these two destinations.

Methodology

To investigate the tourist attitudes towards disasters in tourist destination, a questionnaire survey was conducted to collect primary data from a convenience sample of domestic travelers. The tourists who were travelling in Chengdu (Jinli Street, Kuan-Zhai Lane, Chunxi Road, Tianfu Square) and Dujiangyan (Mount Qingcheng, Hongkou) were selected as the sample of on-site questionnaire survey. A five-item survey was composed to access tourist perceptions and responses toward the disasters. Structural equation modeling and analysis were applied in the survey results.

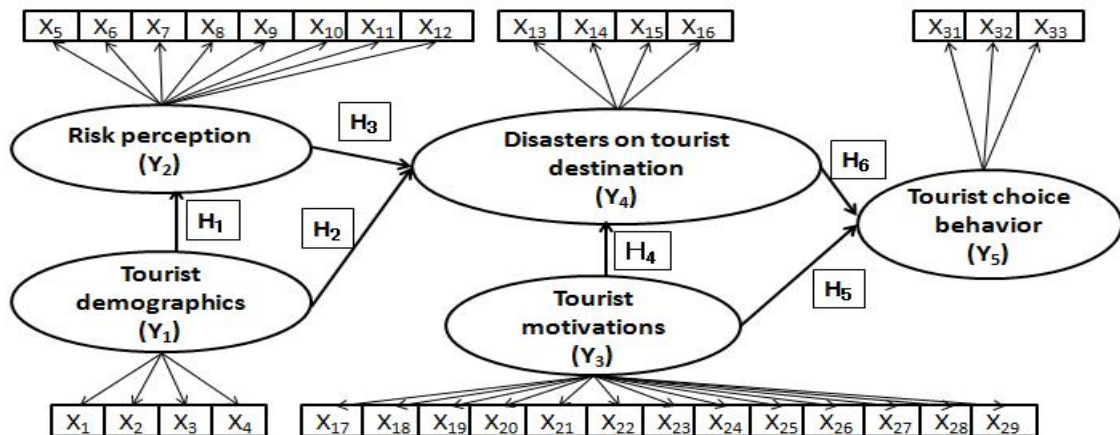


Figure 1. Conceptual model of tourist perceptions and responses.