

# An Introductory Note on Disaster and Tourism

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**Abstract:** *This note provides a scope to understand the dimensions and relationship between disaster and tourism in context of contemporary social researches. Going through a number of existing multimodal researches on disaster and tourism tends its pole towards with a massive area of research interest and at the same time exploring different dimensions on this issue is now been a possibility to further humanitarian aids and assistance in its applied sense. Through the present attempt, the author tries to frame an outline on the issues of disaster and tourism not just to summing up the literature in a common thread; rather to expose the dynamics and dimensions of disaster tourism in contemporary academic discourses.*

**Keywords:** Disaster, Tourism, Vulnerabilities, Crisis, Disaster Planning

## 1. Introduction

'Disaster Tourism' by its term, can be simply divided into two major phenomena ('Disaster' and 'Tourism') with multidimensional magnitudes and simultaneously both of the issues by their nature can not possible to be universally defined. Starting with the basic understanding of disasters, the author would like to reflect it- as a process or an event that combines with the potentiality of disruption and destruction of natural agent (s) and a population in socially and/or technologically generated conditions of vulnerability (Oliver-Smith, 1996; Oliver-Smith and Hoffman, 2002).

Tourism on the other, can be conceptualized as- an approach that includes travelling and a temporary, and voluntary, visit to a place away from home, a 'break' from daily life and living, and as an 'industry' that have had ecological, economic, social, and political dimensions (Smith 1989; Burns, 2004; Bramwell and Lane, 2000).

The issues of tourism is principally depends upon the choices of the tourists that are now been no longer limited to the spaces of scenic beauty, rather, it became also changes its nature to chose tour destinations to real and co modified death and disaster sites (Fonseca, Seabra and Silva, 2016; Wight, 2006; Lennon and Foley, 2009).

It is obvious that 'disaster' and 'tourism' are not synonymous events, but, the recent changes in global landscapes and increasing rates of natural and man-made disasters needs to special protection for the tourists from the risks of hazards of unknown places and at the same time to aware and provide knowledge to resist against the hazards to the local people and permanent residents of the tourist prone areas (Murphy and Bayley, 1989).

## 2. The Type of Crises in Tourism Industry

Maditinos and Vassiliadis (2008) pointed out Beirman's (2003) classification of five fundamental causes of tourism destination crisis-

1. International war or conflict and prolonged manifestations of internal conflict,
2. A specific act or acts of terrorism, especially those directed at or affecting tourists,
3. A major criminal act or crime wave, especially when tourists are targeted,
4. A natural disaster, such as an earthquake, storm or volcano, causing damage to urban areas or the natural environment and consequently impacting on the tourism infrastructure, and,
5. Health concerns related to epidemics and diseases; these may be diseases which impact on humans directly or diseases affecting animals, which limit access to tourist attractions.

Thus came, from Beirman's classification of crisis, the fourth stand is a natural disaster that is in many cases 'unexpected'. From the perspective of natural disaster, an ethnographic study conducted by P. D. Mullick and A. Das (2014) on the effects on phailin at Puri, Odisha, India, reflected the issues of the detailed of the Warning, Risk Prediction and Preparation, The Event, The Crisis, Interaction and Hospitality Management, The choices of the tourists and associated responses, Issues of unity, cooperation and interaction under threat, and Myth and spirituality as support building system.

Contrastingly, it is reflected in contemporary researches that- keeping in mind the pre-warning of extreme environmental events, tourists' interests are rising in general to experience the scenario in face to face situation (Wysokiński, 2007). The more interest in tourism in natural hazards and disasters prone areas are now been the central them in this era of globalization and this interest have been much provoked by travel agencies for the low numbers of tourists taking part in such activities (Rucinska and Lechowicz, 2014).

## 3. Disaster Tourism as Dark Tourism

Rucinska (2016) defines 'Dark Tourism' as- the act of travel to sites associated with death, suffering and the seemingly macabre.....'dark' describes alludes to a sense

of apparent disturbing practices and morbid product and experiences, within the tourism domain.

Contrastingly, (Fonseca et al., 2016) is of opinion that there is no consensus of the definition of the term 'dark tourism' among the contemporary researchers. Further they classified 'dark tourism' into eight sub types- War/Battlefield Tourism, Disaster Tourism, Prison Tourism, Cemetery Tourism, Ghost Tourism, and Holocaust Tourism.

Keeping focus on disaster tourism is now a phenomenon to study with great interest among the researcher to explore the most interesting point of this kind of tourism is-human motivation.

Becker (1973) suggested that- the idea of death, the fear of it, haunts the human animal like nothing else; it is the mainspring of human activity - activity designed largely to avoid the fatality of death, to overcome it by denying in some way that it is the final destiny for man.

#### 4. Tourism and Disaster Planning

In recent days the tourists' interests to visit and explore the disaster prone zone, the importance of 'proper' planning to protect the tourists and the site as well is a real challenge for the local, national, and international administration, the hosts of the sites, and the government planners; extends the gaze of the researcher in this field to study the domain microscopically. In this context, for the purpose of planning, disasters are been classified into four major stages i.e. assessment, warning, impact, and recovery (Murphy and Bayley, 1989; Foster, 1980).

In this transcendental phase we the authors of the article think it may be very necessary to quote the recommendations of Murphy and Bayley (1989) as the significant stands of tourism and disaster planning i.e. Tourism and natural disasters are not usually synonymous phenomena, but the search for ever more exciting and spectacular landscapes sometimes makes hazardous zones the sites of tourist activities... Destination areas will have to consider their responsibilities as hosts and to include special arrangements for tourists who may be unfamiliar with local hazards and appropriate emergency procedure....and finally Media exposure and consequent public awareness would usually have cost the tourist industry vast sums under normal circumstances, but if it can capitalize on this free, sensational exposure it can increase a flow of visitors and revenue that, in turn, can facilitate recovery and lead to a better landscape in the aftermath of a disaster.

#### 5. Conclusion

In concluding remarks the authors of the present article, after going through a sound of numbers of literature are of opinion that ethnographic and multidisciplinary researches enhance the chances to unfold the patterns of actions and motivation of the concerned agencies-both (the tourists and the host communities of the tourist space) that may extend the help the administration and other stakeholders

in better policy making in the context of tourism and disaster planning.

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