People’s Perceptions and Behavior towards Destinations that have been affected by Terrorism

Bachelor Thesis for Obtaining the Degree
Bachelor of Business Administration in
Tourism and Hospitality Management

Submitted to Xavier Matteucci

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Vienna, May 17th 2016
Affidavit

I hereby affirm that this Bachelor’s Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

The thesis was not submitted in the same or in a substantially similar version, not even partially, to another examination board and was not published elsewhere.

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Abstract

The study presented in this paper tried to identify the extent to which personal characteristics influence travel behavior and travel decision making regarding destinations that have been affected by terrorism. As terrorism is gaining much more weight in today’s news and media, it is important to measure the impact it has on tourism. Many published studies focus on only one of these topics, but do not take into consideration that in today’s world, media, travel behavior and terrorism are closely related to each other. In order to gain some insights into people’s behavior in relation to other variables, an online survey was carried out in 2016. More than half of the survey participants were Austrians aged mostly between 18 to 25 years old or 40 to 60 years old. The data retrieved from this survey were predominantly set on ordinal scales and nominal scales. Microsoft Excel 2016 was used to make calculations, create graphs and compute cross-tabulations in order to evaluate the survey. Questions regarding this survey related to travel behavior, willingness to travel, risk perception and media coverage. It was assumed that between populations there will be significant differences when testing the hypotheses. However, it turned out that some independent variables had a larger impact than other variables tested. While gender and age did show significant differences in many questions, level of education and amount of trips taken per year had fewer impacts. Due to recent happenings around the world concerning terrorism, survey takers were also asked to indicate the extent to which media coverage influences their travel decision making. Younger people were assumed to be less influenced by media due to the assumption of showing riskier travel behavior. Nevertheless, this study was meant to give further insights to decision making processes and risk perceptions between different population groups. Further research in this field of tourism might some day bring more light into the terrorism-tourism relationship, which has existed for a long time but is changing to more complex structures due to technological improvements.

Key words: Travel Behavior, Travel decision making, Terrorism, Tourism, media coverage, risk perceptions
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List of Abbreviations

ISIS – Islamic State (Terror organization)
DIA – Defense Intelligence Agency
RAF – Red Army Faction
JRA – Japanese Red Army
9/11 – The terror attacks on September 11th 2001
ETA – Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (Basque Country and Freedom)
PR – Perceived Risk
PU – Perceived Uncertainty
SRHI – Self-Reported Habit Index
UNWTO – World Tourism Organization
IRA – Irish Republican Army
VFR – Visiting Friends and Relatives
1 Introduction

This chapter is an introduction to the topic of terrorism and its effects on people’s behavior and perceptions and will give a short overview of the research questions and objectives. A hypothesis development is presented at the end of this chapter.

1.1 Presentation of the topic and aim of Bachelor Thesis

Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the world (UNWTO), but also one of the most sensitive ones (Araña & León, 2008). Unexpected and uncalculated threats are a major concern in this industry and can result in significant drops in tourist arrivals. Not surprisingly, the tourism industry in the Middle East has suffered for a while now and is no longer attracting people to visit, but rather diverting people away. The reason for that is the region’s affiliation to terror organizations, making it one of the biggest melting pots for religious terrorism (Moore, n.a.). However, today the “Holy War” goes far beyond the Middle East’s borders. On November 13th 2015, the deadliest terror attacks in decades unfolded in one of Europe’s most prestigious cities, Paris (Ajaka, 2015). Then on March 22nd 2016, Brussels airport and metro turned into a scene of crime after two suicide bombers killed 31 people and wounded hundreds (Hume et al., 2016). ISIS have claimed responsibility for both events and they certainly managed to bring one major message across; terrorism has reached Europe. While Terrorism is not an entirely new threat in Europe, the frequency and severity of attacks is increasing. What differentiates these attacks from incidents in the past is the availability and improvement of technology. Mass media played a major role in the fast rise of the Islamic State. This happened due to the fact that the use of social media is no longer restricted to individuals, so organizations such as these take advantage and use it as a mean of propaganda and recruitment. Media outlets, such as social media, online news platforms and television news all have the power to influence our decision making and behavior (Pizam, 2000). How much however, is our travel behavior influenced in terms of terrorism?

The aim of this paper is to define the degree to which people’s personal characteristics affect their travel behavior and risk perceptions. The first part of this paper will focus on the definition and history of terrorism, as well as its impact on tourism. The next part of the literature review focuses on the theoretical framework of risk analysis and
decision making, as well as on media coverage. The third part will present the study results and finally the limitations and conclusions of this paper will be presented.

1.2 Research Questions and Methodological Approach

In order to evaluate the extent to which personal characteristics have an impact on travel behavior and risk perception, a self administered online survey was conducted, which guaranteed anonymity to anyone participating. Due to the possibility to reach people in geographical areas other than Vienna in Austria, the survey was published on social media, primarily in university groups. A total of 79 valid responses could be achieved and processed. The questions were asked in a quantitative setting requiring multiple choice and Likert-scale style answers in order to process them statistically with Microsoft Excel using cross-tabulations with Pivot Tables and calculating tests to prove significance. The aim was to test the following hypotheses:

H1: There is no difference in behavior towards destinations between males and females.

H2: Individuals that travel more often, show higher willingness to travel to destinations that have been affected by terrorism.

H3: The younger generation (<30 years) shows riskier travel decision making behavior and lower risk perception than others in terms of the amount of time to wait before visiting a destination after terror attacks.

H4: Individuals with children show more cautious travel behavior than individuals with no children.

H5: Media coverage significantly influences travel decision making

   a) Women and Men are both influenced equally.

   b) Younger people tend to be more influenced by media than older people.
2 Literature Review

This chapter is made up of two parts, terrorism and travel behavior. The former includes relevant literature on the history of terrorism, its link to tourism and its effects. The latter includes the theoretical frameworks concerning travel decision making, risk perceptions and influences of media coverage.

2.1 Definition of Terrorism

The tourism industry in general is becoming increasingly competitive, however some countries have to deal with much more than competitiveness, they have to deal with another sort of problem, that of terrorism. Even though Terrorism has existed for a very long time, the actual word “Terrorism” and “to terrorize” first appeared in 1789 during the French Revolution (Capper, 2010). Many definitions for terrorism exist, one which states that in order to qualify as terrorism, an attack has to have a political motive. This definition rules out state terror, where a government terrorizes its own people, however it does not eliminate state sponsored terrorism, meaning that the government secretly uses funds, intelligence and safe passage to help a terrorist group (Sandler, 2014). For research published in 1996, Pizam and Mansfield adopted following definition: “Terrorism is the act of destroying or injuring civilian lives or the act of destroying or damaging civilian or government property without the expressly chartered permission of a specific government, thus, by individuals or groups acting independently of governments on their own accord and belief, in an attempt to effect some political goal” (Capper, 2010).

2.2 History of Terrorist Groups

As Capper (2010, p.10) states, “Terrorism is not simply a modern phenomenon”. Since ancient times, people have used violence in order to fight for what they believe is right. However, specifically since the 1960’s, acts of international terrorism have increased steadily. In 1968 Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, which led to political unrest in the United States and Europe (Hays, 2008). In that same year the longest hijacking incident in history occurred. An El Al Plane was forced to divert from Rome to Algiers and was held hostage for a total of forty days by Palestinian militants.
(BBC, 2001), while twenty years later, the bombing of a Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland left the world in shock (Hays, 2008). While there are terrorist attacks that are carried out by individuals that are not affiliated with certain groups, a couple of terrorist groups made headlines all over the world. The Red Army Faction (RFA), founded in 1970 in Germany by a group of four extremists (Andreas Baaser, Gudrun Ensslin, Horst Mahler and Ulrike Meinhof), received international attention as a result of their terrorist activities. Their targets included NATO, as well as German political parties and industrial companies. They followed a Marxist – Leninist ideology using armed resistance against what they deemed to be a fascist state. A total of three generations existed, split up between the years of 1970 and 1998. The end of 1977 became known as “German Autumn”, when 34 people were killed by the RAF. (Hays, 2008). Another group, the Red Brigade, managed to be called the most successful European terrorist group ever. The group was founded 1972 in Italy with tactical support of the Italian Left and was responsible for the death of 350 people using methods of political assassination, kneecapping and kidnapping. Tough laws in the 1980’s made it possible over a period of a couple of years to capture more than 250 Red Brigade members and their followers. In May 1999, after it appeared that the terrorist group had been diminished, a group called Construction of a Combative Communist Party reemerged and killed a high profile economic advisor of prime minister Massimo D’Alema (Hays, 2008). While these two groups had a substantial impact on Europe, another left wing group, the Japanese Red Army (JRA) was founded in the 1969 by a group of radical students. Their goal was to protest against the presence of U.S. military in Japan by overthrowing the Japanese government. Soon after their formation, the group split up in factions, one of which moved to Lebanon. They were held responsible for incidents in North Korea, Japan, Israel, Malaysia and Italy (Hays, 2008).

Relating to these terror incidents occurring around the world, at a colloquium in 1998, organized by the Pentagon’s Defense Intelligence Agency, the director of the DIA said “One day, terrorists will attack a building like this, in Washington or New York. They will kill hundreds of people and deal us an unprecedented psychological blow. The question is not whether such an attack will occur on American soil, but when and where. It is up to you, gentlemen, to be prepared. The security is in your hands.” As a matter of fact, only three years later, on September 11th 2001, nine men, affiliated
with the terrorist group Al Qaeda, were responsible for the deaths of over three thousand people in in New York City and Washington D.C in the worst terrorist attack in world history (Chaliand & Blin, 2007). The terrorist group, as is now known, was founded in 1988 by Osama bin Laden, soon after Soviet forces were withdrawn from Afghanistan. Sympathizers and members of the terror organization were responsible for numerous bombings targeted at the Western world. Today, Al Qaeda has emerged as a multinational movement with operations in at least 16 countries (McCormick, 2014).

2.2.1 History of recent terrorism in Europe

Terrorism in Europe seems to be at an all-time high, however when taking a closer look, the number of fatalities between 1990 and 2015 add up to considerably less than those killed between 1970 and 1990. While between 2000 and 2015 the death toll from terrorist attacks dropped to an average of 50 fatalities per year, fatalities from terrorist attacks leading up to 1990 left an average of 150 people dead per year. Terrorist attacks since the turn of the millennium included the 2004 Madrid train bombings, killing 191 people, the 2005 London bombings, killing 52 people, as well as the 2011 terrorist attack by Anders Behring Breivik in Norway, killing 77 people. These acts of terror were followed by at least five terror attacks within 13 months in France, Belgium and Turkey. However, when taking a closer look on worldwide terrorism, Iraq experienced the most acts of terrorism with about 40,000 fatalities between 2001 and 2014, while “only” 420 deaths occurred in Western Europe during the same time period (Luxton, 2016).

2.2.2 Types of Terrorism

In order to respond appropriately to terrorism, it is of great importance to distinguish between different kinds of terrorist types. Grothaus (n.a.) created a list of definitions for different types of terrorism:

**State Terrorism**
Governments use this kind of terrorism to systematically control their population. State Terrorism however, shall not be confused with state sponsored terrorism, where states sponsor terrorist groups. This kind of terrorism is the original form of terrorism and carried out entirely by the group holding power in a country. Throughout history,
state terrorism has been used by most dictators in order to assure control over the population.

**Religious Terrorism**
This type of terrorism is motivated by religious ideologies and is sometimes referred to “Holy Terror” (Grothaus, n.a.; Chaliand & Blin, 2007). Today it is considered the most alarming terror threat (Hays, 2008), as it is characterized by the fanaticism of those who practice it (Grothaus, n.a.). What sets this type of terrorism apart from others is the willingness of these terrorists to sacrifice themselves using “all in” tactics such as suicide bombings. This kind of behavior is encouraged through religious teachings that are aimed to justify these actions by promising rewards. Al Qaeda and ISIS are the most prominent examples regarding religious terrorism. Both terror organizations follow an Islamic extremist ideology where the “Holy Chief” is both religious and political leader. Even though this ideal did not exist for a long time, it created theological and political issues (Chaliand & Blin, 2007). Hays (2008) however states that Muhammad Atta, one of the main planners of the 9/11, had been drinking alcohol before boarding the plane, even though it is strictly prohibited for highly religious Muslims. These actions resulted in assuming that some highly observant Muslims did not turn into extremists, but rather that violent extremists manipulated religious concepts for their own purposes and benefits.

**Right Wing Terrorism**
According to Grothaus (n.a.), Right Wing Terrorism aims to fight liberal governments in order to preserve traditional values and orders. The motivation of followers of this movement is of a racist nature and they are often characterized as militias and gangs. Modern examples of such terrorist groups are the Klu Klux Klan and Neo-Facists.

**Left Wing Terrorism**
Left Wing Terrorism is characterized by a dedication to overthrowing capitalist democracies and values to establish governments of a socialist or communist nature. Their goal is to diminish social class distinction. As previously mentioned, at least two major Left Wing terror organizations, the RAF and Red Brigade existed during the time of the Cold War.
**Pathological Terrorism**
This type of terrorism is characterized by people’s joy of terrorizing and hurting others. Pathological terrorists are usually “Lone Wolves” and are not affiliated with any terrorist group or organization. Theoretically, such terrorists are not defined as terrorists as they lack political motives. These characteristics are most commonly seen in school shootings and serial killing scenarios.

**Issue Oriented Terrorism**
Issue Oriented Terrorism often refers to environmental terrorism and is usually carried out for the purpose of addressing social or environmental issues. Examples include bombings of abortion clinics and assaults of whaling ships.

**Separatist Terrorism**
This kind of terrorism refers to causing fragmentation within a country to create a new state. Minorities often make use of this kind of terrorism, wishing to separate themselves due to discrimination from the majority group. The ETA Basque (Basque Country and Freedom) separatists in Spain are one of the most prominent examples.

**Narco Terrorism**
Narco terrorism is very different compared to the above mentioned types of terrorism, as this refers to the sale of drugs to gain funds. Mexican cartels often use methods of violence such as beheadings and mass burials to intimidate populations into not cooperating with authorities.

### 2.2.3 Causes of increased terrorist activity

Causes for terrorism vary, religion however, is considered to be one of the most dominant ones throughout history (Capper, 2010). Generally, terrorist groups cannot be created where there are no major causes for complaints or dissatisfaction and no dissident groups have appeared. Terrorist activity increases due to dissatisfaction of members of societies (Baker, 2014). Causes for this behavior include economic recessions or the introduction of new and fragile political and economic systems. Other causes include growth in technology, making mass communication and access to weaponry easier (Capper 2010).
Terrorism has become a tool for politically weak and excluded people to realize their objectives since they feel they are not being taken seriously by the rest of the population. As stated above, not only the lack of opportunity for political participation in a society but also economic globalization has caused inequality among states and within countries (Baker, 2014). In his article, Baker (2014) refers to “economic anxiety and dissatisfaction” which is generated by economic recessions and depressions that in turn can breed terrorism. Other factors include modernization and globalization, which can lead to significant challenges and disrupt social structures. As of now this phenomenon is being experienced by millions of Europeans who fear that the increased refugee flows from Syria, Iran and Iraq are de-emphasizing their old patterns of respect and social interaction as new social groupings develop. History has shown that any representation of modernization has become a target for terrorism, such as the World Trade Center Twin Towers in New York (Baker, 2014).

2.3 Tourism and Terrorism

Tourism has become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world and its business volume equals or surpasses that of oil exports, food products or automobiles. This sector accounts for one of every eleven jobs and for 30% of the world’s services exports. International tourist arrivals increased by 4.3% in 2014 to 1,133 billion (UNWTO, 2015). Many underdeveloped countries benefit from this industry even more than “modernized” countries, as it serves as their main export industry. Many of these countries are particularly threatened by socio-economic problems, which in most cases lead to an increase in crime rates. Terrorism however, remains an even bigger threat (Baker, 2014). According to Baker (2014, p.58) “many scholars in the tourism industry advocate that being safe on vacation is an expected requirement for any visitor in a tourist destination or city”. Further research has found that while natural and human-caused disasters impact tourism to a certain extent, terrorism tends to intimidate potential tourists more severely.
2.3.1 The Tourism – Terrorism Relationship

Surprisingly, international tourism and terrorism have more characteristics in common than expected. These include crossing national borders and involving citizens of different countries, as well as utilizing travel and communications technologies (Schlagheck, 1988). According to Sonmez and Graefe (1998) “The relationship between tourism and terrorism first gained international notoriety in 1972 during the Munich Olympic Games.” Israeli athletes were attacked by Palestinians in front of a television audience of nearly 800 million viewers. This attack made people all around the world aware of the tourism-terrorism relationship. Generally, even though the possibility of being affected by a terrorist attack is very much real, the chance of actually experiencing one is low. The fear however, is real and persistent for tourists. The reason for tourists appealing to terrorists is because they represent soft targets and are easily distinguishable symbols of the enemy with the tourist locations being perfect strategic targets to carry out attacks (Baker, 2014). Richter and Waugh (1986) however, identified Western capitalism, consumption and values as characteristics that turn tourists into targets, whereas Capper (2010) identifies ideological objectives as reasons for vulnerability of the tourism industry.

2.3.2 The Impact of Terrorism on Tourism and Economy

According to Araña and León (2008) “Tourism is an industry where both demand and supply can be sensitive to extreme events such as terrorism or political violence.” Several studies have been conducted to determine the impact of terrorism on tourism demand. A popular approach is collecting monthly data for a time series to compare and analyze. In a study from 1991 Ender and Sandler found a significant negative impact of terrorism on tourism revenues in European countries. Furthermore, they proved that tourists substituted vacation destinations in order to minimize the risk of facing a terror attack (Araña & León, 2008).

Another study focused on determining whether the severity of the event or the frequency of occurrence has a larger impact on tourism demand. In order to test this, Pizam and Fleischer used the number of tourists entering Israel on a monthly basis as the dependent variable and the severity and frequency of acts as the explanatory and independent variables. Using a time series from May 1991 through May 2001, the
study showed that the more severe the terrorist attack, the higher the decline of tourists entering Israel. Secondly they proved that by adding the frequency variable, the severity of attacks was no longer significant (Pizam & Fleischer, 2002).

Seddighi et al. (2001) and Stafford et al. (2002) state that “the effects of terrorist attacks might cause political instability, which leads to the decline or disappearance of tourist arrivals in some tourist destinations” (cited in Baker, 2014). Literature, statistics and surveys as mentioned above, all prove that incidents concerning terrorism alter tourism demand patterns.

One of the most immediate and substantial impacts of terrorism on world wide travel could be seen after the attacks on September 11th in New York City. Up to this date, these incidents mark a dark spot in the history of the United States and prove that a country as big as this one can become vulnerable in a matter of seconds. The attacks did not only have an impact on New York City, but furthermore on air travel around the world. The United States experienced an immediate drop in international tourist arrivals, particularly from those flying in from overseas. The reason for this was the rising concern in the safety of air travel as well as the global recession following in the years 2001 and 2002. In order to increase safety in air travel, the United States and Homeland Security followed a stricter policy of issuing visas and granting access to the country, making it unattractive or even impossible for people from certain countries to visit (Yale-Loehr et al., 2005).

In the future, factors such as safety, security and stress free travel, especially in air travel will determine the travelling intentions of tourists (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005).

2.3.3 Types of disruption to the tourist industry

According to the Economist Intelligence Unit (1994), there are three types of disruptions to the tourist industry:

- Short term, single event disruption
- On-going volatility/uncertainty
- Fundamental, long term disruption
2.3.3.1 Short term, single event disruption

“Even a single event can affect Tourism” (Capper, 2010 p. 23). A major incident of any kind is roughly estimated to reduce tourist arrivals for two years, while minor incidents affect tourism for a shorter period of time, depending on the extent of media coverage (Economist Intelligence Unit, 1994). Capper (2010) provides an example regarding the disruption of a single event. In 1989 the pro-democracy movement was suppressed in Tian-an-men square in Beijing, resulting in the damage of a booming tourism industry caused by excessive global media coverage. The incident resulted in ongoing political protests at the square and throughout many other cities, leading to a drop in tourist arrivals and empty hotels throughout the country’s capital. For about two years, attitudes towards visiting the country shifted to the negative side until general media and press ran favorable images of China in order to push its destination image (Lavery, 1996; Gartner & Shen, 1992; Hall, 1994).

2.3.3.2 On-going volatility/uncertainty

Capper (2010) uses on-going terrorist attacks in Egypt as an example for this kind of disruption. Between 1992 and 1995 Muslim activists systematically carried out over 120 attacks, killing 13 tourists. The reason for these attacks were the ideological objectives of tourists that did not comply with Islamic cultural values and traditions, such as consuming alcohol, eating pork, gambling, prostitution and clothing. The effects of these incidents were horrific for Egypt’s tourism industry and economy and led to the removal of this country from programs of international tour operators. Tourist arrivals finally returned to 1992 levels after four years, however only one year later a terrorist attack took place at the Luxor Temple, killing 60 tourists. As a result, tourist arrivals decreased again.

2.3.3.3 Fundamental, long-term disruption

Northern Ireland is a country that has a lot to offer concerning landscape, recreation and architecture. The country however, has a long history of unrest and terrorism, which curtailed their tourism industry. Paramilitary activities of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and its Loyalist counterparts have not only severely damaged the destination image of Northern Ireland over many years, but also, to a lesser extent, that of the Republic of Ireland (Capper, 2010). During the 1950’s and 1960’s tourism increased until the 1970’s when visitor numbers rapidly declined. The country was
able to moderately recover in the 1980’s and early 1990’s due to a lower number of terrorist attacks. The tourist segment that showed the biggest drop in arrivals was the British. It is argued that due to the geographical proximity of both countries, media coverage was greatest in the UK, where Northern Ireland was portrayed as a problem area (Buckley & Klemm, 1993). The country had to face severe problems concerning changing visitor profiles. While arrivals of people visiting friends and relatives (VFR) and business tourism continued to grow, tourist arrivals of holidaymakers continued to decline. According to Deegan and Dineen (1994) “The higher the proportion of VFR’s in the tourist population of an area, the worse tends to be the performance of the tourism sector”. While Northern Ireland has areas of exceptional natural beauty to offer, other British Isles countries still perform as substitutes. 44% of tourist arrivals in Scotland account for pure holidaymakers, over double the percentage of Northern Ireland’s tourist arrivals. Both countries offer similar attractions though Scotland is a far bigger country than Northern Ireland.

Compared to the other British Isles countries, Northern Ireland does not have any distinctive attractions or high quality products to offer, making the necessary improvement of destination image difficult. Even though tourists have not been targets in the country’s ongoing unrest, they are aware of the possibility of terrorists hitting the wrong person at a particular location at the wrong time (Capper, 2010). Unrest and terrorism have become an unwanted characteristic of the country, impairing development in the tourism sector since the late 1960’s. The Republic of Ireland, even though terrorist activity was low there compared to Northern Ireland, had to deal with the backlash of the North, leading to the country not being able to reach full potential in the tourism market. The Republic of Ireland invested in strong marketing campaigns in order to distance themselves from the North, which successfully increased tourist arrivals. In the mid 1990’s the Republic of Ireland Tourist Board agreed to cooperate with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board to boost tourism on the whole island. This agreement and cooperation resulted in positive global media attention, bringing benefits to both countries with regard to the economy and the tourism industry (Capper, 2010).
2.3.4 The impact of Terrorism on Destination Image

Destination Image has been defined by the World Tourism Organization (1979, p.5) as “the ideal conceptions held individually or collectively about a destination.” The WTO suggests that an image is not created from scratch, but rather involves the transformation of an existing image. However, finding a clear definition for the term “Destination Image” has been quite difficult for researchers and led to vague and incomplete descriptions. Echtner and Richie (1991) for instance, define the term as “impressions of a place” or the “perceptions of an area”, leaving room for interpretation.

Baker (2014) states that the 9/11 attacks had a major impact on the United States’ as well as New York City’s destination image. The World Trade Center was a recognized landmark and tourist attraction, not only because of its height, but also because of its remarkable construction. In a matter of hours, millions of people saw these two buildings vanishing from the New York City skyline (history.com, n.a.).

Even though not much research has been done in the field of destination image, Witt and Moore (1992) investigated to what extent special events have an impact on destination image in Northern Ireland. They tested whether promoting such events can outweigh a negative external image caused by terrorism. The study showed that the country needed to increase inbound tourism by paying more attention to overcoming its negative destination image. Northern Ireland, however did not come up with any solution relating to its negative destination image, but rather tried increasing visitation with other means. Coshall (2003), found that the highly attractive destinations for UK travelers in terms of arrivals and reputation recover much quicker in the aftermath of a crisis. Following these findings, Baker (2014) emphasizes the importance of fully integrating recovery marketing with crisis management activities.

2.4 Risk

Macquarie (1999), defined risk as the “exposure to the chance of injury or loss or a hazard or dangerous chance” (cited in Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005). Haddock (1993) lists three different kinds of risk: absolute, real and perceived risk. Absolute risk
relates to specialists implementing safety procedures in order to minimize real risk, while perceived risk is drawn from one’s individual observation and knowledge.

2.4.1 Risk Perception in Tourism

Tsaur, Tzeng and Wang (1997) defined risk in tourism as being “what is perceived and experienced by tourists during the process of purchasing and consuming traveling services” (cited in Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005). However, limited attention has been drawn to the element of risk as a component of tourist decisions. The main reason for the split of risk into actual, real and perceived risk is the extensive media coverage on topics such as political violence and instability on one hand and on terrorism on the other hand. For that reason, perceived risk may outweigh actual risk. In order for destination marketers to better understand perceptions and attitudes, travel risk should be studied in terms of actual and perceived risk (Baker, 2014). In a study, Roehl and Fesenmaier (1992) grouped tourists based on their perception of risk:

- risk neutral;
- functional risk and;
- place risk

The study found that the risk neutral group believes that there is no connection between risk and tourism. This group was concerned with placing more emphasis on the need to experience excitement and adventure compared to the other groups. Furthermore, the risk neutral group was connected to framing uncertainty, in this case risk, as part of their excitement for travelling. The functional risk group only considered problems concerning mechanics, organization and equipment as the biggest source of risk related to tourism. Finally, the place risk group generally considered vacations to be fairly risky and perceived the destination of their most recent vacation as very risky. This study was, back then, one of the very few ones to be published, as risk perception theory has only been of great interest after the terrorist attacks on September 11th (Baker, 2014). The definition about risk being an exposure to certain threats or dangers, refers to the belief that the decision-making-processes at the time of choosing a destination are diverse. In consumer behavior, multiple different types of risks can be identified, such as financial, social, psychological, physical, functional, situational and most relevant for the purpose of
this paper; travel risks (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005). Most concerns relating to risks are associated with health, terrorism, crime or natural disasters at tourist destinations (Baker, 2014). Roehl and Fesenmaier (1992) identified three different types of perceived risk in tourism: physical equipment risk, vacation risk and destination risk. While Roehl and Fesenmaier argue about different groups of risk perception, Quintal, Lee and Soutar (2010) elaborate on the terminology of perceived risk. Uncertainty, worry, fear and anxiety are all terms that have been used interchangeably with perceived risk. Scholars therefore have tried to distinguish between perceived risk and perceived uncertainty by applying probability. This resulted in a definition which states that as long as the probability of something happening is known, perceived risk (PR) is the appropriate term, if not, then perceived uncertainty (PU) shall be used (Hofstede, 2001). This definition was applied to a survey about the impact of these two constructs on travel decision making but did not incorporate the relationships of PR and PU (Quintal et al., 2010).

2.4.2 Safety

Like risk, safety is a factor closely related to travel decision making. Destinations, airline companies and hotels wish to create a “favorable environment”. To do so, it is important to understand how potential tourists experience and perceive their surroundings. Major concerns relating to international and overseas travel relate to air travel. Lack of personal safety, among other factors is perceived as a major restraint to international travel. Governments nowadays issue travel warnings on a weekly to monthly basis to their citizens, which are created based on political instability, acts of terror, violence, health and weather. These announcements are issued in the hope of creating awareness, but are widely misunderstood and instead create concerns and anxiety about personal safety (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005).

2.5 Travel Decision Making

Tourist travel decision making and its search for information is a complex phenomenon. The reason for that is the large volume of information available and the possibility to combine different bits of it. Previous studies have focused on travel
decision making as one individual decision, not including opinions and decisions by spouses. Following these studies, researchers have concluded that potential tourists gather information of different types from a variety of sources (Fodness & Murray, 1998). Solomon et al. (1999) concluded that travel decision making is not only one single decision, but consists of many sub-decisions of which some are made out of habit.

The multidimensional and abstract concept of habit has created many discussions about how to measure and operationalize it. In order to bring clarification, Verplanken and Orbell (2003) introduced a Self-Reported Habit Index (SRHI). The model takes into consideration many different habits to be measured at once, such as eating habits and transportation choices. Björk and Jansson (2008) were the first ones to apply this model to the field of tourism by elaborating on the theoretical framework by Solomon et al. (1999) and gathering empirical results with a questionnaire built on the SRHI.

Solomon et al. (1999) created a decision making continuum, with the habitual decision making approach on the left side and extensive decision making approach on the right side, as seen in Table 1. In the habitual decision making approach, every decision is made very fast and with low mental effort and involvement. The advantage of this approach is that it is less time and energy consuming and reduces the risk of being disappointed as the consumer knows that he or she has been satisfied with the

![Decision-Making Continuum](image-url)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitual Decision</th>
<th>Extensive Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Perceived knowledge about available alternatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Perceived need for information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Mental effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Length of time to each decision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Solomon et al. (1999), Mayo and Jarvis (1981)

Table 1: Decision-Making Continuum, adopted from Björk and Jansson (2008, p. 14)
decision in the past. This approach characterizes the traveler as having high knowledge about available alternatives and low need for information.

In the extensive decision making approach, a traveler will put more time and effort in his decision as opposed to a habitual decision maker. This approach shows similarities to the traditional decision making perspective, where a traveler goes through following stages:

1. Problem recognition
2. Information search
3. Evaluation of alternatives
4. Product choice
5. Outcomes

Previous research has primarily focused on decision outcomes, such as destination choice, rather than the whole process. Consequently, travel decisions have been considered to be trade-offs among destination attributes and characteristics (Jeng & Fesenmaier, 2002). As mentioned before, travel decision making is not necessarily one single big decision, but several multifaceted sub-decisions; where to go, when to go, what to do while on vacation and how to get to the chosen destination.

Decisions concerning where to go refer to the choices one has when going on vacation, including the choice of various destinations and the choice to stay at home. This decision can be influenced by experiences, emotions and activities. Decisions concerning when to go refer to the time of the year a person chooses to go on vacation. This decision is rather influenced by external factors than internal factors, such as work schedules and weather. However, some activities a person wishes to perform during vacation are very season dependent, such as skiing in winter and surfing in summer. In that case, a person’s wish to carry out this specific activity will very much influence when to take a vacation. Decisions concerning what to do, refer to the variety of activities a person can choose from when on vacation. Some prefer to to be non-active, by doing activities that are quiet and calm and some prefer to be very adventurous and active. Additionally, the decision is influenced by the destination a person has chosen to go to, as some places offer more adventurous activities due to their topography. Decisions concerning how to get to a destination,
refer to the means of transportation a person chooses to go on vacation. This decision can be influenced by the availability of transport, health issues and anxiety (Björk & Jansson, 2008).

With regard to the decision-making continuum, Decrop and Snelders (2005) found that decisions that have been made extensively can in the future turn into habitual decisions. For instance, a decision to go skiing (relating to what to do) may have been made by making use of the extensive decision-making approach by evaluating and comparing different ski resorts and areas. The decision of going to the Alps (where to go) can in future become a routine and the decision is made due to habit. This theory suggests that travel decision-making cannot be linked to one place on the decision making continuum in Table 1.

2.5.1 Influences on the Tourism Decision Making

Cooper et al. (1993) mentions four main fields of influence; energizers of demand, tourist roles, effectors of demand and determinants of demand.

Energizers of demand

Both personal and social determinants of travel behavior are included in energizers of demand and influence the decision making process of tourists. The main and most important component of this influence is motivation, which is characterized by the concept of equilibrium. Crompton (1979, p. 409) states “tension in the motivational system occurs when some need arises and that this disturbance of equilibrium drives the organism to elicit a course of action that is expected to satisfy the need and to restore equilibrium.” As soon as equilibrium is restored as a result of the need being met, the process ends. Some researchers describe motivation primarily as a need, whereas others rely on the motivational push and pull theory (Capper, 2010).

Tourist Roles

Like any other consumers, tourists are not homogenous and every tourist will have different expectations, needs and goals. Nevertheless, researchers have tried to create tourist typologies to characterize differences among tourists. Cohen (1972) created a “Sociological Tourist Typology”, which is based on the degree to which tourists seek uniqueness or familiarity in their travels. He groups them into four categories; organized mass tourist, individual mass tourist, the explorer and the
drifter. The organized mass tourist is the least adventurous tourist in this group, seeking familiarity and usually purchasing all-inclusive tours or package holidays. The individual mass tourist is characterized by being more autonomous and free from restrictions than the previous group. The explorer enjoys adventurous trips, but sometimes wishes to step back into more familiar conditions. The drifter slides the furthest away from the traditional tourist path and is almost wholly immersed in the host culture. While the first group might not want to visit a destination that has been affected by terrorism, the last one might want first hand experiences and might actually enjoy visiting locations that have experienced terrorist activity.

Plog (1974) on the other hand only identified two categories; allocentrism and psychocentrism. The former relates to adventurous types that like travelling independently, whereas the latter refers to more conservative types that enjoy package holidays.

Dann (1977) and Crompton (1979) argue that family and social structure have an impact on travel behavior. Children, relatives and close friends for instance, have the power to directly persuade an individual to visit a destination.

**Effectors of Demand**

Energizers of demand can either be heightened or lessened due to travel stimuli, which include advertising, promotion, travel literature, suggestions, recommendations and reports from other travelers. Through these effectors of demand, the consumer will have developed ideas and expectations of certain destinations or other tourism products through the process of learning (Capper, 2010).

**Determinants of Demand**

Research in this field relates to the determining the reasons that people travel (Capper, 2010). While energizers of demand consist of motivational factors that lead a tourist to undertake a holiday, other personal factors influence travel motivation as well. Cooper et al. (1993) identified determinants that can affect purchasing behavior in two ways. Age, gender, family makeup, education and life cycle influence travel behavior in one way, whereas barriers to participation result in people not travelling at all. Research about how gender influences travel behavior has shown women to
have higher levels of fear of violence. Research about age, on the other hand, has shown that this characteristic influences purchasing behavior the most. Family makeup has shown to influence purchasing behavior in a way that children up to a certain age act as a barrier to participation in various activities. Education has shown to affect decisions by influencing attitudes, perceptions and motivations (Capper, 2010). Life cycle on the other hand influences decisions in a way that new cycles evolve at different ages. Cooper et al. (1993) distinguishes here between individual life cycles and family life cycles.

Barriers to participation include cost, lack of time, health limitations, family circumstances and fear and safety. These barriers however may be overcome if the motivation to travel is sufficiently powerful (Capper, 2010).

2.5.2 Risk in Tourism Decision Making

The component of risk in travel decision making has so far only received limited attention. In a study Um and Crompton (1992) introduced two terms, facilitators and inhibitors. The former refers to destination attributes that help to satisfy the tourist’s motives, whereas the latter refers to the attributes that are not congruent with those motives. Tourists then make use of these attributes by eliminating destination alternatives that do not match with their expectations. According to Um and Crompton (1992), facilitators have greater influence in the beginning of the decision making process, whereas inhibitors have greater influence towards the end of the decision making process, when the outcome becomes more serious. Other actual research concerning this topic was carried out by Sonmez and Graefe (1998). The authors created a framework (Figure 1) that combines the decision making process with the external influence of terrorism risk, by referring to psychological and tourism literature based on risk perception theories.
This framework, like most other decision-making models, uses the components of problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives and choice. Additionally, three influencing fields have been added. The first step of this framework is problem recognition, which leads to a motivated state within an individual. An awareness of terrorism at this stage is most likely due to the exposure to external factors such as media coverage, government issued travel advisories or social interaction. The next step refers to the awareness set of alternative destinations, which individuals have learned about incidentally or through passive or informal information search. These alternatives are further split up in three groups based on their interest; evoked set, inert set and inept set. Evoked set refers to destinations where active and formal information search will take place. The inert set refers to destinations that the individual is not yet sure about or insufficiently informed. The inept set refers to destinations that have been rejected due to negative perceptions.

Figure 1: The Impact of Terrorism on the decision-making process, adopted from Sonmez & Graefe (1998, p.124)
or perceived risks. The information search is conducted on destinations that have been placed in the evoked set and the inert set. For this purpose, the individual might take multiple sources of information channels into consideration. It is also believed that the extent of the information search is highly dependent on past experiences and perceptions, thus at this point in the decision making process, destinations are being evaluated according to their safety levels and risk factors, with regards to terrorism and political problems. In the next stage Sonmez and Graefe (1998) applied a theory of Kahneman’s and Tversky’s (1979) which splits risky decision making in two stages. First, alternatives are narrowed down to a handful until one is selected. Second, alternatives that are considered undesirable are eliminated. Sonmez and Graefe (1998) applied this theory to the stage at which the individual has to evaluate its alternatives based on safety and terrorism risk. Relating to this, Plog (1974) states that risk adverse individuals are more likely to choose destinations that are perceived safe, whereas risk seekers are likely to not make decisions based on safety levels. The next stage refers to destination choice. This choice will be made based on one’s individual characteristics and experiences concerning level of safety, perceived risk and needs. This links back to the previously mentioned work by Um and Crompton (1990, p.19) who stated “potential tourists are likely to narrow down perceptions of destination attributes into facilitators and inhibitors eliminating destination alternatives from their consideration or evoked set by pondering the impacts of those inhibitors and facilitators.”

Sonmez and Graefe (1998) added, in the last stage of the framework under possible decision outcomes, the probability of cancelling travel plans. This refers to the case when individuals after booking their vacation, acquire information about terrorism or political problems and wish to cancel their trip or substitute to a different location. This is supported by an information integration theory, which was developed by Anderson (1981). This theory states that when additional alternatives are added to the evaluation, already formed impressions and judgments about products and services (or in this case, destinations) may change. Sonmez and Graefe (1998) applied this theory beyond the point of final choice, meaning that even after individuals have made their final destination choice, new negative information will still be integrated in the decision making process.
2.6 The Role of the Media

Weimann and Winn (1994) state that “Media coverage of terrorism or political upheaval has the potential to shape individuals’ images of destinations” (cited in Baker, 2014). The authors argue about the connection between terrorists and journalists who use media to stage events and performances in order to receive attention. Richter and Waugh (1986) on the other hand argue about the extent to which media enhances and influences communication between terrorists. Up until two decades ago, communication as known today had no such influence on terrorist activity compared to the amount of media that is available and free of charge today. Through the medium of the internet distances and thus communication between distances is no barrier for terrorism.

Karbour (1971, p.9) stated that “as a symbolic act terrorism can be analyzed much like any other mediums of communication” implying that communication and terrorism can be evaluated similarly. He further applies four basic components of communication to the context of terrorism. The organization in that case is the terrorist group, the message is the terrorist act itself with all casualties involved, the medium used is the media and the intended recipient of the message is the terrorist’s target, which can be a specific government or governments, tourists, and organizations. The feedback related to the communication process is the reaction of the recipient, in this case the target. Figure 2 is an illustration of the communication process adapted to terrorism.

![Figure 2: Communication Process in context of terrorism, adopted from Capper (2010, p.16)](image-url)
Richter and Waugh (1986) argue that the familiarity of the terrorism phenomenon is largely promoted through mass media and Pizam (2000) concluded that the media are exaggerating and magnifying the already volatile relationship between terrorism and tourism. Some destinations therefore, that had experienced isolated terrorist attacks in the past, complain that media exaggerates and overacts by giving minor incidents greater prominence. Obviously, such statements leave room open for arguments, as for someone who was not present during such a terror attack, it may be difficult to distinguish between a minor and major attack. Nevertheless, such media might unintentionally discourage and frighten people and thus reduce tourist arrivals.

Research shows that as a result of globalization and technological improvements, the media gain advantages that many people are not even aware of. Graphically highly defined live reports instantly from anywhere in the world are nowadays an integral part of every news report. Within seconds however, destination images and tourism industries can be tarnished and jeopardized (Pizam, 2000).

In order to evaluate the media’s communication of terrorism and the subsequent effect on tourism markets, Richter and Waugh (1986) took a closer look at the events of the mid 1980’s. During this time the level of terror attacks and the extensive media and press coverage unintentionally increased the impact and importance of these events and caused substantial negative impacts on the tourism industry. While up until the mid 1980’s the impact of terrorist attacks took a couple of months to diminish, beginning from 1985 such events began to have a more lasting impact than usual, not only on the destination itself, but also in wider geographical areas. This was highly visible up until early 1986.

The substantial difference between media coverage in the 1980’s and today is the existence of social media. On November 13th 2015, the night when ISIS struck Paris, Facebook users received notifications from people stating “marked safe”. This is a feature that was primarily designed to notify one’s wellbeing to friends and family during natural disasters. The night of the Paris attacks however, was the very first time the social media giant activated this feature in response to terrorism (Ajaka, 2015). Only one day earlier, two suicide bombers from the same terror organization affiliated with Paris, killed 43 people in Beirut, Lebanon (Botelho et al., 2015). Contrary to what people perceive, Beirut, even though it shares a border with Syria, had a very peaceful
year and as with the Paris attacks, the Beirut attacks have been some of the deadliest in decades. Media outlets however, chose to pay more attention to the French capital rather than treating both capitals similarly (Ajaka, 2015). According to David Graham (cited in Ajaka, 2015) a variety of factors could have resulted in this inconsistency in attention and compassion, some of which include tourism patterns and cultural familiarity. Ajaka (2015) compared in his newspaper article headlines from both events. Headlines for the Paris attacks were affiliated with grief and alarm and stories were written in a beautiful and expressive way, whereas emerging headlines regarding the Beirut attacks all included the phrase “Hezbollah stronghold”. Coverage for the former prioritized the civilian nature of the scene as opposed to coverage of the latter, focusing on the religious makeup of the area attacked.
3 Methodology

The purpose of this study is to elaborate to what extent certain personal characteristics have an impact on travel decision making. A self-administered online survey was conducted using google documents to collect primary data from a random sample. The reasons for choosing an online survey over any other means of surveys were flexibility, time efficiency and real time access. Google documents was the easiest tool to use for this purpose as it offered flexible designs and real time access to spreadsheets and graphs related to the survey. Data for independent variables was collected to examine their impact on dependent variables. A total of 88 surveys were collected during the period of May 20th 2016 to June 1st 2016. Due to invalid and incomplete responses, 9 surveys had to be taken out of the sample, reducing the total number of valid surveys for evaluation to 79.

3.1 Research Methods and Instruments

The study was carried and created online with an application by google docs, which guarantees anonymity to whoever participates. Due to the possibility of achieving results with a wider geographical reach, the study was published on social media. The questionnaire was only available in English and primarily set up with multiple choice and Likert scale questions. In the first part of the survey, respondents had to answer questions relating to their travel behavior, risk perceptions and their perception of the influence of media coverage. The second part of the survey required respondents to provide personal information about themselves, such as age, gender, education and number of children. With the help of these independent variables, a pivot table in excel was used to make cross-tabulations with dependent variables. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to test for significance between two independent variables and the Pearson correlation coefficient was used to determine a positive or negative relationship between two sets of data that were tested on a Likert scale. The calculations where processed with Microsoft Excel Spreadsheets.
3.2 Sample Description

The survey’s sample consisted of 51 females (64.6%) and 28 males (35.4%). With regards to the respondent’s country of residence, out of 88.6% that stated that they live in Europe, 65.8% are currently residing in Austria. Due to the fact that 49.4% of the respondents stated that they are currently studying at university, the most common age group selected was 18-25 (57%). The second most common selected age group was 40-60, which came up to 24.1%.

![Figure 4: Age](image)

Respondents were also asked to state whether they have children or not, which again due to the relatively young sample resulted in 69.6% stating that they do not have children. The survey ended with a question relating to the survey participant’s travel behavior during one calendar year. 44.3% responded that they travel 3-5 times per year outside their country of residence, whereas 31.6% stated that they travel more than 6 times and 24.1% stated that they travel only once or twice per year.

![Figure 3: Level of Education](image)

![Figure 5: Trips taken per year](image)
4 Results

The survey started with questions relating to the respondent’s travel behavior. The results showed that the great majority of respondents (69.6%) have visited a destination that has been affected by terrorism in the past five years. Since Austria turned out to be the country of residence for most survey takers (65.8%), it makes sense to take a closer look on travel behavior of this specific sample. 75% of people residing Austria stated to have visited a country affected by terrorism in the past five years and by taking Europe as a whole as a sample, this resulted in 70% stating to have visited a country that has been affected by terrorism in the past five years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>visited a destination affected by terrorism</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country of residence</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Austria</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>Canada</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<td>Ukraine</td>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Country of residence and visitation of country affected by terrorism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>visited a destination affected by terrorism</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living in Europe</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Europe and visited a country affected by terrorism

The two biggest age groups found in this survey were age 18 to 25 (57%) and age 40 to 60 (24.1%). While 31.6% of the 40 to 60 age group stated they had not visited a destination affected by terrorism in the past 5 years, only 22.2% of the younger generation chose “No” as an answer to this question.
As to the question whether to consider visiting a country affected by terrorism in the future, respondents were asked to mark their willingness on a five point Likert scale. 1 indicated “yes”, 2 indicated “probably”, 3 indicated “moderate”, 4 indicated “probably not” and 5 indicated “no, not at all”. 23 out of 79 survey takers, answered this question with “moderate”, resulting in an average mean of 2.6. As seen in Figure 5, the majority of survey participants indicated a strong or somewhat moderate willingness to travel to a destination affected by terrorism, as opposed to 22.8% stating to probably not or not at all visit such destination.

Figure 6: Willingness to visit destination affected by terrorism

By cross-tabulating the willingness to travel to an area that has been affected by terrorism with people that stated to be living in Europe, the average mean decreased to 2.2, indicating that European residents show higher motivation and readiness to take on risk compared to Non-Europeans, who showed an average mean of 2.8. By splitting the sample into two age groups, <30 years of age and >30 years of age, calculations of the mean for both groups, showed a higher motivation and willingness to travel in the younger age group (2.4) compared to the 30 years of age and older group (2.9). The Mann-Whitney U test however, does not show a significant enough result (p=0.9102).

Table 4a and 4b: Willingness to travel (age groups & living in Europe)
While gender didn’t show any significant differences in whether or not survey takers have visited a destination that has been affected by terrorism, it did show interesting results when cross-tabulated with willingness to travel. Women are significantly (p=0.00194) more reluctant (mean=2.9) to travel to an area affected by terror, compared to men (mean=2.0). Furthermore, individuals with children seem to be more hesitant to take a vacation at a terror stricken destination, as opposed to individuals with no children. With regard to level of education, travel behavior did differentiate between groups. Individuals currently studying or holding a bachelor degree proved to be higher risk takers in contrast to people holding a secondary school certificate and master and doctorate degree. Based on these findings, we have to assume that people indicating that they are currently studying at university are somewhere in their twenties and as mentioned before, the younger generation is willing to take on more risk and travel to a destination affected by terrorism.

Additionally, survey takers were asked to indicate the amount of trips they take per year. Not surprisingly, the group that stated they travel more than 6 times per year, resulted in an average mean of 2.0 on the willingness to travel scale compared to people travelling 3-5 times (2.4) or once or twice per year (3.3), indicating that the more people travel the more they would be willing to visit a destination affected by terrorism. The Pearson correlation coefficient however, shows only a weak negative correlation (r = -0.2906).

After evaluating the willingness to travel, survey takers were asked to indicate after what period of time they would or have visited a destination affected by terrorism. 31.6% indicated they would visit such a destination after one year, whereas 22.8% indicated they would visit such a destination after 3 months. Surprisingly, 15.2% state they would be willing to travel straight away. Cross-tabulations with the age of the participants showed no distinct differences in the amount of time they would wait. Also, the number of children and the level of education did not affect the results. Even gender, which so far did show differences in answers, did not have any significant influence on the outcome.

Figure 7: Amount of time to wait before visiting a destination that has been affected by terrorism
Concerning the safety level, the primary country this data analysis will be focusing on is Austria, as it represents the largest group out of the sample. 88.5% of Austrians feel very or somewhat safe in their country and no difference was found when cross-tabulating Europeans and Non-Europeans. However, 20% of women living in Europe consider their country of residence only moderately safe or somewhat unsafe, compared to 0% of men. No significant differences between perception of safety level and age, educational level or number of children was found.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>level of safety</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender &amp; Europe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Gender, living in Europe & level of safety

Following the results of high safety level perceptions of Austrians, 53.8% believe that a terrorist attack is very unlikely to somewhat unlikely. However, 40.4% indicated that a terrorist attack is moderately likely and 5.8% believe that such an attack is somewhat likely. Survey takers from other countries such as Spain, France and Germany perceive their country to be at risk on at least a moderate level. Even though the non-European survey takers make up the minority of this sample, it is worth mentioning that 7 out of 9 non-European citizens perceive their country of residence at a moderate or somewhat high risk of facing terrorism in the future.

A comparison of risk perceptions of different world regions showed that some regions are perceived to be on a similar scale. Respondents were asked to rank their risk perception on a five-point scale, with “1” indicating that the region is very safe when it comes to terrorism and “5” indicating that the region is very dangerous and prone to terror attacks. Europe’s mean averaged at 3.3 and North America’s at 2.9. As seen in Figure 6 and 7, both regions show a high peak in the middle, however, risk perceptions about Europe tend to move to the “riskier” right side of the scale, while North America’s risk perceptions tend to move to the “safer” left side of the scale.
Out of all seven regions, Australasia and Central and South America were perceived as the safest, with means of 1,8 and 2,5, respectively. Asia and Africa were perceived as risky on a moderate level with means of 2,6 and 2,7, respectively. The region with highest perceived risk turned out to be the Middle East with an average mean of 4,0. This most certainly does not come as a surprise due to the ongoing acts of terror. What does come as a surprise is that out of all seven regions, Europe shows the second highest mean after the Middle East (3,3), indicating that the risk of terrorism is perceived as being on a moderate to somewhat high level. Furthermore, non-European citizens perceive Europe to be less risky compared to Europeans, with means of 3,7 and 3,2, respectively (see Appendix 1 for more graphs).
Cross-tabulating risk perceptions with age as an independent variable only had minor influences on the results. For any region the maximum deviation between the means of both age groups was 0,4, not significant enough to make further calculations on significance. Gender however, influenced risk perception to a certain extent, such as that men perceive the Middle East as riskier and more prone to terrorism (3,9) in comparison to women (4,3). Europe and North America on the other hand, were perceived as riskier regions by women. Australasia, Central and South America, Asia and Africa did not show any significant differences in gender cross-tabulations. As mentioned before, risk perception is a rather vague expression, as it brings a lot of confusion with it. As participants were only asked to indicate the level of perceived risk in these regions, no data concerning the thoughts that motivated to rank these risk perceptions is available. Different factors could have influenced the decision making process for these questions, such as reading a newspaper article about terrorism in the Middle East just a few moments before participating in this survey, leading to perceiving this region as riskier. These thoughts were confirmed with 60,8% stating that the perceived risk of facing terrorism in Europe is higher than the actual risk. Quite distinct differences between men and women were found concerning this question. 78,6% of men stated they believe that perceived risk is higher than actual risk, whereas only 51% of women stated so, indicating that more women than men see the risk of facing terrorism being exaggerated. While gender showed disparities between perceived risk and actual risk, no significant differences where found between age groups. To facilitate the analysis for this purpose, age groups were divided into two groups, under 30 years of age and over 30 years of age. 59,2% of the younger generation agreed to perceived risk being higher than actual risk, in contrast to 65,5% of the over 30 years of age group. No significant differences were found when cross-tabulating with other independent variables such as the amount of trips outside the country of residence per year and number of children.
The last section of the survey required participants to answer a question relating to media coverage. A five point Likert scale was provided to answer how much negative media coverage influences travel decision making. “1” indicated that negative media influences travel decision making very much, whereas “5” indicated that there is no relation between the two. The mean averaged to 2.7 for all participants, women however tend to be more influenced (2.4) than men (3.2). As seen in Table 7, this is proved by p=0.0023, suggesting a high significance level using the Mann-Whitney U test.

For the purpose of this thesis, the population sample was again split in two age groups (<30 years of age and >30 years of age) to make cross-tabulations with the influence of media. Calculations of the mean show that the younger generation (2.4) tend to be more influenced by the media than the older generation (3.2). This is statistically supported by a significance level of p=0.008 using the Mann-Whitney U test.

Table 6: Mann-Whitney U test for gender and media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pop. 1</th>
<th>Pop. 2</th>
<th>Pop. 1 &amp; Pop. 2 Combined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sum of ranks</td>
<td>1756.5</td>
<td>1403.5</td>
<td>3160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean of ranks</td>
<td>34.44</td>
<td>50.12</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected sum of ranks</td>
<td>2040</td>
<td>1120</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-value</td>
<td>997.5</td>
<td>430.5</td>
<td>714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected U-value</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>714</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12: Influence of media coverage (1-very much, 5-not at all)

Other variables such as number of children and level of education did show differences in average means. This is highly probably due to the linked ages of both variables. Most individuals with children that took part in this survey are over 30 years of age and individuals holding master degrees, doctorate degrees and PhDs also belong to the older age group. The amount of trips per year, as well as the country of residence also did not show any significant differences.
5 Discussion and Limitations

The study results suggest that there are differences in perceptions and behavior towards destinations between population groups. However, previous research in the field of travel behavior have primarily focused on the end result such as making decisions regarding the outcome of the destination rather than focusing on the whole process of making these travel decisions (Jeng & Fesenmaier, 2002). Doing research and studies in this field can be complicated due to the wide variety of different factors influencing travel decision making. One of these factors tested in this study was the influence of negative media coverage and the results showed that a great majority of people tend to get moderately to somewhat possibly influenced by media. As proposed by Pizam (2000), this is most probably due to technological improvements, such as live broadcasts, social media and instant messaging. The data shows that the younger generation tends to get more influenced by media coverage than older people, confirming H5b The younger generation tends to get more influenced by media coverage than the older generation. A significance level of p=0.008 statistically supports this hypothesis. As for the reason for these results, only assumptions can be made, as survey participants were not asked to clarify the reasons for their answer choices. Regarding the data analysis, H5a women and men are influenced equally by media coverage is rejected since the spread of means between both population groups was significant, statistically supported by p=0.0023, proving that women are more influenced by media than men.

With regard to the study carried out for the purpose of this paper, H1 There is no difference in behavior towards destinations between males and females was rejected. This is due to multiple factors. Even though women and men did not show any differences whether or not they had visited a destination that has been affected by terrorism, results showed that women are significantly more reluctant to visit a destination affected by terrorism in the future. Furthermore, the survey showed that men would consider taking on more risks than women. H2 Individuals that travel more often, show higher willingness to travel to destinations that have been affected by terrorism was rejected. Calculations of the Pearson correlation Coefficient did show a negative correlation, however not strong enough to be significant. After comparing age groups to each other H3 The younger generation (<30 years) shows riskier travel
decision making behavior and lower risk perceptions than others in terms of the amount of time to wait before visiting a destination after terror attacks was rejected. While comparisons between the average means of both age groups in terms of willingness to travel to a destination that has been affected by terrorism did show differences, they were not significant enough. The same applies to risk perceptions about different regions of the world. Only a maximum deviation of 0.4 between means was found between the two age groups tested. H4 Individuals with children show more cautious travel behavior than individuals with no children was accepted. Individuals with children show a lower willingness to travel to a destination that has been affected by terrorism than individuals with no children. This was statistically supported by a significance level of 0.0083 in the Mann-Whitney U test.

Limitations other than previously mentioned include the fact that the sample was randomly chosen, making room for the possibility of sampling errors. Furthermore, the results are not generalizable to the general population. The study was open to citizens of all countries, however due to the geographical position concerning the publication of the study, most survey takers turned out be from Austria and other European countries. This resulted in unbalanced population sizes of Europeans and non-Europeans and putting more weight on Austrians specifically. This required the limitation of some cross-tabulations to Austrian citizens only, in order to limit the possibility of receiving results with high weight on outliers. Similarly, age groups focused on two out of five age groups, 18-25 years and 40-60 years. In order to avoid outliers, the other remaining age groups were left out, where applicable, for cross-tabulations. Terms such as “younger generation” and “older generation” are not generalizable to the general public. These terms were solely used for the purpose of this thesis to facilitate calculations. Regarding other limitations, it is worth noting that even with a high level of concentration and accuracy, human and system errors can occur.
6 Conclusion and Future Prognosis

To conclude, it can be said that some personal demographic characteristics have a larger impact on one’s travel decision making and travel behavior than others. Age and gender for instance showed more significant differences between answers than level of education and number of children. Literature, however, states that level of education and number of children have substantial influence on purchasing behavior. In the survey conducted for the purpose of this paper, the majority of respondents were students or people holding a bachelor degree, hence no direct influence of level of education could have been measured.

All in all, research in this field of tourism is difficult on many levels, as the Tourism and Terrorism relationship constantly changes over time. New factors have to be accounted for, such as technological improvements in order to make accurate predictions about travel behavior and decision making. Now more than ever governments are faced with providing high safety levels for their citizens and tourists, which as a result can also lead to high perceived risk. As a result, it is necessary to conduct further research about the right balance of high safety levels and high media coverage and its effect on perceived risk. Another factor influencing research in this field of tourism is the difference between short-term and long-term disruptions. Due to the economic instability of the Middle East, Europe is faced with experiencing many new long-term changes to its social structure and it will take many years to finally make conclusions of the impact of the Middle East’s crisis on Europe. Will the Middle East countries be able to rebuild their destination image? How long will Europe, specifically Belgium, France and Turkey feel the effects of terrorism in its countries? Will perceived risk increase over time with the amount of terrorist attacks happening? All of these questions will have to and hopefully will be answered in the future.
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   Sage

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Appendix Figure 1: Central and South America risk perception

Appendix Figure 2: Africa risk perception

Appendix Figure 3: Asia risk perception
Appendix 2

Survey Questions

Travel Behavior

Have you visited a destination that has been subject to terrorist activities in the past 5 years? (Note: destination must have been affected by terrorism in the past 5 years)

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Would you consider visiting a destination that has been subject to terrorism activity in the future?
After what period of time would you consider visiting/have you visited a destination that has been affected by terrorism?

- Straight away
- After 2-4 weeks
- After 3 months
- After 1 year
- After 3 years
- Never

Country of residence

Do you live in Europe? *

- Yes
- No

What is your country of residence?

Kurzantwort-Text: __________________________

Do you feel safe in the country you live in? (in terms of terrorist activity)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>No, I don’t feel safe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, very safe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you believe your country to be at great risk in regards to facing terrorism in the near future?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Yes, a terrorist attack is very likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No, a terrorist attack is very unlikely</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How risky do you perceive the following regions to be (in terms of terrorism)?

Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>very safe</th>
<th>very risky</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
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</table>

North America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>4</th>
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<th>very risky</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
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<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
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<td>O</td>
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</table>

Central and South America

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<th>1</th>
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<th>5</th>
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<th>very risky</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
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Middle East

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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<th>very risky</th>
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<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
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<td>O</td>
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</table>

Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>very safe</th>
<th>very risky</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>O</td>
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<td>O</td>
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</table>

Asia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>very safe</th>
<th>very risky</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Australasia

Do you believe that the perceived risk of facing terrorism in Europe is higher than the actual risk?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Media Coverage

How much does negative media coverage influence your travel decision making?

- Very much
- Not at all (I don't care what media says)

Demographics

Gender

- Male
- Female
Age *
- <18
- 18 - 25
- 25 - 30
- 30 - 40
- 40 - 60
- > 60

Level of Education *
- A-Levels/ IB/ Matura/ Abitur/ Other higher secondary school certificate
- Currently studying at University
- Bachelor Degree
- Master/ Diploma/ Doctorate/ PhD

Do you have children? *
- Yes
- No

How often do you travel outside the country of your residence? *
- Once - Twice per year
- 3 - 5 times per year
- more than 6 times per year