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Peacefulness at home: impacts on international travel

Cláudia Seabra, Elisabeth Kastenholz, José Luís Abrantes and Manuel Reis

Abstract

Purpose – *The purpose of this paper is to analyse the impact of peacefulness in the tourists' country of origin in their main decisions and behaviours when travelling internationally.*

Design/methodology/approach – *A sample of 600 international tourists from 49 countries was divided into five groups according to each respondent's belonging to a country with a specific level of peacefulness, assessed by the Global Peace Index, to test differences in international travel decision and behaviour patterns.*

Findings – *Travel safety is a critical issue to most tourists, while the peacefulness level of travellers' country of origin is an important key factor for understanding different travel behaviours and safety perceptions held when going on an international trip, namely, regarding involvement, risk and safety/insecurity perceptions.*

Research limitations/implications – *This is one of the few studies investigating the impact of peacefulness in the tourist's country of origin on travel decisions and behaviours, based on the Global Peace Index. Additionally, this study responds to the call of the Prospect Theory regarding general consumption contexts, and adds to the Experiential Consumer Perspective, here applied to tourism consumption.*

Practical implications – *This study provides guidance to destination and tourism industry managers to attract and segment their market according to tourists' country of origin, in accordance with its respective level of peacefulness as defined by the Global Peace Index, especially in destinations more affected by terrorism, war, political turmoil, crime and other safety risks.*

Originality/value – *No published study has tested the impact of peacefulness at home on tourists' international travel behaviours and decisions yet.*

Keywords *Tourism, Safety, Terrorism, Global Peace Index, Travel risk perception*

Paper type *Research paper*

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1. Introduction

According to the International Institute for Peace through Tourism, founded in 1986, travel and tourism is the world's first "Global Peace Industry" — "an industry that promotes and supports the belief that every traveller is potentially an "Ambassador for Peace" (D'Amore, 2009, p. 566). However, apart from this belief and the research conducted on the existence of a causal relationship between peace and tourism (Litvin, 1998; Pratt and Liu, 2016), a question still remains: does peace lead to tourism or does tourism lead to peace instead? Moreover, if there is a link between peace at tourists' country of origin and tourism, how does it influence their behaviours and attitudes, particularly attitudes towards risk in international travel?

The research on tourism and peace started in the 1980s (D'Amore, 1988). However, over time, studies conducted on tourism's role in helping consolidate peace have been scarce (Moufakkir, 2010; Pernecky, 2010). Recently, there has been a new investment in the research attempting to assess the "possibilities for tourism to act as an agent for peace in post-conflict social reconciliation" (Causevic and Lynch, 2013, p. 146). However, the perspective that peace and "peacefulness at home" may lead to an increased predisposition for international travel, eventually associated with lower levels of travel risk perception, has been neglected in the literature. Also, the question of how diverse levels of peacefulness at home may determine diverse travel risk perceptions and consequently travel attitudes and behaviours has not been studied before. It is our aim to close these gaps.

The present study analyses the impact of peacefulness in the tourists' country of origin, using the Global Peace Index (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2015) on several aspects of travel behaviour and its determinants, specifically its impact on—behaviour in travel planning: involvement with international travel; travel risk and safety perceptions: risk perception, safety/insecurity sensation; and the determinant of risk awareness: interest in/attention to terrorism in the media.

This study draws on the assumptions of behavioural economics and consumer behaviour theories to understand how tourists react and behave in their decision-making processes, conditioned by the level of peacefulness in their own country of origin. Specifically, this work intends to answer the calls to extend knowledge in the field of consumer behaviour, namely, in the domain of the Prospect Theory, considering a "typical situation of choice, where the probabilities of outcomes are not explicitly given" (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979, p. 289). It also adds to the Experiential Consumer Perspective to balance and broaden the theory of consumer behaviour within a domain of consumption shaped by "consumer fantasies, feelings and fun" (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982, p. 139), where risk perceptions refer to expectations of novelty-involving hedonic experiences in a geographically and culturally distant, unknown environment (Kastenholz, 2010).

In the next section, the theoretical background that supports the study is presented and the main aspects of international tourist behaviour considered in this study accordingly introduced. In the subsequent sections, the methodology is discussed followed by the analysis of results. The paper concludes with the discussion of results and respective implications for science and management, also presenting the study's limitations and future research directions.

2. Literature review

Considering the concept of "positive peace" (Galtung, 1996), that includes "a society based on social justice through equal opportunity, a fair distribution of power and resources, equal protection and impartial enforcement of law, and above all, mutual cultural understanding and respect" (Carbone, 2017, p. 61), tourism is clearly a way of promoting peace and mutual understanding (Wohlmuther and Wintersteiner, 2014), being considered as "an agent for peace" (Wintersteiner and Wohlmuther, 2014, p. 31). Tourism is often pointed at as a major force that leads regions to peace; in fact it constitutes "a primary component of sustainable development [...] fostering and sustaining world peace" (Farmaki, 2017, p. 528).

Recently there has been a significant investment in researching the connections between tourism and peace. Many studies concluded that tourism has a significant impact not only in building peace (Ap and Var, 1990; D'Amore, 1988; Jafari, 1989; Litvin, 1998) but also in maintaining peace (Farmaki, 2017). The tourism industry has a "significant peace-stabilising effect" (Becken and Carmignani, 2016), contributes to the "democratisation of society", encourages and strengthens international relations (Kim et al., 2007). Tourism as a social phenomenon that brings the contact between visitors and hosts increases the understanding between people from different backgrounds, cultures and races (Farmaki, 2017). Tourism establishes connections between divided communities (Causevic, 2010), influences international politics towards peace by reducing cultural and psychological differences between people (Nyaupane et al., 2008), encouraging cooperation among nations (Askjellerud, 2003; Causevic, 2010; Sonmez and Apostolopoulos, 2000).

The opposite connection is also evident but less studied. Some researchers claim that tourism is a beneficiary of peace rather than a cause of peace (Kim and Prideaux, 2003; Litvin, 1998). For a successful tourism industry, conditions like peace, safety and security are recognised and acknowledged as crucial (Becken and Carmignani, 2016). A study of 11 countries allowed the conclusion that tourism industry benefits from peace (Pratt and Liu, 2016). However, those few studies exploring the effect of peace in the tourism industry only analysed this effect in the visited countries. To the best of our knowledge, no study has yet explored the impact of distinct levels of peace and safety in the tourists' country of origin on their travel behaviour and attitudes.

With the present study we try to close this gap analysing the impact of peacefulness in the tourists' country of origin on their travel behaviour and its determinants, namely, travel planning, involvement, travel risk and safety perceptions; risk perception, safety/insecurity sensation and interest in and attention to terrorism in the media.

Tourists' decision-making behaviour

The Prospect Theory and the Experiential Consumer Perspective form the theoretical basis to analyse tourists' decision behaviours taking into account the level of peace in their own country of origin, in its impact on involvement, risk perception, attention to and interest in terrorism and safety/unsafety perceptions.

The Prospect Theory (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979) explains the psychological, social, cognitive and emotional factors that affect the economic decisions of individuals, namely, when risk is involved. According to the theory "people derive utility from gains and losses, measured relative to some reference point, rather than from absolute levels of wealth" (Barberis, 2013), meaning that if an individual is confronted with two options, one presenting potential gains and other with potential losses, the first option will be chosen.

Tourists are more and more demanding in their travel choices. The purchase of tourism products implies high-involvement decision-making, because tourists purchase highly valued experiences expected to occur at a destination. These are personally relevant, but intangible and subjectively distinctly lived and perceived, while tourism products are purchased at a distance in both space, time and frequently culture, making the decision more complex, risky and engaging (Kastenholz, 2010), also due to the substantial financial and non-financial costs they may involve (Sirakaya and Woodside, 2005). Consumers consequently spend considerable effort and time in the decision-making process to reduce the perceived risk.

The Experiential Consumer Perspective (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982) examines the processes individuals use to select, use and consume products, services, experiences or ideas to satisfy needs and to search for hedonic responses, specifically fun and pleasure associated with "various playful leisure activities" (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982, p. 132), including tourism. Proposed as an alternative to the Information Processing Model (Bettman, 1979), the Experiential Consumer Perspective adopts a hedonic orientation "assuming the consumer as an experiential being who consumes for enjoyment rather than instrumental" purposes (Lofman, 1991, p. 730).

According to this perspective, consumers' individual differences and type of involvement influence the criteria by which the products and consumption consequences are evaluated (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). The purchase and consumption of tourism products involve multiple steps and variables (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2016). Subject to sociodemographic and psychographic influences, the travel decision is determined by personal, social and commercial factors (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b). Human behaviour is essentially intentional and regulated by anticipation. Through anticipation, individuals motivate themselves to conduct their actions, anticipate images of a product, its uses and the consequences of its consumption. While forming different expectations, consumers can mentally try different alternatives and choose the one that will bring them more pleasure during its consumption (Bieger and Laesser, 2000).

Purchase involvement

Travel, especially leisure travel, should be a most enjoyable and relevant experience for an individual's quality of life. This importance makes most tourists plan their travel carefully (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2016). Purchase involvement is the degree of commitment consumers attribute to the various phases of the consumption process: product choice, search for information, decision making and purchase (Broderick and Mueller, 1999; Seabra *et al.*, 2014; Zaichkowsky, 1985). It is, in fact, a central aspect in consumer behaviour research (Broderick and Mueller, 1999), especially when analysing the purchase decision regarding tourism products (Dimanche *et al.*, 1991).

Some researchers use the concept "product involvement" to define the relationship between an individual and a product (Engel *et al.*, 1986). The focus in this research area is the relevance or importance that a product or category assumes for consumers (Howard and Sheth, 1969; Hupfer and Gardner, 1971). More specifically, whenever the products are relevant to satisfy and address consumers' needs and values, product involvement is high (Dholakia, 2001; Engel *et al.*, 1986; Zaichkowsky, 1986). Product involvement in a multidimensional perspective has five main dimensions: knowledge, pleasure/interest, risk probability, risk importance and prestige (Gursoy and Gavcar, 2003; Park *et al.*, 1994).

Risk, safety perceptions and terrorism

Markets are more and more global due to a combination of economic, socio-cultural, political and technological factors (Douglas and Craig, 1995). The world is becoming a single market (Levitt, 1983), in which an increasing number of products are offered simultaneously and similarly in different countries (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2016). Tourism products are eminently global products and the globalisation of tourism has led to its expansion on an international scale (Levitt, 1983). The globalisation of tourism markets entails increasing global risks that are inherent to businesses that have undergone a global scale growth. Tourism, in fact, is one of the activities that are most likely to suffer from these global risk factors (Ritchie, 2004), given that, contrary to other product categories, in tourism it is the consumer who moves to the place of consumption, frequently over long distances.

Stability and safety at the destination and during travel are key factors for tourism development (Fletcher and Morakabati, 2008). If an event causes a disruption in this balance, it will cause a feeling of risk in tourists that will, in turn, cause a powerful negative impact on demand (Pizam and Mansfeld, 1996). Tourist demand is particularly sensitive to the tourists' safety, health and well-being concerns (Blake and Sinclair, 2003). Perception of risk has been mostly associated with factors like political instability, threats to health, crime, violence, war, natural disasters and terrorism in destinations or in their surrounding areas (Coshall, 2003; Lepp and Gibson, 2003; Kozak *et al.*, 2007). Those events are typically highly visible through contemporary media coverage. In this context, individual sensitivity towards risk in travel may be determined by the perceived safety and peacefulness experienced in tourists' home environments (Pratt and Liu, 2016).

Risk perception relates to the amount and types of risk tourists associate to travel and international tourism. Two subscales can measure this perception: the generic types of perceived risk and perceptions of insecurity. Many studies adopted the five dimensions of generic risk suggested by Jacoby and Kaplan (1972): financial, performance, physical, social and psychological risk (Cheron and Ritchie, 1982; Mitra *et al.*, 1999; Stone and Grønhaug, 1993). Roselius (1971) added weather risk to the tourism context, a perspective adopted in other studies (Stone and Grønhaug, 1993). Additionally, satisfaction risk (being unsatisfied with the trip) first appeared in studies on leisure (Cheron and Ritchie, 1982; Rohel and Fesenmaier, 1992). Finally, recent studies added other dimensions such as political risk (Sedighi *et al.*, 2001; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b), and health and terrorism risk (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a, b).

In the present study, the above ten types of risk appear in an aggregate form. A separate measurement process would add unnecessary complexity, since the aim here was the evaluation of the effect of certain variables on the global risk perception (Laroche *et al.*, 2003; Seabra *et al.*, 2014). The general unsafety perception in national or international trips is also part of the risk perceptions that individuals associate with the tourist experience (Floyd and Pennington-Gray, 2004).

In the travelling decision-making process, people may come to disregard some destinations or products (Um and Crompton, 1990), because of their potential cost or perceived risk, especially if the media link them to terrorism or other war or crime situations. The psychological impact of terror may have less to do with its destructive power than with its ability to evoke fear and anxiety (Spilerman and Stecklov, 2009). The fear of terrorism is irrational (Sönmez *et al.*, 1999), and influences clearly the individuals' overall travel risk perceptions. In addition, media coverage and exploration of terrorist attacks can condition public opinion, damaging destination images, particularly in international travel (Sönmez, 1998). The power of media may even change and precondition pre-existing images and attitudes towards destinations that people used to consider safe. This happens because, in many cases, media information is the only source available to the audience or because people tend to think they are sources that convey enough knowledge to enable them to interpret the facts realistically (Weimann and Winn, 1994).

Tourists, in turn, reveal high levels of interest in and attention to news regarding terrorism, especially when they are associated with destinations they might consider visiting. They will undoubtedly keep this kind of information in their memory (Jin, 2003; Seabra *et al.*, 2014).

3. Methodology

Data collection and measures

For the empirical component of the present study, a survey approach was used. First, a measurement instrument with scales, which had previously been identified in relevant literature, was developed. The scales used intended to capture the analysed concepts:

- The involvement concept was measured with scales adapted from Park, Mothersbaugh and Feick (1994) and Gursoy and Gavcar (2003). Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements related with tourism products, namely, tourism and travel regarding five dimensions: knowledge, pleasure/interest, perception of risk probability, importance attributed to risk and prestige.

- Risk perception was assessed for ten types of risks in international travel, on a scale ranging from 1 (very low risk) to 7 (extremely high risk) ling: financial, performance, physical, social, psychological risk, risk of time, risk of (in)satisfaction, political instability/unrest, health and terrorism (Mitra *et al.*, 1999; Seabra *et al.*, 2013; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a).

- Attention to and interest in terrorism in the media was measured with a scale developed by Jin (2003) and Seabra *et al.* (2014). Tourists indicated their level of agreement with statements regarding their level of interest in and attention to (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree) information about terrorism acquired in the media.

- To measure safety/unsafety perceptions, a scale from Floyd and Pennington-Gray (2004) was adapted, where tourists had to rate their level of agreement (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree) with statements regarding safety in travelling.

Experts gave their opinion on these scales, which were then translated into the languages: Portuguese, French, Spanish and German and subsequently back-translated to English. A pre-test was conducted with 30 international travellers, permitting Cronbach's α reliability tests of the scales, which were considered sufficiently sound for the final survey instrument. Data collection was conducted from January 2009 to March 2009, surveying randomly amongst those travellers, who had gone on an international trip. These were approached in loco across three international airports: Madrid/Barajas (Spain), Lisbon/Portela (Portugal) and Milan/Malpensa (Italy). These three locations were selected since the respective countries present different levels of terrorism and risk. Two of this study's authors applied the survey directly to travellers at the airport after checking in at their return trip. Self-administration of the questionnaire aimed at reducing bias. This approach resulted in 600 valid responses, equally distributed among the three airports. Table AI includes the questionnaire measures, constructs and scales adapted from literature relevant to the research context.

Data profile

Respondents' places of origin reveal 41 countries: Portugal (10.8 per cent), Brazil (10.3 per cent), Spain (10 per cent), Germany (9.6 per cent), the UK (8.8 per cent), France (8.4 per cent) and the USA (6.7 per cent). Less represented are Italy (5 per cent), Sweden (2.1 per cent), The Netherlands (1.9 per cent), Denmark (1.9 per cent), Belgium (1.7 per cent), Ireland (1.7 per cent), Austria (1.5 per cent), Argentina (1.5 per cent), Czech Republic (1.5 per cent), Australia (1.5 per cent), Canada (1.4 per cent), Morocco (1.4 per cent), Romania (1.2 per cent), Turkey (1 per cent), Estonia (1 per cent) and Switzerland (1 per cent). Responses from countries with less than 1 per cent of the sample are: South Africa, Guinea, Japan, Venezuela, Luxembourg, Finland, India, Mexico, Israel, Poland, Kyrgyzstan, Ecuador, Slovakia, Russia, Bolivia, Norway, Hungary and Slovenia.

Respondents are mostly male (56 per cent) and with ages below 35 years (56 per cent). A large part (74 per cent) presents higher education levels; most present occupations include middle and senior management (22 per cent), executives (20 per cent), freelancers/self-employed (19 per cent) and students (15 per cent), with average monthly income ranging from 2,000 to 3,000 euros. Most respondents travel frequently, reporting an average of seven international trips, with duration, on average, of nine days, in a period of the last three years. Respondents also

show a high level of familiarity with the visited destination, having visited it on average 3.5 times before. Respondents reported an average of 15 days to plan their trips, with accommodation booking generally occurring 25 days in advance.

Data analysis

To analyse the mentioned dimensions of involvement, risk perception, safety/unsafety perceptions and contact with terrorism through media, and to examine the impact of peacefulness at home on these determinants of international travel decisions, the sample was divided, based on each respondent's country of origin and corresponding classification within the Global Peace Index. This index incorporates data of 23 indicators from different sources and is elaborated by the Economist Intelligence Unit, regarding: level of safety and security in society, extent of conflict and degree of militarisation (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2015).

The indicators are revised each year by a group of specialists and are used then to rank 162 independent states. The GPI assigns a weight of 60 per cent to internal and 40 per cent to external peace indicators. The experts allocate a heavier weight to internal conditions because it is the one that would determine most the perception of peacefulness as lived in a country. The lower the index score, the less peaceful is the country. Using the GPI, it is possible to divide the countries into five categories: very high, high, medium, low and very low peace conditions. The most peaceful countries have a very high GPI and the less peaceful countries have a very low GPI. Europe is the most peaceful region in the world and its countries present a very high GPI or a high GPI.

The respondents in the sample are mostly from countries with a high (50 per cent) or from a very high GPI conditions (26.1 per cent) and 19.2 per cent are from countries with a medium GPI. Only 5.2 per cent of responses are from countries with a low or very low GPI as can be seen in Table I.

The resulting groups were finally compared regarding the travel decision-making variables and respective determinants: involvement with international travel, travel risk and safety perceptions and interest in/attention to terrorism in the media.

4. Results

To assess the internal consistency the international travel behaviour determinants (involvement, risk perception, unsafety perceptions and interest and attention to terrorism) Cronbach's α values were computed (Cronbach, 1951). All the factors presenting Cronbach's αs lower than 0.7 were removed from the analysis (Nunnally, 1978). In the involvement concept only three dimensions were maintained: knowledge; pleasure and interest; risk probability. The ten risk perception variables were all included in the analysis: financial, performance, physical, social, psychological risk, risk of time, risk of (in)satisfaction, political instability/unrest, health and terrorism risk. Regarding the unsafety perceptions dimensions only safety importance exhibits a good internal consistency. Finally, for interest in and attention to terrorism both dimensions showed a good internal consistency.

Next, possible associations between the GPI groupings and the previously identified most consistent travel-determinant dimensions were analysed through Kruskal-Wallis tests. In addition, a more specific analysis was carried out through pairwise comparisons to assess which pairs of GPI categories exhibited significant differences. It was possible to obtain the following results.

| **Table I.** Travellers' countries of origin in the sample by GPI	
Global Peace Index	*Countries*
Very high	Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Japan, The Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland
High	Argentina, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, UK
Medium	USA, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Morocco
Low and very low	Guinea, India, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, South Africa, Turkey, Venezuela, Russia

Regarding the involvement dimensions, tourists from countries with different levels of GPI showed no significant differences regarding knowledge ($p = 0.547$) and pleasure/interest ($p = 0.868$). However, the risk probability dimension showed a significant difference between GPI groups ($p = 0.004$). In a deeper analysis, significant differences were most evident among tourists coming from countries with low GPI and those who come from countries with medium or high GPI, with tourists from low GPI countries showing a higher involvement with international travel due to risk probability perception than the other two groups (see Figure 1).

When testing the influence of tourists' GPI level on risk perception types, the results show that most of the risks have a low or very low influence: functional risk ($p = 0.153$), financial risk ($p = 0.889$), physical risk ($p = 0.753$), social risk ($p = 0.719$), psychological risk ($p = 0.652$), risk of satisfaction ($p = 0.108$), health risk ($p = 0.713$) and terrorism risk ($p = 0.760$). Only the risk perception of political instability varies according to the GPI of the country the tourists live in ($p = 0.037$). Significant differences exist among tourists from countries with a high GPI and those from countries with low GPI. Tourists from countries with low GPI have a higher risk perception of becoming involved in political turmoil than those who come from countries with a high GPI ($p = 0.027$). Likewise, the time risk perception differs according to the GPI level of country of residence ($p = 0.021$), with significant differences only found between tourists from countries with a high GPI and those from countries with medium GPI. Specifically, tourists who come from countries with a medium GPI are more likely to feel that a travel experience may last too long or that it may be a waste of time compared with tourists from countries with a high GPI ($p = 0.017$) (see Figures 2 and 3).

The unsafety perceptions dimension safety importance depends significantly ($p = 0.028$) on the GPI value of the tourists' country of origin. There are only significant differences between tourists from countries with medium GPI and from countries with high GPI. Tourists who come from countries with medium GPI are, comparatively, those who assigned the greatest importance to their destinations' security attributes (see Figure 4).

Finally, the tourists' country of origin GPI does not influence significantly the dimensions interest and attention to terrorism ($p = 0.179$).

Figure 1 Pairwise comparisons of GPI—involvement (risk probability dimension)
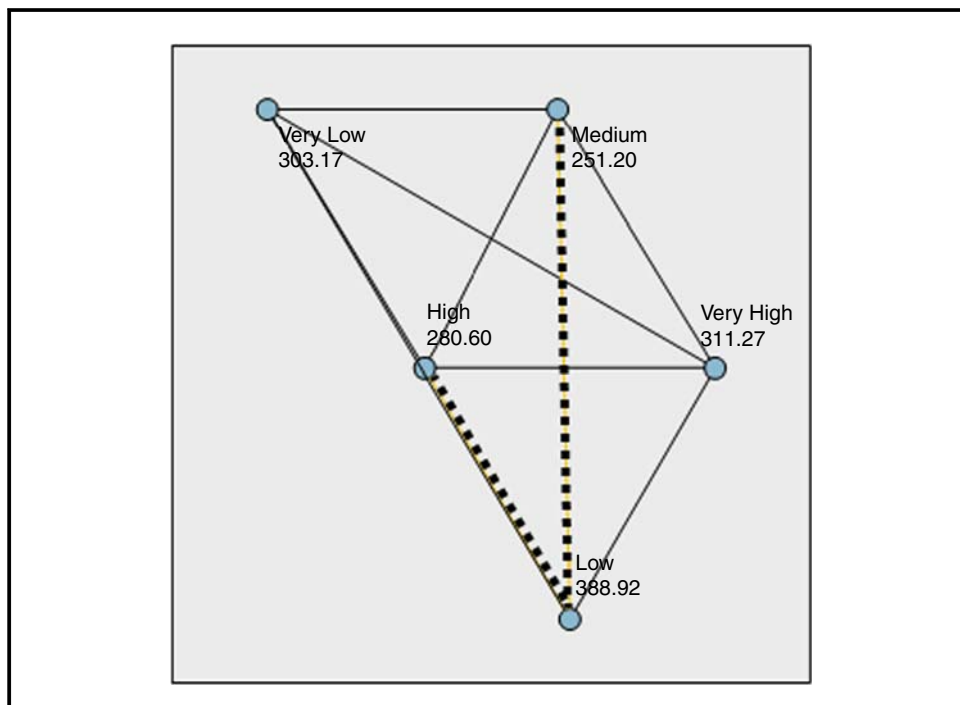
Figure 2 Pairwise comparisons of GPI—risk types (political turmoil dimension)
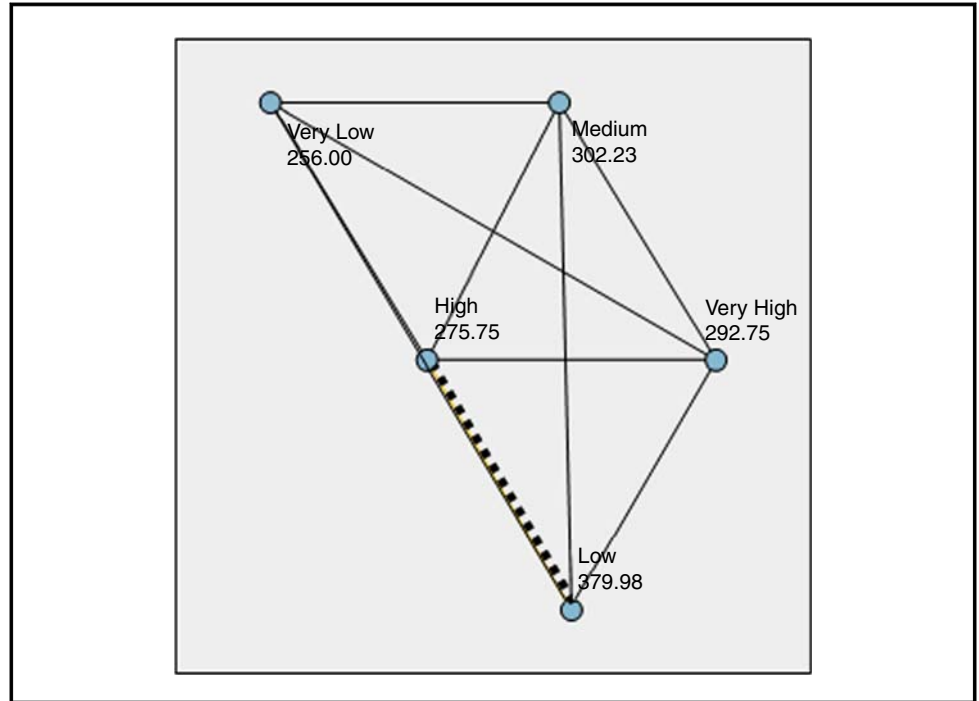
Figure 3 Pairwise comparisons of GPI—risk types (time risk dimension)
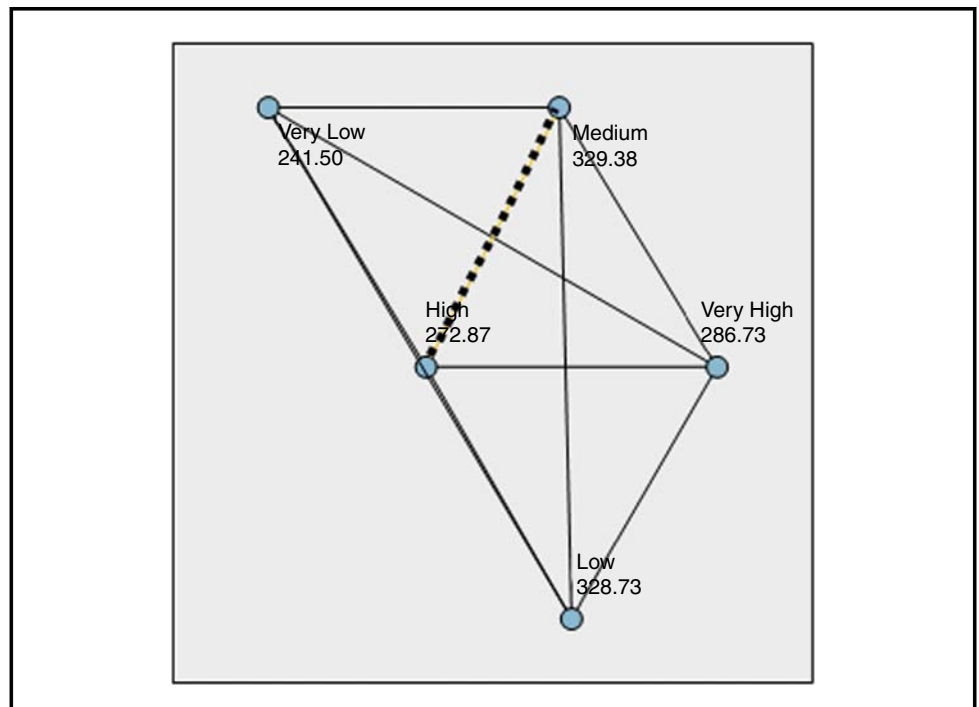
5. Discussion

Travel safety is a critical issue to tourists. Also, their country of origin may be an important key factor to understand the different behaviours and safety perceptions they hold when they go on an international trip. The main goal underlying the present study was to advance the knowledge

Figure 4 Pairwise comparisons of GPI—unsafety perceptions (safety importance dimension)
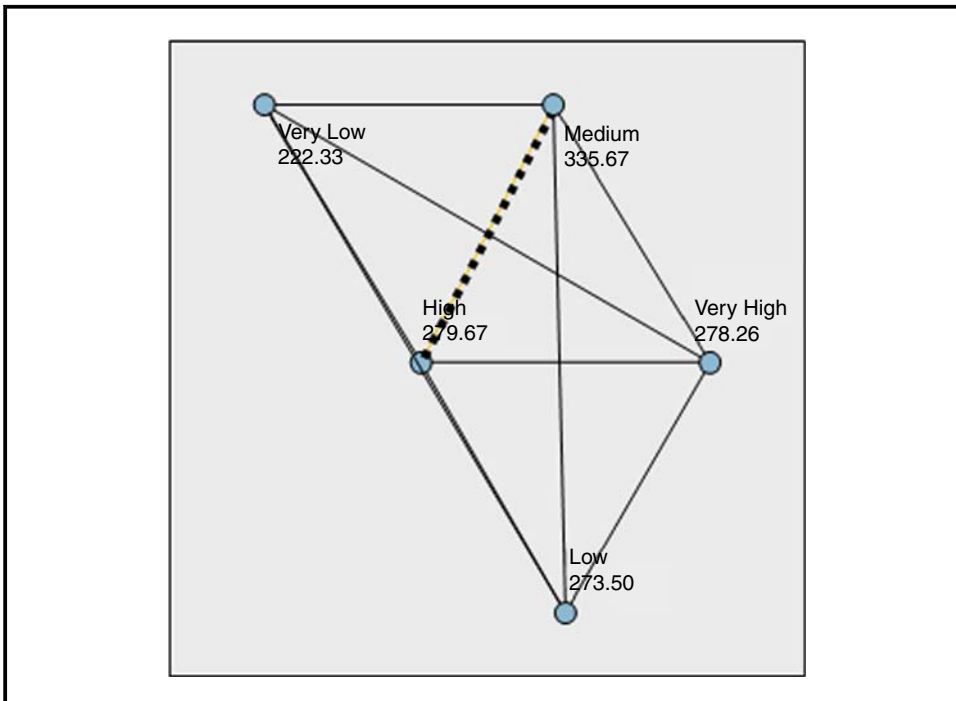
on the relationship between peacefulness at home and international travel. Some studies show the impacts of tourism activity on peace (D'Amore, 2009; Litvin, 1998; Pernecky, 2010; Pratt and Liu, 2016; Moufakkir, 2010). However, to the best of our knowledge, the impact of peace on tourists' behaviours has never been tested before. Specifically, this is the first study analysing the impact of peacefulness in tourists' country of origin on their travel behaviour regarding involvement, risk and safety/insecurity perceptions.

Theoretical implications

This paper provides a number of theoretically grounded and empirically validated contributions to the literature in consumer decision making and the role of safety and risk perception, providing important insights for an understanding of the dynamics between peace and tourism. Particularly, the results show that the peace in tourists' country of origin impacts on some consumer decisions and behaviour dimensions.

It is interesting to note that tourists coming from countries with a medium or high GPI have a lower risk probability perception regarding their buying processes than those who come from countries with a low GPI. This may be due to the tendency of countries with a lower GPI being less developed, implying that tourists from those countries travel less and feel therefore less secure during their buying processes. Living in less secure, peaceful and organised environments may also make them fear similar environments and situations abroad and when travelling, further aggravated by the unknown and unfamiliar context. They are, thus, more aware of the risks involved in buying a trip. Consequently, they show to perceive more than those from more peaceful countries that when purchasing a vacation: they cannot be completely sure of their choice; they think that choosing a vacation destination is complicated; and when they face a variety of vacation choices, they feel a bit lost. They understand more easily that whenever a tourist buys a vacation, they never really know whether it is the right option. On the other hand, higher and medium GPI countries tend to be more developed and rich countries, where residents are more experienced travellers, with a greater travel knowledge; so they feel more secure about their choices. As far as the other involvement dimensions regarding the product "travel" are

concerned, there were no significant differences among the GPI countries of origin. Specifically, tourists from different countries did not show statistically significant differences related with knowledge and pleasure/interest revealing the importance of the tourism industry worldwide.

Regarding risk perceptions, the political instability and time risk dimensions were the only ones in which we could find significant differences. Tourists who come from countries with a low GPI perceive more than those coming from higher GPI-level countries that during international travel they can be involved in political turmoil of the country they are visiting. This may be related to the fact that these tourists come from countries that are not safe, so they feel constantly this risk in their own country. It is thus logical that they will project that fear to the destinations they visit. The level of safety and security in their home society, the extent of conflict and the level of militarisation of the country where tourists come from, thus, positively influence the risk perception they attribute to the countries they visit. On the other hand, regarding the risk of time, tourists from countries with a high GPI consider less than tourists from countries with a medium GPI that there is a risk of their travel experience being a waste of time. This tendency may be related to our previous argument regarding risk probability perception in the purchase decision, since tourists from higher GPI countries are typically from more developed countries, used to professional, efficient and generally satisfaction-generating travel services. There are no significant differences among tourists from different countries for all the other risk perception dimensions: financial, performance, physical, social, psychological risk, risk of (in)satisfaction, health and terrorism. This is an interesting result and it may be because tourists are aware of the safety measures that airline companies, airports, tour operators, hotels and destination authorities are implementing to reduce those risks, while time risk and political instability risks may be perceived as less controllable or more likely, particularly by those from countries with lower GPI.

However, as far as safety importance is concerned, there were significant differences between individuals coming from countries with high and medium GPI. Interestingly and as may be expected, tourists from countries with a medium GPI attribute more importance to safety than those coming from safer countries. They consider that it is important to have additional security measures at airports that will allow people to travel more safely. They think that safety is the most important attribute that a destination can offer. They also consider that safety is a major consideration to be taken into account when they choose a destination. This probably occurs because they are not certain that their own country has the best safety and security conditions to offer, so they expect to find those measures in the countries they visit. Perhaps those with higher GPI are not to the same extent concerned about travel safety, because they relativise these safety measures since they expect that visited countries have similar measures they are used to in their own countries.

Another interesting result is that there were no differences regarding the attention to and interest in terrorism among the tourists of all GPI segments. This confirms the importance of media as the primary source of information about terrorism. Regardless of the country of origin, all tourists have interest in and pay major attention to terrorism news in the media. In fact, tourists from all countries are very interested in the news on terrorism, and the media exploration of terrorist attacks has the power to transform the public opinion on tourism, particularly on international travel (Sönmez, 1998). Media coverage of terrorist attacks consequently impacts on the image other destinations where those attacks take place, a finding in line with previous studies (Seabra et al., 2014).

The results respond to the Prospect Theory extension call (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979) since an international tourism experience itself presents a risky decision, even more when the consumers face instable contexts in their country of origin, being thus more aware and concerned about risks in their daily lives. In the decision processes, international tourists formulate the judgemental principles to evaluate gains and losses, influenced by their context, namely, the (more or less) peaceful environment in their home country. Specifically, those coming from countries with medium and low GPI show higher risk probability perception regarding their buying processes, higher risk perception of political instability and time risk, and also attribute more importance to safety measures than those coming from safer countries. In sum, the travelling decision is associated with the level of peace in the tourists' country of origin, in so far as it depends largely on the perceived likelihood of that peace in diverse contexts, also in international travel, conditioned by what people are used to in their daily living context.

The study also adds an interesting angle to the Experiential Consumer Perspective (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982) by analysing the relationship between peacefulness at home and involvement and risk perception in international travel. Leisure activities carry an important symbolic value, prompting significant levels of interest and involvement. This study's results corroborate this perspective since all tourists, independently of their country of origin, showed high levels of involvement, with differences only observable in risk probability perception, namely, between tourists coming from countries with low GPI and those from countries with medium or high GPI. Thus, individual differences associated with the safety level of the traveller's country of origin proved to be relevant when trying to explain international travel decisions and behaviours, bringing the attention to the emotional dimension of tourism products consumption, namely, fear and anxiety (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982), dimensions which are in fact understudied in tourism and other fields of consumer behaviour.

Managerial implications

These results bring important insights to managers of tourist organisations and destinations. Factors like involvement and especially risk probability that relate directly with the tourists' confidence when they buy tourist products, interest in and attention to terrorism in the media and safety perceptions are very important attributes managers have to take into account if they want to attract tourists from all around the world.

This study showed that the peacefulness in the tourists' origin countries has an impact on their involvement, on some risk perception dimensions and on the importance that they attribute to safety. Especially countries more affected by safety, instability and terrorism risks need to be aware of travellers' concerns and expectations and present, particularly to those travellers coming from less safe or unstable contexts themselves, convincing measure that may reduce those risks. Thus, the GPI may be a useful tool in identifying those markets where particular care must be given to the design and communication of travel services, attending the needs of particularly risk averse and concerned international travellers. The relationships which are identified here may thus serve as a very important insight helping tourist destinations and firms to develop successful targeting strategies. Attracting tourists from countries with medium GPI is a challenge, since they are particularly concerned with safety measures. Particularly destinations that want to attract tourists from countries that exhibit a low GPI should invest in increase safety measure and corresponding informational strategies, highlighting the safety of the destination and the measures to guarantee it to tourists.

However, the image of safety and security is apparently critical nowadays, so promotional campaigns should not neglect stability and safety features of the destination image, while all destinations should consider strategies not only to prevent events that may threaten stability and safety but also those mitigating the impact of such events, through sensible communication in the media and effective crisis management.

6. Research limitations and future research directions

The present research has some limitations. The first relates to the study setting; we collected data from tourists in three international airports, all located in Europe. Therefore, it only included tourists who were travelling by plane and eventually mostly in this continent, which may limit the generalisability of the results. In order to achieve the data generalisability, there should be an opportunity to gather data in other locations, in different continents and from tourists who are using different transportation means. Also, a larger sample may have helped obtaining more significant numbers of tourists travelling from countries with lower GPI, although a lower international travel intensity from these countries should be expected.

Future studies on this topic using the scale battery, presented here, would be interesting to test the instrument and the suggested model in other tourism and travel contexts. New items and factors may also be added that could highlight other facets of the phenomenon under study. Antecedents of involvement and risk perceptions in international travelling should also be investigated. It would also be interesting to explore the possibility of an analysis of behaviour and

trip planning among tourists that come from countries with a high and a medium GPI. Finally, other indexes like the Organization for Economic and Co-operation Development (2018) safety index could also be used to assess different levels of "peacefulness/safety at home".

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Further reading

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Appendix

Table AI	Factors, dimensions and measures of the questionnaire	
Factor	*Dimensions*	*Variables*
Involvement with international travel	Knowledge	Compared to average person, I am very familiar with a wide variety of vacation destinations
		Compared to my friends and relatives, I am very familiar with a wide variety of vacation destinations
		Compared to people who travel a lot, I am very familiar with a wide variety of vacation destinations
	Pleasure/Interest	It gives me pleasure to purchase a vacation
		Buying a vacation is like buying a gift for myself
		A vacation is somewhat of a pleasure to me
		I attach great importance to a vacation
		One can say vacation destinations interests me a lot
		A vacation destination is a topic that leaves me totally indifferent
	Risk probability	Whenever one buys a vacation, one never really knows whether it is the one that should have been bought
		When I face a variety of vacation choices, I always feel a bit lost to make my choice
		Choosing a vacation destination is rather complicated
		When one purchases a vacation, one is never certain of one's choice
	Risk importance	When I chose a vacation destination, it is not a big deal if I make a mistake (rev. code)
		It is really annoying to purchase a vacation that is not suitable
		If, after I bought a vacation, my choice proves to be poor, I would be really upset
	Prestige	You can tell a lot about a person by the vacations destinations he/she chooses
		The vacation you buy tells a little bit about you
Assessed through a seven-point Likert scale: 1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree		
Adapted from Broderick and Mueller (1999), Seabra *et al.* (2014), Zaichkowsky (1985)		
Travel risk perception	Functional	Possibility of mechanical, equipment, organisational problems during travel or at destination (transportation, accommodation, attractions, etc.)
	Financial	Possibility that travel experience will not provide value for money spent
	Health	Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination
	Physical	Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents)
	Political instability	Possibility of becoming involved in the political turmoil of the country being visited
	Psychological	Possibility that travel experience will not reflect the individual's personality or self-image
	(In)satisfaction	Possibility that travel experience will not provide personal satisfaction
	Social	Possibility that travel choice/experience will affect other's opinion of individual
	Terrorism	Possibility of being involved in a terrorist act
	Time	Possibility that travel experience will take too much time or will waste time
Assessed through a seven-point Likert scale: 1 = very high risk; 7 = very low risk		
Adapted from Seabra *et al.* (2013), Sedighi *et al.* (2001), Sönmez and Graefe (1998b)		
Travel unsafety perceptions	Unsafety sensation	Travelling is risky right now
		I feel nervous about travelling right now
		Domestic travel is just as risky as international travel
	Safety sensation	I would feel very comfortable travelling anywhere right now
		Vacation travel is perfectly safe
		Travel to natural areas such as national parks or forests is safe
		Visiting art galleries and museums are safe tourist activities
	Terrorism	Tourists are not likely to be targets of terrorism
		Because of terrorism large, theme parks should be avoided by tourists right now
	Safety importance	Additional security measures at airports make travelling safer
		Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer
		Safety is a serious consideration when I am choosing a destination
Assessed through a seven-point Likert scale: 1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree		
Adapted from Floyd and Pennington-Gray (2004)		
Interest and attention to terrorism	Interest	I am really interested about terrorist attacks reports on news
		When I have the opportunity I watch/read/ear reports about terrorist attacks on news
		I am very curious about terrorist attacks reports on news
	Attention	I do not want to miss terrorist attacks reports on news
		I never want to change the channel during a report of terrorist attack on news
		I pay much attention on reports about terrorist attacks on news
Assessed through a seven-point Likert scale: 1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree		
Adapted from Jin (2003), Seabra *et al.* (2014)		

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