Safety Issues in Tourism in Goa - A Tourist Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Safety and security have always been indispensable condition for travel and tourism. But it is an incontestable fact that safety and security issues gained a much bigger importance in the last two decades. Goa, one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world, is no longer the tourist paradise it once was. The deaths of 15-year-old Scarlett Keeling has made this place a talking point and a pet bashing subject for the foreign media. The deaths of foreign nationals raise the question whether Goa is still a safe destination for tourists. While foreign tourists would like to believe that their lives are no longer safe in Goa, local residents claim otherwise. The local Goan says that crime is common across the world and it is common knowledge that one has to tread carefully especially at nights. The question being asked now is whether Goa is unsafe? In the aftermath of multiple incidents involving crimes against tourists, also deaths due to natural causes or drowning deaths and overdose of drugs in Goa, safety has become a complex multidimensional notion with a wide range of components. Therefore this fact necessitates the research and study of the relationship between security issues and tourism. In the present paper the author is trying to give theoretical insight of safety issues and government responses and possible marketing actions in crisis situations due to safety issues in tourism in Goa.

Keywords: Safe destination, Safety Issues, Crisis Situations

Introduction

The topic of safety and security in the tourism industry is of vital importance globally. Safety and security are vital to providing quality in tourism. More than any other economic activity, the success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide a safe and secure environment for visitors. Perceived or real threats to visitor safety have immediate impacts on a destination’s reputation and can dramatically affect visitation. If visitor safety and security is not well managed, adverse incidents can significantly impact on the profitability and sustainability of destination. If a tourist feels threatened or unsafe during a trip this may impact on length of stay and expenditure in a destination and decrease the likelihood of repeat visitation and word-of-mouth referrals. If a destination develops a negative image for visitor safety this will result in a declining visitor market for the region. Back in the 1970s, Goa’s beaches were almost reserved for the hippies and none of the locals even bothered interfering with them. The hippie culture was at its peak and there were not many reports of crimes against tourists. However, now the scene is different. There are several cases of sexual assault, most of which have gone unreported. The travel and tourism industry cannot avoid the negative impacts and consequences of these events. Recent events require further analysis of how travel safety may be improved in Goa state.

Objectives

1. To provide an informative picture of safety and security measures in Goa.
2. To examine the opinion of tourists with regards to safety issues in Goa.

Hypothesis

1. Tourists do not differ in their opinion about safety during Day time and Night time.

Research Methodology

The exploratory research design was based on survey method. The present study was based on survey method. The present paper was based on the feedback of 400 tourist visiting Goa. Structured questionnaire were used for collecting the data from the respondents. The secondary data has been collected through internet, books, newspaper, journals records and brochures. The tools used for the study were percentage analysis and Z-test for Significance of single proportion is used for testing hypothesis.
Data Analysis

Table 1 Safety of Tourist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Widely Available %</th>
<th>Available at Few Places %</th>
<th>Not Available %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do's and Don'ts</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>46 14.38</td>
<td>264 82.5</td>
<td>10 3.1</td>
<td>32 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International</td>
<td>17 21.25</td>
<td>59 73.75</td>
<td>4 5</td>
<td>80 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63 15.75</td>
<td>323 80.75</td>
<td>14 3.5</td>
<td>40 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Facilities</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>16 5</td>
<td>84 26.25</td>
<td>220 68.75</td>
<td>32 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International</td>
<td>3 3.75</td>
<td>29 36.25</td>
<td>48 60</td>
<td>80 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19 4.75</td>
<td>113 28.25</td>
<td>268 67</td>
<td>40 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Assistance</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>36 11.25</td>
<td>97 30.31</td>
<td>187 58.44</td>
<td>32 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International</td>
<td>15 18.75</td>
<td>21 26.25</td>
<td>44 55</td>
<td>80 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51 12.75</td>
<td>118 29.5</td>
<td>231 57.75</td>
<td>400 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Guards</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>249 77.81</td>
<td>67 20.94</td>
<td>4 1.25</td>
<td>320 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International</td>
<td>53 66.25</td>
<td>24 30</td>
<td>3 3.75</td>
<td>80 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>302 75.5</td>
<td>91 22.75</td>
<td>7 1.75</td>
<td>400 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Table 1 reveals that 82.5% Domestic tourist and 73.75% International tourist are of the opinion that Do's and Don'ts are available at few places. The survey reveals that 68.75% of the Domestic tourist and 60% of the international tourist found that medical facilities were not available. The table reveals that 58.44% Domestic tourist and 55% international tourist found that police assistance at tourist spots is not available. The table reveals that 77.81% Domestic tourists and 66.25% International tourists stated that life guards are widely available at various beaches of Goa.

Testing of Hypothesis

Safety in the Market

Table 2: Safety Moving about in the Market in the Day and Night

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Cannot Say</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Market</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>96.56</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>International</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>95.75</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Night</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>40.94</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>40.31</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>18.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>International</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26.25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>45.25</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>17.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Day time
Ho: The proportion of tourist feeling safe in the market during day time is \( p = 0.5 \).
H\(_1\): The proportion of tourist feeling safe in the market during day is \( p > 5 \).
One-sample test of proportion  

Variable | Mean  | Std. Err. | [95% Conf. Interval]  
--- | --- | --- | ---  
x | .9575 | .0100863 | .9377311 - .9772689  

Ho: proportion(x) = .5  
Ha: x < .5  
Ha: x != .5  
Ha: x > .5  
z = 18.300  
z = 18.300  
z = 18.300  
P < z = 1.0000  
P > |z| = 0.0000  
P > z = 0.0000  

From the results, the null hypothesis has been rejected and the alternative hypothesis that p > 0.5 has been accepted. Therefore the proportion of tourists opined that the safety at market is significant indicating that tourists feel secure at markets in the day time.

Night Time

Ho: The proportion of tourist feeling safe in the market during night time is p = 0.5.
H1: The proportion of tourist feeling safe in the market during night time is p < 5.

One-sample test of proportion  

Variable | Mean  | Std. Err. | [95% Conf. Interval]  
x | .4525 | .0248869 | .4037225 - .5012775  

Ho: proportion(x) = .5  
Ha: x < .5  
Ha: x != .5  
Ha: x > .5  
z = -1.900  
z = -1.900  
z = -1.900  
P < z = 0.0287  
P > |z| = 0.0574  
P > z = 0.9713  

From the results, the null hypothesis has been rejected and the alternative hypothesis that p < 0.5 has been accepted. Therefore the proportion of tourists opined that the safety at market is insignificant indicating that more safety is required.

Safety on the Beaches

| Factor | Time | Nationality | Yes | % | No | % | Cannot Say | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beaches | Day | Domestic | 304 | 95 | 13 | 4.06 | 3 | 0.94 |
| | | International | 76 | 95 | 3 | 3.75 | 1 | 1.25 |
| | Total | 380 | 95 | 16 | 4 | 4 | 1 |
| | Night | Domestic | 52 | 16.25 | 199 | 62.19 | 69 | 21.56 |
| | | International | 34 | 42.5 | 28 | 35 | 18 | 22.5 |
| | Total | 86 | 21.5 | 227 | 56.75 | 87 | 21.75 |

Day Time

Ho : The proportion of tourist feeling safe on the beaches during day time is p = 0.5.
H1 : The proportion of tourist feeling safe on the beaches during day is p > 5.

P < z = 1.0000  
P > |z| = 0.0000  
P > z = 0.0000  

One-sample test of proportion  

Variable | Mean  | Std. Err. | [95% Conf. Interval]  
x | .95 | .0108972 | .9286418 - .9713582  

Ho: proportion(x) = .5  
Ha: x < .5  
Ha: x != .5  
Ha: x > .5  
z = 18.000  
z = 18.000  
z = 18.000  
P < z = 1.0000  
P > |z| = 0.0000  
P > z = 0.0000
Here also the null hypothesis has been rejected and the alternative hypothesis that \( p > 0.5 \) has been accepted. Therefore, the proportion of tourists opined that the safety at beaches is insignificant indicating that they are secured in the day time.

**Night Time**

**Ho :** The proportion of tourist feeling safe on the beaches during night time is \( p = 0.5 \).

**H\( _1 \) :** The proportion of tourist feeling safe on the beaches during night is \( p < 5 \).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One-sample test of proportion</th>
<th>x: Number of obs = 400</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho: proportion(x) = .5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ha: x &lt; 0.5</td>
<td>Ha: x != 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z = -11.400</td>
<td>z = -11.400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P &lt; z = 0.0000</td>
<td>P &gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here the null hypothesis has been rejected and the alternative hypothesis that \( p < 0.5 \) has been accepted. Therefore the proportion of tourists opined that the safety at beaches is insignificant indicating that they are less secured.

**Safety for Entertainment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Safety Moving about for Entertainment in the Day and Night</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Day Time**

**Ho :** The proportion of tourist feeling safe at entertainment places during day time is \( p = 0.5 \).

**H\( _1 \) :** The proportion of tourist feeling safe at entertainment places during day is \( p > 5 \).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One-sample test of proportion</th>
<th>x: Number of obs = 400</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>.5925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho: proportion(x) = .5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ha: x &lt; .5</td>
<td>Ha: x != .5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z = 3.700</td>
<td>z = 3.700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P &lt;</td>
<td>z</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The calculated Z-value 3.7 is greater than the critical value of Z at 5% level of significance. Thus the null hypothesis has been rejected and the one sided i.e. right-tail has been accepted. Thus it is inferred that significant proportion of tourists are feeling secure at entertainment places in the day time.

**Night time**

**Ho :** The proportion of tourist feeling safe at entertainment places during night time is \( p = 0.5 \).

**H\( _1 \) :** The proportion of tourist feeling safe at entertainment places during night time is \( p < 5 \).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One-sample test of proportion</th>
<th>x: Number of obs = 400</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>.7725</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The calculated Z-value 10.9 is greater than the critical value of Z at 5% level of significance. Thus the null hypothesis has been rejected and the one-sided i.e. right-tail has been accepted. Thus it is inferred that significant proportion of tourists are feeling secure at entertainment places.

**Findings**

1. It is inferred that majority of tourist are of the opinion that Do's and Don'ts are available at few places.
2. It is inferred that majority of the tourist are of the opinion that medical facilities are not available.
3. It is inferred that majority of the tourist are of the opinion that police assistance at tourist spots is not available.
4. It is inferred that majority of the tourist found it safe to move about in the market during the day and night.
5. It is inferred that majority of tourist found it safe to move about on the beaches during the day. While domestic tourist find the beaches unsafe during the nights while international tourist finds it safe to be on the beaches during the night.
6. It is inferred that majority of tourist find it safe to participate in entertainment activities during the day and night.

**Suggestions**

1. Emphasis must be placed on the security of the entire tourism network, making tourist feel secure and safe is essential to the international competitiveness of the destination.
2. Safety and security of the life of the tourist should be an area of concern. The law enforcing agencies should be prompt, efficient and tactful in handling the cases related to safety and security of life of tourist.
3. The Department of Tourism needs to open good number of information booths at bus terminus, shopping complexes and busy commercial complexes. The tourist office should be kept open to all 24 hours.
4. In order to improve the qualities of facilities and make it accessible to tourist readily there is need of a helpline centres, which will be equipped with latest telecommunication equipments. Besides providing information these Help centres will also render emergency health services to the tourist, on the spot.
5. Setting up police booths at railways, airports, tourist destination, first aid facility at tourist spots, setting up a tourist grievance cell to speedily resolve of all authentic complaints.
6. Beaches in Goa should be covered under night patrolling where trained life guards will keep a close watch till early hours to intervene in case of emergency.
7. Formation of all women’s police force for night patrolling will instil confidence among women tourists and to intervene in emergency situation.

**Conclusions**

It is undeniable that the tourism industry has a right to defend itself as well as to have a legitimate expectation that the state will do all it can to ensure safety and security. It is, therefore, in the industry’s own interest to co-ordinate its efforts and co-operate fully with the other main partners, i.e. the government, law enforcement agencies and the wider community. It must recognise that when the environment is safe, the visitor is also safe and that if the travel and tourism industry emphasises security it will have a good chance of surviving.

In the aftermath of multiple incidents involving crimes against tourists in Goa and travel advisories issued by multiple countries against India, the Department of Tourism, Government of Goa has constituted strict measures to safeguard tourist safety, especially women travellers. The Tourism Minister is hopeful that these measures will help in controlling and preventing crimes against tourists remarkably. Different groups with stakes in Goa’s tourism should come together and act against the people responsible for the crimes; keeping in mind that tourism is Goa’s mainstay which attracts over a million visitors annually.

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