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TOLERANCE AND FLEXIBILITY AS CRUCIAL COMPETENCES OF MULTICULTURAL TEAM LEADER

MARTINA BLÁŠKOVÁ – RUDOLF BLÁŠKO

Abstract

The paper deals with the theme of culture and the desired profile of competences of multicultural team leader. The leader of that team must be a mature personality, a great expert in the field which is this team concerned with, and primarily, a great manager and leader. Based on questionnaire survey, realized under the auspices of International Academic Network Human Potential Development in Central and Eastern European Union Countries and realized also in other European countries, we decided to conduct this survey also in Slovakia. This one was performed at the end of 2014 in terms of 384 respondents (employees and managers of Slovak organizations). We consider for the key attributes of a multicultural team leader in particular these two competences: tolerance and flexibility. Appropriate application of tolerance and flexibility from the side of members and from the side of leader of multicultural team, and in addition, their creative connection could become an accelerator of continued success and dynamics of the team. Disposal of such teams and such leaders might enable the organizations to be even stronger, more powerful and more creative than ever.

Key words: culture, multicultural team, leader, tolerance, flexibility, survey.

1. Introduction

In the current period, not only questions on dynamics and turbulence of an environment, problems in coping with the consequences of financial crisis but above all the questions related to an incipient crisis of values and relationships come to the interest forefront of production and non-production organizations. *Cultures of individuals, groups, nations and of all mankind* have been experiencing a period of intense pressure that giving rise to inevitable changes. It is necessary to resist these pressures successfully and preserve cultures in their positive content, but at the same time, also desirably update them to meet the conditions of the 21st Century. Moreover, it is necessary to understand properly the content, characteristics and potentialities of cultures in a multinational environment.

Culture is the interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a human group's response to its environment (Hofstede, 2001) and determines the uniqueness of a human group in the same way personality determines the uniqueness of the individual (Ruehlman, Thompson, 2015, p. 117). Culture has come to mean the predominant system of beliefs and values held in the organization by its members (Cole, 1988, p. 183) and these ones unite the organization's members (Bazerman, 1986, p. 89). As reward systems, policies, and procedures are instituted, they impact culture by further specifying notions or appropriate behavior. Moreover, critical incidents, such as an employee's being rewarded or fired for pushing a major innovation, may add to individuals' perceptions of internal norms over time (Bartol, Martin, 1991, p. 103). This means, in an expansive sense, culture means not only aspects of ethnicity or race but also the norms, customs, and values associated with sexual orientation, gender, class, and professional identity (Hope et al., 2005, p. 75).

Culture is a pattern of basic assumptions – invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaption and internal integration – that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to these problems (Schein, 1985). Since community depends on trust, and trust in turn is culturally determined, it follows that spontaneous community will emerge in differing degrees in different cultures (Fukuyama,



EMERGENCY, DISASTER AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT MODELS IN TOURISM INDUSTRY

BRIGITA ZUROMSKAITE – ARVYDAS SURVILA – RUTA DACIULYTE

Abstract

In ever-changing world individuals, communities and societies continuously encounter plenty of threats which are posed or may be posed and which lead to extreme situations, emergencies and crises bringing a number of human losses, casualties, injuries and doing harm to the environment and buildings. In the modern economy and social life of many countries tourism plays a significant role, therefore, disasters may have a considerable impact on the provision of tourism services or on the entire tourism industry. It has been noticed that losses as a result of disasters are increasing and the number of people affected is rising. This leads to the growing interest in the tourism industry and tourists by scientists. Referring to the modern scientific understanding of disasters, emergency situations, and crises, the authors of the article analyse crisis management models in the sector of tourism. It should be noted that many models emphasise the constituent of human resource development and learning of the entire organisation which is seen as an important factor to both avoid emergencies, disasters and crisis in tourism, and to successfully manage crises. The major result of the article is the theoretical model for research of crisis management in the Lithuanian tourism industry.

Key words: tourism industry, emergency, disaster, crisis management, crisis management models.

1. Introduction

The modern tourism industry takes an important role in the economy and social life of many countries and in the world on the whole. On the other hand, critical situations with a wide range of effect are encountered all the time on a worldwide scale. The tourism industry is in particular related to the risk which emerges due to the threats existing in a certain location and at a certain time and which has been affected by numerous crises and disasters (Santana, 2004). Tourists travel either to foreign countries where they usually stay for at least one night or in their own country crossing the borders of their common living location. Most often travelling people use the infrastructure of a foreign or their own country, take advantage of provided different services, stay in places designated for this purpose. However, for the reason of certain events which may take place in another country, region or within their own native country and can cause catastrophic outcomes, the provision of particular services of the tourism sector may be briefly suspended or even have after-effects on the entire tourism industry. In the second half of the 20th century, international tourism became one of the largest and fastest developing industries (Pender, Sharpley, 2008, p. 331). The flows of tourists increase annually; in addition, the geography of travels is also expanding. There is a trend emerging that tourists find the exotic destinations of travels attractive; such trips, however, involve a higher level of risk.

The aim of the article is to: 1) examine the scientific perception of disasters, crisis and emergency situations in the context of tourism industry; 2) analyse and compare crisis management model in the sector of tourism; 3) suggest a theoretical model for research of crisis management in the Lithuanian tourism industry. Used methods are as follows: theoretical and data analysis, comparative analysis, modelling.

2. Scientific Perception of Emergency Situation, Disaster and Crisis

Individuals, communities and societies face an indefinite number of threats in their daily routine but actually the amount of these hazards is very limited as their effect depends on our genetics, movement in space, dwellings, activities, geographical location and coincidence.



Hazard means an event or physical conditions that have the potential to cause fatalities, injuries, damage to property, environmental degradation, interruption of business, or other types of harm or loss (FEMA, 1997). Literature on disaster management usually classifies threats into three types: (1) natural; (2) technological; and (3) intentional.

Different types of threats and their examples are provided in Table 1. Physical or geographical location defines what natural threats we might encounter. Natural hazards are often termed as the 'Acts of God'. Economic, industrial, social and political factors describe the origin of the hazards created by man. Technological hazards are the negative consequences of human innovation that can result in the harm or destruction of life, property, or the environment (Coppola, 2007, p. 80). Intentional hazards include those hazards that exist not due to accident or „act of God“, but as a result of the conscious decision of man act in an antisocial or anti-establishment manner (Coppola, 2007, p. 96).

Table 1. Hazards: Types and Examples (according to Coppola, 2007; 2011)

Hazard type	Hazards	Name of Hazard
Natural	Natural phenomena beneath the Earth's surface	earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions;
	Topographical phenomena	landslides, avalanches;
	Meteorological/hydrological phenomena	windstorms (cyclones, typhoons, hurricanes), tornadoes, hailstorms and snowstorms, sea surges, floods, droughts, heat waves/cold waves;
	Biological phenomena	human epidemics, infestations (locust swarms, mealy bug), epidemics (cholera, dengue, Ebola, malaria, measles, meningitis, yellow fever, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis), livestock or animal epidemics, plant and agricultural epidemics, animal attacks;
Technological	Transportation	transportation system accidents, airline accidents (air) roadway accidents (land), rail accidents (land), maritime accidents (sea);
	Infrastructure	power failures, telecommunication systems failures, computer network failures, critical water or sewer system failures, gas distribution line breaks, dam failure, food shortage, overburdened public health facilities, economic failure;
	Industrial	hazardous materials processing and storage accidents, explosion or fire (including military installations);
	Structural fires and failures row materials extraction accidents	
Intentional	Terrorism	terror act using conventional explosives, biological agents, chemical agents, nuclear and radiological weapons, cyberterrorism, narcoterrorism;
	Crowd incidents	protests, strikes, rioting, stampedes;
	Crime	
	War	

The mere existence of threats does not pose any danger; the danger lies in the magnitude of the potential loss and the probability the specific loss will happen. Disasters are non-routine events in societies or their larger subsystems (e.g., regions and communities) that involve conjunctions of physical conditions with social definitions of human harm and social disruption (Kreps, 2001, p. 3718). The notion of 'non-routine events' distinguishes emergencies from other daily problems and troubles as unusual and dramatic events. The



reference to 'physical conditions' and social concepts means that each of them individually is necessary and it is enough to have both of them to result in an emergency at a certain time in a certain place. The description 'in societies or their larger subsystems' implicates that damage to human-being and social disturbance are relevant to larger social systems. Globalisation, accessibility to international communication, global climate change – all these factors – facilitate the spread of hazards in a vast territory.

Committee on Disaster Research in the Social Sciences of National Research Council of the National Academies of the USA describes disaster as causing changes in physical effects and dangerous social changes – both small and big inclusively, and closely related to the dynamics of various changes (National Research Council [U.S.], 2006, p. 15).

Disaster is defined as an extraordinary event causing considerable damage to human resources and property and which notably exceeds the available capabilities to recover. Despite the fact that scientists disagree on a single universal definition of disaster, Quarantelli (1998) suggested a comprehensive definition which is substantiated by generally accepted component of disaster, i.e. negative outcome, disturbance of ordinary daily life on a collective level. According to Quarantelli, disasters are events caused either by the manifestation of a threat or by the effect of the aftermath of sudden natural or technological factors (for instance, earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, tornadoes and tsunamis, also spills of toxic substances, radiation, large scale explosions and fires, collapse of buildings, major accidents, etc.) which causes negative social outcomes. In principle, we include only those cases where daily life of a community is affected and where the resulting situation is impossible to control by means of local resources.

The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) suggests viewing disaster as a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources (UNISDR, 2004, p. 17).

Such definition focuses on the immeasurable losses caused by disasters, which vary with regional location, climate, and the degree of vulnerability. For a disaster to be considered under the database of the UN's International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), at least one of the following features must be met:

- A report of 10 or more people killed;
- A report of 100 people affected;
- A declaration of a state of emergency by the relevant government; and
- A request by the national government for international assistance.

Disasters may cause cultural, social, economic and psychological outcomes in terms of individual and communities. The extent of manifestation of threats is usually characterised by the number of casualties, number of people affected and the total loss/damage is measured in monetary units (Table 2 and Table 3)

Table 2 and Table 3 illustrate the extent of disasters having taken place on the continent of Europe in recent years. Numbers listed in the tables do not show the direct link between the effect of disasters and the tourism sector, however, it is clear that both natural disasters and major technological accidents, directly and indirectly, affect the performance of the tourism industry.



Table 2. Examples of great natural disasters in Europe in 2010 – 2014 (www.em-dat.net)

Date	Hazard type	Country	Total deaths	Total affected	Damage ('000 US \$)
2010	Earthquake	Serbia	2	27030	132260
2010	Storm	Belgium	1		160000
2010	Storm	France	53	500079	4230000
2010	Storm	Germany	4		10000000
2010	Heat wave	Russia	55736		4000000
2010	Wild fire	Russia	53	5996	1800000
2010	Earthquake	Iceland			
2011	Storm	Belgium	5	71	99000
2011	Earthquake	Spain	10	15300	132260
2012	Cold wave	Romania	86	7539	
2012	Cold wave	Serbia	9	18234	
2012	Drought	Italy		5800	4020000
2012	Storm	Poland	1	310	5900
2012	Earthquake	Italy	7	11050	1580000
2013	Storm	Switzerland		84	250000
2013	Storm	Germany	4		4800000
2013	Storm	Portugal	1	3967	
2014	Flood	United Kingdom	2	600	1500000
2014	Flood	Serbia	51	16000000	217255
2014	Storm	United Kingdom	5	18000	100000

Table 3. Examples of major technological accidents in Europe in 2010 – 2014 (www.em-dat.net)

Date	Hazard type	Country	Total deaths	Total affected	Damage ('000 US \$)
2010	Industrial accident (chemical spill)	Hungary	9	7270	103000
2010	Transport accident (rail)	Belgium	18	171	
2010	Industrial accident (explosion)	Russia	106	129	
2011	Transport accident (water)	Italy	150	48	
2011	Transport accident (water)	Russia	130	80	
2012	Transport accident (rail)	Netherlands	1	117	
2012	Transport accident (rail)	Poland	16	60	
2013	Transport accident (rail)	Spain	79	140	138000
2013	Transport accident (water)	Italy	50	200	
2013	Transport accident (rail)	France	6	192	
2014	Transport accident (road)	Germany	11	69	

Global fatalities from acts of terrorism in 2014 have risen 30% compared to the previous five year average. Globally were recorded 18,668 fatalities in the 12 months prior to July 1st, up 29.3% from an annual average of 14,433 for the previous five years. Over the same period was recorded 9,471 attacks at an average of 26 a day, down from a five year average of 10,468, revealing that terrorist methods have become increasingly deadly over the last year (Table 4), (Maplecroft, 2014).



Table 4. Top 12 countries ranked by terrorism Risk, 2014 (Maplecroft, 2014)

Rank	Country
1	Iraq
2	Afghanistan
3	Pakistan
4	Somalia
5	Nigeria
6	Yemen
7	Syria
8	Philippines
9	Lebanon
10	Libya
11	Colombia
12	Kenya

The UNDP (2004) notes that disaster losses are increasing and the number of people affected by disasters is rising. Disaster losses occur on all levels, from individual household losses associated with everyday environmental hazards to losses due to exceptional catastrophic events, such as major earthquakes and cyclones that can affect entire regions. Seen from a local perspective, all these losses would be relevant and important. From a global perspective, most local level disasters are effectively invisible. Worldwide, for every person killed, around 3,000 people are exposed to natural hazards. This scale of impact fits more intuitively with the order of magnitude one might expect from disaster.

As may be seen, disasters are caused by certain events of physical conditions and their characteristic feature is that the affected community or society has no sufficient capabilities to cope with them. According to their scale emergencies are events that need a professional response from people who are specially trained and equipped to cope with them. Emergency situation is a situation resulting due to extreme event which may pose a sudden and huge danger to people's lives or health, property, environment or people's death, injuries or do any other harm (The Law on Civil Protection of the Republic of Lithuania, 2009). Most emergencies are relatively minor events that can be dealt with in a routine way using resources that are normally available. It is evident that not all emergencies are disasters, but all disasters are emergencies, as the latter is a much broader and less restrictive term (Penuel, Statler, Hagen, 2013, p. 323).

A crisis is a crucial and unstable state of affairs with a possibility to bring about a decisive change. In a more general sense, a crisis is mostly an abrupt and unexpected negative change creating a critical, dangerous, and unstable situation at the individual, group, organization, or community level. (Penuel, Statler, Hagen, 2013, p. 186).

In many countries of the world disaster management systems are similar, the main difference, however, is the capabilities a country has to cope with consequences. It has been noticed that poor countries are disproportionately affected by disaster consequences. Given that most catastrophic impacts in any particular area tend to be repetitive, disaster is conceptualised in terms of a cycle, which broadly distinguishes times of quiescence, in which preparations are made for the next event, and times of action, in which emergencies are managed. The full cycle involves:

- Mitigation, the process of reducing risks and hazards;
- Preparation for impending impacts (including such activities as warning and evacuation);
- Management of, or response to, the emergency phase;



- Recovery or restoration of major human and infrastructural systems; and
- Reconstruction of damaged buildings and structures (Alexander, 2004).

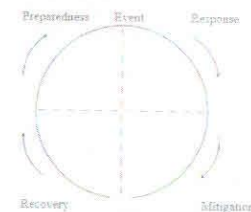


Figure 1. The disaster management cycle (O'Brien et. al, 2010)

The mitigation function, sometimes called prevention or risk reduction, is considered as the critical stage of management of disasters and emergencies. Meanwhile, the three other components of the disaster management cycle (preparedness, response and recovery) are carried out either as response to threats or as foreseeing their outcomes. The measures of mitigation are intended to reduce the possibility and the outcomes of the risk of threat before any disaster happens.

Every threat has unique capabilities of mitigation measures which are characteristic specifically to it. Managers can choose those which are already developed and tested. Every such possibility/capability is related to costs, the limits of its application and expectations to actually reduce the risk. The methods selected to reduce the risk depend on financial resources, likely social and physical outcomes, geographical environment in which the measure is to be applied.

The preparedness function provides the people who may be affected by a disaster with tools which increase the possibility to protect oneself, one's property, reduce financial losses and help others. Preparedness for disasters is defined as actions which are taken before a disaster occurs so as to ensure adequate response to its effect to restore its outcomes and which is performed to reduce the need for 'last minute' actions.

By means of preparedness and mitigation processes individuals, communities and countries aim at reducing the vulnerability to threat and in this way increase their resilience to disasters. Unfortunately, regardless of the best prepared emergency management plans, the most complex preparedness programmes and the most effective mitigation measures, emergencies arise every day, every year.

When a threat is presented, individuals, communities and countries must initiate the actions of response to emergency using their limited resources, financing, capabilities and time so as to prevent any catastrophe. Usually the scale of extreme situations determines the extent of responsive actions. The function of response of management of disasters is intended to perform actions which would limit the number of injured or casualties and the damage to property and environment, and they are employed before an emergency, during it or immediately afterwards. The process of response commences right away after it becomes clear that an emergency is inevitable and takes until its end is declared.

The recovery function involves the return of the injured and affected back to the 'normal' condition after the effect of the outcomes of a disaster. The recovery stage usually starts after the phase of response and might last for months and years. Recovery is a function



during which countries, communities, families and individuals repair and restore what was lost or damaged during the disaster and at the same time reduce the risk of similar situation in the future (Coppola, 2011)

3. Effect of Disasters, Crisis and Emergency Situations on the Tourism Industry

The changing travelling fashions and travel motives prompt tourists to not only travel more often but also to choose untraditional routes of trips. However, there is also a 'dark' side of this phenomenon. Tourists increasingly often become the victims of terrorists and hostages of radical groups (Pawlicz, 2012, p. 157). Moreover, as they decide to travel to the regions which are not adjusted for the tourists' needs, tourists also encounter other threats and risks.

Scientific research related to the effect of crisis, disasters and emergency situations on tourism may be grouped into two phases. Articles written and surveys carried out before 2000 mostly focus on the impact of terrorism on tourism. Meanwhile, writings of scientists from different countries dating from the year 2000 more often analyse and discuss the subject of the effect of crisis, disasters and emergency situations on tourism (Pawlicz, 2012, p. 157).

Tourism development largely depends on external threats (Batorski, 2013, p. 71). Regardless of its scope, impact and outcomes, any crisis has a considerable effect on the sector of tourism (Pawlicz, 2012, p. 157).

Scientists have noticed that the events of the last few decades have determined drastic reductions in tourist flows (in the 20th century, the number of tourists reduced considerably twice – in 1982 and 2001) and lead to 'unpopularity' of certain travel directions. Global economic situation is not the only factor determining such falls; political and natural events also play an important role.

As stated by L. Pender and R. Sharpley (2008), natural, economic and political events have had a huge effect on the development of regional and national tourism industry of certain countries. Besides, terrorism has more than once affected the development of tourism and has prompted certain countries to review their readiness to making decision and taking actions in critical situations. It is worth remembering the 9/11 events in New York or the events of October 2002 in Bali (Pender, Sharpley, 2008, p. 332). Meanwhile, in the period from 2008 to 2010, economic situation had a big effect on the sector of tourism (Zdon-Korzeniewska, Rachwał, p. 117).

There are many more similar examples. Nevertheless, it is necessary to emphasise that the recent few years have seen such situations more frequently and the scale of such incidents has increased. Below are the factors listed which have a big effect on the development and expansion of the tourism industry:

- Deterioration of economic situation which affects tourist flows and their decreasing purchasing power;
- Natural disasters which negatively affect the tourism infrastructure and limit the provision of tourism services. Besides, they negatively affect the degree of popularity of the tourism region among tourists;
- Prolonged unfavourable weather conditions (during the season, in particular):
 - ~ Hotel reservations cancelled;
 - ~ Travel duration shortened;
 - ~ Decreasing popularity of the tourism region among 'last minute' tourists;
- Industrial disasters (e.g., duration of trips shortens due to high air pollution);
- Terrorism;
- Epidemics and pandemics (Panasiuk, 2013, pp. 26–27).

Santana (2004, p. 301) notes that there are many new factors leading to crisis in tourism. He provides clusters of crisis typologies in tourism generating them in the axes in terms of



their origin (Socio – Economic and Nature/Technological) and their severity (Severe – Normal), (Figure 2). In addition, the author points out that these clusters may affect each other, e.g., majority of technological accidents may also determine natural disasters. Besides, crises may change in terms of their progress and become severe instead of normal.

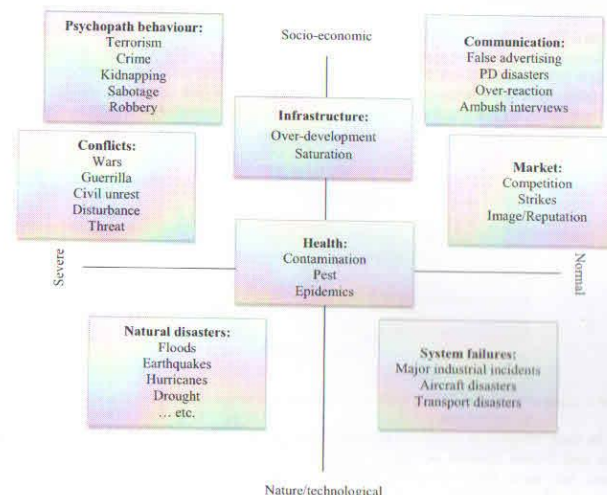


Figure 2. Framework of Generic Causes of Crises in Tourism (Santana, 2004, p. 301)

It should be stressed that lately several types of catastrophes have been faced at a time. One of such cases was recorded in Japan¹, when at the same time there was an earthquake, a tsunami, an accident in a nuclear power plant taking place, and logistics-related problems encountered (Krawczyk, 2013, p. 169).

4. Crisis Management Models in Tourism

Research and practical literature of tourism present quite a wide variety of crisis management models. In their discussion of research on crisis management in tourism Paraskevas et al. (2013, p. 3) cover several prevailing directions as follows: 1) on crisis and post-crisis communication involving the interrelationships between both internal and external stakeholders and the social control of organizations; 2) proposal different models for the development of crises.

¹ Since 1947, legislation related to the management of crises and emergency situations have been continuously reviewed and updated in Japan. There is an operation plan worked out and a communication system in case of a crisis/catastrophe.

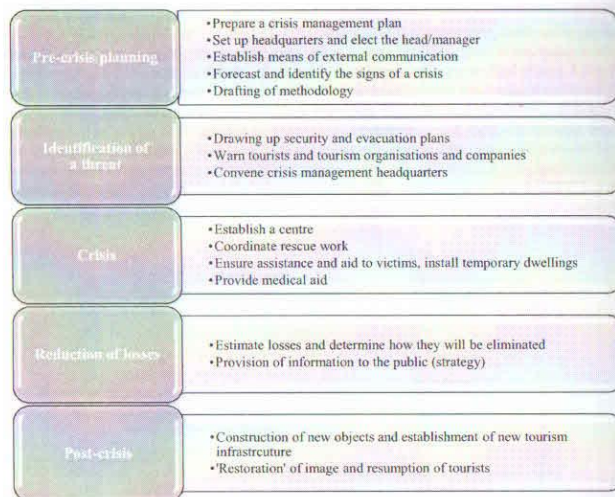


Figure 5. Crisis management model in tourism (Pender, Sharpley, 2008, p. 344)

In analysing crisis management model in the sector of tourism, it is relevant to take into consideration operational definitions (Figure 6), (Santana, 1999, quoted according to Santana, 2004, p. 309), to analyse integrated management processes on strategic, organizational, operational and stakeholders level. As aforementioned, the constituent of learning and training of human resources of organisations and of the public is very important. Santana (2004) points out that scientific literature often examines general outcomes of crises and catastrophes, however, it forgets to assess that these situations affect the functioning of the tourism business. Given the importance of the tourism industry to economy, in modelling crisis management the strategic level and consideration of preparation for critical situations in this field by national and local governments should be emphasised, however, no less attention should be paid to organisations as the preparation of each individual organisation is equally important (Pennington-Gray et al., 2011, p. 312). Meanwhile, preparation for crisis management in tourism on the level of organisations has been least analysed. Organisations have to be ready to help tourists; tourism destination managers should have crisis and disaster management competency and have to be prepared for the management of likely incidents. Such preparation/readiness is needed on all levels: planning, response, restoration after a disaster (Pennington-Gray et al., 2011, p. 313). Even managers of small tourism companies are often forced take certain actions on their own and without any preparation (Pender, Sharpley, 2008, p. 332).

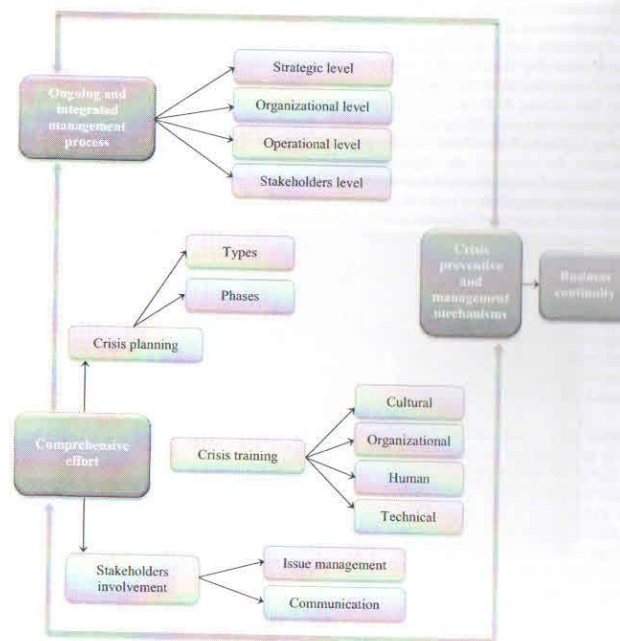


Figure 6. Operational Definition of Crisis Management (Santana, 2004, p. 309)

It is of paramount importance to make sure that every person knows his/her action plan and is capable of acting effectively under the circumstances of crisis. Therefore, every company should have a risk management action plan and an 'accident plan' (Kurleto, 2013, p. 62; Pennington-Gray et al., 2011, p. 313). This plan is an important part of the preparation phase and has to include organising of a crisis management team; it shall be also foreseen how the tourism related industries will be alerted about the existence of such plan and team, and what corresponding health and safety procedures are planned. When providing for the response to an emergency phase it is important to define communication procedures, the assessment of travellers' status and the provision of help to individuals and families. The restoration phase shall cover the procedures for how to return to the normal situation, implement business continuation plan, resolve human resources related problems, and analyse as well as measure and discuss the actions of every stakeholder (Pennington-Gray et al., 2011, p. 313). It shall, however, be emphasised that standard procedures do not always prove out,



and the responsible persons may be forced to make snap decisions (Pawlicz, 2012, p. 161); therefore, the level of readiness should be taken into account and the learning definition is then of particular importance. Organisations should become learning organisations in the field of preparation for disasters and crisis management. The ways of learning may be very different, including distance learning as many tourism organisations have remote agencies (Pforr, Pete, Hosie, 2008, p. 259). Moreover, an important factor is whether an organisation has experience in crisis management, whether a corresponding organisational culture is being developed. Pforr, Pete, Hosie (2008, p. 260) suggest the following indicators for the preparation for crisis in an organisation: 1) existence of crisis management plan; 2) information and communication management; 3) human resource development; 4) efficiency and organisational culture.

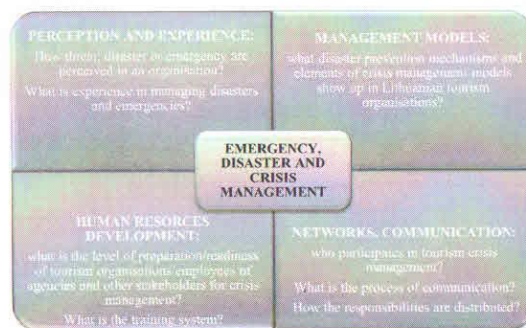


Figure 7. Emergency, Disasters and Crisis management in the Lithuanian tourism industry research model (own study)

It should be admitted that Lithuania has so far lacked crisis management research, the tourism sector including. The authors failed to find an effective crisis management plan in the tourism industry. There has been no research published on the readiness and level of preparation of organisations in the Lithuanian tourism sector in terms of crisis management. It is, therefore, difficult to define the interaction between the stakeholders of the sector in case of crises. It would be then reasonable to find out in further studies (Figure 7) how the notions of emergency, disaster and crisis are perceived in the Lithuanian tourism organisations, what experience the managers of organisations have, what the components of crisis management models are characteristic of Lithuanian tourism organisations and whether any learning process is taking place in the sector of tourism in the context of crisis management.

5. Conclusions

In their daily activities individuals, communities and societies face a number of threats. Travelling abroad or within their own country, tourists are continuously exposed to a certain likelihood of danger, regardless of whether they are aware of that or not, and are the object of potential effect and outcomes of hazards. How much the provision of tourism services and the entire tourism sector will be affected by hazards depends on geographical location, events or



physical conditions which develop in the space of movement, on the places tourists stay, on their activities and on a mere coincidence. Threats we most often encounter are usually grouped into three types, namely, natural, technological and intentional.

Threats may arise and cause catastrophic outcomes when certain events or physical conditions develop in a specific region, the point of destination of travel or in one's native country. Such situations are called disasters, emergencies and crises. It is evident that not all emergencies are disasters, but all disasters are emergencies, as the latter is a much broader and less restrictive term. A crisis is a crucial and unstable state of affairs with a possibility to bring about a decisive change.

Emergencies can lead to cultural, social, economic and psychological outcomes and affect individuals and communities. The extent of such outcomes is measured by the number of casualties, the number of people affected and the general damage (loss) caused is estimated by means of monetary units. The main global trends in terms of the effect of emergencies demonstrate that the number of people affected by disaster is rising, disasters are becoming less deadly and more costly, poor countries are more affected by disaster's consequences.

Many countries worldwide have similar emergency management systems which differ in their capabilities to cope with the outcomes of emergencies. Nevertheless, from the modern point of view, the full cycle of emergency management involves: mitigation, the process of reducing risks and hazards; preparation for impending impacts (including such activities as warning and evacuation); management of, or response to, the emergency phase; recovery or restoration of major human and infrastructural systems; and reconstruction of damaged buildings and structures.

The sector of tourism has been seeing the increase in emergency and disaster. Furthermore, globalisation and the increasing tourist mobility result in the widening of the spectrum of threats and the growth of the danger they pose. It should be emphasised that the increase in frequency and recurrence of emergency and disaster adjust the choice of tourist routes and the popularity of certain destinations. The growing effects of emergency and disaster have determined a great interest in the tourism industry and tourists by scientists. In the practice of tourism sector, classical MPRR or PPRR four-stage models are popular; scientific literature, however, analyses a wide variety of models and stresses problematic aspects as well as presents different indicators. It should be noted that many models emphasise the constituent of human resource development and learning of the entire organisation which is seen as an important factor to both avoid emergencies, disasters and crises in tourism and to successfully manage crises. Moreover, there is a lack of research on crisis management in tourism on organisational level, meanwhile, the preparation and readiness of organisations and their effective participation are recognised as a significant factor in effective crisis management.

For the meantime, Lithuania has no practical model for crisis management in tourism; there is also a shortage of scientific research in this field. For this reason, systematic research should be carried out involving legal databases, preparation of the public sector and tourism business organisations for emergencies. It would be reasonable to find out how Lithuanian tourism organisations perceive the notions of emergency, disaster and crisis, what experience managers of such organisations have, what crisis management models are typical in Lithuanian tourism organisations and how human resources are developed in terms of crisis management in the tourism industry.



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 - ❖ *new challenges in the development of human potential and human resources management* (confrontation of human potential and human capital, creating added value through people, the possibility of human potential measurement and appraisal, investment in human potential or capital, leadership, competence management, motivation of human potential, social media and information-communication technology in the human potential development, human potential and human resources in an era of recovering from global recession and social crisis);
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