Title  Evaluating Security Image of the Middle East as Perceived by Travel Intermediaries

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EVALUATING SECURITY IMAGE OF THE MIDDLE EAST AS PERCEIVED BY TRAVEL INTERMEDIARIES

INGY ABDEL KADER SHAABAN, MBA

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE

2006
DECLARATION

I declare that this work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted for any other degree. I further declare that this thesis is the result of my own independent work and investigation, except where otherwise stated. Finally, I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted to be available for photocopying and for interlibrary loan, and for the title abstract to be made available to outside organisations.

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Professor Peter Mason (Supervisor)
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Alexandria, September 2006

Ingy Shaaban
ABSTRACT

An analysis of literature on security issues and its effect on destination image suggests that to date little research has been done on the specific issue of the security image of the Middle East destinations, particularly as perceived by travel intermediaries. In this context, and due to the current situation of the Middle East, especially the Islamic countries, this research is a response to the urgent need to investigate and evaluate the safety and security perceptions, attitudes and behaviours of travel intermediaries towards Middle East destinations, and also seeks to compare between such perceptions, attitudes and behaviours of travel intermediaries based in the region and those of travel intermediaries based outside the region.

This research may be described as phenomenological research that employed qualitative research tools. As a result of this perspective, the development of research methods is geared toward qualitative methods of study. The phenomenological approach employs qualitative research tools to interpret meaning from the reactions of individuals to experiences of dealing with Middle East destinations. Therefore, the present study adopts, as a primary method of data collection, interviewing of individuals representing the travel intermediaries in UK and Egypt.

Results from the evaluation of the Middle East security image held by travel intermediaries showed that the Middle East is mostly positively perceived by majority of travel intermediaries despite the security problems that might occur in some of its destinations. Also it was made very clear that each destination in the Middle East is sold and promoted separately based on its unique image and identity as presented by travel intermediaries and not as apart of the Middle East.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Tourism is an industry, which is characterized by its sensitivity to global changes and its ever-increasing competitive nature, which requires tourists' destinations to develop an effective marketing strategy (Baloglu and Mangaloglu 1999). Destinations mainly compete based on their perceived images relative to their competitors in the market place. Therefore, destination marketers need a sound understanding of travellers' images of their own destination as well as their images of other competitive destinations (Baloglu and McCleary 1999).

Since tourism is sensitive to changes that might happen in the world, no tourism policy maker can afford the negative impacts of political instability, or high levels of crime and violence that can cause damage to the image of a given area as a tourist destination (Seddigghi et al. 2002). Therefore, international destination marketers must concentrate on the safety element as one of the key features of a destination's image, where it can be uniquely positioned in comparison to other destinations (Leisen 2001).

The impact of the safety element in tourism does not only affect the individual tourist and the destination, but also affects the company, which organizes the trip and the one that sells it, namely tour operators and travel agents (Sonmez 1998). Therefore, travel intermediaries (tour operators and travel agents) play a vital role in creating the image of destinations and can significantly influence international tourists' flows to a country hit by safety or security risks.

The crisis behaviour of travel intermediaries towards the destination primarily depends on the type of crisis, its dimensions, its predicted length, its consequences in the receiving country, the tour operator's own business
interests there and the decisions taken by the governments of the generating countries (Cavlek 2002). For example, tourism collided fatally with terrorism in Egypt when a gunman massacred 18 Greek pilgrims outside a hotel in Cairo in 1996. The foreign office warned British holidaymakers that security could not be guaranteed for their clients if they travelled to Egypt (Independent, April 19, 1996). Similar terrorists' attacks such as the one in Luxor, Egypt in 1997 resulted in dramatically decreasing the tourists' flows to Egypt (WTO 2002 on tourism after 11th of September).

Cavlek (2002) has commented that tour operators always try to diminish the safety or security hazards that their clients could face. Therefore, they have to decide whether to include destinations with different kinds of risks in their programs. As such, they influence the way a particular destination is viewed, because their practices affect the attitude of potential tourists (Cavlek 2002).

This research aims to explore how travel intermediaries perceive safety under the current circumstances in the Middle East and how such perceptions may affect the growth of tourism in the destinations of that region. It also discusses needed crisis management measures that will be appropriate for maintaining the safety image of a destination.

1.2 Literature Background and Context of the Study

Seaton (1996) argued that a destination is not just a physical entity, but is also what is thought to exist, a mental concept in the minds of tourists and potential tourists. This is why the concept of destination image is an essential concept. According to Fakeye and Crompton (1991), destinations with positive images can be expected to prosper while those with less favourable images may never achieve their fullest tourism potential. Accordingly it seems that travellers use images and perceptions of destinations to form their destinations awareness sets.
Buckly and Klemm (1993) assert that any security problem would create an unfavourable image that is spread across the world, so that even those who are not afraid, will be discouraged from taking a holiday in a destination with security problem. It is not so much that the area is dangerous as that it does not look attractive. This is the problem currently facing the Middle East region as a result of the prevailing conditions of political unrest, especially in Israel, Palestine and Iraq, which affect not only their image but may also affect the image of their neighbouring countries. Therefore, the problem of the research lies on investigating the current security image of the Middle East region and its destinations as held by travel intermediaries; as travel intermediaries are considered one of the important factors that shape destination image (Gartner, 1993; Gartner and Bachri, 1994). It is also important to note that little research has been done on the security image of a destination as perceived by travel intermediaries.

Therefore the literature of the study includes: destination image and its importance; safety issues and their effect on destination image; travel intermediaries and their role on destination selection process.

1.2.1 Destination image and its importance

For the past two decades, researchers have demonstrated that image is a valuable concept in understanding the destination selection process of tourists. Several studies concentrated on the relationship between destination image and destination choice (Baloglu and McCleary 1999; Santana 2001; Sirgy and Su 2000). Positive images of destination help decision makers construct awareness and act as differentiating factors among competing destinations. Consequently, it is believed that success or failure of many destinations depends on images held by potential tourists and the effective management of those images by the destination (Sirgy and Su 2000).

Image formation and change have been widely discussed by researchers (Chen and Hsu 2000; Crompton 1979; Gartner 1996; Gunn 1972; Sirakaya et al. 2001;
Sirgy and Su (2000). Gunn (1972) argued that images are developed at two levels: organic and induced. The organic image is developed because of actual experience or visitation or through non-commercial sources (books; articles in newspapers; documentaries) and the induced image is developed through commercial sources (brochures; advertisements).

Gartner (1996) in his continuum suggested that different types of information and their level of credibility, cost and market penetration are all influential in image formation. Accordingly he classified image into:

1. Overt Induced I (traditional forms of advertising)
2. Overt Induced II (information requested from travel intermediaries)
3. Covert Induced I (celebrity spokesperson's recommendations)
4. Covert Induced II (reports, stories, articles about a destination)
5. Autonomous (independent information such as news and movies)
6. Unsolicited organic (unsought information from friends and colleagues)
7. Solicited organic (friends, relatives, word of mouth)

Gartner (1996) related image to attitude. He argued that three distinctly different but hierarchically interrelated components form images: cognitive, affective and conative. Cognitive images refer to intellectual evaluations of known attributes of destinations, affective images are emotional and related to individual's motives in destination selection, and conative images are considered a result of cognitive and affective images.

Gallerza, Saura and Garcia (2002) argued that the image formation process is critical to tourism marketing, promotion and development. In their model they show the strategic importance of destination image and demonstrate that there
are four features that identify and describe the image construct. These features are:

1. Complex nature; whose comprehension has more than one meaning.
2. Multiple in elements and processes.
3. Relativistic; which means subjective and comparative.
4. Dynamic or varying according to time and space factors.

Numerous empirical studies on destination image in different parts of the world have been conducted in an attempt to identify variables in consumer choice models. Pike (2002) in his review of 142 papers in the destination image literature from the period of 1973-2000; found that the most popular region for study was North America, followed by UK and Europe, Asia, Australasia, Africa, Central America/Caribbean, South Pacific and South America. Over half of the papers he reviewed measured the perceptions of only one destination, without a frame reference to any competing destinations. Therefore, the proposed research in its focus of the Middle East opens up a new geographical area for study, which has been ignored in the past. Moreover, it will include a comparative dimension since the study will focus on the destination images of those individual countries that are perceived to constitute the Middle East.

1.2.2 Safety issues and their effect on destination image

Among the various elements that form a destination image is the safety element. Such element is the primary condition for the normal tourism development of a destination, region or country and thus the basic determinant of its growth. Without that element destinations cannot successfully compete on the generating markets, even if they have the best quality of natural and built attractions (Cavlek 2002).

Tourist flow to any destination is affected by crises, disasters and crimes. Crises are distinguished from disasters as they have their origins in planning and
management deficiencies and in this sense they are self-inflicted. On the other hand, disasters are triggered by events over which the victim has little control and their impacts are therefore, to some degree unavoidable. However, the distinction between crises and disasters is often somewhat blurred and it is for that reason suggested that they represent opposite poles of the continuum, rather than a dichotomy (Faulkner 2001). Crimes also have proven to be one of the deterrents to tourism especially in the developing countries, because news of deteriorating law and order situation in destination countries is often disseminated to potential tourists in source countries (Levantis and Gani 2000).

Any kind of disaster can turn tourism flows away from destinations, but political instability has a much greater negative psychological effect on potential tourists than others (Pizam and Mansfeld 1996). Hall (1994) has suggested that political instability has different dimensions that can be identified within international tourism such as, terrorism, political and social unrest, riots, strikes and international wars. Therefore, political instability is a multi-dimensional concept and each dimension has a different magnitude and impact on a tourism industry (Seddighi, Theocharous and Nutall 2002).

Wars, as discussed by Vuconic (1997) have negative impacts on tourism flows to destinations in the area of conflict and redirecting them to other safer destinations. What happened during the Persian Gulf War is a case in point, as the Middle East destinations suffered an acute drop in the number of tourists. Also the Gulf war in 1991 triggered a significant slow down in the growth of tourism (WTO Commission for the Middle East, 1998). Therefore, it is clear that tourists usually avoid visiting areas involved in conflicts and those perceived as being close.

Similarly terrorists' attacks had severe negative effect on tourists' flows to destinations hit by terrorism, such as the one in Luxor, Egypt in 1997, which resulted in dramatically decreasing the tourists flow to Egypt (WTO 2002 on tourism after 11th of September). It is argued by Aziz (1995) that, terrorism is an
indicator of a problem rather than being a problem in itself. She attributed this violence to irresponsible governmental policies, as the attackers use violence against tourists as a way of showing their resentment to the government and their opposition to its policies. Therefore, she suggested that governments should seek the real problems responsible for the terrorist attacks and try to solve them.

The existence of political instability on a regional level could lead to a negative effect on tourism industry of a nearby region/country (spill-over effect). Henderson (2002) has asserted that tourism managers and policymakers need to be aware of the dimensions of political instability and its likely impacts on their industry. Such awareness would enable them to design and implement policies to counterbalance the negative effects of political instability (Henderson 2002). Destinations affected by violence should, according to Beirman try to differentiate and distance themselves from the place of the crisis and focus more on how to be proactive in dealing with the different types of tourism crises, than on developing reactive post crisis plans (Beirman 2002).

This review of literature on safety issues in tourism, suggests that much research has been conducted on political instability, its dimensions, the effect of each dimension on tourism flows to destinations, and the remedial programmes that should be taken to mitigate its negative effects. However, little is known about how travel intermediaries perceive political risk and especially in the Middle East and how such perceptions affect their attitudes towards destinations and potentially the flow of tourists to the region. Thus, the present research aims to fill a gap in the area that relates security issues to perceptions and images of destinations, and travel propensity to them.
1.2.3 Travel intermediaries and their role

Image has been proven to be a pivotal factor in travellers' decision process and destination selection behaviour (Gunn, 1972; Goodrich, 1978; Woodside and Lysonki, 1989; Um and Crompton, 1990; Gartner, 1993). The images that travellers hold about a destination would be significantly influenced by several sources. Significant information sources as well as marketing channel influencing destination image and choice, particularly for international destinations, are travel intermediaries such as tour operators and travel agents. In the literature, tour operators and travel agents have been treated as formal sources (Goodall, 1990), formal inter-personal sources (Hsiesh and O'Leary, 1993), external formal sources (Gitelson and Crompton, 1983), commercial sources (Mill and Morrison, 1985), overt induced II (Gartner, 1993), and professional sources (Baloglu, 1997). Travel intermediaries can be considered as a formal as well as social information source due to their promotional and consultative efforts. In that respect, they contribute to formation of induced images of the travellers in the active information search process (Gartner, 1993; Gartner and Bachri, 1994).

Travel intermediaries' work as gatekeepers (Bitner and Booms 1982) of information, acting as a relay mechanism for the image people come to hold about a certain destination (Murphy, 1983). Recognizing this role Reol (1990) examined California based travel agents' attitudes towards the People's Republic of China after Tiananmen Square. The study found that the majority of travel agents opposed any travel restrictions against China and suggested that US travellers should be informed about travel-related risks so that they would make an informed decision concerning their travel (Reol 1990). In that respect travel intermediaries contribute to formation of induced images of tourists travelling through tour operators (Gartner 1996).

Reimer (1990) investigated the role of Canadian Package tour operators in determining and marketing of images stimulating Canadians to travel. According to Reimer, tour package operators consider themselves as real contributors to
the creation of new definitions of the images and dreams they perceive their clients to have, rather than designing and modifying their products according to already existing images held by potential travellers. The study argued that demand for tourist product is largely produced by a travel industry network of image generators, and concluded that tour operators compete both in terms of the product they sell and the travel image they create for those travelling with them.

Baloglu and Mangalogu (1999) examined structured (cognitive and affective) and unstructured images of four competitive Mediterranean destinations; the study identified strengths and weaknesses of these destinations as perceived by tour operators and travel agents currently promoting them. They suggested that perceptions held by travel intermediaries about tourist destinations would be a significant element influencing their decisions in promoting the destinations. It concluded that it would be realistic to assume that these images would influence the number and nature of tour packages designed and promoted by tour operators. They also concluded that images perceived by travel intermediaries would reflect perceptions of some of their clients that they pass to the rest of their clients.

Cavlek (2002) in a study on Croatia emphasized that the movement of demand from the most significant generating markets to foreign countries is greatly impacted by the leading tour operators, since they organize the largest number of trips abroad from these markets. Cavlek argued that the travel intermediaries have become very powerful and influential players in shaping the image of destinations. He explained that the crisis behaviour of tour operators towards destinations primarily depends on the type of crisis, its dimensions, its predicted length, and its consequences in the receiving country, the tour operators' own business interests there, and decisions by governments of generating countries. Tour operators always try to diminish the safety and security hazards that their clients could face. Therefore, they have to decide whether to include destinations with different kinds of risks in their programs. As such, they influence the way a
particular destination is viewed, because their practice affects the attitude of potential tourists.

This literature review suggests that it is obvious that travel intermediaries are considered one of the important factors that shape the tourist image of a certain destination and also the tourist risk perception, especially, international tourists, or tourists visiting a certain destination for the first time, or those visiting long haul destinations and needing the advice of their travel consultant. Therefore, the current research aims at examining the security image of the Middle East as held by travel intermediaries as they were found to have a major role in creating and altering destination’s image and in directing tourist flows, and because their images represent a more objective perception (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001) than travellers, which may greatly help tourist destinations in the Middle East in improving and enhancing their offers.

The previous literature background proves that to date little research has been done on the specific issue of the security image of the Middle East destinations, particularly as perceived by travel intermediaries. In this context, and due to the current situation of the Middle East, especially the Islamic countries, this research is a response to the urgent need to investigate and measure the safety and security perceptions, attitudes and behaviours of travel intermediaries towards Middle East destinations, and also seeks to compare such perceptions, attitudes and behaviours of travel intermediaries based in the region with those of travel intermediaries based outside the region.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Research

The research aims at evaluating the security and safety image as perceived by travel intermediaries in UK and Egypt towards Middle East destinations through the following objectives:
1. Eliciting from intermediaries:

- The current image of the Middle East as an overall geographic entity.
- Their comparative evaluation of different nations within the Middle East along a number of perceptual dimensions.
- Their perceptions of the relationship between safety and security issues and tourist flows.

2. Determining if there is a perceptual difference between travel intermediaries, based in the Middle East and those based out of the region.

3. Recommending actions, arising from the findings of this study, that may be appropriate for governments to consider during times of future security crises

To accomplish these objectives, this study is focused on four specific steps:

1. To review literature on destination Image and security issues.
2. To collect data on the Middle East through desk research
3. To conduct two phases of data collection based on interviews with travel intermediaries based in the UK and with travel intermediaries based in Egypt (since the researcher is Egyptian).
4. Through these steps it was possible to evaluate the image of safety in the Middle East as perceived by travel intermediaries.
1.4 Methodology of the Study

The study utilised a phenomenological methodology that employs qualitative research tools to interpret meaning from the reactions of individuals to experiences of dealing with Middle East destinations. The study is constructionist in its notion of the relationship between travel intermediaries and destination selection process. In this research, the Middle East security image as perceived by travel intermediaries (tour operators and travel agents) will be explored. The figure below is the discussion of epistemological choice and the theoretical approach for this research that justifies the combination.
Figure 1.1 Epistemology, Theoretical Perspective, Methodology and Methods
Adapted for the Research

Adapted from Crotty (1998)
Qualitative methods are adopted in this research in order to better understand and give more in-depth information about the Middle East security perception as held by travel intermediaries, where little is yet known. This research deals with concepts and perceptions which are residing at the subconscious level and may be disguised from the outer world by rationalisation and other ego defences. Therefore, the desired information can be obtained through qualitative research. The research used both direct (in-depth interviews) and indirect (projective techniques) qualitative techniques in data collection.

In-depth interviews are qualitative interviews where the aim is to understand the perspective, which the interviewee (travel intermediaries’ perceptions) attaches to the situations (current circumstances in the Middle East) and contexts important to him (Finn, Elliott-White and Walton, 2000). Such interviews employ some techniques as open-ended questions, projective technique questions, cognitive mapping exercise and ranking questions with the purpose of exploring the subjects’ perceptions beliefs, attitudes and experience in as much depth as possible. Interviewing travel intermediaries was undertaken twice, once before Sharm El Sheikh Attacks in July 2005 and another time three months after the attacks in order to monitor any changes in perception and also examine the reaction of both types of intermediaries to the attacks.

Given that the importance of a truly representative sample matters less to phenomenological research (Bell, 1992), a sampling technique called purposive sampling was used. Purposive maximises the chance of obtaining accurate information about the studied phenomenon for it relies upon choosing those who have both the experience of the phenomenon and also the ability to communicate their experience of that phenomenon. The research carefully selects a purposive sample from each of the travel intermediaries in U.K. and Egypt. The sample consisted of ten U.K. based travel intermediaries and ten Egyptian travel intermediaries.
The other kind of data used in the research is the secondary data, which is information, collected by others for purposes other than that of this research (Ghauri, Gronhaug and Kristianlund, 1995). Secondary data may be of great support to the research as it will provide the general background on the Middle East and its destinations and especially, during times of crises using the governmental statistics that specifies the number of tourists flowing to Middle East destinations.

The research uses Qualitative content analysis in analysing the data drawn out from the interviews. Qualitative content analysis as asserted by Bryman (2001) is probably the most prevalent approach to the qualitative analysis of documents or interview transcripts. It comprises a searching out of underlying themes in responses being analysed. Content analysis as argued by Bryman is a very transparent research method. It is this transparency that often causes content analysis to be referred to as an objective method of analysis.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study is intended to be of significance to the tourism industry in the Middle East, especially in the context of the changed political circumstances, which have followed September 11th, and the Iraq occupation.

Its academic originality lies on several features:

- It may be the first study of the destination security images as held by intermediaries and how these perceptions influence their recommendations and, potentially, tourist flows.

- This study may be considered the first study done on the Middle East region. Furthermore the study is not looking at the Middle East individual countries, but at the Middle East as a region.
• This study does not only measure the image of Middle East destinations, but position each of them with respect to each other; therefore it provides a frame of reference to competing destinations in the Middle East.

• The study employs a cognitive mapping methodology, which while well known in the field of geography and social psychology, has been neglected in tourism and leisure research.

This research should be of utility and benefit to various stakeholders such as: public policy makers and marketers in the Middle East destinations, investors in the tourism sector in this region, travel intermediaries and academia.

1.6 Thesis Outline

The thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter one - the current chapter - has introduced the study and outlined its background, setting the stage for what follows. Specifically, it has addressed the research problem, stated the overall aims and specific objectives, and discussed its significance.

Chapter two reviews the key literature on destination image and its importance as one of the essential factors in destination selection process. The chapter moves from the structure of the destination selection process to destination image, its formation, dimensions, and nature. Then the chapter extends to assess previous studies that have investigated destination image from various perspectives: factors that affect destination image such as safety and security; the measurement of destination image, where it was obvious that little research had been done in relation to the Middle East as a destination.

Chapter three discusses security issues and their effects on destination image. The chapter starts with a general overview on disasters, crises and their nature, then moves to discuss political instability as one of the important types of crises that negatively affect destination image and put travel industry in a position of allocating scarce resources to encourage tourists that it is safe to travel such as: wars, terrorism, and crimes against tourists that have received international
attention. The chapter concludes with some strategies for crisis management and remedial actions that may be adopted by destinations facing an insecurity crisis.

Chapter four presents a review of the factors affecting tourists' risk perceptions and their effects on destination image. The chapter provides an overview of the factors that affect the perception of tourists and affect their destination selection process. It assesses the role of media and the role of travel intermediaries as two of the major factors that may affect tourists' decision-making. The chapter concludes with a model that describes the factors affecting tourist risk perceptions.

Chapter five presents an overview of the Middle East. It provides a general background on the Middle East from various aspects; the geographic location of the Middle East and its importance, the main languages and religions that dominate the region, in addition to the economic conditions of the region and especially tourism as one of the significant industries in many of the countries in the region and illustrates the importance of tourism in the Middle East with its three regions as classified by the WTO (1998). It discusses security problems that have taken place in the Middle East in the past 15 years and their effects on tourist flows to the region.

Chapter six outlines the epistemological and theoretical perspectives of the research and provides a justification for choosing the research design and methodology. The chapter then describes methodology phases employed in this research. It includes: interviews with UK based and Egyptian travel intermediaries before Sharm El Sheikh Attacks in July 2005 to expose their experiences with organising or selling tours to the Middle East and whether they perceive them as safe destinations or not. Secondly, interviews with Egyptian and UK based travel intermediaries after the attacks to augment the data of the first interviews, and to let Egyptian travel intermediaries express their experiences with foreign travel intermediaries, especially after the attacks, and
give their opinion about the security situation in the Middle East and in its different destinations.

Chapter seven presents the results of the two sets of interviews that were undertaken. It displays the results from interviewing British and Egyptian intermediaries before the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh in July 2005; this section presents the different perceptions of both the British and Egyptian intermediaries about the Middle East overall image, the effect of media on the Middle East image, and safety and security of a destination. The chapter also displays the results from interviewing British and Egyptian intermediaries after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh in July 2005; this section presents the effects of the attacks on the Middle East security image, as well as the strategies adopted by travel intermediaries for securing their tourists, in addition to demonstrating some of the promotion and risk management strategies used by travel intermediaries.

Chapter eight analyses and discusses the results of the interviews and its relevance to each other and its consistency with previous studies. It also extends to highlight some implications of the research. Finally, the main outcomes of the chapter are summarised.

Finally, chapter nine concludes the study on evaluating the Middle East security image as perceived by Egyptian and British travel intermediaries. It presents the major research findings with relation to the security image of the Middle East as a tourist destination within the same region and abroad, its effect on tourist flows to the region, and the counteractions taken by travel intermediaries to promote their destinations. The significant contributions of the study in relation to theory, methodology and practice are outlined. Limitations of this study are presented and an agenda for further research is set out.
CHAPTER TWO: DESTINATION IMAGE AND ITS IMPORTANCE

2.1 Introduction

The chapter reviews the key literature on destination image and its importance as one of the essential factors in destination selection process. Section 2.2 explains the structure of the destination selection process to destination image. Section 2.3 discusses the different theories formulated about destination image. Section 2.4 explains the image formation process, destination image framework, its dimensions, and nature. Section 2.5 extends to explore previous studies that investigated destination image from various perspectives: factors that affect destination image such as safety and security; measuring destination image, where it is obvious that no or very little research was done to cover such topic using the Middle East as a destination. It concludes with some literature studies on destination image.

2.2 The Structure of Destination Selection Process

Tourism exports have become an important sector in many countries as a growing source of foreign exchange earnings. In addition to the generation of foreign exchange earnings tourism also alleviates balance of payments problems, creates employment, and contributes significantly towards the increase of income, savings, investment and economic growth (Lim 1997). Undoubtedly, marketing decisions and strategic planning of tourism provisions require knowledge of factors affecting destination choice, type of trips and forecast of tourism flows in the short and the long term (Seddighi and Theocharous 2002), which can serve in the development of destination marketing goals, strategies, tactics and activities to enhance overall marketing efforts (Reilly 1990; Woodside 1990; Hawes et al. 1991).
An important objective of tourism demand analysis is to improve understanding of public behaviour towards a particular destination or region. It is therefore, interesting to know how holidaymakers select their holiday destination and investigate which factors are determining their choices. Potential tourists frequently have limited knowledge about a destination that they have not previously visited. This knowledge is often confined to symbolic information acquired either from media or from their social groups. From this information, tourists formulate images of alternative destinations (Um and Crompton 1992). According to Fakeye and Crompton (1991), destinations with positive images can be expected to prosper while those with less favourable images may never achieve their fullest tourism potential. Accordingly it seems that travellers use images and perceptions of destinations to form their destinations awareness sets.

A considerable number of studies concerned with destination choice have focused upon identifying the dominant attributes of destination image and investigating their role in the selection of a travel destination (Fakeye and Crompton 1991; Um and Crompton 1990; Woodside and Lysonki 1989). The concept of destination choice hypothesises that there is a channelling process that involves a relatively large initial set of destinations being reduced to a smaller set, from which a final destination is selected. Ankomah et al. advocate that this set is subdivided into an action set; comprising those destinations towards which potential tourists have taken some action such as requesting information, and inert set of places for which the individual took no further action (Ankomah et al. 1996).

Crompton (1977) suggests a two-stage model to describe a tourist’s destination selection process that emphasised the roles of perceived constraints and image. In his study, destination selection behaviour was characterised as a function of the interaction among perceived constraints such as time, money and travel ability, and destination image. He suggests that tourists create their destination images according to their ideal preferences then adjust such images by the
impact of perceived constraints. More recently, Crompton and Ankomah (1993), based on their review of the choice set literature, develop a proposition that states:

*The criteria used to evaluate alternatives in the early consideration set will primarily focus on relative merits of the destinations' attributes, while the criteria used to evaluate alternatives in the late consideration set will primarily focus on the constraints associated with each alternative destination.*

(Crompton and Ankomah, 1993:469)

Hence, Um and Crompton (1992) assert that the critical role of interaction between constraints and image is now widely accepted in the tourism area.

The destination choice process has received similar attention in the outdoor recreation literature, where destination choice has been characterised as the result of individual cognitive evaluations of both social and physical environmental attributes of the alternatives (Mackay and Fesenmaier, 1997). It has been suggested by Young and Kent (1985) that individuals integrate their subjective impressions of each attribute in different ways so they have distinctive preferences for alternative sites. The maximisation of utility over all choice alternatives as explained by Peterson et al. (1985) is reported to be the most common decision rule. Um and Crompton (1999) suggest that different desired experiences are pertinent in formulating different preferences for recreation sites. They also conclude that this is consistent with the notion that different attributes of different destinations form the basis for different expectations.

In reality, limits are considered in the selection of any destination and most of the outdoor recreation studies have included constraints such as travel distance and available time and money (Harris et al. 1985; Krumpe and McLaughlin 1982). Among these constraints the primary emphasis has been placed on travel distance as a determinant of recreation site choice. Krumpe and McLaughlin (1982) emphasise the role of constraining attributes associated with the
recreation site in the process of reaching a reduced set of alternatives in
destination choice. They visualise the choice process as an alternative-reducing
process, followed by sequential selection of a final single choice from the
remaining alternatives. Constraining attributes are valued either negatively or
positively depending upon the situation and the number of them perceived to be
present. Finally, after evaluating remaining alternatives, an alternative that has
the fewest constraining attributes is chosen as the preferred recreation site.

Harris et al. (1985) suggest that destination finally chosen represents a decision
maker's set of preferences for site attributes constrained by situational factors.
They state:

Constrained demand is emphasised because the model recognises that most
human decisions are strongly influenced by limited money, time and other
personal resources and capabilities.

(Harris et al., 1985:46)

The site finally chosen represents the decision maker's constrained set of
preferences for site attributes. This concept of constrained preferences
parallels the concept of demand as formulated in micro economic theory;
demand curves are, in theory, derived by tracing out these price-quantity
points where each individual's indifference curve intersects his/her budget
constraint function.

(Harris et al., 1985:47)

Spiggle and Sewill (1987) assert that the notion of choice sets is central to most
models of the pleasure traveller's destination selection process. Choice sets are
most likely applicable when the purchase task is a new or modified one in which
individuals typically seek information and evaluate alternatives and when the
purchase involves some degree of high risk. It seems likely that many vacation
destination selection decisions will meet these two criteria, and it in these high-
involvement situations that the choice set structure is likely to be most useful (Um and Crompton, 1999).

In the context of tourism, there appear to be general agreement that selection of a vacation destination goes through three central core stages; development of an initial set of destinations that has traditionally been called the awareness set, rejecting of some of those destinations to comprise a smaller evoked or late consideration set, and a final destination selected from those in the late consideration set (Woodside and Lysonki, 1989; Um an Crompton, 1999).

2.3 Destination Image

Research in the past two decades has demonstrated that image is a valuable concept in understanding the destination selection process of tourists (Um and Crompton, 1999; Ankomah et al., 1996; Crompton, 1977). Goodall and Ashworth (1988) have described how holiday selection is based on person specific motivation and destination specific attributes, commonly known as the push/pull factors. The motivation to take a holiday pushes the potential tourist into a decision, while the attraction of the holiday images pulls the holidaymaker to a particular destination. Sussmann and Unel (1999) cite that many alternatives will be weighed when making the holiday decision, but the most relevant among them will be the image of each alternative and its perceived ability to satisfy a potential tourist's needs.

A destination image consists of people's beliefs, ideas, or impressions about a place. A destination's image is a composite of various products and attributes woven into a total impression (Gartner, 1993; Kotler, 1991). Lawson and Baud Bovy (1977) define image as the expression of all objective knowledge, impressions, prejudice and emotional thoughts an individual or a group have of a particular object, place or people. For example, the impression that western people may currently have in mind, and especially after September 11th about Muslims and Arabs as being terrorists, which could have caused prejudice and hatred feeling towards them.
Milman and Pizam (1995) suggest that a destination image may be referred to as the visual and mental impression of a place, product, or an experience held by the general public. They also suggest that in order to capture certain market segments, suppliers of tourist products should attempt to develop a favourable image of their destination in order to stimulate demand to visit those places.

The image of the destination is reflected in the awareness that potential tourist have of it. Therefore, for tourism destinations to be successful, it must have first awareness and second a positive image (Milman and Pizam, 1995). Consequently, tourism industry in many destinations around the world largely depends on the images held by potential travellers and the effective management of those images by the destination marketers (Sirgy and Su, 2000; Fakeye and Crompton, 1991).

2.4 Image Formation

As a result of the importance of image to the success of tourist destinations; image formation and change are widely discussed in the literature (Chen and Hsu, 2000; Sirgy and Su, 2000; Bojanic, 1991; Gartner, 1989, 1993; Telisman-Kosuta, 1989; Gartner and Hunt, 1987; Pearce, 1982; Crompton, 1979; Gunn, 1972, 1988). Gunn (1972) pioneered image research in tourism by proposing two levels of image development. His study has become very popular and the terms "organic" and "induced" are commonly used when referring to image formation.

Gunn (1972, 1988) defines organic image as the product of personal experience, or non-commercial sources such as: newspapers, periodicals, and books, including geography and history books. In relation to a destination, and more specifically a country, it would include history, politics, natural and human catastrophes, etc. This image is mostly maintained through stereotypes and prejudices and is therefore, very difficult to change. For example, media coverage of the current political instability in the Middle East may lead to an organic image of insecurity in the region, which may need a lot of effort from tourism marketers in the region to change it.
On the other hand, induced image is defined by Gunn as the result of a conscious promotional effort and advertising. An example would be image enhancement of destination as a consequence of television promotion. The alteration of the induced image is of primary interest to tourism marketers (Gunn, 1972, 1988).

The underlying assumption is that image development is inextricably linked to various forms of information; this idea is further developed with Gartner's (1993) intricate description of image formation. According to Gartner a continuum characterised by different types of information and their level of control by the promoter and credibility with the target market are influential in image formation as follows:

I. **Overt Induced I;** which develops based on the traditional forms of advertising. Advertising is a means by which a destination can improve its image (Bojanic, 1997) as it is highly controlled but it is the lowest in audience credibility (Mackay and Fesenmaier, 1997). Therefore in case of a destination crisis that is covered by the media, the influence of tourist boards and of promotions to such destination is very weak in comparison the influence of the organic image formed as a result of news coverage.

II. **Overt Induced II;** which is the image that develops based on information requested from travel intermediaries. Travel intermediaries act as gatekeepers of information (Bitner and Booms, 1982). Baloglu (1997) argues that travel intermediaries are considered a significant source of information to their clients, especially for international destinations. Lawton and Page (1997) suggest that travel intermediaries are opinion formers of their clients, therefore, images formed by travel intermediaries and the knowledge they hold about destinations might have a significant impact on potential travellers' vacation decision making process. Therefore, an understanding of images held by travel intermediaries may assist destinations in assessing their market images and influencing the
image and behaviour of potential tourists through distribution and promotion strategies.

III. **Covert Induced I**; which is based on celebrity spokes person’s recommendation, where credibility is somewhat increased.

IV. **Covert Induced II**; which is based on reports, stories and articles about a destination resulting from familiarisation tours, organised by a destination marketing organisation for travel media sponsors.

V. **Autonomous** image formation agents are authoritative and credible. They consist of news and popular culture, widely received sources beyond the destination’s control that can swiftly create and change an image. For example, the news of war or terrorism in or near a certain destination may affect its image and change it from a positive favourable image to another negative unfavourable one, which might be currently the case in the Middle East destinations as a result of the political instability in Palestine and Iraq.

VI. **Unsolicited Organic**; which is based on unsought information from friends or colleagues, which are considered unbiased sources; therefore, this level is of high credibility but, low control of destination marketing organisations.

VII. **Solicited Organic**; which is based on sought information from friends and colleagues and knowledgeable people. Like unsolicited organic it is of high credibility and low control of destination marketing organisations.

VIII. **Organic** image formation, which is based on previous experience with the destination and it, is the most credible form.

2.4.1 **Destination image conceptualisation and dimension**

The discussion is further moved in logical direction by parallels drawn between image and attitude. Gartner (1993) explain that destination images are formed by three distinctly different but hierarchically interrelated components:
a) **The Cognitive** component of image, which is defined by Gartner (1993) as the evaluation of the known attributes of the product according to facts. Dann (1996) suggests that in every pre-trip situation the comparison is affected by means of reference to real experience.

b) **The Affective** component of image, which is defined by Gartner (1993) as emotional and related to individual's motives in destination selection process, or what the tourist wishes to obtain from the destination being considered.

c) **The Connative** component of image, which is considered by Gartner (1993) as the action component, which builds on the cognitive and affective stages.

Moreover, Echtner and Ritchie (1991, 1993) contributed to the area of destination image through a comprehensive examination of literature in order to understand the unique characteristics of the concept of destination image. They reviewed studies relevant to destination image measurement and developed a framework consisting of three continua:

a) **Attribute holistic**, based on research concerning the nature of human information processing from the fields of psychology and consumer behaviour.

b) **Functional–Psychological**, when distinction is made between those characteristics of image that are directly observable and those that are less tangible and more difficult to observe or measure.

c) **Common-Unique**, which highlights the idea that images of destinations can range from those perceptions based on common characteristics such as price level and climate to those unique features such as safety and fame. This study is looking only on an individual country, but looking at a whole region with a group of countries that share some features and are unique in other features.

Mackay and Fesenmaeir (1997) conclude that image theory presents destination image as tri-dimensional. The image dimensions generated from visuals such as
attractiveness, uniqueness, and texture were important to conveying Echtner and Ritchie's (1991) previously discussed dimensional structure of tourism destination image. They also added that image formation was also described as a composite of individual inputs and marketer inputs.

Mackay and Fesenmaier find that for every case except the holiday image, dimensions of the visual were most significant predictor of destination image, while individual characteristic variables were much weaker predictors of the destination image. Familiarity was consistently a significant input variable across image dimensions.

They also discovered that a more affective evaluation of visuals was linked to experience with the destination; whereas a more cognitive evaluation of visuals was linked to lack of experience with the destination. They suggest that more familiar individuals hold destination images closer to the previously discussed holistic, psychological and unique ends of Echtner and Ritchie image dimension continua. Conversely, individuals unfamiliar with a destination fall closer to the attribute, functional, and common ends of the image continuum. In this respect it may be logical to assume that the British intermediaries are unfamiliar with the Middle East and consequently fall closer to the attribute, functional, and common ends of the image continua. In the same sense, we can assume that the Egyptian intermediaries are familiar with the Middle East and consequently fall close to the holistic, psychological and unique ends of the image continuum. Therefore, this research will investigate the location of the British travel intermediaries and that of the Egyptian ones in Echtner's and Ritchie's image continua.

2.4.2 Destination image frameworks

The following figure (figure 2.1) presents a general framework of destination image formation development from previous literature. Numerous researchers across fields and disciplines agree that image is mainly caused or formed by two major forces, which are stimulus factors and personal factors. The former are
those that stem from external stimulus and physical objects. On the other hand, personal factors are the characteristics of the perceiver, including personal experience.

Figure 2.1: General framework of destination image formation

Source: Baloglu and Mcleary, (1999:870)

In another study by Gallarza et al. (2002), the researchers propose a conceptual model of tourism destination image based on four features as shown in figure 2.3:
Figure 2.2: Conceptual model of tourist destination images

Source: Gallarza et al., (2002:69)
The construction of the model demonstrates that four features identify and describe the image construct:

I. **The complex nature of destination image;** which allows for more than one interpretation or whose comprehension lacks a common meaning. There is neither a consensus as to whether or not tourism destination image can be conceived as a collective impression; or it should be understood more as a unipersonal impression. There is also more than one component of the tourist destination image as explained in previous literature. This lack of comprehension underline a first feature; its complexity.

II. **The multiple nature of the image;** when considering this construct, the justification of its multiple-nature lies in two factors. The first corresponds to its nature (attribute-based or holistic) and the second to its formation process (both static and dynamic considerations). The tourist destination image formation process produces two areas of research interest: the destination selection, and tourist satisfaction. The multi-dimensionality of tourist destination image constructs and the multiplicity of stages and components in its formation emphasise its multiple nature.

III. **The relativistic nature of the concept;** when the concept is simultaneously subjective (changes from one person to another) and comparative (involves perceptions among various objects). Image always corresponds to an interiorisation of some perceptions, and not every person has the same perception about the same object; therefore, image is always subjective. The second idea that supports that tourist destination image concept is relativistic is the fact that image is a perception that normally refers to one particular attribute as opposed to other attributes or refers to a certain destination in comparison to another destination, i.e. the competitive and strategic image of a destination among its competitors. Similarly, this research attempts to highlight the comparative perception of security of the Middle East destinations relative to other competitive regions and relative to each other.
IV. **The dynamic nature of the concept;** which means that image is not static but changes, depending on two variables: time and space. The influence of time on image is logical as its formation is a process. The influence of the space variable on image formation involves its subjective nature and the circumstances of the destination image formation process. The circumstances of the destination with respect to space, together with the subjective nature of tourist destination image concept, emphasises its dynamic nature.

Baloglu and McCleary (1999) in developed their path model of the determinants of tourism destination image before actual visitation. The path analysis of the model developed by Baloglu and McCleary (1999) indicates that variety of information sources, type of information sources, age, and education influence perceptual/cognitive evaluations. These and socio-psychological tourism motivations together influence the affective component.

From a theoretical perspective, the study develops and tests a conceptual model of determinants of destination image. It also adds that the formation of destination images is dependent on the different roles played by the factors in the process. Variety and type of information sources and tourists’ socio-demographic characteristics such as nationality or age influence the perceptions and cognitions of destination attributes. These perceptions, together with travellers’ socio-psychological motivations, form certain feelings towards destinations. These, then mostly form the overall image of tourism destinations. For example, the current news of political instability or terrorism in Iraq or Palestine may form a feeling of fear and insecurity towards the Middle East destinations among some nationalities such as American and British tourists because they may perceive that since their governments are part of the current situation in the Middle East, they may be not welcomed as tourists in Middle East destinations. This then leads to an overall image of insecurity of the tourism destination.
As a result, it may be concluded that the overall security image of any destination may be affected by the type of information gathered from media, travel intermediaries or other sources, which affect the perceptual/cognitive evaluation of destinations, as well as demographic factors such as age, education, marital status, etc., which affects both perceptual cognitive and affective evaluation of destinations' security situation. Travel motives also have impacts on the affective evaluation of destinations' security situation. Both perceptual/cognitive and affective evaluations of destinations' security situation affect the overall security image of any destination as shown in the figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Path model of the determinants of destination overall security image
2.5 Previous Studies of Destination Image

The analysis of destination image is relatively recent. However, in almost three decades since the first studies emerged, the topic has become one of the most popular in the tourism literature (Pike 2002). A review of some of the studies that tackle the issue of destination image from different perspectives will be reviewed to produce a synthesis of key characteristics of destination image as concluded by other researchers that have investigated destination image, its attributes, its different elements, and the different factors that affect it, etc. It was felt that such a review would provide the researcher with a useful reference guide. The reviewed studies discuss destination image from different aspects; one of the aspects is discussing some of the factors affecting destination image such as awareness, media and photographs, another aspect is measuring images of certain destinations as perceived by certain type or nationality of tourists, in addition to some studies reviewing and analysing other researches that have been done on the literature of destination image.

2.5.1 Examining some factors that affect destination image

Milman and Pizam (1995) undertook a study, which they have based on theoretical background of consumer buying process incorporating product awareness, familiarity, interest, and purchase. Using a sample of 750 U.S. households, a series of hypotheses were tested to analyse whether consumer awareness and familiarity with central Florida as a vacation destination has an impact on the consumers' destination image and on the interest and likelihood to visit it. The results indicate that those who were familiar with central Florida (had previously visited it) have a more positive image of the destination and are more interested and more willing to revisit again than those who are only aware of the destination. However, contrary to researchers' expectations, interest or likelihood to revisit central Florida is not significantly higher among those who are aware of central Florida as a tourist destination than those who are not aware of it. The results of the study point out a significant improvement in the image of the
destination and an increase in the interest in visiting it when tourists go from the awareness stage to the familiarity stage. However, the evidence presented in this study fails to show a similar increase occurring when tourists move from non-awareness to the awareness stage. The results also indicate that awareness may not always lead to an interest in the destination or intent to visit it.

The photographic image was another aspect that may affect and be affected by the destination image. Markwell (1997) reported an empirical study, which explore the spatial, temporal and social dimensions of photography in a nature-based destination. Data sources used to investigate the tourist photography phenomenon include; in-site observation, post-tour interviews, photographic collections taken by tour participants, diaries from some of the participants and the author description of the tour. The researcher describes and examines; the temporal distribution of the photos throughout the duration of the tour, the role of photography in the social interactions of the tour participants, the patterns of photographic collections, and the meanings given to the images contained within them. He concludes that photographic images of places and attractions help form expectations of the tour in a pre-travel stage, and the collected images brought home in the form of postcards and photographs help shape memories of the trip in the post-travel stage.

The media as one of the factors that may significantly affect the image of a tourist destination is discussed by Avraham (2000) in his study about the images of the cities in the news media. The researcher argues that media portrayal has implications for the position of cities in the growing national and international competition of various resources such as tourism. The first part of the paper discusses three general aspects of the subject; how to measure a city’s news media image, types of images, and level of research in the field. The researcher suggests that there are four factors that determine the amount and nature of cities’ coverage patterns in the news media. These are:
i. The city's characteristics such as size of population, geographical location, crime rate and number of institutions.

ii. Editorial policy towards about the coverage of the city (reporters, definition of news about the city, sources used and definition of target audience) and personal background of news people.

iii. Social-political environment in which media operate.

iv. The public relations efforts made by the city.

These factors presented by the researcher allow cities' (destinations') policy makers to better understand the many factors that take part in the construction of images of cities in the news media and facilitate their task if they want to change their city's image.

2.5.2 Measuring images of some destinations

Moving to another angle; which is studying destination image of some destinations as perceived by international tourists, Brown (1997) examines the destination attributes (pull factors), which influence European travellers' selection of Africa as a vacation destination region. He seeks after providing a database and an identification of a positioning framework within which the relevant tourism planners and promoters can promote the various sub-regions to selected European visitor markets. The study focuses on two samples drawn from the German and British tourists. He selects 53 destination attributes, which were measured on a four point Likert scale. The study concludes variations for both German and British visitors to this region; the data showed that "beach resort", "heritage/cultural" and "other factors" ranked very highly for German groups as significant destinations pull factors to Africa. On the other hand, "other factors", "heritage/cultural" and "outdoor resources" ranked as top three important factors for British tourists to visit Africa. This study gives important information to destination marketers in Africa so as to know the image of Africa as seen by tourists of two European nationalities and accordingly, give them a clue of what
to offer either nationality in their destination promotional campaigns. In the same respect this study gives vital information to destination marketers in the Middle East so as to know their security image as perceived by European travel intermediaries and particularly British ones, and clarify to them how this perception is similar or different than their own perception of their countries as tourist destinations. Also it gives them a relative positioning to the Middle East destinations as perceived by British travel intermediaries as a sample of the European intermediaries.

In the same approach of investigating tourist destination image, Baloglu and McCleary (1999) carried out a comparative study of U.S. international pleasure travellers' images among four Mediterranean destinations; Turkey, Greece, Italy and Egypt for both visitors and non visitors. The image construct was conceptualised as having three components; cognitive, affective and overall image, which where measured using five and seven points scale. MANOVA analysis indicated significant differences in all image components between the four destination countries. The study provides insights regarding image strengths and weaknesses of Turkey, Greece, Italy and Egypt in the minds of U.S. international pleasure travellers. The findings can help the Mediterranean destinations investigated to assess their current images and positions relative to competitors in the U.S. market. This information, accordingly, will help them compare their current position and their desired position versus their competitors. The destinations may also compare the image and position they currently attempt to project with images actually held by U.S. travellers. This comparison should enable destinations to see the differences between their projected images and images perceived by U.S. pleasure travellers, which would help them plan their positioning strategies. The study also confirms that visitation may alter image and suggests that actual experience may alter not only image but also the positioning of destinations based on perceptual/cognitive variables, affective variables, and overall image. Therefore, before tourist destinations decide among alternative positioning strategies, they should know their relative position in each image component.
Also Choi et al. (1999) use a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches as developed by Echtner and Ritchie (1991) to investigate the image of Hong Kong as a tourist destination. A sample of 142 tourists was asked to respond to a set of pre-developed statements, in addition to describing the unique aspects of Hong Kong in their own words. The research concludes that the two complementary approaches of data analysis (qualitative and quantitative) combined to give a more comprehensive view on the image of Hong Kong. It is also concluded that while holistic impressions help to find out its unique symbols, the psychological and functional characteristics help to reveal the pull factors of Hong Kong as a destination. Specifically the attributes identified will help marketers understand Hong Kong’s competitive position as a tourist destination.

In a similar study Chen and Hsu (2000), identify image attributes measuring the total attractiveness of international destinations to Korean tourists and investigated image attributes affecting Korean tourist selection behaviours of trip planning, budgeted travel costs, length of the trip. 18 image attributes were measured in this study, 17 were designed to measure tourists’ perceptions of international destinations that they were about to visit and one assessed tourists’ perceptions on the destination’s overall attractiveness. A five point Likert scale was used for all 18 items. Korean tourists’ perceived image attributes of an attractive tourist destination is found to be; natural and scenic beauty, similar architecture, the adventurous atmosphere, availability of tourist information, and environmental friendliness.

Rittichianuwant et al. (2001) presents a research that aims at identifying the underlying dimensions of the current image of Thailand, determining differences in the image of Thailand held by first time and repeat visitors and among visitors with different demographic profiles, and finally assessing how Thailand’s image affects the likelihood that travellers would return. The results of the self completed questionnaire that was distributed by the researches determine that single and young travellers perceived Thailand less favourably than more aged and married travellers in factors of safety and good value cuisine and hotels. On
the other hand, the study finds that single and young travellers had a more positive perception of Thailand’s adventure activities and scenic natural beauty. The study also finds that Asian nationalities had the least favourable perception of Thailand as a safe destination.

Yuksel and Yuksel (2001) undertook a study that aims at providing managers with exploratory insights into what tourists regard as the components of a satisfying holiday experience and how tourists perceived the destination performance relative to other destinations. Focusing on Turkey as a destination, a modified experience based framework was adopted in order to understand tourists’ perceptions of Turkey relative to other destinations, and whether experiences with other destinations affected their present holiday evaluation. The study uses self-administered questionnaire, whose results are analysed statistically. The results show that tourists might judge destination performance on a set of attributes, some being more tangible and some being relatively more important. The relation found between tourists’ perceptions of other destinations and their evaluation of current holiday suggests that what other destinations have to offer might affect tourists’ current satisfaction judgments and their future behavioural intentions. Considering the multi-dimensional nature of factors affecting tourists’ satisfaction, they state that the achievement of product quality, competitiveness, and a favourable image depends on the collective and coordinated action of interdependent organisations and individuals operating in the tourism industry such as travel intermediaries (tour operators and travel agents). Therefore, destination authorities need to explore the image that travel intermediaries hold about their destination in order to be able to improve it.

Baloglu and Mangaloglu (2001) have drawn attention to the significant role played by travel intermediaries in the tourism industry whether for tourists or for travel destinations. Accordingly, they emphasise the importance of travel intermediaries’ images for international travel destinations. They carried out a comparative study of U.S. based travel intermediaries’ images among four Mediterranean destinations; Turkey, Greece, Italy and Egypt. By examining
structured and unstructured images of the four competitive destinations through a self administered questionnaire sent to the travel intermediaries in the USA, the study identifies the strengths and weaknesses of these destinations as perceived by tour operators and travel agents currently promoting them. The results indicated that destinations images should be measured by scaled items and unstructured techniques for validation purpose as they complement each other to identify true images of tourist destinations. The study also concluded that the perceptions held by travel intermediaries in the study provides implications for product strategies, as they have visited the destinations many times, and because their images represent a more objective perception than that of tourists. The results also indicated that the perceptions held by tour operators and travel agents about a destination would be a significant element influencing their decisions of promoting the destinations. It is also assumed that these images would influence the number and nature of tour packages designed and promoted by tour operators.

2.5.3 Reviewing destination image literature

In an attempt to review literature of destination image that have been previously reported, Chon (1990), carried out a review of 23 destination image studies. The review determines that the most popular themes were the role and influence of destination image in traveller buyer behaviour and satisfaction. He states:

*The central postulates of the destination image studies are that a destination image has a crucial role in an individual's travel purchase related decision making and that the individual traveller's satisfaction/dissatisfaction with travel purchase largely depends on a comparison of his (sic) expectation about the destination, or previously held destination image, and his performance of the destination.*

(Chon, 1990: 3)
Echtner and Ritchie (1991) examine the conceptualisation and operationalisation of 15 previous studies. Their review concludes that researchers had not yet been successful in operationalising destination image. They also find that researchers held a strong preference for quantitative research methods, with few involving travellers in unstructured methods.

Pike (2002) undertook a review of 142 destination image studies, published in literature during the period 1973 – 2000. The review results in number of findings some of which are:

- The most popular region for study is North America, followed by Europe, Asia, Australasia, Africa, Central America/Caribbean, South Pacific and South America. This finding shows that there may be very little or no research has been done about destination image in the Middle East. This study may be considered the first study done on the Middle East region. Further more the study is not looking at the Middle East individual countries, but at the Middle East as a region.

- The Majority of the studies measure only the perceptions of only one destination, with out a frame of reference to any competing destination. This study does not only measure the perception of Middle East destination, but position each of them with respect to each other; therefore it provides a frame of reference to competing destinations in the Middle East.

- The most popular types of destination of interest are countries, followed by states, cities, and resort areas. This confirms that may be little or no attention was given to exploring the image of an entire region like the Middle East.
- The majority of the studies use structured techniques to operationalising the destination image construct.

- Most studies target visitors whether in the destination or at their places of residence, which indicates that there was little attention given to destination images of travel intermediaries.
2.6 Summary

Tourism is an industry, which is characterized by its sensitivity to global changes and its ever-increasing competitive nature, which requires tourists' destinations to develop an effective marketing strategy (Baloglu and Mangaloglu 1999). Destinations mainly compete based in their perceived images relative to their competitors in the market place. According to Fakeye and Crompton (1991), destinations with positive images can be expected to prosper while those with less favourable images may never achieve their fullest tourism potential. Therefore, destination marketers need a sound understanding of travellers' images of their own destination as well as image of other competitive destinations (Baloglu and McCleary 1999).

Among the various elements that form a destination image is the safety element, which will to be discussed in chapter three. Such element is the primary condition for the normal tourism development of a destination, region or country and thus the basic determinant of its growth. Without that element destinations cannot successfully compete on the generating markets, even if they have the best quality of natural and built attractions (Cavlek 2002).
CHAPTER THREE: SECURITY AND ITS EFFECTS ON DESTINATION IMAGE

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in chapter two, a destination is not just a physical entity, but it is also what is thought to exist, a mental concept in the minds of tourists and potential tourists. This is why the concept of destination image is an essential concept (Seaton, 1996). According to Fakeye and Crompton (1991), destinations with positive images can be expected to prosper while those with less favourable images may never achieve their fullest tourism potential. Accordingly it seems that travellers use images and perceptions of destinations to form their destinations awareness sets.

Among the various elements that form destination image is the safety element (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996). This element is the primary condition for normal tourism development of a destination, region or country and thus the basic determinant of its growth. Without that element destinations cannot successfully compete on the generating markets, even if they have the best quality of natural and built attractions (Cavlek 2002). Buckly and Klemm (1993) assert that any security problem would create an unfavourable image that is spread across the world, so that even those who are not afraid, will be discouraged from taking a holiday in a destination with security problem. It is not much that the area is dangerous as that it does not look attractive.

Richter and Waugh (1986) stated that tourism may decline abruptly in some destinations when security conditions appear unsettled as tourists simply choose alternative destinations. Indeed, Sonmez and Graefe (1998) claim that if the destination choice is narrowed down to two alternatives which offer the same benefits, the one that is safe from any security problem is likely to be chosen.
Hall and O’Sullivan (1996) argue that security/safety may be judged by the nature of physical environment; by the potential for criminal activity; by the possibility of being caught in a war-zone; and/or by potential politically motivated attacks on tourists such as terrorism. The tourism industry is highly vulnerable to natural disasters such as hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, torrential rains, etc. and human caused disasters whether social or political such as; crimes, riots, revolutions, terrorism, political turmoil, wars, regional tensions, and crimes against tourists (Sonmez et al., 1999). Sonmez et al. (1994) argue that disasters regardless of their nature create difficult and often tragic situations for the distressed area and its residents. They assert that over the years, media coverage of disasters has conveyed the resulting loss of life, human suffering, public and private property damage, and economic and social disruption. The ensuing negative publicity is the most significant feature of the period after disaster occurrence and it often lasts until full recovery is achieved and pre-disaster conditions resume. For a tourist destination, this period can represent a tourism crisis, which can threaten the normal operation of tourism-related businesses; damage a tourist destination’s image of safety, attractiveness, and comfort by negatively affecting negative perceptions of that destination; and in turn, cause a drop in the destination’s travel and tourism economy, and interrupt the continuity of business operations for the area’s travel and tourism industry by reductions in tourists’ arrivals and expenditure (Sonmez et al., 1994).

Sonmez et al. (1999) argue that large numbers of people often have a vested interest in the wellbeing of the destination’s tourism industry.
Stakeholders and the local economy depend on outsiders' perceptions of the community. For this reason, it is highly unfortunate that tourism centres are, by definition, places of high visibility. (Sonmez et al., 1999:14)

They also highlight that regardless of whether tourism crises are generated by natural or human-caused disasters, travellers will prefer other destinations that are far from the afflicted area. Consequently, the destination's tourism industry will suffer from a "lag-effect", in which a negative image caused by the disaster may well outlast physical damages and the tourism industry will have to find ways to manage the disasters after effects (Sonmez et al., 1999).

This chapter discusses various security issues and their effects on destination image. Section 3.2 presents a general overview on the disasters, crises and their nature, then section 3.3 moves on to discuss political instability as one of the important types of crises that negatively affect destination image and put travel industry in a position of allocating scarce resources to encourage tourists that it is safe to travel such as: wars, terrorism, and crimes against tourists that have received international attention. Then section 3.4 concludes the chapter with some strategies for crisis management and remedial actions that should be adopted by destinations facing insecurity crisis.

3.2 Disasters, Crises and Their Nature

Tourist flow to any destination is affected by both crises and disasters. Faulkner and Russell (2000) attempt to differentiate between crises and disasters using the definition of Selbst (1978) who refers to a crisis as "any action or failure to act that interferes with an organisation's (destination's) ongoing functions, the acceptable attainment of its objectives, its viability or survival, or that has a detrimental personal effect as perceived by the majority of employees, clients or
constituents” (tourism enterprises, tourists, or employment). This definition of crises therefore seems to exclude situations where the survival of a destination is risked because of incidents over which those involved have little or no control (Faulkner and Russell, 2000). For example, tornadoes, floods and earthquakes can hardly be described as self-induced, although destinations in vulnerable areas may take steps to minimise the impacts of such events. Therefore, Faulkner and Russell (2000) use the term disaster to describe such events where a tourist destination is confronted with unpredictable catastrophic changes over which the destination has little control as in the case of any of the examples mentioned earlier.

In their study Faulkner and Russell (2000), they suggest a continuum of events as shown in the following figure (fig. 3.1), with crises located at one extreme and disasters at the other.
CRISES

Induced by the actions or inactions of the organization

DISASTERS

Induced by natural phenomena or external human action

Figure 3.1 Continuum of Events

Source: Faulkner and Russell (2000:335)
However, they assert that it is not always clear where we locate events along this continuum because, even in the case of natural disasters, the damage experienced is often to some extent based upon human action. Booth (1993) argues that the recognition of a critical problem that might lead to a crisis becomes a matter of too little or too late because standard procedures tend to suppress or redefine the abnormal as normal, which, is more relevant to the origin of crisis, where destinations fail to adapt to gradual change. However, it might also apply to disaster situations if the warnings on an impending disaster are ignored, which leaves destinations unprepared when it actually happens (Booth, 1993).

Crises and disasters are interrelated in the sense that the distinction between the two is not clear, for example, it is possible for the same event to become simultaneously a crisis for a destination, to the extent that it might be self-induced, and a disaster for another if there is substantial collateral damage (Faulkner and Russell, 2000) such as the decline in tourists’ arrivals to Egypt during the Gulf war although Egypt was not part of the event apart from being in the same area or near the conflict region.

Faulkner and Russell (2000) hypothesise that since the second millennium has started, there is a general perception that the world has become more disaster and crisis prone, and crises which, are distinguished from disasters as they have their origins in planning and management deficiencies and in this sense they are self-inflicted may be come more frequent than disasters as disasters have been linked with natural events which are more random than the seemingly constant change in social, economic and political processes. Therefore, this study will not deal with the effects of natural disasters on the tourism industry, while will focus on human causes crises such as political instability and its effects on the tourism industry.
Any kind of disaster can turn tourism flows away from destinations, but political instability has a much greater negative psychological effect on potential tourists than others (Pizam and Mansfeld 1996). According to Hall (1994), political stability is an essential prerequisite for attracting international tourists to a destination and a fundamental precondition to successful establishment, growth and survival of tourism industry in any destination. Therefore, next section (section 3.3) will review political instability and its effects on the tourism industry as explained in literature.

3.3 Political Instability and Its Effects on Destination Image

The political nature of international tourism has received scant attention till the early 1990s in the tourism research literature (Richter and Waugh, 1986; Smyth, 1986; Richter, 1989; Hall, 1994). Nevertheless, issues of political instability and political relations within and between countries are extremely important in determining the image of destinations in tourist generating countries and the real and perceived safety of tourists (Hall and O’Sullivan, 1996).

Political instability refers to a situation in which conditions and mechanisms of governance and rule are challenged as to their political legitimacy by elements operating from outside of the normal operations of the political system. When challenge occurs from within a political system and the system is able to adapt and change to meet demands on it, it can be said to be stable. When forces for change are unable to be satisfied from within a political system and then use such non-legitimate activities as protest, violence, or even civil war to seek change, then a political system can be described as being unstable.

(Hall and O’Sullivan, 1996:106)
Valenzuela (1988) highlights the importance of the role played by governments, media and tourists perceptions of destinations in determining attitudes towards the political characteristics of the destination and the creation of its tourist image. There are a number of factors, as suggested by Hall (1991) that leads to the creation of images of the political stability of a destination in the tourist generating countries. As shown in the following figure, three elements are identified as leading to the creation of destination images: word of mouth and previous experience, the media, and the governments of the tourist generating countries.

Figure 3.2 Political instability, Violence and the Image making Process

Source: Hall an O'Sullivan (1996:107)
Governments through their foreign policy settings have a substantial influence on perceptions of potential destinations. Consequently, international tourism policy is closely related to foreign policy objectives (Hall, 1991). Government policy is certainly essential in controlling tourist flows and also influencing tourist visitation through the enunciation of national government policies towards current or potential tourist destination countries (Richter, 1984). However it is the media that will have the greatest impact on the creation of destination images in tourist generating regions.

The media is clearly seen as very influential when it comes to political and social attitudes. Public perceptions of the relative importance of an issue are largely determined by news media (Wood and Peake, 1998). The media interprets issues, giving them more or less significance through the amount or type of coverage provided. The media, particularly television news, also focus attention on specific events through this same interpretive function (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987). However, not only does the media influence general public opinions, it also plays a key role in forming tourists' images destinations and transport modes, their relative safety and security, either directly in terms of being read, heard or watched, or indirectly through the word of mouth of friends or relatives (Fodness and Murray, 1997; Swarbrooke and Horner, 1999). Moreover, in this age of global communication events can be played out live and unedited on the television screen (example the events of the Israeli attacks on the Palestinians and the scenes of slaughtered Palestinian children by Israeli soldiers or the scenes of arresting and humiliating Iraqi citizens by American and British soldiers) thereby potentially having an even greater impact on the viewing public. Therefore, critical to an understanding of the likely longer-term pattern of response to events such as those of 11 September, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Iraqi invasion and other crises that affect tourism, is an understanding of how media deals with such issues and how this affects policy (Faulkner and Vikulov, 2001).
Hall and O'Sullivan (1996) point out that media and governments arbitrate as an image filter between tourist destination and generating countries. Sometimes the filter highlights particular issues or events while other times events may be ignored. In both cases the media is a major force in creating images of safety and political stability in the destination region. They also emphasise that the media are not passive portrayers of events. The media select particular representations and interpretations of places and events among a flood of potential representations in terms of time, content and images. Therefore, it is the image of political instability rather than political instability itself that becomes uppermost as a factor in tourist destination selection behaviour (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996).

Political instability can take a number of forms. Lea and Small (1988) suggest that a number of different dimensions of political instability can be identified within international tourism such as international wars, coup d'état, terrorism, riots, political and social unrest, and strikes. Therefore, political instability is essentially a multi-dimensional concept that varies in the degree of severity. This multidimensionality imposes a serious problem when the impact of each dimension is assessed in relation to the tourism industry. Undoubtedly, the impacts of political instability on tourism are something that no policy maker can afford to ignore (Seddighi et al., 2002). According to Bloom (1994) wars (whether international or civil), terrorism and the high level of crime can cause long-term damage to the image of a given destination area.
Therefore the following sections give full literature coverage of those three dimensions of political instability which are the core points of investigation in this study as they are described as those which most deter tourist flows (Richter and Waugh, 1986; Teye, 1986; Holllier, 1991; Enders et al., 1992; Gartner and Shen, 1992; Richter, 1992, 1999; Aziz, 1995; Bar-On, 1996; Bloom, 1996; Mansfeld, 1996; Wall, 1996; Pizam et al., 1997; Sonmez and Graefe, 1998; Sonmez, 1998; Ioannides and Apostolopoulos, 1999; Pizam, 1999; Sonmez et al., 1999; Levantis and Gani, 2000; Seddighi et al., 2000; George, 2003).

3.3.1 Warfare and tourism

Since the tourist product is connected to destinations, some of its basic components are the attractions of the destination such as natural and socio-cultural factors (Kaspar, 1991).

Attractions ... may be defined as those elements in the tourist product which determine the choice of the tourist to visit one destination rather than another.

(Burkart and Medlik, 1997:193)

War is foremost a national security issue but clearly different from other civil threats such as crime and terrorism in terms of its cultural heritage indicators important to tourism (Smith, 1998).

Crime is usually one-on-one or an interpersonal interaction; terrorism is a politically motivated small-group activity directed towards individuals to "strike terror" into their midst and thereby control the opposition. In both instances the activity is local and of short duration. Crime or terrorism leaves little or no heritage to become permanent tourist markers.

(Smith, 1996:251)
Turney-High defines warfare as a dynamic social process and, as such, war parallels the dynamics of tourism:

*War is a state of mind and a legal condition ... the essence of which is to introduce turbulence and crisis into another social system while attempting to prevent a lack of equilibrium within the we-group.*

(Turney-High, 1981:19)

Turney-High (1981) describes warfare as a penetrating societal involvement that reaches the heart of a culture and touches the soul of every inhabitant on both sides. War is so deeply imbedded in human activity and memory that despite the horrors and destructions, the memorabilia of warfare and associated products most likely comprises the largest single category of tourist attractions in the world. In contrast to the individualism and violence of crime and terrorism, the memories of warfare last for generations (Smith, 1996).

Accordingly, in the case of war, the war itself with all its dimensions becomes part of the tourist product (an attraction). Normally the state of war means dis-attractiveness, which leads in the majority of cases to a decrease in tourist demand. The state of war whether it is international or civil, is obviously catastrophic for tourism. Apart from the dangers that war presents to the individual, military activity can damage also tourist infrastructure (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996). For example, Lebanon's once flourishing tourist industry has been distressed by years of civil war and conflict with neighbouring Syria and Israel. Much of the Former Yugoslavia's tourism infrastructure and attractiveness as a tourist destination has been demolished (Jordan, 1994).
Teye (1988) highlights the impacts of war on tourism development. Teye notes that the war affects both sides of tourism, supply and demand. On the side of demand he describes the following impacts of war:

1. Borders are closed for land, air and sea transport;
2. Foreign authorities recommend that their citizens do not travel to war-stricken destinations;
3. Maltreatment of tourists travelling to a destination involved in war;
4. Adverse publicity in international media;
5. Blacklisting by tour operators and travel agents.

On the side of tourist supply there are two types of impacts; one influencing tourism development and the other influencing the existing tourist supply. The simultaneous consequences are:

1. Development plans are reduced or cancelled;
2. Loss of investment capital from abroad;
3. Tourist infrastructure is occupied (airports, hotels);
4. Destruction of game parks due to excessive stealing;
5. Consequences on nightlife (due to embargos);
6. Military blackmail (towards passengers in airports and elsewhere);
7. Emergence of foreign currency black market.

Warfare may also have long-term impacts on the image of the destination (Hall and O’Sullivan, 1996), which causes a dramatic harm to the tourism industry of the destination as the tourist flow to such destination, and probably other nearby destinations, may face a sharp decline as will be illustrated in the following cases.
South Korea's tourism industry has long been harmed by images of the Korean War and conflicts between North and South Korea (Jeong, 1988). Also, Witt (1994) states that tourism flows to Greece were lower than expected in 1974 because of the heightened threat of war between Greece and Turkey as a result of the Turkish invasion on Cyprus. Mavris (1993) stated that the Turkish invasion had a significant negative impact on the tourist industry in 1974 and 1975. He also emphasises that the Lebanese conflict had both a positive and a negative impact on tourism in Cyprus; the positive impact because some of the tourist flows that used to have their vacation in Lebanon were redirected to Cyprus as a result of the fear from the civil war in Lebanon, while the negative impact because of the latent danger in the region as a result of the conflict in Lebanon. As a result it may be concluded that the destination suffering from a state of war, whether international or civil, is not the only one suffering from war consequences but also the other destinations that are located in the same region suffer. They are considered collateral victims of other destination's problems.

Vuconic'(1997) comments that the Gulf war in 1991 had a strong negative impact on the development of international tourism. According to the World Tourism Organisation, the number of tourists fell by 1.4 percent for the first time in nine-year period of constant growth, and international traffic from Japan and the United states was reduced by 2 percent. He also notes that the development of tourism was influenced by another factor, which is the economic recession in most tourist generating countries at that time because of the oil problem that was caused as a result of the Gulf war. Not only were the tourist flows to the Mediterranean, Europe and the Middle East reduced, but also the influence of the Gulf war was even felt by the Australian tourist industry (Rowe, 1993), which again supports the concept of the existence of collateral victims to any conflict. The Gulf war kept many tourists from taking their holidays. It affected both leisure and business travel, but the war itself had only a short-term effect on international travel. During 1990 the threat of war and international terrorism caused a significant decline in international tourism. However, when the war ended, the tourists did not return immediately to the region as they had already
booked their holidays elsewhere (Jusko, 1991).

The following figure (fig. 3.3) will illustrate the drop in the number of arrivals to four Middle East destinations (Egypt, Jordan, Israel and Syria) during the times of the war. The figure illustrates tourists' arrivals to the Middle East region in an approximately twenty five-year period (1967 - 1992), excluding Lebanon due to its long lasting civil war. It is clearly observed from the figure that there are two major drops in the number of tourists' arrivals to the Middle East. One of them is in 1973 during the Egyptian Israeli war, while it is also obvious that tourists' arrivals started to increase after the war was ended. The second sharp decrease in tourists' arrivals to the region was during the Gulf war in 1991, while also increased gradually after the war had ended. This emphasises that the fear of war and associated violence in a certain destination creates an image of insecurity that accompanies the minds of tourists until the existing conflict ends.

Figure 3.3 Tourist Arrivals to the Middle East from 1966 - 1994

Adapted from: Mansfeld (1996)
Also Vuconic (1997) states that the war in Yugoslavia clearly reveals the actual consequences of war in tourism development; it has practically destroyed tourism in part of the Mediterranean Adriatic zone. He notes that Yugotours, a specialised tour operator for Yugoslavia, lost more than one million booked tourists in 1991. A similar thing happened to Bemextours, another tour operator for the Yugoslav tourist territory. The following figure (3.4) will illustrate the sharp decrease in foreign tourists’ flows to Croatia during the war and its gradual increase after the war has ended, the figure demonstrates tourists’ arrivals to Croatia in the period from 1960 to 1997.

Losses have not only affected Yugoslav destinations, but, indirectly due to lower transit tourism, they have affected neighbouring countries too. At the same time, tourist flows inside the region have been redirected from the affected countries towards the competing countries. Thus, some of the tourists who traditionally spent their holidays in the Adriatic coast spent their 1991 holidays in neighbouring Austria and Italy (Vuconic, 1997).

![Figure 3.4 Tourist flows to Croatia during the war](image)

Adapted from: Ivandic and Radnic (1997)
When the war is over, it becomes part of the historical memory of a certain destination and this memory becomes a tourist attraction (Smith, 1998). In order to better understand the relationship between war and tourism another dimension has to be included. Very often famous tourist attractions are destroyed during the war; this is emphasised stoutly in the media (Gubernick, 1993). Warfare may make tourism development or attraction of visitation problematic, but they do not by themselves constitute a direct threat to tourists (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996). For example, in the case of Sri Lanka, Sinclair (1994) reported that no visitor has ever been involved in the common conflict. However, terrorism, which, will be exhibited in details in the next section, may be a war-associated event. Terrorism constitutes a different nature of threat to tourists because in this instance, tourists may constitute the target of terrorist activity, which may affect tourism much more severely than the war itself.

3.3.2 Terrorism and tourism

Terrorism is a mysterious and riveting phenomenon, which draws rich intellectual attention. In the hope of understanding and controlling terrorism, government and academic communities have exerted major efforts towards its study (Schmid and Graaf, 1982; Poland, 1988). Definitions of terrorism have not gained universal acceptance (Santana, 2001). However, the US Department of State has provided some definitions of terms that are generally used and applied when terrorism is discussed.

The term terrorism means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence audience.

The term international terrorism means terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country.
The term terrorism group means any group practicing, or that has significant subgroups that practice, international terrorism.

(TUS Department of State, 2003:xii)

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon and has been used as a political weapon in almost all parts of the world (Santana, 2001). Tudge (2004) corroborated this notion as he argued that terrorism is not a 21st century phenomenon and noted that crops, villages and towns have been set on fire and wells have been poisoned since Old Testament times. Troops of fired-up cavalrymen slaughtered many a town full of men, women and children all over the ancient medieval worlds. He emphasised that the proportion of fanatics is no longer now that before and he provided evidence from the bible which tells that extremists have always been with us.

Wahab (1996) noted that it is an entrenched fact that terrorism exists in many countries and cities around the globe. The Red Brigade in Italy, the IRA in Northern Ireland and Britain, Basque separatists in Spain, the Neo-Nazis in Germany, the Fundi in Algeria and the Sikh in India, and the Khemer Rouge in Cambodia are just few examples of some well established groups (Wahab, 1996).

Although terrorism is not a new phenomenon or related to specific countries, since the events of September 11th Islam and terrorism have become synonymous (Sardar, 2001a) and it is always related with the Middle East or the Islamic countries. Media often emphasise such relationship and repeat it again and again in a string of films such as Rules of Engagement, True Lies, Executive action, and The Siege (Sardar, 2001a). The novelist Tom Clancy commented in the New statesman (16 September 2001) that terrorists don’t act because of their religion and that terrorists share no common general label as they harm those they claim to defend. He also argued that it is not how much terrorists belong to
any group but how far apart they have to exist to conceive and act out their unconscionable deeds that should be the focus of our attention.

Sardar (2001b) supported the previous notion as he emphasised that the terrorists do not follow the same Prophet Muhammad who so unequivocally forbade the killing of civilians, women and children, the old and the infirm, the destruction of property, burning of crops, and slaughter of animals in any act of war. Sardar (2001c) also confirmed that the suicide bomber is a special breed and that these terrorists stand outside normality and beyond reason or religion.

Terrorism origin causes are not only due to religious purposes but there may be several other reasons that hide behind religion fanatism such as political instability, chronic economic problems, starvation and disease, environmental problems, over-population, lack of opportunities, civil unrest, wars, etc. (Santana, 2001). While these terrorist groups have different aims, it could be safely said that they are of special importance in some of these countries. On the other hand, as demonstrated by Edgell (1993) media coverage and worldwide awareness of politically stimulated terrorist activities can have harsh impacts on international travel. As described by Buckly and Klemm (1993) terrorism is a political weapon that can be used to larger impacts in the post-war world because of the mass media, whose coverage grants for terrorist organisations an illusion of power and efficiency.

Karper (1971 in Sonmez, 1998) explains terrorism as a symbolic act and that it can be analysed much like other mediums of communications. Therefore, the components of the communication process can be explained as: the terrorist (transmitter of message); the terrorist’s target (intended recipient message); the terrorist act itself (message); and the reaction of the message recipient (feedback) (Sonmez, 1998). In the same sense, Richter and Waugh state,
“Terrorism is a form of communication of both the threat or reality of violence and the political message. To some extent the media are responsible for that communication”


As a result of all of the above, and after knowing that terrorism is a political weapon and that there are terrorist groups nearly in all parts of the globe (Wahab, 1996; Santana, 2001), and also that terrorism is considered a medium of communication (Karper, 1970; Richter and Waugh, 1991; Sonmez, 1998), it is logical to ask why terrorism particularly target tourism and tourists.

**Why does terrorism particularly target tourism and tourists?**

Even though researchers vary in their rationalisation of terrorist objectives, they agree that terrorists have a lot to achieve by targeting tourists. Terrorists’ goals are classified broadly as revolutionary (narrow or broad), antigovernment (including overthrowing government) or sub-revolutionary (including policy and personnel changes) (Richter and Waugh, 1986). Upon closer examination, quite a few more specific objectives emerge.

Sonmez et al. (1999) affirm that targeting tourists assist terrorists realise strategic objectives. These short-or long-term objectives can include using the excitement and turmoil at tourist centres as a cover for activities, destabilising the economy, or attainment of much needed media attention. Attacking tourists does not only just provide terrorists with influential benefit by distracting the tourism industry and assuring publicity. Large groups of foreign-speaking and foreign-looking tourists provide an opportunity for terrorists to mingle as well as offering themselves target objects. Terrorists can mingle among tourists and carry out financial; transactions in foreign currencies without arousing suspicion (Richter and Waugh, 1986).

Since tourism is considered as a vital economic activity in some countries, terrorists’ attacks on tourists cause a decline in foreign exchange receipts, thus,
allowing terrorists to enforce indirect costs on their governments (Richter and Waugh, 1986; Hall and O’Sullivan, 1996). The decisions taken by tourists to cancel their vacation or to select another safer destination may lead to large losses for the tourism industry of the country experiencing terrorism (Edgell, 1990). For example, Egypt’s tourism receipts dropped by 43 percent as a result of the terrorists’ attacks, which began in 1992, reveal how terrorists can damage a country’s economy (Wahab, 1996). While tourism symbolises capitalism and, if it is state-sponsored, then the attack on the industry is an attack on the government the terrorists are fighting as well (Richter and Waugh, 1986; Hall and O’Sullivan, 1996). This offers terrorists an added advantage of reinforcing their claims to political authenticity by making the government look weak (Hall and O’Sullivan, 1996).

Over the years, terrorist recognition of the political significance of international tourism has been frequently and disastrously communicated (Sonmez et al., 1999). The reasons are simple and obvious and have been proved by numerous incidents: when nationals of other countries become involved, news coverage is guaranteed.

*By capturing the media agenda for days or weeks, such groups can hope to increase their profile and amplify their message; enhance their relative moral legitimacy; and improve their organisational effectiveness.*

(Weimann and Winn, 1994:143)

Terrorists secure media attention while curtailing their government’s ability to censor news content when they target international tourists. When tourists are kidnapped or murdered, the situation is immediately dramatised by the media, which also helps the political conflict between terrorists and the establishment reach a global scale. Terrorists achieve the exposure they crave and the media increases its circulation or ratings (Richter, 1983; Sonmez et al., 1999).
Terrorists target tourists to achieve ideological objectives (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996), which can be explained in terms of crashing values such as changes and vanishes of certain local traditions and habits as a result of the interaction with tourists and trying to imitate them (demonstration effect) and also the spread of some crimes such as prostitution as a result of tourism especially in poor destinations, cultures such as over-commercialisation of culture such folklorique dances or arts just to satisfy tourists, and socio-economic levels, especially if the local people are not benefiting from tourism, which creates hedonism. Travellers are targeted for their symbolic value as indirect representatives of others, perhaps hostile governments (Richter, 1983; Richter and Waugh, 1986). Palestinians fatally confirmed this during the 1985 hijacking of the Achille Lauro yacht. The selection of the only Jewish American on board as the one passenger to be killed is anything but a coincidence (Sonmez et al., 1999).

Ideological objectives can be explained in socio-economic and cultural terms as well. Quite a few studies provide rational socio-economic and cultural explanations of the terrorism-tourism relationship (Richter, 1983; Aziz, 1995; Wahab, 1995, 1996; Lea, 1996). According to Richter, tourism can generate disruptive conflicts among proponents and opponents of tourism development (Richter, 1983). She further points out, foreign business travellers and tourism facilities might become legitimate targets for terrorists who oppose the control socio-economic and political leaders exert over the industry. The perception that tourism development does not really benefit locals may incite hostility when it is blamed for demolishing indigenous industries and cultures (Richter and Waugh, 1986). Lea (1996) affirms that a failure on the part of tourism developers to plan, establish, and manage their destinations in a way that guarantees community support will eventually lead to community opposition and probably violence. It is possible that local frustration with the tourism industry may eventually lead to opposition followed by violent action (Lea, 1996).
In her discussion of terrorism in Egypt, Aziz (1995) counters the misconception that Islam is simply against foreign tourists. According to her, language barriers as well as economic and social barriers separate tourists and locals in Egypt. Poor locals are forced to co-exist with international tourists enjoying lavishness and friction is unavoidable. Aziz’s explanation supports Richter’s (1983) earlier proposition that travel behaviour can be representative of ideological values, class behaviour, and political culture of tourists and their countries. As a result tourists may be targeted because of their tourism behaviour that may reveal striking consumption (demonstration of money, credit cards, jewellery, expensive clothes or equipment, etc). Hostility that is created against tourism can therefore ignite into dangerous expressions of anger.

Hostility between hosts and tourists may also results from clashing cultures or values (Sonmez, 1998). Certain tourists’ behaviours such as; eating pork, drinking alcohol, gambling, western dress, etc. are incongruent with Islamic cultural values, therefore Aziz (1995) suggests as possible explanation for Egyptian’s frustration. In the same respect, Wahab (1995) advocates that sometimes terrorism specifically targets tourism because it is viewed as a movement of “… alien visitors representing a form of neo-colonialism or a threat to well-established societal norms, traditions, value-systems, and religious convictions” (Wahab, 1995:85). This explanation (Aziz, 1995; Wahab, 1995) supports Richter and Waugh’s (1986) earlier implication that friction could result when tourism is blamed for causing negative impacts on culture due to simple contact between hosts and tourists. More conservative locals or Muslim activists may think they have to take severe action to avert what they perceive as a threat to their national culture, traditions and religious beliefs unfortunately, in extreme cases, the desire to protect holy beliefs manifests itself in terrorism (Wahab, 1995).

It is clearly explained in the above literature that tourism may be a message as well as a medium of communication initiated by terrorists. Sonmez (1998) affirms that tourism can stimulate terrorist violence by fuelling political, religious, socio-
economic or cultural resentment and be used as a cost effective instrument to convey broader message of ideological/political hostility. In either case, the choice of tourist as a target is not coincidental (Sonmez, 1998).

In the resolution of WTO's General Assembly in Bali, Indonesia (1993) the organisation member countries condemned all violence and all criminal acts against travellers, tourists and tourism facilities. The resolution recommends that countries should take all appropriate measures against those who commit such criminal acts to protect travellers, tourists and tourist facilities. This use of appropriate measures may need a deep understanding of the nature of each violent act; therefore it may be important to distinguish terrorism from other similar event in order to assign the appropriate measures to obstruct such events before its occurrence.

**How is terrorism distinguished from other similar events?**

Ryan (1993) treats terrorism as an advanced form of crime in a typology of crimes involving tourism. Admittedly, at first glance terrorism and crime are similar because they both involve random violence against individuals and threaten tourism. However, it is important to differentiate between them because the lack of clear definition of motives can only add to the complexity of developing solutions. Terrorism is clearly different from every day crime on the basis of political and religious motives (Sonmez, 1998).
Terrorism should not be confused with crime, nor should it be considered a synonym of political violence. It is a systematic and persistent strategy practiced by state or political group against another state, political or social group through a campaign of acts of violence, such as assassinations, hijacking, use of explosives, sabotage, murder and the like, with the intent of creating a state of terror and public intimidation to achieve political, social or religious ends.

(Ezzeddin, 1987:39-40)

Wahab (1996) affirms that terrorism should be distinguished from other forms of violence, such as guerrilla warfare, state dictatorship, political crime, and organised crime. He explains that while those engaged in guerrilla warfare and terrorism both use systematic violence to realise their goals, terrorism generally take place in cities, involving small groups, and seeks to devastate the enemy’s morale. He further notes that guerrilla warfare is a clear and definite pattern of war acts that are mainly practiced in woods, mountains, and rural areas. He also argues that while guerrillas do not usually use terrorist actions, they may resort to them in order to help them achieve their political aims, particularly in the case of national liberation movements and popular struggle against colonialists (Wahab, 1996).

Wahab (1996) also distinguishes terrorism from state dictatorship:

State dictatorship, on the other hand, may use violence to influence political decisions and eradicate opposition. It strives to achieve social and political change by superimposition. Its scope of activities is usually extensive, overwhelming and includes all the population. This particular aspect makes it more comprehensive than terrorism, which no matter how strong it may be, is limited in its scope. Dictatorship may use methods similar to those used in terrorism such as assassinations, kidnapping and bombing. But
terrorism differs from state dictatorship in motives and the social, economic, ideological and political considerations, which drive its activities.

(Wahab, 1996:177-178)

In the same article he also discriminates between terrorism and political crime. He states:

Terrorism is also different from political crime, which is subject to controversial opinion among jurists; it is usually considered a crime connected to the basis of social order like anarchy and communism. The sixth conference for standardising criminal laws held in Copenhagen in 1935 was clear in defining political crimes as "crimes committed against the regime of the state and its proceedings as well as against its citizens' rights". This definition does not apply to terrorism.

(Wahab, 1996:178)

Organised crime is also different from terrorism; Ezzedin (1987) differentiated between organised crime and terrorism, as the main goal of the organised crime is to work outside the government and the people's framework to achieve financial benefits through illegitimate means. He affirms that while the terrorist believes in the nobility and the honesty of his motives that may sacrifice himself to realise his aim, the only objective of the criminal organisation is to attain financial gain.

Tudge (2004) discriminated terrorists from freedom fighters as he emphasised that the government for its convenience, is confusing terrorists with freedom fighters or resistance workers. Tudge (2004) suggested that freedom fighters have a cause that they pursue as decorously as possible and they try to target only their enemies, while terrorists aim to strike terror; and to slaughter innocents as an important part of the stunt.
After shedding the light on terrorism, its definitions, its different motives, the reasons that terrorism usually target tourists and tourism, and the differences between tourism and other similar events, it is very important to discuss the impacts of terrorism on the tourism industry.

How does terrorism affect the tourism industry?

According to Hall (1994), tourism is affected by terrorism in two ways. First, terrorists’ activities may damage a destination’s or country’s tourist industry by creating an image of insecurity. For example, tourist arrivals to Egypt dropped by 12.14 percent in 1998 after Luxor attacks in 1997 (WTO, 1998), as a result of the terrible image of insecurity that was created, especially by the media at that time. Second, tourists or tourist facilities, such as airport terminals or aircraft, may themselves be subject to attack. Richter and Waugh (1986) support this concept as they state that tourist facilities are logical targets of terrorists’ violence because they give chance and security for terrorists to execute their plan. They report that preliminary estimates demonstrating that 1.8 million Americans changed their plans for foreign travel in 1986, following attacks on Libya and terrorist attacks on several European airports (Richter and Waugh, 1986).

Hall (1994) asserts that terrorists to achieve a range of tactical, strategic and ideological objectives can use attacks on tourists or tourist facilities. He points out that gaining publicity for the terrorist cause is one of the most common reasons for terrorist attacks (Hall, 1994). For example, the September 11th terrorist attacks had a more dramatic impact on the international tourism industry than any other crisis in the recent years (WTO, 2001). The USA was attacked within its own territory and as usual travellers and tourist facilities (aircrafts) were used to execute the attack. The attacks generated fear and hesitation to travel, especially in aircrafts. The reaction from tourists was to return home as quickly as possible, and then followed by a wave of cancellations, especially, long haul trips from North America. The crisis also had a severe impact on carriers (especially, aircrafts), hotels, and on the business travel sector. Reservations
worldwide were estimated to be 12 to 15 percent down by end of October 2001. Also emerging Mediterranean destinations of the Middle East and North Africa suffered from being perceived as close to the conflict or belonging to the Muslim world (WTO, 2001). For Example, the Egyptian tourism industry was hurt by September 11th attacks especially during October and November 2001. This was a decrease of 15 percent in tourists' arrivals and 9 percent in terms of tourist nights compared to the year 2000 (WTO Commission, Cairo, September, 2002).

In this way, terrorist attacks on tourists may also be used to punish nationals of the country, which supports the government that the terrorists are trying to conquer or that is in opposition to their own activities (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996).

It is very clear that the attacks of September 11th supports this proposition as well as the proposition of Richter and Waugh (1986) that attacks on American tourists may be analysed as a form of punishment to the US government for its foreign policy decisions (example supporting Israel, levying political penalties on Iraq at that time) and military actions.

Terrorism may not only endanger the future of the tourism industry, but it may also threaten the industry's authenticity (Santana, 2001). Santana (2001) argues that when terrorism strikes, the industry inexorably becomes an issue of political significance and debate since it involves national security measures and has implications on the whole population.

*Whenever a tourist destination is affected by an act of terrorism, the consequences are many and diversified. Invariably, the net result is that the industry's profitability is negatively affected due to both travellers' reactions to the event and the numerous amount of effort in the industry has to exercise to lure tourists back.*

(Santana, 2001:231)
Santana (2001) also suggests that terrorism may affect the tourism industry in several ways that he listed as follows:

- Employment in destination countries and businesses in generating countries may be hurt (travel agents, tour operators, etc.).
- Neighbouring countries may lose inbound tourists (generalisation effect).
- Airlines suffer from low demand and when they are involved as a victim of terrorism as the case in September 11th attacks, there may be legal disputes over compensation or damage claims for victims of incidents, or awards for loss of life.
- Due to its economic significance, tourism is immensely important politically for both developed and developing nations. Whenever international terrorism occurs, its impacts are seldom localised and it has repercussions on the whole country, or region, as well as on political relations between countries.

Several researchers also have suggested that acts of terrorism have differential effects on tourism demand depending on such factors as the severity of the event and the frequency of occurrence. Pizam (1999) accounts for these two factors suggesting that the more severe the criminal/violent act the greater the magnitude of the impact and also the more frequent the occurrence of such acts the greater their impact on tourism demand. He concludes:

Acts resulting in mass destruction of life and property followed by loss of life and bodily harm have the strongest effect on tourism demand. Acts resulting from loss of property only have the lowest effect on tourism demand. All these being equal, acts occurring more frequently will have more intense, widespread and lengthy effect on tourism demand than those occurring less frequently.

(Pizam, 1999:11)
On the other hand, the results of the study done by Pizam and Fleischer (2002) confirm that during the period of May 1991 through May 2001 the most important factor that affected tourists' entries to Israel was the frequency of the terrorist acts and not the level of severity, therefore they suggest that tourist destinations may recover from even severe acts of terrorism as long as the terrorist acts are not repeated. However, when acts of terrorism occur at high frequency and regular intervals, tourism demand will constantly decrease and eventually, will come to a standstill (Pizam and Fleischer, 2002). O'Brien and Read (2005) supported this argument by emphasising that risk to human populations is a function of frequency of the severe event in addition to vulnerability; they defined vulnerability as the range of factors that express the state of development that determine the amount of damage and loss of human life that a particular hazard can cause.

Wahab (1996) concludes that terrorism is a temporary phenomenon that appears in relation to specific circumstances prevailing in a given time in a certain society. He asserts that it's an expression of minority groups who haven't succeeded throughout history in overthrowing political regimes or introducing a real substitute for an existing political system (Wahab, 1996).

The above literature offer valuable insight and leads to a deeper understanding of the meaning of terrorism, the unique relationship between tourism and terrorism, the difference between terrorism and other similar activities such as crime, which will be thoroughly discussed next, and shed light on the devastating impacts of terrorism on the tourism industry.

3.3.3 Crime and tourism

Crimes against tourists have received international attention and put travel industry in a position of allocating scarce resources to encourage tourists that it is safe to travel (Tarlow and Muehsam, 1996). Tarlow and Muehsam (1996) note
that there are two broad categories of crimes that affect the tourist: first, planned political crimes such as terrorism that has been previously discussed, and second, crimes of opportunity, which occur as a result of law and order problems together with weak economic conditions such as high poverty and unemployment rates in the destination (Levantis and Gani, 2000). In the former case, the perpetrator seeks to make a statement or send a message through the use of violence (Karper, 1970; Richter and Waugh, 1991; Sonmez, 1998), while in the later, the crime occurs against an unknown victim as a means of gratification, whether psychological, sexual or economic (Katz, 1992).

The news media, government agencies and researchers are much concerned about the issue of crime and its relationship with tourism. Tarlow and Muehsam (1992) stated that it is merely because tourism is considered a vital economic activity in many countries. They also affirm that tourism is by most accounts the world’s largest peacetime industry. On the other hand, a social-psychological perspective would be to view travel as the industry that binds people together. In this necessarily interconnected and travel dependent world (Giddens, 1990), crimes against travellers touch many more people than just the injured party and his/her family.

Although crimes against tourists seem to affect the perception of safety of almost every one who travels, crimes against tourists or visitors are not new (Tarlow and Muehsam, 1996). Tarlow and Muehsam (1996) discuss that reaching back to Biblical days it may be assumed that there were always some people who were keen or desirous of taking advantage of tourists. They note that taking advantage of tourists, such as raising the price of an item under the hypothesis that the tourist knew no better, was so common that the English language invented the term “tourist-trap” Also in the past travellers used to fear pirates and Kidnappers (Tarlow and Muehsam, 1996).
In the recent years researchers have been interested in the relationship between tourism and security issues; several studies as demonstrated in the above literature have tackled the relationship between political instability (warfare and terrorism) and tourism, but to what extent does crime impact upon tourism? The focus of much of the research detailing the association between crime and tourism has sought to examine two main issues: first whether the tourism industry encourages criminal activity, and second, whether crime and safety problems at a tourist destination have an impact on tourism demand (George, 2003) as will be further discussed.

Does the tourism industry encourage criminal activity?

Pizam (1982) in his study of the relationship between crime and tourism in the United States found that very little correlation existed between crime and its relationship to tourism. A later cross-cultural comparative study of perceptions of tourism in seven countries found that crime-related issues were among concerns of each country studied relative to tourism (Pizam and Teliseman-Kosuta, 1989). Another cross-cultural study compared perceptions of residents in Central Florida and Nadi, Fiji. The findings suggest that tourism is perceived to contribute toward an increase in organised crime and individual crimes (Pizam et al., 1994).

Other research into the relationship between mass tourism destinations and increasing crime suggests a number of factors that may seem encouraging to criminal activities. In general, however, previous studies have failed to identify those features of the growth in tourism that stimulate growth in crime (Prideaux, 1996). Fujii and Mak (1980) suggest that tourists may be regarded as tempting crime targets because they carry portable wealth in the form of cash, jewellery and cameras. Also Chesney-Lind and Lind (1986) found after reviewing the crime statistics in Hawaii that tourists experienced rates of crime involving property and violence at rates that were significantly higher than residents.
Clark (1988) concludes that the pleasant tropical climate of certain destinations may attract many non-tourists to the area including a large number of drifters and drug users. Both groups tend to be associated with increased criminal activities, particularly the areas of illegal use of drugs, prostitution and vandalism. In the same perspective Garland (1984) found that tourist destinations in New Zealand show rates of offences including violence, drugs and sexual offences that were higher than the national average. While unable to conclude that tourism was the prime cause of increased crime, Garland concludes that rates of crime confirm the residents' belief that tourism brought with it increased criminal activity.

Prideaux (1996) asserts that there are some factors that contribute to the increase of crime rates in tourist destinations; one of these factors he discusses is the unfamiliarity with the area that may result in tourists engaging in activities that lead to victimisation. Visiting nightclubs and bars late at night and engaging in activities such as prostitution and drug taking that would normally be avoided at home, are typical examples of these types of action. In the same sense, Uzzell (1984) suggests that risk taking is a significant element in the fantasy and escape, which is often an important element of the holiday experience. As a result, they may find themselves victims of theft, assaults and robberies because of their lack of knowledge about where and where not to go and when in the destination, while local residents are aware of such things therefore, tourists may be more exposed to crimes than local residents.

Prideaux (1996) suggests that if there is a relationship between drug use and crime in certain tourism areas it is probable that other factors are at work apart from the physical presence of increased numbers of tourists. Closed investigation of strategies that destinations employ to promote themselves may provide an answer. Uzzell (1994) noted that some tourism promotional materials are trying to sell sun, sea, sand and sex, by purposely using images that exhibit a similarity to contemporary soft pornography.
Prideaux (1994) suggests that images of this nature and the potential for employment stimulate migration into the area including those who wish to invest, those looking for work and those attracted by the potential for crime.

Prideaux (1996) suggests that the lure of a pleasant lifestyle, potential for employment in an apparently glamorous industry and possible attractions of a hedonistic lifestyle away from emotional bonds of family and friends provide strong inducements for young people to move to tourist destinations that promote such a lifestyle. Unfortunately, for many new arrivals the promise does not match reality. Many tourism jobs are comparatively low-paid, service positions that are often worked on shift basis. Earnings from employment may not always enable newly arrived workers to engage in the lifestyle that attracted them to the area in the first place, giving rise to a general feeling of frustration. Such frustrations may lead to people departing from the area or turning to other endeavours such as drugs or crime (Prideaux, 1996).

As a result Prideaux (1996) suggests that the most influential factors seem to be the image that is created through the type of marketing undertaken, as discussed above. He affirms that an increasingly mobile population with few emotional ties to the area and in hunt of their own after-work entertainment offers an opportunity for a huge night entertainment industry to emerge. As a result, this powerful mix of youth, money and desire to have good time leads to excessive use of alcohol and encourages the growth of a drug sub-culture, which in turn leads to high crime rates.

Other factors that may also contribute to increased incidents of crime include resentment by locals over invasive mass tourism and conflicting norms of dress, speech and behaviour which give rise to increased tension between tourists and residents, Racial and ethnic factors and colour may also be a contributing factor (Pearce, 1982)
The tourism crime cycle

The tourism crime cycle depicted in table 3.1 and figure 3.5 illustrates the development of crime in beach destinations according to the type of marketing used in that destination as proposed by Prideaux (1996). He suggests that it is highly likely that similar patterns will be found in other tourism destinations such as mountain resorts. The model traces the development of crime through the manner in which destination is marketed, the type of tourist accommodation facilities constructed and the expansion of marketing vicinity from day-trippers to international tourists. He notes that two principal types of destinations are postulated, the hedonistic destination and the family values destinations. The hedonistic destination would market itself with images of adventure, romance, escapism and sex. Destinations classified as belonging to the family values group will not emphasise sex and romance but instead promote family holidays for all age groups.

The following model suggested by Prideaux as shown in figure 3.5 and in table 3.1 postulates four stages in the growth of a destination starting with stage one, local tourism. Growth of destination is dependent on the development of transport infrastructure and the expansion of the marketing vicinity from the local area in stage one to international market in stage four. The growth of crime will depend on both the type of marketing adopted and the stage of growth achieved.
Figure 3.5 Destination growth stages
Table 3.1 The Tourism Crime Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic of Development</th>
<th>Local Tourism</th>
<th>Regional Tourism</th>
<th>National Tourism (emphasis on hedonistic style)</th>
<th>Mass Tourism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Key Developments in the Area's Tourist Industry** | • Small tourism industry  
• Caravan parks  
• Backpackers’ hostels, motels as the main types of accommodation  
• Road and air access limited | • Decisions made by locals to promote tourism  
• Roads and some air services start being improved  
• Increased investment in tourism facilities  
• First large resort-style hotel built  
• Promotion of a larger scale with some national promotion | • Promotion assessed against national focus  
• Improvements to tourism infrastructure, principally in the transport area, including scheduled national air services  
• Resort hotels and manmade attractions move into the area  
• A nightclub scene develops initially to cater for tourist industry workers as well as tourists | • International promotion includes major events  
• Improved national access through air and/or rail  
• Heavy foreign investment  
• Centre for international conferences  
• Desire to attract casino |
| **Social Characteristics** | • Employees are mainly locals  
• Low ownership  
• Low crime  
• Low social mobility | • Migration of workers into the area  
• Increased outside investment  
• Crime rate begins to increase in relation to increased mobility of population  
• Type of promotion | • Large number of young single women who exhibit social mobility, relative deprivation, use drugs  
• Increase in media awareness of crime  
• Organised crime increases  
• Opportunity for corruption of civil servants and politicians | • Crowding  
• Citizen fright may occur in hedonistic resorts  
• Demand for law enforcement |
| **Major Crime Characteristics** | • All classes of crime below the state average  
• Property crime and drug taking increase in hedonistic resorts  
• Low crime in family values destinations | • Property crime and drug taking increase in hedonistic resorts  
• Low crime in family values destinations  
• Crime rates exceed state average in hedonistic resorts  
• Increase in drug offences and stealing in family values resorts generally still below the state average | • Most classes of crime exceed state average by significant level in hedonistic resorts  
• Increase in drug offences and stealing in family values resorts generally still below the state average | |

Source: Prideaux (1996:71)
In his conclusion Prideaux (1996) emphasises the strong link between the increase in tourism and the increase in crime, which is likely caused by the promotional image of the destination, the growth in the night entertainment industry and the size of the destination’s drug sub-culture.

Many other studies supports Prideaux’s proposition that tourist is responsible for the increase rate of crime in tourist destinations (Nicholls, 1976; Fujii and Mak, 1980; Long, 1996; Ryan and Kinder, 1996; George, 2003). For instance, Nicholls (1976) note that according to the police department statistics, increased visitor rates correlated to the increased number of arrests to a holiday resort town in North Carolina in the USA. Fujii and Mak (1980) found similar results arguing that increased crime rates in rural areas of Hawaii are associated with the development of tourism.

Begging, gambling and prostitution, which may be social consequences of the tourism industry, may also be associated with criminal activity in certain host communities. For example, in his study into the impact of casino gambling on US communities, Long (1996) concludes that gambling leads to an increase in crime rates. Ryan and Kinder (1996) discuss the phenomenon of prostitution and its relationship with tourism. They argue that such activity might be thought to have some relation to other forms of deviant tourist behaviour such as being drunk or tanking drugs, where, such tourists might not be defined as criminals, might not be victims or criminals but are operating the fuzzy edge of criminality in such a way as to be potentially vulnerable to either criminal or police action.

George (2003) shed the light on another factor that should be taken into consideration when viewing the relationship between crime and the tourism industry is that tourism growth is usually accompanied by an increase in the local population, which means that the actual number of crimes might increase with out any actual growth in the per capita crime rate. On the other hand, Sheibler et al. (1996) conclude that crimes against tourists are more likely to occur in those countries that already are experiencing a disproportionately high level of
conventional crime. Therefore it may be assumed that introducing higher rates of tourism in a low crime rate country will not automatically lead to higher rates of tourist victimisation. However, increasing the numbers of tourists in an already high crime country may have a significant effect on the rates of crime committed against tourists (Scheibler, 1996).

Also Mathieson and Wall (1982) point out that tourism is not the only industry that is responsible for the increase of crime rate in a certain place; they noted that increased crime rates at certain destinations may also be a result shred by other industries at those destinations, such as the farming and the mining industry. For example, labourers and migrant workers might participate in criminal activities. Nevertheless, tourism-related crimes are highly publicised, thus resulting in a disproportionate emphasis on tourism as the reason for such activity (Mathieson and Wall, 1982).

After the above literature has focused on the effect of tourism on crime rates and whether tourism is a major factor in increased crime rates in certain destinations or not, it is important to start facing the fact of high level of crime occurrence in some destinations and investigating how such image would affect tourist demand.

**How does crime affect tourist demand?**

As previously mentioned, crime committed against tourists is not a new phenomenon (Tarlow and Muehsam, 1996), yet researchers have been judicious to link tourist victimisation directly to tourism demand. This is because there are many exogenous factors that are involved in the tourist’s decision-making process. Some of these factors include economic considerations, accessibility, climate, changes in consumer trends, the amount of push and pull by intermediaries (which will be discussed in details in the next chapter), and the effectiveness of marketing campaigns (George, 2003). Furthermore, tourism researchers have been hindered by a lack of available data because most law-enforcing agencies do not distinguish between crimes committed against tourists
and crimes committed against residents. As Fujii and Mak (1980) note, data limitations often prevent researchers from being able to identify the direct victims of crime. Tourism researchers, have therefore, either relied on interviewing tourists as they leave the destination (Strangeland, 1998) or made use of police records that identified victims as tourists (Chsney-Lind and Lind, 1986; Sheibler et al., 1996).

Tourists and certain tourist locations have been found vulnerable to crime. Tourists are regarded by criminals as an easy target, or those who happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, may become crime victims, and the ensuing media attention may have an adverse effect on potential tourists' perceptions and consequently on the volume of tourist demand to such destinations (George, 2003).

Besides affecting the volume of tourist demand tourist-related crime and violence also impact on those businesses that rely heavily on tourist expenditure for their survival. Their loss in revenue could be substantial if tourists are unwilling to take risks where they are doubtful about the safety of the inner city areas. Tourist-related businesses see the crime factor as the main reason for the decline in tourist business activities, accounting for 78 percent of the decline. The economic and political climate contributes 58 and 70 percent respectively to the decline of tourist business (Mynhard, 1992).
The impact of crime and violence is also often measured in terms of associated costs to the economy of a country or region. Many other measures could be considered to determine the impact of crime and violence such as the number of man-hours lost or the decrease in productivity (Bloom, 1996). Besides having a negative on tourism businesses and on the economy of a country or region, the unfavourable publicity has a damaging effect on the image of the country as a whole (Bloom, 1996). The perceived risk for tourists and foreign investors if the situation is unstable or insecure becomes too large to risk visiting or investing in destinations plagued by high level of crime.

After reviewing literature on three of the major security problems that could face any destination it may likely be concluded that any security problem (wars, terrorism, high level of crime) in a certain destination may affect negatively the volume of tourist demand to such destination. It is also logic to conclude that if a tourist feels unsafe or threatened at a holiday destination, he or she can develop a negative impression of the destination. George (2003) suggests that this can be very damaging to the destination’s tourism industry and can result in the
decline of tourism to the area. Therefore it is very important to study how to manage destination crisis and what are the counteractions that should be taken towards security problems in any destination as will be illustrated in the following section.

3.4 Destination Crisis Management

Clearly, the tourism industry is one of the most vulnerable and most susceptible industries to crises. Paradoxically, the ability of the industry to react or prevent crisis is very limited (Santana, 2001). While a great deal of attention is given to the impact of crises on the industry, very few attempts have been made to provide effective tools for the prevention and management of crisis within the industry. While other industries are benefiting from the development and employment of crisis management tools, the tourism industry is still only reactive to divergent situations (Sonmez and Tarlow, 1997).

Sonmez et al. (1994) clarify that a crisis is any event that creates negative publicity and includes the period of time after a disaster occurrence that may last until full recovery is achieved and pre disaster conditions resume. They then define tourism crisis as:

Any occurrence, which can threaten the normal operation and conduct of tourism related businesses; damage a tourist destination's overall reputation for safety, attractiveness, and comfort by negatively affecting visitors' perceptions of that destination; and, in turn, cause a down turn in the local travel and tourism economy, and interrupt the continuity of business operations for the local travel and tourism industry, by the reduction in tourist arrivals and expenditures.

(Sonmez et al., 1994:2.2)
It can be inferred then that crisis situations, which threaten tourist activity, often begin with short-lived disasters, whether natural or human caused. Thus a single terrorist incident as an example may create a crisis situation if that destination’s image of safety is significantly damaged (Wahab, 1996) such as Egypt after Luxor’s terrorist attacks in 1997. Therefore the destination must not only manage the crisis but also instigate marketing efforts to recuperate lost tourism by rebuilding its positive image (Sonmez, 1998).

Tourism crises triggered by political instability are likely to be different from those caused by natural disasters (Sonmez, 1998). Sonmez (1998) recommends that preceding any negative occurrence a task force should be organised to deal specifically with crisis situations, one that efficiently delegates to the teams responsibilities of communicating with the media, public relations, information coordination, fund raising, and marketing and advertising. He further suggests initiating crisis management activities with the appropriate identification of a situation of crisis. Other recommendations by Sonmez et al. (1994) include organising press conferences, developing a strong relationship with media members to assure balance and realistic coverage of the events, and developing press outfits for media distribution.

For example, Wahab (1996) carried out a study to explain the origins and reasons of terrorism in Egypt and to set strategies that should be followed for counteracting terrorism in Egypt. He describes possible actions for managing tourism crisis as capitalising on two constituents; security and promotion. He notes that after terrorists had targeted international tourism, the Egyptian police force implemented preventive and proactive measures that eventually helped them locate and arrest terrorist leaders.
The Egyptian police force adopted a series of counter-measures against terrorism that were heavily based upon tight anti-criminal actions aiming at protecting the country at large and the vulnerable tourist industry in particular. Every bus, train and Nile cruiser transporting tourists has a “discreet” police guard.

(Wahab, 1996:181)

The other constituent of Egyptian crisis management he explains involves aggressive promotions. He notes that the ministry had re-evaluated its current marketing strategy before setting new objectives that included heavy advertising. In support for the ministry’s measures, Wahab states,

The only way to overcome such poor image (resulting from sustained terrorism) projection is by vigorous promotions that can provide wide exposure sufficient to capture the international media’s attention.

(Wahab, 1996:185)

Recognising that promotion alone is insufficient, Wahab (1996) also recommends maintaining good contacts with members of the international media; providing comprehensive information to international travel intermediaries (tour operators and travel agents) as travel intermediaries have a great power to influence and affect consumer (tourist) demand (Hawkins and Hudman, 1989) and to the press in order be able to properly evaluate travel risks and wisely guide tourists away from high risk areas (Wahab, 1996)

As Wahab (1996) accounts for measures of counteracting terrorism as one of the dimensions of political instability (Hall and O’Sullivan, 1996), Bloom (1996) suggests some possible initiatives to combat tourism-related crime and violence. Bloom (1996) notes the main objective should be to combat crime and violence in South Africa by creating and operationalising structures within the tourist nodes. He suggests that a well-coordinated and cooperative networking among national tourism structures, the police, the community structures and tourist
information agencies and all other industry stakeholders is crucial to guarantee success. He also affirms that crime and violence could be addressed effectively through community involvement and support programmes to improve social conditions, which may also be improved as he argues by employment generated by tourism, which acts as a catalyst to stimulate socio-economic conditions. He finally concludes that the involvement of community-based organisations in the promotion of tourism-related activities could help to promote a feeling of pride and belonging and eventually help to reduce crime and violence (Bloom, 1996).

Finally, it may be concluded that most crises are hard to avoid, due to their volatile nature especially, those resulting from social or political problems. Destinations may need to establish a plan of action particular to their situation. Having such a plan may save time, energy, and other resources when a destination is faced with a crisis.
3.5 Summary

This chapter has presented one of the various elements that form a destination image, which is the safety element. It has been proven by many researchers that the security and safety element is one of the primary elements when choosing a vacation destination. It also highlights the difference between disasters and crises and that regardless of whether tourism crises are generated by natural or human-caused disasters, travellers will prefer other destinations that are far from the afflicted area.

The Chapter also discusses political instability, which has a much greater negative psychological effect on potential tourists than others (Pizam and Mansfeld 1996), as according to Hall (1994), political stability is an essential prerequisite for attracting international tourists to a destination. It also gives full literature coverage of the three dimensions of political instability, which are warfare, terrorism, and crime and violence as they are considered the main investigated elements in this study. Warfare and terrorism will be investigated as the current circumstances in the Middle East and, especially after September 11th attacks, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Iraqi invasion requires it, while crime and violence in the Middle East will be investigated as to the knowledge of the researcher no or little research was done to investigate the image of such element in the Middle East which may give the research a point of originality.

The chapter concludes with some recommendations of tourism scholars to counteract political instability, terrorism and crime violence acts and methods of managing tourism crisis in destinations, it also concludes that destinations may need to establish a plan of action particular to their situation. Having such a plan may save time, energy, and other resources when a destination is faced with a crisis.
The following chapter highlights the tourist's risk perception, how it affects tourism demand, also the different factors that affect it such as tourist-related factors (Demographic, internal, cultural) and external factors such as media as well as travel intermediaries with their great influence on tourist purchase decision and in forming tourist image of a destination, which are the main subject of this study and is be discussed in the next chapter (chapter 4).
CHAPTER FOUR: FACTORS AFFECTING TOURIST’S RISK PERCEPTION AND ITS EFFECTS ON DESTINATION IMAGE

4.1 Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapter, violence is a feature of the contemporary world, mediated through instant news and pictures from most parts of the world. It may be directed specifically against tourists from abroad, since this will gain maximum publicity for politically motivated terrorists and/or those who want to harm a country’s economy by reducing its income from tourism (example the fundamentalists’ attacks in Egypt from 1990 and the rebel attacks in Turkey from 1991. Also individual crime against tourists such as stealing, which is considered as more profitable for thieves and easier than assault local residents and may be rationalised as taking money from rich exploiters (Bar-On, 1996).

Therefore, George (2003) suggests that if a tourist feels unsafe or threatened at a holiday destination, he or she may develop a negative impression of a destination. This may be very damaging to the destination’s tourism industry and may result in the decline of tourism to the area. He suggests that this may happen in three ways as follows:

- Prospective tourists may decide not to visit the destination because it has a reputation for security problems.

- If tourists feel unsafe at a destination, they are not likely to take part in activities outside their accommodation facility.

- Tourists who have felt threatened or unsafe are not likely to return to the destination, and they are not likely to recommend the destination to others.
Tourists may be reasonable in expecting some degree of protection by governments and the industry. However, individuals are responsible for their own decisions and actions. The introduction of risk into tourist's decisions has the potential to disrupt routine decision-making. It is intuitively logical for potential tourists to compare destination alternatives according to perceived benefits and costs (Sonmez and Graefe, 1998).

Despite, their low probability, risks carrying high costs (example, terrorism) appear to provoke serious consumer reaction (Richter and Waugh, 1986). Risks have been mostly treated as an issue of facilitators versus inhibitors or constraints. For example, time, budget, and physical distance have been identified as important constraints potential tourists use to differentiate between destinations alternatives (Cook and McCleary, 1983). Sonmez and Graefe (1998) reported from Crompton (1977) that destination selection is made after weighing constraints such as time and money against destination image. VanRaaij and Francken (1984) suggest that consumers weigh constraints against current economic situations in making travel decisions. According to their argument, tourists might select less expensive options or decide against travel during economic difficulty. It is likely for perceptions of crime, terrorism or political instability risk to cause similar behaviour. Crompton (1992) supports this idea as he affirms that destinations perceived as constituting too high risk, due to situational constraints or barriers, might become undesirable.

As a result this chapter presents a review of the factors affecting tourists' risk perception and its effects on destination image. Section 4.2 provides an overview of the factors that affect the risk perception of tourists and affect their destination selection process. Section 4.3 discusses after that role of media and its effects on destination security image. Section 4.4 highlights the role of travel intermediaries and their effects on destination security image that may affect tourists' decision-making. The chapter concludes with a model that describes the factors affecting tourist risk perception.
4.2 Risk and its Effect on Tourism

Since 1984, a number of catastrophes have occurred that have highlighted the importance of studying risk (Tierney, 1994). In order to better understand the effect of risk on individuals' decisions, it is important to explain the notion of risk as covered by sociologists. Several writers emphasized the importance of studying the sociological perspective of risk (Beck, 2002, 1996; Tierney, 1994; Mitchell, 1990; Rowe, 1988; Crouch and Wilson, 1982).

Risk as a sociological phenomenon

Rowe (1977) defined risk as the potential for realisation of unwanted, negative consequences of an event. The fields of risk assessment and risk analysis aim at identifying, measuring and evaluating the outcomes resulting from natural and technological hazards (Mitchell, 1990; Rowe, 1988; Crouch and Wilson, 1982). Much of the literature focuses on the analysis of the risks and consequences associated with natural hazards and disasters but in recent years technological risks have become a major focus (Tierney, 1994).

The term 'risk society' was introduced by Beck (1992). Beck argued that modern society has changed fundamentally from a society characterised primarily by inequalities of wealth and income to a society where the chief problems are environmental hazards which cut across traditional inequalities. In this sense, in the contemporary world, society is characterised by risks such as nuclear and chemical pollution which – while not affecting everyone equally – nevertheless affect people according to new patterns and inequalities which are only partially related to those of income and wealth.

Giddens (1991) argued that there has been a huge historical transformation of the nature of risk and security. Preoccupation with risk in modern social life has nothing to do with the actual prevalence of life threatening dangers. On the level of the individual life-span, in terms of life expectation and degree of freedom from
serious disease, people in the developed societies are in a much more secure position than were most in previous ages. Although physical security of human beings has been enhanced in industrial societies, modernity has resulted in new risks such as war, motor accidents, drugs, environmental pollution, etc. (Giddens, 1991).

Beck (2002) emphasised that world risk society does not arise from the fact that everyday life has generally become more dangerous. It is not a matter of the increase, but rather of the de-bounding of uncontrollable risks. This de-bounding is three-dimensional: spatial, temporal and social. In the spatial dimension we see ourselves confronted with risks that do not take nation-state boundaries, or any other boundaries for that matter, into account: climate change, air pollution and the ozone hole affect everyone (if not all in the same way). Similarly, in the temporal dimension, the long latency period of dangers, such as, for example, in the elimination of nuclear waste or the consequences of genetically manipulated food, escapes the prevailing procedures used when dealing with industrial dangers. Finally, in the social dimension, the incorporation of both jeopardizing potentials and the related liability question lead to a problem, namely that it is difficult to determine, in a legally relevant manner, who 'causes' environmental pollution or a financial crisis and who is responsible, since these are mainly due to the combined effects of the actions of many individuals. 'Uncontrollable risks' must be understood as not being linked to place, that is they are difficult to impute to a particular agent and can hardly be controlled on the level of the nation state.

This then also means that the boundaries of private insurability dissolve, since such insurance is based on the fundamental potential for compensation of damages and on the possibility of estimating their probability by means of quantitative risk calculation. So the hidden central issue in world risk society is how to put on control over the uncontrollable – in politics, law, science, technology, economy and everyday life (Adam, 2002; Beck, 1992, 1999; Featherstone, 2000; Giddens, 1994; Latour, 2002; van Loon, 2000).
Beck (2002) differentiated between three different axes of conflict in world risk society. The first axis is that of ecological conflicts, which are by their very essence global. The second is global financial crises, which, in a first stage, can be individualized and nationalized. And the third, which suddenly broke upon us on September 11th, is the threat of global terror networks, which empower governments and states. When we say these risks are global, this should not be equated with a homogenization of the world, that is, that all regions and cultures are now equally affected by a uniform set of non-quantifiable, uncontrollable risks in the areas of ecology, economy, and power. On the contrary, global risks are per se unequally distributed. They unfold in different ways in every concrete formation, mediated by different historical backgrounds, cultural and political patterns. In the so-called periphery, world risk society appears not as an endogenous process, which can be fought by means of autonomous national decision-making, but rather as an exogenous process that is propelled by decisions made in other countries, especially in the so-called centre. People feel like the helpless hostages of this process insofar as corrections are virtually impossible at the national level.

Therefore, individuals find themselves obliged to make their own decisions in order to avoid risks. A case in point is the case of tourists who take their travel decisions based on their risk perception of a certain destination. Potential tourists (as previously explained in chapter two) are likely to narrow down complex perceptions of destination attributes into simply facilitators and inhibitors and eliminate destination alternatives from their consideration set by the assessment of the impacts of those inhibitors and facilitators (Um and Crompton, 1992). Facilitators are found to exert greater influence in the earlier stages of decision-making, whereas inhibitors had more influence in later stages when the process becomes more serious (Um and Crompton, 1992). This is confirmed by the cancellations of plans to travel to destination that has experienced terrorism or political problems after the vacation is booked, such as what happened after September 11th attacks as a result of the fear that spread between travellers.
Tourist Risk Perceptions

In a study exploring the relationship between risk perceptions and leisure tourism, destinations selection was found to become risky when the decision's consequences are uncertain or some outcomes are more desirable than others; and information search behaviour was identified as a common risk reduction strategy (Roehl and Fesenmaier, 1992). Roehl and Fesenmaier (1992) suggest that personality features are used in explaining individuals' risk taking tendencies. Roehl and Fesenmaier (1992) classify tourists into three groups based on their perception of risk: risk neutral, functional risk and place risk. The risk neutral group do not consider tourism or their destination to involve risk. The functional risk group considers the possibility of mechanical equipment or organisational problems as a major source of tourism related risk. The place risk group perceives vacations as fairly risky and the destination of their most recent vacation as very risky. According to them situational factors and types of risk perceived determine how potential travellers respond to risky situations (Roehl and Fesenmaier, 1992).

Sonmez and Graefe (1998) suggest that when consequences of a travel decision are uncertain, that decision is perceived as risky. Decision-makers proceed by weighing the benefits and costs of destination alternatives in order to select the one that promises the most benefits for the least cost. The costliest or the riskiest destinations are likely to become undesirable and eliminated from the selection process. Potential tourists can eliminate part of the perceived risk by acquiring more information about destination alternatives; however, individuals' risk-taking tendencies and their style of response to risky situations are determined by personality traits, types of risk perceived, and situational factors (Sonmez and Graefe, 1998).

Based on several other theories Sonmez and Graefe (1998) suggest that decisions are influenced by several factors as they progress through a sequence of stages. Subject to socio-demographic and psychographic influences, motivation of travel results from various personal, social or commercial cues. They suggest
that an awareness of terrorism or political turmoil risk associated with international tourism may already exist due to personal experience. This awareness, which may also develop as a result of exposure to external factors, such as media coverage, travel advisories, or social interaction, is a political influence on the rest of the decision-making process. In the next stage, individuals decide whether or not to travel to a foreign country as opposed to a domestic destination. They also suggest that the propensity for international choice may depend on several internal and demographic factors.

Pearce (1988, 1996) argues that perceived risk is a stronger predictor of avoiding a particular region than of planning to visit one. For example, those perceiving terrorism as a risk are more likely to avoid the Middle East. He hypothesised that more experienced tourists seek to satisfy higher order needs, while less experienced tourists are likely to be occupied with lower order needs such as food and safety. He also notes a link between travel career and life stage, assuming that older tourists may be more experienced. Interestingly, Sonmez and Graefe (1998) found that age does not affect an individual’s perception of risk among their sample. However Gibson and Yiannakis (2002), in an investigation of tourist role preference over the life course, found that preference for risk related to tourism tended to decrease with age.

In addition, tourism type such as leisure or business may affect the decision process. For instance, business tourists might be more restricted in their destination and scheduling selections. Cook (1990) investigated decisions involving terrorism and political instability risk by using two different populations. According to Cook (1990) business travellers’ propensity for international destinations is predicted by their reluctance to change their plans in response to media coverage of terrorism and their level of previous international experience. In another study of high-level business executives of American multinational corporations, who travelled abroad extensively despite international terrorism, Hartz (1989) found them modifying their on-trip behaviour in order to minimise risks. Cognitive and affective coping styles, uses of denial, anxiety, and self-
reported behavioural changes related to security are examined using in-depth interviews that reveal that many respondents have experienced danger personally. The majority reported changing behaviours to more secure styles. In addition, to this modification, most international business travellers experienced restricted freedom, increased inconvenience and heightened anxiety levels. He defines secure behaviour as keeping low profile, dressing down, eliminating striking consumption patterns and not identifying oneself with a large corporation.

On the other hand, Elsrud (2001) found that risk and adventure are central to the construction of backpacker identity and that perception of risk increases with the degree of novelty associated with particular destination. Moreover, she found that some backpackers are attracted to a location because of the risk associated with it and some are equally deterred by the same perception of risk. Uriely et al., (2002) suggest that while backpackers may share an identity based on their form of travel, they are not homogenous in terms of their attitudes and motivations. Some backpackers are considered drifters according to Cohen's (1972) classification, while others prefer diversionary and recreational modes of tourism (1979).

Elsurd (2001) suggested that the narratives of risk and adventure associated with backpackers are constructed as masculine. This raises the issue of gender. Sonmez and Graefe (1998) found that gender does not influence an individual's perception of risk, yet other researchers have found it does influence touristic choices (Hawes, 1988; Enloe, 1989; Squire, 1994; Deem, 1996; Kinnaird and Hall, 1996; McGehee et al., 1996; Wearing and Wearing, 1996, Jordan and Gibson, 1998; Carr, 2001). Jordan and Gibson (1998) conclude that gender alone does not explain the diversity of travel styles among women tourists who travel alone. Among these interviewed, there is an awareness of increased vulnerability as a result of being female; however, this did not stop them travelling. Instead, they adopted risk reducing strategies similar to the women Elsrud (2001) interviewed. They took calculated risks while travelling from which they gained a sense of empowerment and adventure. Carr (2001) found similar patterns among the young tourists he surveyed in London, UK. While there are gender differences in
the perceptions of danger associated with the city at night, with more women perceiving the greater risks, this consistent among those interviewed. He postulates that other factors such as personality type might also be influential on an individual's perception of danger in a vacation destination.

The assumption that tourists are rational consumers who move through the decision process (as discussed earlier) by weighing utilities against costs postulates that risks associated with increased terrorist incidents, warfare, or high level of crime at a destination increase the perceived cost of the experience, which then results in substitution by destination perceived as safe (Enders and Sandler 1991; Enders et al., 1992; Gu and Martin, 1992). Gu and Martin (1992) support that concept in their study that identifies destination alternatives as a logical solution for international tourists who perceive risk in a certain destination. For example, Mansfeld (1996) identifies shifts in tourism from less stable "inner ring" of the Middle East (Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon and Syria) to the calmer "outer ring" (Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey) due to the Arab-Israeli conflicts. Mansfeld states: "a country that does not take an active part in conflict is not regarded by potential tourists as a threat (Mansfeld, 1996:275). He supports his argument by explaining that the outer ring gained visitors the inner ring lost as a result of the conflict in the region, which he called the "spill over effect". Wahab's (1996) statement that "when some chain of events deters tourists from visiting certain destinations other destinations whether proximate or faraway, will benefit" (Wahab, 1996:176) supports Mansfeld's findings.

On the other hand, Beirman (2002) concludes that countries neighbouring the conflicting countries may be considered collateral victims and be negatively affected. He focuses on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its effect on the tourism industry in Jordan as its neighbour, he considers Jordan a collateral victim of the Israeli-Palestinian problems. Sonmez (1998) supports this concept as he suggests that intra-regional tourists might easily prefer calm destinations neighbouring those in conflict (spill over effect), unlike inter-regional tourists who generalise conflict to entire regions, which might explain why Jordan is considered a
Collateral victim in the case of Beirman (2002) and also explains the decline in the number of tourists visiting the Middle East destinations that were not part of the conflict during the Gulf war such as Egypt.

Sonmez (1998) also claims that it is judicious to consider other situational factors that might lead to travel shifts, such as intensive marketing efforts and currency exchange rates. He asserts that the substitution effect (spill over effect) explains why tourists prefer some destinations to others. The "generalisation effect" might explain why some tourists who perceive political instability threat in one country tend to imagine entire regions to be risky (Enders et al., 1992). The result is the deterrence of tourists from perfectly safe countries when their neighbours experience any kind of political instability. This is illustrated by the decline in overall European travel as a result of terrorism in few countries whose neighbours were experiencing political turmoil, such as during the 1991 Gulf war in Iraq, the Mediterranean region registered serious decrease in tourist flows (Sonmez, 1998).

Cross-cultural studies of risk perception have demonstrated differences not only in ranking risks but also in the magnitude and source of perceived situations (Tiegen et al., 1988; Metchitov and Rebrik, 1990; Goszczynska et al., 1991). Similarly, international tourists’ country of origin is found to predict their reaction to threat of political instability in a certain destination (Hurley, 1988; Tremblay, 1989). In a study weighing the 1985 and 1986 international arrival in Rome, Hurley (1988) found 59 percent decrease in American tourists’ arrivals. The study concludes that American tourists were capricious and suggests that European hoteliers shift their marketing efforts to tourists from Europe and Asia. Another study on the effects of terrorism on the tourism receipts of 18 European countries found receipts to have different elasticities according to tourists’ country of origin (Tremblay, 1989). The study attributes its findings that terrorism did not affect receipts from European tourists to the fact that they may be better informed about political events in Europe and are able to control their destinations and timing according to regions of high and low terrorism possibilities. He also approves that the decrease in receipts from North America may be attributed to the fact that they are often
victimised by terrorist violence and have been exposed to more intense media coverage of terrorist events, which follow his argument that tourists who are better informed about political events react less severely. In the same sense, Wall (1996) suggests that visitors to Northern Ireland who were quite aware of the terrorist activity still felt out of harm’s way because they understood its underlying reasons.

The previous literature focused on the tourist related factors, while external factors (media and travel intermediaries) will be thoroughly discussed in the next sections. The next two sections will discuss the two external factors that affect tourist’s risk perception, which are media coverage and its effects on destination images of security or on the perception of risk held by tourists, and especially travel intermediaries, their importance and their role in tourist decision-making as travel intermediaries are the main focus of this study.

4.3 Media and Its Effect on Destination Security Image

Image has been described as simplified impressions (Mayo, 1973), and the sum of beliefs, impressions, ideas, and perceptions that people hold of objects, behaviours and events (Crompton, 1979). Images are believed to develop on two levels: organic that is formed internally as a result of actual experience, news reports, or inputs from acquaintances and induced that is formed externally received and processed information such as from advertisements (Gunn, 1972; Gartner, 1989). Media coverage of political instability, terrorism, or high level of crime may have the potential to shape the organic image individuals have of destinations. The media’s power to actually change pre-existing attitudes is somewhat questioned, but Weimann and Winn (1994) define its ability to impact attitudes that have not been fully formed.

*Media coverage of terrorist events has an especially powerful potential influence because media coverage is frequently the only source of information on an issue available to the audience. Media coverage is not only frequently a unique source of information but it may be also a unique source of interpretation. In particular, the general public is apt to rely to an*
enormous degree on media accounts for an understanding of terrorists’ motives, the implications of their actions, and the essential character of the situation.

(Weinmann and Winn, 1994:154)

Negative media coverage may impact attitude formation quite easily. Because of the intangible nature of tourism experience, destinations depend heavily on positive images. As a result, the image becomes a crucial factor in travel choice and tourism marketing (Chon, 1991; Echtner and Ritchie, 1991; Gartner, 1993; Bramwell and Rawding, 1996; Dann, 1996). During decision-making, potential tourists compare alternative destinations according to perceived costs and benefits (vanRaaij and Francken, 1984; Woodside and Lysonski, 1989; Enders and Sandler, 1991; Crompton, 1992; Enders et al., 1992). Some destination alternatives may be eliminated as a result of their perceived risks, especially if associated with media images of terrorist threat or political turmoil. Even though the importance of image to marketing is well known, the impact of terrorism or political violence on destination image and the link between it and mass media have scant research attention (Sonmez, 1998).

Iyengar and Kinder (1987) assert that the media interprets issues, giving them more or less significance through the amount or type of coverage provided. They note that the media, particularly television news also focus attention on specific events through the same interpretive function. However, the media does not only influence general public opinions, it also plays a major part in forming tourists’ (and sometimes travel intermediaries’) images of certain destinations and transport modes, their relative safety and security and consequently their travel decision to such destination (Hall, 2002). Bloom (1996) supports this idea as he argues that negative publicity not only contributes to the dilemma of reduced sales and income faced by tourism business, but also has a damaging effect on the image of the country as a whole. He also notes that in many instances tourists are uninformed of the situation or are given a distorted view of development in a certain destination (Bloom, 1996)
Wall (1996) agrees with Bloom (1996) that media may be giving tourists a distorted image of some destinations. Wall (1996) notes:

The immediate reaction of the international public to a terrorist event is usually one of horror, although one suspects that it may gain less attention if it is distant, particularly if no nationals are involved and if it is one among a long series of such events. The media usually covers such events, often with graphic pictures and film, and this may lead to the creation of distorted perception of risk.

(Wall, 1996:145)

For example, media images after September 11th associates any terrorist incident with Muslims, Arabs and the Middle East, which logically creates a stereotype of violence, terrorism, and insecurity in the Middle East or anywhere Arabs and Muslims, are in the minds of Western tourists. As a result of this stereotype created by media exaggerations Western tourists may think twice before visiting the Middle East region or any of its countries. Bloom (1996) argues that despite occurrences of violence it could be safe to travel to certain parts of the country, and that in order to ensure that areas affected do not lose tourist revenue because of problems elsewhere, it is essential to project a realistic image of where it would be safe to travel and what precautions should be taken. A clear distinction should therefore be made between suspect and non-suspect areas (Bloom, 1996)

Hall (2002) reports from Downs (1972) that one of the most significant concepts in understanding the relationships between the media and how important certain issues are to consumers; the concept of the "issue attention cycle". Hall (2002) notes that according, to Downs modern publics attend to many issues in a cyclical manner. The notion of an issue attention cycle has also been found to be extremely important in explaining the relationship between domestic and foreign policy decisions, the media and level of public interest in certain issues (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987).
Hall (2002) explains that the issue attention cycle is divided into five stages that may vary in duration depending upon the particular issue involved, but which almost always occur in the following sequence:

- The pre-problem stage;
- Alarmed discovery and euphoric enthusiasm;
- Realising the cost of significant progress;
- Gradual decline of intense public interest;
- The post-problem stage

He argues that these stages describe not only current efforts with respect to travel safety measures and policies but are also indicative of wider public opinions towards issues associated with travel safety. He also concludes that the role of the media is paramount not only in terms of the images that surround travel and specific destinations, and which influence travel decision-making but also the media has a substantial impact on the policy measures which governments take with respect to tourist safety (Hall, 2002).

Finally, Hall and O’Sullivan (1996) point out that media and governments arbitrate as an image filter between tourist destination and generating countries. Sometimes the filter highlights particular issues or events while other times events may be ignored. In both cases the media is a major force in creating images of safety and political stability in the destination region. They also emphasise that the media are not passive portrayers of events. The media select particular representations and interpretations of places and events among a flood of potential representations in terms of time, content and images (Hall and O’Sullivan, 1996). Therefore, it is the perception of security and safety at a certain destination rather than the real security and safety conditions in that destination that becomes primary factor in tourist destination selection behaviour.
As the media is considered one of the major factors that may shape potential tourists’ as well as intermediaries’ images (Wahab, 1996) of a certain destination, it is suggested that destinations marketers may use the same medium that projects negative images of the destination to promote the positive images of the that same destination, which suggests that marketers of destinations affected by real or imagined risk factors need to use the media in projecting a realistic image of their destinations, the safe areas where tourists may safely visit, the unsafe places that should be avoided, and the precautions that should be taken by visitors, so that tourists and travel intermediaries would be well informed with the real situation. This may prevent destinations from losing their tourism revenues as a result of distorted media and may also guard against the generalisation effect that some destinations such as the Middle East destinations suffer from, especially after the attacks of September 11th.

Although destination’s security image is greatly affected by media coverage, travel intermediaries (tour operators/travel agents) have been suggested as significant information sources and distribution channels influencing the images and decisions of travellers (Woodside and Lysonki, 1989; Goodall, 1990; Gartner, 1993; Brown, 2000; Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001; Cavlek, 2002). Therefore, as suggested by Lawton and Page (1997), because travel agents are opinion formers for their clients, their images and knowledge about destinations will have a significant impact on potential travellers’ vacation decision-making process. Therefore, an understanding of images held by travel intermediaries would assist destinations in assessing their market images and influencing the image and behaviour of ultimate customers through distribution and promotion strategies (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001). For that reason this study’s main objective is to investigate the security image of the Middle East held by travel intermediaries and its effect on the image and behaviour of their clients. The next section will thoroughly discuss travel intermediaries, their importance and their role in tourist decision-making as reviewed in literature.
4.4 Travel Intermediaries and Their Effect on Destination Security Image

Travel intermediaries are general affiliates in the distribution chain in the tourism channel (Brown, 2000). The primary distribution functions for tourism are information, combination and travel arrangement services. Most travel intermediaries therefore provide information for prospective tourists; bundle tourism products together; and also establish mechanisms that enable consumers to make, confirm and pay for reservations. In tourism the position of the distribution sector is much stronger than that of other trade intermediaries. Travel intermediaries have far greater power to influence and to direct demand than their counterparts in other industries do. They control demand; they also have increased bargaining power in their relations with suppliers of tourist services and are in a position to influence their pricing, their product policies and their promotional activities (Buhalis, 2001).

Renshaw (1997) compares travel intermediaries to the intermediaries of other products as shown in the following figure (fig. 4.1).
A striking difference between the two models is that principals in the travel and tourism model replace manufacturers. Principals are service suppliers (airlines, hotels, etc.) and as such do not perform a manufacturing function. Tour operators, represented at a later stage in Renshaw's model, combine different elements of the holiday package for resale and so could more accurately be described as performing a role similar to that of manufacturers. Tour operators sometimes also referred to as both principals and wholesalers. Renshaw further provides comprehensive coverage of the slightly different set of distribution alternatives facing each different sector of the industry (Renshaw, 1997).

According to Christopher (1992), intermediaries bridge five gaps: time, space, quantity, variety, and communications-information gaps; in effect they reduce the
transactional links between a manufacturer and clients. Wanhill (1993) suggests that the principal role of intermediaries is to bring buyers and sellers together, either to create markets where they previously did not exist or to make existing markets work more efficiently and thereby to expand market size. As a result it may be suggested that travel intermediaries have considerable influence in the travel decision process, which may imply that they are of greater importance to both the traveller and the destination area the greater the distance from point of origin to destination.

Tourism distribution decisions should therefore be regarded as pivotal to the marketing mix, and their interdependency with the other elements should be emphasised. As intermediaries influence both branding and image of tourism products, suitable intermediaries should be utilised by tourism suppliers for their distribution (Buhalis, 2001). Middleton (1994) highlights that paradoxically; the inability in travel and tourism to create physical stocks of products adds rather than reduces the importance of the distribution process. In marketing practice, creating and manipulating access for consumers is one of the principal ways to manage demand for highly perishable products (Buhalis, 2001).

The travel distribution system consists of tourists, suppliers and three types of intermediaries: tour operators, retail travel agents and speciality channels (Ujma, 2001). The last group is sometimes referred to as a support network and includes incentive travel firms, meeting and convention planners, hotel representatives, association executives, corporate travel offices, etc. (Bitner and Booms, 1982; Fill, 1995).

A tourism distribution chain begins with a principal. The principal is a supplier of a service in the tourism industry and provides the basic travel products, the 'core' product.

(Renshaw, 1992:2 – 3)
Destinations are often omitted from the description of distribution chain although they represent principals, tourism and local authorities and create a vital element on the supply side (Ujma, 2001). Medlik (1996) narrows the group of ‘principals’ down only to those companies that sell their products through retail travel agents. He adds tour operators to the group of principals, arguing that a tour operator gives authority to an agent who may then act and represent him and sell his product. Medlik (1996) argues that a tour operator creates a new product and thus is, in fact, a manufacturer of travel products with a role in some ways similar to that of wholesaler in goods distribution. Renshaw (1992) draws attention to another difference between wholesalers and tour operators; tour operators sell individual units to individual members of the public, not in bulk, and they take the risk. A travel agency is usually described as an organisation selling travel and ancillary services on behalf of principals for a commission. The main functions of travel agents are those of a retailer, but there are also differences between a travel agent and a regular retailer. Travel agents carry no stock, except brochures, and therefore bear limited financial risk. So far agents receive commission on sales and are therefore compared to insurance brokers or estate agents. However, it is generally accepted in the industry that the travel agent is a retailer (Ujma, 2001).

Gartner and Bachri (1994) argue that in most industries the supplier or producer has decisive control over the product, pricing, quality and distribution, while travel and tourism suppliers are the exception; as travel intermediaries have far greater power to influence and direct consumer demand as compared to other industries. They attribute this to the fact that unlike other products that flow from producer to consumer, tourists flow to the product. This inverted distribution system relies on intermediaries to perform much more than simple delivery services (Gartner and Bachri, 1996). The balance of power in tourism distribution channels is sometimes perceived as the relationship between demand and supply (Mill and Morison, 1992). It changes while the balance between those two variables changes. The tour operator might have had the power, for example, in the early stages of destination development. At this point destinations and other suppliers may be
willing to make concessions to a wholesaler who will actively promote a new destination to a mass market. Once the destination gains in popularity, the tour operators’ influence is reduced and may then be excluded (Ujma, 2001). Similarly, Ujma (2001) reports that Konieczna-Domanska (1994) argues that the relationship of power and dependency between principals and travel agents gives the latter group the opportunity of demanding special terms, conditions and standards connected with the quality of tourism products. However, sometimes when competition between intermediaries in the market is high, tour operators and travel agents are dependent upon suppliers. It is logical to argue that when demand is larger than supply, principals are more powerful than anybody else in the tourism chain, while in the opposite case travel agents and tour operators are more powerful in the chain, as in the case of a developing destination or a destination that has been facing problems such as security ones.

The role of the tour operator in developing countries is one that deserves attention. Jenkins (1991) states:

...the tour wholesaler acts as a catalyst of demand – he interprets the market needs of his clients and packages these needs into destinations. His influence on the direction of demand is particularly significant to long haul, relatively expensive destinations, i.e. most developing countries. Limited market knowledge, finance, distant countries offering high-priced, low-volume tours to work with and through specialist wholesalers. This can impose serious limitations on tourism policy making in the host country.

(Jenkins, 1991:274)

Cooper et al. (1993) note the location of power of travel intermediaries changes over time. They explain that from the supply perspective it is possible to forecast which principals are going to be more powerful by looking at the tourist area life cycle. Buhalis (2000) exhibits the role of tour operators in packaging and managing tourism products often at the expense of destinations and suppliers. His research undertaken in Greece reveals that Mediterranean hoteliers find the
power of tour operators from the North European countries very challenging, as tour operators increasingly reduce their profit margins and force them to reduce quality standards in order to fuel their price-driven competition in the markets.

Gartner and Bachri (1994) distinguish the connection between the importance of different groups of channel players in terms of their power in developed and developing countries. On the basis of an Indonesian case study, they conclude that tour operators will have more influence in the travel decision the greater the distance of visitor origin to destination, because tour operators are often the first and most influential link in the tourist flow chain. They also conclude that the dependence of developing countries on foreign tour operators derives fundamentally from the expertise of these operators as producers and wholesalers of tourism-related services, their knowledge of the market, and their access to the complementary services. They argued that tourists depend on tour operators as sources of apparently expert information about product quality and consumption expectations. Therefore it might be concluded that tour operators may be considered as professionals in the fields of marketing, public relations and management because of their expertise in connecting destinations with travellers and their awareness of the power of information, which give them a negotiating advantage.

Buhalis (2000) asserts that nowadays tour operators are generally perceived as the most influential group within the channel of tourism distribution. Their position between the supply side, represented by principals and the demand side, represented by travel retailers and customers, gives them advantage over these two groups. He points out some of their key techniques that give them advantage over other channel players that he specifies as follows:

- Timing contract negotiations to coincide with periods of low occupancy
- Using customer satisfaction surveys to their advantage
- Directing tourists to particular properties
• Making the sale of unused rooms difficult for hoteliers
• Altering the image of destinations and properties
• Playing hotels against each other
• Oligopsony (few buyers)

Laws (1997) argues that a factor distorting the operation of channels is that dominant member, usually major tour operator, can offer extra inducements beyond what is normal business practice, to persuade retailers to sell particular holiday brands. He explains that such inducements may be in the form of extra incentives and volume performance targets. Ujma (2001) asserts that the key information-exchange role of the retailer has been a primary factor in shifting the balance of power in the chain of distribution away from the manufacturer to the retailer in most European markets. She also asserts that the role of experiential information, provided in 'educational' or 'familiarisation trips' for agency staff, is important in making product choices and that role makes them important for travellers.

Since one of the key roles for travel agencies is that of advising customers about the suitability and quality of various travel products (Gee and Fayos-Sola, 1997), it is important to understand the ways that customers make their choices. A key function of travel agents is to provide travellers with information and to influence their choice of holiday product. Understanding customers’ information search behaviour is crucial to strategic decision-making (Uysal and Fesenmaier, 1993; Moorthy et al., 1997). Raaij (1986) demonstrates that travellers’ preferences are partially a reflection of what is available in the market, but also reflects what travellers consider to be ideal products, a concept which combines image and expectations. Therefore, there is potential risk that the holiday experience may not match what the customer anticipated (Murray, 1991). Thus, in order to minimise such risk customers always look to travel agents (travel consultants) for expert product knowledge and objectivity of advice given (Buhalis, 2001).
As a result of the above literature that highlights the role of the travel intermediaries (tour operators and travel agents) in tourist flows to a particular destinations, especially less developed countries, in exchanging information, and in advising travellers and influencing their travel choice; it may be logic to conclude that travel intermediaries play an important role in creating and altering destination image which will be proved by reviewing studies that focused on this issue.

Image has been proven to be a pivotal factor in travellers' decision process and destination selection behaviour (Gunn, 1972; Goodrich, 1978; Woodside and Lysonki, 1989; Um and Crompton, 1990; Gartner, 1993). The images that travellers hold about a destination would be significantly influenced by several sources. Significant information sources as well as marketing channel influencing destination image and choice, particularly for international destinations, are travel intermediaries such as tour operators and travel agents. In the literature, tour operators and travel agents have been treated as formal sources (Goodall, 1990), formal inter-personal sources (Hsiesh and O'Leary, 1993), external formal sources (Gitelson and Crompton, 1983), commercial sources (Mill and Morrison, 1985), overt induced II (Gartner, 1993), and professional sources (Baloglu, 1997). Travel intermediaries can be considered as a formal as well as social information source due to their promotional and consultative efforts. In that respect, they contribute to formation of induced images of the travellers in the active information search process (Gartner, 1993; Gartner and Bachri, 1994).

Many studies have been undertaken to emphasise the importance of the role played by travel intermediaries in destination selection process. Reimer (1990) asserts that both tour operators and travel agents act as distribution channels and image creators. Ioannides (1998) reports that Britton (1978) argues that due to their position as marketers of tour packages and destinations travel intermediaries function as gatekeepers, often having a say as to whether or not a particular destination rises in popularity. Therefore, Ioannides attributes the success of many countries as tourist destinations depends heavily on their ability to attract and
maintain over a long term, the attention of major intermediaries and especially, tour operators. In addition, Lumsdon and Swift's research (1999) confirms the key role played by small- to medium-sized tour operators based in South American destination countries. By contrast, it reaffirms the importance of the international tour operator as gatekeeper to the market.

Travel intermediaries play a very important role as sales agents for the suppliers in the distribution of products. They have increasingly emerged as the most powerful and influential bodies within the sector, pursuing a function of organising packaged holidays. Tour operators and travel agents also represent a primary source of information contributing to the image formation that the travellers base their decision upon (McLellan and Foushee, 1983). Research particularly shows that destination first-time travellers mostly rely on professional sources (tour operators and travel agents) in their information search behaviour (Bitner and Booms, 1982; Snepenger et al., 1990).

The images of tour operators and travel agents would affect and in turn are affected by the images of tourists. Recognising the role of the travel agents as sales and information influence in destination selection behaviour, Roehl (1990) examined California-based travel agents' attitudes toward the People's Republic of China after Tiananmen Square. The study found that the majority of travel agents opposed any travel restrictions or trade sanctions against the People's Republic of China, and suggested that the US travellers be informed about travel-related risks so that they would make an informed decision concerning travel to People's Republic of China.

Reimer (1990) investigated the role of Canadian package tour operators in determining and marketing of images stimulating Canadians to travel. According to Reimer, tour packagers consider themselves to actively create new definitions of the images and dreams they perceive the clients to have, rather than design and modify their product according to already existing images held by potential travellers. The study argued that demand for the tourist product is largely
endangered by a travel industry network of image generators, and concluded that
tour operators compete both in terms of the product they sell and the travel
images they create.

Baloglu and Mangaloglu (2001) conclude that the perceptions held by tour
operators and travel agents about tourist destinations would be a significant
element influencing their decisions of promoting the destinations, as the results of
their study indicate that travel intermediaries are not likely to promote a destination
for which they have a negative or weak image. They also conclude that such
images held by travel intermediaries would influence the number and nature of
tour packages they design and promote. It is also assumed that the images
perceived by travel intermediaries would reflect their clients' perception and be
passed by travel intermediaries over to their clients.

Klem and Parkinson (2001) note that large tour operators play an essential role in
promoting the destination to and delivering tourists from international markets.
They assert that tour operators are increasingly promoting their own brand image
rather than the image of the destination, which dilutes and in some case distorts
the image and even the recognition, of a tourist destination. They also discuss that
the images that major tour operators give to destinations are driven by the market
potential of particular segment and is based on their interpretation of the needs
and aspirations of the customer group in the country of origin.

In the same sense Carey et al. (1997) argue that the tour operators, like any other
distributor, operate in a dynamic and price competitive market, selling non-
essential product they create a customer loyalty to themselves rather to any other
product (destination) they are trying to sell. They suggest that destinations also
are able to sell their products to many distributors (tour operators) and therefore
they are not compelled to be loyal to any tour operator either.

Since travel intermediaries aim at creating customer loyalty to themselves rather
than to particular destinations as previously mentioned, it is logic to assume that in
order to maintain their image and their clients' loyalty; it is natural that they take
certain measures to secure the safety of their clients during the journey and while on holiday. In this way, travel intermediaries try to diminish safety and security risks that their clients may face. They assess destination safety even more critically than an individual would (Steene, 1999). In order to avoid risks, tour operators decide whether or not to include in their programmes destinations with different kinds of risk, to stop operations to certain destinations already included in their programmes, to reduce capacities at a destination, or to take certain measures to protect their clients (Cavlek, 2002).

The behaviour of travel intermediaries towards a destination hit by a crisis depends on many factors, and they make a final decision on their attitude towards it after analysing all possible aspects of safety and security risks there (Cavlek, 2002). Cavlek (2002) argues that such factors are the type of crisis and its dimensions, its predicted length, its consequences in the receiving country, the tour operator own business interest there, and decisions by the governments of the generating countries.

The growth of terrorism, crime, and violence as discussed in the previous chapter has given rise to a new problem, which encounters tourists as targets of terrorist and criminal acts. As pointed out by Richter and Waugh (1986), tourists are targeted for their symbolic value. Based on this fact Cavlek (2002) argues that the responsibility of travel intermediaries towards their clients means that they cannot neglect this fact. In cases of uncertain disruptions, they will usually stop their operation to the particular country for a period of time until local governments undertake the adequate measures to diminish safety risks. Alternatively, travel intermediaries will reduce their capacity to the destination. In this way they keep the destination in their programme, but at the same time try to minimise their risk operation. The cancelling or omission of a particular destination from a tour operator's programme is a signal that the destination is unsafe (Cavlek, 2002).
Cavlek (2002) also discusses that the business interests of tour operators and their partners in the receiving country in such situations lose their common ground, and marketing a destination in generating markets becomes their main problem. She adds that the respective destination thus stays without direct and adequate support on foreign markets, since their tourism mostly depends on outside tour operators. There have been many examples of such behaviour of tour operators. A few cases of the reactions of foreign tour operators towards countries hit by safety and security risks support the point raised.

**China 1989.** After Beijing’s Tiananmen Square incident, Silk Cut Travel cancelled the whole summer programme for the country; China Travel Service cancelled all travel until September; Voyages Jules Verne cancelled all travel until July. In total about 300 groups cancelled their travel plans, and country’s tourism earnings declined by $ 430 million in 1989 (Gartner and Shen, 1992).

**Egypt 1992 – 1994.** Over 120 tourists were targeted by terrorists’ attacks during this period. Some European tour operators struck the country from their programmes entirely, but most of them reduced their capacities significantly. In 1992 – 1993, the biggest tour operator in Europe, TUI, sold 30% fewer holidays to Egypt than the previous year, while Tjaereborg sold 77% fewer. In 1993 – 1994, the former further reduced its sales to Egypt by 22% and the latter by 27% (FVW International, 1993). During this time, Egypt recorded a significant drop in arrivals (22%), in tourist nights (30%), and even more so in tourism income (43%) (Wahab, 1996). With signs of recovery from the crisis, TUI immediately increased its sales to the country in 1994 – 1995 by 20% and fully went back to the country (158% increase in sales compared to 1994 – 1995) (FVW International, 1995; 1996).

**Egypt 1997 – 1998.** Most tour operators pulled out immediately after terrorist attack in Luxor in which 64 tourists were killed. They sent their clients home or organised other holidays for them in another country. Following travel advisory information, foreign tour operators abandoned the destination in the winter
season. In the summer of 1998, tour operators slowly started to re-introduce the country in their programmes, but with only 1/10 of their earlier number of clients (Cavlek, 2002)

**Turkey 1992 – 1994.** Since 1991, Kurdistan Worker’s Party had been directing their terrorist attacks against tourists by bombing sites and hotels and even kidnapping tourists. Still, major European tour operators did not cut Turkey from their programme, but safety problems resulted in a drop-off in tourism demand. For example, TUI had 10% fewer clients than the year before, the second largest German tour operator, NUR, 14% less, etc. in 1993 – 1994, the safety situation did not change and TUI had a decrease in sales of 47% but in 1994 – 1995 quickly returned with 67% increase and in 1995 – 1996 with further increase on 13% (FVW International, 1994; 1995; 1996).

**Turkey 1997 – 1998.** The threat of the Kurdistan Worker’s Party terrorist attacks resulted in 11.1% fewer German passengers flying to destinations in Turkey (ADV, 1998).

The above cases indicate that travel intermediaries are not likely to promote destinations with weak security images; on the contrary, they may reduce capacities to such destinations or totally cancel holidays to such destinations. Such actions affects the destinations tourist industry as illustrated in the above cases as well as affect images tourists hold about such destination. Therefore it is suggested by Baloglu and Mangaloglu (2001) that tourist destinations (especially, those hit by a security crisis) should carefully assess and improve their images to be included in tour packages developed and sold by travel intermediaries. Travel intermediaries are more likely to give more positive ratings to the destinations they have business with (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001; Cavlek, 2002). Therefore, it may be wise that tourist destinations hit by a security problems create commitment and considerable investment to re-establish the business with tour operators and travel agents to restore traffic and regain the earlier position in the international market (Cavlek, 2002). Also it is possible to argue that tourist
destinations should sell their products through as many channels as possible and that it is not enough to be promoted only by travel intermediaries (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001).

This literature review may be concluded that risk perception is affected by different factors. The researcher suggests that there may be different factors that affect tourist risk perception; these factors may differ from one tourist to another leading to different risk perceptions. These factors may be classified into tourist related factors and external or situational factors. The tourist related factors might consist of demographic factors (such as age, gender, income level, education), internal factors (such as personality type, attitudes and aspirations, experience), and cultural factors, which differs according to the tourist country of origin. On the other hand, the external factors may compose of media coverage of certain insecurity incidents and travel intermediaries’ risk perception and its effect on the decisions of their clients. The researcher proposes a model (fig. 4.2) that explains the different factors affecting tourist risk perception as concluded from previous literature.
Figure 4.2 Factors Affecting Tourist Risk Perception

The figure shows that some both the tourist related factors and the external factors cooperate to shape the tourist risk perception. The researcher also advocates that in the tourist related set of factors the demographic factors such as the nationality, age, gender, income level, or education level affect the internal factors such as the personality type, attitudes and aspirations, travel type and experience of tourists. On the other hand, regarding the set of external factors, it is concluded from the previous literature that as media affects the perceptions held by tourists it also affects the risk perceptions held by travel intermediaries and their images of certain destinations. The above literature also indicate that tour operators who are directly selling to travellers have great influence on shaping tourists' destination image and consequently, tourist perception of risk, while those selling through travel agents have the same influence on the travel agents' perceptions, which will be transferred accordingly to their clients.

Therefore, it is obvious that travel intermediaries are considered one of the important factors that shape the tourist image of a certain destination and also the tourist risk perception, especially, international tourists, or tourists visiting a certain destination for the first time, or those visiting long haul destinations and needing the advice of their travel consultant. Therefore, the current research aims at
examining the security image of the Middle East as held by travel intermediaries as they were found to have a major role in creating and altering destination’s image and in directing tourist flows, and because their images represent a more objective perception (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001) than travellers, which may greatly help tourist destinations in the Middle East in improving and enhancing their offers.

4.5 Summary

The chapter has discussed the various factors that affect tourist perception of risk. Accordingly, from the reviewed literature the researcher concludes that risk perception is affected different factors. The researcher concludes that there may different factors that affect tourist risk perception; these factors may differ from one tourist to another leading to different risk perception. These factors may be classified into tourist related factors and external or situational factors.

On the other hand, the external factors may compose of media coverage of certain insecurity incidents and travel intermediaries’ risk perception and its effect on the decisions of their clients. The chapter further discusses the two external factors that affect tourist’s risk perception, one of which is media coverage and its effects on destination images of security or on the perception of risk held by tourists and how tourist destination utilise it for its best interest.

The last but most significant factor, especially as it is the main focus of this study is the function of travel intermediaries, their importance and their role in tourist decision-making, their role as a gatekeeper to international markets, their significance as a source of information and destination image creator and finally their reactions towards destinations hit by security problems.

Finally, after reviewing literature about the internal and external factors that affect the tourist risk perception, the researcher proposes a model that explains the different factors affecting tourist risk perception as concluded from literature.
CHAPTER FIVE: TOURISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST

5.1 Introduction

The chapter presents an overview of the Middle East. Section 5.2 provides a general background on the Middle East from various aspects; the geographic location of the Middle East and its importance, the main languages and religions that dominate the region, in addition to the economic conditions of the region and especially tourism as one of the significant industries in many of the countries in the region as in section 5.2.2, which illustrates the importance of tourism in the Middle East with its three regions as classified by the WTO (1998). Section 5.3 discusses security problems that took place in the Middle East in the past 15 years and its effects on tourist flows to the region. Finally section 5.4 summarizes and concludes the chapter.

5.2 The Middle East

Located at the intersection of Europe, Asia, and Africa, the Middle East and North Africa together constitute a complex region linked by broad similarities of climate, religion, and culture. Physically, the Middle East and North Africa form something of an east-to-west arc. Iran and Turkey compose the north eastern tier. Southward are the Arab states of Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq and the Jewish state of Israel. The southernmost boundary includes Saudi Arabia and the small Gulf States (Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates) as well as Oman and Yemen. Moving westward from the Saudi Arabian Peninsula, the North African states of Egypt and Sudan, as well as Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Western Sahara complete the region (Marston et al., 2005).
5.2.1 General background

The Middle East is a geographic area without clear borders (encyclopaedia of the orient), with its centre in the eastern Mediterranean basin. The most limited version of what the Middle East includes is set to Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine and Jordan (encyclopaedia of the orient). An equally often used version of Middle East includes Cyprus, Turkey, Iraq, and Egypt. An even larger Middle East includes Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Yemen. In some cases, the Middle East is extended to include countries in
North Africa with clear connection to Islam, like Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, and Sudan (encyclopaedia of the orient).

Religion is an important part of the lives of most people within the region. Its centrality stands in sharp contrast to less religious cultural impulses that dominate life in many other parts of the world. Whether it is the quiet ritual of morning prayers or discussions about current political and social issues, religion is a central part of the daily routine of most regional residents from Casablanca to Tehran (Rowntree et al., 2006). Christianity, Islam, and Judaism all developed among the Semitic-speaking people of the deserts of the Middle East (Marston et al., 2005). Islam is by all means the dominant religion of the region, and also the dominant religion of culture, politics and to some extent even business. Ninety four percent of the population are Muslims, around two and a half percent are Christians, and two percent are Jews (Encyclopaedia of the orient).

A popular misconception is that there is a homogeneous race of people in the Middle East. This notion is fostered by some of the region's religious institutions, whose traditions allude to Arab, Jewish, or even Aryan races. These terms, however, have little meaning in the Middle East today, unless they are limited to linguistic or cultural associations.

Although there are no recognizable groupings about which everyone would agree, authorities acknowledge that the region contains Semitic, Turkish, and Persian-speaking people. Of the Semitic-speaking population, the Arabs are the most numerous. Although there are many dialects, written modern standard Arabic is understood by educated Arabs everywhere. Arabic is spoken from the Atlantic coast of Morocco to the shores of the Persian Gulf. By this definition, approximately 200 million Arabs live in the region. Although there is a single Arab nation in theory only, the common bond of language has meant that unification is an aspiration of many of the region's inhabitants (Weatherby et al., 2004). However, there are other dominant languages found in the region since the Middle East has a number of peoples, languages, and religions. The second dominating
language is Turkish, Kurdish is the third language, the forth important language is English, although it is not used as the first language, and the fifth largest is Hebrew.

Though clearly dominated at midsection by a continuous swath of dry lands from western Morocco to eastern Sudan The Middle East and North Africa region is a latitudinally broad region that stretches from the winter cold climes of northern Turkey to the summer wet, subtropical climes of southern Sudan. The moderating effect of large bodies of water on the coastal areas, as previously mentioned, also adds to climatic variation in the region, producing milder year-round climates with wet winters in those places (Marston et al., 2005).

The countries of the Middle East have passed through a couple of decades with relatively little economic progress, and wealth is unevenly distributed between the countries, with United Arab Emirates and Israel as the two offering highest living standards for the entire population, and Sudan and Yemen as offering the greatest economical problems for its entire population. Certain countries has witnessed some economic growth, at the present, Egypt is the country with the highest growth. Greene (2001) reported that most economies of the main Middle Eastern countries including Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, showed improved growth in GDP in 2000 in comparison to1999.

The Middle East has in periods housed some of the most advanced cultures of its time, like the ancient Egyptian culture, the Muslim Caliphate, and the early stages of the Ottoman Empire. Today the region is characterised by strong political tensions, like the issue of Palestine/Israel, as well as a number of smaller, yet important issues, like the border disagreements between Syria and Turkey (Encyclopaedia of the orient). Greene (2001) noted that the outlook for the Middle East is somewhat mixed across the region. Of course, this is due to the regional conditions, which is linked to the status of the peace process, especially its Israeli-Palestinian component (Rubin, 1997).
Despite of the regional conditions in the Middle East, it has always been a region of great diversity in culture, religion, economics and politics. In a land that supported highly advanced civilisations when Europe and the Americas lived primitively, this diversity aided the development of sophisticated art, science and social awareness. The peoples of the Middle East spread their culture throughout the world they knew. Phoenicians travelled the West Coast of Africa centuries before the birth of the Christ and may have gone as far as the East Indies. These were the world’s first global tourists (WTO, 2002).

While the Middle East is still an important outbound source of tourism, the last two decades have seen the region develop some of the world’s foremost tourist destinations as well. As in ancient times, diversity characterises the Middle East today and has been used to develop tourism products for a wide variety of markets. Beaches, archaeological stations, religious sites, convention centres, shopping malls, cultural festivals and sporting facilities serve as poles of attraction for various leisure segments (WTO, 2002).

5.2.2 Tourism in the Middle East

Modern tourism in the Middle East began with visits to the archaeological sites of Egypt, and other centres of cultural interest soon became popular (Aziz, 2001). In the 1960s, Morocco, in particular, became a destination for low budget travellers (Aziz, 2001). However, the wide difference in these two societies, and the types of tourists they attract, illustrates the way that the region is categorised by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO).

The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) classifies the Expanded Middle East (EME) into three sub-regions; Northern Africa, East Europe-Mediterranean region, and the Middle East (WTO, 1997). Each of the three sub-regions accounts for roughly similar share of international arrivals. However, there is a major difference in their respective shares of tourism receipts (WTO, 2002), the East Mediterranean Europe sector, for example, accounts for more than half the total receipts of the EME.
The expanded Middle East (EME) covers the following three sub regions:

- Northern Africa
- Europe-East Mediterranean region
- Middle East.

(Tourism Market Trends, WTO, 1997)

All three sub regions taken together registered almost 200 million tourist arrivals in 2004 (WTO, 2005) or approximately 9.1 percent of the market share of the world international tourist arrivals as shown in figure 5.2. In absolute terms the number of international tourist arrivals worldwide increased by 69 million, where the share of the EME in this increase was 12 millions, which is approximately 17.4 percent, distributed among the three sub regions as follows; North Africa two millions, the East Mediterranean Europe four millions and the Middle East six millions (WTO, 2005) as shown in figure 5.3.
El world tourist arrivals in millions

Figure 5.2 EME Share of the World International Tourist Arrivals in 2004

Figure 5.3 EME Share of the World International New Arrivals in 2004
The EME was considered the fourth region in the year 2004 in terms of tourist arrivals (WTO, 2005) as illustrated in the following figure.

![Figure 5.4 International Tourist Arrivals in 2004 by Region (in millions)](image)

Figure 5.4 International Tourist Arrivals in 2004 by Region (in millions)

It is also important to highlight that in 2000 the average receipt per arrival in the EME was US $531.8, while the world average receipt per arrival was US $680.88 (WTO, 2001a), which is illustrated in the following figure.
From 1990 to 2004 the region attracted almost 43.8 million additional tourist arrivals, having leapt from 25 to 68.8 million arrivals (WTO, 2001a; 2005). The following figure shows tourist arrivals to the EME from 1990 till 2004, which indicates that the region shows positive results in increasing tourist arrivals, even though the different security problems that have taken place during this period starting from the Gulf war 1991, the ongoing Palestinian/Israeli conflict, September 11th, the several terrorist attacks in Egypt and the finally the Iraqi conflict.
The following figure illustrates the average annual growth rate of tourist arrivals by region for the period from 1990 to 2004, which helps position the EME among other regions in terms of growth in tourists' arrivals.
It is obvious from the figure that the EME experienced the highest growth rate in tourist arrivals during the past decade among the other regions. It showed an increase of 7.1% between 1990 and 1995, 11.9% between 1995 and 2000 and 7.3% between 2000 and 2002 (WTO, 2003). This annual growth is total growth for the three sub regions together, which may hide significant differences between one sub region and another. Therefore, the following section studies each sub region alone and in relation to the other two sub regions.
5.2.2.1 North Africa

The WTO includes in the Northern Africa region countries like Algeria, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia. The Northern Africa region includes mature destinations with a relatively well established tourism industry, such as Tunisia and Morocco. Between 1988 and 1992, the region recorded a steady growth of tourist arrivals around 5.6 percent a year (WTO, 1998).

Travel to the region is largely dominated by holiday tourists from Europe and intraregional traffic characterised by low spending levels and scarce use of facilities. National residents working abroad and returning to their home countries for their annual holidays represent an important market of more than one million in Morocco and half a million in Algeria. However, expenditure by these visitors is generally not reflected in the official statistics on travel expenditure (WTO, 1997).

Northern Africa's tourism performance has shown a strong cyclical character in the past two decades, with substantial booms having given way to substantial recessions and vice-versa. In the first half of the 1980s the number of international tourist arrivals in the sub region fluctuated between four and five millions. The growth of tourism in 1988 was followed by a period of expansion to reach 9.1 million arrivals in 1992. In the recessive cycle between 1993 and 1996 the number of arrivals in the sub region fell by two millions. Between 1997 and 1999 the cycle swung upwards again surpassing the 1992 level (WTO, 2000).

The following two figures illustrate the international tourist arrivals and receipts in North Africa sub region for the period from 1990 to 2004, as also show the trend of growth.
The WTO (2001) recorded that in the year 2000 the number of international tourist arrivals in the four countries of Northern Africa rose by 6.9 percent to exceed the 10 million tourists and rose by 30 percent from 2000 to 2004 to reach 13 millions. With approximately 19 percent of the regional total (WTO, 2005), as shown in the following figure:

Figure 5.8 International Tourist Arrivals in North Africa 1990 – 2004 (millions)

Figure 5.9 North Africa Share of EME Tourist Arrivals in 2004 (in millions)
The WTO (2003) reported that the North Africa region and particularly, Morocco and Tunisia started the year 2003 with a substantial increase in January and February followed with more moderate increase, while March showed sizeable drops after the Iraqi invasion, which were immediately and steadily recovered. North Africa experienced overall decline of two percent in tourist arrivals in 2003, while 2004 showed growth in tourists' arrivals to Tunisia and Morocco by 19 percent and 17 percent respectively (WTO, 2004b).

By source markets, North Africa is characterised by a strong reliance on Europe, which is the origin of 57 percent of all international arrivals in the sub region. Only eight percent of the total international arrivals originate from within the African region itself. The Middle East accounts for eight percent, Americas for two percent, while East Asia, the Pacific and South Asia together account for one percent (WTO, 2001a).

5.2.2.2 The East Mediterranean Europe

The East Europe-Mediterranean region includes three countries, which are Cyprus, Israel, and Turkey. The three countries of the East Mediterranean Europe generate more receipts than all countries of Northern Africa and Middle East together (WTO1997). This sub region accounted for nearly 30% of the EME international tourist arrivals and almost 48.5% of the EME international tourist receipts in 2004 (WTO, 2005).
This group of countries tend to present a far more dynamic growth pattern than the more mature destinations. Turkey is a good example, although it suffered a setback in 1997 and 1998, its achievement is impressive between 1980 and 2004 it managed to increase its number of arrivals tenfold, from less than one million to almost 17 millions (WTO, 2001a; 2005).
International tourism in this sub region grew steadily since the beginning of the 1980s, culminating in an increase of almost 23 percent of tourist arrivals and 32 percent of tourism receipts in 1985. In 1986, there was a first drop in tourists’ arrivals and receipts. Growth resumed in 1987 until the Gulf war when arrivals stabilised at 0.9 percent whereas receipts dropped by 15 percent. With the exception of 1993 for arrivals, tourism growth seems to have consolidated since 1992 and as illustrated in the previous two figures 1997 showed an increase of nine percent in arrivals and almost eight percent in receipts (WTO1997).

Europe is by far the East Mediterranean biggest generating market. This market is both very large from a quantitative standpoint and boasts an affluent population of which large share disposes of the means to travel. For them it is also cheaper to go abroad that to opt for a domestic holiday, as price levels in many source countries tend to be higher than those of most destinations (WTO, 2001a).

5.2.2.3 The Middle East

The Middle East is the least developed of the three EME sub-regions (WTO, 1997). The most important is Egypt, which has been a true success story in terms of tourism development over the last decade. In terms of motivations, the leisure market is far less important for this region than for the East Mediterranean Europe and Northern Africa, with the exception of Egypt. Business travel is still largely preponderant for the Middle East region as a whole (WTO, 1998).

In the Middle East tourism is one of the most dynamic economic sectors. Since 1990, the region has attracted around twenty six million additional tourists’ arrivals, having leapt from nine to thirty five million arrivals in 2004 (WTO, 1998; 2005) as illustrated in figure 5.12. The growth rate from 1995 till 2000 was due to stability in the region, the placing on the market of new destinations and the redoubling of planning and promotional efforts in countries intensifying their activity in the tourism market, as well as in the more traditional destinations.
The first few years of the 1990s saw demand increase considerably. The value of the region’s tourism products per se, including those that have what it takes to satisfy demand for leisure and relaxation (linked to climate, beaches, and urban destinations of notable interest), culture, sport, nature (including the desert), shopping and business tourism, coupled with the correct management of crisis situations and the implementation of promotional programmes, have enabled the sector to bounce back in a remarkable fashion (WTO, 2000).

Figure 5.12 International Tourist Arrivals in the Middle East 1990 – 2004 (millions)

Two countries, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, absorb a very large share of regional inbound tourism, their combined market share being slightly more than half the
total. In the year 2000 Egypt received 5.1 million tourists, which means 14 percent increase from 1999, the year in which tourism grew by 40 percent (WTO, 2001a). In 2004, the region’s share in the world international tourist arrivals reached approximately 4.6 percent as illustrated in figure 5.13.

![Figure 5.13 Middle East Market Share of the World International Tourist Arrivals in 2004 (in millions)](image)

In 2004, arrivals grew by 20 percent to a total of 35 million, which makes the region the fourth visited in the world, thus surpassing for the first time the volume of Africa (WTO, 2005), this figure also shows that the Middle East region in 2004 accounted for nearly 51 percent of the international tourist arrivals to the EME as shown the following figure.
Since 1999 intraregional tourism in the Middle East has accounted for more than 60 percent of the total. The biggest generating markets outside the region were Europe (Germany, United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Russian Federation) followed at considerable distance by Asian countries (Asia, Philippines) and Africa, especially, North Africa (WTO, 2000).

The growth rate in the past five years (1999 to 2004) is due to the placing on the market of the new destinations and the redoubling of planning and promotional efforts in their activity in the tourism market, as well as in the more traditional destinations (WTO, 2004a). The following two figures illustrate the annual growth of international tourist arrivals in the Middle East in comparison to the annual growth of international tourist arrivals in the world and in reference to other regions, respectively.
Figure 5.15 Annual Growth Rates of Tourists’ Arrivals (1999 – 2004) in the World and Middle East
It is obvious from the previous figures that the annual growth rate of tourist arrivals in the Middle East may be considered one of the highest growth rates during the past five years among the other regions (WTO, 2005). The overall conditions for tourism development in the Middle East have been quite encouraging since the late 1990s (WTO, 2000). While prevailing conditions have probably propelled large flows of tourists towards regional destinations, the overriding factor is the recognition the sector enjoyed as a real development opportunity in each and every one of these countries, despite their different development levels, their different economic structures and their different institutional frameworks (WTO, 2001a).

It is also obvious that the growth of international tourist arrivals to the Middle East was negatively affected twice in the period from 1999 to 2004. The first drop was
after the attacks of September 11th 2001, which the Arabs/Muslims were accused of being responsible for. Such attacks have affected tourist arrivals worldwide and in particular the Americas as being the victim of such attack and because of the fear of further attacks, and the Middle East, which was (and may be still) perceived by the western world as the criminal behind these attacks and therefore, the Middle East was avoided especially, by western tourists.

The second drop in tourist arrivals to the Middle East was immediately after the Iraqi conflict (the Iraqi invasion), which was quickly recovered during the second half of 2003 to end the year with approximately three percent increase (WTO, 2004a) in tourist arrivals to the region, which as observed from the figure (5.15) the highest growth rate among all other regions. The region also achieved an increase in international tourist receipts by 16 percent, which is the highest growth rate in international tourist receipts in this year among other regions (WTO, 2004b). This growth is may be due to the further development of intraregional traffic and the continuous investment in the tourism sector that is adopted by many countries in the region (WTO, 2004a).

![Figure 5.17 Annual Growth Rates of Tourists’ Receipts (2003/2002) by Region](image-url)
Even with this restricted definition of the Middle East (WTO, 1998), huge socio-economic variations in the region are revealed, which have a radical influence on the way that such area’s tourism has developed and the level of investment in the sector. The heterogeneity of the Middle East can be observed in the stages of development of the countries’ tourism industries (WTO, 2002).

Because of the oil, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar for example are among the richest countries in the world, and thus have no obvious reason to develop incoming tourism (even though the UAE and Bahrain are seriously attempting to promote tourism as a form of public relations) (Aziz, 2001).

It can be observed that there is a positive attitude towards tourism for the role that it plays, or may play, as a diverse sector that invigorates the economies of those countries of the region, independently of the level of national development (WTO, 2002).

Some traditional destinations of the region have already invested heavily in tourism and they are now reaping the benefits of this investment. Other countries, particularly those of the Gulf area are realising the importance of investing in tourism as a tool for development and adopting measures to create a better climate for potential investors, both within and outside the region (WTO, 1997).

Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, specifically Dubai, have developed their tourism activities into sophisticated industrial powerhouses that have served as catalyst of economic development within their respective regions. Both countries have shrewdly used e-commerce, the creation of niche products, worldwide distribution networks and revenue maximisation tactics to develop some of the most dynamic tourism destinations that exist today (WTO, 2001a).

Egypt has been a regional pioneer in creating joint public-private initiatives to encourage tourism investment. Since 1993, financial incentives, tax exemptions and the granting of full ownership rights to foreigners has encouraged private
sector involvement in almost 700 integrated resort communities throughout the country (WTO, 2001a).

The main elements of tourism policy as cited by WTO (2001) are:

- Maintenance in the quality of tourism services,
- Diversification of tourism products,
- Diversification of tourism destinations,
- Promotion and tourism Publicity in traditional and prospective markets,
- Training and human resource development,
- Sustainable tourism development for preservation and environmental balance,
- Protection of tourism resources,
- Easing frontier formalities,
- International cooperation.

Dubai’s tourism development throughout the last decade is one of the most impressive stories in the history of leisure industries. Within a relatively short period of time, Dubai has established itself as the business capital of the Gulf, if not the entire Middle East (WTO, 2001a). By offering easy international accessibility, world-class infrastructure, unquestioned security, streamlined bureaucratic procedures and quality residential/office facilities, Dubai has earned a reputation as one of the world’s most business-friendly cities. The Emirate has successfully attracted billions of dollars in foreign investment by offering liberal ownership rights to citizens of other Gulf Cooperation council (GCC) countries. Dubai Internet City has established itself as the hub of Arab e-business attracting global tenants such as Microsoft and Cisco (WTO, 2001a).

Tourism is a key to Dubai’s diversification strategy and continues to grow at supernormal rates tourist arrivals increased by 19 percent from 1988 to 1999 (WTO, 2000) representing a jump of almost 500,000 visitors. Hotels achieved a record in annual occupancies, room rates and revenues per available room as a
result of strong growth in both the business and leisure markets. Lodging establishments also experienced a marked decrease in seasonality despite a significant increase in room supply (WTO, 2000).

Just behind the two market leaders in terms of tourism development are Bahrain and Oman, both of which attempt to position their products to upscale tourism markets. Bahrain became the Gulf's first major leisure tourism destination in the 1970s by capitalising on its use as a stopover for flights travelling between Europe and Asia/Australia. Since that time, the country has greatly elaborated its tourism products beyond shopping, historical sites and beaches. It has developed an Aqua Leisure Land, luxury marinas, the Gulf's largest sports theme park and extensive equestrian activities (WTO, 2001a).

Through careful planning, Bahrain has also maximised use of its limited land. A major boost to tourism came recently in a verdict by the International court of justice in The Hague that Hawar Island, disputed by Qatar, was part of Bahrain (WTO, 2001a).

Oman is often sited as a Gulf country with the most spectacular natural terrain and eco-tourism possibilities. While the government has long recognised this potential, the Directorate General of Tourism has implemented its sixth five-year plan to ensure that the business activities do not damage the environment or disrupt traditional Omani culture (WTO, 2002).

Another group of countries has enthusiastically embraced tourism as an important economic driver but have been unable to realise its full potential due to regional political disruption. Jordan, Lebanon and Syria all possess great potential in their natural and historic sites but have been unable to meet their strategic policy objectives due to the negative image resulting from the conflict in the area (WTO, 2001a).

After decades of avoiding tourism, Qatar and Saudi Arabia have each recently announced policy shifts to actively engage in tourism development. In Qatar, a
strategic master plan was recently developed studying twenty possible projects from city centre business hotels to eco-resorts. Following meticulous analysis, the number was prudently reduced to five for which detailed market, financial and engineering feasibility studies were undertaken. Other efforts have been made to make the country more attractive to tourists including the streamlining of visa procedures and the liberalisation of beverage control regulations.

Saudi Arabia's guardianship of the Muslim religious sited of Mecca and Medina has historically made the country the most important destination in the Middle East in terms of international arrivals. The seasonality of this business results in facilities being booked to capacity during Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages while suffering low utilisation during the remainder of the year. In Mecca, where peak Hajj season requires tented villages to be constructed around the city (WTO, 2000).

Saudi Arabia's hotel industry suffered from overbuilding during the late 1990s and 2000. Hotel occupancy rates had fallen below 60 percent in all markets. In 2000 the government of Saudi Arabia established a twenty-year tourism master plan and officially declared the country to open to non Muslim visitors. As part of Kingdom's policy to diversify revenue sources, coordination of tourism activities has been delegated to the newly created Supreme Commission for Tourism. Laws have been revised encouraging foreign direct investment in tourism projects (WTO, 2001a).

Logically, the different levels of development reached mean distinct policies and programmes of action as each country has different problems to resolve. The most advanced countries are better equipped to outline their promotion campaigns, to diversify tourism products and to facilitate access to national tourist destinations. The destinations still in process of defining and establishing their tourism policy, tend to focus on improving their accommodation, transport infrastructure and the services necessary for the development of tourism.
But, despite of the stage of development, there is an important factor that appears to affect all countries and should be taken into consideration of tourism policy makers, which is the consolidation of a stable and secure image (WTO, 2001a) of their destinations. Since the Middle East was destined by going through frequent political instability, wars, conflicts, and security problems in the last 15 years, which as emphasised by Pizam and Fleischer (2002) causes a large decline in international tourist arrivals to the region. Therefore, it is important to evaluate the position of the Middle East as a destination under the current political instability and security problems in some of its destination, how such incidents affect the flows of tourists to the whole region, and also how individual destinations within the region are affected by security problems in neighbouring countries.

3 Security Problems and Tourism in the Middle East

The image of the Middle East or the Arab world is described by Aziz (2001) as being largely negative in the popular Media of the west. She stated that Islamic society tends to be painted from a palette consisting mostly stereotypes of patriarchal oppression, harsh environments, religious fundamentalism, political unrest, cultural intolerance and irrational violence, which may hold back the growth of mass tourism to the region.

Such negative image of the Middle East in the west is may be due to the number of conflicts and security problems that have been faced by the Middle East especially, during the last 15 years. The tourist industries of few countries have been obliged to manage as many crises as the Middle Eastern countries. Over the last decades there has been, the on going Palestinian – Israeli conflict (the Intefada), the 1990 – 1991 Gulf war, the terrorist attacks that take place in some countries like Egypt, the terrible events of September 11th 2001, which Muslims/Arabs were accused of, and after that the Iraqi war in March 2003.

All of these conflicts and security problems caused a loss of tourism demand because of the erosion of confidence in travel which affected the image of the Middle East region, which suffered from being perceived as close to the conflict or
belonging to the Muslim world (WTO, 2001b), which is widely perceived by the west as being the advocate of crime and terrorism. This series of conflicts affected also the image and consequently the tourism flows in many countries in the region, although each country should have its own destination or tourist image, some countries are subsumed within a regional image (Schneider and Sonmez, 1999), which is the case in the Middle East.

For example, The Gulf War crisis, which started in the summer of 1990; however the actual fighting began only at the beginning of 1991 radically affected in the image of EME region; as the international tourist arrivals and receipts to the region in 1991 decreased by 1.34 percent and 15.8 percent respectively (WTO, 1998) for the first time in nine-year period of constant growth, and international traffic from Japan and the United states was reduced by 2 percent (Vuconić, 1997). However, when the war ended, the tourists did not return immediately to the region as they had already booked their holidays elsewhere (Jusko, 1991).

The following figure (5.18) illustrates the drop in the number of arrivals to the three sub regions of the EME during the time of the Gulf war. The figure illustrates tourists' arrivals to the Middle East region in an approximately five-year period (1988 - 1992).

![Figure 5.18 Tourist Arrivals (in millions) to EME (1988 – 1992) by Sub Region](image)
The figure shows that the biggest drop in tourists' arrivals was to the Middle East sub region as result of being perceived as closer to the area of conflict, while North Africa and East Mediterranean Europe were not much affected in terms of tourists arrivals, but they had a sharp drop in international tourist receipts due to a decline in arrivals from higher spending markets (WTO, 1998). However, it is obvious that tourist arrivals started to increase gradually after the war had ended.

This emphasises that the fear of war and associated violence in a certain destination creates an image of insecurity that accompanies the minds of tourists until the existing conflict ends. Such image may not only affect the country having the conflict, but may also affect the whole region and the neighbouring countries.

Also, as a consequence of the Gulf war, Egypt suffered from several terrorist attacks in the period from 1992 till 1994. Over 120 tourists were targeted by terrorists' attacks during this period. As a result, some European tour operators entirely struck the country entirely from their programme, but most of them reduced their capacities significantly (Cavlek, 2002). During this time Egypt recorded a significant drop of 22 percent in tourist arrivals, 30 percent in tourist nights, and even more 43 percent in tourist receipts (Wahab, 1996).

In the same period, Kurdistan worker's party had been directing their terrorist attacks against tourists by bombing sites and hotels and even kidnapping tourists. Major European tour operators did not cut Turkey from their programmes (Cavlek, 2002), but safety problems resulted in a drop-off in tourism arrivals to Turkey by nearly 10 percent (WTO, 1997).

As a result of these terrorist attacks in Egypt and Turkey in the period from 1992 to 1994 especially, in 1993, the tourist arrivals to the EME region was affected as there was a decrease of 1.4 percent (WTO, 1998) as shown in the following figure, which illustrates the drop in tourist arrivals between 1992 and 1993 and the gradual slow growth in the region after that, which may be as a result of the
perceived risk related to the region. Sonmez and Graefe (1998, 1998a) found that perceived risk was a stronger predictor of avoiding a particular region than of planning to visit one. Therefore those perceiving terrorism as a risk were more likely to avoid the EME in that period.

![Graph showing EME tourist arrivals 1990-1995](image)

Figure 5.19 International Tourist Arrivals (in millions) to EME (1990 – 1995)

After that in 1997, Egypt suffered again from another terrorist attack in Luxor in which 64 tourists were killed. As a result, most tour operators pulled out their tourists immediately and they repatriated their clients from Egypt or any other organised holiday for them in another country in the region (Cavlek, 2002). The figures of the WTO (1998) shows a decrease of the number of tourist arrivals to Egypt in 1998 by 11.1 percent, and the total arrivals to the EME showed an increase of only 2.7 percent, as following travel advisory information, foreign tour operators abandoned the destination in the winter season. In the summer of 1998,
tour operators slowly started to introduce the country in their programmes, but with only 1/10 of their earlier number of clients (Cavlek, 2002).

Moreover, much of the media coverage magnifies the Israeli/Palestinian conflict into a regional conflict regardless of the fact that 90 percent of violent acts occurred on the margins between Israeli-controlled and Palestinian-controlled territory (Beirman, 2003). People solely dependent on the media are likely to develop negative images of the Middle East and, unable to distinguish among its components, decide against future there (Schneider and Sonmez, 1999). For example, media coverage of events in Israel resulted in neighbouring Jordan becoming a collateral destination victim to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict (Beirman, 2002, 2003). However, the tourism industries of more distant neighbours of Israel such as Egypt, Syria, the Gulf States and even Turkey have, to varying degrees, had to cope with distancing themselves from events in Israel (Beirman, 2002).

In addition, the September 11th attacks on America severely affected in the tourism industry worldwide, where the world international tourist arrivals decreased by 0.3 percent in 2001 and slightly increased by 2.8 percent in 2002 as recorded by the WTO (WTO, 2005). The most affected regions by such attacks were the Americas, the Middle East, and Europe as each of them recorded a decrease of 4.7, 1, and 0.5 percents, respectively (as illustrated in figure 5.15). Naturally, the most severe initial impact on travellers' confidence was within the United Stated itself (Beirman, 2003) as it was the showground of the terrible incidents, not only, did the events affect decisions regarding where to travel but they also influenced choices regarding mode of transport and, in some cases, whether to travel at all.

Beirman (2003) reported that in the weeks following the attacks, the focal point of the US was Afghanistan, the country in which Osama Bin Laden was reported to have been in hiding and protected by Afghanistan's radical Islamist Taliban regime, which aroused heightened safety concerns about travelling anywhere in the Middle East. He also added that the governments of most nations warned their
citizens to either defer or reconsider their travel plans to the Middle East and South Central Asia. The government advisories were heavily publicised by the international media, especially in Western countries, which had a significant influence not only on general public opinions, but also in forming consumers’ images of destinations safety and security (Hall, 2002). As a result the Middle East was portrayed as an unsafe region that hides terrorists and advocates terrorism, which may have negatively affected the image of the Middle East and its tourist destinations and consequently the flows of tourists to the region.

Furthermore, in 2003, international tourism lived through another considerably difficult year in which three negative factors came together: the Iraq conflict, SARS and a persistently weak economy. The Iraq conflict and the high level of uncertainty that preceded it depressed worldwide travel in the first quarter of the year (WTO, 2004a). After the American/British invasion to Iraq in March 2003 the number of tourist arrivals during the second quarter of the year to the Middle East region was decreased by 15 percent in comparison with the same period in 2002 (WTO, 2004b), but such decrease was quickly recovered during the second half of the year to end up the year with more than three percent increase in tourist arrivals to the region (WTO, 2003, 2004a, 2004b). The good performance of the Middle East in comparison to other regions in 2003 was due to the strong development of intraregional market, Lebanon, for example, received 30 percent more tourists from the Arab generating market. Similarly other destinations such as Dubai, Bahrain, and Jordan also benefited from such strong intraregional demand (WTO, 2004b).

The growth of intraregional demand even during periods of conflict in one or some of the countries in the region highlights the difference between the images held about the region by tourists or tourist organisations of the same region and the images held by those of other regions, in spite of being addressed with the same type of media coverage, which is consistent with Echtner and Ritchie (1991) and Mackay and Fesenmaeir (1997), as they suggested that more familiar individuals hold destination images closer to the holistic, psychological and unique ends of
Echtner and Ritchie image dimension continua. Conversely, individuals unfamiliar with a destination fall closer to the attribute, functional, and common ends of the image continua.

Therefore, as image is likely to be a critical element in the destination selection process (Gunn, 1972; Goodrich, 1978; Crompton, 1979; Goodal, 1990; Um and Crompton, 1990; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Baloglu and Mangaluglu, 2002; Konecnik, 2003 and many others), especially in a situation like this of the Middle East, where negative security image may be considered a major deterrent to tourists away from the region (Richter and Waugh, 1986; Teye, 1986; Holllier, 1991; Enders et al., 1992; Gartner and Shen, 1992; Richter, 1992, 1999; Aziz, 1995; Bar-On, 1996; Bloom, 1996; Mansfeld, 1996; Wall, 1996; Pizam et al., 1997; Sonmez and Graefe, 1998; Sonmez, 1998; Ioannides and Apostolopoulos, 1999; Pizam, 1999; Sonmez et al., 1999; Levantis and Gani, 2000; Seddighi et al., 2000; George, 2003).

Although such negative image is not always truly representative of what a place has to offer (Um and Crompton, 1990), which is the case in most of the Middle East destinations. Consequently, destination marketing should aim to achieve an image transfer that is based on a destination's identity (Konecnik, 2003). In this way image analysis may be an important step of self analysis leading towards building a strong destination brand.
5.4 Summary

The chapter presents a general background of the Middle East from various perspectives; geographical, cultural, economic and discusses tourism as one of the main industries in many of its destinations. It presents an overview on tourism trends in relation to some insecurity incidents that took place and traces the effect of such events on the figures of tourist arrivals and tourist receipts. This overview may be significant evidence that insecurity problems in a destination negatively affect tourist arrivals to it for a certain period of time. This notion will be further explored in the following chapter that analyses security image of the Middle East by travel intermediaries.

The main aim of this research is to analyse the security image as perceived by travel intermediaries as they play a vital role in creating the image of destinations and can significantly influence international tourist flows to a country hit by safety or security risks (Baloglu and Mangaluglu, 2001; Cavlek, 2002). This image analysis may be the first step of analysing the Middle East and may enable destination marketers to modify an unrepresentative image and create instead a true image of the destination that is based on its own identity, leading towards building a strong destination brand.
CHAPTER SIX: RESEARCH METHODS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the epistemological and theoretical perspective of the research. It provides justification for choosing the appropriate methodology and therefore the suitable methods applied to achieve the specific research objectives. The chapter describes the two methods of data collection that are used in this study. Data collected for the research is divided into two types of data one of which is the primary data, which is original data, collected by the researcher for the purpose of the research problem at hand (Ghauri, Gronhaug and Kristianlund, 1995). The research uses in-depth interviews as primary data. In-depth interviews are qualitative interviews where the aim is to understand the perspective, which the interviewee (travel intermediaries' perceptions) attaches to the situations (current circumstances in the Middle East) and contexts important to him (Finn, Elliott-White and Walton, 2000). It includes semi-structured questions, a cognitive mapping exercise using projective technique questions.

The other kind of data is the secondary data, which is information, collected by others for purposes other than that of this research (Ghauri, Gronhaug and Kristianlund, 1995). Secondary data may be of great support to the research as it will provide the general background on the Middle East and its destinations and especially, during times of crises using the governmental statistics that specifies the number of tourists flowing to Middle East destinations particularly, through travel intermediaries, the economic conditions, and the political conditions of each individual destination.
6.2 Qualitative Research

There are several ways in which research methods can be classified. A common method is to make a distinction between quantitative and qualitative research methods. Berg (2001) differentiated between qualitative and quantitative research by identifying research as referring to meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, description of things, whereas quantitative research as referring to counts and measures of things. Quantitative researchers assimilate facts and study the association between one set of gathered facts with another, while qualitative researchers are more interested in understanding individual and group perceptions of their environment (Bell, 1992).

Qualitative research was developed in the social sciences to enable researchers to study social and cultural phenomena. Examples of qualitative methods are action research, case study research (as in this study), and ethnography (Myers, 2000). Qualitative data sources include observation and participant observation (field work), interviews and questionnaires, documents and texts, and researcher's impressions and reactions (Myers, 2000).

Strauss and Corbin (1998) claimed that qualitative methods can be used to better understand any phenomenon about which little is yet known. They can also be used to gain new perspectives on things about which much is already known, or to gain more in-depth information that may be difficult to convey quantitatively (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

Qualitative methods are adopted in this research in order to better understand and give more in-depth information about the Middle East security perception as held by travel intermediaries, where little is yet known. There are several objectives that the research used qualitative methodology in order to better achieve; which are:

1. Understand the criteria used by travel intermediaries in selecting the Middle East destinations they sell.
2. Verify the way the Middle East is perceived by travel intermediaries.

3. Determine the perception of destination security and safety as perceived by travel intermediaries.

4. Identify which Middle Eastern destinations travel intermediaries consider as safe destinations and which they consider as unsafe.

5. Identify which Middle Eastern destinations travel intermediaries consider as substitute destinations.

This research deals with concepts and perceptions which are residing at the subconscious level and may be disguised from the outer world by rationalisation and other ego defences. Therefore, the desired information can be obtained through qualitative research. The research used both direct (in-depth interviews) and indirect (projective techniques) qualitative techniques in data collection.

Central to the notion of qualitative research are the concepts of "ontology" (a branch of philosophy concerned with "what is", i.e. the study of being and the nature of "reality") and "epistemology" (a branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of knowledge, dealing with issues of how we know what we know). This means that all research has to answer the question of how its specific subject relates to the world of theory and knowledge "epistemology". This in turn needs to be based on a statement of what the world must be like "ontology" in order for us to have knowledge of it.

(Crotty, 1998:8).

"Epistemology deals with the nature of knowledge" (Crotty, 1998:8). It informs the theoretical approach one chooses. The epistemological stance of study provides a context or broad map for the assessment process.
Epistemology is concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible, and how we can ensure they are both adequate and legitimate.

(Maynard, 1994:10)

Crotty (1998) provides a three-fold classification of epistemologies into: objectivism, constructionism, and subjectivism. Objectivism "holds that meaning, and therefore meaningful reality exists as such apart from the operation of any consciousness" (Crotty, 1998:8). Constructionism "rejects the view of human knowledge, meaning is not discovered, but constructed" (Crotty, 1998:8). In this view, subject and object emerge as patterns in the generation of meaning in relation to the same phenomenon. In subjectivism meaning does not come out of interplay between subject and object but is imposed on the object by the subject. Crotty (1998) argues that much more can be said about possible epistemological stances, and the three he has referred to are not seen as firm compartments. However, it is possible here to simplify Crotty's classification of the three different epistemological stances as shown in table 6.1.
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6.2.1 Thesis epistemology and theoretical perspective

As mentioned above, every research has to answer the question of how its specific research subject relates to the world of theory and knowledge in terms of epistemology and theoretical perspective.

*In adopting an approach to social inquiry, the researcher is buying into a set of choices with far-reaching implications. They therefore need to be given careful considerations. No one approach or strategy, and its accompanying choices on these issues, provides a perfect solution for the researcher; there is no one ideal way to gain knowledge of the social world.*

(Blaikie, 1993:203)

*The adoption of a paradigm literally permeates every act even tangentially associated with inquiry, such that any consideration even remotely attached to inquiry processes demands rethinking to bring decisions into line with worldview embodied in the paradigm itself.*

(Lincoln, 1990:81)

In this research, the Middle East security image held by travel intermediaries (tour operators and travel agents) and its potential effect on tourists' flows to Middle East destinations is explored via a research string of constructivism – interpretivism – phenomenology, see figure 6.1 below is the discussion of epistemological choice and the theoretical approach for this research that justifies the combination.
Figure 6.1: Epistemology, Theoretical Perspective, Methodology and Methods Adapted for the Research

Adapted from Crotty (1998)
6.2.2 Constructionism

Human behaviour must be viewed and interpreted according to the individual's motives, intentions, or purposes for action as well as through rules that have been consensually agreed upon and validated by people in society. Not only is it important to discover external, observable human behaviour, but also to understand the intentions, values, attitudes, and beliefs behind that behaviour (Candy, 1991). To develop an understanding of the subjective and intersubjective meaning of human behaviour required the development of another paradigm, the constructivist paradigm. Constructivists look not only at explicit and language-based propositional knowledge, but implicit and tacit knowledge as well (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

Ontologically, the constructivist emphasizes the personal meaning made by the inquirer and the inquired. Constructivists do not believe an objective truth exists and deny the existence of one correct interpretation against which all research findings must be measured (Candy, 1991). Instead, constructivists believe in a relativist reality, which is constructed, socially and contextually specific, and which changes over time (Merriam, 2002; Schwandt, 1994). Reality is both individually constructed and intersubjectively negotiated within a given social context. It is socially constructed as individuals interact within the world. Constructivists believe that there can be multiple realities and no one is more privileged than the other (Merriam, 2002; Schwandt, 1994). Reality cannot be understood in terms of independent variables, instead it must be understood in terms of intersubjectively agreed upon patterns of truth (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

Constructivists do not deny the existence of an outside reality. They acknowledge this possibility, but assert that we are only coming to fully understand it and the only way to know reality is through experience and action (Candy, 1991) (Merriam, 2002). Underlying this paradigm is the presupposition that intentions, values, attitudes, and beliefs behind human behaviour can be uncovered through inquiry.
and interpretation and that these interpretations can be validated through consensus.

Truth in the constructivist paradigm is "a matter of the best-informed and most sophisticated construction on which there is consensus at a given time" (Schwandt, 1994:128). These socially constructed meanings of events occur over time and are influenced not only by the individual's actions, but also by history, society, and language (Schwandt, 1994). This ontological perspective is a major break from that of the previously accepted positivist and post-positivist paradigms.

Epistemologically, constructivists believe that knowledge is comprised of multiple interpretations that are context dependent and value-laden (Kim, 2003). Since knowledge is created through interactions and accepted through relative consensus, constructivists see the inquirer as intimately involved with the inquiry. The researcher is the primary research tool, not a "distanced observer" (Merriam, 2002). Focus is placed on the process by which the meaning of human behaviour is created. This process includes how meanings are created, negotiated, sustained, and modified within a specific context of human action (Schwandt, 1994).

In discussing the epistemological claims of constructivists, Schwandt raises the question, "If knowledge is individually constructed how it can be extensively shared" (Schwandt, 1994:131). To counter this question, constructivists often emphasize the social construction of knowledge. Constructions are created not only by the individual, but by society as well. Thus, constructions are subjectively created and intersubjectively validated, which reinforces the need for the inquirer to be intimately involved in the inquiry.

The goals of the inquirer are to interpret and construct meaning (security image of the Middle East) from the individual and social constructions of those involved in the inquiry (travel intermediaries). Moreover, it is to attempt to understand subtle and unique differences in human behaviour rather than make gross generalizations about similarities (understand the unique differences in images...
held by British travel intermediaries versus those held by Egyptian travel intermediaries). Constructivist researchers are not necessarily interested in predicting the future; rather they are interested in understanding the meaning individuals make of their experiences (Merriam, 2002). Constructivists seek to understand phenomena from the emic perspective (Crotty, 1998). As understanding becomes more fully developed these constructions of truth may be altered to incorporate new levels of knowledge. Therefore, constructivists think of knowledge as a process, not a product or an essential given to be discovered (Schwandt, 1994). The interactivity of the inquirer in this process allows for learning to occur. This learning continually alters the inquirer’s understanding of the phenomenon under study, which further informs each successive inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). In fact the ability of the inquirer to pick up subtle nuances, details, and multiple dimensions of the phenomenon under study often comes from the fact that the inquirer is intimately involved in the phenomenon being studied. Eisner calls this a “state of enlightenment” (Schwandt, 1994, p. 129).

The theoretical perspective of social constructionism includes diverse practices and multiple conceptions of meanings and of the role of social constructionism. For example, at times, the terms social constructionism and social constructivism have been used interchangeably. Schwandt (2001) explained that there are two strands of constructivism: radical or psychological constructivism (focus on individual) and social constructivism (focus on interaction). As Crotty (1998) has reported that the term ‘constructionism’, particularly ‘social constructionism’ derives largely from the work of Mannheim (1893 – 1947) and from Berger and Luckmann (1966). Manning (1967) further elaborated on the differences within constructionism by focusing on procedural and reflexive versions. The procedural version of constructionism emphasises interpretation and saturated meanings that construct the world itself, whereas the reflexive version acknowledges the fuzziness of social interaction and is willing to reorder the knowledge of social worlds.
Methodologically, Schwandt (1994) notes that constructivist inquiry begins with a question or concern as opposed to an a priori hypothesis from theory, as would be in the case of the positivists/post-positivists. Constructivists gather details and utilize inductive reasoning to develop hypotheses, theories and concepts (Creswell, 1994). Constructivists assume that reality is multifaceted and cannot be fragmented or studied in a laboratory, rather it can only be studied as a unified whole within its natural context (Candy, 1991). This inquiry takes place in the natural setting, it is informal and interactive, and the research design evolves as the inquiry unfolds. The design is expansionistic in nature, not reductionistic as was seen in the positivists/post-positivists approach. The constructivist takes an open, exploratory stance with the goal of understanding the complexity of the phenomenon as a whole (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

6.2.3 Interpretivism

Interpretivism is the "systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds" (Neuman, 2000:71). Myers (1997) argues that interpretive research attempts to study a phenomenon in its natural settings and interpret the phenomenon through the meanings that people assign to them.

However, interpretive research is fundamentally concerned with meaning and it seeks to understand social members' definition of the situation (Schwandt, 1994: 118). Constructionists argue that knowledge and truth are the result of perspective (Schwandt, 1994) hence all truths are relative to some meaning context or perspective. Moreover, Snadberg (2000) argues that interpretive research tradition is the stipulation that person and world are inextricably related through persons' lived experience of the world.
**6.2.4 Phenomenology**

A phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon. Phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon (e.g., grief is universally experienced). The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (a "grasp of the very nature of the thing," van Manen, 1990, p. 177). To this end, qualitative researchers identify a phenomenon (an "object" of human experience; van Manen, 1990, p. 163). This human experience may be phenomena such as insomnia, being left out, anger, grief, or undergoing coronary artery bypass surgery (Moustakas, 1994). The inquirer then collects data from persons, who have experienced the phenomenon, and develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all of the individuals. This description consists of "what" they experienced and "how" they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994).

Beyond these procedures, phenomenology has a strong philosophical component to it. It draws heavily on the writings of the German mathematician Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) and those who expanded on his views, such as Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty (Spiegelberg, 1982).

*A phenomenological perspective can mean either or both (1) a focus on what people experience and how they interpret the world (in which case one can use interviews without actually experiencing the phenomenon oneself) or (2) a methodological mandate to actually experience the phenomenon being investigated (in which case participant observation would be necessary).*

Patton (1990:70)
Phenomenology is popular in the social and health sciences, especially in sociology (Borgatta & Borgatta, 1992; Swingewood, 1991), psychology (Giorgi, 1985; Polkinghorne, 1989), nursing, and the health sciences (Nieswiadomy, 1993; Oiler, 1986), and education (Tesch, 1988; van Manen, 1990). Husserl’s ideas are abstract, and, as late as 1945, Merleau-Ponty (1962) still raised the question, “What is phenomenology?” In fact, Husserl was known to call any project currently under way “phenomenology” (Natanson, 1973).

Types of Phenomenology

Two approaches to phenomenology are highlighted in this discussion: hermeneutic phenomenology (van Manen, 1990) and empirical, transcendental, or psychological phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994). Van Manen (1990) is widely cited in the health literature (Morse & Field, 1995). An educator, van Manen, has written an instructive book on hermeneutical phenomenology in which he describes research as oriented toward lived experience (phenomenology) and interpreting the “texts” of life (hermeneutics) (van Manen, 1990, p. 4). Although van Manen does not approach phenomenology with a set of rules or methods, he discusses phenomenology research as a dynamic interplay among six research activities. Researchers first turn to a phenomenon, an “abiding concern” (p. 31), which seriously interests them (e.g., reading, running, driving, mothering). In the process, they reflect on essential themes, what constitutes the nature of this lived experience? They write a description of the phenomenon, maintaining a strong relation to the topic of inquiry and balancing the parts of the writing to the whole. Phenomenology is not only a description, but it is also seen as an interpretive process in which the researcher makes an interpretation (i.e., the researcher “mediates” between different meanings; van Manen, 1990, p. 26) of the meaning of the lived experiences. Moustakas’s (1994) transcendental or psychological phenomenology is focused less on the interpretations of the researcher and more on a description of the experiences of participants. In addition, Moustakas focuses on one of Husserl’s concepts, epoche (or bracketing), in which investigators set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh
perspective toward the phenomenon under examination. Hence, "transcendental" means "in which everything is perceived freshly, as if for the first time" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 34). Moustakas admits that this state is seldom perfectly achieved.

The procedures, illustrated by Moustakas (1994), consist of identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing out one's experiences, and collecting data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon. The researcher then analyses the data by reducing the information to significant statements or quotes and combines the statements into themes. Following that, the researcher develops a textural description of the experiences of the persons (what participants experienced), a structural description of their experiences (how they experienced it in terms of the conditions, situations, or context), and a combination of the textural and structural descriptions to convey an overall essence of the experience.

Procedures for Conducting Phenomenological Research

Moustakas (1994) developed systematic steps in the data analysis procedure and guidelines for assembling the textual and structural descriptions. The conduct of psychological phenomenology has been addressed in a number of writings, including Dukes (1984), Tesch (1990), Giorgi (1985, 1994), Polkinghome (1989), and, Moustakas (1994). The major procedural steps in the process would be as follows:

- The researcher determines if the research problem is best examined using a phenomenological approach. The type of problem best suited for this form of research is one in which it is important to understand several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon. It would be important to understand these common experiences in order to develop practices or policies, or to develop a deeper understanding about the features of the phenomenon.
• A phenomenon of interest to study, such as anger, professionalism, what it means to be underweight, or what it means to be a wrestler, is identified. Moustakas (1994) provides numerous examples of phenomena that have been studied.

• The researcher recognizes and specifies the broad philosophical assumptions of phenomenology. For example, one could write about the combination of objective reality and individual experiences. These lived experiences are furthermore “conscious” and directed toward an object. To fully describe how participants view the phenomenon, researchers must bracket out, as much as possible, their own experiences.

• Data are collected from the individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. Often data collection in phenomenological studies consists of in-depth interviews and multiple interviews with participants. Polkinghorne (1989) recommends that researchers interview from 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. Other forms of data may also be collected, such as observations, journals, art, poetry, music, and other forms of art. Van Manen (1990) mentions taped conversations, formally written responses, accounts of vicarious experiences of drama, films, poetry, and novels.

• The participants are asked two broad, general questions (Moustakas, 1994): What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon? What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences of the phenomenon? Other open-ended questions may also be asked, but these two, especially, focus attention on gathering data that will lead to a textural description and a structural description of the experiences, and ultimately provide an understanding of the common experiences of the participants.

• Phenomenological data analysis steps are generally similar for all psychological phenomenologists who discuss the methods (Moustakas, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1989). Building on the data from the first and second research questions, data analysts go through the data (e.g., interview transcriptions) and highlight
"significant statements," sentences, or quotes that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon. Moustakas (1994) calls this step horizontalization. Next, the researcher develops clusters of meaning from these significant statements into themes.

• These significant statements and themes are then used to write a description of what the participants experienced (textural description). They are also used to write a description of the context or setting that influenced how the participants experienced the phenomenon, called imaginative variation or structural description.

• From the structural and textural descriptions, the researcher then writes a composite description that presents the "essence" of the phenomenon, called the essential, invariant structure (or essence). Primarily this passage focuses on the common experiences of the participants. For example, it means that all experiences have an underlying structure (grief is the same whether the loved one is a puppy, a parakeet, or a child). It is a descriptive passage, a long paragraph or two, and the reader should come away from the phenomenology with the feeling, "I understand better what it is like for someone to experience that" (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 46).

Challenges

A phenomenology provides a deep understanding of a phenomenon as experienced by several individuals. Knowing some common experiences can be valuable for groups such as therapists, teachers, health personnel, and policymakers. Phenomenology can involve a streamlined form of data collection by including only single or multiple interviews with participants.

Using the Moustakas (1994) approach for analyzing the data helps provide a structured approach for novice researchers. On the other hand, phenomenology requires at least some understanding of the broader philosophical assumptions, and these should be identified by the researcher. The participants in the study
need to be carefully chosen to be individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon in question, so that the researcher, in the end, can forge a common understanding. Bracketing personal experiences may be difficult for the researcher to implement. An interpretive approach to phenomenology would signal this as impossible (van Manen, 1990)—for the researcher to become separated from the text. Therefore the current research applies van Manen hermeneutical phenomenology as the research methodology.

6.3 Methodology Justification

Methodology comprises the strategy or plan of action, it is the research design that shapes choices and the use of particular methods, and links them to the desired outcomes (Crotty, 1998). As discussed earlier, the theoretical perspective informing this research is phenomenology where the concern is with the essence or basic structure of phenomenon (the current situation in the Middle East). Phenomenological methodology is also consistent with the theoretical framework of this research, constructionism, because the current political conflict in the Middle East is a phenomenon, so as the perception of insecurity that might be held about the Middle East, and therefore, this framework provides a methodology to investigate the perceptions of the Middle East destinations currently held by travel intermediaries based on the ongoing circumstances in the Middle East. It is constructionist in its notion of the essential relationship between conscious subjects and their objects (the relationship between the security image of the Middle East and the flows of tourists to its destinations).

The research employs social constructionism for the purpose of uncovering the ways in which travel intermediaries participate in the creation of their perceived security image of the Middle East. The research uses procedural constructionism as it emphasises interpretation and meanings that construct the security perception of travel intermediaries in UK and Egypt. The research also applies the reflexive version of constructionism, in which explicit attention is paid to the process of attention itself. The researcher undertakes an ongoing examination of
what she knows and how she knows it. This ongoing learning process continually alters the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon under study which further informs each successful inquiry (Schwandt, 1997). Reflexivity reminds the qualitative researcher to be attentive to and conscious of the cultural, political, social, linguistic and ideological origins of one's own perspective as well as the perspective of those one interviews (Hertz, 1997).

However, this research, with the aim of exploring travel intermediaries' image of the Middle East and its effects on tourists flows to the destinations in the region, utilised a phenomenological methodology that employed qualitative research tools and Moustakas's (1994) systematic steps in the data analysis procedure and guidelines for assembling the textual and structural descriptions. As a result of this perspective, the development of research methods is geared toward qualitative methods of study. Kaplan and Maxwell (1994) argue that the goal of understanding a phenomenon from the point of view of participants and its particular social and institutional context is largely lost when textual data are quantified.

6.3.1 Procedure: Collecting data

According to Kerlinger (1986:280), the research design represents and articulates the researcher's plan and the structure of investigation that will be followed when seeking answers to the research questions posed. Supporting this thinking, Yin (1994:18) defines the research design as the logic that links the data to be collected to the initial question/s of a study. Simply stated, the research design serves as a blueprint that outlines the overall research programme and guides the investigator in collecting, analysing and interpreting observations (Kerlinger, 1986; Yin, 1994).

The objectives of this case study are:

1. Investigate and measure safety and security perceptions of the Middle East as held by British travel intermediaries
2. Elicit from British travel intermediaries their comparative evaluation of different nations within the Middle East.

3. Investigate and measure safety and security perceptions of the Middle East as held by Egyptian travel intermediaries

4. Elicit from Egyptian travel intermediaries the attitude and behaviour of foreign travel intermediaries (especially European travel intermediaries) towards the Middle East especially during times of security problems.

5. Elicit the difference between travel intermediaries, based in the Middle East and those based out of the region, in their perceptual responses to the previous three issues.

Table 6.2 Phases of the Research

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<th>PHASE ONE</th>
<th>PHASE TWO</th>
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<td><strong>Objectives</strong></td>
<td><strong>Objectives</strong></td>
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<td>- Assess safety and security perceptions of the Middle East as held by Egyptian travel Intermediaries before Sharm Sheikh Attacks in July 2005.</td>
<td>- Assess safety and security perceptions of the Middle East as held by Egyptian travel Intermediaries after Sharm Sheikh Attacks in July 2005.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Assess safety and security perceptions of the Middle East as held by UK based travel Intermediaries before Sharm Sheikh Attacks in July 2005.</td>
<td>- Assess safety and security perceptions of the Middle East as held by UK based travel Intermediaries after Sharm Sheikh Attacks in July 2005.</td>
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Procedures

- Conduct a series of in-depth interviews with Egyptian travel intermediaries.
- Conduct a series of in-depth interviews with UK based travel intermediaries.

Methods

- In-Depth interviews
- Telephone interviews

A phenomenologist is concerned with understanding certain group behaviours from that group’s point of view. Phenomenological inquiry requires that researchers go through a series of stages or phases in which they try to eliminate their own assumptions and biases, examine the phenomenon based on internal themes that are discovered (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). This situation applies to this research, as it has undertaken two stages of investigation; one of which, took place before The Sharm El Sheikh Attacks in July 2005 and it focused on past experience with the phenomenon of interest (security image of the Middle East), while the other took place three months after the attacks. The second phase focused on the present experience (Marshall, 2004), in order to examine the effect of the attacks on perceptions. The second phase aimed at reflecting on the results of the first phase in order to assure results and eliminate biases. Therefore as a series of steps are followed to examine the phenomenon. These are described below in the two phases of data collection (see table 6.2).

The first phase of data collection takes place in the U.K. and Egypt, while the second phase is undertaken through telephone interviews to UK based travel intermediaries and in-depth interviews with Egyptian travel intermediaries. The researcher used telephone interviews with UK based travel intermediaries in the
second phase in order to save money and time; as the researcher was in Egypt at that time and was difficult for her to travel to the UK to carry out face to face interviews. All conversations and interviews will be recorded on audiotapes for transcription and analytic induction purposes. The two stages of data collection are detailed below.


This phase includes interviews with a selected sample of ten U.K based travel intermediaries (tour operators and travel agents). This stage aims at achieving the first and the second objectives mentioned above. All interviews took place in U.K. in the interviewees’ offices. The interview pattern is based on a set of open-ended questions, a cognitive mapping exercise and projective technique questions. The duration of each interview is between twenty and thirty minutes. The interviews are designed to encourage interviewees to describe their perceptions and reveal the feelings, beliefs, and images they hold of the Middle East.

Similar to the above methodology, semi-structured interviews took place with ten Egyptian travel intermediaries. This stage aims at achieving the third and the fourth objectives mentioned above. All interviews will take place in Egypt in the interviewees’ offices. The interview pattern is similar to the one of the British travel intermediaries, apart from some extra questions that may describe the attitude of the foreign travel intermediaries as perceived by the Egyptian ones.


In this phase the researcher travelled to Sharm El Sheikh three months after the attacks that took place in July 2005. The researcher undertook some personal observations about the safety situation in the resort and the traffic of tourists whether in hotels, restaurants, coffee shops, gift shops and/or in the streets.
Malhotra (1999) asserted that observation involves recording the behavioural patterns of people, objects and events in a systematic manner to obtain information about the phenomenon of interest. The observer does not question or communicate with the people being observed. Observation may be recorded as the events occur. The research employed an unstructured natural personal observation, which involves observing behaviour (example, non-verbal data on people and traffic of tourists in terms of places they gather round and times of being there) as it takes place in the environment without attempting to control or manipulate the phenomenon being observed.

In addition, this phase included interviews with five travel agents in Sharm El Sheikh three months after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh. Interviews took place in the offices of the interviewees in Sharm El Sheikh and lasted about twenty minutes. Interviews were designed to describe the response, feelings, and perceptions Egyptian intermediaries held of security and safety image in the Middle East after the attacks on Sharm El Sheikh Resort in July 2005.

This phase also included telephone interviews with five UK based travel agents. The researcher used telephone interviews instead of depth interviews in order to save time and money that would have cost her to travel to UK to undertake the interviews there. The interviews took place three months after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh and exactly after the explosion of three hotels in Amman, Jordan by suicide bombers. The interviews were conducted by phone after calling the interviewees to set a date and time of interview, each interview lasted for about fifteen to twenty minutes. Interviews were designed to draw out the reactions of the British intermediaries after these attacks.
6.3.2 Sampling techniques

Sampling is a process that involves the selection of some, but not all, the members of the larger population (Bell, 1992; Bakeman, 1992). Research that is field oriented in nature and not concerned with statistical generalisability often uses non-probabilistic samples. The most commonly used samples, particularly in applied research, are purposive (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Purposive samples can be different varieties. Patton (2002), for example, outlined sixteen types of purposive samples but the common element is that participants according to predetermined criteria relevant to particular research objective.

Purposive sampling maximises the chance of obtaining accurate information about the studied phenomenon for it relies upon choosing those who have both the experience of the phenomenon and also the ability to communicate their experience of that phenomenon. Purposive sampling techniques are primarily used in quantitative studies and may be defined as selecting units (individuals, groups of individuals, institutions) based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study’s questions (Denzin, 1994).

Many qualitative researchers employ purposive and not random, sampling methods. They seek out groups, settings and individuals where the processes being studied are most likely to occur.

(Denzin, 1994:234)

The current study employs purposive sampling techniques. “The function of purposive sampling is to help select relevant decision makers (travel intermediaries who are making decisions about selling destinations), settings and communication vehicles which aid the researcher to describe, explain and otherwise account for administrative milieu in which they operate day by day” (Hollinshead, 1993:648)
Purposive sampling techniques have also been referred to as non-probability sampling or purposeful sampling or "qualitative sampling." As noted above, purposive sampling techniques involve selecting certain units or cases "based on a specific purpose rather than randomly" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 713). Several other authors (e.g., Kuzel, 1992; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002) have also presented typologies of purposive sampling techniques.

There are three broad categories of purposive sampling techniques (plus a category involving multiple purposive techniques), each of which encompass several specific types of strategies:

- **Sampling to achieve representativeness or comparability**—these techniques are used when the researcher wants to (a) select a purposive sample that represents a broader group of cases as closely as possible or (b) set up comparisons among different types of cases.

- **Sampling special or unique cases**—employed when the individual case itself, or a specific group of cases, is a major focus of the investigation (rather than an issue).

- **Sequential sampling**—uses the gradual selection principle of sampling when (a) the goal of the research project is the generation of theory (or broadly defined themes) or (b) the sample evolves of its own accord as data are being collected. Gradual selection may be defined as the sequential selection of units or cases based on their relevance to the research questions, not their representativeness (e.g., Flick, 1998).

- **Sampling using multiple purposive techniques**—involves the use of multiple qualitative techniques in the same study.

The current study aims to select a purposive sample that represents a broader group of travel intermediaries in UK and Egypt, as well as set up comparisons among both groups of travel intermediaries in terms of their perceptions towards
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security image in the Middle East. Therefore, the sample belongs to the category of purposive sample that aims at achieving representativeness and comparability.

**Sampling to Achieve Representativeness or Comparability**

The first broad category of purposive sampling techniques involves two goals:

- Sampling to find instances that are representative or typical of a particular type of case on a dimension of interest, and

- Sampling to achieve comparability across different types of cases on a dimension of interest.

There are six types of purposive sampling procedures that are based on achieving representativeness or comparability: typical case sampling, extreme or deviant case sampling, intensity sampling, maximum variation sampling, homogeneous sampling, and reputational sampling. Although some of these purposive sampling techniques are aimed at generating representative cases, most are aimed at producing contrasting cases. Comparisons or contrasts are at the very core of qualitative data analysis strategies (e.g., Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Mason, 2002; Spradley, 1979, 1980), including the contrast principle and the constant comparative technique.

In the current study, a purposive sample was carefully selected based on typical case sampling in order that the sample represents units which are considered typical of the phenomenon understudy. Therefore, Participants were purposively sampled according to one criterion which is organising and/or selling tours to Middle East destinations. Also the sample was selected from both Egypt and the UK in order to achieve comparability. In addition, the sample was divided into travel agents and tour operators from both nationalities. The two groups of the selected sample provide contrast as one of them (the Egyptian travel intermediaries) belongs to the region under study, while the other group belongs to the West (another region), thereby allowing for comparability across those two cases.
(Middle East based travel intermediaries and those who belong to another region).

The sample of the first phase consisted of ten U.K. based travel intermediaries who agreed to conduct the interview with the researcher. The individuals interviewed in these companies were mainly sales executives (as these are the decision makers of which destinations to sell and which not to sell). Another ten Egyptian travel intermediaries were approached and the interviews were conducted with the managers or owners of these companies (the only decision makers in the Egyptian hierarchy). The sample of the second phase consisted of five Egyptian travel intermediaries who were based in Sharm El Sheikh, and the interviews were conducted with the managers of these companies. In addition, five UK travel intermediaries who were accessible by phone were approached and the interviews were undertaken with sales executives in these companies.

6.3.3 Designing interviews

The phenomenological approach to research typically involves five to ten people and depends almost exclusively on in-depth interviewing (Leedy, 1997). An in-depth interview is a dialogue between a skilled interviewer and an interviewee. Its goal is to elicit rich, detailed material that can be used in analysis (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). Therefore, the present study adopts, as a primary method of data collection, in-depth interviewing of individuals representing the travel intermediaries in UK and Egypt. The general purpose of interviewing is “to find what is in someone else’s mind.

*Researchers interview people; to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe.*


The aim of in-depth interviewing is to develop an understanding of the respondent’s world and their constructs (the perception of travel intermediaries), and is suitable where the step-by-step logic of a situation is unclear (Easterby-
Smith et al., 1991). However as mentioned above, in this research the first phase interview format used a variety of direct open ended-questions and cognitive mapping exercise which, employed projective technique questions with the purpose of exploring the subjects' perceptions beliefs, attitudes and experience in as much depth as possible. On the other hand, in the second phase the interview format focused on direct open ended questions for the purpose of exploring the reaction of travel intermediaries to the attacks and whether such reactions corroborate or contradict the findings from the first phase interviews.

Qualitative interviews have traditionally been framed as explorations or discoveries of the perceptions of an individual subject to better understand his or her world. The starting point of the social constructionist interview does not begin with individual subjectivity but rather is centred on social and cultural relationships as they actively and constantly create language and understanding (Gergen, 1994). Thus, in the process of interviewing, we have to acknowledge the influence of the participants' perspectives on the researchers' shifting subject position to acknowledge the collaborative process of the interview (Ellis and Berger, 2003). The interview and the data obtained seemingly feed off one another as each influences and bolsters the other in the negotiation of meaning.

Marshall (2004) asserted that the primary advantage of phenomenological interviewing, is that it permits an explicit focus on the researcher's persona; experience combined with those of the interviewees. It focuses on the deep, lived meanings that events have for individuals, assuming that these meanings guide actions and interactions. It is, however, quite labour intensive and requires a reflective turn of mind on the part of the researcher (Marshall, 2004). The researcher tried to reflect on the responses of the participants by repeating back their responses the way she understood so that they can confirm or modify the constructs gathered by the researcher in the same interview session. In addition each interview session reflected on the following session as the responses of the first session reflect on the questions asked in the following session.
Many authors (e.g. Neuman, 1994; McCracken, 1988; Seidman, 1991; Dwyer, 1993; Putnis and Petelin, 1996) provided instructions on interview techniques. Seidman (1991) also offers further guidelines for interviewing, such as recommended length and tone, appropriate questions and the use of pilot interviews.

**Direct open-ended questions**

The interviews were semi-structured and direct in which respondents were probed by the researcher to uncover underlying motivations, beliefs, attitudes and perceptions on destination selection criteria, destination safety, definition of safety in the destination, its importance, the Middle East region and its different tourist destinations, tourists safety in the Middle East destinations, etc. The researcher used the laddering technique in questioning her respondents. In laddering, as explained by Malhotra (1999), the line of questioning proceeds from product characteristics (destination selection criteria, destination safety, Middle East destinations, etc.) to user characteristics (tourist risk perception and the different factors affecting it).

Although the researcher attempted to follow a rough outline, the specific wording of the questions and the order in which they are asked were influenced by the interviewee’s replies. Probing was of critical importance in obtaining meaningful responses and uncovering hidden issues. Probing was done by asking questions such as “why do you say that?”, “that is interesting, can you tell me more?” or “would you like to add any thing else?”
Cognitive mapping exercise

Behavioural geographers and environmental psychologists have recognised for a long time that the world as perceived by individuals is often very different from the "real" one and that the nature of this perceptual and experiential world has a significant influence on human behaviour. Brookfield (1969) wrote about "the environment as perceived" and its importance in understanding why people use the environment as they do. In this sense, of course, the term perception may be used loosely. Therefore, the term cognition is more appropriate than the term perception (Walmsley and Lewis, 1984).

The images that people construct are variously known as environmental images, cognitive maps, or mental maps. The activity whereby these images are developed is known as cognitive mapping. Such mapping is the subject of a great deal of research in both geography and psychology (Dows and Stea, 1977; Golledge and Stimson, 1987; Gould and White, 1974; Lloyd, 1989; McNamara, 1986). Gould and White (1974) explain that the basic strategy of cognitive mapping technique is to put people (travel intermediaries) in hypothetical situation, where they are asked to rank their preferences for a series of places (Middle East destinations) in terms of locational desirability (in terms of desirability to live, visit or organise trips to them). From maps of their space preferences the attempt is made to explain the way in which mental maps are related to characteristics in the real world.

Dows and Stea (1977) suggest that cognitive mapping allows people to generate mental images and models of the environment. They explain that a cognitive map is a cross section representing the world. It reflects the world as some person believes it to be, not always in terms of its geographical accuracy to measurable "reality", since it is accepted that perceptual research cannot necessarily be judged against objective criteria. They also discuss that given the link between cognitive maps and decisions as to what to do and where, cognitive maps are a target for advertisers with products and places to sell.
One of the key roles of cognitive mapping is providing major insights into tourist behaviour, not least by helping develop understanding of how certain places are perceived (Walmsley and Jenkins, 1992). Also cognitive mapping acts as a generating frame of reference for interpreting events in our spatial environment (Laszlo et al., 1996). Cognitive maps provide an efficient mean of communicating certain types of information (Mazze, 1974). Cognitive mapping techniques have been usefully used in the fields of international relations, administrative sciences and management sciences (Monazeml and Conrath, 1986), but have not been yet widely used in the field of tourism.

There are many ways of exploring cognitive maps. For instance, Saarinen (1973) suggests that a range of projective techniques can be used to elicit images. These include association techniques (such as word association tests); construction techniques (such as thematic apperception tests); the close procedure (deriving from gestalt notion of closure and involving situations where individuals fill in the missing parts of a stimulus, as in the case of completing maps that are partially drawn); choice techniques (e.g. individuals drawing a neighbourhood on a street plan in order to indicate areas with which they are familiar); and free expression techniques (exemplified by situation where individuals draw sketch maps to illustrate the extent and nature of their environmental knowledge).

This research used several techniques; word association techniques, construction techniques, and choice techniques using card sorting and choosing destinations from given maps.
Projective technique questions

Projective techniques were developed for use in clinical psychology in the early twentieth century. These techniques, including the Roschach and the Thematic Apperception Test, are employed in personality assessment (Rabin, 1981). During the 1940s, projective techniques were adapted from their clinical settings for use in attitude, opinion and market research (Weschler and Bernberg, 1950; Smith, 1954). They were employed to encourage respondents to express private feelings and to say things that might be threatening or embarrassing when conventional research techniques were used (CoIliner, 1951). Since they require respondents to report on how others, and not themselves, might think, feel or behave, the views expressed can be seen as other people’s views or simply attributed to imagination (Schlackman, 1989). Thus, at least one of the assumptions underpinning the techniques remained when they were employed in these new research applications; that projection is the process of attributing one’s own feelings, behaviour or motivations to others. These techniques were not used in market or opinion research to assess personality, nor did users adapt or develop any of the test norms or standards available to users in clinical settings. During the 1980s they were rediscovered by academic consumer researchers (Rook, 1988).

In qualitative research, projective techniques allow respondents to project their perception and feelings on some person or object (the Middle East) or in some other way are allowed to depersonalise their responses, and thus they feel freer to express their thoughts (Day, 1989), thus breaking several response barriers associated with direct questioning such as inability to express themselves, lack of awareness of repressed motivations, unwillingness to disclose certain feelings, irrationality and the tendency for subjects to say the right thing to please the interviewer (Oppenheim, 1992).
Linzey (1959) identified five categories of projective techniques based on the type of responses they elicit.

1. Associative techniques where respondents were asked to respond to a stimulus with the first thing that comes to mind. Word association is the most frequently used technique. In this study respondents were asked to respond with the first three descriptions that occur to their minds when the Middle East is mentioned.

2. Construction techniques require respondents to construct a picture or story loosely based on clinical Thematic Apperception Test. They encourage the expression of imagination and creativity. They can be asked to draw their own picture as in this research travel intermediaries are asked to personify the Middle East and describe it.

3. Completion techniques where respondents are presented with an incomplete stimulus such as the beginning of a sentence, and are asked to complete. The theory is that providing closure to an open-ended, ambiguous stimulus or narrative will reveal implicit attitudes, values and perceptions held by the person supplying the closure.

4. Choice or ordering techniques where respondents select one from a list of alternatives, or arrange materials, such as pictures or statements into some order, respondents in this research are presented by some sets of maps where they have to select destinations and sort them according to several factors and also they are given cards with some statements that they are asked to arrange.

5. Expressive techniques where respondents incorporate some stimulus into a novel production such as role-play. Respondents may be asked to prepare and act out a mini-play.

Projective techniques are sufficiently versatile to be employed within a wide range of research strategies and application. They can be involving and fun for respondents, tap feelings, perceptions and attitudes that can be difficult to access by more direct questioning techniques and can be a rich source of new leads and
ideas for researchers (Catterall and Ibbotson, 2000). Malhotra (1999) defined a projective technique as an unstructured, indirect form of questioning that encourages respondents (travel intermediaries) to project their underlying motivations, beliefs (image of the Middle East), attitudes or feelings regarding issues if concern (safety and security in the Middle East). Decrop (1999) asserts that projective techniques are particularly useful to triangulate the more conventional interviewing.

**Telephone interviews**

For the last two decades telephone interviewing has been one of the primary methods of collecting data. The quality data obtained by telephone may be comparable to that collected in personal interviews. Respondents may even be more willing to provide detailed reliable information on a variety of personal topics over the telephone than in personal interviews (Zikmund, 2000). The researcher used telephone interviews in the second phase of the research with interviewing British travel intermediaries to benefit from two of the main advantages of such technique, these of which are, decreasing time and cost. The speed of telephone interviews is a major advantage as, it would have cost the researcher a lot of time to arrange appointments with the British intermediaries and to travel from Egypt to UK for conducting the interviews. It would have cost her also quite a sum of money to travel to UK for such purpose. Therefore, telephone interviews have eliminated travel time and the cost of travel.
6.4 Data Analysis

As component of research methodology, data collection and analysis approaches are sometimes considered as being either qualitative or quantitative (Neuman, 1994). Qualitative analysis techniques will be used to evaluate data collected from the two sets of interviews.

In general, qualitative data analysis means a search for patterns in data recurrent behaviours, objects, or body of knowledge. Once a pattern is identified, it is interpreted in terms of social theory, the setting in which it occurred.

(Neuman, 1994:411)

Qualitative data analysis focuses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text (Budd, Thorp, & Donohew, 1967; Lindkvist, 1981; McTavish & Pirro, 1990; Tesch, 1990). Text data might be in verbal, print, or electronic form and might have been obtained from narrative responses, open-ended survey questions, interviews, focus groups, observations, or print media such as articles, books, or manuals (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002). Qualitative data analysis includes several methods that are used to analyse textual data such discourse analysis and qualitative content analysis.
Discourse Analysis

According to Foucault (1984) discourse refers to ways of thinking and speaking out aspects of reality.

\[
A\, \text{discourse provides a set of possible statements about a given area, and organises and gives structure to the manner in which particular topic, object, process is talked about.}
\]

(Kress, 1985:7)

Foucault (1984) declared that discourse is the power which is to be seized. In Foucault analysis, power is thus a productive concept, it is not simply repressive. It is the operation of webs of power that enables certain knowledge to be produced and known.

Fairclough (1995) defined discourse analysis as the study of opaque relationships of causality and determination between discursive practices, events and texts and wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor of securing power.

Discourse analysis involves more than analyzing the content of texts for the ways in which they have been structured in terms of syntax, semantics, and so forth. Rather, discourse analysis is concerned with the way in which texts themselves have been constructed in terms of their social and historical "situatedness." Traditional content analyses, as Sacks (1996:59) pointed out, "fail to account for the insistence with which certain stories or explanations are put forth, take hold and shape images of [whatever is focused on]". Thus, an important assumption that underpins discourse analysis as a form of inquiry informed by post structural and post modern understandings is that language cannot be considered to be transparent or value free. Even the language that we take to be the most "natural,"
that is, the spoken word or talk, does not "have" universal meaning but is assigned particular meanings by both speakers and listeners according to the situation in which language is being used.

Discourse analysis, however, poses some challenges on researchers. One of the challenges that confront researchers undertaking discourse analysis is ongoing tension in discourse analytic research between the text and the context in which that text is situated (Parker & Burman, 1993). The dilemma for me as researcher is deciding how far I should go beyond the actual text I am analysing to arrive at a contextualized interpretation of what is being conveyed. Following on from this, discourse analytic research also gives great power to the analyst to impose meanings on another's text. This critique relates to the position of the researcher, and it is important to take into consideration the point that analysts are not only readers but also producers of discourse (Parker & Burman, 1993).

Furthermore, Parker and Burman (1993) noted that discourse analytic approaches often refer to partial or situated reality, and view texts as constructed by and, in turn, constructing understandings of reality rather than describing a or the reality. Discourse analysis can thus be perceived by some as not providing a sufficiently rigorous methodology in which the reader is satisfied that the analysis has produced the only possible reading.

**Qualitative Content Analysis**

Qualitative content analysis as asserted by Bryman (2001) is probably the most prevalent approach to the qualitative analysis of documents or interview transcripts. It comprises a searching out of underlying themes in responses being analysed. Content analysis as argued by Bryman is a very transparent research method. It is this transparency that often causes content analysis to be referred to as an objective method of analysis.

Research using qualitative content analysis focuses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of
the text (Budd, Thorp, & Donohew, 1967; Lindkvist, 1981; McTavish & Pirro, 1990; Tesch, 1990). Text data might be in verbal, print, or electronic form and might have been obtained from narrative responses, open-ended survey questions, interviews, focus groups, observations, or print media such as articles, books, or manuals (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002).

Qualitative content analysis goes beyond merely counting words to examining language intensely for the purpose of classifying large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings (Weber, 1990). The goal of content analysis is “to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study” (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992) and is congruent with the goal of the current study; as to provide knowledge and understanding of the security image of the Middle East as perceived by travel intermediaries.

Data analysis starts with reading all data repeatedly to achieve immersion and obtain a sense of the whole (Tesch, 1990) as one would read a novel. Then, data are read word by word to derive codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Morgan, 1993; Morse & Field, 1995) by first highlighting the exact words from the text that appear to capture key thoughts or concepts. Next, the researcher approaches the text by making notes of his or her first impressions, thoughts, and initial analysis. As this process continues, labels for codes emerge that are reflective of more than one key thought. These often come directly from the text and are then become the initial coding scheme. Codes then are sorted into categories based on how different codes are related and linked. These emergent categories are used to organize and group codes into meaningful clusters (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; Patton, 2002). Ideally, the numbers of clusters are between 10 and 15 to keep clusters broad enough to sort a large number of codes (Morse & Field, 1995).

Depending on the relationships between subcategories, researchers can combine or organize this larger number of subcategories into a smaller number of categories. A tree diagram can be developed to help in organizing these categories into a hierarchical structure (Morse & Field, 1995). Next, definitions for
each category, subcategory, and code are developed. To prepare for reporting the findings, exemplars for each code and category are identified from the data. Depending on the purpose of the study, researchers might decide to identify the relationship between categories and subcategories further based on their concurrence, antecedents, or consequences (Morse & Field, 1995).

With a conventional approach to content analysis, relevant theories or other research findings are addressed in the discussion section of the study. In the current study the researcher might compare and contrast her findings to theory. The discussion would include a summary of how the findings from her study contribute to knowledge in the area of interest and suggestions for practice and future research.

The advantage of the conventional approach to content analysis is gaining direct information from study participants without imposing preconceived categories or theoretical perspectives. Knowledge generated from the content analysis is based on participants’ unique perspectives and grounded in the actual data.

One challenge of this type of analysis is failing to develop a complete understanding of the context, thus failing to identify key categories. This can result in findings that do not accurately represent the data. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described this as credibility within the naturalistic paradigm of trustworthiness or internal validity within a paradigm of reliability and validity. Credibility as explained in the following section can be established through activities such as peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, negative case analysis, referential adequacy, and member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Manning, 1997).
Data analysis method used in this research

In the current study responses were analysed according to each exercise. The answers to the semi-structured questions were recorded and later transcribed verbatim. The verbatim quotations were subsequently analysed using conventional qualitative content analysis technique. Bryman (2001) also described qualitative content analysis as a strategy of researching for themes in one's data lies at the heart of coding approaches that are often employed in the analysis of qualitative data.

All conversations and interviews were recorded on audiotapes for transcription, coding and analysis. Interviews with the Egyptian travel intermediaries were conducted in Arabic language then were transcribed, translated into English and then back into Arabic to ensure retaining the consistency of meanings. The elicited constructs were content analysed. In view of the limited number of interviews, this was carried out manually. The researcher worked on transcribing the answers and setting basic codes for them, then a coding frame was set, then the researcher sorted constructs by code and continued to draw out more constructs from what the language used by the intermediaries reflects.

It was found useful to begin by coding text according to the specific research questions used to frame the interview. We labelled this type of index coding as stage one or basic coding. Codes or categories are tags or labels for allocating units of meaning to the information compiled during the interviews. Codes were attached to phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs connected to a specific setting. The purpose of this step was to facilitate subsequent analysis by identifying all of the text associated with a particular elicitation or a specific question. Creating categories triggers the construction of a conceptual scheme that suits the data. This scheme helped the researcher to ask questions, to compare across data (Gough and Scott, 2000).

Basic coding resulted in the identification of large segments of text on broad topics; these segments formed the basis for an in-depth analysis within or across
topics. In contrast to basic coding, the researchers attempted to use respondents' own terms and semantics to guide the construction of codes and their definitions for in-depth analysis. For example, respondents' comments on the way they describe the Middle East to their clients have guided the researcher to figure out the way travel intermediaries perceive the Middle East. These comments have also helped the researcher to understand the difference in the way each group of respondents uses to promote tourist destinations.

### 6.3 Validity, Reliability and Triangulation

There are many perspectives and much debate regarding the appropriate criteria and terminology to be used in judging trustworthiness within the constructivist paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Merriam et al., 2002; Murphy et al., 1998). Guba and Lincoln (1994), suggest that the paradigmatic differences between post-positivism and constructivism warrant the use of different criteria. They submit that the traditional evaluative concepts of internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity do not hold because they do not believe in objectivism and essentialism.

Schwandt (1994) suggests that the most important criteria for judging trustworthiness of constructivist research is functional fit (i.e., whether the inquiry and its results allow you to achieve goals and how the findings fit into a given context or discourse). Guba and Lincoln (1994) offer the following criteria by which constructions themselves can be evaluated: "fit" or how the findings fit within current knowledge; "work" or the degree to which they develop a more sophisticated level of knowledge; "relevance" or how applicable the inquiry is to the given context; and finally, "modifiability" or their ability to be modified as new data emerge. Eisner (as cited in Murphy et al., 1998) discussed trustworthiness from the perspective of perception and aesthetic knowledge, which yields criteria such as structural corroboration (i.e., do different parts of the data collected demonstrate coherence?); referential adequacy (i.e., are readers presented with data that enable them to see what the researcher saw?); and multiplicative
replication (i.e., do the members of the community believe the findings?). Other criteria that have been suggested include thoroughness and comprehensiveness. These criteria would ultimately determine whether the findings reported show a more informed view, useful and worthy of adoption (Schwandt, 1994).

Two additional sets of criteria for judging inquiries have been proposed: (1) credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability; and (2) authenticity, which include fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, and tactical authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Robson, 1993).

The first bears resemblance to criteria used for positivist and post-positivist research being reinterpreted to reflect the basic assumptions of the constructivist paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). Credibility deals with truth-value, which is referred to in traditional research as internal validity. Given the underlying assumptions of constructivism, to test truth-value one would need to determine if the interpretations made were credible based on the subject’s own interpretations (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Murphy et al., 1998).

Guba and Lincoln (1994) also replaced the criteria for external validity or generalisability with transferability. Since the purpose of constructivist inquiry is to search for unique differences, emic views and idiographic statements, and generalisability is considered a context-free statement, generalisability in the traditional sense is not an issue. Instead, it is the applicability or degree of fit that is essential to the adoption of a given construct and thus an essential criterion from which to judge the inquiry. Transferability is the degree to which similarities exist between contexts that allow findings to be transferred from one situation to another (Murphy et al., 1998). Creswell (1994) discusses the use of thick descriptions to provide a solid framework for comparison from which transferability may occur. The responsibility of the researcher is to provide thick descriptions with sufficient detail so that the reader can make judgments regarding the transferability of the data obtained (Robson, 1993). Thus the responsibility of...
transferability is taken off the researcher and placed on the person who is attempting to generalise the information from one context to another.

The use of the concept of reliability is not adhered to by constructivists for reasons similar to those of generalisability, particularly since the constructivist researcher is often more interested in differences than similarities and the uniqueness of the event within a specific context. Instead, steps must be taken to ensure that the information obtained is dependable. What makes a study dependable is whether the researcher has taken into account the expected instability of the phenomenon in question, as well as the potential change that may have resulted from the study design itself (Murphy et al., 1998). Creswell (1994) notes that by having the researcher clearly state the central assumptions, the selections of the participants, and the biases and values of the researcher it may actually be possible to replicate the study in another context.

As noted, key to the concept of dependability is the use of thick descriptions. The thick descriptions allow for an inquiry audit, where the auditor can follow the process to determine if it was clear, systematic, well documented, and provided safeguards against bias (Altheide & Johnson, 1994; Robson, 1993). Thick descriptions allow the researcher to describe how problems encountered were addressed, which is a key to evaluating the validity of a study. Thick descriptions include what is implicit as well as explicit. Emphasis is on the process, and thick descriptions provide a full account of the hermeneutic process involved in the interpretation of the situation. Additional steps to enhance dependability may include overlapping methods, stepwise replication, and auditing (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

Finally, the concept of objectivity or neutrality is at odds with the assumptions underlying the constructivist paradigm since it clearly views the interactivity of the inquirer as being essential to the inquiry. Instead, constructivists would employ criteria of confirmability. What becomes critical is that the information obtained must be confirmable. Utilisation of thick descriptions and audit trails are essential
in allowing the reader to determine whether the conclusions clearly flow from the
data (Murphy et al., 1998; Robson, 1993).

In looking at the authenticity of inquiry, Guba and Lincoln (1994) proposed that the
following issues be evaluated: fairness (i.e., the researcher must ensure that the
range of realities were presented); ontological authenticity (i.e., constructions of
the individual has become more sophisticated with respect to the phenomenon
under study); educative authenticity (i.e., the constructions of others have become
more sophisticated); catalytic authenticity (i.e., the outcomes of the inquiry have
stimulated human action); and tactical authenticity (i.e., the inquiry increased the
subjects’ empowerment to act). The last two criteria were added most recently in
response to criticism from those holding beliefs in the critical theory paradigm
(Schwandt, 1994).

Regardless of the criteria and terminology used to judge quality of constructivist
research all agree that care must be taken to prevent distortions resulting from the
researcher’s presence and bias on the part of either the inquirer or the subjects,
including the manner in which the data were collected and interpreted. A number
of strategies have been proposed to ensure quality of constructivist research
including: member checks or asking participants to comment on the researcher's
interpretations; triangulation or use of multiple investigators, theories, sources,
and methods of data collection; clear exposition of methods and process or
ensuring sufficient detail to allow the reader to view the context from which to
judge the credibility of the research process and content; audit trail or use of an
independent auditor to authenticate the findings by following the logic of the
researcher; reflexivity or critically reflecting on the self as researcher; prolonged
engagement in data collection and analysis to ensure in-depth understanding of
the phenomenon; peer review such as the use of a devil’s advocate to offer
questions and raise alternative explanations throughout the process; search for
negative cases or those cases that do not apparently fit the emergent conceptual
framework; use of thick rich descriptions that enable the reader to judge whether
the methods used and conclusions drawn by the inquirer were justifiable; and
finally a commitment to fair dealings or representing multiple perspectives in the research (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Merriam et al., 2002; Murphy et al., 1998; Robson, 1993).

Many techniques were applied in the present study in order to establish trustworthiness. First of all credibility, as the researcher tries to maintain credibility using different techniques; for example, during the personal interviews, a tape recorder was used to reduce the risk of wrongly-interpreted answers during transcription of interviews, and to be able to double check the answers after the interviews. Follow-up questions were also used during interviews to make sure that the respondents understood the questions to allow the collecting of more data.

Also the researcher applied member check during the interview session; the researcher repeated back the responses after the interviewees in the same way she understood them in order to give interviewees the chance to either further comment on their answers or clarify them. This process allowed the researcher to check her data and her interpretations with the respondents.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) informal checking should be undertaken during the course of collecting data (the interview session) for various reasons; some of which are, assessing the intentionality of respondents; providing direct opportunity to amend factual errors; placing the respondent on record as having confirmed certain statements; and gaining the chance to recap. As to Denzin (1989) – as cited by Hollinshead (1993:730) such immediate feedback is particularly important in group interactional situations, where the inquirer wishes to become regularly involved in order to appreciate how members of that group routinely interplay. Member check may be also undertaken after data is interpreted; as the researcher provides the people on whom he/she conducted research with an account of his/her findings (Bryman, 2001).
However, the credibility of the depth interviews of the Egyptian travel intermediaries may be lowered due to the fact that interview patterns are translated into Arabic language and accordingly answers were again retranslated into English language during transcription, in the translation process words may unintentionally get the wrong meaning. To overcome this, the interviews patterns and transcription of results were sent to two authorised translation specialists to check the translation and edit the transcription.

Yin (1994) suggests that **triangulation** is a common mean to satisfy the conditions of credibility. Denzin (1978) emphasised that the data triangulation is the use of variety of data sources to give a researcher more confidence about his/her findings and conclusions. Decrop (1999) discussed five types of triangulation that were presented in literature and their use in tourism qualitative research:

1. **Data Triangulation** – the use of multiple sources evidence in a study,
2. **Investigator Triangulation** – the use of multiple researchers and/or evaluators,
3. **Theory Triangulation** – the use of multiple perspectives or rival theories to explain and interpret a set of data,
4. **Methodological Triangulation** – the use of multiple methods in a study to investigate the same problem,
5. **Interdisciplinary Triangulation** – the use of multiple disciplines to inform a research process.

In the present research, two types of triangulation are employed: data triangulation, methodological triangulation. **Data triangulation** is established by using multiple sources of evidence as the research investigated two types of travel intermediaries; UK based intermediaries and Egyptian intermediaries and also the data collection procedures took two phases; as interviews were undertaken twice; once before the Attacks on Sharm El Sheikh Resort in July 2005 and another time after the attacks. **Methodological triangulation** is achieved as a result of using...
multiple methods of questioning (open-ended questions, cognitive mapping exercise, and projective techniques questions) during the interview as well as using telephone interviews in the second phase of data collection (as shown in section 6.3.3). Additionally, the researcher employed observation as another method of investigating the phenomenon under study. These methods of triangulation helped triangulate the data collected in order to emphasise credibility of the data collected.

Second, **transferability** which encourages researchers to produce what Geertz (1973) calls thick description. The researcher in the current study tried to provide thick descriptions with sufficient details of travel intermediaries' behaviour in terms of cultural norms, motives and community values so that the reader can make judgments regarding the transferability of the data obtained.

Third, **dependability** which entails ensuring that complete records are kept of all phases of the research process – problem formulation, selection of research participants, fieldwork notes, interview transcripts, data analysis decisions, and so on – in an accessible manner. Thick description of the research process and problems and how they were encountered, where the auditor (in the current study the auditors were the research supervisory team who acted as auditors during the course of the research and at the end to establish how far proper procedures are being and have been followed) can follow the process to determine if it was clear, well documented and provided safe guards against bias.

Also a pilot study was employed to reduce reliability errors in measuring travel intermediaries perceptions (Appendix III). This pilot study was used to test the patterns of the interviews. The feedbacks of such study will be reflected in the revised research design.

Finally, **confirmability** which is concerned with ensuring that, the researcher can be shown to have acted in good faith or it should be apparent that he/she has not overtly allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations manifestly to sway the conduct of the research and findings deriving from them. Utilisation of thick
descriptions and audit trails – as previously explained - are essential in allowing the reader to determine whether the conclusions clearly flow from the data (Murphy et al., 1998; Robson, 1993).

6.6 Summary

This chapter has presented the epistemological and theoretical perspectives of the research; it has described its methodology, data collection techniques and methods of data analysis. A research string of constructionism (epistemology) – interpretivism (theoretical perspective) – phenomenology (methodology) is appropriate for this study as it concerned with understanding of the different perspectives of travel intermediaries.

The research encompasses two phases of data collection; qualitative interviews to both UK based travel intermediaries and Egyptian travel intermediaries before Sharm El Sheikh Attacks in July 2005, and personal interviews with Egyptian travel intermediaries and telephone interviews with British travel intermediaries after three months after the attacks.

Many techniques were applied in the present study in order to establish trustworthiness. The study achieves credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability through the use of different techniques such as member check, triangulating sources of data (interviews with UK based travel intermediaries and interviews with Egyptian travel intermediaries), triangulating; using different methodologies in the same interview (open-ended questions, cognitive mapping exercise, and projective technique questions, ranking questions), and observation. Finally, thick description and audit helped in achieving dependability and confirmability.
CHAPTER SEVEN: INTERVIEWS RESULTS

7.1 Introduction

Destinations with positive images can be expected to prosper while those with less favourable images may never achieve their fullest tourism potential. Accordingly it seems that travellers use images and perceptions of destinations to form their destinations awareness sets (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991). Among the various components that form a destination image is the safety element. This factor is a primary condition for the normal tourism development of a destination, region or country and thus a basic determinant of its growth. Without that element destinations cannot successfully compete in the generating markets, even if they have the best quality of natural and built attractions (Cavlek 2002).

This chapter displays the results of the two sets of interviews that were undertaken before and after the attacks on Sharm El Sheikh resort with a sample of British and Egyptian travel intermediaries to assess the security image of the Middle East and its destinations as perceived by both groups of travel intermediaries and it also focuses on comparisons between the perceptions of the UK based travel intermediaries and the Egyptian ones. Section 7.2 displays the results from interviewing British and Egyptian intermediaries before the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh in July 2005 and presents the different perceptions of both the British and Egyptian intermediaries about the Middle East overall image, the effect of media on the Middle East image, and safety and security of a destination. Terrorists struck in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el Sheik on July 23rd 2005, bombing hotels and beach resorts usually frequented by Western tourists. They killed nearly 88 people. In view of the importance of the resort and the severity of the terrorist attack, the researcher decided to collect some additional data in an attempt to update the fieldwork of the study and assess the implications and after effects of the bomb. Section 7.3 displays the results from interviewing British and Egyptian intermediaries after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh in
July 2005 and presents the effects of the attacks on the Middle East security image, as well as the strategies adopted by travel intermediaries for securing their tourists, in addition to demonstrating some of the promotion and risk management strategies used by travel intermediaries. Finally, section 7.4 summarises the main outcomes of the chapter.

7.2 Results from Interviewing British and Egyptian Intermediaries Before the Attacks of Sharm El Sheikh in July 2005

As components of a research methodology, data collection and analysis approaches are sometimes considered as being either “qualitative” or “quantitative” (Neuman 1994). Qualitative analysis techniques were used in this research to evaluate data collected from the two sets of interviews that were undertaken with two sets of ten Egyptian and ten British travel intermediaries. The stage of data collection took place in the U.K. and Egypt, all interviews took place in March 2005 in the offices of travel intermediaries, and each interview lasted between twenty five to forty minutes. Interviews with Egyptian intermediaries were done with companies' managers or owners. On the other hand, interviews with the British took place in London in April 2005 in the offices of the interviewees; each interview lasted between twenty to thirty minutes. The majority of interviews were done with sales assistants, few of them with shift managers and one with a secretary. There is a clear difference in level of respondent over the two research stages that would be discussed in the coming chapter.

All conversations and interviews were recorded on audiotapes for transcription, coding and analysis as confirmed in section 6.4. Interviews with the Egyptian travel intermediaries were conducted in Arabic language then were transcribed, translated into English and then back into Arabic to ensure retaining the consistency of meanings. The elicited constructs were content analysed (section 6.4). In view of the limited number of interviews, this was carried out manually by the researcher and one of her colleagues, both working independently. A coding frame was agreed and the constructs were then sorted by code. Results of the data collection are detailed below.
7.2.1 The Middle East overall image

The interviews started with questions that aimed at exploring how travel intermediaries perceive the Middle East as an overall geographic entity from different angles including their understanding as to the countries that constitute the Middle East, their perception of the Middle East as a tourist destination and the way they describe it to their clients, and also their perception of the image of the Middle East abroad and the factors influencing such image.

Travel Intermediaries were asked as previously described (section 6.3.3) to plot on a map the area of the Middle East and identify on it the countries it constitutes. The majority of Egyptian Intermediaries perceived the Middle East as constituting Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and the Gulf countries; which are United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain and Yemen. On the other hand, the British Intermediaries perceive the Middle East as being the Arab countries such as Algeria, Bahrain, Dubai, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, in addition to Israel, Turkey, and some of the Intermediaries included Iran. Answers of the Egyptian Intermediaries which support these findings came as follows:

*The Middle East in the Media usually refers to the Eastern Arab world like Egypt, the Gulf countries, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Palestine or shall we say Israel (ET 01).*

*It is a term created by politicians to denote the area that includes the Gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait together with Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel and Egypt (ET 04).*

*Countries like Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, eh! .....Also Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Dubai, Qatar, Yemen, and Oman. What else?! Oh yes! I forgot to mention Jordan, Palestine, and Israel. That is all I think (ET 05).*
The Middle East is a name that refers to the Arab countries and Israel for example when the media mentions the Middle East conflict they always refer to the Arab Israeli conflict. When I hear the Middle East term I always think of Palestine, Israel, Iraq, Egypt -of course- and also the Gulf area (ET 09).

On the other hand, answers of the British Intermediaries came as follows:

Oh! What's this? (Pause) I think the Middle East Countries are the Arab Countries, Israel, Iran, and Turkey (BT02)

Oh this is a difficult task, well let me try. I think it is the region that constitutes the countries of North Africa like Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt, and Asian Arab countries such as Jordan, Lebanon and the Gulf countries, together with Israel, Turkey and Iran (BT03)

The Middle East is mostly called on Islamic countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Egypt, and countries of North Africa such as Morocco and Tunisia (BT07).

It is a region with many political conflicts, such as the Iraqi conflict and the long lasting Israeli/Palestinian conflict. The countries neighbouring such conflicts such as Egypt, Jordan, Dubai, in addition to Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria are the countries that represent such region (BT 10).

It is clear from the previous quotations that the British intermediaries view Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia as part of the Middle East region; while a majority of the Egyptian Intermediaries perceived such countries as being North Africa and not part of the Middle East, which is emphasized by six Egyptian intermediaries as in the following quotations:
I think that Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco are considered North Africa and not included with the Middle East countries; they are even rarely involved or mentioned in any of the problems concerning the Middle East (ET 04).

Countries like Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria are considered North African countries not Middle Eastern. If we look at their geographical location we'll find them in the Northern part of Africa and a bit to the west like Morocco (ET 07).

Moreover, it is obvious from the quotations of the British intermediaries that they perceived Turkey as being one of the Middle East countries; eight respondents out of ten mentioned Turkey as one of the countries that constitute the Middle East, while on the other hand the Egyptian intermediaries never mentioned Turkey as being part of the Middle East; on the contrary some of them mentioned that Turkey belongs to Europe and others said they were not sure; their comments came as follows:

..... I think that even Turkey considers itself as part of Europe and they are waiting for being accepted in the European Community. So I don't think that it is included within the Middle East countries (ET 06).

I don't really know if Turkey is politically considered as one of the countries of the Middle East, but when we sell it to our customers we promote it as a destination in Europe (ET 08).

Using Associative technique questioning (as previously explained in section 5.4.3) where respondents were asked to respond to a stimulus with the first thing that comes to mind. The travel intermediaries were asked to respond with the first three descriptions that occur to their minds when the Middle East is mentioned. The answers confirm that the Egyptian travel intermediaries perceive the Middle East destinations as attractive destinations that enable
their tourists to explore a great deal of unique tourist products whether archaeological, natural or manmade, which will suit all types of tourists. Their answers included the following.

"A very important tourist destination with lots of good potential that would attract different segments of demand". I believe that the Middle East has got a great deal of attractions that would satisfy a wide range of tourist segments. The region only needs good tourism management, planning and coordination between its different destinations to be one of the most important regions in the field of international tourism (ET06).

"Variety of good services and competitive prices". We offer our tourists a variety of good services; we try to ensure tourists satisfaction and the same time our prices are lower than many European or Asian destinations that offer the same type of services (ET08).

"A great diversity of products" one of the most important aspects about tourism in the region is that its destinations do not capitalise on one type of tourism products, but they have a wide range of tourist products. Each destination in the Middle East targets more than one tourist segment and more than one tourism type. For example, Egypt does not only focus on cultural tourism instead it is diversifying its tourist products into cultural, recreational, business and convention tourism, adventure and desert safaris …etc (ET10).

It is obvious that the previous quotations reflect promotional views of the destinations by respondents who are involved in selling them as tourism places and hence appear to be similar.

In the same sense, the answers of the British intermediaries came to emphasise the same notion that the Middle East has many destinations that are very popular and attractive to tourists. Majority of the answers confirmed that many of the Middle East destinations are highly demanded by a lot of their customers. The following are examples of quotations that hold such meaning:
“Lots of Fun”. Let me speak only about the destinations that we sell in the Middle East, which are very exciting destinations; they offer the tourist lot of fun and exciting times. (BT01)

“Full of Mystery”. The Middle East to me is a place that takes you back in history to live within its ancient civilisation with all the mysteries that surrounds it, it’s enough to see the pyramids or the temples in Egypt and start to wonder about the mystery of the ancient Egyptians’ life and death (BT04).

Another important finding is that most of the British intermediaries were not able to describe the whole region as one entity, instead they described only the countries they sell in the Middle East, emphasising the difficulty of describing the Middle East as a whole as there are countries that they would never recommend to their customers such as Iraq and Israel. This finding may indicate that selling tourist destinations is different than describing them politically; when selling a tourist destination it is usually sold and promoted individually regardless of the region where it is located, sometimes even micro destinations regardless of the countries they belong to, for example in most of the brochures promoting Sharm El Sheikh it is promoted as a Red Sea resort not mentioning that it is part of Egypt. It also emphasises the fact that where ever a security problem prevails in a certain destination and lasts for some time, this destination would be automatically bypassed by travel intermediaries and tourists. Their answers came as follows:

Actually, the Middle East has many different countries and it is very difficult to deal with the whole region as one destination as each country in the region has its own characteristics and some countries are not considered as tourist destinations. Nevertheless, I can describe the most popular destinations of the region – the ones we sell - as having beautiful nature and great cultural heritage. (BT03).
Pretty, mysterious, and great culture, for example the pyramids in Egypt, and the mosques of Saudi Arabia, actually it is difficult to describe it as one unit (BT09).

Other answers reflect that the Middle East are perceived as troubled or at least some of its countries are not recommended by British travel intermediaries because of the political conflicts that take place in such places. The following quotations exemplify this notion:

Well, I would describe some of its countries as extraordinary, unique and beautiful such as Egypt or Morocco, yet I would describe other countries as troubled and dangerous such as Iraq, Iran and Israel and I'll make sure to warn my customers from visiting any of them (BT05).

The Middle East destinations may be described as exciting, mysterious and pretty, but there are some of its destinations that I would not currently recommend such as Israel (BT06).

From the previous quotations of both the Egyptian and British intermediaries, it may be notable that the Egyptian intermediaries’ descriptions of the Middle East destinations focused on the Middle East destinations in terms of a whole range of different attributes, while the British intermediaries’ descriptions of the region came in a holistic approach.

“All tourists destination”. The Middle East has a variety of tourist products that can match all tourists’ preferences or tastes. For example if you are seeking cultural tourism you can easily find it in the ancient Egyptian monuments in Cairo, Luxor or Aswan in Egypt, you can also go to Jordan and see the magnificent Petra or ancient Lebanon and its temples, while if you’re seeking recreation the Middle East have got some magnificent beaches, such as Sharm Elsheikh, Hurghada, and the North west coast in Egypt, the beaches in Jordan, Lebanon and the Jumeira beach in Dubai, ...etc (ET02).
"Beautiful, Mysterious, and Exciting". The Middle East has got some countries which may be described as beautifully mysterious and exciting with their history, culture and natural beauty (BT02).

You’ll find there all you need; the Middle East has got a wide variety of attractions that you must find one of your interests in; we’ve got magnificent ancient monuments that don’t exist anywhere else, marvellous beaches and wonderful climate, spacious amazing desert ... etc. The people in the Middle East are also very welcoming and hospitable to tourists. In addition, the Middle East destinations offer good services and attractions for reasonable prices. All of this makes the Middle East destinations very popular to tourists (ET07).

The Middle East is the wonder land, the Arabian nights, the adventures of Sinbad. When visiting the Middle East it takes in a trip in its mysterious history and unique culture (BT07)

Moreover, the researcher used a projective technique to allow interviewees project their perceptions and feelings freely and avoid barriers of direct questioning (Oppenhiem, 1992). The technique used was the Construction technique which requires respondents to construct a picture or story loosely based on clinical Thematic Apperception Test (Linzey, 1959), in order to encourage the expression of imagination and creativity. The travel intermediaries were asked to personify the Middle East and describe what kind of relationship they would have with this person. Majority of answers of the Egyptian intermediaries came to reflect the close everlasting relationship, which is normal due to their feeling that they are considered part of this region. In the description of all Egyptian intermediaries to this person, they described it as a beautiful person that suffers from some problems that hinder its growth or survival and needs to be believed in and supported in order to conquer all its problems. Also in their description all answers agreed that this person is a female or a child.

Majority of answers were detailed which indicates familiarity with the person (the Middle East) described and its exact description and conditions. Some
answers reflected a high level of love, care, and devotion to the Middle East; as interviewees expressed their feelings by comparing the Middle East to a spouse or the lover, which indicates also the level of intimacy in the relationship.

*Well, the relationship that I can have with this person is catholic marriage (ET01).*

*As a person the Middle East would be my partner in life (ET08).*

*The Middle East is a person I love very much and which I can't be separated from (ET09).*

In addition, other answers reflected a high level of appreciation and gratitude to the Middle East and also a desire to support it and return its favours and kindness; as interviewees expressed their feelings by comparing the Middle East to their mothers or fathers, which indicate also the level of love, respect and emphasise the close relationship.

*I think that if the Middle East was a person the relationship it would have with any of us would be like the relationship between a mother and her children (ET02).*

*The Middle East as a person would be someone whom I belong to; well we can say he is big father who links all brothers and sisters together (ET04).*

*It would be my kind mother who has spent her life taking care of her children and now she is ill and needs to be taken care of to get well and continue its noble mission with the new generations (ET05).*
Moreover, two answers reflected their great feeling of responsibility for developing the Middle East; as interviewees expressed this feeling by comparing the Middle East to a child who needs care and support to realise its great potential.

*The Middle East may be my child who needs care and support to solve its problems and grow (ET07).*

*It is a beautiful, intelligent orphan child, who needs a family to protect, care for and solve his problems so that this beauty and intelligence be maintained, grow and flourish, so that in the future he would be able to benefit himself and his family (ET10).*

Finally, two answers indicated that the Middle East is very close and familiar to them as they considered it a close relative or part of their family, which again reflect a high level of closeness and sympathy in their relationship with the region

*The Middle East to me would be part of my family who needs my sincere support (ET03).*

*It would be a close relative of mine (ET06).*

When they described this person, five answers confirmed that this person is a female and that she is beautiful, kind and generous. These answers are consistent with their previous answers, given that all interviewees were men, it is also consistent with the perception that this person needs support and help and these are usually women in the Egyptian culture. Also the answers reveal that this person is beautiful but suffering from some problems which are consistent with some of their descriptions to Middle East destinations.
This person is extremely beautiful but unfortunately suffering from starvation, which hides its beauty. She needs help in order to overcome her problems and unveil its charm (ET01).

As usual mothers are beautiful, kind and always giving to her children. It also like any mother expects her children to be gathered around to support her when weak or ill as it is the current situation facing the Middle East or our kind mother (ET02).

The Middle East to me is like a beautiful person who had several accidents that left some injuries in some important part of her body and needs careful treatment and the support of all her family and friends in order to be able to stand on her feet again. (ET03).

She is very pretty but suffers from illnesses and pain in some parts of her body and needs surgery (ET08).

This person is very charming and kind but has some problems that need to be solved (ET09).

Furthermore, three answers indicated that this person may be an old man or a small child, which again emphasise the construct of needing to be supported. Yet, in both cases it was also described as beautiful, smart and with great potentials. These descriptions are consistent with their previous description to the Middle East as a tourist destination.

At the time being I can describe this person as handsome, very kind and generous, but suffering from some problems with some of his children (ET04).

Very brilliant and charming but needs the support and help of his family and friends to solve his problems and make use of his potentials (ET06).

This child is beautiful, talented and smart (ET07).
On the other hand, answers of the British intermediaries were short general sentences that reflect a good, but rather distant and independent relationship. Six respondents described the relationship as a good healthy relationship without defining its nature. Their description to this person was consistent with their previous descriptions to the Middle East destinations; such as being attractive, mysterious and troubled. The following quotations emphasise this notion.

*It is a good healthy relationship. I would describe him as a good friend (BT01).*

*Oh! What kind of question is this? Well the relationship I would have with this person is good relationship. This person is handsome, polite, and mysterious (BT 02).*

*It would be good steady reliable relation. He is mysterious but reliable (BT 03).*

*Oh, this is funny. Emmmm! I can say it is good relation. This person is pretty and attractive (BT 04).*

*Our relation would be good. I can describe it as pretty but troubled (BT 08).*

Besides, three of them described this person as being their friend who is good looking and kind yet has some problems, which makes it dangerous sometimes to get involved with him. This description may well describe the relation of the west with the Middle East with all its problems; as although they believe it is a beautiful place with kind people, they are always cautious in dealing with it as a result of the insecurity conditions taking place in some parts of it.
He would be my best mate. Ehhh I may describe him as handsome (BT 05).

He would be my friend who always gets himself into trouble and I should be careful with him. He is a nice person but always gets into trouble (BT 06).

I may consider him my friend who is kind and good looking but sometimes dangerous to deal with (BT 09).

Additionally, only one British interviewee described the Middle East as being part of his family, which is closer than what was mentioned by the rest of the British interviewees. Yet he also described it as being nice but troubled which is consistent with the rest of the answers.

He may be a brother to me; he is a bit troubled but he is nice by nature (BT 07).

As to their perception of the image of the Middle East as perceived by foreign tourists, most of the Egyptian intermediaries agree that the west perceives the Middle East as a near region with extraordinary magnificent destinations that attract different segments of tourists, especially those who are seeking cultural and/or recreation tourism. In addition to its proximity from Europe, it offers good value for money as it combines quality of service and reasonable prices. Examples of the answers of the Egyptian intermediaries regarding this notion came as follows:
Many European tourists whether those targeting history or recreation choose Middle East destinations and Egypt in particular for their holidays and this indicates that European tourists have a positive image of the Middle East destinations and view them as attractive (ET 01).

The Middle East region is very popular abroad in particular among Europeans as the Middle East is not far from Europe, offers quality services at reasonable prices especially that their currencies are very strong against ours. (ET 03).

Well, I believe that regardless of the security problems that sometimes take place in some countries in the Middle East; tourists still prefer the Middle East and specially Egypt as a place to spend their holidays, which indicates that these problems do not have long term effect on the destination image but rather a temporary effect that fades away after the news about the incidents stop and gradually the flow of tourists bounces back to normal, and this happened in almost all insecurity incidents that faced Egypt such as the latest Taba incidents, where tourist flows where not much affected and shortly after they demand was back to normal (ET 07).

It is very obvious from the previous examples that Egyptian intermediaries were trying to convince the researcher with PR comments about the Middle East as a tourist destination; the answers seemed to be preset and positive which resembles the comments they put in their brochures to promote a certain destination or the comments of a government official who is trying to present a positive image of a destination in the media; which makes these comments feel like selling comments rather than being their real perceptions.

Similarly, when British intermediaries were asked about the image they hold about the Middle East destinations and how they think their customers view such destinations; their answers showed the same promotional tone as did the answers of the Egyptian intermediaries, which feel less like unique personal impressions than positive testimony in a selling brochure.
The destinations we sell in the Middle East are very popular to our customers, and the feedbacks we have from our customers usually confirm their satisfaction and enjoyment (BT01).

The picture of Middle East destinations as held in minds was always about the thought of ancient civilisations and countries with unique cultures (BT07).

A lot of tourists prefer the Middle East destinations and view them as beautiful destinations with good value for money such as Turkey (BT09).

It is also worth mentioning that unlike the Egyptian intermediaries who focused their answers on Egypt as the most important destination in the region, the British intermediaries confirmed that there are some destinations in the Middle East that are very popular, highly demanded and attractive to tourists in addition to Egypt such as Morocco and Turkey. Their answers were as follows:

I believe that our customers enjoy the destinations we promote in the region such as Turkey and Egypt. We sell only destinations we believe to be exciting and satisfying to our customers (BT02).

I think that some destinations are perceived as exciting, attractive and enjoyable such as Turkey and Morocco, while some other countries are considered unsafe such as Iraq and Israel (BT05).

Well some destinations such as Turkey, Egypt, Morocco...etc. are perceived as charming tourist destinations, but some other places are viewed as dangerous and tourists are advised to avoid such as Israel (BT06).
Moreover the British intermediaries confirmed that there is not one specific image that covers the whole region but rather every destination or every country has its own unique image by which it is known and promoted. Therefore the following answers reveal that the Middle East destinations are not promoted nor sold as being part of the Middle East but rather each destination has its own image and is promoted and sold individually.

As I said before there isn't one single image that encounters the entire region but rather we promote each destination distinctively from others (BT 03).

There are many destinations in the Middle East that are attractive to a lot of travellers and every destination has its particular image. For example Egypt is very popular with its pyramids and temples as land of the pharaohs that fascinates all its visitors (BT 04).

I told you before it depends on which destinations are we talking about, for example Egypt, Tunisia and Turkey are recognised as exciting and interesting, while this does not apply to the rest of the region, which makes us sell them as individual destination regardless of their location(BT10).

In contrast with the previous answers, only one British intermediary stated that at the present time the Middle East destinations are not safe and therefore he currently would never recommend any of them, his answer came as follows:

At the moment the Middle East is very unsafe as there are political turmoil currently taking place in more than one country in the region therefore, I would advise everyone to avoid visiting it at the present time (BT09).
7.2.2 The effect of media on the Middle East image

As for the factors affecting the image of the Middle East in the west, all responses of Egyptian intermediaries emphasised that media exaggeration is the major factor that affects the image of the Middle East. The media focuses on reporting the news of wars, conflicts, terrorism and political unrest in some countries in the region and overstates the situation to the audience and even more generalise it in the whole region, which really affect the image of the Middle East and its other destinations that are not part of any conflict.

A majority of the answers revealed a conviction that media is the main factor in damaging destination image; as they all agreed that media has a great influence in shaping destination image and by focusing on presenting the problems or the negative points that might not be as severe as it is presented.
Tourism is a volatile industry, which means that any problem that may affect the destination and especially security problems would affect tourist flows to the destination. So when the news of security problems or political instability in a certain destination become the main topic in news journals or Tele-news then it is natural that tourists' destination choice would be affected (ET02).

Yes, the media has a negative effect on tourists' demand and tourists' image of the destination reported by the media; therefore even if the destination is not really insecure; tourists refuse to travel to this destination (ET 03).

There are many examples that prove that media has a wide negative effect on destinations image and on tourists purchase decision for example, after the events of September 11th that had been intensively covered by almost all media channels; many tourists postponed their previously arranged trips, changed their routes and may even cancelled the entire idea of travelling. At that time the whole idea of travelling was considered as risky (ET04).

On the other hand, others confirmed that media may be also used as an efficient tool for improving destination image if there was coordination between tourist authorities in the destination with both foreign travel intermediaries and foreign media, as one of the counteractions that take place after the occurrence of any crisis.

I think that coordination between national tourist authorities in the destination with foreign tour operators and foreign media is very important in controlling the way the destination may be perceived by foreign tourists (ET09)

Well, I think there is more than one factor that may affect destination image as perceived by tourists; one of which is whether the tourist has previous experience in the destination, the recommendation of his travel consultant, as well as publicity of the destination, and most important is
the way the media views such place and therefore in is very important to work closely with these parties (ET07).

In the same sense, when travel intermediaries were asked if their recommendation to any destination would be affected by the way media presents it; a majority of Egyptian and British intermediaries agreed that sometimes the media affect their recommendation to some destinations, especially when the news media focuses on lack of security, political instability or war in some destinations, a case in point currently being Iraq.

Although in most of the cases media exaggerates and creates an untrue image based on one incident, media has a great impact on tourists' decisions and consequently on the destinations they choose and as I said earlier we mainly choose our destinations based on our customers' demand, therefore in most of the cases our recommendations are affected by what comes in the news (BT01).

Definitely, the news of wars or terrorist attacks has negative effect on both travel intermediaries and tourists because at the end a tour operator would not want to risk his image by selling destinations that his clients view as dangerous (ET02).

Yes, of course sometimes the image presented by the media affects our recommendations as most of people get their information from the media. In many cases customers cancel their reservations as a result of what they heard about the destination in the media, it really sometimes makes a destination seems more dangerous than it truly is but, if we actually think that the destination is not really dangerous than we simply recommend it our customers while if we really think it is dangerous then we don't recommend it (BT02).
Yes, I think that travel intermediaries are also affected by the news about certain destination, for example many western tour operators excluded Egypt from their programmes after the Gulf war in 1991 and after Luxor's attacks in 1997 (ET10).

On the other hand, some travel intermediaries had another opinion; they stated that although media is considered an important factor in directing tourists flows out of a destination because of security problems, travel intermediaries do not easily switch destinations they sell or stop recommending them for their customers. They attributed their view to the fact that they only sell destinations that are safe for their clients. This in turn means that even those intermediaries who claimed that the media does not affect their recommendations, will be affected by the news of insecurity in any destination they sell, which is in a way consistent with the previous views.

*We are always very keen in our agency to sell only destinations that are free of any problems that may be tackled by the media; therefore our recommendations are rarely affected by media reports (ET01).*

*Not really, media does not affect our recommendations much; as we recommend destination we are sure of its safety (BT04).*

*Media never affects our recommendations as we only sell safe destinations and would never recommend troubled ones (BT07).*

### 7.2.3 Safety and Security of a Destination

Travel intermediaries were then asked to state the criteria upon which they decide to sell a destination. Answers of both groups concur that the assurance of their clients' personal safety in the destination is a prerequisite. Once tourists' safety in the destination is guaranteed they start looking at other criteria; most important of which is tourists' demand and their preferences; the majority of respondents in both groups of travel intermediaries emphasised that they choose the destinations they sell based
on customers' demand. Answers of both Egyptian and British intermediaries that emphasise this notion came as follows:

We base our choice on destinations that we include in our programmes on what customers ask for; for example when many customers come to the agency or call to ask if we have a programme for a certain destination, then we notice that this is a demanded destination and that when we promote it will attract a huge number of customers, after that we make our contacts with tour operators in such destination and try to make a deal with best terms. ..... As to safety in destination, it is very important but as I told you we base our choice on our customers' demand and we have never experienced a case of an unsafe destination that is being highly demanded by customers; since the destination is highly demanded then for sure it is a safe destination. We follow our customers' needs (ET03).

We choose destinations with the highest demand from our customers, for example if we are talking about the Middle East Turkey and Egypt are demanded by a lot of our customers. (Interrupted by a phone call) he resumes: Of course destination safety is a very important issue that we put into consideration when selecting our destinations (BT03).

Well, the numbers of inquiries we receive from our clients determine which destinations would be included in our tour programmes. ..... if you're talking about safety in the destination we consider it a must before taking any further action (BT10).

In addition to safety of the destination and high tourists demand, some interviewees added the quality of products and services offered by the destination, only one British interviewee defined quality as meeting the European standards of service, while the rest failed to define what they really meant by quality which makes a vague and unclear criterion.
We choose the popular destinations, according to the quality of services offered by destinations and the demand of travel agencies, who express the demand of their customers (BT01).

Before selling any destination we send a representative from the company in a FAM trip to explore the conditions of the destination, the most important of which its safety and security, its quality of products and services and whether the type of attractions it offers is appealing to our clients (ET04).

We choose destinations that our customers ask for, destinations that are attractive to tourists, and also destinations that offer services of high quality for example hotels, and restaurants should meet the European standards of service. But before this the destination should be safe and comfortable for our customers (BT04).

In addition to the previous answers some interviewees mentioned good value for money as an important criterion for selling a tourist destination after ensuring tourist safety in the destination, which holds a lot of sense since tourism is no more dependent on the upper level income segment in the society, alternatively tourism now is considered a necessity to various segments of the society, even the Egyptian society is now more aware of the importance of tourism and hence, price is an important factor in deciding upon a certain destination not only for travel intermediaries but also for tourists.

Basically, we are very careful in our choices of the destinations we sell. We sell only safe destinations. Another important factor is the price of such destination versus the variety of attractions offered; so price is also an important factor (ET07).

Most of all safety in the destination determines whether to sell the destination or not. After that comes its attractiveness to tourists and of course prices (BT09).
I would put our criteria in the following order; safety, high demand and good value for money (ET10).

At the time where nearly all interviewees confirmed that the main criteria for selling a tourist destination were safety and tourist demand, one Egyptian interviewee confirmed that the only important criterion was the political condition in the destination and he attributed this to the fact that whenever there is a social or political instability in a certain place it is more prone to terrorist attacks and insecurity problems. This view may be a true summary of all the previous views.

Political stability is a very important issue when choosing a tourist destination because if the country has a stable political and social regime then there would be minimum opportunity of any risk occurrence (ET06).

Furthermore, when travel intermediaries were asked to define safety in the destination, both groups agreed that safety is the physical wellbeing of tourists in the destination. All answers of both Egyptian and British travel intermediaries concurred that a safe destination is the one where tourists can move around freely without being worried about their lives.

A safe destination is when tourists are not exposed to any incident that may affect their lives or their well being (ET01).

Personal safety in my opinion is the most important aspect in tourist safety in the destination. It is very important that the tourist feels safe to move around in the destination with out any fear about their lives or physical being (ET04).
In addition, a majority of interviewees from both parties the Egyptian and the British mentioned terrorism or terrorists' attacks as the main aspect which makes a destination unsafe. This view indicates that the main fear of both travel intermediaries and tourists arise mainly as a result of terrorists' attacks which was the most frequently mentioned aspect of insecurity in tourists destinations, making it the most feared of all other insecurity aspects. Therefore, it may also be claimed that terrorism is the biggest security deterrent to tourists.

A destination is safe if the tourists are secure of any terrorist attack or so (BT05).

We can consider a destination safe if there is no threat that tourists may get killed or kidnapped in terrorist attacks (BT07).

Any place with no risk of terrorism or war may be considered a safe place. Wars and terrorism are the most threatening to tourists Safety entitles tourists comfort and peace of mind that the destination should offer; it entitles no single worry or fear about lives or belongings (BT08).

Safety is always related to peoples’ lives. Safety in the destination may be that there is no danger that faces tourists’ lives in the destination like the case of terrorist (BT09).

A destination is said to be safe if there is no danger of terrorist attack (BT10).

Also some of the interviewees, especially the British added theft and armed robbery to terrorists' attacks. From the previous quotations in addition to the following three it may be observed that terrorists' attacks were the main concern of the majority of British tourists as they spoke of terrorists' attacks as the main deterrent security risk and mentioned nothing else besides it except few of them who added theft and armed robbery. This view gives an
indication that travel intermediaries and tourists in Britain and may be in the whole West fear terrorism the most.

I am not sure but, I can define it as self safety of tourists in the destination. The destination is safe if the probability of tourists getting killed or injured is minimal. Also absence of theft and robbery are very important in tourists' safety, may be not as important as self safety, but it is still an issue that makes the tourist feels unsafe and unhappy in the destination. (BT01).

Tourists’ safety means that there would be no immediate risk of terrorism or kidnapping and also minimum risk of theft or armed robbery. (BT02)

Any political turmoil or terrorism really makes tourists scared; also theft and robbery are issues to be considered (BT06).

On the other hand, majority of Egyptian interviewees mentioned terrorism as one aspect among other aspects that leads to unsafe destination such as natural crises, epidemic diseases, individual crimes and wars, which reveal the difference between the British who perceive terrorism to be the main and may be only aspect of destination insecurity, while the Egyptian perceived terrorism as one aspect among others that may have the same weight in deterring tourists away. We may assume here that Egyptian intermediaries view insecurity in a destination from a wider perspective.

A destination is considered unsafe if it suffers from any risk that may physically affect tourists, such as diseases, terrorist attacks that target tourist or any natural disaster (ET 03)

Safety in the destination comprise a lot of aspects most important of which is personal safety. Personal safety is very important, it is very important that tourists feel that there is no risk of being hurt, getting ill or being killed or kidnapped by a terrorist groups. Personal safety in the destination may be achieved if there are no wars; terrorist attacks targeting tourists in the destination, no threat of epidemic diseases, and
the destination take good care of applying the food hygiene standards and finally no threat of any natural disasters. If the destination maintains all the previous aspects then it supports personal safety of tourists in the destination (ET05).

I think that destination safety has a strong relation with severe security incidents that take place in the destination such as wars, terrorist attacks, and natural disasters such as diseases or earthquakes. What I mean are incidents that have the international attention, but no body would really care about a bit of theft or an individual crime (ET07)

Any place with no risk of terrorism or war may be considered a safe place. Wars and terrorism are the most threatening to tourists (ET10).

Travel intermediaries also confirmed that any security risk in a destination affects tourist flows to such destination because nothing can force tourists to travel to a destination they perceive as unsafe. Answers of both the British and the Egyptian intermediaries corroborate the notion that tourists flee away of any destination that is perceived as suffering insecurity problems especially terrorist attacks. The following citations reflect this perception.

It is normal that tourists would not like to visit countries with insecurity problems, especially problems that may cause them injuries or death, I mean this is natural no one would like to get caught up in terrorist attack for example (ET01).

Places with criminal offences and terrorism against tourists are very intimidating to tourists. When tourists know from the news that a certain place is insecure they become very much discouraged to visit it (BT01).

Naturally, any destination with security problems will suffer decrease in tourist flows. However, I think that when a sever incident occur tourist flows will be affected, but if such sever incident occur frequently then tourism in this place is ruined for along period of time such as Iraq nowadays and Lebanon during its civil war (ET05).
From our previous experience, when a security problem occurs in any destination, this destination usually experiences many cancellations (BT10).

Furthermore, severity versus frequency of the security problem was another aspect that had to be studied in order to be able to assert which type of security problems that affect most tourist flows to a certain destination. Severity of the security problem was viewed by both the Egyptian and British intermediaries as the main deterrent to tourists at a destination. They think that the more the severity of the problem, the more it is tackled by the media and consequently the more tourists are worried and avoid visiting the affected destination.

Incidents that are presented in the news influence tourist's decision to travel to a certain destination the most... The news brings out only major drastic incidents that take place, which means that drastic incidents are the most discouraging to tourists (ET04).

I think that severity of the problem is more damaging to destination growth for a while, for example severe events such as wars, terrorism, diseases or natural crises like what happened in Tsunami (ET06).

It's probably the severity, as I said terrorism scares away a lot of tourists, while theft or pick pocketing might not scare a lot of people, though they are definitely problems that happens frequently and may affect destination selection decision of both tourists and tour operators (BT06).

Severity I'd say, no one cares about a bit of theft or such, but terrorist attacks and war do not look good on travel details (BT07).

Of course, events such as terrorism or wars are severe problems that intimidate people from travelling to the destination with the problems more than any other security problem (ET08).

I think it's the severity of the problem that deters tourists away from the destination (BT09).
Moreover, another group of interviewees and these were the majority (ten interviewees) viewed frequency in majority of answers in relation with the severe security problems. They have agreed that the more the frequency of such severe incidents the longer it takes the destination to regain back its position as a tourist destination.

_I would say first it is the severity of the problem, then the frequency of its occurrence. Frequency of such severe acts like wars or terrorist attacks are very damaging to destination reputation more than small incidents such as theft even if it happens repeatedly (ET01)._

_I think it’s both, the severity of the problem deter tourists but the frequency of this severe situation deter tourists even more for a long period of time (BT01)._

_Of course, severity of the problem discourage tourists from visiting the destination for a while after media has no more news about the problem, while in case of frequency of events such as what's going on in Israel the media keeps on following the news of the unrest and the terrorist attacks taking place there, which creates a long lasting image of insecurity and this makes tourists abandon the destination (BT03)._

_Naturally, any destination with security problems will suffer decrease in tourist flows. However, I think that when a severe incident occurs tourist flows will be affected, but if such severe incident occurs frequently then tourism in this place is ruined for along period of time such as Iraq nowadays and Lebanon during its civil war (ET05)._

Besides, only three British intermediaries emphasised that the frequency of any insecurity problem whether it was severe or not makes an unattractive destination, which again negatively affects tourists’ flows to it, while Egyptian intermediaries think that small insecurity problems such as theft or robbery would not much decrease tourists flows to affected destinations. These constructs are clear in the following quotations:
I think that the frequency of any security problem would deter tourists away from the destination for a long period of time (BT04).

I think that frequency of any security problem makes the destination less attractive to tourists and to us; we would never risk the peace or comfort of our clients (BT08).

I think that frequency of security problems in a destination link the destination image with danger and fear of insecurity problems, for example when people think of Israel they think of the ongoing war and unrest which is an unfavourable image that affect tourists' flows to it (BT10).

Another significant point that the answers revealed is concerning the types of tourists that highly perceive risk factors and whose destination selection decisions are the most affected among other types of tourists. The answers of both the British and Egyptian intermediaries confirmed that there are types of tourists that worry more than others about insecurity risks in destinations. Thirteen respondents; seven of which were Egyptian intermediaries out of ten interviewed as well as six British out of ten intermediaries interviewed emphasised that tourists who travel in large groups were seen as one of the types that are bothered the most from insecurity problems in a destination, especially, concerning terrorist attacks as due to similar incidents throughout history of terrorism they consider themselves an easy target for tourists.

Almost all kind of tourists tend to avoid places with insecurity risk, for example those tourists who travel and move in groups worry so much because of what the see some times in the news that a group of tourists or a tourist bus were attacked (ET01).
Of course some people worry more than others especially those travelling on mass as they are considered a target to terrorist attacks, but we try to offer our customers the best we can by choosing secure destinations (BT02).

I think that tourists who travel in large groups; those who travel in organised package tours are the first to cancel their bookings in case of any terrorism incident (ET 03).

Certainly there are certain types of tourists who worry more than others one of which are group travellers (BT 03).

Mass travellers worry the most about security risks and in particular terrorism, as they usually move in groups, which makes them so obvious to terrorists (ET 04).

Moreover, families, especially those with children were pointed out as one of the types that highly perceive destination risk and accordingly are most likely to alter their travel plans as a result of any news about insecurity problem in their selected destination. Five British intermediaries confirmed this notion compared with only two Egyptians.

..., I think that families also get concerned about destination insecurity problems for their safety and the safety of their children (BT01).

..., in addition, families with children also worry very much about security in destination (BT03).

Well, families with children, in general worry more than others about destination safety (BT04).
Well it seems to be families with kids. They select their holiday destinations cautiously in order to ensure above all the safety of their kids (BT06).

Families especially, those who have children worry very much about security risks and prefer secure destinations (ET 06).

Travelling families select destination based on safety factors in order to save themselves and their children the fear of any risk that decreases their level of comfort and satisfaction (ET 08).

Also I believe that also families also fear and the refuse the concept of travelling to a destination with even a slight degree of risk (BT10).

Another type of tourists that avoid destinations with security problems was found to be elderly people or the so called senior citizens; these people who are often retired from work. Six intermediaries mentioned elderly people as one of the types that worry most about insecurity problems in tourist destinations; two of which were Egyptian intermediaries and four British. Senior citizens were perceived as old age tourists who prefer to enjoy a comfortable, quiet and relaxing destination with minimum degree of risk. This perception may be clearly comprehended from the following answers:

..., also old age tourists –those usually above 65 years- tend to carefully choose their destinations; they usually prefer peaceful tranquil destinations (ET 01).

Well, I think that elderly people worry more about security issues than younger people as elderly people seek destinations with high levels of security and comfort to help them relax (BT01).

..., senior citizens too, worry much about any insecurity risk, it is very important for them that the destination would be as safe as possible (BT 04).
Old age tourists are very cautious with security factors in order to avoid putting themselves in a situation that they cannot muddle through (ET 05).

..., also elderly people worry about destination safety; I believe young people worry less (BT 06).

From my experience elderly people worry the most about security problems in the destination (BT 07).

In addition, interviewees were asked to arrange some security problems according to their frequency in the Middle East. The following answers were revealed from interviews with Egyptian intermediaries; first, theft was considered of low frequency level by eight intermediaries and slightly frequent by two interviewees. Second, epidemic diseases were perceived of low frequency by six intermediaries and four intermediaries perceived epidemic diseases as slightly frequent. Third, the ten interviewees agreed that natural disasters were considered of low frequency in the Middle East region. Fourth, wars were considered frequent by six intermediaries and highly frequent by the other four. Finally, eight intermediaries agreed that terrorism is slightly frequent in the Middle East, while only two agreed that terrorist attacks are frequent in the region.

In the same sense interviewees we asked to arrange the previous security problems according to their degree of deterring tourists away from a destination. All Egyptian intermediaries perceived theft as being the least deterrent to tourists, while seven of them considered diseases as highly deterrent to tourists and three perceived them as slightly deterrent. Natural crises were considered slightly deterrent by six intermediaries and not deterrent by the other four. The ten Egyptian intermediaries agreed that wars are highly deterrent to tourists and also they all confirmed that terrorism is highly deterrent to tourists.
The following figure (fig. 7.1) presents a continuum of frequency of incidents versus their level of deterrence to tourists and illustrates the position of each of the discussed insecurity incidents in the continuum as were perceived by Egyptian intermediaries.

![Figure 7.1: Insecurity incidents in the Middle East as perceived by Egyptian intermediaries: Frequency versus Level of deterrence](image)

However, British intermediaries held the following perceptions about these security problems; first, theft was perceived by five interviewees as highly frequent in the Middle East, while four perceived it as frequent and only one as slightly frequent. Second, epidemic diseases were perceived by seven interviewees as not frequent and three interviewees could not determine the frequency of their occurrence. Third, nine interviewees out of ten agreed that natural disasters are least frequent in the Middle East, while only one perceived them as slightly frequent. Fourth, wars were perceived by seven as frequent in the Middle East, while three perceived them as slightly frequent.
Finally, terrorism was perceived by six interviewees as frequent in the Middle East, while four interviewees perceived terrorism as highly frequent in the Middle East.

Conversely, six British Interviewees perceived theft as being the least deterrence level, one as slightly deterrent and three could not determine its deterrence. Diseases were perceived as deterrent by eight interviewees and slightly deterrent by the other two. Natural crises were perceived by three interviewees as least deterrent and by two as slightly deterrent, while five interviewees could not specify the degree of deterrence. Wars were perceived by nine interviewees as highly deterrent and by one as deterrent. Finally terrorism was perceived by eight interviewees as a major deterrent and by two as only deterrent.

The following figure (fig. 7.2) presents a continuum of frequency of incidents versus their level of deterrence to tourists and illustrates the position of each of the discussed insecurity incidents in the continuum as were perceived by British intermediaries. The difference in perception of both frequency and level of deterrence of insecurity incidents in the Middle East between Egyptian and British intermediaries is so apparent in figure 7.1 and figure 7.2.
7.2.4 Comparative evaluation of different destinations in the Middle East

In addition, travel intermediaries plotted destinations they thought of as most attractive to tourists on a map for the Middle East. Comments of travel intermediaries will be illustrated in the figures that follow. There is no attempt to suggest that these figures represent real proportions, based in such small samples but that they are used illustratively to support the qualitative analysis.

All ten of the Egyptian intermediaries confirmed that Egypt is perceived to be the most attractive to tourists whether for Egyptian or foreign tourists, followed by seven intermediaries emphasised that Saudi Arabia is an important religious tourism destination and of very high demand as it attracts large flows of Muslim tourists for pilgrimage during periods of Hajj and Umrah. Furthermore, Lebanon was considered five times as well as Dubai as being attractive destinations and finally three interviewees mentioned Jordan.

Figure (7.3) illustrates the answers.
On the other hand, each British travel intermediary made a choice of three destinations that he views as most attractive to tourists. Egypt and Turkey shared the position of the most attractive destination as perceived by British travel intermediaries; Egypt was mentioned four times as the most attractive destination and five times as the second most attractive, while Turkey was mentioned six times as the most attractive and four times as the second most attractive destination in the Middle East. Moreover, Morocco followed Turkey and Egypt as it was mentioned by three intermediaries as one of the attractive destinations in the Middle East. Tunisia also was mentioned by three intermediaries followed by Jordan and Iran which where both mentioned twice. Surprisingly, Saudi Arabia was mentioned once as one of the interesting destinations in the Middle East. The following figure emphasise these findings:
Nevertheless, all Egyptian intermediaries agreed that currently the most unattractive destinations to tourists in the Middle East are Iraq and Israel due to their political turmoil. The two destinations were perceived equally by the ten intermediaries as unsafe and unattractive destinations to tourists. Moreover, four of them mentioned Israel as being an unfavourable destination to Arabs as a result of their feeling of hatred and condemnation towards its current practices against the Palestinians and in the past before 1973 and the peace agreement against Egyptians. This may give some evidence that Arabs don't feel comfortable with the idea of visiting Israel as their culture and political history together maximises the feeling of risk they hold against it. The following citations prove this construct:
... Egyptians and I think all Arabs condemn the Israeli attacks on the Palestinians, the Palestinian lands and sacred religious places besides the insecurity, therefore it is not a preferable destination to them (ET 01).

Besides being insecure, there is a long history of wars and hatred which, dates to 1948 between Arabs and Israel and this makes Israel banished from Arabs’ destination choice set (ET 05).

Although, Egypt and Particularly the area of the Red Sea receives numbers of Israeli tourists, Egyptians still can not imagine visiting Israel; for they still think of it as the country that occupied part of their land for some time, the country that caused death to many of their relatives who were killed in the war, the country that is occupying the holy lands in Palestine and Killing and torturing many youth, women and children, I don’t think that with such perception any Arab would visit Israel even if it was safe (ET 07).

I think that the concept of visiting Israel is not yet accepted by Egyptians and may be all Arabs; Arabs generally do not approve Israel’s policies in the region and therefore, psychologically speaking I don’t think it would be a relaxing or secure destination to them (ET 08).

In the same sense, nearly all British intermediaries perceived Iraq and Israel as the most unattractive destinations in the Middle East due to their current situation of political turmoil in both countries. Ten intermediaries confirmed that Iraq is very unattractive to tourists because of its current political status, versus eight stated that Israel is unfavourable to tourists because of its long lasting conflict with the Palestinians, which makes it unsafe to tourists. This perception is consistent with this of the Egyptian intermediaries. In addition, only one travel agent mentioned Saudi Arabia and another mentioned Iran as being unattractive to their tourists. Comments of the British intermediaries came as follows:
Currently I think Iraq and Israel are very unattractive. Israel is suffering of a non-stop security chaos and of course under the current war circumstances Iraq is totally unappealing to tourists and tour companies (BT01).

Israel suffers lack of security, although it is a very nice destination. Also Saudi Arabia has no demand from our customers (BT02).

The unattractive destinations are Iraq and Iran; they are both unsafe to visit (BT05).

The only destinations that have sever security problems in the Middle East region at the present time are Iraq and Israel and therefore they are unattractive and unsafe to visit (BT10).

Furthermore, all Egyptian travel intermediaries confirmed that the destinations they would recommend in the Middle East are those which are considered attractive to their customers. All interviewees repeated again the same destination they chose previously as being attractive to tourists. Therefore answers came again with Egypt being the most recommended; as all ten interviewees mentioned recommending domestic trips in Egypt. Also seven interviewees stated that they offer and sell religious trips to Saudi Arabia in the seasons of Hajj and Umrah, Lebanon was recommended by five interviewees, and another five recommended Dubai, and finally Jordan was recommended by three interviewees. The following figure emphasise these findings:
As for the destinations which British intermediaries would most recommend for their customers, interviews revealed that Egypt was the first destination to be recommended as all ten interviewees mentioned Egypt as their first recommendation. This result is coherent with the answers of the Egyptian intermediaries. Turkey came in the second place as it was mentioned by nine interviewees. Morocco came in the third place as it was mentioned five times, followed by Tunisia and Jordan which were mentioned three times each, which again matches the results of the Egyptian intermediaries as also Jordan was recommended by three Egyptian intermediaries. Answers of the British intermediaries' recommendations are illustrated in the following figure.
Moreover, both Egyptian and British intermediaries agreed that Iraq and Israel are unsafe destinations at the time being and hence would never be recommended. Again some of the Egyptian intermediaries added as was previously mentioned that due to Arabs current feelings towards Israel's political practices against Arabs and especially Palestinians; Israel is excluded from their tour programmes.

On the other hand, all Egyptian intermediaries agreed that the Middle East is a safe region apart from Iraq and Israel which are suffering severe ongoing political conflicts. They all confirmed that Egypt is one of the most secure and welcoming destination as it was chosen by all of the interviewees as the first safe destination. After Egypt six interviewees mentioned Dubai, and five mentioned Saudi Arabia, and another five mentioned Lebanon and four mentioned Jordan as illustrated in figure (7.7):
Conversely, most British intermediaries emphasised that most countries of the Middle East suffer certain periods of lack of security such as Egypt from 1991 till 1998, and also Turkey, Lebanon, and Algeria suffered some period of unrest. Most of them also mentioned currently the safe countries they are dealing with in the Middle East are Turkey, Egypt, Morocco and few mentioned Jordan. The ten British interviewees mentioned Egypt and Turkey, seven added Morocco and three added Jordan as being safe destinations.
Figure 7.8 Safe Middle East destinations as viewed by British intermediaries

Once again, both the British and Egyptian intermediaries emphasise that Iraq and Israel are the current most unsafe destinations in the Middle East due to the political conflict which is taking place in both countries. Their answers are consistent with their previous answers that these two countries are perceived as being unattractive due to security problems and hence not recommended by either group.

7.3 Results From Interviewing British and Egyptian Intermediaries After Sharm El Sheikh Attacks in July 2005

Terrorists struck in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el Sheik on July 23rd 2005, bombing hotels and beach resorts usually frequented by Western tourists. They killed nearly 88 people. This time, however, most of the dead were Egyptians (Washington Times, 27 July, 2005). Tourism is Egypt's second leading source of revenue. Despite several past terrorist attacks on tourist facilities, visitors have kept coming, undeterred by threats of violence. In 1995, Egypt hosted 2.8 million tourists. Egypt reached record tourism levels, despite the Taba and Nuweiba bombings in September 2004. By
2004, more than 8 million tourists spent billions of dollars, providing jobs, directly or indirectly, for about 3 million Egyptians (Washington Times, 27 July, 2005).

This section presents the results of interviews with five travel agents in Sharm El Sheikh three months after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh. Interviews took place in the offices of the interviewees in Sharm El Sheikh and lasted about twenty minutes (see section 6.3.1). Interviews were conducted and tape recorded in Arabic language then were transcribed and translated into English. Transcriptions were content analysed to present key findings.

This section also presents the results of telephone interviews with five UK based travel agents. The interviews took place three months after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh and exactly after the explosion of three hotels in Amman, Jordan by suicide bombers. The interviews were conducted by phone after calling the interviewees to set a date and time of interview, each interview lasted for about fifteen to twenty minutes (see section 5.4.1). Interviews were transcribed and content analysed to draw out the exact reactions of the British intermediaries after these attacks. Findings from both groups of interviews are discusses below.

7.3.1 Effects of the attacks on the Middle East image

The interviews started with questions that aimed at illuminating the effect of the attacks on the image of Sharm El sheikh as an international tourist resort and also the image of the whole region. Travel intermediaries were ready to answer questions of the researcher. They held a positive impression about the security situation in the resort as well as tourist flows. They acted friendly and optimistic as if they were giving a statement at a press conference. They were trying to convince the researcher that the effects of the attacks were minimal. They have also stressed on the fact that Sharm El Sheikh is and will always be a safe destination or "the land of peace" as the called it.

At the beginning interviewees were asked how dangerous did they think the Middle East was, especially after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh. All Answers
of the Egyptian intermediaries confirmed that despite of the individual attacks that sometimes take place in some Middle Eastern countries such as the latest attacks in Sharm El Sheikh, the Middle East may not be all considered a dangerous region, yet there are few countries that are suffering continuous wars or long lasting political conflicts such as Israel, Palestine and Iraq. This finding is consistent with some findings from the previous set of interviews and this may confirm the notion which asserts that the Middle East is a safe region apart from Israel and Iraq.

Generally, the Middle East is not dangerous, apart from some parts of it which are suffering long lasting wars or political conflicts such as Palestine and Iraq. I think it is very difficult nowadays to describe a place as dangerous because there has been a terrorist attack, as such attacks are taking place everywhere now not only in the Middle East. (ET 11).

No, of course not. May be few of its countries may be considered currently unsafe such as Iraq and Israel but the other places are normal like any other country in the world that may be exposed to an insecurity incident. For example before the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh London faced two series of attacks on its transportation system and a large number of people were killed or injured; do we consider London a dangerous place just because of such incident?! Of course not (ET 14).

The previous constructs were supported by several British Intermediaries as the majority of them asserted that terrorists' attacks are taking place all over the world now with no restriction to a particular region, especially after September 11th in America, the incidents of Madrid and the two series of attacks of London transportation System in Europe, which indicate that terrorism is spreading internationally and hence, there is no single place that may be described as more dangerous that the others.
I believe that there is no such place that maybe described as safe and another described as dangerous; as the Madrid and London bombings demonstrated that Western travellers are no safer in their morning commute than if they are in a Middle Eastern resort (BT12)

May be before September 11\textsuperscript{th}, it was widely held that terrorism devastated tourism, but as the West grow accustomed to a new era in which suicide bombers can strive anywhere, the Middle East is not the only unsafe region any more (BT14).

The previous findings show a noticeable shift in ideas of the British intermediaries after the attacks of London; as in the pre- Sharm EL Sheikh attacks interviews that took place before July 7\textsuperscript{th}, many intermediaries viewed the Middle East as a troubled region because of the problems in Iraq and Israel and also the terrorists’ attacks that sometimes take place in some of its destinations. Alternatively their current views are different, may be due to the fact that they felt that such attacks do not take place only in the Middle East but rather spreading internationally, which may put them in the same situation of the Middle East destinations that suffer being perceived as unsafe.

On the other hand, one British interviewee attributed the danger in the Middle East to the fact that, it is the region where majority of terrorists originate; as most terrorists are Muslims who come from or originate from Middle Eastern Islamic countries, which means from his point of view that the Middle East endangers the whole world and not only itself.

\textit{Regardless of being a dangerous destination or not, the Middle East is the origin of most terrorists, they don't want only to destroy the Middle East, but the entire world. They are spreading like cancer everywhere, which is horrific} (BT15).
Moreover the interviewees were asked about the effect of Sharm El Sheikh Attacks on their programmes. Answers of the Egyptian intermediaries confirmed that there was a temporary effect immediately after the attacks as many tourists asked to be flown back home, in addition to some cancellations that took place directly after the attacks. Travel intermediaries asserted (and it was obvious through my visit) that western tourists are back again lying on the beaches of Sharm El Sheikh, diving, snorkelling, and enjoying the great weather. Sharm El Sheikh’s resorts seemed enjoying back high occupancy rates. It showed also on traffic in the city centre, cafes, discos and night clubs) that things are back to normal and Western tourists are back enjoying Sharm El Sheikh, that also added that the period of the drop did not exceed few weeks before the flows were gradually returning back to normal.

Well, our programmes were not much affected as cancellations were just for the short period that followed the attacks. We had many cancellations in the day of the attacks and for about the couple of weeks that followed it; as people were afraid of a new attack. After that our programmes were gradually back o normal. At the moment, I think we have regained our tourists back (ET12).

As you can see, Sharm is currently full of tourists; we have resumed most of our programmes shortly after the attacks. I think that tourists now are aware that such incidents may happen anywhere in the world (ET14).

These findings may support the notion which asserts that the frequency of the severe events is the most damaging to destinations image and the greatest deterrent to tourists as was suggested in the previous sets of interviews. They confirmed that tourists mainly fear the reoccurrence of the attacks and therefore, cancellations usually are for bookings that directly follow the attacks, but after a while and when travellers make sure that there were no further attacks flows of tourists return back gradually to the destination, which is exactly what happened after the attacks of Taba in 2004 and also after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh.
In addition, other Egyptian intermediaries added that Sharm El Sheikh has got great sympathy and support from the Egyptian tourists and celebrities who visited Sharm El Sheikh directly after the attacks to show terrorists and the whole world that Sharm is still a safe destination to visit, in addition to some nationalities that refused to leave the destination or cancel their trips. These were mainly Arabs who have visited Sharm El Sheikh directly after the Attacks to show support to the Egyptian resort and also to declare their condemnation of terrorists and terrorism. Also British tourists and travel intermediaries were considered among those who insisted to go on with their regular programmes.

Well, cancellations that came from the European tourists were faced with bookings from Egyptian and Arab tourists who were really of great support to tourism industry in Sharm. Now, as may be you have noticed we have Egyptians, Arabs and also Europeans. Occupancy rates in most hotels and resorts is above 80 percent and our prices are back again to their normal levels (ET11).

Yes, certainly we were affected; after the attacks some of our agents abroad cancelled or postponed their programmes, but on the other hand, some other agents in Europe, especially the British agents nearly executed their regular programmes and refused to do any cancellations. Also Arab tourists who arrived to sharm exactly after the attacks were of significant effect on the whole situation (ET15).

This finding may give evidence of the importance of domestic as well as intra-regional tourism in supporting and promoting tourists' destinations. This finding also corresponds with the previous comments of the British interviewees that nowadays any place may be hit by terrorism, which does not make the place a dangerous place. Also it highlights the resilience of both the British intermediaries and tourists in dealing with a destination that was hit by terrorism.
In the same sense, when British travel intermediaries were asked about the effect of Sharm El Sheikh Attacks and the bombings in Amman on their programmes to such destinations and to the Middle East as a whole, all answers confirmed that although some customers cancelled their bookings to such destinations, yet holiday companies were carrying on with tours to Sharm El Sheikh, Jordan and to the Middle East in general.

Well, certainly some of our customers had cut short their holidays and others had cancelled or altered their bookings, but these were not many and we carried on our regular programmes to both destinations as well as to other destinations in the region which were not negatively affected (BT11).

Not much, apart from few cancellations. We applied normal conditions and followed our tour schedules, but we did not push it. Staffs were being told to use their discretion when dealing with worried customers (BT13).

This again shows consistency with the answers of the Egyptian intermediaries about the reaction of the British intermediaries who operated their programmes according to their regular schedules. On the other hand this evidence conflicts with some of the answers in the previous set of interviews where respondents asserted that the news of terrorist attacks in any destination may affect their decisions to sell or recommend that destination; as it is noticeable from their previous answers and also the answers of the Egyptians that the latest attacks in Sharm El Sheikh and Amman did not affect their selling or recommendation to these destinations.

In addition, two interviewees confirmed that normally they don't have much demand for Jordan and therefore the bombings in Amman had no significant effect on selling Jordan, yet they had some impact on tourists who were travelling to Sharm El Sheikh; as they feared that another bombing may proceed in Sharm El Sheikh.
In the case of Sharm El Sheikh there were minor effects; we were operating normally apart from a few cancellations. As for Jordan we don't have regular programmes to Jordan; as demand for Jordan is slow, so our programmes were not much affected by the bombings. Yet some our customers especially those with kids who had bookings for Sharm El Sheikh have worried a bit after the bombings in Amman, but our staff managed to calm them down (BT12).

Well, after Sharm El Sheikh's attacks we've experienced only slight effects, but since we don't sell Jordan that often we did not feel the effects of the bombings in Amman (BT14).

On the other hand, some of the answers added that many of the cancellations they received were from families with children who were worried a lot after the news of the attacks and feared the reoccurrence of the attacks and therefore, decided to cancel or postpone their trips.

...people with young children for example who were very anxious about the situation were allowed to cancel, postpone, or choose an alternative destination at no additional cost (BT13).

Of course we had some cancellations immediately after the attacks especially from families who were travelling with their kids, apart from that everything was according to schedule (BT15).

This finding shows consistency with the findings that were drawn out of the previous sets of interviews. The previous sets of interviews revealed that families especially those with children are of the most concerned types about security issues and hence of the most likely to be deterred away from any destination with a security problem, and here the previous quotations of the British interviewees support this finding.
Egyptian interviewees were then asked to determine the nationalities of tourists, who cancelled their trips to the resort. Most answers confirmed that American and Canadian tourists were the first groups that fled away from the resort immediately after the attacks and also they had the largest number of cancellations for the period that followed.

Well, most of all American and Canadian groups were the most terrified and asked to fly back home; also we've received a lot of cancellations from American agents to cancel their programmes for the few weeks that followed the attacks (ET11).

We had a lot of cancellations of the programmes that were booked for August by American travel agents, but some of them rebooked with us again when they felt that things are under control in the resort (ET15).

Moreover, some of them added that although Italian tourists are considered the number one market for Sharm El Sheikh; as majority of foreign tourists who usually visit the resort are Italians, Italian tourists were those among European tourists who left the destination most after the attacks. There was also a drop in the number of Italian tourists who visited Sharm El Sheikh in the few weeks that followed the attacks.

At the time of the attacks Sharm was full of tourists, especially Italian tourists whom we consider our main market in Europe. Yet, after the attacks the majority of them hurried to travel back home and then we received a lot of cancellations from the Italian operators, but I have to say again that everything is back to normal again (ET12).

Well, the shock was hard on all tourists and especially Italians whose operators immediately sent them charter flights to take back home after few hours from the attacks (ET15).
Further more one interviewee catering for Japanese groups indicated that Japanese tourists were so worried about the attacks that programmes to Japanese companies have not yet returned back to their normal schedules; many of them are still afraid that there might be more attacks.

*I think that the Japanese tourists were the most horrified from the attacks; the Japanese market is one of the new markets we cater for in Sharm. After the attacks they were all gathered together in our office, they were in great panic and they asked to go back home and although we tried our best to calm them down, we achieved limited success and they were flown back home in the following in the same day. Also their agents were as worries as their tourists and even more and till now they have not resumed back their programmes with us (ET14).*

The previous findings indicate that the nationalities most deterred by the attacks who took actions to leave the destination immediately and whose travel intermediaries cancelled or postponed their scheduled programmes were American, Canadian, and Italian tourists. However, their travel intermediaries resumed their programmes shortly after the attacks; as there were no further attacks. On the other hand the Japanese tourists and their travel agents also showed noticeable fear, which may still exist as at the date of the interview (three months after the attacks) they had not resumed their scheduled programmes.

Moreover, interviewees were asked how bookings to other destinations in the Middle East were affected as a result of the attacks. Answers of all Egyptian intermediaries emphasised that the overall effects on Sharm El Sheikh itself were minor and for a very limited period of time and similarly they assumed that there were no effects for the attacks on any of the Middle Eastern destinations.
The effects of Sharm El Sheikh Attacks on the flow of tourists were minimal and lasted may be for a couple of weeks as I said before, which imply that the drop in number of tourists did not last for a long time to reach other destinations in the Middle East (ET11).

I don't think that any of the Middle East destinations was affected; as the effects on Sharm El Sheikh itself were controllable (ET13).

I really don’t know, but I don’t think that there was any effect on the neighbouring countries (ET15).

On the other hand, majority of the British interviewees confirmed that Turkey, Morocco and Tunisia were considered as substitute destinations to those who cancelled their trips to Sharm El Sheikh in the period that followed the attacks, which indicates that such destinations were positively affected by the diversion of some tourists away from Sharm El Sheikh.

Well, some customers preferred alternative holidays after cancelling their trips to Sharm El Sheikh in the days that followed the attacks; they went to Turkey instead (BT11).

Well, I don’t think there was a significant effect apart from few cases that shifted their holidays from Sharm El Sheikh to Morocco or Tunisia (BT12).

I believe that Morocco and Turkey have benefited in a way as some tourists preferred to spend their holidays there than visiting Sharm El Sheikh in the few days after the attacks (BT14).

It is obvious from the previous quotations that answers of the British interviewees conflict with those of the Egyptians; as the Egyptian intermediaries believe that there were no effects what so ever on other Middle Eastern destinations, ignoring completely the role of the “spill over effect”
which indicates that destinations suffering a crisis might lose its tourists to other destinations, which is what the British tourists confirmed; as Sharm El Sheikh in the few days that followed the attacks had lost some of its tourists to Turkey, Morocco, and Tunisia.

Furthermore answers of all the British intermediaries revealed that none of the other Egyptian destinations were negatively affected by the attacks and that they were sold each according to its unique identity and unique promoted image. They also added that some customers were directed to other Egyptian destinations.

*Our sales to other Egyptian destinations were operated normally and none of them was negatively affected (BT11).*

*Of course, we sell other Egyptian destinations and sales were not negatively affected, on the contrary we directed some of the cancelled bookings to Sharm El Sheikh to another resort in Alexandria, which is still Egypt (BT13).*

*Everything was operating normally; we’ve experienced no cancellations for any other Egyptian destinations (BT14).*
7.3.2 Strategies of travel intermediaries for securing their tourists

Furthermore, interviewees were about the risk analyses they practice before choosing their destinations, some Egyptian intermediaries highlighted that destinations with long lasting security problems are excluded from their programmes, on the other hand, they added that they cannot completely abandon a destination because an individual insecurity incident that took place; as the whole world currently is prone to such events.

*It is very important to ensure that our customers will travel to safe destinations, therefore, if a destinations is usually suffering insecurity problems such as wars, political instability or hostility against tourists we don't sell such destinations and also advise our tourists not to visit them (ET11).*

*Any destination that has frequent or ongoing severe security problems is automatically avoided by our customers and of course we avoid selling them too. Yet sometimes it happens that one of our destinations gets hit by terrorism; this is something we cannot avoid or predict, especially that the entire world nowadays is facing such incidents even the European destinations such as Turkey, Madrid, and finally the London attacks (ET13).*

It is notable from the previous quotations that safety is a very important criterion when choosing a destination. It is also clear that there is a general agreement to completely avoid destinations with long history of ongoing wars or political instability such as Iraq and Israel which completely matches with the previous findings and previous quotations whether in this interview or the previous sets of interviews.
Moreover, such finding is congruent with the previous findings that emphasised that frequency of the severe insecurity problems, a case in point on going wars, is the most damaging to destination image as well as the most deterrent to both tourists and tour operators.

In addition, the findings also corresponds with the notion, which may be generated as a result of the series of attacks that faced some European countries; that currently any country in the world may be hit by terrorism and not only particular countries. This may move terrorism from being one of the major risks that ruin a destination image; as it is becoming an international plague and not limited only to particular destinations or to a particular region.

It is also worth mentioning that one of the interviewees mentioned Turkey as being a European destination and not as being part of the Middle East, which is consistent with one of the results of the previous set of interviews; which asserted that Egyptian intermediaries viewed Turkey as a European destination, which conflict with the views of the British interviewees.

Furthermore, another answer confirmed the importance of what is Known as familiarisation trips; as they send on of their representatives to study all conditions of any destination, including its political conditions and safety before deciding to sell it and according to his report they decide whether to include it in their programmes or not.

> Our company policy necessitates that before sending any tours to a certain destination a group of our representatives have to visit it and present an evaluation report about all its tourism features including safety and accordingly we decide upon selling it or not (ET12).

Another answer confirmed the importance of investigating the destinations political status; as political status is one of the major elements that determine the level of security in any country. The answer also added that by defining the political status of any country it gives a clear indication about the level and
volume of crimes that take place and also determine whether it faces any sort of unrest that may lead to violence or terrorist attacks whether against locals or foreigners.

*The political conditions in any country determine the percentage of risk it encounters; therefore it is very important to study the destination political status before deciding to sell it. I think that if we know the political conditions we estimate how safe the destination is, if the destination is facing political or economic problems then we can assume that there will be high level of violence and crime (ET15).*

This answer is congruent with some of the answers in the previous set of interviews, which emphasise the notion that there is a direct relationship between political stability and safety of the destination and vice versa. These interviewees believe that political instability in any country is responsible for wars, terrorism, and high crime and violence levels, which makes it an unsafe destination.

On the other hand, British intermediaries emphasised that they have their own forms of risk assessment. Reviewing the country's history is considered one of the methods used for destination risk assessment. Interviewees have emphasised the importance of reviewing the destination's history concerning political stability, volume and type of crimes that frequently occur, and most of all the frequency of terrorist attacks through a certain interval of time; to be able to determine the level of risk that exists in such destination.
It is very important to trace the history of the destination and define the types of insecurity that take place frequently and their volume (BT11).

Though the statistics and reports done by some international organisations we can determine say the level of crimes or the frequency of terrorist attacks in the past years and draw conclusions upon the level of risk in any destination (BT14).

We collect data about various elements such as political stability in the destination, crime levels and types and most of all if there is a history of frequent terrorist attacks (BT15).

The previous quotations revealed the importance of studying the destination's security conditions before deciding to sell it. They also emphasise that travel intermediaries are concerned more about the insecurity elements that were mentioned; frequency of terrorist attacks, high levels of crime and violence, in addition to studying the political conditions in the destination; which as confirmed before viewed as the main responsible for determining the levels of insecurity in the destination.

It is also worth mentioning that other elements such as epidemic diseases and natural crises have been ignored in the answers of the travel intermediaries, which suggest that they are seen as of marginal significance as factors in choosing a destination, compared to these more important ones. This may be because people have been lately overwhelmed with the news of terrorism and political instability.

In addition, two answers came to reflect the difficulty of analysing the amount of risk in any destination, as lately some incidents just happen without any prior warning. Yet they all confirmed the importance of consulting the British foreign offices in all destinations they sell and working in accordance with what they declare, especially concerning security issues in that destinations.
Well, it is currently very difficult to assess risk factors in any destinations as in some cases unexpected incidents take place. Yet, before selling any of our destinations we usually consult the British foreign office in that destination and ask them to send us full details about the destination's conditions, especially security conditions and accordingly we make our decisions (BT12).

We are always in contact with the commercial branch of our embassies or consulates in all destinations we sell or intend to sell to supply us with full information about such destinations, including their security status, although under the current circumstances taking place internationally sometimes disasters just happen (BT13).

These answers highlight the role that should be played by the foreign offices of the countries of origin in giving full information and creating accurate images in the minds of travel intermediaries about the destinations they are working in and supply them with the needed guidance for dealing with such destinations.

In addition, answers of all interviewees confirmed that supplying charter flights for tourists who wished to return back to their countries was considered the main procedure emphasised for securing tourists in the resort. They all asserted the feeling of tourists that they can travel back home if they wanted to made them feel secure.

*Charter flights were made available for tourists who asked to travel back to their countries (ET15)*

*We sent many charter flights to take our tourists who insisted on leaving the resort directly after the attacks (BT15).*
Furthermore, travel intermediaries were asked about the plans they used in restoring the image of Sharm El Sheikh in minds of the West, their answers emphasised on three main strategies; one of which were the prices. Many interviewees mentioned the effectiveness of price reduction in attracting back tourists to the destination.

Well, mainly in order to face the drop in the number of arrivals and attract tourists back we had to reduce the prices of our packages so that tourists would be tempted to visit it, then after visiting it they discover that the situation is safe and not as they imagined. After that they went back home telling their friends and relatives that they had safe trip, which may encourage more flows (ET11).

Price reductions in times of crises usually helps regaining back some of our tourists, in addition to attracting new international segments and also the local market (ET12).

In the same sense, some British interviewees referred to cutting down the prices of their packages in order to keep on moving with their regular schedules to the destination, which corresponds with the answers of the Egyptian intermediaries.

The reduction in hotel rates in August and September played a role in increasing demand to the resort (BT11).

Operators could be left with empty hotel rooms because of anxious tourists bypassing the resort and hoteliers had to slash prices to stimulate demand (BT13).

We re-packaged some of our cancelled holidays and priced them at half their original prices. Sixty five of the packages had been snapped up virtually overnight (ET14).
The previous quotations show that price reduction for attracting tourists and promoting a destination that has suffered security crisis is a common strategy that was used by both the Egyptian and the British intermediaries to re-direct tourist flows back to Sharm El Sheikh.

The answers also confirmed that price reduction is an effective strategy to be used immediately after the crisis; as it helps increasing tourist flows to a destination; as many tourists were encouraged to continue with their booking or to book a trip to Sharm El Sheikh as a result of the decrease in prices.

Another answer confirmed the importance of maintaining good relationship and working closely with travel intermediaries in the destinations and those in the countries of origin in order to be updated with any needed information about the destination and its security status, which highlights the importance of the travel intermediaries as an important source of information especially to their counterparts in the country of origin.

We maintain close contact with our counterparts in the in the countries of origin and through them we are able to monitor and analyse the effect of the attack on our markets abroad, and supply them with the needed information to calm their customers and convince them to visit the destination (ET14).

Moreover, using media to inform both tourists and travel intermediaries in the generating markets was also considered one of the tools used by travel intermediaries in the destination in coordination with The Egyptian Chamber Of Travel Agents and The Egyptian Tourism Promotion Authorities with the objective of informing generating markets with up to date news about the event that took place in the destination and the progress of the situation so as to be able to modify and correct the negative image that might develop as a result of the presentation of the incidents in foreign media.
We have launched promotional campaigns with the assistance of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Authorities using ads and documentaries in international television channels and also online ads and published daily reports with the progress of the situation in our web sites (ET13).

This finding suggests that although media was viewed in the previous set of interviews as a major factor in destroying destination image; it may also be considered as an important tool for informing tourists about the real situation in the destination, which helps rebuilding the destination's image back.

Finally, Egyptian interviewees were asked about the destination risk management strategies they would adopt in the future; only one of them claimed to have a prepared risk management plan, while the rest asserted that they do not need a prepared plan and that they act spontaneously according to the type of problem that occurred. Many of them repeated again the previous three strategies they mentioned before, which are price reduction, coordination with other travel intermediaries in the generating markets, and using media for informing foreign tourists with the real situation in the destination. Some of them also suggested the necessity of coordination with Middle Eastern travel intermediaries to promote a positive image to the Middle East region in minds of the West.

I think that there should be a consortium which includes travel intermediaries in all the Middle East. This consortium meets on regular basis to discuss the problems that face the Middle East destinations and try to work them out (ET12).

We are already working some sort of agreement with some of our counterparts in some Arab countries that entitles a promotion programme to the whole region with its various destinations to correct some of the wrong images that is held by the West, such as the concept that the Middle East is the origin of terrorism (ET14).

I also think that all tour operators in the Arab world should collaborate for promoting the whole region (ET15).
These quotations confirm the role travel intermediaries play in promoting a certain destination and in re-shaping its image, especially if a number of intermediaries works together to achieve mutual benefit.

In addition some of them added the importance of participating in the international tourism markets that take place all over the world to promote the country, especially in promising countries such as China, Korea, Russia, as well as Latin America in order to create new demand opportunities in new markets in addition to the traditional ones.

Also participating in international tourism markets helps a lot in promoting our image internationally (ET11).

The international existence through major international travel markets, especially in new markets such as China, Korea, Russia and Latin America is very important for introducing our selves in new marketing and generating new demand opportunities (ET13).

On the other hand all British intermediaries claimed to have a prepared destination risk management plan. They focused on two main strategies for risk management; one of which is providing crisis training for travel intermediaries. They asserted that the British foreign office with travel industry, especially Federation of Tour Operators, had organised training programmes for handling crises.

We are now working in coordination with the British Foreign Office and the Federation of Tour operators; all staff participates in training programmes for handling destination crises, which really helped us a lot in responding as quickly as possible to the event. (BT11).
Well, the Federation of Tour Operators is organising training programmes for tour operators in crisis handling and I think that this will help a lot (BT14).

Furthermore, they added the importance of working closely with their foreign offices in the destinations they sell in order to have a correct image about the real situation in the destination attacked, and hence, be able to update their travel advice accordingly.

I think that working close with our Foreign Offices in our destinations has enabled us to respond more efficiently to crises such as Sharm El Sheikh Attacks than the response to 9/11 and Bali, particularly in the updating of travel advice (BT13).

This answer emphasises again the important role played by travel intermediaries in informing tourists about their destinations and also in updating such information according to the progress of the situation in these destinations. This construct also supports the strategy of building strong relationship between travel intermediaries in the destination countries and those in the countries of origin, which was adopted by many of the Egyptian intermediaries. Since travel intermediaries in the countries of origin are considered an important source of information to their clients, they may be considered one of the important tools of re-shaping the image that was created as a result of the attacks by supplying them with the needed information and evidence to update their travel advice for their clients.

Finally, it may be noted that the findings of the two phases of interviewing both Egyptian and British intermediaries have shown consistency with each other and have revealed interesting findings about the way the Middle East is perceived by both nationalities of travel intermediaries, as well as the perception of safety, their evaluations to security in different destinations in
the Middle East, and finally, the strategies they adopt for destination crisis management.

7.4 Summary

This chapter has displayed the results of the two sets of interviews that were undertaken before and after the attacks on Sharm El Sheikh resort with a sample of British and Egyptian travel intermediaries to assess the security image of the Middle East and its destinations as perceived by both groups of travel intermediaries and it has held on comparisons between the perceptions of the UK based travel intermediaries and the Egyptian ones. It identified a number of major issues of perception of the Middle East, in addition to some gaps of perception between the two groups of intermediaries.

It has also displayed the results from interviewing British and Egyptian intermediaries before the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh in July 2005. This section presents the different perceptions of both the British and Egyptian intermediaries about the Middle East overall image, the effect of media on the Middle East image, and safety and security of a destination. Results from the evaluation of the Middle East security image held by travel intermediaries showed that the Middle East is mostly positively perceived by a majority of travel intermediaries despite the security problems that might occur in some of its destinations.

Finally, the Chapter has presented the results from interviewing British and Egyptian intermediaries after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh in July 2005; this section presents the effects of the attacks on the Middle East security image, as well as the strategies adopted by travel intermediaries for securing their tourists, in addition to demonstrating some of the promotion and risk management strategies used by travel intermediaries.
CHAPTER EIGHT: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the overall image of the Middle East as perceived by both Egyptian and British travel intermediaries, the way destination safety is perceived by both parties, the way different destinations in the Middle East are perceived, and the main risk management strategies adopted by travel intermediaries. These issues will be addressed in view of the present results.

8.2 The Middle East as Perceived by Egyptian and British Intermediaries

This section discusses the perceptions of both British and Egyptian intermediaries of the Middle East region from different perspectives. Firstly, it analyses their perceptions of the Middle East as a geographic region and the countries which are viewed as being part of this region. Secondly, it discusses the images of the Middle East countries as tourist destinations. As perceived by these travel intermediaries.

Countries constituting the Middle East Region

The majority of Egyptian Intermediaries were found to perceive the Middle East as constituting Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and the Gulf countries; which are United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain and Yemen. On the other hand, the British Intermediaries perceive the Middle East as being the Arab countries such as Algeria, Bahrain, Dubai, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, in addition to Israel, Turkey, and some of the Intermediaries included Iran.

The British intermediaries view Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia as part of the Middle East region; while a majority of the Egyptian Intermediaries perceived such countries as being North Africa and not part of the Middle East.
Moreover, the British intermediaries perceived Turkey as being one of the Middle East countries. Whereas, the Egyptian intermediaries have never mentioned Turkey as being part of the Middle East; on the contrary some of them mentioned that Turkey belongs to Europe and others said they were not sure.

The previous findings show that there are differences in the way British and Egyptian intermediaries perceive countries that constitute the Middle East. The British intermediaries perceive the Middle East in a broad sense, whereas, Egyptian intermediaries perceive it from a narrow perspective. British intermediaries view the Middle East as constituting countries of North Africa (Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria), Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Israel, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Yemen, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. Some British intermediaries also include Turkey and others include Iran. On the other hand, Egyptian intermediaries view the Middle East as only Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Israel, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Yemen, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia.

In comparison to these perceptions to the World Travel Organisation (WTO, 1998) classifies the Expanded Middle East (EME) into three sub regions. The first is North Africa which includes Algeria, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia. The second sub region is East Mediterranean Europe which covers Cyprus, Israel, and Turkey, and lastly the Middle East part which is comprised of Egypt, Libya, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Yemen, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia.

It is obvious that the WTO classification of the Middle East sub region is concurrent with the Egyptian intermediaries' perception of the Middle East including Egypt and the Asian Arab countries. However, Egyptian intermediaries perceive Israel as part of the sub region. The Egyptians' view may be attributed to Israel's proximity or the unclear boundaries between Israel and Palestine.
In addition, the WTO classification of the North Africa sub region is congruent with that of the Egyptian Intermediaries. On the same hand, the classification of the WTO to Cyprus and Turkey as part of Europe is consistent with that of the Egyptian intermediaries. The Egyptian travel intermediaries perceive the EME sub regions as being different regions separate from each other; they lack the perception of the Expanded Middle East as defined by the WTO.

On the other hand, the WTO (1998) definition of the Expanded Middle East as constituting North Africa (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia), East Mediterranean Europe (Cyprus, Israel and Turkey) and the Middle East (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Gulf countries) indicates its correspondence to great extent with the view of the British intermediaries of the countries that constitute the Middle East. Nevertheless, some British intermediaries differ from the WTO in their consideration of Iran as one of the Middle East countries.

The encyclopaedia of the orient has similar view of the Middle East to that of the British intermediaries. This view is illustrated in the map below:
Figure 8.1 The Middle East Political Map  
Source: Encyclopaedia of the Orient

Marston et al (2005) also described the Middle East and North Africa region in the same manner as follows:

...the Middle East and North Africa form something of an east-to-west arc. Iran and Turkey compose the north-eastern tier. Southward are the Arab states of Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq and the Jewish state of Israel. The southernmost boundary includes Saudi Arabia and the small Gulf States (Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates) as well as Oman and Yemen. Moving westward from the Saudi Arabian
Peninsula, the North African states of Egypt and Sudan, as well as Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Western Sahara complete the region.

(Marston et al., 2005:180)

The image of the Middle East destinations

Findings have confirmed that Egyptian travel intermediaries perceive the Middle East destinations as attractive destinations that enable their tourists to explore a great deal of unique tourist products whether archaeological, natural or manmade, which will suit all types of tourists. Comments of the Egyptian intermediaries reflect promotional views of the destinations by respondents who are involved in selling them as tourism places and hence appear to be similar.

In the same sense, majority of the British intermediaries have emphasised that the Middle East has many destinations that are very popular and attractive to tourists. They have also confirmed that many of the Middle East destinations are highly demanded by a lot of their customers. Whereas, some other British intermediaries view the Middle East as a troubled region or at least some of its countries are not recommended by British travel intermediaries because of the political conflicts that take place in such places.

The previous findings show that majority of the British intermediaries agree with the Egyptian intermediaries in their perception of the Middle East destinations. They have described the Middle East destinations as attractive destinations that enable their tourists to explore a great deal of unique attractions. Travel intermediaries have described Middle East destinations archaeological, natural or manmade attractions and an ambience overwhelmed with mystery, which makes them attractive to all types of tourists. However, some of findings indicated that despite all the beauty and charm, the Middle East is viewed by some British intermediaries as a region with much trouble and security risks.
Other findings indicated that it is difficult for some British intermediaries to describe the Middle East as one entity, because the situation regarding safety and security issues is not the same in each country. This position echoes the full image of the Middle East perceived by the British intermediaries. Although they agree that it is a region with many attractive destinations, it is still a troubled area. This may explain the reason behind the drop in tourist arrivals to the region during times of severe conflicts such as wars or terrorist acts and the quick recovery, which usually occurs after events end or when people make sure it is contained in one of the countries. What happened in March 2003 after the start of the war in Iraq is a case in point. Figures of tourist arrivals to the Middle East region dropped during the second quarter of the year. The number decreased by 15 percent in comparison with the same period in 2002 (WTO, 2004b). However, such decrease was quickly recovered during the second half of the year to finish the year with more than three percent increase in tourist arrivals to the region (WTO, 2003, 2004a, 204b). Findings of the interviews conducted after the attacks on Sharm El Sheikh Resort in Egypt on July 2005 emphasised that their impact was minimal.

Generally, findings come to reflect a general perception that the Middle East is a region with a great diversity of tourism products in its various destinations. Beaches, archaeological stations, religious sites, convention centres, shopping malls, cultural festivals and sporting facilities satisfying a wide variety of markets and serve as poles of attraction for various leisure segments.

These comments concur with the WTO (2000) statement about the Middle East (see section 5.2.2) which states that, the value of the region’s tourism products per se, including those that have what it takes to satisfy demand for leisure and relaxation (linked to climate, beaches, and urban destinations of notable interest), culture, sport, nature (including the desert), shopping and business tourism. The WTO (2004) stated that 62.2% of tourist arrivals to the Middle East for leisure, recreation and holidays.
In the same sense, comments of both Egyptian and British intermediaries to the way they would describe the Middle East destinations to their clients are consistent with each other. This may be attributed to the nature of the interviewees as people on the trade and therefore their comments tended to be promotional comments.

It may also be interesting to note the difference in the way each group of intermediaries promotes the destinations of the Middle East. Egyptian intermediaries focused on sorting the different products and attributes of the place, whereas British intermediaries adopted a holistic approach in describing the Middle East destinations for their clients.

This distinction in the way each group used to form an image of the Middle East destinations for their customers contradicts with Echtner and Ritchie (1993). Echtner and Ritchie developed a framework consisting of three continua,

1. Attribute - Holistic, based on research concerning the nature of human information processing from the fields of psychology and consumer behaviour,

2. Functional-Psychological, when distinction is made between those characteristics of image that are directly observable and those that are less tangible and more difficult to observe or measure,

3. Common-Unique, which highlights the idea that images of destinations can range from those perceptions based on common characteristics such as price level and climate to those unique features such as safety and fame.

Echtner and Ritchie (1993) have asserted that more familiar individuals hold destination images closer to the previously discussed holistic, psychological and unique ends of the image dimension continua. Conversely, individuals unfamiliar with a destination fall closer to the attribute, functional, and common ends of the image continua. Mackay and Fesemaier (1997) in their study of the effect of visual elements of destination in image formation show compliance with Echtner and Ritchie’s continua.
In this study British intermediaries are unfamiliar with the Middle East, and therefore should have fallen closer to the attribute, functional, and common ends of the image continua. Likewise, the Egyptian intermediaries are familiar with the Middle East and therefore should have fallen closer to the holistic, psychological and unique ends of the image continua. Yet, the findings showed the opposite, Egyptian intermediaries, who are more familiar with the Middle East destinations employed descriptions based on different attributes and functions to inform their customers about the Middle East. Unlikely, British intermediaries employed descriptions based on a holistic and psychological approach to inform their customers about the Middle East. To clarify, the quotations below may support the suggestion that Egyptian intermediaries fall closer to the attribute, functional and common ends (quotation ET 07), while the British intermediaries fall closer to the holistic, psychological and unique ends of Echtner and Ritchie's continua (quotations BT 06, BT 07).

*We've got magnificent ancient monuments that don't exist anywhere else, marvellous beaches and wonderful climate, spacious amazing desert ... etc. The people in the Middle East are also very welcoming and hospitable to tourists. In addition, the Middle East destinations offer good services and attractions for reasonable prices. All of this makes the Middle East destinations very popular to tourists (ET07).*

*The Middle East destinations may be described as exciting, mysterious and pretty ... (BT06).*

*The Middle East is the wonder land, the Arabian nights, the adventures of Sinbad. When visiting the Middle East it takes you in a trip to its mysterious history and unique culture (BT07)*

Each group used its culture and perception to persuade and motivate its customers. Therefore, the current study suggests that British intermediaries used the holistic and psychological approach or affective images in describing the Middle East to their customers to motivate them and shape their overall image of the Middle East. Beerli and Martin (2004) noted that affective images refer to the feelings of excitement by a place; people with different
motives may assess a destination in similar ways if their perception of that destination satisfies their psychological needs. Moreover, Gartner (1993) pointed out that the affective component is the value that individuals attach to destinations based on motivations. Baloglu (1997), Dann (1996) and Gartner (1993) suggested that motivations exert a direct influence on its affective component. Since the affective dimension influences the overall image, motivations may also influence, either directly or indirectly, that overall image.

The present study also suggests that Egyptian intermediaries used the attribute and functional approach or the cognitive approach in motivating their customers. This can be concluded from their description of the Middle East destinations as:

...full of magnificent natural sights, for example the wonderful beaches of the Red Sea in Egypt with the outstanding views of the coloured mountains and the desert, and also the great ancient heritage and monuments in most of the Middle East destinations (ET03).

From a cognitive point of view, tourist destination image is assessed on a set of attributes that correspond to the resources or attractions that a tourist destination has at its disposal (Stabler, 1995). In the tourism context, and in line with Lew (1987), those attractions are the elements of a destination that attract tourists, such as scenery to be seen, activities to take part in, and experiences to remember. To be precise, the attractions provide the motivations and the magnetism necessary to persuade an individual to visit a determined place (Alhemoud & Armstrong, 1996), and this is exactly the way Egyptian intermediaries used to attract their customers.

In line with Beerli and Martin's (2004) conclusion that the country of origin may determine different cultural factors which affect perceptions on a cognitive and on an affective level, it can be argued that the British are influenced and motivated by affective or emotional factors. This in turn may
indicate that affective factors shape the overall image of British tourists. Similarly, it may also be argued that Egyptians are motivated by cognitive factors, which shape the overall image of Egyptian tourists.

Cultural difference reappeared again in the way intermediaries of each group personified the Middle East and described his/her relationship with intermediaries. Answers of the Egyptians reflected a close perpetual relationship between the intermediaries and the Middle East. Some answers reflected a high level of love, care, and devotion to the Middle East; as interviewees expressed their feelings by resembling the Middle East to a spouse or the lover, which indicates also the level of intimacy in the relationship. In addition, other answers reflected a high level of appreciation and gratitude to the Middle East and also a desire to support it and return its favours and kindness; as interviewees expressed their feelings by comparing the Middle East to their mothers or fathers, which indicate also the level of love, respect and emphasise the close relationship.

This relationship also shows a great deal of dependability, (the majority of answers agreed that the Middle East was personified as a female or a child, reflecting the Egyptian culture that emphasises that women and children should always be dependent, looked after and supported by men). This culture matches what Hofstede (1980, 1998) referred to as masculine which, tend to have very distinct expectations of male and female roles in the society.

On the other hand, comments of the British were general, short and with out much details. Comments of the British intermediaries have reflected a good, but rather distant and independent relationship. These comments may well describe the relation of the west with the Middle East with all its problems; as although they believe it is a beautiful place with kind people, they are always cautious in dealing with it as a result of the insecurity conditions taking place in some parts of it.
Such comments show a clear cultural difference between British and Egyptian intermediaries. These comments also confirm the normal difference in views between the British intermediaries and the Egyptian ones. British intermediaries who are based outside the region hold a feeling of distant relationship. Whereas, the Egyptian intermediaries who are part of the Middle East have emphasised a very close relationship and given more details about the person they are describing.

The previous descriptions also reveal difference in the Middle East images held by Egyptian intermediaries and the images held by British intermediaries. The difference is clear between the detailed description and the close relationship described by the Egyptian intermediaries and the short description and distant, though good relationship described by the British. This difference may be due to the different degree of involvement and familiarity with the region. It may thus be suggested that the more the familiarity with the destination the deeper the image held of it. This claim may concur with Beerli and Martin's (2004) suggestion that when assessing the destination the experience accumulated results in more understanding because of knowing of more realities that serve as points of comparison.

It is worth to mention that the image of the Middle East is slightly blurred in the minds of British intermediaries; they have described it as mysterious and beautiful. This may little contradict their description of the Middle East as a male person. The contradiction may suggest a distorted image held by British intermediaries of the Middle East, who describe it as a tourist destination with many beautiful attractions. However, they view the Middle East as a masculine society with masculine inventions such as frequent political conflicts, terrorist attacks and wars. This may show that the Middle East has a perplexed image in the minds of British intermediaries, as they evidently could not separate between the Middle East as a political region and the Middle East as tourist destination.

As to their perception of the image of the Middle East as perceived by foreign tourists, most of the Egyptian intermediaries agree that the west perceives the Middle East as a near region with extraordinary magnificent destinations that
attract different segments of tourists, especially those who are seeking cultural and/or recreation tourism. In addition to its proximity from Europe, it offers good value for money as it combines quality of service and reasonable prices.

Egyptian intermediaries were trying to convince the researcher with PR comments about the Middle East as a tourist destination; the answers seemed to be preset and positive which resembles the comments they put in their brochures to promote a certain destination or the comments of a government official who is trying to present a positive image of a destination in the media; which makes these comments feel like selling comments rather than being their real perceptions.

Similarly, when British intermediaries were asked about the image they hold about the Middle East destinations and how they think their customers view such destinations; their answers showed the same promotional tone as did the answers of the Egyptian intermediaries, which feel less like unique personal impressions than positive testimony in a selling brochure.

Egyptian intermediaries also asserted that the Middle East and especially, Egypt receives a lot of western tourists, particularly German, British, Italian and American tourists. This perception concurs in a way with the figures of the WTO (2003) (section 5.2.2) which shows that nearly 58 percent of tourist arrivals to Egypt in 2002 were Europeans. The WTO (2004) also states that Egypt's largest market share belongs to western and southern Europe (WTO, 2004b) and the five top generating markets are Germany, Italy, France, United Kingdom and USA (WTO, 2003). Moreover, Egypt recorded the highest increase in 2004 by more than two million arrivals, which indicates that the country was barely affected by the attacks of Sinai in October 2004 (WTO, 2005). This might be the case after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh. Figure (8.2) below shows that the whole region of the Middle East recorded the second highest percentage of growth after Asia and the Pacific from 2003 to 2004 in comparison to the rest of the world regions. The Middle East has shown 18 percent increase in number of tourists’ arrivals to the region.
It is worth to note that, unlike the Egyptian intermediaries who focused their answers on Egypt as the most important destination in the region, the British intermediaries confirmed that there are some destinations in the Middle East that are very popular, highly demanded and attractive to tourists in addition to Egypt such as Morocco and Turkey.
Another interesting remark from the previous findings is that the British intermediaries confirmed that there is not one specific image that covers the whole region but rather every destination or every country has its own unique image by which it is known and promoted. Travel intermediaries do not deal with the Middle East as one entity, resembling the Media in the way it deals with the Middle East when presenting political news. The Middle East destinations are not promoted nor sold as being part of the Middle East but rather each destination has its own image and is promoted and sold individually. Travel intermediaries market each country and some times each part of the country as a separate destination.

The previous construct is supported by findings from the interviews conducted after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh since both Egyptian and British intermediaries confirmed that no other destinations in the region were negatively affected by the attacks. In addition, the British intermediaries emphasised that even other destinations in Egypt were not affected by the attacks.

The WTO report (August, 2005) on the impact of the Sharm El Sheikh Attack has supported such findings. It has asserted that most travel advisories had common sense to distinguish between the directly affected destination and the rest of Egypt’s destinations. The report has also added that in some cases, travel advisories have pointed out that terrorist acts have to be understood as a global threat.

8.3 The Effect of Media on Destination Image

A major aspect of the Middle East security image was the attention given to it by the media. It is not just the fact that any insecurity problem that takes place in the region is reported, in terms of sheer volume of coverage and the often sensationalist and alarmist tones.

Egyptian intermediaries emphasised that media exaggeration is the major factor that affects the image of the Middle East. The media focuses on reporting the news of wars, conflicts, terrorism and political unrest in some countries in the region and overstates the situation to the audience and even
more generalise it in the whole region, which really affect the image of the Middle East and its other destinations that are not part of any conflict.

Majority of the British intermediaries revealed a conviction that media is the main factor in damaging destination image; as they all agreed that media has a great influence in shaping destination image and by focusing on presenting the problems or the negative points that might not be as severe as it is presented.

The previous findings showed agreement between the Egyptian and the British intermediaries that media exaggeration is the major factor that affect the image of the Middle East abroad. The media focuses on reporting the news of wars, conflicts, terrorism and political unrest in some countries in the region and overstate the situation to the audience and even more generalise it in the whole region, which really affect the image if the Middle East and its other destinations that are not part of any conflict.

A lot of literature advocates this view; if we apply Gartner’s (1993) classification of types of information sources and their level of control over image formation, we may find that media belongs to autonomous image formation agents which are authoritative and credible. For example, the news of war or terrorism in or near a certain destination may affect its image and change it from a positive favourable image to another negative unfavourable one, which is currently the case in Israel and Iraq.

The media was clearly distinguished by Hall (2002) as very influential when it comes to political and social attitudes and that it does not only influence public opinions but also shapes consumers' images of destinations (Santana, 2001). Moreover, Schneider and Sonmez (1999) asserted that mass media influences travellers image formation, particularly in the Middle East due its prevalent spot in international politics and turmoil. Also Beirman, (2002) asserted that the media coverage of Israel problems as a Middle East crisis has created an unjustified fear factor among potential western tourists to the neighbouring countries.
Hall (2002) asserted that media plays a major role in influencing consumers' images of destinations and informing them whether or not a place is safe and secure. In the same sense, Cavlek (2002) agrees that media bombard readers and viewers with news during the time of crisis and that people find negative reports far more interesting than positive, which makes travel intermediaries try to consider what is in the interest of their clients and also what is in their own interest for the protection of their image.

This assertion corresponds with travel intermediaries' emphasis that media reports of security unrest in a certain destination creates an insecure image in the minds of tourists about the destination. This insecure image of a destination affects tourist's destination choice. Such image may make tourists change their travel plans. Therefore, this study may answer the question raised by Mason et al. (2005), relating to the power of the media and the extent to which press coverage actually influences destination choice. It suggests that media may really influence destination choice or the decision to travel or not. This is evident in the comments of some travel intermediaries pre the attacks of Sharm EL Sheikh. Travel intermediaries agreed that they decrease flows or even cancel their programmes to destinations presented by the media as having security problems, in order to comfort and satisfy their customers who get terrified by the news reports.

However, this statement is contradicted by the same travel intermediaries after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh. After the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh, travel intermediaries have confirmed that although some customers cancelled their bookings, yet holiday companies were carrying on with tours to Sharm El Sheikh and to the Middle East in general. This attitude adopted by British travel intermediaries after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh, may confirm the influence of travel intermediaries in relation to media.

On the other hand, other travel intermediaries have confirmed that media may be also used as an efficient tool for improving destination image if there was coordination between tourist authorities in the destination with both foreign travel intermediaries and foreign media, as one of the counteractions that take place after the occurrence of any crisis. This view concurs with Wahab
(1996) who recommends maintaining good contacts with members of the international media; providing comprehensive information to international travel intermediaries (tour operators and travel agents) as travel intermediaries have a great power to influence and affect consumer (tourist) demand (Hawkins and Hudman, 1989) and to the press in order be able to properly evaluate travel risks and wisely guide tourists away from high risk areas (Wahab, 1996).

In the same respect, crisis management literature emphasises the need to have a detailed communication strategy as the media can encourage the flow and the intensity of a crisis or even turn an incident into a crisis (Keown-McMullan, 1997). Barton (1994) believes that the implementation of a strategic crisis communication plan can help limit the damage from a crisis and allow an organisation to concentrate on dealing with the crisis at hand. Responding quickly to demands of the media and publics is important as the media have deadlines to work to and are looking for quick sources of information. If the crisis team does not fill the void, someone else will (Coombs, 1999). Zerman (1995, p. 25) agrees stating that “the mass media has the power to make a break a business. Beirman, (2002) notes that the media reporting of the more recent Palestinian– Israeli conflict has given the false impression that Israel is enmeshed in violence, severely damaging the tourism industry at an important time for pilgrimage tourism in 2000/2001.

In the Foot and Mouth Outbreak, the British Tourist Authority felt that the media was very intense for the first 3 months and at times their reporting was hostile, sometimes neutral but rarely friendly leading to misinformation and a severe decline in tourism (Ritchie, 2004). This hostility was also noted by Britton (2003) who believed that the hostility of the media towards the airline sector before September 11, 2001 also influenced the way the crises was handled by American Airlines.

However, in contrast to this Hall (2002) notes that the media, through the issue-attention cycle, can bring issues to the attention of government and policymakers because of the power and influence they have over public opinion, and in fact can help speed up the recovery process. Sonmez,
Apostolopoulos, and Tarlow (1999) agree and note that the media are very important to help rebuild the image and restore confidence in a destination or organisation.

8.4 Destination Security Image and its effect on tourist flows

Decision-makers weigh the benefits and costs of destination alternatives in order to select the one that promises the most benefits for the least cost. The costliest or the riskiest destinations are likely to become undesirable and eliminated from the selection process (Sonmez and Graefe, 1998).

Findings from the interviews that preceded the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh corroborate that the assurance of tourists' personal safety in the destination is a prerequisite to selling any destination. Both British and Egyptian intermediaries supported the notion that tourists' safety in the destination comes in the first place. Findings also confirm that a safe destination is when tourists are not exposed to any incident that may affect their lives or their well being, which corresponds with Row's (1997) definition of risk as the potential realisation of unwanted negative consequences of an event.

In addition to destination safety, there was also a noticeable consistency in both views of the British and the Egyptian intermediaries to determine that the first criterion after safety in the destination is the demand of tourists and their preference. The majority of respondents in both group of travel intermediaries emphasised that they choose the destinations they sell based on customers' demand.

It is obvious that majority of the travel intermediaries interviewed take certain selection conditions to secure the safety of their clients during the journey and while on holiday, the construct that concurs with Steene's (1999), assertion that travel intermediaries try to diminish safety and security risks that their clients may face. They assess destination safety even more critically than an individual would. In the same sense Cavlek (2002) argued that in order to avoid risks, tour operators decide whether or not to include in their programmes destinations with different kinds of risk, to stop operations to certain destinations already included in their programmes, to reduce
capacities at a destination, or to take certain measures to protect their clients.

In relation to tourists' needs and preferences being one of the important criteria in selling a destination, Jenkins (1992) advocates this notion by stating that the travel agent/tour operator interprets the market needs of his clients and packages these needs into destinations. In the same sense, Klem and Parkinson (2001) discuss that the images that major tour operators give to destinations are driven by the market potential of particular segment and is based on their interpretation of the needs and aspirations of the customer group in the country of origin.

Destination risk analysis strategies adopted by travel intermediaries were revealed in the interviews conducted after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh; studying the destination political, social and economic conditions was agreed upon by majority of interviewees. Some British interviewees added the importance of working close with their foreign offices in the destinations they sell in order to be aware of the real conditions that take place in the destination.

Findings revealed association in views of both groups of intermediaries that any security risk in a destination may affect tourist flow to it because nothing can force tourists to travel to a destination they perceive as unsafe. This construct was some how supported by findings from the interviews conducted after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh that revealed that some of the cancellations to Sharm El Sheikh were shifted to other destinations such as Turkey, Morocco and Tunisia. It is also worth mentioning that such destinations are Middle Eastern destinations, which emphasises the notion that the West perceived each destination individually and not in a regional context.

Moreover, majority of the travel intermediaries interviewed have agreed that frequency of the severe risks such as terrorist attacks, wars or epidemic diseases affect tourist flows much more than the frequency of minor risks such as theft, or robbery. This finding was supported by the views that came in the interviews that were conducted after the attacks on Sharm El Sheikh;
as most interviewees have agreed that long lasting and frequent security problems may be considered more deterrent to tourists than a single act even a severe one that any place in the world could be prone to in the last few years and, especially after the series of attacks that took place lately in Europe.

Pizam and Fleischer (2002) supported this view in their study of the impact of acts of terrorism in Israel. Their results showed that the most important factor that affected tourists' entries to Israel was the frequency of the terrorist acts that were covered and usually played out live and unedited by international news media thereby having even greater impact on viewers.

In view of the fact that media focuses and interprets severe and major events that take place, giving them more significance through the amount or type of media coverage and since public perceptions of the relative importance of an issue are largely determined by news media, especially when it comes to political and social attitudes, it is logical that tourists' flows are negatively affected by severe insecurity incidents that took place in a certain destination after being highlighted by news media.

Therefore, it may be argued that by applying the issue-attention-cycle discussed by Hall (2002), any destination that suffered a severe insecurity incident will go through its attention cycle till gradually fades from the centre of public attention and would then gradually regain back its image and its tourists. While on the other hand we may find out that a destination that is suffering from high frequency of severe insecurity incidents such as terrorist attacks is always between the pre-problem stage, the alarmed discovery and euphoric enthusiasm stage, where media is constantly resuming its coverage the situation in this place and hence the problem never loses the intense interest neither to media nor to public. This situation makes the destination always seems to tourists as chaotic and troubled place in which they would never think of visiting, therefore such destination needs much more time to recover.
Also findings from interviews that preceded the attack of Sharm el sheikh emphasised the agreement of both Egyptian and British intermediaries that the most severe risks that the Middle East suffers from frequently are wars followed by terrorism which is usually a result of political instability, at the same time both wars and terrorism were also considered the most deterrent to tourists. Hall and O’Sullivan (1996) corresponded with this notion by noting that political instability and violence have the most severe effect on tourist flows. This construct concur also with Richter and Waugh’s (1986) statement that tourism may decline precipitously when political conditions appear unsettled as tourists simply choose other destinations.

Similarly, findings from the interviews that followed the attacks emphasised that political instability may be considered much more deterrent to tourism than an individual act of terrorism that take place in a politically stable country; as frequency of terrorism, high crime and violence levels were attributed to political instability, which makes such destination more prone to insecurity problems that any other and, hence, most avoided by tourists such as the case of Iraq and Israel.

Aziz (1995) supported this construct; as she attributed the terrorist attacks that took place in Egypt in 1992 to the political, social and most of all economic instability at that period, which resulted in such acts. Wahab (1996) also asserted that such attacks were mainly directed towards the government political and economic policy.

In addition, this notion was also supported by Sonmez (1998) who confirmed that political instability impacts tourism severely.

_Terrorism occurs quickly and briefly and assures immediate public attention through intense and dramatic media coverage. Political turmoil - even though it does not always command the same level of media scrutiny – has lingering effects and can effectively impede travel to affected areas and create an enduring barrier to international tourism._

(Sonmez, 1998:421)
Blake and Sinclair (2003) also laid emphasis on this construct as they asserted that tourism demand is particularly sensitive to security conditions, they mentioned some cases that support this notion, some of which were; the effects of the Gulf war on tourism in the Middle East, terrorists attacks at Luxor in Egypt in 1997, and the effects of September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States. They asserted that in all of these cases tourism demand to such destinations was negatively affected.

Conversely, it was found that the attacks on Sharm El Sheikh Resort in July 2005 had very limited effects on tourist flows which lasted for few weeks and the flows were back to normal. The WTO report on the impact of Sharm El Sheikh Attack (August, 2005) supports this finding; the report attributed this finding to the fact that in the case, of Luxor attacks, the attacks had a national scope, while the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh came in a global context that has already affected different types of destinations. It also added that the demand seems to have become more accustomed to such attacks, which contribute to decreasing the effect of the attacks on tourist flows to the destination as well as shorten the period of recovery of tourism, which is exactly what happened in the case of Sharm El Sheikh.

8.5 Factors Affecting Tourist Risk Perceptions

Tourism type such as leisure or business is one of the factors that may affect tourist risk perception and hence, affects the destination selection process. Findings from the interviews that took place before Sharm El Sheikh Attacks confirm the unity between British and Egyptian intermediaries in perceiving mass travellers as one of the types that are bothered the most from insecurity problems in a destination, especially, concerning terrorist acts as due to similar incidents throughout the history of terrorism they consider themselves an easy target for terrorists.

Accordingly, travel intermediaries should call off any group travel to destinations suffering from security problems and shift it to other safe destination. This suspension of group travel to such destinations may last for
a while till the perceived risk withdraws.

In relation to Cohen's (1972) and Plog's (1974) tourist role typology, this view may be evidenced as mass tourists whether in groups or individuals seek a high degree of familiarity and so considered of the most risk avert types. This notion was also proved by Lepp and Gibson (2003) in their study of tourist roles and their effect on perceived risk and international travel; their study revealed that organised mass tourists and independent mass tourists perceived wars and terrorism as a greater risk and hence avoid visiting destinations with potential risk of terrorism or war.

In addition, Cavlek (2002) suggested that travel agencies and tour operators are not willing to take the risk that any problem may face their clients at an unsafe destination; so in order to protect the interests of their clients, as well as their own, they withdraw from the country at risk and delete it from their programmes, which supports the views that came in the interview.

This construct contradicts with the findings from the interviews that took place after the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh; as British intermediaries asserted that they operated their normal schedules to the resort apart from few cancellations that took place for a very short while after the attacks. This contradiction in views of the British intermediaries indicates a change in attitudes of both travel intermediaries and also their customers.

Frangialli (2005), in his speech on the occasion of the celebration of World Tourism Organisation Day 2005 has supported this view.

In fact, the recent attacks in Sharm El Sheikh are expected to have only a short-term effect on tourism to the part of Egypt. Changes in consumer attitude towards the threat of terrorism over the past few years have shown that tourism has become much more resilient

(Frangialli, 2005:3)
Both interviews (before the attacks and after) revealed that families, especially those with children were perceived among the types of tourists that highly avoid risk and choose to spend their holidays in safe destinations, which was clearly observed in the effects of the attacks on Sharm El Sheikh; as majority of the tourists who cancelled their bookings directly after the attacks were families travelling with kids.

With reference to the model of International Tourism Decision-Making Process by Sonmez and Graefe (1998) which emphasise that demographic factors tend to affect tourism decision making process, it may be claimed that families with children have a great tendency to avoid situations or destinations that encounter risk factors derived from their sense of responsibility for their families and children.

Another type of tourists that avoid destinations with security problems are found to be old people or senior citizens who prefer to enjoy a comfortable, quiet and relaxing destination with minimum degree of risk.

Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) correspond with this notion as in their investigation of tourist role preference over the life course; found that preference for risk related to tourism tended to decrease with age, which again adheres with the demographic factors being of influence on tourism decision making selection process as in the model of Sonmez and Graefe (1998).

It should also be noted that the results of the interviews conducted after the attacks showed notable differences in tourists' behaviours towards the attacks depending on their nationalities. Egyptian and Arab tourists showed a strong support to tourism in Sharm El sheikh and refused to leave the resort, on the contrary, many of Egyptian and Arab tourists made bookings directly after the attacks to prove that the resort is safe. This finding may confirm the importance of domestic as well as intra-regional markets to tourist destinations and in particular during times of crises.
As to Western tourists the most resilient were the British tourists who made only few cancellations and majority of the British operators carried on their regular programmes to the resort. On the other hand, the American and Japanese tourists and tour operators were the first to pull out of the resort.

8.6 Image of Middle East Destinations in Relation to Each Other

The evaluation of different destinations in the Middle East findings confirm that the destinations which are perceived by Egyptian and British intermediaries to be attractive to tourists are those which are most recommended and sold by travel agents and tour operators to their customers. This notion supports the previous finding about that one important criterion in which travel intermediaries choose the destinations they sell is their attractiveness to their customers. This construct is supported by Jenkins (1992), Klem and Parkinson (2001) and Cavlek (2002)

Egypt followed by Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Dubai, and Jordan respectively were perceived by Egyptian intermediaries as destinations of high demand from tourists for their safety, cultural and recreational tourism products and also as destinations the usually recommend and sell to their customers. These destinations were also perceived as safe destinations. On the other hand, Egypt, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, and Jordan were perceived as Middle East destinations that are attractive and safe to British tourists and travel intermediaries. This finding is consistent with their previous perception about safety being the first criterion in choosing a tourist destination.

Section 5.2.2 reported that the World Tourism Organisation (2004) recorded that the Middle East outperformed all other regions in 2003 as a result of the further development of intraregional traffic and the continuous investment in the sector contributed to growth of over three percent in international tourist arrivals and of 16 percent in tourism receipts. Main destinations were recorded; Egypt was the first as it showed 17 percent increase in number of tourists arrivals, the United Arab Emirates showed eight percent and Lebanon six percent increase in number of tourists. It was also pointed out that
Lebanon received 42 percent more tourists from the Arab generating market up to July 2004 and Dubai received about 9 percent increase in demand from Arabs. Such figures are consistent with the choices made by Egyptian travel intermediaries.

This finding helps drawing out a frame of reference to competing destinations in the Middle East; the results positioned some of the Middle East destination with respect to each other in relation to attractiveness to tourists and travel intermediaries. They introduced a group of destinations that are considered competitive to each other with respect to intra-regional market, especially Egypt; these destinations are Egypt followed by Lebanon, Dubai, and then Jordan regarding leisure tourism while Saudi Arabia was categorized as the top destination for religious tourism. While on the other hand, Egypt followed by Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, and then Jordan were considered competitive to each other with respect to the European market, especially the British. This frame of reference would enable each of the previous destinations to know its position among the others with respect to both the intra-regional market and the European market, which help them use their competitive advantages to compete more.

As for destinations they don't sell nor recommend all British and Egyptian intermediaries agreed that Iraq and Israel due to the current situation of war and terrorism taking place there are considered the most unsafe destinations in the region and hence they are the least attractive to tourists and never recommended by travel intermediaries.

In addition, answers of both the Egyptian and the British intermediaries in the interviews that took place after the attacks on Sharm el Sheikh Resort emphasised the idea that the Middle East is not a dangerous place to visit, apart from the previously mentioned countries that suffer from long term political conflict and frequent series of terrorists' attacks, which corresponds with the findings revealed in the interviews that took place before the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh.
It is also worth mentioning, the stress from both groups of intermediaries that the whole world currently is prone to terrorist attacks and that terrorism now is not only limited to Middle Eastern destinations, especially after the two attacks on London’s transportation system shortly before the attacks on Sharm El Sheikh and preceded this the Madrid attacks. British intermediaries have supported this notion by refusing to cancel their programmes to Sharm El Sheikh and insisting on operating their normal schedules to the resort. This construct corresponds with Beck’s (2002) definition of uncontrollable risk which is not linked to a certain place and can hardly be controlled on the level of the nation state; he also argued that the threat of global terror networks affects all regions and cultures by a set of non-quantifiable, uncontrollable risks.

These views contradicts with their previous views concerning their selling attitudes towards destination insecurity and concerning following their tourists' needs and respecting and coping with their perception of risk towards unsafe destinations by cancelling the perceived insecure destinations from their programmes and offering alternative destinations. This may show the alteration in thinking of the British intermediaries before and after the London attacks. It may therefore be claimed that the London attacks have re-shaped the perceptions of the British intermediaries towards terrorism and made them more resilient and supportive with other affected destinations. There attitude towards Sharm El Sheikh Attacks may support this notion.

Moreover, Egyptian intermediaries mentioned Israel as being an unfavourable destination to the Arabs as a result of their feeling of condemnation towards its practices currently against the Palestinians and before 1973 and the peace agreement against the Egyptians, which is consistent with the cross-cultural studies of risk perception, which demonstrated differences not only in ranking risks but also in the magnitude and source of perceived situations (Tiegen et al., 1988; Metchitov and Rebrik, 1990; Goszczynska et al., 1991).
This may prove the reasons that Arabs don't feel comfortable with visiting Israel as their culture and political history with Israel make them maximise the feeling of risk they hold against it.

Findings from the interviews undertaken before the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh may contribute to the vast literature that confirm that terrorism, political instability and wars can cause long-term damage to the image of a given destination area as they are described as those which most deter tourist flows (Richter and Waugh, 1986; Teye, 1986; Hollnier, 1991; Enders et al., 1992; Gartner and Shen, 1992; Richter, 1992, 1999; Aziz, 1995; Bar-On, 1996; Mansfeld, 1996; Wall, 1996; Pizam et al., 1997; Sonmez and Graefe, 1998; Sonmez, 1998; Ioannides and Apostolopoulos, 1999; Pizam, 1999; Sonmez et al., 1999; Levantis and Gani, 2000; Seddighi et al., 2000, 2002; Cavlek, 2002; George, 2003).

On the other hand, findings from the interviews that took place after the attacks reveal a new notion, which asserts that terrorism is not any more as devastating to tourism as it was perceived before and that due to the terrorism attacks that have been hitting even unexpected and secured places, a case in point London attacks; travellers have grown accustomed to the new era in which suicide bombers can strive anywhere, and hence, both travel intermediaries and tourists are proving increasingly resilient.

8.7 Strategies for Destination Crisis Management

While a great deal of attention is given to the impact of crises on the industry, very few attempts have been made to provide effective tools for the prevention and management of crisis within the industry. While other industries are benefiting from the development and employment of crisis management tools, the tourism industry is still only reactive to divergent situations (Sonmez and Tarlow, 1997).

Findings from the interviews that were conducted after the attacks have laid emphasis on the strategies adopted by travel intermediaries to secure their tourists in affected destination, to promote affected destinations as well as
risk management strategies. Findings showed coherence between Egyptian and British intermediaries in emphasising the role of the charter flights that were sent to tourists.

In addition, prices were viewed by both the Egyptian and British intermediaries as an effective strategy for gaining tourist flows back to the destination hit by security problem; as happened in Sharm El Sheikh after the attacks. Price reductions were perceived as a fundamental stage in promoting such destination; so that tourists get encouraged to visit the destination and observe themselves the level of security and after that go back home to spread the news about the real situation to friends and relatives who might be encouraged to visit the destination too or at least change their negative perception of the destination.

Egyptian intermediaries emphasised also on the important role information plays in shaping destination image, they confirmed two major tools of passing on the real information about security conditions in the destination; one of which is though keeping good contact and working in coordination with travel intermediaries in the countries of origin; as they are considered one of the most dependable sources of information to tourists.

Travel intermediaries were viewed by a lot literature as a source of information; tour operators and travel agents have been treated as formal sources of information (Goodall, 1990), formal inter-personal sources (Hsi, and O'Leary, 1993), external formal sources (Gitelson and Crompton, 1983), commercial sources (Mill and Morrison, 1985), overt induced II (Gartner, 1993), and professional sources (Baloglu, 1997). Travel intermediaries can be considered as a formal as well as social information source due to their promotional and consultative efforts. In that respect, they contribute to formation of induced images of the travellers in the active information search process (Gartner, 1993; Gartner and Bachri, 1994), which corresponds with the previous finding.
Another tool for disseminating information that was revealed in the findings was media; media was viewed as an important source of information and it was viewed as an effective tool that shapes destination image, which may be used to present information about the real situation in the destination and also the way it is progressing so that tourists be updated with the most recent situation and this may help fixing the security image of the destination.

Wahab (1996) supported this notion as he suggested that destinations marketers may use the same medium that projects negative images of the destination to promote the positive images of the that same destination, which suggests that marketers of destinations affected by real or imagined risk factors need to use the media in projecting a realistic image of their destinations, the safe areas where tourists may safely visit, the unsafe places that should be avoided, and the precautions that should be taken by visitors, so that tourists and travel intermediaries would be well informed with the real situation. This may prevent destinations from losing their tourism revenues as a result of distorted media and may also guard against the generalisation effect.

Furthermore, the findings highlighted the difference between Egyptian intermediaries who operate with out having a prepared risk management plan, but rather act spontaneously and the British intermediaries who operate based on a prepared risk analysis plan. The findings also revealed some of the strategies adopted by travel intermediaries for risk management. Egyptian intermediaries for example, emphasised the importance of coordination between all Arab travel intermediaries in order to promote a positive image to the whole region and its different destinations, which again emphasises the role played by tour operators in promoting their destinations. Klem and Parkinson (2001) corresponded to this notion; as they note that large tour operators play an essential role in promoting the destination to and delivering tourists from international markets.
Also they drew attention to the significance of intensifying participation in international conferences, tourist trade shows and mega events, which will help in increasing communication with generating markets which helps clarifying the destination’s situation and hence, restore its image. This notion was supported by Fall (2004) as she confirmed the effectiveness of the increasing role of public relations as a crisis management function.

On the other hand, British intermediaries pointed out to the value of collaboration between the government and the tour operators to establish training programmes for travel intermediaries in ways of handling destination crisis. They also emphasised the important role of working together with the foreign offices in the destinations they are selling in order to be updated with the real progress of the situation; so that they would be able to update their travel advice.

All the previous findings show consistency with each other and also supported by a lot of literature that was published in the topics of security and safety issues of destinations, their effect on destination image, the role of media on destination image and tourist risk perception and its effect on tourism decision making.

8.8 Summary

This chapter discussed the results of the interviews held concerning the security image of the Middle East as perceived by both Egyptian and British intermediaries. It identified a number of major issues of perception of the Middle East and its destinations in two intervals of times; one of which before the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh, while the other took place after the attacks to monitor the difference that could have occurred as a result of the attacks. It discussed the overall image of the Middle East as perceived by both Egyptian and British travel intermediaries, the way destination safety is perceived by both parties, the way different destinations in the Middle East are perceived, and the main risk management strategies adopted by travel intermediaries.

Findings from the evaluation of the Middle East security image held by travel intermediaries showed that the Middle East is mostly positively perceived by
majority of travel intermediaries despite the security problems that might occur in some of its destinations. Also it was made very clear that each destination in the Middle East is sold and promoted separately based on its unique image and identity as presented by travel intermediaries and not as apart of the Middle East.

The chapter has also identified a new concept for destination security and safety literature, which asserted that terrorism is not any more as devastating to tourism as it was perceived before and that due to the terrorism attacks that have been hitting even unexpected and secured places, a case in point London attacks; travellers have grown accustomed to the new era in which suicide bombers can strive anywhere, and hence, both travel intermediaries and tourists are proving increasingly resilient.

The chapter underlined some of the risk management strategies adopted by travel intermediaries, which mainly emphasised the importance of coordination between travel intermediaries in order to promote a positive image to the whole region and its different destinations, which again emphasises the role played by tour operators in promoting their destinations.

Finally, the chapter highlighted some clear differences in perception between Egyptian and British intermediaries. These differences in perception may be due to cultural differences between them. Table (8.1) summarises these perceptual gaps.
### Table 8.1: Differences in perceptions between Egyptian and British Intermediaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Egyptian Intermediaries</th>
<th>British Intermediaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview sessions were undertaken mainly with the companies' managers because Egypt subordinates usually are not authorised to be consulted and the boss should be involved in every action taken and consequently he is the only one capable of answering any question or solving any problem.</td>
<td>Interview sessions were undertaken with employees holding various positions in the companies, such as sales persons, shift managers, secretaries, etc. this may indicate delegation of authority in the British organisations, which is missing in the Egyptian organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They perceived the Middle East countries as being only Egypt, Israel and the Asian Arab countries.</td>
<td>They hold a broader perception of the region countries as being North African countries, Asian Arab countries, Israel, Turkey, and Iran.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They hold a close and detailed image of the Middle East.</td>
<td>They hold a general, distant, and blurred image of the Middle East.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They promote their destinations using the cognitive (attribute/functional) approach.</td>
<td>They promote their destinations using holistic/psychological approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They do not perceive Turkey, Tunisia or Morocco to be regional competitors to them.</td>
<td>They assert that Turkey, Tunisia and Morocco are regional substitute destinations to Egypt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis management in the Middle East is not systematised or formalised. They rather have a more ad hoc response to individual events.</td>
<td>They have agreed set of formal procedures and operational policies, to some extent coordinated with governmental agencies and media.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Nine: Conclusions

9.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study on evaluating the Middle East security image as perceived by Egyptian and British travel intermediaries. Section 9.2 presents the research summary and conclusions. Section 9.3 displays the main research implications with relation to the security image of the Middle East as a tourist destination within the same region and abroad, its effect on tourist flows to the region, and the counteractions taken by travel intermediaries to promote their destinations. Limitations of this study are presented in section 9.4. Finally, section 9.5 concludes the chapter with an agenda for further research on this issue.

9.2 Summary and Concluded Findings

For the past two decades, researchers have demonstrated that image is a valuable concept in understanding the destination selection process of tourists. Several studies have concentrated on the relationship between destination image and destination choice (Baloglu and McCleary 1999; Santana 2001; Sirgy and Su 2000). Positive images of destination help decision makers construct awareness and act as differentiating factors among competing destinations. Consequently, it is believed that success or failure of many destinations depends on images held by potential tourists and the effective management of those images by the destination (Sirgy and Su 2000).

Among the various elements that form a destination image is the safety element. Such element is the primary condition for the normal tourism development of a destination, region or country and thus the basic
determinant of its growth. Without that element destinations cannot successfully compete on the generating markets, even if they have the best quality of natural and built attractions (Cavlek 2002).

A review of literature on safety issues in tourism, suggests that much research has been conducted on political instability, its dimensions, the effect of each dimension on tourism flows to destinations, and the remedial programmes that should be taken to mitigate its negative effects. However, little is known about how travel intermediaries perceive political risk, especially in the Middle East and how such perceptions affect their attitudes towards destinations and potentially the flow of tourists to the region. Thus, the present research aims to fill a gap in the area that relates security issues to perceptions and images of destinations, and travel propensity to them.

Since the Middle East is considered one of the regions that suffers insecurity problems such as wars, political conflicts and/or terrorism; the current research attempted to assess the security and safety image of the Middle East and its destinations as perceived by travel intermediaries in UK and Egypt. This research utilised a phenomenological methodology that employed qualitative research tools. The phenomenological approach to research typically involves five to ten people and depends almost exclusively on in-depth interviewing (Crotty, 1998). Therefore, the present study adopts, as a primary method of data collection, in-depth interviewing and telephone interviewing of individuals representing the travel intermediaries in UK and Egypt. Such interviews employed techniques which included open-ended questions, and cognitive mapping exercises with the purpose of exploring the subjects' perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and experience in as much depth as possible. Interviewing travel intermediaries was undertaken twice, once before Sharm El Sheikh Attacks in July 2005 and another time three months after the attacks in order to monitor any changes in perception and also to examine the reaction of both types of intermediaries to the attacks.
Therefore, it may be claimed that the current thesis has significantly contributed to methodology; through the first use of cognitive mapping approach and projective technique exercises, as tools for collecting tourism data.

Using cognitive mapping technique for collecting data allows people to generate mental images and models of the environment. One of the key roles of cognitive mapping is providing major insights into tourist behaviour, not least by helping develop understanding of how certain places are perceived (Walmsley and Jenkins, 1992). Also cognitive mapping acts as a generating frame of reference for interpreting events in our spatial environment (Laszlo et al., 1996). Cognitive maps provide an efficient mean of communicating certain types of information (Mazze, 1974). Cognitive mapping techniques have been usefully used in the fields of international relations, administrative sciences and management sciences (Monazemi and Conrath, 1986), but have not been yet widely used in the field of tourism.

On the other hand, projective techniques were adapted from their clinical settings for use in attitude, opinion and market research (Weschler and Bernberg, 1950; Smith, 1954). They were employed to encourage respondents to express private feelings and to say things that might be threatening or embarrassing when conventional research techniques were used (Cobliner, 1951). Since projective techniques require respondents to report on how others, and not themselves, might think, feel or behave, the views expressed can be seen as other people's views or simply attributed to imagination (Schlackman, 1989). Thus, at least one of the assumptions underpinning projective techniques is that projection is the process of attributing one's own feelings, behaviour or motivations to others (Rook, 1988).

In qualitative research, projective techniques allow respondents to project their perception and feelings on some person or object (the Middle East) or in some other way are allowed to depersonalise their responses, and thus they feel freer to express their thoughts (Day, 1989), thus breaking several response barriers associated with direct questioning such as inability to
express themselves, lack of awareness of repressed motivations, unwillingness to disclose certain feelings, irrationality and subjects like to say the right thing to please the interviewer (Oppenheim, 1992). For example, while interviewees’ answers tended to be more like sales comments about destinations they sell rather than real perception, the same could not be said for the way in which they answered the projective question about personifying the Middle East. Their responses to this question revealed a lot about the real perceptions held by both the Egyptian and British intermediaries. The Egyptians expressed their true feelings that the Middle East is not just beautiful destinations that tourists dream to visit, but rather they sympathise with its problems and admit that it needs help in order to survive and use its potentials. On the other side, British intermediaries who claimed to have a good knowledge of the destinations they sell, this question helped to reveal that they have a blurred and unclear image of the Middle East due to the overlapped picture of the Middle East as a beautiful tourist destination and the Middle East as a region with political conflicts and wars. Such perceptions were not clear from their answers to direct open questions, but were rather revealed by the projective questions, which gives evidence to the significance of using projective techniques in exploratory research.

Finally, it may be claimed that the previous approaches of collecting data ensured that interviewees were able to express themselves freely and that answers were not biased, which indicates that data collected was deemed to be useful and the research worthwhile.

The current study has drawn out some major findings. First, the majority of Egyptian Intermediaries perceived the Middle East as constituting Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and the Gulf countries; which are United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain and Yemen. On the other hand, the British Intermediaries perceive the Middle East as being the Arab countries such as Algeria, Bahrain, Dubai, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, in addition to Israel, Turkey, and some of the Intermediaries included Iran.
Second, Egyptian and British travel intermediaries agreed that the Middle East destinations are attractive destinations that enable their tourists to explore a great deal of unique tourist products whether archaeological, natural or manmade, which will suit all types of tourists.

Third, British intermediaries were not able to describe the whole region as one entity, instead they described only the countries they sell in the Middle East, emphasising the difficulty of describing the Middle East as a whole as there are countries that they would never recommend to their customers such as Iraq and Israel. This finding may indicate that selling tourist destinations is different from describing them politically; when selling a tourist destination it is usually sold and promoted individually rather than being inherently regarded as part of a larger collectivity of places and regions.

Fourth, both Egyptian and British travel intermediaries revealed a concerted conviction that media are the main suspects in damaging destination image; as they all agreed that media have a great influence in shaping destination image and by focusing on presenting the problems or negative points that might be severely presented would be creating a negative image of the destination.

Fifth, findings confirmed that as a result of the terrorist attacks that have been recently taking place everywhere in the world, even in European countries British travel intermediaries no more view the Middle East region as an unsafe region with many political conflicts and frequent terrorist attacks, but rather they can distinguish between the directly affected destinations (Iraq and Israel) and the rest of the Middle East destinations. This may be due to the fact that they promote each individual destination separately based on its distinctive attractive features and regardless of the region it is located in, which separate safe destinations from others in the same region that suffer security problems.

Sixth, the effect of terrorist attacks on tourist flows to a certain destination and the time it takes the destination to recover from the problem has significantly decreased. For example, the attacks that took place in Luxor in 1997 had a
devastating effect on tourist flows to all destinations in Egypt for a long period of time, while the attacks that took place in Taba in 2004 and also the recent attacks on Sharm El sheikh had much less effect on tourist flows and the recovery time was not as long as that of Luxor’s attacks. This notion indicates that the demand seems to have become accustomed to such attacks, and hence, their resilience to the situation increased.

Seventh, there are notable differences in behaviour of tourists towards destination security crisis depending on several factors, one of which is demographic factor; for example, families, especially those with kids were pointed out as a group highly sensitive to destination risk and accordingly are most likely to alter their travel plans as a result of any news about insecurity problem in their selected destination.

Another factor that affects tourists’ behaviour towards destination security problem is the nationality of tourists. Results confirmed that certain nationalities such as Americans and Japanese tourists are highly responsive to perceptions of destination risk and are the first to flee out of a destination at a problem of insecurity risk. On the other hand, results have proven other nationalities such as Arab and British tourists to be more resilient and of lower perception of risk than the other two.

Eighth, the research illustrated that the frequency of violent acts has greater impact on tourism demand than severity of the act. Any destination that suffered a severe insecurity incident will go through its attention cycle till gradually fades from the centre of public attention and would then gradually regain back its image and its tourists. While, on the other hand we may find that a destination that is suffering from high frequency of severe insecurity incidents such as terrorist attacks is always between the alarmed discovery stage and euphoric enthusiasm stage. These are the stages where media is constantly resuming its coverage to the situation in this place and hence the problem never loses the intense interest neither to media nor to public. This situation makes the destination always seems to tourists as chaotic and troubled place in which they would never think of visiting, therefore such destination needs much more time to recover.
Ninth, media is considered a major factor that may shape potential tourists' as well as intermediaries' images of a certain destination; it is considered the primary suspect in ruining a destination image by exaggerating news about any security problem that may take place in the destination and threaten tourists. It is also alleged that in many instances it does not inform tourists of the situation or the real progress in security conditions in the destination after the security problem ends, which leaves the image of insecurity uncorrected in minds of tourists.

However, the study also highlights the role media may play in the crisis management function. Destination marketers as well as travel intermediaries may use the same medium that projects negative images of the destination to promote the positive images of the that same destination, which suggests that marketers of destinations affected by real or imagined risk factors need to use the media in projecting a realistic image of their destinations.

Tenth, findings have revealed a gap in perception between Egyptian and British travel intermediaries. For example, Egyptian intermediaries ignored the spill over effect that takes place after any security problem; they denied that the attacks of Sharm El Sheikh had positively affected other destinations. While British intermediaries emphasised that some other Middle East destinations were positively affected by the deviation of some tourists away from Sharm El Sheikh.

Eleventh, results of the study gave evidence of the importance of domestic and regional tourism in supporting a destination that was hit by a security problem.

Twelfth, the study demonstrated the significant role public relations may play as a crisis management function. More specifically, results showed the significance of intensifying participation in international conferences, tourist trade shows and mega events, which will help in increasing communication with generating markets which helps to clarify the destination's situation and hence, restore its image.
Finally, the study suggested that none of the travel intermediaries in Egypt have a prepared crisis management plan; they do not see why they should invest in something that they might never need. Yet, findings showed that crises have become a part of daily lives, and neglecting this fact can cost the company much more than it costs to establish an action plan to handle a general crisis. That is why Western companies do realise the necessity of having a crisis management plan prepared in advance.

In conclusion, the current study may have contributed to the understanding of various issues related to destination image, security and safety perceptions, the role travel intermediaries play in destination image formation and destination crisis management strategies. Through its review of literature and generation of ideas it adds to the growing academic literature about destination image, factors affecting it and its effect on tourist flows to the destination. This thesis may be the first in literature that tackles the problem of security image in the Middle East region. This thesis also analyses travel intermediaries' cognitive behaviour towards the Middle East destinations, especially those with security problems, and the way such behaviour influences their recommendations and, potentially, tourist flow.

The research has classified security threats according to their degree of deterrence to tourists, as well as according their frequency of occurrence into high deterrent and frequent (wars, political instability and terrorism) and low deterrent, while frequent (theft).

Most significantly, it proposed a new insight into destination security and safety literature, which asserted that terrorism, is no longer as devastating to tourism as it was perceived before, due to the terrorism attacks that have been hitting even unexpected and secured places, a case in point London attacks. Travellers seem to growing accustomed to the new era in which suicide bombers can act anywhere, and hence, both travel intermediaries and tourists are proving increasingly resilient.
9.3 Implications and Recommendations

Tourism is an industry, which is characterized by its sensitivity to global changes and its ever-increasing competitive nature, which requires tourists' destinations to develop an effective marketing strategy (Baloglu and Mangaloglu 1999). Destinations mainly compete based in their perceived images relative to their competitors in the market place. According to Fakeye and Crompton (1991), destinations with positive images can be expected to prosper while those with less favourable images may never achieve their fullest tourism potential. Therefore, destination marketers need a sound understanding of images of their own destination as well as image of other competitive destinations (Baloglu and McCleary 1999).

Since tourism is sensitive to changes that might happen in the world, undoubtedly no tourism policy maker can afford the negative impacts of political instability or high levels of crime violence that can cause damage to the image of a given area as a tourist destination (Seddigghi et al. 2002). Therefore, international destination marketers must concentrate on the safety element as one of the key features of a destination's image, where it can be uniquely positioned in comparison to other destinations (Leisen 2001).

The impact of the safety element in tourism does not only affect the individual tourist and the destination, but also affects the company, which organizes the trip and the one that sells it, namely tour operators and travel agents (Sonmez 1998). Therefore, travel intermediaries (tour operators and travel agents) play a vital role in creating the image of destinations and can significantly influence international tourists' flows to a country hit by safety or security risks.

Although travel intermediaries represent an important element in the growth of any tourist destination, researchers have failed to devote much attention to understanding their perceptions and behaviour towards destinations they sell with the exception of few studies (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001; Cavlek 2002). This study attempted to gain a better understanding of the role of images especially, security image in destination choice of travel intermediaries. The perceptions held by tour operators and travel agents
about a destination have proven to be a significant element influencing their decisions of promoting the destinations. It was also assumed that these images would influence the number and nature of tour packages designed and promoted by tour operators.

According to an evaluation of security issues and its effects on tourist destinations, Hall and O'Sullivan (1996) pointed out that among the various elements that form destination image is the security element. Although security is considered to be intrinsically linked to image, very little was known about its unique contribution to overall destination image as perceived by travel intermediaries. The present study has attempted to close this gap in literature.

First, image of the Middle East and its destinations as perceived by travel intermediaries was assessed. A major purpose of destination marketers is to build a positive image of their destinations as well as differentiate themselves from competitors. This study provides insights regarding overall image of the Middle East destinations in the minds of travel intermediaries in the region (Egyptian) and out of the region (British). The findings can help the Middle Eastern destinations to assess their current images and positions relative to each other. This information, in turn, will help them compare their current position and desired position versus competitors. The destinations can also compare the image and position they currently attempt to project (supply side) and the images held by regional travel intermediaries with images actually held by British travel intermediaries (demand side of image). This comparison should enable destinations and Middle Eastern travel intermediaries to see the differences between their projected images and received images by British travel intermediaries, which would help them plan their communication strategies.

The study has developed a frame of reference to competing destinations in the Middle East; as the study positioned some of the Middle East destination with respect to each other in relation to attractiveness to tourists and travel intermediaries. The study introduced a group of destinations that are considered competitive to each other with respect to intra-regional market,
especially Egypt; these destinations are Egypt followed by Lebanon, Dubai, and then Jordan regarding leisure tourism while Saudi Arabia was categorized as the top destination for religious tourism. While on the other hand, Egypt followed by Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, and then Jordan were considered competitive to each other with respect to the European market, especially the British. This frame of reference would enable each of the previous destinations to know its position among the others with respect to both the intra-regional market and the European market, which help them use their competitive advantages to compete more.

Second, from a marketing perspective it appeared that British travel intermediaries do not perceive the Middle East as one entity but, rather each destination is uniquely perceived from the others. Therefore destination marketers and Middle Eastern travel intermediaries should stress unique image dimensions of their destination, differentiating it from other destinations in the region as well as distancing it from places with security problems and hence avoid the generalisation effect of security problems.

In this respect, the key recommendations drawn from the many results and analyses presented in the current study target mainly ministries of tourism, tourism promotion authorities, tourist offices in the generating countries, and the industry itself (travel intermediaries and their associations), as follows:

**Ministries of tourism**

- Setting a recovery marketing plan that is fully integrated with crisis management activities. This recovery marketing and promotion plan would be set by a group of the world’s leading experts on different aspects of tourism. The plan would be developed regionally through the collaboration of various destinations in the Middle East to deal with the problem of instability, but would specify steps to be implemented on a local basis.

- Offering training programmes to all parties involved in marketing the destination or in implementing the pre-set recovery marketing plan; destination marketers, tour operators, travel agents, local journalists and their editors, etc. These training programmes would be for the purpose of
understanding the nature of the situation, the ways of communicating it with potential generating markets, whether through the media or the direct contact with travel intermediaries in these countries, as well as dealing with the crisis locally in order to overcome the harmful effects of the events.

Destination tourism promotion authorities

- Media was proven to be a major element in damaging the image of any tourist destination, which encountered a security problem. Therefore, to minimise effects of bad publicity on tourism of a tourist destination hit by crisis it is necessary that destination tourism promotion authorities coordinate all their activities with the media and give accurate information about the crisis, because credibility is critical to this process and to inform media about the steps taken in the country to broadcast out positive facts, so that tourists are kept updated with the true situation in the destination and avoid any misleading news.

- A pro-active approach to media relations in tourism can generate positive publicity and can help influence what gets published and broadcast about the destination. Speed of response is the most important element. Tourism promotion authorities could organise Press conferences, press releases, social events and familiarisation trips for the media will help create positive coverage of the destination.

- Websites on the internet provide a communication alternative to traditional mass media, allowing the tourism industry to send out its own messages to public and travel trade without using the press as an intermediary. Destination websites need to be strengthened with the content that addresses the current problems and correct misconceptions, including daily updates about safety and security issues in the destination.

- Tourism promotion authorities in Middle East destinations ought to collaborate to highlight the common features they share together as a result of being in the same region such as climate, culture, traditions. On the other hand, tourism promotion authority of individual destinations would then
emphasise their unique features such as security status of the destination especially, after security problems whether in the destination or in a near by destination.

- Tourism promotion Authorities in the Middle East should also collaborate to promote domestic and intra-regional tourism, as there was evidence of the great significance of domestic and regional tourism in supporting a destination with security problem, a case in point is what happened after the attacks on Sharm El Sheikh, where many Egyptian and Arab tourists preferred to travel to Sharm El Sheikh directly after the attacks in order to support the destination and send a message to the whole world that it will remain the city of peace.

- Tourism promotion authorities may well expand their distribution channels and target non traditional markets such as The Russian Federation and other countries of Eastern Europe which may increase demand for the region's tourism products and services. This could be achieved by highly targeted advertising, public relations activities and promotions to market segments and niches identified as representing good potential, as well as participating at trade shows in generating markets.

**Destination Tourist offices**

- Destination Tourist offices in the generating countries should focus on clarifying the real situation and updating travel intermediaries in the tourist generating countries with the up to date situation. Destinations will then be able to maintain or improve their positive security image and retain their tourists.

**Industry**

- Travel intermediaries in the Middle East can promote domestic destinations through special prices offered to national tourists.
• Travel intermediaries in the region can join forces to develop regional tour packages by putting different Middle East destinations in one package tour and promote it regionally.

• Travel intermediaries in the tourists generating countries are considered as significant information sources and distribution channels influencing the images and decisions of travellers thus, their images and knowledge about destinations will have a significant impact on potential travellers’ vacation decision-making process. Therefore, Middle Eastern travel intermediaries and their associations should develop a close relationship with travel intermediaries in tourists generating countries especially, these countries whose tourists are less resilient to security problems such as the Japanese and ensure that the messages transmitted coincide with the desired image of the place.

9.4 Research Limitations

The findings of the study should be interpreted in the light of its limitations:

• This study focuses only on the security perception of the Middle East and not the overall image of the Middle East.

• The sample population of this study was tour operators and travel agents listed in the UK and Egypt. UK based travel intermediaries are chosen as representatives for European travel intermediaries, while Egyptian travel intermediaries are considered representatives for Middle East Travel intermediaries. The researcher made this choice, as UK is accessible to her because her studies are done in the UK and also Egypt as the researcher is Egyptian.

• The sample is only limited to travel intermediaries who are organising or selling tours to the Middle East.

• The sample of the study is only limited to ten UK based travel intermediaries and ten Egyptian ones. Therefore the findings cannot be generalised over all travel intermediaries in Europe and the Middle East. May be future research
can focus on a larger sample including tour operators and travel agents not promoting these destinations.

- In Egypt, the nature of the travel intermediaries is not specific as; there is no actual difference between travel agents and tour operators. The majority of travel intermediaries in Egypt are tour operators, which may affect the distribution of the Egyptian sample among tour operators and travel agents; as the number of tour operators is more than travel agents.

- The validity of the semi-structured interviews with Egyptian intermediaries may be lowered due to the fact that the interview questions were translated into Arabic language and accordingly answers were again re-translated into English during transcription. In the translation process words can unintentionally acquire wrong meaning. The strategy of translating back to Arabic the re-translated English transcription has hopefully helped to overcome this problem.

9.5 Directions for Further Research

The issue of destination image in the context of security and safety is still wide open for exploration. It is a complex field, which demands specific comprehension of multiple disciplines, not only those related to destination image, its formation, the factors affecting it and its effect on tourist flows, but also others associated with security problems with their wide array of types, factors affecting tourist risk perception, as well as destinations or regions suffering security problems. Further research to be done concerning the issue of image in the Middle East and its destinations may include:

- As a result of the weight of historical and cultural aspects in shaping perceptions the researcher aims to undertake a more longitudinal work on the effect of historical and cultural aspects on the security perception of the Middle East destinations

- Investigating the security perception of the Middle East among intermediaries from other major markets such as American and Asian (especially, Japanese) travel intermediaries
• Evaluating and comparing the Middle East image as held by travel intermediaries selling tours to the Middle East and those who are not dealing with it.

• Focusing on evaluating and comparing between image of the Middle East as perceived by both mass and specialist travel intermediaries to provide critical distribution channel strategies for Middle East destinations.

• Investigating the security perception of the Middle East as perceived by foreign tourists and assessing how much the image presented by media affects their perception.

• Assessing the inter-relationship between security image and other decision making factors.

• Investigating detailed images of single destinations in the Middle East and relating them to other competitors inside and outside the region.

• Identifying and comparing tourist risk perception among several nationalities in order to be able to define which nationalities worry about destination security problems more than the others.

• Investigating the role played by destination marketers to enhance destination image after a security crisis.

• Exploring the role played by travel intermediaries to overcome security crisis and to rebuild destination image after a security crisis.

In conclusion, despite of the limitations of the study, its findings provide important insights into the role of security image in destination choice decisions of travel intermediaries, and therefore may have significant implications for researchers and practitioners alike.
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Appendix A-1: Phase one interview pattern before pilot study

Interview Guide

The researcher prepares an interview guide in order to cover specific topics but the interviewee (travel intermediary) has a great deal of leeway in how to respond. The interview will include open ended questions, projective technique questions and a cognitive mapping exercise to investigate the perceptions of travel intermediaries about safety and security in the Middle East. The interview would take place in the interviewee’s office so that to make him feel comfortable, the interview session would take approximately sixty to ninety minutes.

After the interviewer introduces himself and the purpose of the research and the benefits gained to all parties from its results and having some general talk on the business which leads to the research topic, the interviewer starts posing questions as follows:

1. How do you think travel agents/tour operators choose destinations they sell?
2. Put the attributes upon which travel agents/tour operators choose destinations they sell in order from the most to the least important.
3. Giving the respondents some cards, where each card shows a certain destination attribute and ask him to sort them according to their importance to tourists from most to least. The attributes shown on the cards are:
   - Good value for money
   - Beautiful scenery and natural attractions
   - Good climate
   - Cultural and historical attractions
   - Suitable accommodation and appealing local food
   - Safety and security
   - Proximity
4. Probe on why safety was given such order of importance.
5. How do you define safety of destinations?
6. According to what do tourists consider a place as unsafe?
7. From your experience what are the types of insecurity that your clients could face in a destination?
8. “The trip was magnificent until ............” Complete the story and suggest a destination to this story.
9. Giving the respondents some cards, where each card shows a type of insecurity that could occur in a destination and ask him to sort them from the most severe to the least. The insecurity types are:
   - Theft
   - Robbery
   - Terrorist attacks
   - Wars
   - Political instability
   - Natural crises
   - Diseases

10. Give example of destinations to each type of insecurity.

11. Given again the same cards of insecurity types respondents are asked to sort them according to their frequency from the most to the least.

12. Again given the same cards of insecurity types respondents are asked to sort them from the most deterrent to tourists to the least.

13. Give examples of unsafe destinations you've experienced or heard of.

14. Probing to give more examples and to relate them with frequency and severity, and how tourists reacted and also how the destinations with the problem reacted.

15. Do you think that there are tourists that worry about security issues more than others? Which types of tourists?

16. Giving the respondents some cards, where each card shows a type of tourism and ask him to sort them from the most affected by insecurity issues in his destination selection process to the least. The types of tourists are:
   - Business tourism
   - VFR
   - Sea, Sun & Sand
   - Cultural tourism
   - Convention
   - Adventure tourism
   - Ecotourism


18. What are the sources of information upon which, tourists base their destination selection process?
19. Sort them according to the effective.
20. What about travel intermediaries how do you usually get your information?
21. Sort them according to the most credible.
22. Is the most credible is necessarily the most effective? Why? Give examples.
23. Probing in the subject to in order to ask whether the respondent think that media sometimes exaggerates in insecurity issues.
24. If yes, does this mean that the perceived security of a destination could be negative while it's not really the case?
25. Have you experienced such a case before? When? Where? What was your reaction then?
26. Displaying a number of maps to the interviewees and they will be asked to map their perceptions of the Middle East on them, for example:
   - A map of the world, where interviewees will be asked to trace on it the area of the Middle East (so that the researcher can measure which area is perceived to be the Middle East)
   - A map of the world shading the Middle East area, where the interviewees will be asked to plot the Middle East destinations (so that the researcher can figure out what countries are perceived as being in the Middle East).
   - A map of the Middle East destinations, where they should number the destinations according to its value for money from most to least
   - A map of the Middle East destinations, where they should number the destinations according to its proximity from most to least
   - A map of the Middle East destinations, where they should number the destinations according to its attractiveness to tourists from most to least
   - A map of the Middle East destinations, where they should number the destinations from the destination they would most send their tourists to the least and why?
   - A map of the Middle East destinations, where they should number the destinations from the destination they would most advise their tourists not to visit to the least and why?
   - A map of the Middle East destinations, where they should shade on the destinations they perceive as insecure destinations and why?
   - A map of the Middle East destinations, where they should shade on the destinations they perceive as secure destinations.
   - A map of the Middle East destinations, where they should number the destinations starting form the most insecure and ending with the most secure.
   - A map of the Middle East where, respondents should assign to each destination the type of tourism that matches with it according to tourists preferences.
27. Giving the respondents cards of regions like the Middle East, Africa, The Far East, Europe, Australia, North America and South America and they are asked to sort them from most to least according to:

- Value of money
- Proximity
- Attractiveness to tourists
- Security

28. Matching the cards of the last question with cards of type of tourism to know the favored destination by each type tourists.

29. Thinking of the Middle East what has been your main source of information over the last year…?

30. What was the main information you got about Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Israel?

31. Have you believed all the information you got?

32. What impressions did such information leave in your mind about these destinations?

33. Showing some brochures and photographs of some of the Middle East destinations, and asking him to comment on them in terms of how do the photos match with his impression of the destination?

34. How do you feel about visiting the destination before organizing tours or sending tourists to it?

35. What destinations have you visited in the Middle East before? Which counties? Why?

36. How do you assess security there?

37. Was it the same perception you got before visiting it? How different?

38. What was the effect of such visit on your promotion to such destination?

39. What destinations in the Middle East do you sell? Why?

40. What advice you give to any of your clients who intend to spend his vacation in the Middle East?

41. If the Middle East were a person you know
   - What kind of relationship could you have with him
   - How would you describe him?
   - Draw a sketch to this person (put a picture to him)
   - Assuming the Middle East destinations are different parts of his body, which destination would be which part? Why?
Appendix A-2: Pilot Study

It was considered necessary to conduct a pilot study to test the research instrument before carrying out the main interview. One of the main reasons of conducting a pilot study interview is to identify and avoid any misunderstanding or problems that may face the researcher during the interview and hence, result in vague or misleading answers. Another objective of the pilot was to test whether the researcher was capable of conducting fruitful interviews or not so that to determine if the interview was the appropriate tool that she should use in her study.

The pilot study targeted five travel intermediaries in Alexandria, Egypt. The researcher went directly to the agencies and asked permission for interviewing the person responsible for tours in the company as she is conducting an academic research. Five travel intermediaries out of eleven she had approached accepted to be interviewed, as the rest apologised by not having time, being not interested, and others asked the researcher to put her questions in form of questionnaire that they would answer and send it back to her after that. All travel intermediaries approached including those who accepted to be interviewed refused the idea of taping the interview. Some of them refused the whole idea of being interviewed after they have made a preliminary acceptance because of the issue of taping the interview session. They all could not accept the idea of a taped conversation with a total stranger to them or even with someone they slightly know; they felt so much suspicious and anxious.

The five interviews took place at the travel agency with the manager of the company (who is in most of the cases its owner). The researcher had to wait from 30 to 75 minutes after the time that was determined by the interviewees to start the interview in four interview sessions out of the five conducted. The interview was designed to take approximately from 60 to 90 minutes but, the researcher was not allowed more than 30 minutes.
Results of the interviews came as follows:

- Travel intermediaries mainly select the destinations they sell according to various factors such as: destination attractiveness to tourists, quality of services and facilities in the destination, good value for money.

  We usually choose the destinations we sell according to their attractiveness to our clients and their quality of services and facilities. We appreciate so much our customers' preferences and feedback.

  (F tours)

  Destinations are mainly selected based on their beautiful scenery and their good value for money. We don't sell expensive holidays; we don't have customers for them.

  (O Travel)

- Three interviewees put safety and security as the first attribute in importance when choosing a destination, while the other two put it as the second in importance after attractiveness.

  Of course safety and security matters are the first things to be considered when selling a destination, the first thing we cater for here is the safety and the satisfaction of our clients.

  (H tours)

  Safety and security come after attractiveness as attractiveness is the main reason of travel and therefore it is the main reason of choosing a destination. What if a destination is safe but not attractive?

  (S Travel)
• None of the interviewees was able to give a complete definition for destination safety, instead they all started to use Egypt as an example of a safe destination. They all spoke as if it was an advertisement about security in Egypt.

See how Egypt is a beautiful and safe destination; tourists can enjoy themselves till late at night with no fear. Egypt has kind and helpful people who like their tourists and help them.

(B Tours)

….. for example here in Egypt tourists can move around safely at any time of the day. Whatever the media says about terrorism in not true, it's just that our competitors are trying to spread rumors. We have a strong tourism industry.

(H Tours)

• They also all admitted that none of their tourists has ever experienced a problem of insecurity neither within the region of the Middle East nor outside the region. They also emphasised that the Middle East is a safe region with no problems of insecurity apart from the parts having wars such as Palestine and Iraq where tourists normally don't visit but the rest of the region and especially Egypt is very safe and welcoming to tourists.

The Middle East is a safe destination, apart from the war zones, which are Palestine and Iraq otherwise all countries are safe to visit.

(S Travel)

If we excluded what is happening in Iraq and Palestine, the rest of the Middle East is Safe.

(O Tours)
• Wars are considered the most severe type of insecurity followed by natural disasters and diseases while theft and robbery are considered the most frequent.

Wars are the worst problems that can face a destination; they destroy everything. Natural disasters and diseases are also major problems but are forgotten faster when they're over. Theft is a minor issue but happens a lot in some destinations, not in Egypt.

(F Tours)

• All interviewees emphasised that the Middle East and especially, Egypt is a safe destination. Three of the interviewees refused to state any examples of insecurity in the Middle East, while one of them mentioned the Palestinian/Israeli situation and the invasion of Iraq. The other one mentioned Luxor attacks in 1997 and asserted that it was an individual incident and was never repeated.

The interviewees began to feel suspicious and uncomfortable; they appeared getting nervous as they thought that the interview is being deviated towards politics, which made them very conservative in their replies.

The mapping exercise and the projective questions made the interviewees feel surprised and even more suspicious. Such exercises were not accepted by the interviewees and did not answer them. Some of them felt it was a way of examining their knowledge and their ability to draw, others felt it was a way of psycho analysis and commented that these are such a strange ways of interviewing people and that they have never been through before. All respondents then tried to wind up the interview for various reasons.

That's all. I think that I've said enough try to manage yourself with the information you got; I have a meeting right now.

(B Tours)
(Suspiciously) I'm very sorry but I don't think I'll be able to continue this interview now may be some other time.

From the previous results of the pilot study the researcher can argue that in Egypt collecting primary data for any research is difficult because of the lack of cooperation of the business companies and also from the managers themselves. Therefore, the interviews are in general not widely used as a data collection method in Egypt, while questionnaires are the most widely used method of data collection in Egypt.

In order to interpret this argument, it is important to take into account the local culture of the Egyptians. For example, the interview sessions were done mainly with the companies' managers because in Egypt subordinates usually are not authorised to be consulted and the boss should be involved in every action taken and consequently he is the only one capable of answering any question or solving any problem. Also Egyptians feel threatened by ambiguous, uncertain situations and try to avoid them by establishing more rules and structure. They prefer to avoid uncertainty and dissent as a cultural value and desire consensus and as a result people show little tolerance to deviant or new ideas and high resistance to change, which is very obvious in the way Egyptian travel intermediaries reacted to the researcher during the pilot interview sessions and especially, when they became suspicious of her and her unusual techniques of asking questions; as due to their culture they ignored the questions or refused to answer them and finally, winded-up the interview sessions aggressively in order to avoid the risk they perceived might come from responding such interview.

As a result of the findings of the pilot study a number of modifications were made to the interview design and the procedures taken to access respondents in order to adapt to the Egyptian culture. Modifications were done as follows:
• Respondents were contacted with the help of Mr. Sayed Moussa who is the ex-president of the Egyptian National Tourist Authority and one of the tourism-marketing consultants in the Middle East. He is in good contact with the major travel intermediaries in Egypt. Mr. Moussa contacted the travel intermediaries and asked them to help the researcher to accomplish her academic mission. He also explained to them the purpose of the interview and that the researcher would use some relatively new methods in interviewing them (so as to reveal any kind of ambiguity that the respondents might feel). Finally he told them that the interview session should be taped and that this tape would only be used for the purpose of the research. Respondents agreed as a favour for Mr. Moussa.

• The researcher prepared a stamped letter from the Arab Academy for Sciences and Technology and Maritime Transport; where she works. The letter states that the researcher works there and that the interview results will only be used for the purpose of academic research.

• Some modifications were done to the interview design such as:

1. The cognitive mapping question was put earlier and its questions were reduced to only three

2. Some questions that respondents felt suspicious about in the pilot study were eliminated or rephrased.

3. The proposed duration of the interview were reduced to about 45 to 60 minutes.

After such modifications it was considered necessary to conduct another pilot interview with one travel intermediary to test the interview as the research instrument after modifications were done. The interview session was undertaken without any problem, it took around 55 minutes and the respondent was very welcoming and cooperative.
Appendix A-3: Phase one interview pattern after pilot study

The researcher prepared an interview guide in order to cover specific topics. The purpose of the interview is investigating the perceptions of travel intermediaries about safety and security in the Middle East. The interview would take place in the interviewee's (tour operator's or travel agent's) office in order to make him feel comfortable, the interview session would take approximately 45 to 60 minutes.

Interview Guide

Company Name:

Interviewee Name:

Interviewee Position:

42. How do you think travel agents/tour operators choose destinations they sell?

43. Put the attributes upon which travel agents/tour operators choose destinations they sell in order from the most to the least important. Arrange them according to their importance.

44. What destinations in the Middle East do you sell? Why?

45. In three words how do you describe the Middle East to any of your clients who intend to spend his vacation there?
46. Displaying a number of outline maps of Middle East to the interviewees and they will be asked to map their perceptions of the Middle East on them:

From the following map choose five destinations and rank them on the map from (1) "the most attractive to tourists" to (5) "the most unattractive to tourists".
From the following map choose five destinations and rank them on the map from (1) "the most you would recommend to your clients" to (5) "the most you would never recommend". WHY?
From the following map choose five destinations and rank them on the map from (1) "the most insecure" to (5) "the most secure". WHY?
From the following map choose five destinations and assign to them on the map the type of tourism that matches with it according to tourists' preferences.
47. How do you define safety of destinations?

48. According to what do you think tourists consider a place as unsafe?

49. From your experience what are the types of security lack that your clients could face in a destination?

50. Please rank the following cards of insecurity types according to their frequency in the Middle East from (1) “the most frequent” to (5) “the least frequent”.

- Theft [ ]
- Terrorist attacks [ ]
- Wars and political instability [ ]
- Natural crises [ ]
- Diseases [ ]

51. Please rank the following cards of insecurity types from (1) “the most deterrent to tourists” to (5) “the least deterrent to tourists”.

- Theft [ ]
- Terrorist attacks [ ]
- Wars and political instability [ ]
- Natural crises [ ]
- Diseases [ ]
52. Give examples of unsafe destinations you’ve directly experienced or heard of. How tourists reacted? How the destinations with the problem reacted.

53. Do you think that there are some tourists that worry about security issues more than others? Which types of tourists?


55. Do you think that the security image of some destinations may be negatively affected as a result of exaggerating media? Do you think it’s the case with the Middle East?

56. If the Middle East were a person you know

- What kind of relationship could you have with him

- How would you describe him?
Appendix A- 3- 1: Example of an interview with Egyptian travel intermediary

Company Name:

Interviewee Name:

Interviewee Position: Manager and head of the chamber of travel agents

1. Mention the criteria upon which you choose the destinations you sell?

It depends on what attracts customers, 70 to 80 % of the decision is based on the destinations attraction to customers

What about safety?

Safety is a prerequisite before taking any decision for example if a tourist would like to travel for a vacation in the M.E. in the time being, automatically he will exclude Israel, Iraq and Lebanon

2. What destinations in the Middle East do you sell? Why?

United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Egypt, these are secure and attractive destinations that are currently booming

3. Mention the first three words that come to your mind when you hear of the Middle East?

A very important tourist destination with lots of good potential

4. How do you describe the Middle East to your clients?

Important destination full of excitement
Displaying a number of outline maps of Middle East to the interviewees and they will be asked to map their perceptions of the Middle East on them:

5. From the following map choose five destinations and rank them on the map from (1) "the most attractive to tourists" to (5) "the most unattractive to tourists".

1. Egypt
2. Turkey
3. Dubai
4. Lebanon
5. Iraq

He asked if Turkey and Cyprus to be included
6. From the following map choose five destinations and rank them on the map from (1) "the most you would recommend to your clients" to (5) "the most you would never recommend". WHY?

1. Egypt for its heritage and recreation tourism
2. Turkey for its natural attraction
3. Cyprus
4. Dubai for quality tourism
5. Oman
7. From the following map choose five destinations and rank them on the map from (1) "the most insecure" to tourists to (5) "the most secure". WHY?

1. Iraq from because it heading the news these days
2. Lebanon after the assassination of El-Hariri
3. Israel
4. Egypt
5. Dubai
8. How do you define tourists’ safety in a destination?

There is a difference between safety and security as safety is the daily practices as cleanliness and hygiene which if they lack may cause illnesses, while security is any physical threat that may face the tourist such as terrorist attacks.

9. According to what do you think foreign tour operators consider a destination as unsafe?

According to any threat that deals with personal safety.

10. Do you think it is the frequency of the security problem or its severity that deter tourists the most away from a certain destination?

Severity I’d say, no one cares about a bit of theft and such, but terrorist attacks and war do not look good on travel details.

Given some cards the respondents are asked to rank the following insecurity types according to their frequency in the Middle East from (1) “the most frequent” to (5) “the least frequent”.

   a. Theft (5)
   b. Terrorist attacks (2)
   c. Wars and political instability (1)
   d. Natural crises (3)
   e. Diseases (4)
11. Given some cards the respondents are asked to rank the following insecurity types from (1) “the most deterrent to tourists” to (5) “the least deterrent to tourists”.

a. Theft (5)
b. Terrorist attacks (2)
c. Wars and political instability (1)
d. Natural crises (3)
e. Diseases (4)

12. Which types of tourists worry the most about security issues in a destination?
Mass travellers as they move in groups and consider themselves target

13. How does security image presented by media affect your recommendations to a certain destination?
Of course it has negative effect on both the travel intermediaries and tourists because at the end the tour operator would want to keep his positive image

14. If the Middle East were a person you know

a. What kind of relationship could you have with him
Marriage

b. How would you describe him
Beautiful but starving
Appendix A- 3- 2: Example of an interview with British travel intermediary

Company Name:

Interviewee Name:

Interviewee Position: Asst. Manager

15. Mention the criteria upon which you choose the destinations you sell?

We choose destinations with the highest demand from our customers, for example if we are talking about the Middle East Turkey and Egypt are demanded by a lot of our customers. (Interrupted by a phone call) he resumes: Of coarse destination safety is a very important issue that we put into consideration when selecting our destinations.

16. What destinations in the Middle East do you sell? Why?

We sell many destinations in the Middle East such as Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and Turkey; these destinations are attractive to lots of our customers and we sell also Saudi Arabia.

17. On the following map determine which countries do you think are part of the Middle East

Oh this is a difficult task, well let me try. I think it is the region that constitutes the countries of North Africa like Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt, and Asian Arab countries such as Jordan, Lebanon and the Gulf countries, together with Israel, Turkey and Iran.

18. Mention the first three words that come to your mind when you hear of the Middle East?
Full of Mystery

19. How do you describe the Middle East to your clients?

Again I will describe it as a place that is full of mystery. All the destinations we sell in the Middle East are exciting mysterious destinations that take you in a tour to the world of fantasy.

Displaying a number of outline maps of Middle East to the interviewees and they will be asked to map their perceptions of the Middle East on them:

20. From the following map choose five destinations and rank them on the map from (1) “the most attractive to tourists” to (5) “the most unattractive to tourists”.

1. Egypt  
2. Turkey  
3. Saudi Arabia  
4. Iran  
5. Israel

21. From the following map choose five destinations and rank them on the map from (1) “the most you would recommend to your clients” to (5) “the most you would never recommend”. WHY?

1. Egypt  
2. Turkey  
3. Morocco  
4. Israel  
5. Iraq
22. From the following map choose five destinations and rank them on the map from (1) "the most insecure" to tourists to (5) "the most secure". WHY?

1. Iraq; it is a very dangerous there
2. Israel also suffers insecurity problems due to the conflict with the Palestinians

After interrupted by a phone call, where were we ah yes after that comes; (3) Egypt, (4) Turkey, and (5) Morocco these are secure attractive destinations

23. How do you define tourists’ safety in a destination?

Safety in a destination means the absence of any security problem that could endanger the lives of tourists such as wars, terrorism, or natural crises.

24. According to what do you think tourists consider a destination as unsafe?

As I've just said destinations that experience war, terrorism, or natural crises such as earth quacks or hurricanes and of course diseases are considered unsafe.

25. Do you think it is the frequency of the security problem or its severity that deter tourists the most away from a certain destination?

Of course, severity of the problem discourage tourists from visiting the destination for a while after media has no more news about the problem, while in case of frequency of events such as what's going on in Israel the media keeps on following the news of the unrest and the terrorist attacks taking place there, which creates a long lasting image of insecurity and this makes tourists abandon the destination.
26. Given some cards the respondents are asked to rank the following insecurity types according to their frequency in the Middle East from (1) "the most frequent" to (5) "the least frequent".

   a. Theft (1)
   b. Terrorist attacks (3)
   c. Wars and political instability (4)
   d. Natural crises (5)
   e. Diseases (2)

27. Given some cards the respondents are asked to rank the following insecurity types from (1) "the most deterrent to tourists" to (5) "the least deterrent to tourists".

   a. Theft (5)
   b. Terrorist attacks (1)
   c. Wars and political instability (3)
   d. Natural crises (4)
   e. Diseases (2)

28. Which types of tourists worry the most about security issues in a destination?

   Of course some people worry more than others especially those travelling in groups as they are considered a target, and also families with children also worry very much about security in destination.

29. How does security image presented by media affect your recommendations to a certain destination?
Yes as most of people get their information from the media and it really sometimes makes a destination seems more dangerous than it is, like the case of the Middle East as the media always puts it in red light but if we really think that the destination is dangerous then we simply don't recommend it.

30. If the Middle East were a person you know

a. What kind of relationship could you have with him

A good steady reliable relation I think

b. How would you describe him

Mysterious but reliable
Appendix B-1: Phase two interview pattern

What kind of risk analysis do you do when choosing your destinations?

How dangerous do you think the Middle East is?

What were the effects of the attacks of Sharm el sheikh on your programmes?

Which nationalities were the first to cancel their trips and which did not?

What are your plans to restore Sharm el Sheikh’s image back?

What were the procedures you followed to secure your tourists?

Do you still sell Sharm el Sheikh?

When will you start putting it again in your programmes?

What indicators would make you start selling Sharm el sheikh again?

How long do you think it would take Sharm el sheikh to regain its previous security image?

What other destinations you sell in Egypt? How were they affected by the attacks?

How were the rest of Middle East destinations affected by Sharm el sheikh attacks?

What kind of destination risk management plans will you adopt in the future?