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Crisis in the city? A systematic literature review of crises and tourism cities

Tourism destinations are prone to crises and disasters that can cause significant loss and damage, with cities even more exposed to such events due to their complex nature. This was evidenced by the current coronavirus pandemic that had a devastating impact for many city destinations. Yet, this is an area of research that has attracted little attention from academics until recently. This study provides an in-depth systematic review of the research published to date on crises in tourism cities and discusses how this field has evolved over the years. The findings show that while there is a healthy amount of literature on crises in cities and a consistent body of knowledge on tourism crises, cities are somewhat overlooked in the context of tourism crises. Several other imbalances are highlighted regarding the type of crises discussed, regions studied, research methods employed, and topics discussed. Finally, several avenues for future research are proposed.

Keywords: crises in cities; tourism cities; tourism crises; crisis management; systematic review

1. Introduction

At the time of writing, the world was facing the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression (IMF, 2020), as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that affected destinations and countries worldwide. Many destinations, in particular large cities, had been in a total lockdown or under travel restrictions for many months, with the tourism industry being one of the most affected sectors. As a result, destinations worldwide were struggling to survive, with the number of international visitors seeing a sharp decline in 2020 when compared with the previous year (UNWTO, 2021).

Destinations are indeed vulnerable to many natural and man-made hazards, as well as other external factors such as political and economic instability (Agustan & Kausar, 2019; Çakar, 2018). These environments have been affected by many crises and

disasters (Luo & Zhai, 2017; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019), with such events usually having serious consequences for tourism development in the affected areas, or even for the economy as a whole in those countries or regions that rely heavily on tourism (Aliperti et al., 2019). Still, tourism academics have started to research the topic relatively recently, with most of the studies that discuss crises in destinations published after 2000 (Aliperti et al., 2019). Among these, Faulkner's (2001) framework for tourism disaster management is considered an important study that ignited interest in this area of research.

Scholars tend to define tourism crises from different perspectives, such as in relation to the effects of low-probability events on the tourism industry in a destination (Mair et al., 2016), events that can be either external or directly linked to the tourism industry (Aliperti et al., 2019), and focusing on the managerial actions required as a result of such events (Beirman, 2020). A comprehensive definition for tourism crises is given by Sönmez and Allen (1994, p. 22), who state that a crisis is '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'. Although the terms crises and disasters are sometimes used interchangeably, researchers note that there is a difference between the two concepts, corresponding to the nature of the cause of the event – whether this is internal or external to an organization (Çakar, 2018; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019).

The effects of crises on destinations vary depending on the magnitude of such events, their scale and nature (Backer & Ritchie, 2017), with the recovery period lasting from short term, in the case of terrorist attacks for example, to years, in the case of earthquakes that may affect a region's infrastructure and cause other damage (Ritchie &

Jiang, 2019). Additional complications may arise from the media coverage of crises (Green et al., 2004) and the secondary crisis communication through social media (Luo & Zhai, 2017). These tend to contribute to creating a negative image of a destination, resulting in declining visitor numbers and reduced income in the area in the short term. Therefore, considering the high level of uncertainty following such events, their complex nature, and the damage they may cause, specific strategies are needed to prepare organizations and destinations to deal with them effectively (Çakar, 2018; Henderson, 1999). Yet, researchers have found that many organizations and destinations are not well prepared for crisis situations (Speakman & Sharpley, 2012) and this was visible during the current pandemic.

To date, while a few review papers have been published about tourism crises and disasters (Hall, 2010; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019), no review studies were found to focus specifically on tourism cities and crises. This is a significant gap, considering that cities, and in particular world tourism cities (Maitland & Newman, 2009; Maxim, 2019) are exposed to many potential crises and disasters (Agustan & Kausar, 2019; Ng & Hills, 2003) due to their complex nature, high inter-connectivity, and diversity (Pearce, 2001, 2011). The lack of studies on this topic may be explained by the lack of attention received previously by urban tourism in general (Ashworth, 1989; Ashworth & Page, 2011), a field of study that has attracted an increased interest over the past decade (Maxim, 2021). Nevertheless, tourism cities need to prepare for several different types of crises and disasters (Agustan & Kausar, 2019) that may be caused by economic (González-Pérez et al., 2020; Lim & Won, 2020) or political instability (Türkcan & Öztürk, 2019), terrorism (Cassinger et al., 2018; Litvin & Alderson, 2003), natural disasters (Faisal et al., 2020b), and pandemics (Qiu et al., 2020), to name only a few.

Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by providing an in-depth systematic review of the research published so far on the topic of crises in tourism cities and how this field has evolved, by identifying and discussing the emerging research themes and trends. As a secondary aim, the research also intends to provide a comparison between the studies focused on crises in cities in general and those that are specifically looking at crises in tourism cities, and highlight similarities and differences between these two areas of research. It thus contributes to the wider literature on crises, by offering an insight into the evolution of this relatively new field of study – crises in tourism cities, and identifying avenues for future research.

The first step is to introduce the significance of the topic and highlight the gap in the current literature. Then, there is an overview of the research methods employed and the data collection strategies adopted to identify the relevant articles for the systematic literature review. The main findings are then presented, followed by a discussion that leads to several conclusions. Limitations are noted together with suggestions for future research directions.

2. Methodology

A systematic literature review was conducted to identify and synthesize the studies published so far in the field of crises in tourism cities. Content analysis was then carried out on those research studies focused on tourism, to identify the main topics and how these had evolved. This provided new insights for the tourism crisis literature in the context of cities.

For the systematic literature review, the five-step process employed by Yang et al (2017a) was followed. This method that was initially proposed by Pickering and Byrne (2014), “has been commended for its ability to minimise bias in its assessments of different combinations of locations, topics, subject matters and variables” (Khoo-

Lattimore et al., 2019, p. 1537). The process began by establishing the aim of this review and the research questions, followed by decisions on the search terms and databases to be used, and the literature selection criteria. Next, a search of the databases was carried out, followed by result screening and fine-tuning of the selection criteria. Subsequently, a decision was made on the data results to be included in the summary table, with the last step dedicated to analysing the findings.

Initially, the intention was to focus on crises in world (global) tourism cities, yet after an initial search of the main databases (i.e., Scopus, ScienceDirect, EBSCO, ProQuest and SAGE), it became apparent that only about a dozen studies discussed crises in such environments. This was a surprising finding since world cities are important settings for tourism (Maxim, 2019), and are environments that are vulnerable to ecological, social and developmental issues (Ng & Hills, 2003). Therefore, it was decided to expand the search and examine crises in tourism cities in general. The search strings used to scan the titles, abstracts and keywords were: 'world tourism city' AND 'crisis'; 'world city' AND 'crisis'; 'global city' AND 'crisis'; 'tourism city' AND 'crisis'; 'urban tourism' AND 'crisis'; and 'cities' AND 'crisis'. As the last string, referring to cities and crises returned more than 8,800 results on the Scopus database, a decision was made to consider only the 200 most cited items for this search. To identify more articles focused on tourism, additional searches were conducted using the term 'disaster' in combination with 'tourism city' and 'urban tourism', as even though the two concepts are different, they are often used interchangeably (Henderson & Ng, 2004; Ritchie & Campiranon, 2015). As the number of studies on crises in cities that focus on tourism was still relatively small (54), a decision was made to also include in the analysis those papers found to look at crises in cities in general and compare the results.

The first searches were carried out using the Scopus database as it is deemed to be 'the most powerful' of the relevant databases in the field (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019, p. 1537), returning indeed most of the items that were selected for the synthesis – 179. Further searches were conducted through four other databases: ScienceDirect – returned 18 new relevant results; EBSCO – returned 14 new results; ProQuest – returned 8 new results; and finally SAGE, with 2 new results. After consulting the reference list of the relevant papers, another 18 items were added to the analysis. In total, 239 articles were considered for a more in-depth assessment of their eligibility. Following this assessment, 30 items were removed from the list, as they were either published in other languages, not available in full, not relevant to the topic, or were books or book reviews (see Figure 1 for a summary of the process adopted for the systematic literature review). All the searches noted were conducted in April and May 2020.

<insert Figure 1 here>

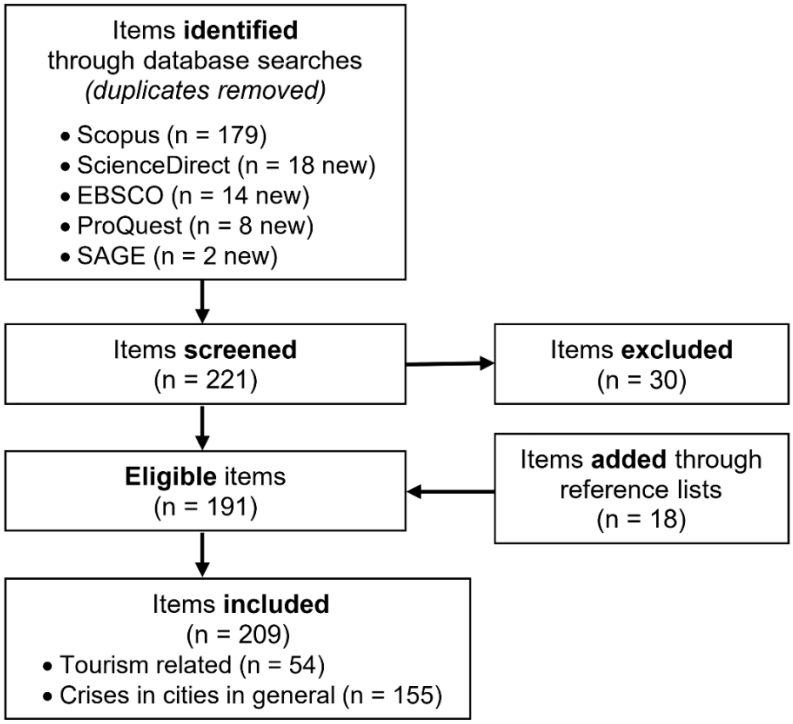

Figure 1. Summary of the process for systematic literature review.

Finally, 209 articles with a focus on crises and disasters in cities were included in the analysis. 43 of these focused specifically on tourism, while for another 11, although tourism was not their focus, it did represent an important topic in the studies. The remaining 155 papers discussed crises in cities in general. The reason for keeping both tourism-related papers (54 in total), as well as those with a focus on crises in cities in general (not related to tourism) was that it offered an opportunity to compare the findings and identify potential similarities and differences between the two research contexts.

Next, a decision was made about the data to be extracted from each article included, considering the aims and research questions (Mair et al., 2016). The following data were deemed relevant and were collected: journal field of study, year of publication, type of crisis discussed, cities studied, and methodologies employed.

The robustness of the analysis was demonstrated based on several criteria, including the quality and quantity of the selected items, and the transparency of the process adopted for the systematic literature review (Mair et al., 2016; Yang et al., 2017b). In addition, the studies included were identified through searches via recognised databases, such as Scopus, and are published in peer-reviewed academic journals, which are deemed to be credible sources (Yang et al., 2017b).

As this research is focused on tourism, for the second part of the analysis it was decided to look mainly at the 54 tourism-related articles that discuss crises in cities. The content analysis was performed in two stages. First, a specialized software program (VOSviewer) was used to scrutinize the keywords and abstracts of the 54 articles and visualize the network of most frequent words and themes. Word frequency analysis is a useful technique to identify research ‘hotspots’ and to better understand the development trends in a field of study (Meng et al., 2020). It also helps group different

words or concepts into clusters based on their proximity and visualize the relationships among them. Second, following the approach adopted by Ritchie and Jiang (2019), the entire text of the tourism-related papers was scrutinized manually and the main topics identified were listed under the three broad stages of crisis management – i.e., preparedness and planning; response and recovery; and resolution and reflection.

3. Findings

3.1 Field of study and year of publication

Over half (55.5%) of the 54 articles discussing crises in tourism cities were published in tourism journals (Table 1), while most of the remaining tourism-related articles were published in journals in the fields of urban studies (13%), social sciences (6%), multidisciplinary studies (6%), and geography (4%).

<insert Table 1 here>

For the remaining 155 articles on crises in cities in general, besides urban studies (24%), geography (18%) and multidisciplinary studies (11%), they also covered fields such as planning (5%) and health and medicine (5%). Figure 2 presents a list of the most popular fields of study covered by the articles analysed.

<insert Figure 2 here>

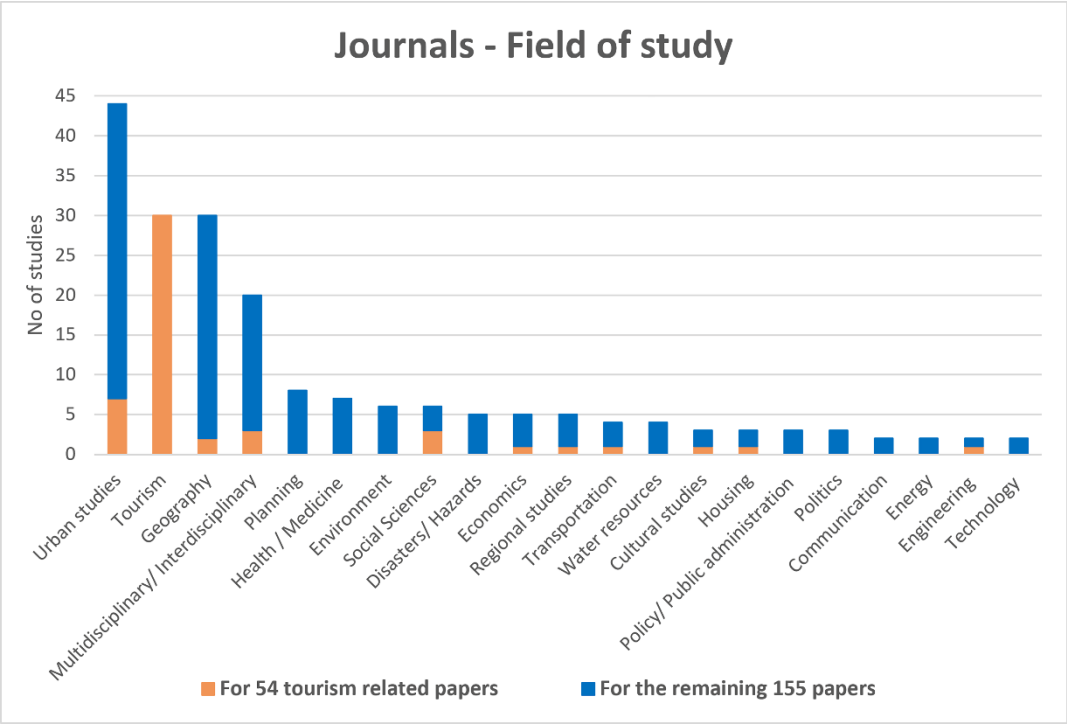

Figure 2. Most popular fields of study covered.

In terms of the years of publication, the first article on crises in tourism cities was published in 1999 (Henderson, 1999), while the first ones to discuss crises in cities in general were from the 1980s (Adedibu, 1988; Portes, 1989; Smith, 1982). This indicated that crises in relation to city tourism was a newer area of research, considering that research on crises in relation to tourism in general dated back to the 1970s (Hall, 2010) and that urban tourism studies emerged as a research area in the 1980s (Ashworth & Page, 2011).

The number of articles on crises in tourism cities published each year remained relatively low even after 2000 and started to show a clear increase only after 2015 (Figure 3). As such, most were published in the past ten years (59%), with 2019 showing a spike in articles on crises in cities (10% of the total and 20% of the tourism-related articles). It is expected that this trend will continue throughout 2020, with 17 articles (of which 10 were tourism-related) having already been published by May 2020, which represents about 8% (19%) of the total number of articles considered.

<insert Figure 3 here>

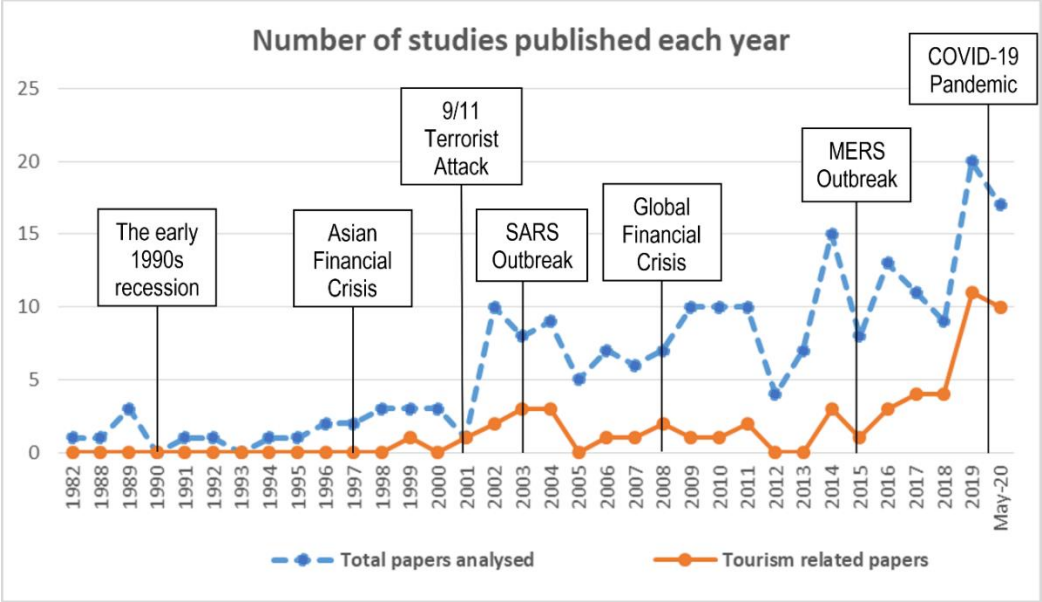

Figure 3. Articles published on an annual basis.

3.2 Crisis types

A total of 34 different types of crises were found across the full set of articles, with the tourism-related papers covering 13 of these (Figure 4). The types of crises considered most often were economic and financial (34%), followed by disasters with almost 16%.

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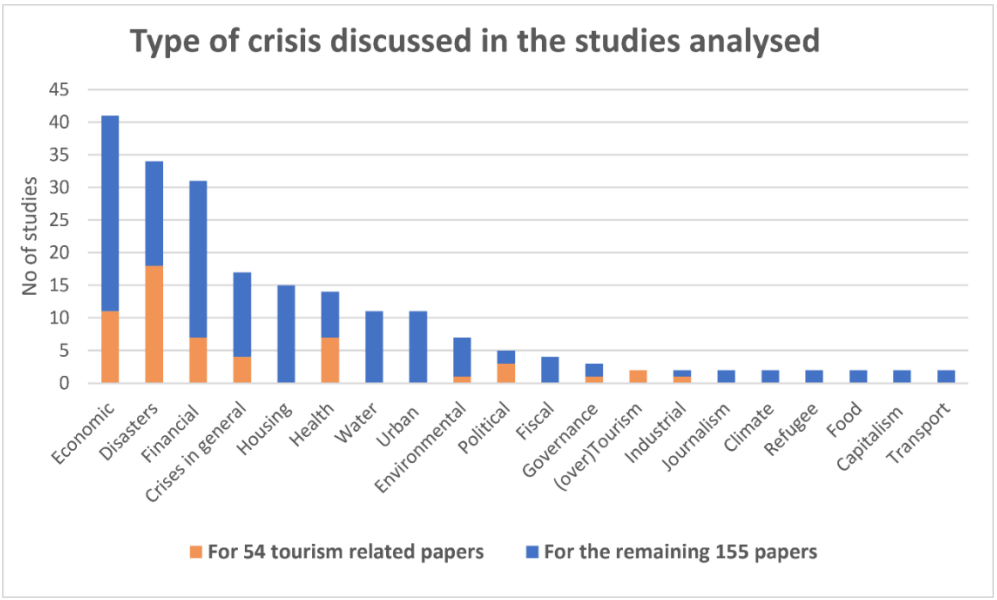

Figure 4. Top 20 types of crises (*some studies discuss more than one type of crisis*).

For the tourism-related articles, disasters – either natural (e.g., earthquakes, hurricanes, and tsunamis), human, (e.g., terrorism) or related to climate change, tended to be the most frequently researched, accounting for a third (33%) of these papers. This is in line with previous work (Hall, 2010) which highlights the considerable attention given in tourism studies to natural and human disasters due to the serious impacts that such events cause in destinations. Economic (20%) and financial crises (13%) were the next two types of crises most researched in the tourism-related articles. Therefore, there appears to be an imbalance in attention, with two-thirds researching either disasters or economic and financial crises, while only a third discussed other types of crises affecting tourism cities, such as heath, political and environmental.

It was surprising to see that none of the tourism studies included in the analysis were found to address the water or climate crises in cities for example, keeping in mind the importance of climate change debates in urban environments (Koop & van Leeuwen, 2017), and the competing demands for water resources and the acute water scarcity faced by some cities (Bischoff-Mattson et al., 2020). These findings support previous research conducted by Hall (2010), who looked at crisis events in tourism and found that most of the studies dealt with economic and financial crises, while few addressed environment-related crises. Considering that sustainability is a major issue for tourism (Hall et al., 2015), and particularly for large tourism cities (Maxim, 2016), it is surprising to see that little progress has been made over the past ten years in researching environmental-related crises in the urban tourism context.

3.3 Cities and regions studied

The accumulated research literature covered a variety of cities from different regions. A total of 107 cities were considered across the full set of studies, with the tourism-related papers based on 42 of them (Table 2). The most researched cities overall were New

York (19), London (15), Hong Kong (15), and Singapore (10), while the remainder were each reviewed by three or four studies at most. For the tourism-related works, most of the cities were studied once, with seven of them considered by two or three different articles (i.e., Antalya, Las Vegas, New York, Singapore, Palma, Christchurch, and Johannesburg), and Hong Kong was discussed in six papers. The majority (55% of all articles and 57% of the tourism related) were world cities or capital cities; 29% (26% for tourism related papers) were large cities, while 16% (17% for tourism related papers) were medium-size or small cities.

<insert Table 2 here>

Regarding the regions covered, Europe was the most represented with 24% of all the articles (33% of the tourism related ones) and 32% of the cities studied (36% in the case of tourism related articles). Asia and North America were second and third, with 24% and 22% respectively (28% and 18% of tourism related studies). Therefore, about three-quarters of the research was focused on those three regions, with the rest of the world receiving little attention from academics studying crises in cities. The regions least researched in terms of crises in (tourism) cities were the Middle East, and South and Central America.

There was not a significant variation when comparing the findings for the total and the tourism-related articles when considering the number of cities researched for each region (Figure 5.a. and 5.b.), and the number of articles with a focus on cities from specific regions (Figure 5.c. and 5.d.). One notable difference was that North American cities were slightly more represented in the studies of crises in cities in general, while Europe was better represented in the tourism-related research.

<insert Figure 5 here>

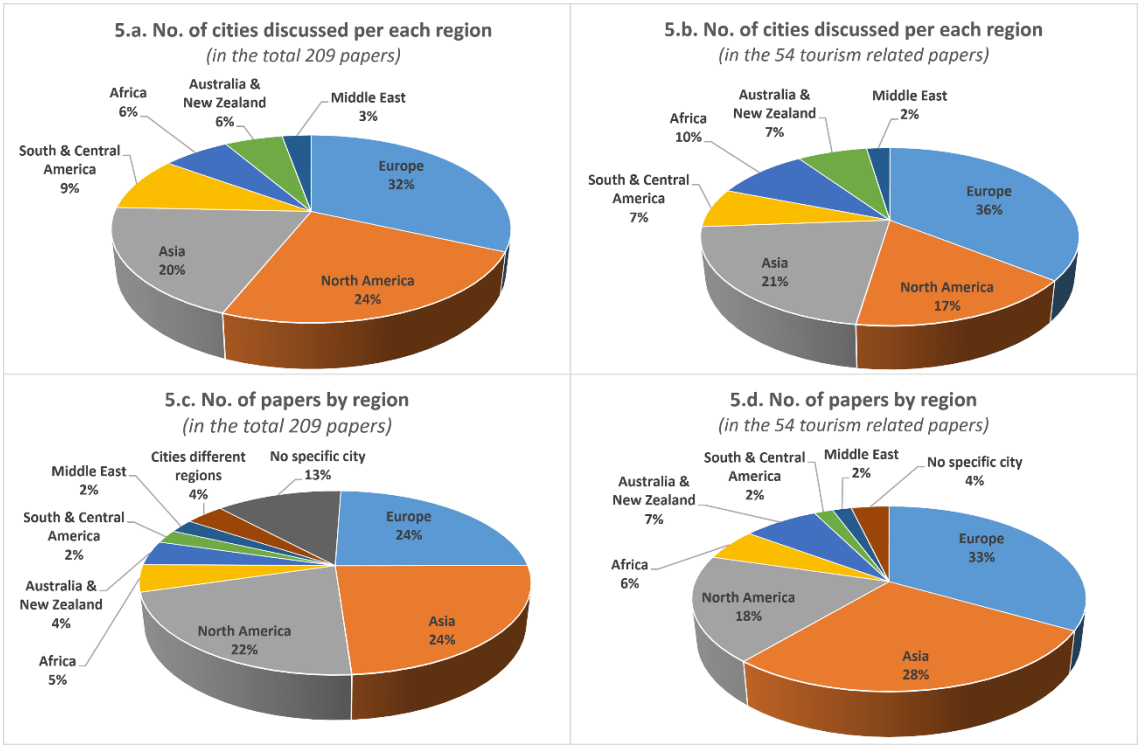

Figure 5. Number of cities and articles focused on specific regions.

3.4 Research methods and approaches

Most tourism-related articles used qualitative (54%) or quantitative (35%) methods, with only four studies adopting a mixed method approach (Table 3). Most of the remaining items on crises in cities in general, adopted qualitative approaches (60%), with only 22% using quantitative methods and 5% mixed methods. Case study was the most employed research approach for tourism-related (30%) and the rest of the studies included in this review (26%). The proportion that did not mention any methodology was much lower for tourism-related studies (about 4%), than for the other articles (nearly 13%).

<insert Table 3 here>

3.5 Content analysis

The content analysis was done on the 54 tourism-related studies and determined the main themes and concepts, firstly by analysing the keywords and abstract co-occurrence networks using the VOSviewer software, and then by manually scrutinizing the full text of the articles.

Co-occurrence analysis

An analysis of the keyword co-occurrence was performed for the tourism-related studies. The number of occurrences for the five most popular terms around which the clusters formed was relatively small, with seven occurrences recorded for 'tourism' and a total link strength (TLS) of 12, followed by 'crisis management' with seven occurrences and a TLS of 7, 'urban tourism' – six occurrences and a TLS of 7, and 'disaster' and 'gentrification', each with at least four occurrences and a TLS of 7. The total link strength represents the cumulative strength of the links (connections) of an item with other items.

The co-occurrence analysis was then carried out for the abstracts of the tourism-related research, using a minimum term for co-occurrences of three. Five clusters were identified (Figure 6) – 'city' (27 occurrences and 155 TLS), 'tourism' (25 occurrences and 161 TLS), 'crisis' (25 occurrences and 145 TLS), 'strategy' (15 occurrences and 92 TLS), and 'development' (11 occurrences and 77 TLS). The cluster around the term 'city' related to themes such as economy, gentrification, economic crisis and financial crisis (the two types of crises most researched in the tourism papers considered), while the cluster for 'tourism' corresponded to aspects such as visitors, demand and policies. The cluster around 'crises' – the largest cluster of all five – included sub-themes such as disease, impact, crisis management and resilience, plus the names of a few destinations

(e.g., Hong Kong and Antalya, which were the two most researched cities). The cluster around ‘strategy’ related to aspects such as uncertainty, challenges, disasters, climate change, management, frameworks, and response, while ‘development’ brought together themes such as risk, community, culture, stakeholders, and urban tourism.

<insert Figure 6 here>

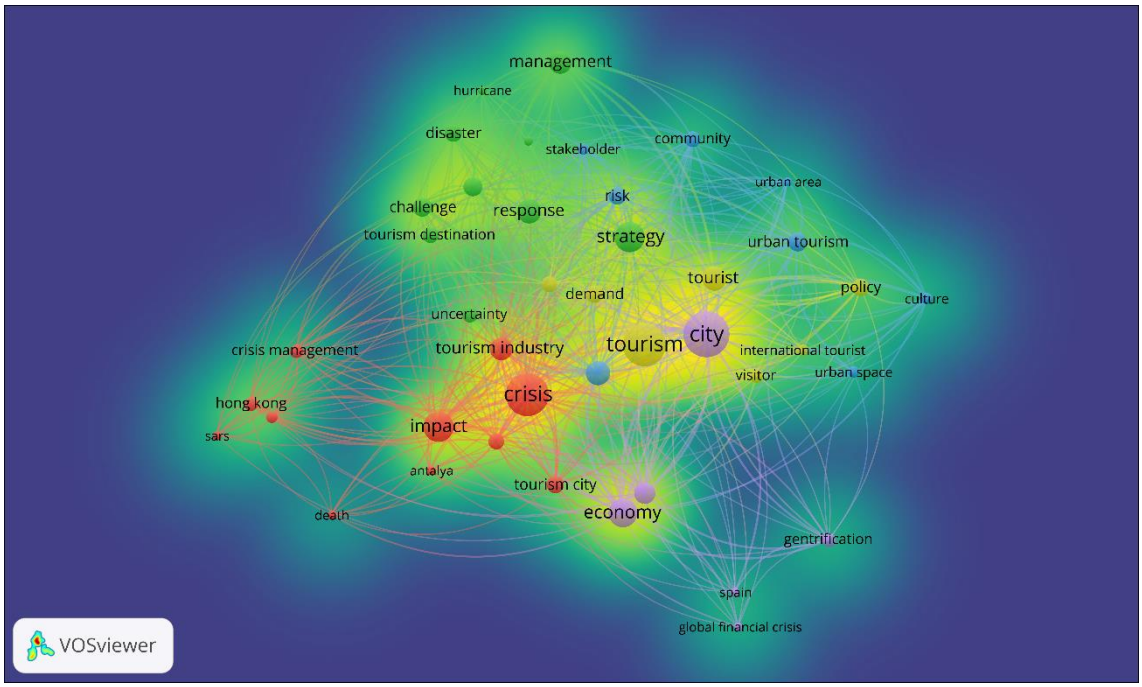

Figure 6. Abstracts word co-occurrence network.

Main topics discussed

The topics covered in the 54 tourism-related articles were then analysed following the approach adopted by Ritchie and Jiang (2019) in their review paper about research on tourism risk, crisis and disaster management. Thus, the main topics discussed were listed under the three broad management stages of crises and disasters: preparedness and planning; response and recovery; resolution and reflection (Table 4).

<insert Table 4 here>

The most researched stage of tourism crisis management was found to be response and recovery, with limited research published on preparedness and planning, and a few studies on resolution and reflection. These findings are similar to those identified by Ritchie and Jiang (2019), who showed that the lack of research on certain stages of crisis management is not only present in the literature on crises in tourism cities, but also applies to the works published on tourism crises in general.

The first stage – preparedness and planning - covered aspects related to stakeholder collaboration and cooperation (Çakar, 2018), crisis management plans and strategies (Agustan & Kausar, 2019; Chan, 2011; Orchiston & Higham, 2016), risk reduction related topics (Agustan & Kausar, 2019; Arce et al., 2017; Córdoba Azcárate, 2019; Qiu et al., 2020), and crisis learning (Orchiston & Higham, 2016). The last stage – resolution and reflection, included topics related to lessons learned by organizations (Henderson, 1999; Ladkin et al., 2008; Tse et al., 2006), and knowledge management (Faisal et al., 2020a).

The most researched stage of crisis management – response and recovery – dealt with topics related to destination governance (Musavengane et al., 2020; Robins, 2002), policy change (Amore & Hall, 2017; Hope & Klemm, 2001), innovation (Bowman, 2015), adaptation strategies (Torabi et al., 2018), and spatial reconstruction (Lestegás, 2019). Another subgroup of studies focused on improving the image of destinations (Avraham, 2004; Drache & Clifton, 2008) and recovery marketing using different strategies (Chacko & Marcell, 2008; Kwon et al., 2020; Ladkin et al., 2008; Orchiston & Higham, 2016). The remaining studies discussed other topics such as key stakeholders' responses to crises and disasters (Amore & Hall, 2017; Chien & Law, 2003; Faisal et al., 2020b; Green et al., 2004), firm survival (Türkcan & Öztürk, 2019), disruption costs (Heberlig et al., 2016), and risk distribution (Lim & Won, 2020).

When considering how this field of study has evolved, the earliest studies published in the field of crises in tourism cities covered areas such as impacts of crises on different tourism sectors (Chien & Law, 2003; Henderson, 1999), policy changes and governance (Hope & Klemm, 2001; Robins, 2002), crisis management (Litvin & Alderson, 2003), responses to crises (Green et al., 2004; Henderson & Ng, 2004; Stafford et al., 2002), and marketing strategies (Avraham, 2004), with research on other topics emerging mostly after 2015.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

Tourism was formerly promoted by many organizations, governments and scholars as a fast-growing industry that was relatively resilient in the face of crisis (Hall, 2010). Yet, as seen over the past decades and after the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), it is an industry that is prone to major crises and disasters that can cause significant loss and damage (Aliperti et al., 2019; Gössling et al., 2020; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019). Large cities, in particular, are considered to be more vulnerable to such events (Agustan & Kausar, 2019) due to their complex nature and characteristics. Therefore, some would expect that crises in tourism cities to be a well-researched topic, considering the significance of urban areas as tourism destinations (Ashworth & Page, 2011; Maxim, 2019). Yet, one of the important findings is the imbalance in attention received by urban destinations when studying tourism crises. While there is a healthy amount of literature on crises in cities (Fujita, 2013; Knieling & Othengrafen, 2015; May, 2017) and a consistent body of knowledge on tourism crises (Aliperti et al., 2019; Gössling et al., 2020; Hall, 2010; Mair et al., 2016; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019), cities are overlooked in the context of tourism crises. This reminds us of a double neglect in the study of urban tourism highlighted by Ashworth (1989, 2003) and later by Ashworth and Page (2011). In this case, it could be said that those scholars who researched tourism crises have neglected cities, while those

who studied crises in cities have neglected tourism crises. This was not the only imbalance observed, with this field of study presenting other significant gaps.

As noted, the systematic review revealed that there was a lack of focus on cities in the literature on tourism crises, with only a few studies published each year on this topic for the past two decades. The last few years where the exception, with the topic starting to gain more traction with researchers (e.g., Cassinger et al., 2018; Córdoba Azcárate, 2019; Faisal et al., 2020a, 2020b; González-Pérez, 2020; Musavengane et al., 2020; Qiu et al., 2020; U & So, 2020). This trend is expected to continue with more studies emerging on this topic as a result of the devastating effects of the current pandemic on tourism cities and the tourism sector in general (UNWTO, 2021).

The crises that attracted the most attention were those in major global cities such as Hong Kong (Chien & Law, 2003; Luo & Zhai, 2017; Qiu et al., 2020; Siu & Wong, 2004; Tse et al., 2006; U & So, 2020), Antalya (Çakar, 2018; Terhorst & Erkuş-Öztürk, 2019; Türkcan & Öztürk, 2019), Singapore (Henderson, 1999; Henderson & Ng, 2004), and New York (Bian & Wilmot, 2019; Green et al., 2004). This may be explained by the important role played by these cities in the global economy and their complex nature (Maxim, 2016), which contribute to their vulnerability in the face of crisis events. Still, global cities are not the only environments that are affected by tourism crises, and therefore future research should focus on other types of city destinations to see if they present a different perspective.

Another important finding is that most of the studies published on tourism crises in cities are focused on economic and financial crises and disasters, with little attention given to other types of crises. Environmental and housing crises are two notable omissions, considering that many cities face environmental issues that impact on tourism, as well as the negative effects of tourism on the environment (Ehigiamusoe,

2020; Zeng et al., 2021), and that tourism development and short-term rental platforms such as Airbnb are blamed in many cities for housing shortages and price rises, for example Balampanidis et al.(2019) on the case of Athens, Garcia-López et al. (2020) on the case of Barcelona, and González-Pérez (2020) on the case of Palma in Majorca.

When looking at the geographical representation of the research published to date on tourism crises in cities, it was seen that the Western world attracted most of the attention, with two regions (Europe and North America) accounting for over 50% of these studies. Asia also attracted significant attention, reflecting the growth of tourism cities in this region (Hall & Page, 2016; Postma et al., 2017). Few studies looked at tourism crises in cities from other global regions, although some of those regions are facing many crises and disasters [e.g., Australia on natural disasters (Handmer et al., 2018; Walters et al., 2015) and Africa on water shortage (Bischoff-Mattson et al., 2020)].

Another imbalance observed is related to the types of research approaches adopted by the studies considered, with most of them employing qualitative methods, with the most popular being the case study approach. In addition, a lack of conceptual studies or papers that engaged with theories was noted, and few studies adopted a mixed method approach. These findings support those of a study conducted by Ritchie and Jiang (2019) on tourism risks, crises and disasters, who identified three research gaps – a lack of conceptual and theoretical papers, a lack of empirical testing of models and theories, and an imbalance in the themes converged. All three of these gaps were also present in the current literature on tourism crises in cities.

Regarding the themes addressed in the tourism-related articles on crises in cities, there was a lack of attention to the preparedness and planning stage of crisis management, as well as on resolution and reflection, with most studies focusing on how

tourism cities reacted or recovered from crises. This has implications for policymakers and the industry, as there is little research to guide them on how to have a proactive approach and plan ahead, and thus help organizations respond to crises more effectively. Indeed, Ritchie and Jiang (2019) pointed out the lack of focus on crisis management plans and strategies at all levels in the tourism industry, which can have negative consequences, including staff layoffs and abandonment of new projects and marketing campaigns.

This research highlighted the limited research available on crises in tourism cities despite the important role played by city destinations and their vulnerability in the face of crisis events. It shows that this area of research started to attract more attention over the past few years, with the literature on this topic expected to expand in the near future due to the implications of the current coronavirus pandemic for city destinations. An important contribution is represented by the gaps identified in the literature through the systematic review conducted (with regard to the type of crises discussed, the regions studied, the type of research methods employed, and the topics discussed), which can help direct the future research agenda.

5. Limitations and future research directions

While efforts were made to identify all studies published in English on the topic of crises in cities that focus on tourism, for the studies that discussed crises in cities in general, only those that were picked up with the search strings mentioned earlier were included in the analysis. The authors acknowledge that there may be other tourism studies which discuss crises in cities that may have not been picked up as they may have not mentioned the term city or crisis in their titles, abstracts or among the keywords (e.g., studies that use the name of the city; studies on climate change and tourism cities that might not mention the term crisis; or studies on overtourism in cities that could be

seen as a crisis event). In addition, although there are no books that specifically focus on crises in tourism cities, there are several individual book chapters that address this topic but have not been included in the analysis (e.g., Laws et all, 2007; Morrison & Coca-Stefaniak, 2021; Pforr & Hosie, 2009; Ritchie & Campiranon, 2015). However, as several different databases were used for the searches, the articles included in the analysis are believed to constitute a representative sample for this field of research.

Future research directions should focus on how crises affect different types of tourism cities, in particular in the little researched regions of the Global South that is prone to many crises and disasters (Sou, 2015). This could help vulnerable destinations to better prepare to deal with such events. Another research agenda recommendation is for more types of crises to be studied, together with their implications for tourism cities, such as the environmental, water, housing, health and climate crises. In some cases, destinations are faced with multiple or recurrent crises (Hall, 2010), and it would be interesting to see how these crises interact with each other and what the implications are for policy makers.

Furthermore, future studies should aim to move from descriptive case studies towards more critical analysis that would help advance this field of study, which is still at an early stage (Mair et al., 2016). This could be achieved by employing more diverse research approaches, such as mixed methods, theoretical papers, and proposing and testing relevant quantitative models for crisis management in an urban tourism context.

Finally, more focus is needed on the preparedness and planning stages of crisis management, and on resolution and reflection, which are lacking both in the number of studies published in those areas, as well as the variety of topics discussed. Such studies have the potential to help and guide city destinations and the tourism industry to move

from a reactive approach to a more proactive mode in managing crises in tourist cities (Ritchie & Jiang, 2019).

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Table 1. Tourism journal distribution.

Journal	**No. of articles**	**Year of publication**
Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing	4	2018, 2008 (2), 2003
International Journal of Tourism Cities	3	2020, 2019, 2018
Tourism Management	3	2020, 2017, 2001
Annals of Tourism Research	2	2020, 2014
International Journal of Tourism Research	2	2016, 2004
International Journal of Hospitality Management	2	2006, 2003
Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism	1	2020
Tourism Geographies	1	2020
Tourism Management Perspectives	1	2020
Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research	1	2019
Journal of Destination Marketing & Management	1	2019
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	1	2019
Journal of Tourism History	1	2018
International Journal of Tourism Policy	1	2017
Current Issues in Tourism	1	2016
Rivista di Scienze del Turismo	1	2010
Tourismos	1	2007
Journal of Vacation Marketing	1	2003
Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly	1	2002
Journal of Travel Research	1	1999

Table 2. Number of cities by region.

Region	**All articles** (n = 209)	**%**	**Tourism articles** (n = 54)	**%**	**Non-tourism articles** (n = 155)	**%**
Europe	34	31.8	15	35.7	24	30.4
North America	26	24.3	7	16.7	23	29.1
Asia	21	19.6	9	21.4	15	19.0
South and Central America	10	9.3	3	7.1	7	8.9
Africa	7	6.5	4	9.5	4	5.1
Oceania (Australia and New Zealand)	6	5.6	3	7.1	3	3.8
Middle East	3	2.8	1	2.4	3	3.8
TOTAL	**107**	**100%**	**42**	**100%**	**79**	**100%**

Table 3. Research methods.

Research Methods	**All (n = 209)**		**Tourism-related (n = 54)**		**Non-tourism (n = 155)**	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Qualitative	122	58.4%	29	53.7%	93	60.0%
Case study	54		16		38	
General qualitative methods (e.g. *interviews, content analysis*)	40		11		29	
Conceptual study	19		1		18	
Theoretical	6				6	
Ethnographic study	3		1		2	
Quantitative	53	25.4%	19	35.2%	34	21.9%
Statistics	19		5		14	
Surveys	11		4		7	
Different models or theories	10		7		3	
Secondary data analysis	3		2		1	
Other methods (e.g., GIS, comparative analysis, web analysis)	10		1		9	
Mixed methods	12	5.7%	4	7.4%	8	5.2%
No methodology	22	10.5%	2	3.7%	20	12.9%
TOTAL	209	100%	54	100%	155	100%

Table 4. Topics for main stages of crisis management.

Stages	**Topics**
Preparedness and planning	- Stakeholder collaboration and cooperation - Crisis and disaster management plans and strategies - Forecasts for strategic planning - Disaster risk reduction - Risk communication strategies - Risk perception - Risk mapping/disaster mapping - Evacuation behaviour - Crisis learning
Response and recovery	- Destination governance/good governance - Changes in destination strategy - Innovation/ innovative institutions - Government challenges in managing public crisis - Tourism policy changes - Adaptation strategies - Role of agents, institutions, and systems - Local economy changes - Spatial reconstruction - New urban development model - Collaboration and communication - Recovery marketing strategies - New image/improving the image for destinations - Modification of the advertising message - Media Strategies in public crisis - Market repositioning - Redefining the key markets - Expansion of the drive market - Diversification of product - Diversifying visitor demand - Substitution effects between different forms of tourism - Shift in spending patterns - Key stakeholders' responses (e.g., public sector, industry, residents) - Transient behaviour - Entrepreneurial/firm survival - Disruption costs - Risk distribution
Resolution and reflection	- Crisis and disaster learning - Lessons learned by organizations - Knowledge management