Socio-political Unrest and Tourism Crisis in Hong Kong: A Critical Incident Approach

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Abstract

A review of world news headlines on the last half of 2019 revealed consistent unrest in Hong Kong. The Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Movement led to the decline of tourism in Hong Kong before the emergence of the COVID-19. Using the critical incident technique, we, adopted content analysis of news items on the protests timeline and travel warnings together with descriptive statistics of tourist arrivals, and tourism growth to assess tourism in Hong Kong. Due to the unrest, growth rate of Hong Kong's tourism dropped to -43.72% by the end of October 2019. The study suggests that tourism industry is sensitive to shocks of ongoing social unrest. Though is possible to forecast protest actions it is hard to foresee the verge of collapse of a system rocked by a slowly developing ongoing social crisis, affecting consumer confidence, which led tourism in Hong Kong to a near-total collapse before COVID-19 pandemic.

Introduction

Tourism activities have been affected by instability of all kinds and magnitudes. As put forward by Monterrubio (2017), crisis, in the context of tourism, has gained considerable attention over the past decades. However, Ghaderi, Mat Som, and Henderson (2012) argue that studies on crisis in tourism are heavily focused on economic implications. It is reflected in the glaring evidence that when crisis strikes the tourism industry, its consequences are felt not only by the industry but the entire economy of the affected country, as noted by Aliperti et al. (2019). The tourism industry has come under pressure, over the past few decades, as it is exposed to a myriad of vulnerabilities on a global scale (Aliperti et al., 2019; Pforr & Hosie, 2007). It is, nevertheless, agreed that crisis in business can be referred to as an incident that occurs unexpectedly and has the power to disrupt everyday operations, causing a significant change that requires action from managers in order to control the effects (Faulkner, 2001; Ghaderi et al., 2012; Laws & Prideaux, 2005).

According to Senbeto and Hon (2018), crisis refers to the botch within an internal environment that results in an immediate effect. The effect of crisis is adverse on tourism and its activities in destinations, evident in the number of tourist arrivals (Otoo & Kim, 2018), tourist expenditure (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria, 2014), destination image and tourists' travel behaviour (Li, Wen, & Ying, 2018; Senbeto & Hon, 2018). Extant literature shows that crisis has attracted considerable attention from scholars for a very long time (Hall, 2010). However, the greater part of this attention is given to crisis management while studies on nature and evolution have seen little attention (Cohen & Neal, 2010; Monterrubio, 2017; Otoo & Kim, 2018; Senbeto & Hon, 2018).

Several studies conducted on crises (e.g. Crotty, 2009; Khan, 2018; Li et al., 2018; Santana, 2004; Tang & Tan, 2013; Yau, 2019) are written on one-off crisis event but little is done on the on-going social crisis in a vibrant tourist destination like Hong Kong. It is, therefore, important to widen the scope of the theoretical perspective of the tourism crises through a study that informs the fundamental understanding of the on-going crisis and its effects on the tourism industry. Hong Kong, one of the top destinations in the fastest-growing tourism region in 2018

(UNWTO, 2019), has been recently hit by massive on-going social movement, that has affected the entire economy.

Social movement, as opined by Monterrubio (2017) and McGehee (2012), is a contemporary phenomenon that is created when individuals who share a common ideology, beliefs or interests act collectively to upshoot changes in the social, political or economic structures of society. These social movements sometimes result in ethnic, cultural, and social dispute which contravenes the laws of society. To this end, researchers have studied social protests and movements in the areas of socio-cultural relationships, resource assessment and management, psychology, politics, economy and gender (Jenness & Broad, 2017; Khan, 2018; Thomas et al., 2019). In tourism, however, the relationship between a social movement and tourism has often been studied from the direction where tourism influences and impacts on social movement and joint opposition (Glaesser, 2003; Kousis, 2000; Monterrubio, 2017) while the opposite direction is understudied. Therefore, the nature of socio-political movements is to be examined to help tourism managers understand and prepare adequately for subsequent events in the future since the effect on the tourism industry is pressing. Review of world news headlines over the past few months shows consistent unrest in Hong Kong by the Anti Extradition Law Amendment Movement. The present study, therefore, seeks to explore critical incidents of the Anti Extradition Law Amendment Movement and its disruptive implications on the tourism industry in Hong Kong in 2019 to answer the following research questions.

1. What are the critical incidents of the Anti Extradition Law Amendment Movement in Hong Kong?
2. What are the actions used by protesters during critical incidents?
3. What effects does the on-going Anti Extradition Law Amendment Movement have on Hong Kong's tourism industry?

Literature Review

Tourism and Crisis

A considerable number of crisis that affects tourism activities is noted as identifiable and predictable (Greening & Johnson, 1996; Hall, 2010a). Such events are usually predicted before-hand and measures are instituted by governments and businesses to tackle its adverse effect. However, some crisis events are spontaneous, dangerous and extraordinary and can disrupt tourism activities/services (Glaesser, 2003; Laws & Prideaux, 2005; Monterrubio, 2017). Tourism is not immune to any crisis but rather, sensitive to its effects (Luo & Zhai, 2017; Monterrubio, 2017; Santana, 2004) because international tourism arrivals, which provides a yardstick for national tourism planning, is sensitive to instabilities that are mostly economic, financial, or health-based as asserted by researchers (Ghaderi et al., 2012; Hall, 2010b; Otoo & Kim, 2018; Senbeto & Hon, 2018).

Crises are classified on several bases. These include the cobra and python classification of crises by Seymour and Moore (2000). To them, the cobra is the type of crisis that erupts suddenly, but the python type gradually surfaces. Other classifications have been done on the bases of the causes and also the scope and magnitude of the crisis (Ghaderi et al., 2012; Henderson, 2007; Laws & Prideaux, 2005). Tourism specific crisis classification is based on time pressure (potential crisis, latent crisis, and acute crisis). By this classification, tourism crises are elicited by internal and external factors (Glaesser, 2003) including politics and socio-

cultural interactions (Katsoni & Velander, 2017; Magoutas, Papadoudis, & Sfakianakis, 2018; Moradi & Paulet, 2019).

In recent years, social movements and protests, also known as a social uprising, have been noted to be a rising factor contributing to the occurrence of tourism crises (Earl, Soule, & John, 2003; Monterrubio, 2017). A social uprising in different forms has happened in leading destinations including France, Tunisia, Iran, Chile, Venezuela, and also in Hong Kong causing varying effects.

Social uprising

In tourism literature, the occurrence of crisis is increasingly gaining momentum from social uprising and political instability (Cohen & Neal, 2010; McGehee, 2012; Monterrubio, 2017). Social uprising or movement, as a human-induced event, has the potential to compete with natural disasters both in scope and in magnitude (Santana, 2004). This movement may aim at resisting change or inducing change. Leaders of such movements may regard themselves as elements of change or of resistance to change (McGehee, 2012). In an environment where there is social unrest, actors usually define clearly who their opponent(s) is or are. In the case of Hong Kong, the opponent was the government which they refer to as the "pro-Beijing".

Social uprising, for either change or against change, may come along with conflict in different forms including political conflict, cultural conflict, economic conflict, environmental resource conflict among others. Researchers have argued that social movements may manifest in protests with distinctive characteristics such as operating under solidarity and collective identity where there is mutual recognition in the form of apparel, hand signs/gestures, and slogans (Porta & Diani, 2006) or collective action and behavioural change (Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013) collective action on targets (Diani, 2004).

Again, social movements are mostly geared towards changing political representative systems, social policies and even altering the relationship between the public and the government or the authorities and the masses. Hence, actors work together to identify targets for collective action (Diani, 2004). During this movement, there is usually a display of radical action focused on significantly restructuring the relationship between the actors and the opponents. With this, a selection is made such that the protests or actions occur in places that are related to authority, places with high disruption potential and also places that have value (historically or symbolically) or places that are related to particular grievances and where the impact of the movement will be most visible. Such targeted action may even be towards tourism activities and businesses as in the case of Greece, Portugal and Spain (Kousis, 2000).

Moreover, social movements are usually noted to be characterised by a change in the behaviour of the people involved in the movement. According to Monterrubio (2017), in the event of a social movement, people change dramatically. Once ordinary civilized people become defiant, within their usual space of daily activities, and sometimes destroy public or private properties as a sign to register their displeasure. This change in behaviour is, however, considered normal within a movement. As such, when the actions of the movement are over, actors return to their usual behaviour. Other researchers also oppose this assertion by noting that some protest behaviour can lead to actions that conform to the norms of the existing society (Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013) though they still agree that most actions go contrary to the norms (Earl et al., 2003; Monterrubio, 2017). Besides, social movements are bonded by informal network systems. Actors in protests or social movements tend to communicate using social media (Luo & Zhai, 2017) for planning and sharing ideas. Social movement, therefore,

brings with them a common purpose and shared commitment as postulated by Diani (2004) and Monterrubio (2017). The communication or reportage related to crises is key to decision making among actors.

Research context

Hong Kong has grown to be one of the financial hubs of the Asian continent and one of the top destinations in the region (UNWTO, 2019). It has faced social problems in the past including the influx of pregnant Mainland Chinese women, the anti-parallel-trader movement and the occupy central movement (Yang, 2016) cited in Luo and Zhai (2017).

Recently, another social movement known as the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Movement struck Hong Kong and there is no doubt that this movement with a series of protests has disrupted the normal economic and social activities in Hong Kong including tourism. This movement is in a fight against an extradition bill proposed by the Hong Kong government. On April 3rd 2019, the Hong Kong government introduced the plan to change legislation that would permit for suspected criminals to be extradited to China. These amendments, from the viewpoint of the security authorities, would offer the security and the government extradition rights and privileges to other countries, including mainland China, beyond the 20 states with which Hong Kong already has treaties. This extradition bill proposed was, however, opposed by the citizens of Hong Kong and sparked an initial protest on the 9th of June. This brought about a lot of uneasiness in Hong Kong and triggered a social movement across the country, intended to stall the progress of passing the Extradition bill into law. According to major world media, the demands of the protesters spread to include a wider spectrum of demands to reform the democratic system of Hong Kong and also probe into alleged police brutality (Cheung & Hughes, 2019). The protest escalated into violent events marked with standoffs between the protesters and police that resulted in injuries and even death. Throughout this unexpected event, tourism has faced some disruptions.

The present study chose to focus on the most recent social movement in Hong Kong as a case because of the intertwined background it has with previous social movements and reveals multifaceted sentiments between Mainland China and Hong Kong. Secondly, it illustrates social movement actions, and how they affect tourism, which will give insight into the theoretical and practical assessment of the crises in tourism.

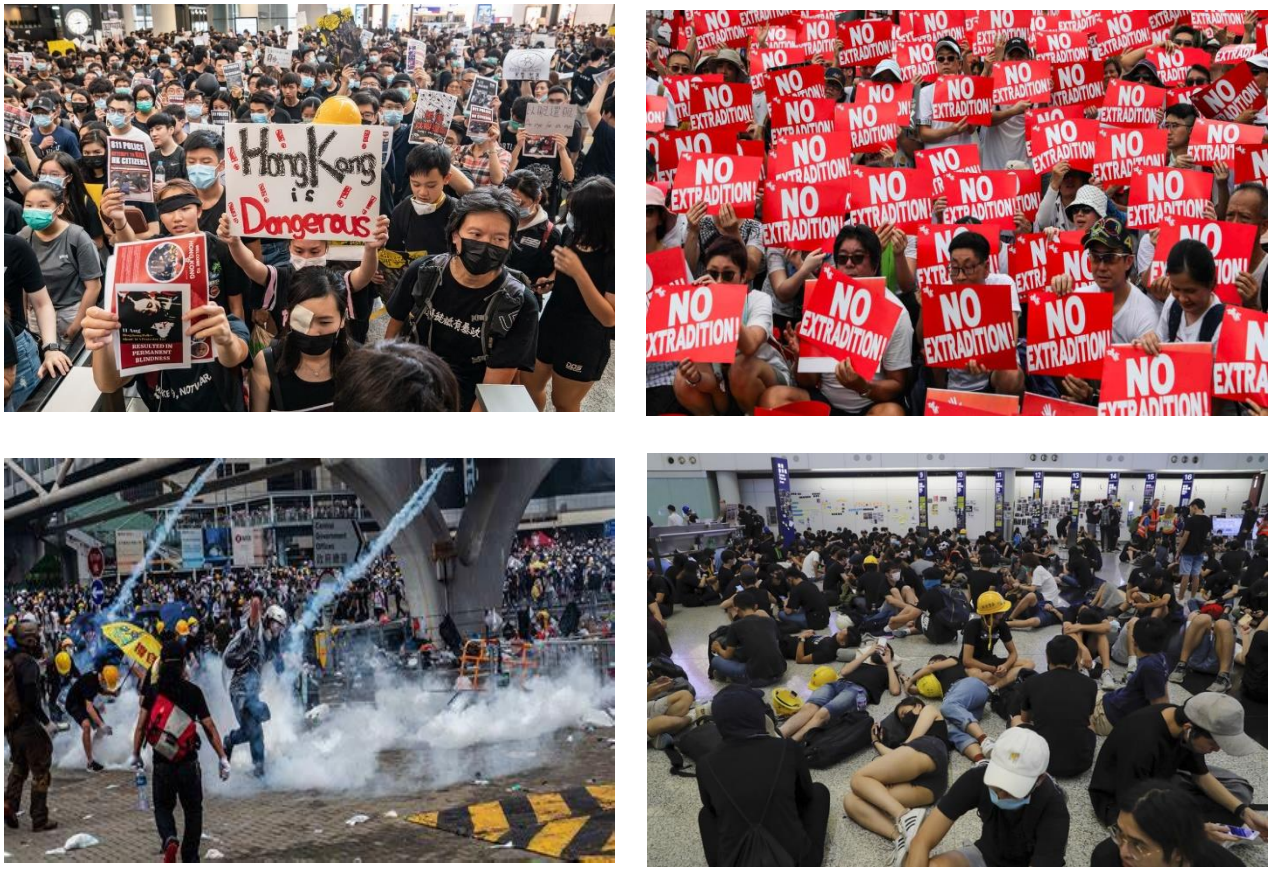

Plate1: Photos of selected events during protests in Hong Kong

Source: Bing images (2019)

Method

Reportage on the social movement from June to December 2019 was used as the data. The primary sources of data were the South China Morning Post (SCMP), Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), BBC, and the Reuters, as well as the official government websites of 12 top tourism markets to Hong Kong for tourism. These include the USA, Australia, and the United Kingdom. An electronic version of 292 news items on the social movement including government announcement and impacts on tourism were screened. A general search was done using the keywords *protest, social movement, and Hong Kong, Hotel, flight, visit(or), travel(ler), airline, tour(ist,ism), and airport* to generate reports released from 1st of June to 30th of December 2019 on the websites of the news agencies. In addition, travel warnings issued on official government websites were gleaned to complement the data.

Second, variables such as the composition of protesters, actions or activities of protesters, place of the protest, as well as how the government of Hong Kong responds to the situation were gleaned to serve as variables for discussion (Piven, Frances & Cloward, 1979). The use of news agencies, newspapers and other periodical reports, and online data is supported by previous researchers (e.g. Earl et al., 2003; Kousis, 2000; Park, Kim, & Choi, 2018). The analysis was done using the critical incident technique.

To obtain the variables used in this study, two independent individuals were asked to generate themes and variables from the unfolding news items. To gain common variables for a reliable explanation of concepts, a semantic feature was followed to generate common categories

named by the independent coders (e.g. the category of protest – violent and peaceful). For codes that were not agreed on by the two, a third party was invited to break the gridlock. No mathematical technique was employed in the study to generate correlation coefficient of reliability but reliance on the agreement of coding of independent coders based on the similarity of context. Then, based on the Critical Incident Technique the second analysis was conducted. Critical incident is defined as "a self-generated written narrative that has a social critique" (Akpovo, 2019, p. 148). This technique involves the generation of written narrative that includes the critical incidents, the crisis instance, turning points, and the responses of the Hong Kong government to the protests adopted to discover how the events happened, the activities and the effects on tourism (de Oliveira Dias & Aylmer, 2019). To comply with the methodological rigour, Flanagan's (1954) method of five stages was followed (Figure 1).

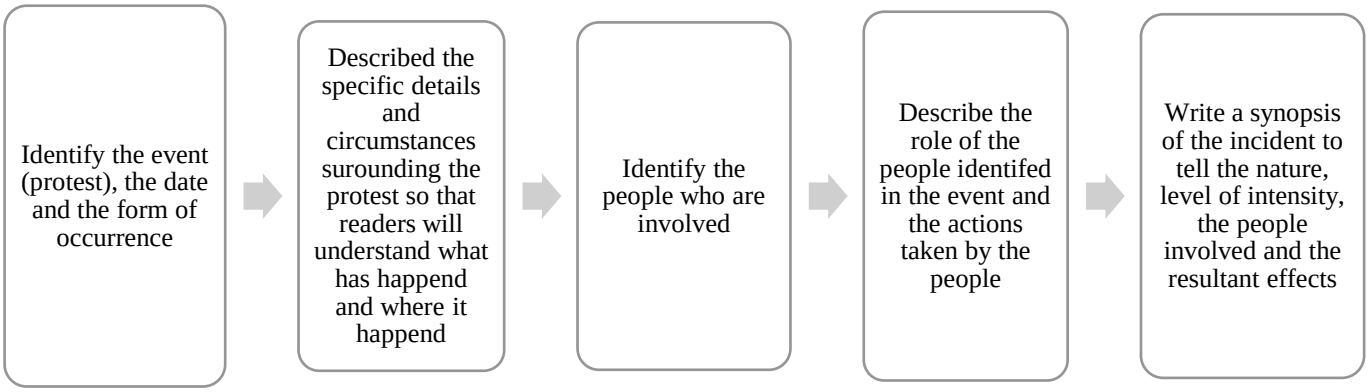

Figure 1: The five stages of Critical Incident Technique used in the study

In addition to the qualitative analysis, descriptive analyses were used to analyze the trends of hotel occupancy, tourist arrival and the tourism growth rate in Hong Kong to support the effects of the protest on the tourism industry.

Analysis and Findings

Evolution and forms of the Anti-Extradition Bill Movement

This protest began as a peaceful march in the early days of the protest until it changed forms over time through strikes and boycotts, into violent clashes throughout major districts in Hong Kong. The protest carried the main demand of withdrawing the amendment bill but it also evolved into five strong demands. About a million people took part in the first march as reported by major national and international media houses including CNN, BBC, SCMP, and Reuters (Cheung & Hughes, 2019; Robles, 2019).

As noted earlier, the protests were peaceful collective actions in the beginning but grew into intensified violent actions with multiple actors (protesters-police-residents-rival groups) throughout the period, explaining the collective nature of protests (Khazraee & Novak, 2018; Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013).

> *"We have to show solidarity and force the government to give us a response to the five basic demands. Even though the situation seems hopeless, we are not alone. The whole world is watching us."* (21-year-old) (SCMP, 2019).

As a result, others (including rival groups and residents) learned from their strategies and mobilized to fight back. This is explained by Bandura's, (2001) and LaMorte's (2019) notion of cognitive learning and application of actions. These protests, therefore, took several peaceful and violent forms through the 6 months. In all, 47 violent and 27 peaceful protests occurred. There were peaceful marches, strikes, sit-ins, and several roadblocks throughout Hong Kong which the police intervened to bring order. Roads were completely blocked, for several days, and rail tracks were partially blocked throughout the various districts. As well, the entrance to the international airport was blocked.

Violent incidents included the mid-night clashes on 9th June, vandalism of the legislative council complex on 1st July, protesters and police riot clash on the 14th of July, and Mong Kok and Wong Tai Sin police station attack clashes on 3rd and 4th August, violent attacks inside the international airport on 13th August, and the stand-off with riot police at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University campus on the 14th of November. These and other clashes resulted in injuries and even death. The violent incidents occasioned the use of tear gas and some level of force by the police. Protesters reacted to the tear gas with petrol bombs, brick, burning off some MTR stations and public buses.

The protest actions were able to exert serious pressure on economic activities and more specifically, on tourism businesses. The first 100 days of the protest saw a release of a mixed bag of violent and peaceful protests which created the stressed political system, causing the arrest of 6105 people. Sixteen major critical incidents occurred which affected tourism in Hong Kong (Table 1). The government responded to the first action with an announcement of the suspension of the extradition bill. The protesters gave a violent response, on 1st July and 5th August, with vandalism of MTR stations across Hong Kong and a general strike. Also, protesters invaded the international airport, occupying the main hall and blocking the entrance. This resulted in the disruption of transport systems and the cancellation of over 100 fights (RHTK, 2019). There was a disruptive effect of blockage of roads, rails and the entrance of the airport causing severe economic stress throughout the districts where workers were unable to go to work. Many industries were affected including construction, tourism, food services, and transport.

These disruptions brought about counter-protests from residents and some other groups labelled as *pro-Beijing* against the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Movement. This was meant to force the protesters to stop their actions. However, on 1st September, roads leading to the airport were blocked. Impeeding travel to and from the airport. The government responded on 4th September with an announcement of the formal withdrawal of the extradition bill, hoping to end the chaos which was gradually crumbling the government machinery. Fights broke out on streets and in shopping malls with police and suspected pro-Beijing individuals/groups on 15th September and also on 1st October as a response to the announcement.

The pattern of actions changed when the government threatened to invoke a ban on the used of face mask and the suspension of MTR services. Violence intensified as the threat-based repression failed, even though the bill was formally withdrawn. Shops with affiliation to China were vandalised on 13th October. In November, the focus shifted and universities were vandalised on the 8th and the takeover was made on 12th. The violence led to physical fights and shooting on the 11th and 13th of November causing injuries, fear, panic and death of 2 individuals. In December, pockets of unrests were recorded leading to arrests of suspects.

Table 1: Critical incidents of Anti Extradition Law Amendment Movement

Critical Incident	Date	Category	Form of action	Government Response
First clash	June 9	Peaceful	March through principal streets	
	June 15			Announcement of suspension of extradition bill
Legco Storming	July 1	Violent	Storming /taking over properties	
	July 9			Government announces the suspension of the bill
General Strike	August 5	Violent	Vandalism	
Airport disruption	August 12 & 13	Violent	Blockade at the airport	
Airport express down	September 1	Violent	Blocking roads that serve the travel hub	
Students boycott school	September 2	Peaceful	Boycotting the first day of school	
	September 4			Announcement of formal withdrawal of the bill
Street violence	September 15	Violent	Physical fights	
Live bullet amidst the riot	October 1	Violent	Physical fights	
	October 5			Announcement to invoke ban the use of face mask & Suspension of MTR
District-wide destruction	October 13	Violent	Vandalism of shops with Mainland Chinese ties/ Road and rail track Blocks	
	October 23			Lecgco formally withdraws the bill
Attack on universities	November 8 & 12	Violent	Vandalism of university properties	
Shootings and injuries	November 11 & 13	Violent	Physical fights	

Crises Communication

Though the protest actions were bad enough to unleash massive detrimental effect on the image and economy of Hong Kong, messages communicated by government agencies (i.e Police, etc.) and the local news agencies couldn't do much to uphold the image of Hong Kong. The government tried to communicate rationally to maintain the trust that the business community and tourists have in Hong Kong. However, messages by other governments and media outside Hong Kong did not help this intention. This reflects Johnson Avery, Weaver Lariscy, Kim, & Hocke's (2010) explanation of Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), that the framing and communication of messages are reliant on involvement and / or location of the communicator.

Local media were optimistic and reported activities and the aftermath in a rational way to reduce sentimental arousal among visitors to Hong Kong and cautioned visitors to stay away from crowded areas which could be potential protest grounds (Ott, 2020). On the other hand, external media and other governments were mostly communicating the protest emotionally. For instance, the BBC emphasized the casualties and violent nature of protests with little attention given to the peaceful marches and government responses (BBC, 2019; Cheung & Hughes, 2019). Similarly, governments (including Macao, United States of America and United Kingdom) warned their citizens travelling to or in Hong Kong, during the period of the social unrest and focused on the violence leaving out the frequency of occurrence (weekends) and the peaceful marches. For example, United States of America issued a level 2 warning to its citizens. Likewise, Australia, warning its citizens to exercise a high degree of caution when they visit Hong Kong (MACRC, 2019; US Department of State, 2020). This finding links the effects of crisis involvement on crisis communication (Claeys & Cauberghe, 2014).

The scope of the protest across all districts in Hong Kong might have contributed to the creation of a high-risk perception among tourists. Government of major tourism markets of Hong Kong begun to issue travel warnings to their citizens from the middle of June 2019. These warnings were issued after violent actions. Interestingly, short-haul markets were quick to issue warnings to their citizens (Figure 2). The first country that announced travel warning was Taiwan, and then Mainland China, Ireland, Singapore, United Arab Emirates Australia, South Korea, UK, USA New Zealand, Canada, and Japan.

Tourist warnings include *"You should be prepared that the situation around protests and public gatherings could change quickly, with the potential for significant violence*," by the British government. "*a high degree of caution*" …."*There is a risk of violent confrontations between protesters and police, or criminally linked individuals, particularly at unauthorised protests*." by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Steger, 2019; Yau, 2019).

Also, some tourists were affected by the actions as riot control police resorted to techniques such as the use of pepper spray, tear gas and batons in popular tourist spots in Hong Kong including Causeway Bay, and Tsim Sha Tsui. These reduced the confidence in the destination and tourists resorted to alternative destinations, leaving hotels, airbuses, restaurants, and souvenir shops almost empty and that, Hong Kong lost tourists to competitors like Japan (Huifeng, 2019). To battle this, prices for hotel rooms, restaurant meals, air tickets and fees at attractions were drastically reduced as a strategy to attract domestic market to help tourism businesses survive (Leung, Tsang, & Sun, 2019).

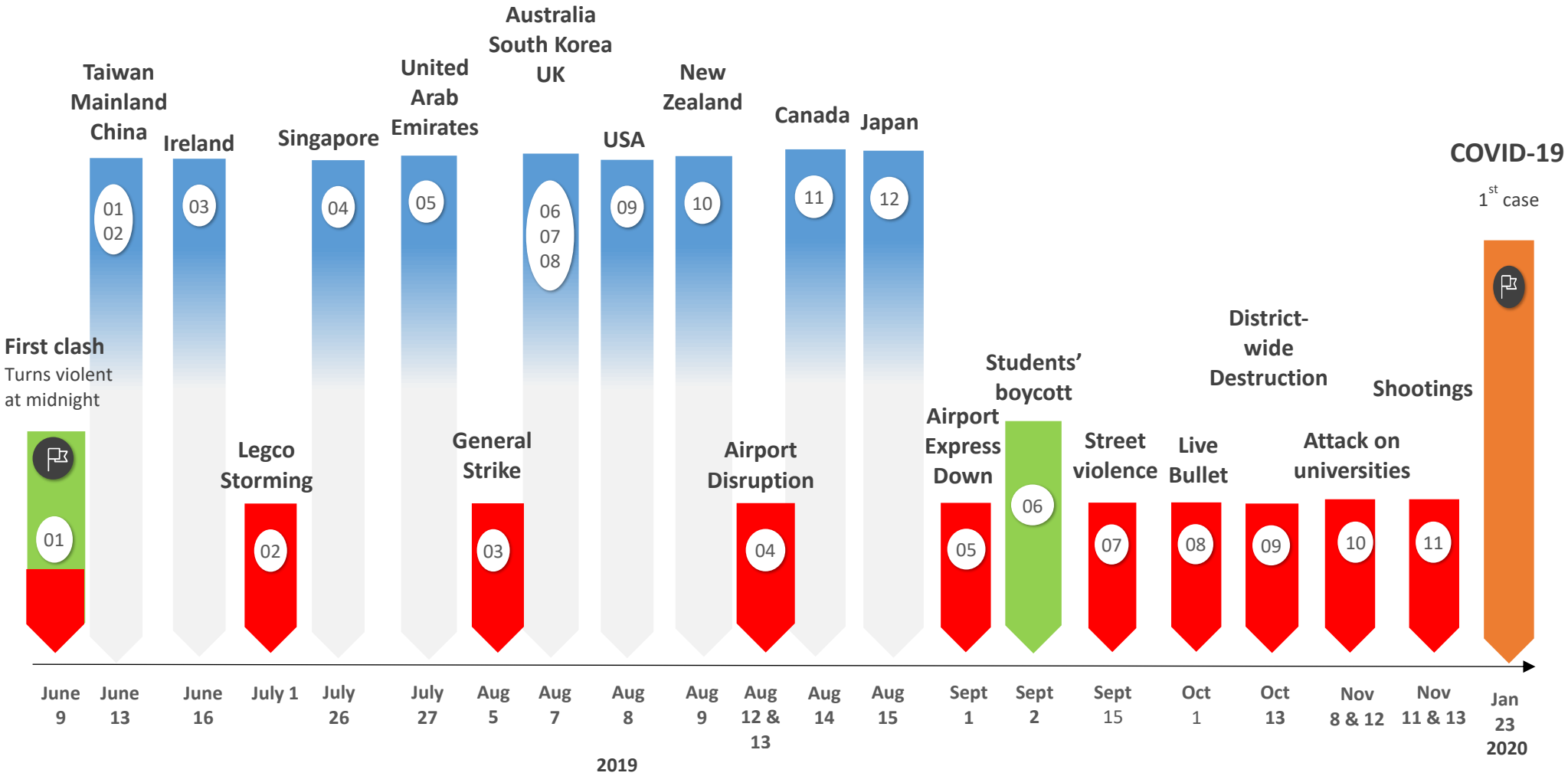

Figure 2: Timeline (June – January 2020) with Travel warnings

Source: BBC (2019); MACRC (2019); RHTK (2019); US Department of State (2020)

Effects of Anti Extradition Law Amendment Movement on tourism

The once vibrant hub for transient tourists and a well-developed tourist destination was branded unsafe and unattractive to tourists following the disruption of Legislative Council progress, injuries and death. This signalled an unsafe destination for business or leisure (Ott, 2020). Tourism is undoubtedly one of the major sectors affected by this social unrest. A month after the first clash, visitor arrivals began to reduce.

August recorded a massive downturn of -39.1% growth. In the same way, the occupancy rate of hotels dropped from 95% in January, to 66% in August (CEIC, 2019). The movement and its fallouts created a bad image for Hong Kong among tourists and so, were not comfortable touring in a tension-ridden destination. By the end of October record, low growth rate (-43.2%) was noted. Aside from this, visits to major attractions such as Ocean Park dropped as low as 80% with Mainland visitors falling by over 70% in September (Hong, 2019). In addition, the number of tours in Hong Kong reduced by about 74% (Ting, 2019), and more than 200 restaurants were closed between June and September as a result of the protests as revealed by Simon Wong Ka-wo, president of the Hong Kong Federation of Restaurants and Related Trades (Leung et al., 2019). Also, festivals (eg. Dragon Boat Canival, Wine festival) were cancelled due to the protests.

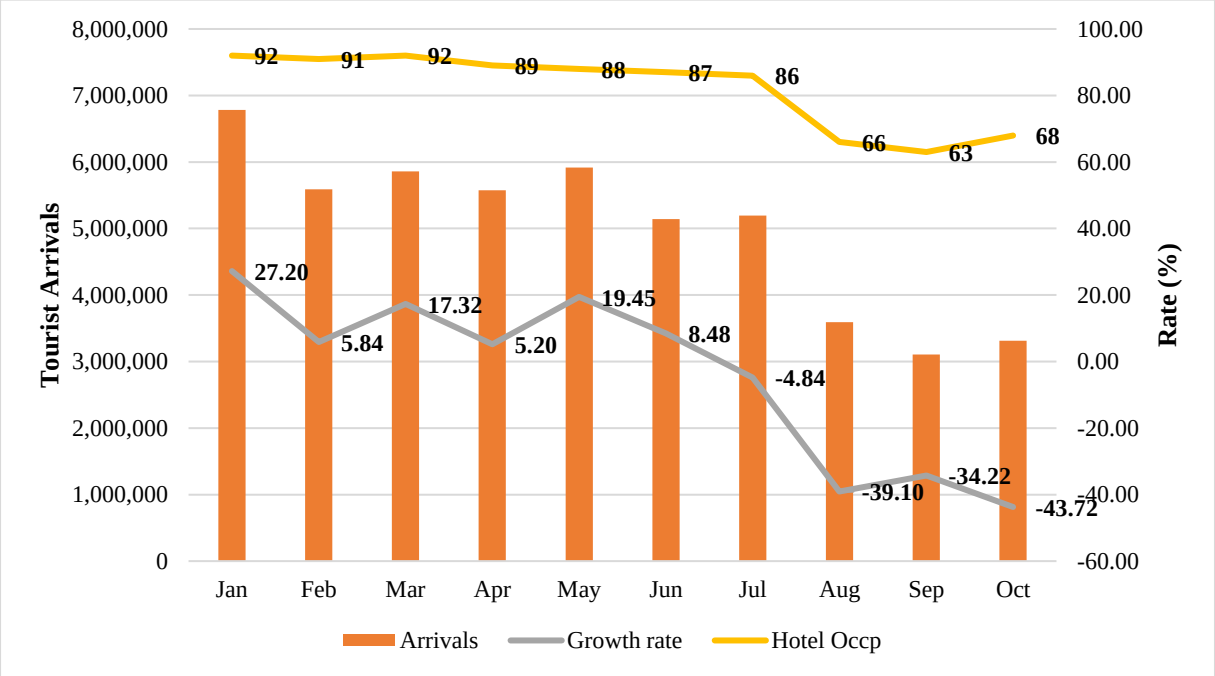

Figure 3: Arrivals and occupancy trends
Source: (CEIC, 2019; Hong Kong Tourism Board, 2018, 2019)

Resulting from the protest, almost 1000 flights were cancelled and airport-express rail line shutdown (Cheung, Siu, & Chung, 2019). This led to a drastic decrease in visitors to Hong Kong by about a third in August and continued to decrease further, affecting receipts. The public felt unsafe and refrained from domestic tourism which affected hotels, restaurant businesses and visitor attractions as well. Important events in Hong Kong that attract tourists from all over the world (e.g. New year's eve fireworks) were also cancelled.

As if that was not daunting enough, the beginning of 2020 saw the emergence of a second crisis with a more violent attack on the tourism industry. The COVID-19 pandemic has given a second blow to the tourism industry of Hong Kong. It is perhaps deepening the biggest challenge faced by the tourism industry in the past 5 years, which is the loss of tourist confidence in the destination. This shows that tourism can be affected by multiple crises as the COVID-19 pandemic followed the social unrest closely, crippling the industry in Hong Kong.

Discussion

Social movement has become a common phenomenon in the world today as residents are using social protests to register their displeasure (Monterrubio, 2017). Though these movements don't focus on tourism, they serve as a spur of tourism crises. In the case of Hong Kong, the social movement came in ten different forms under two main categories (peaceful and violent). The most common form was physical fights and attacks which happened in almost every district. The study reflects the collective nature of protests posited by Khazraee and Novak (2018), and Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2013).

Responses of the government gave way for violent clashes with the police. This is evident in vandalism following every government announcement. This shows that the responses to social unrest can cause a worsening effect. It is important to use a strategy that will be able to calm the actors of the social unrest to nib the event in the bud. The used of collective action made it difficult to control some radical actions though is could be predicted. The protest has thousands of Hongkongers supporting and attending. It changed from peaceful marches to violent clashes, causing the collapse of consumer confidence. This shows that social unrest activities can take different forms which may have adverse effects on the tourism industry. In this study, we notice that ongoing crises that potentially affect tourism can change form gradually surfacing event into violent spontaneous events if they are not dealt with in the budding stage. The social unrest triggered a loss of consumer confidence that dropped Hong Kong tourism to its knees. Therefore, tourism organisations and DMOs are to take a clue from the case of Hong Kong and be proactive in planning strategies for managing crises and recovery strategies once a social crisis is anticipated irrespective of the size to help the industry adapt to change.

The mismatch in the emphasis on the communication of the different protest actions and responses to the outside world is likely to be primarily based on the level of crisis involvement. It can be seen that entities that are within Hong Kong (i.e. the Government, Police, and local media) send out messages that are optimistic that Hong Kong is still a good place for business, amidst the protest. Other governments and media houses outside Hong Kong, however, communicate the pockets of violent incidents that were gaining traction during the last quarter of 2019. Reflecting on the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), it is noted that the framing and communication of messages regarding crisis may be dependent on whether an entity is involved or located within a crisis area. This means that the Government of Hong Kong needs more effort to communicate the strategies used in response to the crisis in an attepmt to restore the image of Hong Kong as "Asia's World City" (Johnson Avery, Weaver Lariscy, Kim, & Hocke, 2010).

The tourism industry experienced direct and indirect consequences with a multiplier effect. Blocking the airport had a direct effect on the industry as it directly reduced arrivals and as a

result causing a reduction in tourism receipt, increase in unemployment in the food and beverage sector and the collapse of restaurants while the fights and vandalism coupled property taking-over created a bad image for Hong Kong as a tourist destination. This shows that though tourism was not the target of the movement, it is susceptible to any form of the disorder. Given this, the Hong Kong Tourism Board and other agencies /organisation need to develop a dynamic recovery strategy to bounce back.

As revealed in this study, the various actions of social movements which are not targeted at the tourism industry, still have an adverse effect on the industry which is contrary to the finding of (McGehee, Kline, & Knollenberg, 2014) that social movement helps in tourism development and that tourism act as agent of social and economic change in communities as in the case of HandMade's STP in the United States of America. This shows that social movement can play a role in both developing and destroying tourism in destinations.

Conclusion and Limitations

This study aimed at exploring critical incidents of the Anti Extradition Law Amendment Movement and its disruptive implications on the tourism industry in Hong Kong. Social movement came in ten different forms under two main categories (peaceful and violent). The most common form was physical fights and attacks which happened in almost every district. The study reflects the collective nature of protests posited by Khazraee and Novak (2018), and Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2013). Responses of the government gave way for violent clashes with the police, evident in vandalism following every government announcement. The movement changed from peaceful marches to violent clashes, causing the collapse of consumer confidence. The tourism industry is sensitive to shocks of ongoing social unrest. Though is possible to forecast protest actions it is hard to foresee the verge of collapse of a system rocked by a slowly developing ongoing social crisis, affecting consumer confidence, which led tourism in Hong Kong to a near-total collapse before COVID-19 pandemic.

It is concluded that social movements are largely unpredictable when it sets off and they can disrupt tourism activities and reduce consumer confidence in a destination. Again, social movements come in different forms that unfold in phases. Beginning with peaceful collective activities and gradually turns to violent actions if not responded to in satisfactory ways. Protests have detrimental effects on Hong Kong's tourism industry directly (e.g. destruction of amenities and facilities) that can lead a destination to its collapse as evident in the context of Hong Kong. This shows that tourism can be affected by issues that do not have tourism as a target and cause destabilization of the industry. Therefore, it is demonstrated that tourism is susceptible to shocks of different forms and magnitudes.

This study, however, has some limitations. Though it points out the effects of social movement on Hong Kong as a tourism destination, the magnitude and intensity remain unexplored. Also, the behaviour of tourists in the crisis, as well as, their perceived image of Hong Kong were left out of the picture. After the crisis effect, the destination is likely to redevelop and therefore the Hong Kong Tourism Board and other tourism agencies should institute destination rejuvenation or regeneration measures to regain the good image of the destination and attract tourists to Hong Kong. This study did not take into consideration the Novel Corona Virus disease (COVID-19) which has been noted to have a global effect on tourism by halting travel and tourism activities all over the world at the end of the first quarter of 2020. For future studies, researchers should use interviews to solicit for the perceptions of tourists regarding destinations

after a crisis and delve deeper into the scope and magnitude of social movements in destinations. Besides, the combined effect of multiple crises (Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Movement and COVID-19) on Hong Kong's tourism industry can be explored.

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