

SIGNIFICANCE OF CRIMINOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Despite the world economic crisis, Georgia is rapidly developing tourism industry. In this regard, while planning new tourist projects, forecasting crime and its seasonal variations is as important as weather forecasting. In relatively short period of time, in particular small tourist area lots of visitors are brought together what automatically means the increase of the danger of crime and thus, requires adequate and coordinated response from the state and society. The Analytical Department at the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, in 2011, delivered a statistical report "foreign visitors and crime in Georgia" which showed that along with tourism development, grew crimes committed against and by tourists and there was a significant seasonal factor. Carrying out criminological researches for good planning tourism will enable society and the state structures to effectively perform their basic function - crime prevention. For this purpose, we recommend under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, to create Criminological Research Center.

Keywords: Tourism development, criminological research, seasonal crime, crime prevention

Introduction

Despite the world economic crisis Georgia is rapidly developing tourism industry. The prognosis from the Georgian government and from experts about the number of international visitors, employees and income earned in the tourism business seems very optimistic.

According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, in 2015, number of international tourists reached 5 400 000 that was 10 fold increase in last decade (www.police.ge). In 2013 tourism industry brought more than 1.7 billion dollars in Georgian economy which was 6.5 % of Georgian GDP (<http://gnta.ge/?lang=ge>).

In general, necessary condition for the due development of tourism is to ensure safety. In this regard, while planning new tourist projects, forecasting crime and its seasonal variations is as important as weather forecasting. In relatively short period of time, in particular tourist area lots of visitors are brought together, that automatically means increase in danger of crime and thus requires adequate and coordinated response from the state and society.

Georgian government's tourism development policy of a visa-free and/or simplified visa regime for certain number of countries promoted and paved the way for a "criminal adventure-seeking tourists" and organized criminal groups in some way related to drug dealing, human trafficking, prostitution, child sex-tourism and other crimes.

Another issue for tourism safety that requires proper study is mountaineering related tourist routes. In 2013-2014, dozens of accidents were reported, namely: death, health damages, loss or messed up of the road... joint activities of Emergency Management Department at the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia and the local agencies' in a number

of rescue operations saved dozens of tourists from Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Israel, etc. (www.police.ge).

The Analytical Department at the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, in 2011, delivered a statistical report "foreign visitors and crime in Georgia" which showed that along with tourism development, grew crimes committed against and by tourists and there was a significant seasonal factor. In 2009, there were 279 crimes committed against them, while 319 by them; in 2010: 358-333; in 2011: 529-353 - where, the majority of cases recorded in Tbilisi and Adjara region (www.police.ge). This statistics is confirmed with research: "Crime and Security in Georgia" conducted by the Ministry of justice with the EU support (<http://www.justice.gov.ge/>).

As for the occupied Abkhazia region, their so-called Ministry of Internal Affairs states that since 2008 the number of crime is increasing and it coincides with tourist season. If in April of 2012 were registered 75 crimes, in May the number reached 89 and its maximum 161 was in August; this is tourist season for the city of Sukhumi and Gagra (<http://mvdra.org/>).

Seasonal crime is long studied in criminology. Regarding to the past centuries, the problem was observed from scientists of the world's different countries, among them: André-Michel Guerry, France; Cesare Lombroso, Italy; William Douglas Morrison, England; Alexander Von Oettingen, Germany; Hugo Herz, Austria – all of them have conducted a large number of important researches.

For the test of the theory of seasonality of crime, the American scientist Gerhard Falk conducted a large-scale research, in which he examined 10 year work of the police in 8 largest cities of the USA. After this he made the following conclusions:

1. Whereas crimes against the person consistently reach their maximum frequency in the summer, such crimes do not always increase or decrease with the temperature, as evidenced by the fact that criminal homicide is higher in December than in June and August.
2. Crimes against a person are at a minimum in the winter months.
3. Crimes against property do not always reach a maximum in winter and a minimum in summer. This may be observed primarily in the case of larceny.
4. There is a similarity between the time of the greatest frequency of crimes against a person and crimes against property. The time of day when the largest number of offenses takes place is about two hours before midnight to midnight.
5. Weekends have a greater crime frequency than mid-week, for all offenses. The day of greatest frequency is Saturday (Gerhard J. Falk, 1952).

The next step in studying the issue was made in 1984 when Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority published the research named: "Is the crime seasonal?" conducted by Carolyn Rebecca Block (<http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/ics.pdf>). Here they try to see the problem in depth and from the different angle; they put question: Does Crime Occur Seasonally, or Is It Reported Seasonally? By doing so they pointed on the problem of latency and argued that the increase in reported crime against human in summer can be caused not by seasonal fluctuations, but by visibility of public, because a lot of people are moving on the street, the windows are open and it is highly possible to witness the crime, but in winter streets are comparing empty, buildings are closed and so latency increases. To prove this, the author made a comparison in the USA between the rate of the seasonal attack and the rate of attack victim in the same period and she revealed that the rate of the attacks were facing much seasonal fluctuations than the rate of the attack victim which proved the theory about the seasonal changes of latency. The same was in case of robbery.

In the same work was made conclusion that urban settlements are more affected to the seasonal changes than village area and on example of Chicago was made the conclusion that the weapon used determines the changes in seasonal crime, the crimes committed by firearms

less suffer seasonal fluctuations, because caused damage, danger suffered by the victim and society is high; accordingly, the rate of reporting is close to reality, especially in summer. Finally, there is conclusion that different types of crime are characterized by their seasonal peculiarities which can be interesting for the forecasting, but this changes are such minor and unimportant, that there is no need to make any special preventive measures by law enforcement agencies.

And the last research I want to mention is the research carried out by Carnegie Mellon University in 2003: “Estimation of Crime Seasonality” (Jacqueline Cohen, Wilpengorr, Christopher Durso, 2003) that criticizes researches conducted earlier and brings new perspectives. The reason of criticism was the fact that earlier researches were conducted on wide-scale, as are town, region or country; here they argued that the character of the seasonal crime is revealed in small places, such as district, residential quarter, and neighborhood.

Researchers studied crime statistics of Pittsburgh in 1990-1998. They divided the town into 103 action squares and in each of them separately examined the rate of the crime, the rate of the buildings, and all the important rates which affect criminological condition.

The research verified that all individual types of crime had its annual, stable seasonal rate in a particular area. Some crimes, over the year showed 15-50% of month-by-month fluctuation. It is very important for law enforcements to know it in order to make fast and appropriate preventive reaction.

Conclusion

Thus, we can conclude that seasonality of crime is a significant issue that is observed in small geographical areas, like tourist zones, and is very important to be considered for keeping safety conditions for the further economic development.

Seasonal peculiarities of crime are subject of specific short-term forecast and well-studied by methods of criminological research, were expert assessment and modeling is overwhelmed by the method of extrapolation, where accuracy of forecast is depended to the stability of criminological situation in the country.

Carrying out criminological researches for good planning of tourism will enable society and the state structures to effectively perform their basic function - crime prevention - by criminological forecasting and planning, and specifying the level of victimization. For this purpose, we believe that "Criminological Research Center" should necessarily be created under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. All the more, the system is scheduled for systemic reforms and restructuring process, so that research, analysis and conclusions should be based on it.

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