Akteurszentriertes Krisenmanagement als integrativer Ansatz in Destinationen

Eine Analyse touristischer Akteure und ihrer Rolle im Krisenmanagement in Destinationen

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Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Dissertation untersucht das touristische Krisenmanagement in Destinationen mit einem akteurszentrierten Fokus, der bislang in der Forschung weitgehend vernachlässigt wurde. Die an einer Krise beteiligten Akteur:innen werden im Folgenden synonym mit dem Begriff Stakeholder verwendet. Nach Freeman (1984, S. 46, Übers. d. Verf.) sind Stakeholder „Gruppen oder Einzelpersonen, die die Zielerreichung einer Organisation beeinflussen oder von dieser beeinflusst werden."

Krisen und Katastrophen – ob von der Umwelt oder menschlich induziert – stellen den Tourismussektor vor erhebliche Herausforderungen. Seine strukturelle Fragmentierung, die Vielzahl beteiligter Stakeholder sowie die besondere Vulnerabilität von Tourist:innen führen zu einer hohen Krisenanfälligkeit. Die Arbeit zeigt auf, dass trotz dieser offensichtlichen Risiken das Krisenmanagement im Tourismus in vielen Bereichen konzeptionell nicht hinreichend etabliert ist. Bestehende Modelle sind häufig begrifflich uneinheitlich, empirisch kaum fundiert und berücksichtigen die Heterogenität der beteiligten Stakeholder nur unzureichend. Insbesondere Reiseveranstalter, Destination Management Companies (DMCs), touristische Verbände sowie diplomatische und behördliche Einrichtungen im Quellmarkt sind in bisherigen Konzepten entweder unterrepräsentiert oder gar nicht enthalten. Diese Forschungslücke bildet den Ausgangspunkt für die vorliegende kumulative Dissertation, die sich zum Ziel gesetzt hat, die Rolle und den Einfluss touristischer Stakeholder im Krisenmanagement zu systematisieren und auf dieser Grundlage ein differenziertes, handlungsorientiertes Krisenmanagementmodell unter Einbeziehung von Stakeholderkriterien für eine verbesserte Kooperation in der Destination zu entwickeln. Die Grundlage der Dissertation bilden drei eigenständige, sich ergänzende Studien. Zunächst erfolgt eine systematische Literaturauswertung von Krisenmanagementmodellen mit Tourismus- und Organisationsfokus. Dabei werden zentrale Begriffe und methodische Herangehensweisen vergleichend analysiert. Die Untersuchung offenbart nicht nur eine terminologische Inkonsistenz, sondern auch einen Mangel an empirisch validierten Modellen. Aufbauend auf dieser Analyse wird ein Modell auf Mikroebene für das Krisenmanagement in touristischen Destinationen entwickelt, das die Verantwortlichkeiten touristischer Stakeholder, Behörden und Nichtregierungsorganisationen (NGOs) entlang des gesamten Krisenlebenszyklus sowie der Krisenmanagementphasen konkretisiert.

Im Zentrum der zweiten Studie steht die qualitative Analyse der Stakeholder in Destinationen mittels leitfadengestützter Interviews in zwei Fallstudienregionen: Dominica und die Dominikanische Republik. Die Analyse identifiziert insgesamt vierzehn relevante Stakeholder, die im Krisenfall eine entscheidende Rolle einnehmen. Dazu zählen neben Hotels auch Reiseveranstalter, DMCs, touristische Verbände und staatliche Stellen in der Destination und im Quellmarkt.

Besonders hervorgehoben wird die koordinierende Rolle von Tourismusverbänden, die als Vermittlungsinstanz zwischen öffentlichem und privatem Sektor agieren. Durch die Anwendung ausgewählter Stakeholderkriterien gelingt es, die Einflussstärke, Legitimität und Dringlichkeit der einzelnen Gruppen differenziert zu erfassen. Diese theoretische Verortung ermöglicht eine strategische Kategorisierung und dient als Grundlage für Empfehlungen zur besseren Kooperation in Krisensituationen. Die Ergebnisse verdeutlichen, dass eine effektive Zusammenarbeit nicht ad hoc im Krisenfall entstehen kann, sondern langfristig vorbereitet und strukturell verankert sein muss. Die Einbindung aller relevanten Stakeholder, einschließlich der häufig ignorierten Stakeholder im Quellmarkt, ist dabei ebenso entscheidend wie der Aufbau von Vertrauen, Kommunikationsstrukturen und klaren Zuständigkeiten.

Die dritte Studie setzt sich mit der besonderen Rolle der Reiseveranstalter als raumprägende Akteure im Management touristischer Krisen auseinander. Basierend auf einer Online-Befragung von 77 deutschen Reiseveranstaltern unterschiedlicher Unternehmensgrößen analysiert die Arbeit die Selbstwahrnehmung der Krisenbereitschaft der Reiseveranstalter im Vergleich zum tatsächlichen Stand der Krisenplanung. Es zeigt sich, dass insbesondere Kleinst- und Kleinunternehmen eine starke Diskrepanz zwischen subjektivem Sicherheitsgefühl und realer Vorbereitung aufweisen. Große Unternehmen hingegen zeigen eine signifikant höhere Übereinstimmung. Obgleich sich die Mehrzahl der Unternehmen als adäquat vorbereitet einschätzt, sind formalisierte Prozesse oder Handlungsstrategien in der Praxis häufig nicht vorhanden. Die Ergebnisse verweisen auf die Notwendigkeit externer Unterstützung und standardisierter Instrumente, um vor allem kleinen Unternehmen eine niedrigschwellige Professionalisierung im Krisenmanagement zu ermöglichen. Die Einführung eines freiwilligen Verhaltenskodexes wird zwar branchenintern bislang zurückhaltend bewertet, könnte jedoch – bei entsprechender Förderung und impulsgebenden Informationskampagnen – eine wirksame Maßnahme zur Etablierung einheitlicher Standards darstellen.

Die Dissertation liefert einen substanziellen Beitrag zur Weiterentwicklung des touristischen Krisenmanagements. Sie plädiert für eine stärkere Verankerung akteursspezifischer Perspektiven in Theorie und Praxis und unterstreicht die Notwendigkeit, bestehende institutionelle Strukturen wie Tourismusverbände als Katalysatoren und Koordinatoren zu stärken. Weiterhin bedarf es einer grenzüberschreitenden, transnationalen Zusammenarbeit, die auch die Stakeholder in den Quellmärkten aktiv einbezieht. Die vorgestellten Modelle und empirischen Befunde liefern praxisrelevante Ansätze für die Etablierung robuster touristischer Systeme und bilden zugleich eine theoretische Grundlage für weiterführende Forschung in diesem Bereich.

1 Krisenmanagement im Tourismus

1.1 Relevanz des Krisenmanagements im Tourismus und dessen Herausforderungen

Spätestens mit dem weltweiten Ausbruch der Covid-19-Pandemie im Jahr 2020 wurde deutlich, in welchem Ausmaß Krisen touristische Strukturen destabilisieren können. Krisen stellen jedoch bereits seit Langem eine zentrale Herausforderung für den globalen Tourismus dar. Naturereignisse wie tropische Wirbelstürme (z. B. Irma und Maria in der Karibik im Jahr 2017), Erdbeben (z. B. Nepal 2015), großflächige Waldbrände (z. B. Rhodos 2024) oder durch Extremwetter verursachte Überschwemmungen (z. B. Spanien 2024) verdeutlichen die Vulnerabilität touristischer Destinationen gegenüber externen Schocks. Dies gilt auch für von Menschen verursachte Krisen – etwa terroristische Anschläge (z. B. 9/11 in den USA 2001, Indonesien 2002, Frankreich 2015, Tunesien 2015), Verkehrsunfälle (z. B. Costa-Concordia-Havarie 2012, erweiterter Suizid auf Germanwings-Flug 2015, Meridian-Zugunfall 2016) oder Epidemien wie SARS (2003), Ebola (2014/2015) und Zika (2016).

Es besteht Konsens in der Wissenschaft über die besondere Anfälligkeit von Tourismusorganisationen gegenüber Krisen und Katastrophen (z. B. Goktepe et al., 2024; Pforr & Hosie, 2008). Zu den Ursachen für diese Verwundbarkeit zählen die drei nachfolgenden Aspekte.

a) Der Tourismussektor ist zumeist von extern verursachten, unvorhersehbaren und unvermeidbaren Krisen betroffen, auf die die einzelnen Organisationen keinen Einfluss haben (z. B. Evans & Elphick, 2005; Ritchie et al., 2011; Sönmez et al., 1999; Xu & Grunewald, 2009).
b) Die Tourismusindustrie ist durch eine fragmentierte, kleinteilige Struktur gekennzeichnet, die sich aus einer Vielzahl von Akteur:innen zusammensetzt, welche zum Tourismusprodukt beitragen und geographisch weit verteilt sein können (z. B. Berbekova et al., 2021; Pavlovich, 2003). Diese Anbieter touristischer Dienstleistungen sind unter unterschiedlichen Bedingungen in verschiedenen Branchen (z. B. Tourismusindustrie, Gastgewerbe, Einzelhandel) und Sektoren (z. B. öffentlich oder privat) auf verschiedenen räumlichen Ebenen (z. B. regional, national oder international) tätig (z. B. Berbekova et al., 2021; Pavlovich, 2003).
c) Tourist:innen stellen am Urlaubsort auf Grund fehlender Orts- und Sprachkenntnisse eine vulnerable Gruppe dar, weshalb sie in Krisensituationen besondere Unterstützung benötigen (z. B. Berbekova et al., 2021; Faulkner, 2001). Theoretisch sollte daher eine Krisenvorbereitung aller beteiligten Stakeholder unabdingbar sein (z. B. Berbekova et al., 2021;

Pforr & Hosie, 2008; Wut et al., 2021), doch in der Praxis scheinen die Tourismusunternehmen auf allen Branchenebenen (z. B. Beherbergung, Veranstaltung, Destinationsmanagement) nicht ausreichend vorbereitet zu sein (z. B. Gruman et al., 2011; Hystad & Keller, 2006; Khardani et al., 2024; Pennington-Gray et al., 2011).

Touristische Destinationen sind in der Tourismusliteratur ausführlich beschrieben und erforscht worden. Die Definitionen wurden dabei unter verschiedenen Gesichtspunkten vorgenommen. Die Welttourismusorganisation der Vereinten Nationen (UNWTO, 2010) verfolgt dabei einen räumlichen Ansatz und beschreibt eine Destination demnach als den Ort, den Tourist:innen besuchen und der für deren Reiseentscheidung von zentraler Bedeutung ist. Nach Becken (2013) sind Destinationen geographische Gebiete, in denen touristische Aktivitäten einen erheblichen Beitrag zur Wirtschaft leisten. Bei diesen Gebieten kann es sich um ein Land, eine Region oder eine Stadt handeln, aber auch um ein Hotel, ein Kreuzfahrtschiff oder eine bestimmte Touristenattraktion wie eine architektonische Stätte (Buhalis, 2000). Destinationen können folglich kulturell oder ökologisch zusammenhängend sein und werden in der Regel von Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) verwaltet. Aus wirtschaftlicher Sicht umfasst eine Tourismusdestination wesentliche Elemente für einen touristischen Aufenthalt, einschließlich eines bedeutenden Angebots an Attraktionen wie Naturlandschaften, Klima und kulturelle Sehenswürdigkeiten zusammen mit der dafür notwendigen Infrastruktur wie Verkehr, Unterkunft, Verpflegung und Freizeiteinrichtungen (z. B. Buhalis, 2000; Vajčnerová et al., 2013). Das angebotene Produkt ist entweder Bestandteil einer Pauschalreise, die von Reiseveranstaltern und (Online-)Reisebüros verkauft wird, oder es wird von den Reisenden direkt gebucht. Besonders Destinationen, deren Angebot substituierbar ist, was für die meisten Warmwasserdestinationen gilt, in denen sogenannter Massentourismus stattfindet, sind zunehmend dazu gezwungen, sich mit dem Thema Krisenmanagement und Reisesicherheit auseinanderzusetzen, um keine Tourist:innen und damit Umsatz zu verlieren (z. B. Avraham, 2015; Sönmez et al., 1999; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998). Der Fokus der vorliegenden Arbeit liegt auf der Analyse der oben beschriebenen Destinationen, bei denen ein besonders enger Austausch mit unterschiedlichen touristischen Stakeholdern sowohl innerhalb der Destination als auch aus dem Quellmarkt heraus stattfindet.

Aufgrund ihrer heterogenen Zusammensetzung stellen Destinationen als komplexe und dynamische Systeme eine Herausforderung für ein effektives Management dar (z. B. Baggio & Sainaghi, 2011; Pyke et al., 2018). Sie setzen sich in der Regel aus öffentlichen (z. B. Regierungen), privaten (Tourismusindustrie, Gastgewerbe, Einzelhandel, Verkehr) oder gemischten (Tourismusver-

bände) Akteur:innen zusammen, die entweder direkt oder indirekt am Tourismus beteiligt sind (z. B. Hartman et al., 2020; Pavlovich, 2003). Diese Stakeholder unterscheiden sich von anderen Netzwerken durch ihre Rolle als produktive Koalitionen innerhalb einer stark fragmentierten Angebotsstruktur, die eine Zusammenarbeit erfordert (z. B. Hartman et al., 2020; Pavlovich, 2003), da sie auf gegenseitiger Abhängigkeit beruhen (z. B. Berbekova et al., 2021). Nach Zemla (2016, S. 9, Übers. d. Verf.) „verändert diese räumliche Einbettung die Regeln der Zusammenarbeit radikal", was insbesondere für Krisen gilt (z. B. Mojtahedi & Oo, 2017). Darüber hinaus beschäftigen sich Tourist:innen in der Regel vor und während ihres Besuchs aktiv mit ihrem Gastland, was sie zu einer zusätzlichen Stakeholdergruppe innerhalb der Destination macht (z. B. van der Zee & Vanneste, 2015). Daher ist es notwendig, dass die Anbieter touristischer Dienstleistungen und die lokalen Behörden sowohl in der Destination als auch im Quellmarkt im Krisenmanagement Berücksichtigung finden.

Obwohl bereits zahlreiche Forschungsarbeiten in unterschiedlichen Fachrichtungen zum Thema Krise publiziert wurden, gibt es keine einheitliche Definition für den Krisenbegriff. Eine Krise zeichnet sich jedoch durch ihren chaotischen Charakter, Ungewissheit (z. B. Ritchie, 2008), Zeitdruck und schlecht strukturierte Entscheidungen aufgrund unklarer Informationen sowie durch die Komplexität der Situation aus (z. B. Glaesser, 2006; Ritchie, 2008). Sie ist zudem unvorhersehbar, aber nicht unerwartet (z. B. Coombs, 2019). Faulkner (2001) definiert eine Krise als ein selbstverschuldetes Ereignis, das innerhalb einer Organisation auftritt, während er eine Katastrophe als externes Ereignis beschreibt, das von der Organisation weder vermieden, noch kontrolliert werden kann. Dieser Begriffsunterscheidung folgen einige Wissenschaftler:innen wie Runyan (2006) und Xu und Grunewald (2009), während andere Forschende „Krise" und „Katastrophe" synonym verwenden. Die vorliegende Dissertation schließt sich der letztgenannten Position an, da der analytische Fokus auf den zugrunde liegenden Wirkmechanismen und Bewältigungsprozessen liegt, die beiden Phänomenen gemeinsam sind, und verwendet dabei die Krisendefinition von Wang und Ritchie (2011, S. 781, Übers. d. Verf.): „Eine Krise bezieht sich auf jedes ungeplante Ereignis oder jede ungeplante Situation im internen oder externen Umfeld einer Organisation, welche den Betrieb stören, Kund:innen und Mitarbeiter:innen physisch und psychisch bedrohen und den finanziellen Status und die Zukunftsfähigkeit einer Organisation gefährden können."

Die Konzepte des Krisen- und Katastrophenmanagements entstammen unterschiedlichen theoretischen Diskursen (z. B. Aliperti et al., 2019), was (insbesondere für fachfremde Personen) zu Verwirrung führen kann, da die Begriffsdefinitionen in der Literatur weitgehend übereinstimmen

und ihre Verwendung häufig synonym erfolgt. Krisenmanagement bezeichnet die Gesamtheit der strategischen und operativen Aufgaben, Prozesse und Maßnahmen, die mit dem Ziel der Prävention, Vorbereitung und Bewältigung von Krisen innerhalb einer Organisation konzipiert und implementiert werden, einschließlich der anschließenden Wiederherstellung des ursprünglichen Zustands (z. B. Fink, 1986; Glaesser, 2006). Laut UNISDR (2016) umfasst das Katastrophenmanagement die Maßnahmen zur Vorbereitung auf eine Katastrophe, zur Reaktion darauf und zur Erholung davon. Ein möglicher Erklärungsansatz zur Unterscheidung beider Forschungsströme liegt in der unterschiedlichen Fokussierung ihrer Handlungs- und Steuerungsebenen: Während das Katastrophenmanagement primär staatliche Akteur:innen in den Mittelpunkt stellt und Maßnahmen entwickelt, um gesamtgesellschaftliche Resilienz herzustellen, adressiert das Krisenmanagement insbesondere Akteur:innen auf Meso- und Mikroebene – etwa Destinationen, Organisationen oder Unternehmen – und überträgt konkrete Strategien auf deren spezifische Handlungskontexte. Krisenmanagement im Tourismus spielt in der akademischen Forschung seit Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts eine Rolle (z. B. Wut et al., 2021). Insbesondere nach den Terroranschlägen von 9/11 in den USA 2001 ist ein deutlicher Anstieg der wissenschaftlichen Publikationstätigkeit zu verzeichnen: Während vor 1999 weniger als zehn Beiträge pro Jahr erschienen, stieg die Zahl der Publikationen auf 13 im Jahr 2003 und erreichte im Jahr 2014 55 Veröffentlichungen (Jiang et al., 2019).

Krisenmanagement wird häufig im Zusammenhang mit Risiko- und Business Continuity Management sowie Resilienz erwähnt. Daher ist eine präzise Abgrenzung dieser Begriffe erforderlich. Risikomanagement ist ein Instrument zur Analyse und Verwaltung der Risikoexposition einer Organisation in Übereinstimmung mit deren strategischen Zielen (z. B. Dorfman & Cather, 2012). Das Ziel des Business Continuity Management hingegen ist es, Betriebsunterbrechungen zu verhindern und zu begrenzen und den Betrieb nach einem Zwischenfall zügig wiederherzustellen (z. B. Coombs, 2019). Resilienz bezeichnet die Fähigkeit eines Systems, durch Anpassung auf Veränderungen zu reagieren und dabei seine Kernfunktionen aufrechtzuerhalten (z. B. Walker et al., 2004). Es zielt darauf ab, einen Gesamtzustand zu erreichen, während sich das Krisenmanagement auf einen Zeitpunkt konzentriert, an dem ein plötzlicher Schock (Krise) bewältigt werden muss. Folglich kann das Krisenmanagement als Teil der Resilienz betrachtet werden (z. B. Brown et al., 2017; Cochrane, 2010; Wang et al., 2022).

Die drei grundlegenden Elemente des Tourismus sind: Der Ortswechsel, Motive für diesen Ortswechsel sowie der vorübergehende Aufenthalt an einem Ort außerhalb der gewohnten Umgebung (Schmude & Namberger, 2015). Wie bereits erläutert, spielt die sich daraus ergebende besondere

Verletzlichkeit von Tourist:innen im touristischen Krisenmanagement eine bedeutende Rolle. Im Fokus der vorliegenden Dissertation steht die Analyse raumspezifischer Aspekte auf der Angebotsseite in der Destination. Dabei werden die raumprägenden und wechselseitigen Beziehungen zwischen den touristischen Stakeholdern untersucht, die einen Einfluss auf die Krisenbewältigung in einer Destination haben, nachdem diese sich z. B. durch eine Naturkatastrophe oder ein extremes Wetterphänomen im Ausnahmezustand befindet. Eine Besonderheit der Tourismusgeographie ist der interdisziplinäre Austausch, der in der vorliegenden Dissertation besonders mit den Bereichen der Krisen- und Katastrophenforschung und den Wirtschaftswissenschaften stattfindet.

1.2 Forschungsdefizite im touristischen Krisenmanagement

Spätestens seit dem Ausbruch der Covid-19-Pandemie werden die Begriffe Krise und Katastrophe im öffentlichen und wissenschaftlichen Diskurs als zentrale Schlagwörter verwendet, deren Definition nicht ganz eindeutig ist, wie bereits im vorherigen Abschnitt diskutiert. Angesichts der Vielzahl potenzieller Krisen überrascht es nicht, dass in der Tourismusforschung zahlreiche Modelle zur Prävention, Vorbereitung und Bewältigung solcher Schocks (weiter)entwickelt wurden. Eine systematische Literaturanalyse zeigt dabei jedoch eine begriffliche Inkonsistenz. Vor diesem Hintergrund widmet sich ein Teil der vorliegenden Dissertation einer umfassenden Untersuchung der Terminologie sowie der konzeptionellen Ursprünge zentraler Krisenmanagementmodelle sowohl im touristischen als auch im Organisationskontext, um ein fundiertes Begriffsverständnis zu schaffen. Dieser Ansatz deckt sich mit den Vorschlägen mehrerer Publikationen, die eine vertiefte Auseinandersetzung mit der Theorieentwicklung in einem interdisziplinären Kontext vorschlagen (z. B. Aliperti et al., 2019; Casal-Ribeiro et al., 2023; Jiang et al., 2019; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019).

Die offensichtlichen Stakeholder in einer Destination sind Hotels, DMOs, Tourismusverbände, DMCs – auch Zielgebiets- oder Incoming Agenturen genannt – Rettungsdienste und Behörden auf Landes-, Bundes- und Kommunalebene. In der Tourismusforschung sind die Stakeholder in den Quellmärkten hingegen weniger präsent. Als Vermittler zwischen Destination und Tourist:innen und in Anbetracht ihrer wirtschaftlichen Auswirkungen spielen Reiseveranstalter eine entscheidende Rolle in der Destination (z. B. Becken et al., 2014; Sausmarez, 2013). Bisher gibt es jedoch nur wenige wissenschaftliche Studien, die sich mit Reiseveranstaltern als Akteuren im touristischen Krisenmanagement befassen (z. B. Cavlek, 2002; Derham et al., 2022; Evans & Elphick, 2005). Diese geringe Sichtbarkeit zeigt sich auch in jüngeren Studien zu den Auswirkungen der Covid-19-Pandemie auf den Tourismussektor, in denen Reiseveranstalter entweder gänzlich fehlen (z. B. Gössling et al., 2021), oder lediglich am Rande erwähnt werden (z. B. Afanasiev &

Afanasieva, 2021). Diese schwache Wahrnehmung in der Forschung gilt auch für die Behörden im Quellmarkt, insbesondere für die Außenministerien, die für die Erstellung von Reise- und Sicherheitshinweisen der jeweiligen Destination zuständig sind sowie für die diplomatischen Vertretungen, die ihre Staatsangehörigen in Notfällen unterstützen (z. B. Cavlek, 2002).

Die effektive Zusammenarbeit und Koordinierung der zahlreichen Stakeholder innerhalb einer Destination stellt bereits im täglichen Betrieb eine Herausforderung dar (z. B. Jamal & Getz, 1995; Zemla, 2016), denn hierarchische und fragmentierte Strukturen im öffentlichen und privaten Sektor erschweren die Kommunikation. In Krisenzeiten nimmt der Druck auf diese Stakeholder zu und deren Zusammenarbeit wird entscheidend für das Überleben der Destination und ihrer einzelnen Organisationen (z. B. Mair et al., 2016; Mistilis & Sheldon, 2006). Die Anwendung von Stakeholderkriterien im Krisenmanagement ist in der Tourismusforschung bislang jedoch begrenzt (z. B. Jiang & Ritchie, 2017). Zwar verweist die Forschung auf die Herausforderungen in Bezug auf die Heterogenität der Stakeholder (z. B. Beritelli, 2011; van der Zee & Vanneste, 2015), doch mangelt es aktuell an fundierten Untersuchungen, die zur vertieften Erkenntnis ihrer Perspektiven und Strategien beitragen (z. B. Nguyen et al., 2017, Pennington-Gray et al., 2014a). Folglich wird für einen Ansatz plädiert, der dazu geeignet ist, diese Diskrepanz zwischen den beteiligten Stakeholdern während einer Krise zu überwinden (z. B. Morakabati et al., 2017).

2 Konzeptionelle Grundlagen der Dissertation

2.1 Forschungsziele der Dissertation

Die vorliegende kumulative Dissertation analysiert touristische Stakeholder und deren Rolle im touristischen Krisenmanagement in Destinationen mit dem Ziel, die vorher beschriebenen Forschungsdefizite zu verringern. Die veröffentlichten Studien (Tabelle 1) widmen sich dabei unterschiedlichen Fragestellungen, deren Beantwortung für das übergeordnete Forschungsziel der Dissertation von essenzieller Bedeutung sind.

Tabelle 1: Veröffentlichungen in referierten Fachzeitschriften im Rahmen der kumulativen Dissertation (eigene Darstellung)

Autor:innen	**Jahr**	**Titel**	**Fachzeitschrift**	**Kapitel**
Khardani, C., Schmude, J., Namberger, P.	2024	Crisis planning among tour operators: an evaluation of small, medium-sized and large enterprises	International Journal of Tourism Policy	5
Khardani, C., Schmude, J.,	2024	A micro-level model for crisis management in tourism destinations – An interdisciplinary approach	Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management	3
Khardani, C.,	2025	Tourism crisis management does not stop in a destination's front yard. Why stakeholder collaboration needs to cross borders	Zeitschrift für Tourismuswissenschaft - Journal of Tourism Science	4

Der theoretische Beitrag der Veröffentlichung von Khardani und Schmude (2024) liegt in der konzeptionellen Aufarbeitung der Terminologie im Krisen- und Katastrophenmanagement sowie in der Rückverfolgung der Ursprünge tourismusspezifischer Krisenmanagementmodelle. Ziel ist es, ein fundiertes Verständnis zentraler Begriffe und konzeptioneller Grundlagen zu schaffen. Das neu entwickelte Modell auf Mikroebene zielt darauf ab, zentrale Begriffe und Krisenmanagementphasen zu vereinheitlichen und durch ein integratives Rahmenkonzept dabei zu unterstützen, strategische Überlegungen im Krisenmanagement fundiert zu gestalten.

Die leitenden Forschungsfragen sind dabei:

(1) Welche Elemente sollten bei der Kategorisierung und Analyse der Krisenmanagementmodelle berücksichtigt werden?
(2) Sind die Krisenmanagementmodelle vergleichbar und/oder kompatibel?
(3) Welche Merkmale sind allen Krisenmanagementmodellen gemeinsam?
(4) Wie können die Ergebnisse der Analyse der Krisenmanagementmodelle zur Entwicklung eines verbesserten Krisenmanagementmodells mit touristischem Schwerpunkt beitragen?

Khardani (2025) verfolgt die Intention, die Zusammenarbeit der Stakeholder im Krisenmanagement von Destinationen zu verbessern, indem sie den Grad ihrer Zusammenarbeit beleuchtet. Die nachfolgenden Forschungsfragen unterstützen dieses Ziel:

(1) Wer sind die Stakeholder, die den Ausgang einer Krise in einer Destination beeinflussen und mit welchen Parteien interagieren sie während einer Krise?
(2) Welchen Einfluss haben die Stakeholder während einer Krise auf die Destination?
(3) Wie können Stakeholdertkriterien genutzt werden, um die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den beteiligten Stakeholdern im Krisenmanagement von Destinationen zu verbessern?

Abschließend widmen sich Khardani et al. (2024) der Analyse von Reiseveranstaltern im deutschen Quellmarkt. Im Zentrum steht zunächst die Untersuchung der Selbsteinschätzung sowie des tatsächlichen Grades der Krisenplanung, differenziert nach Unternehmensgröße, um eine Momentaufnahme der bestehenden Krisenmanagementstrukturen innerhalb der Branche zu gewinnen. Darüber hinaus beleuchtet die Studie die Haltung von Führungskräften gegenüber einem potenziellen Verhaltenskodex im Krisenmanagement, mit dem Ziel, dessen möglichen Einfluss auf das Planungsniveau innerhalb der Unternehmen zu evaluieren.

2.2 Methodik der Dissertation

Zur Operationalisierung der einzelnen Forschungsfragen der Studien wurden hauptsächlich qualitative, aber auch quantitative Methoden aus der Tourismus- und Wirtschaftsgeographie angewendet, wobei auf Primär- und Sekundärdaten zurückgegriffen wurde. Der Mixed-Methods-Ansatz wurde vor allem in der Studie von Khardani (2025) und in geringem Maße in der Studie von Khardani et al. (2024) genutzt. Tabelle 2 führt die Datenquellen und Methoden auf, die den drei Studien der kumulativen Dissertation zu Grunde liegen.

Tabelle 2: Datenquellen und angewandte Methoden im Rahmen der kumulativen Dissertation (eigene Darstellung)

Methodik	**Beschreibung**
Khardani et al. (2024)	
Literaturanalyse	Analyse der vorliegenden Literatur zu den Themen Krisenmanagement im Tourismus, Krisenmanagement bei Reiseveranstaltern, Krisenmanagementmodelle im Tourismus, Krisenplanung im Tourismus, Zertifizierung im Tourismus, Klein- und mittelständische Unternehmen (KMUs) im (touristischen) Krisenmanagement
Befragung	Befragung von Krisenmanager:innen bzw. Geschäftsführer:innen von Reiseveranstaltern mit Hauptfirmensitz in Deutschland (Grundgesamtheit N=599, Stichprobe n=77) basierend auf den fvw | Travel-Talk Branchenkontakten 2022 mittels standardisiertem Online-Fragebogen mit 55 Fragen via Unipark von 06/2022 bis 07/2022
Datenvalidierung und -analyse	Qualitative und quantitative deskriptive Auswertung mit SPSS und Excel
Khardani und Schmude (2024)	
Systematische Literaturanalyse – textuelle narrative Synthese	Sieben Schritte basierend auf Popay et al. (2006) und Mays et al. (2005): Schwerpunktsetzung, Spezifizierung der Forschungsfrage, Modellsammlung, Erstellung eines Standardformats für die Datenextraktion nach 14 formalen und inhaltlichen Kriterien, quantitative und qualitative Analyse und Synthese der Ergebnisse.
Modellentwicklung	(Weiter)Entwicklung eines Krisenmanagementmodells auf Mikroebene in touristischen Destinationen

Methodik	Beschreibung
Khardani (2025)	
Literaturanalyse	Analyse der bestehenden Literatur zu den Themen Stakeholder Management, Stakeholder Collaboration und Multi Stakeholder Collaboration im Allgemeinen, im Tourismus, in der Krisenforschung und im touristischen Krisenmanagement
Formblatt Stakeholder Theorie	Entwicklung eines Formblatts mit angewandten Stakeholdertkriterien (Beritelli, 2011; Clarkson, 1995; Mitchell et al., 1997; Podnar & Jancic, 2006) und Stakeholdern im Krisenmanagement von Tourismusdestinationen
Multiple Fallstudie	Durchgeführt auf Dominica und in der Dominikanischen Republik von 07/2023 bis 04/2024
Leitfadengestützte Expert:innen-interviews	26 teilstrukturierte explorative Interviews mit 28 Interviewpartner:innen aus verschiedenen touristischen Organisationen zum Thema Krisenbewältigung, Zusammenarbeit mit externen Stakeholdern während einer Krise und Schlüsselfaktoren für eine erfolgreiche Zusammenarbeit in der Krise von 07/2023 bis 04/2024
Strukturierende qualitative Inhaltsanalyse	Strukturierende qualitative Inhaltsanalyse zur Auswertung der Interviews mit der Software MAXQDA 24. Die Kodierung erfolgte zunächst deduktiv anhand der Interviewleitfragen sowie den vordefinierten Stakeholderkriterien. Anschließend wurden die Codes überprüft, sortiert und zusammengeführt, bevor durch induktive Kodierung weitere Subcodes gebildet wurden, um neue, aus dem Datenmaterial entstehende Themen und Zusammenhänge zu erfassen.

2.3 Aufbau der Dissertation

Die Tourismusgeographie setzt sich zum Ziel, auf Grundlage theoretischer Überlegungen räumliche Verbreitungs- und Interaktionsmuster, die sich aus dem Handeln unterschiedlicher Akteur:innen ergeben, zu erfassen, zu beschreiben, zu erklären und zu interpretieren, um schließlich Handlungsempfehlungen abzuleiten (Schmude & Namberger, 2015). Diesem Prozess folgt die vorliegende Dissertation, indem zunächst eine systematische Literaturübersicht von organisations- und tourismusspezifischen Krisenmanagementmodellen vorgenommen wird. Darauf aufbauend wird ein Krisenmanagementmodell auf Mikroebene vorgestellt, in dem die Handlungen von touristischen Stakeholdern und öffentlichen Institutionen aufgeschlüsselt werden (Kapitel 3). Anschließend werden in Kapitel 4 die Stakeholder im Krisenmanagement von Destinationen identifiziert, deren Rollen beschrieben und ausgewählte Stakeholderkriterien angewendet, um konkrete Vorschläge für eine verbesserte Zusammenarbeit in der Krise zu unterbreiten. Abschließend wird in Kapitel 5 die besondere Rolle der Reiseveranstalter als raumprägende Akteure beleuchtet. Auch hier wird zunächst der Status quo erfasst, beschrieben, erklärt und interpretiert, um anschließend Vorschläge für Theorie und Praxis aufzeigen zu können. Kapitel 6 schließt mit der Diskussion der aus der Dissertation gewonnenen Kenntnisse sowie der sich daraus ergebender Implikationen für Theorie und Praxis. Dabei wird besonders auf das weiterentwickelte Krisenmanagementmodell auf Mikroebene (Kapitel 3.2) und die angewandten Stakeholderkriterien für das Krisenmanagement (Kapitel 4.2) als Beitrag zu einem akteursspezifischen Krisenmanagement in Destinationen eingegangen.

3 Organisations- und tourismusspezifische Krisenmanagementmodelle und deren Weiterentwicklung

In Anbetracht der hohen Krisenanfälligkeit des Tourismussektors sind spezialisierte Modelle für das Krisenmanagement erforderlich. Eine systematische Literaturübersicht analysiert 25 zwischen 1979 und 2019 entwickelte Modelle mit Tourismus- oder Organisationsfokus und zeigt deren teilweise mangelnde wissenschaftliche Methodik, uneinheitliche Terminologie und unzureichende Stakeholdereinbindung auf. Aufbauend darauf wird ein weiterentwickeltes Krisenmanagementmodell auf Mikroebene für touristische Destinationen vorgestellt.

Referenz: Khardani, C., & Schmude, J. (2024). 'A micro-level model for crisis management in tourism destinations – An interdisciplinary approach', Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management, 2024;32:e12619, https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5973.12619.

3.1 Systematische Literaturübersicht als narrative Synthese

Aus dem Vergleich von Krisenmanagementmodellen mit Tourismus- und Organisationsfokus ergeben sich die nachfolgenden drei Themen, die in Tabelle 3 dargestellt und im Folgenden kurz zusammengefasst werden.

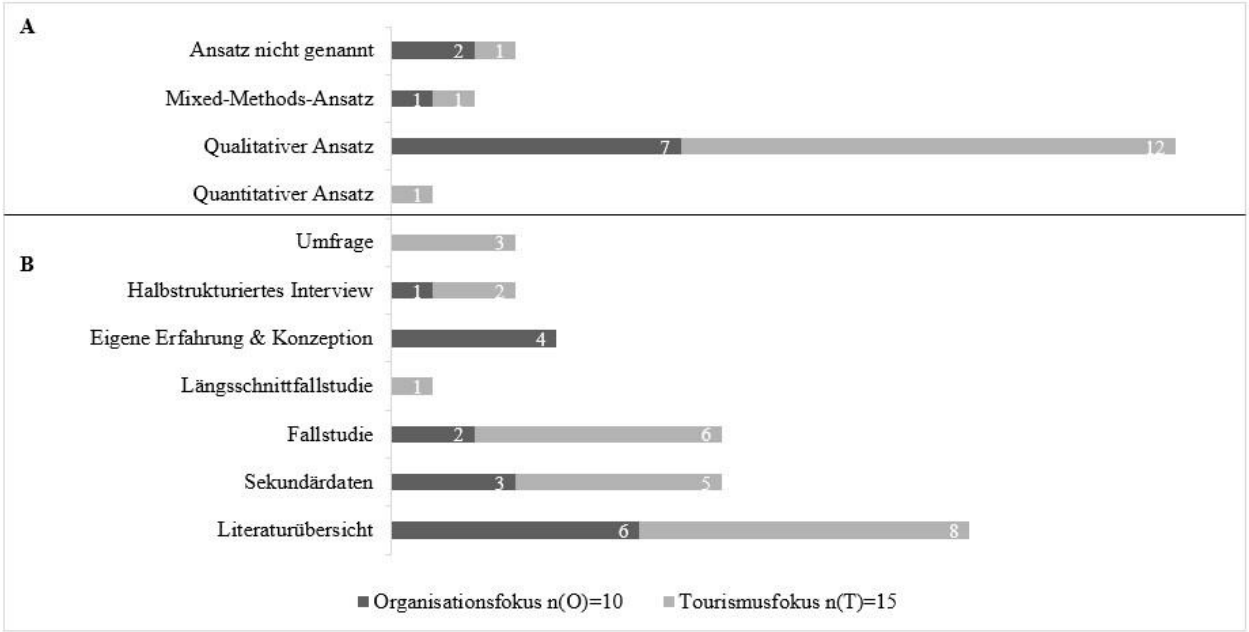
Tabelle 3: Identifizierte Schwerpunkte der systematischen Literaturübersicht von Krisenmanagementmodellen mit Tourismus- und Organisationsfokus 1979–2019 (Khardani & Schmude, 2024)

Schwerpunkte	**Zentrale Erkenntnisse**
Entstehung von Krisenmanagementmodellen	Wissenschaftliche Krisenmanagementmodelle basieren auf Managementliteratur, bei der Methodenangaben häufig fehlen. Empirische Methoden und Modellüberprüfungen sind oftmals nicht ausgewiesen.
Terminologie in Krisenmanagementmodellen	Verwendung des Krisenlebenszyklus und der Krisenmanagementphasen ist inkonsistent und undurchsichtig.
Besonderheiten von Krisenmanagementmodellen mit touristischem Fokus	Konzentration hauptsächlich auf externe Krisen. Es fehlen häufig Einbeziehung und Differenzierung von Stakeholdern.

3.1.1 Entstehung von Krisenmanagementmodellen

Die Ursprünge moderner Krisenmanagementmodelle mit organisatorischem Fokus lassen sich auf die US-amerikanische Managementliteratur der 1970er und 1980er Jahre zurückführen. Obwohl einflussreiche Modelle wie jene von Fink (1986, S. 20), der National Governor's Association (1979, S. 19) oder Wilks und Moore (2004, S. 38) keinen akademisch fundierten Hintergrund aufweisen, sind sie für die vorliegende Einordnung relevant, da die Forschung häufig auf diese Modelle zurückgreift. Die meisten Krisenmanagementmodelle wurden in referierten Fachzeitschriften veröffentlicht, was durch das Peer-Review-Verfahren eine etablierte Form wissenschaftlicher Wissensverbreitung darstellt. Tourismusspezifische Modelle dominieren hier, da das Forschungsfeld vergleichsweise jung ist – das erste grafische Modell wurde von Faulkner veröffentlicht (2001, S. 144). Qualitative Methoden überwiegen (siehe Abbildung 1). Lediglich drei der analysierten Modelle basieren auf quantitativen Methoden (siehe Abbildung 1), was den Forschungsbedarf nach empirischer Fundierung unterstreicht (z. B. Casal-Ribeiro et al., 2023; Jiang et al., 2019; Mair et al., 2016; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019). Die Mehrheit der Modelle bleibt konzeptionell und ohne empirische Validierung (z. B. Wut et al., 2021). Ritchie und Jiang (2019) führen dies u. a. auf die Anwendung von Modellen auf Makroebene und auf Fallstudien auf Mikroebene zurück.

Abbildung 1: Ansatz (a) und Methodik (b; Mehrfachzuordnung) von Krisenmanagementmodellen mit Tourismus- und Organisationsfokus 1979–2019 (Khardani & Schmude, 2024)



3.1.2 Terminologie in Krisenmanagementmodellen

Die begriffliche Unterscheidung zwischen „Krise“ und „Katastrophe“ wurde bereits in Kapitel 1.1 ausführlich thematisiert. Uneinigkeit besteht auch hinsichtlich der Terminologie und Einteilung von Krisenlebenszyklus- und Krisenmanagementphasen. Vier Modelle mit Tourismusfokus zeigen eine klare Orientierung an Faulkners (2001) sechsstufigem Krisenlebenszyklusmodell, während die restlichen zehn keine einheitliche Terminologie oder Einteilung verwenden. In Theorie und Praxis sind die vier Krisenmanagementphasen RRRR (reduction, readiness, response, recovery), MPRR (mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery) und PPRR (prevention, preparedness, response, recovery) verbreitet – jedoch gehen nur vier der untersuchten Modelle auf RRRR bzw. MPRR ein; PPRR bleibt ungenutzt. Der Ursprung dieser Vierphasenmodelle wird auf die National Governor’s Association (1979) zurückgeführt, was ausschließlich von Crondstedt (2002) erwähnt wird.

Ähnlich der Uneinheitlichkeit im Umgang mit dem Krisenlebenszyklus zeigen sich auch bei der Benennung und inhaltlichen Ausgestaltung der Krisenmanagementphasen Inkonsistenzen und Unklarheiten, was möglicherweise auf die Unterscheidung zwischen strategischem Managementansatz und klassischem Krisenmanagementansatz zurückzuführen ist. Diese erschweren eine systematische Einordnung und sollten behoben werden, um eine einheitliche Grundlage für das Themenfeld zu schaffen. Eine konzeptionelle Angleichung beider Perspektiven erscheint notwendig, um die Vergleichbarkeit der Modelle zu gewährleisten und methodische Klarheit zu schaffen.

3.1.3 Besonderheiten von Krisenmanagementmodellen mit touristischem Fokus

Sönmez et al. (1999, S. 16–17) entwickelten das erste textbasierte tourismusspezifische Krisenmanagementmodell; Faulkner (2001) präsentierte das erste grafische Modell, das als Ausgangspunkt für die Forschung im touristischen Krisenmanagement gilt und als eines der wenigen Modelle später durch Fallstudien getestet und weiterentwickelt wurde. Darauf aufbauend entwarf Ritchie (2004, S. 674) ein strategisches Managementmodell. Die beiden letztgenannten Modelle gelten als die einflussreichsten in der Tourismusforschung (z. B. Casal-Ribeiro et al., 2023).

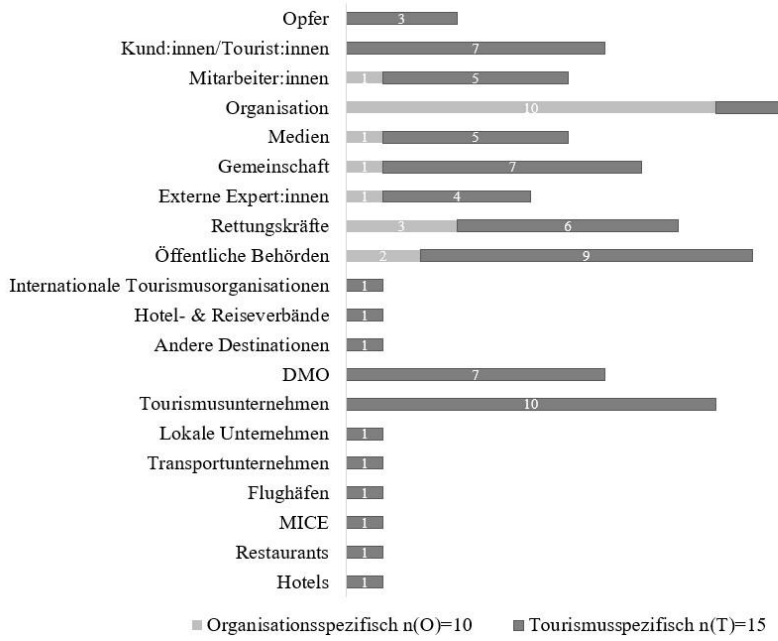
Ein Großteil der analysierten Modelle verfolgt einen universellen Ansatz, da Krisen in der Regel alle Phasen des Krisenlebenszyklus durchlaufen – unabhängig von ihrer Art, jedoch mit unterschiedlicher Intensität (z. B. Fink, 1986; Mitroff, 1988). Acht der untersuchten tourismusspezifischen Modelle fokussieren ausschließlich auf externe Krisen. Fünf Modelle behandeln explizit Katastrophen wie Naturereignisse, vermutlich aufgrund ihres plötzlichen Auftretens und massiven

Schadenspotenzials. Vier Modelle konzentrieren sich auf den Terrorismus, wobei drei dieser Modelle in direktem zeitlichem Zusammenhang mit den Anschlägen der frühen 2000er Jahre veröffentlicht wurden (z. B. USA 2001, Bali 2002, Madrid 2004, London 2005). Die starke Ausrichtung auf externe Schocks verdeutlicht das Fehlen einer konsistenten Definition von Krise und Katastrophe. Die touristische Anfälligkeit für solche Ereignisse wird in der Tourismusforschung dabei als Hauptgrund genannt; jedoch bleibt unklar, wie die Branche auf interne oder schleichende Krisen wie den Klimawandel reagieren kann. Auch die vorliegende Dissertation greift diese Fragestellung nicht explizit auf, da sie einen anderen Forschungsschwerpunkt setzt. In der Forschung sollte jedoch überprüft werden, ob differenzierte Ansätze nötig sind oder ein universelles Modell weiterentwickelt werden kann.

Acht von 25 der untersuchten Modelle mit Tourismus- und Organisationsfokus nehmen ausschließlich eine interne Perspektive ein, ohne dabei externe Stakeholder zu berücksichtigen. Modelle mit Tourismusschwerpunkt integrieren dabei häufiger Stakeholder (siehe Abbildung 2). Hervorzuheben ist, dass Opfer lediglich in tourismusbezogenen Modellen thematisiert werden, obwohl sie auch bei anderen Krisen relevant sind (siehe Abbildung 2). Die Rolle der Tourist:innen bleibt dabei vage: Es ist unklar, ob sie als direkt betroffen, zu evakuierend oder potenziell zukünftig reisend zu verstehen sind. Zudem bleibt die Stakeholderanalyse oft oberflächlich. Zwar nennen rund zwei Drittel der tourismusbezogenen Modelle touristische Unternehmen und etwa die Hälfte auch DMOs, jedoch spezifizieren nur Stafford et al. (2002) sowie Paraskevas und Arendell (2007) konkrete Stakeholdergruppen (siehe Abbildung 2). Wichtige Stakeholder wie Reiseveranstalter oder DMCs, die in der Praxis zentrale Rollen im Krisenmanagement einnehmen, werden in keinem der Modelle erwähnt.

Konsens besteht darüber, dass die besonderen Herausforderungen des Tourismussektors – insbesondere die Vielzahl beteiligter Stakeholder durch die starke Fragmentierung der Branche – berücksichtigt werden müssen (z. B. Berbekova et al., 2021; Casal-Ribeiro et al., 2023; Mair et al., 2016). Kooperation und Koordination sind dabei zentrale Erfolgsfaktoren (Mair et al., 2016).

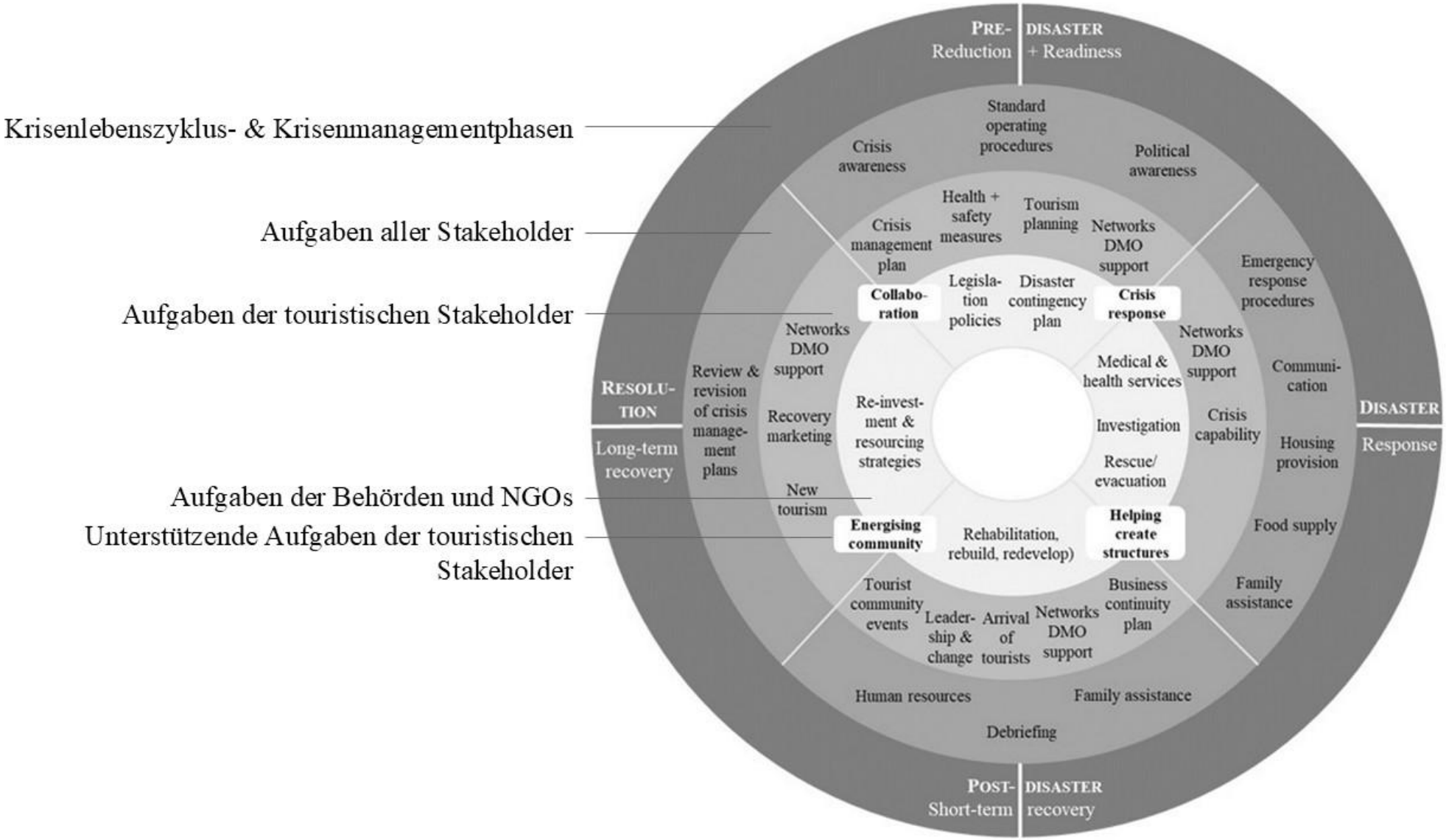
Abbildung 2: Arten von Stakeholdern in Krisenmanagementmodellen mit Tourismus- und Organisationsfokus 1979–2019 in Gesamtzahl (Mehrfachzuordnung) (Khardani & Schmude, 2024)



3.2 Krisenmanagementmodell auf Mikroebene in touristischen Destinationen

Die zuvor aufgezeigten Unklarheiten unterstreichen die Notwendigkeit eines tourismusspezifischen Krisenmanagementmodells, das konzeptionelle Lücken gezielt adressiert. Als geeignete Grundlage wurde der integrative Ansatz von Muskat et al. (2015, S. 111) gewählt, der den Krisenlebenszyklus mit konkreten Aufgaben für zwei zentrale Stakeholdergruppen verbindet: (1) touristische Stakeholder sowie (2) Behörden und NGOs. Eine erweiterte Version dieses Modells basiert auf der detaillierten Ausarbeitung von Wilks und Moore (2004, S. 38) und wurde durch Elemente aus den Modellen von Agustan und Kausar (2019, S. 36), Faulkner (2001, S. 144), Hystad und Keller (2008, S. 159) sowie Xu und Grunewald (2009, S. 109) ergänzt. Das daraus entwickelte Mikro-Modell in Abbildung 3 zielt darauf ab, klare Handlungsempfehlungen für jede Stakeholdergruppe entlang der Phasen einer Krise zu liefern und somit zur praktischen Umsetzbarkeit auf Mikroebene beizutragen.

Abbildung 3: Krisenmanagementmodell auf Mikroebene in touristischen Destinationen basierend auf Agustan und Kausar (2019), Faulkner (2001), Hystad und Keller (2008), Muskat et al. (2015), Wilks und Moore (2004) und Xu und Grunewald (2009) (Khardani & Schmude, 2024)



4 Rolle der Stakeholder im Management touristischer Krisen in Destinationen

In Kapitel 3 wurde herausgearbeitet, dass die touristischen Stakeholder in bestehenden Krisenmanagementmodellen mit touristischem Fokus nicht näher benannt und betrachtet werden. Daher analysiert das folgende Kapitel diese Stakeholder, deren Rolle und versucht auf Grundlage verschiedener Stakeholderansätze die Zusammenarbeit bei der Bewältigung von touristischen Krisen in Destinationen zu verbessern.

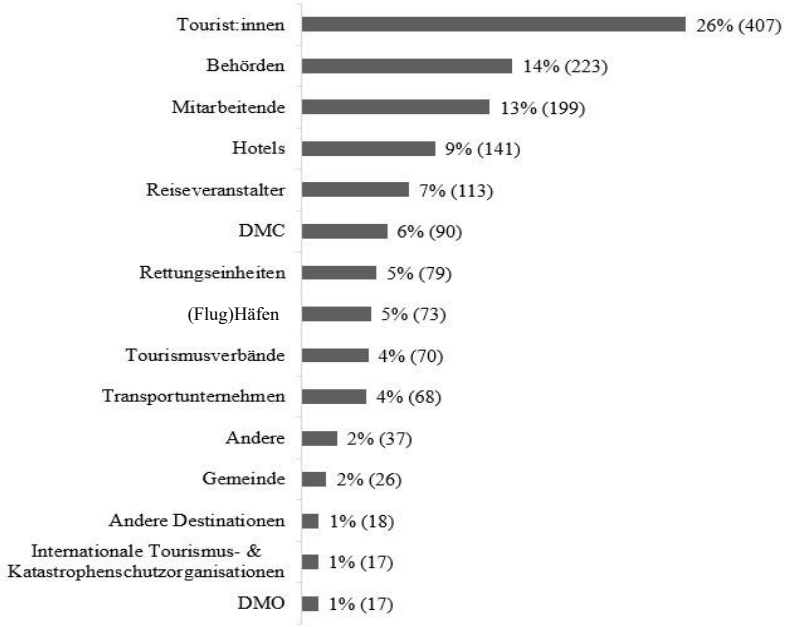
Referenz: Khardani, C. (2025): 'Tourism crisis management does not stop in a destination's front yard. Why stakeholder collaboration needs to cross borders', Zeitschrift für Tourismuswissenschaft, Vorab-Onlinepublikation, https://doi.org/10.1515/tw-2025-0010.

4.1 Identifikation der Stakeholder und deren Rolle im touristischen Krisenmanagement

Aufbauend auf Kapitel 3.1.3 wurden die in Abbildung 2 genannten Stakeholder mithilfe von MAXQDA 24 durch Textsuche und Auto-Codierung identifiziert und anschließend manuell validiert, um sicherzustellen, dass ausschließlich krisenbezogene Nennungen berücksichtigt wurden. Zur Vermeidung von Doppelzählungen erfolgte innerhalb eines Satzes jeweils nur eine Codierung pro Stakeholder. Stakeholder aus derselben Stakeholdergruppe wie die Befragten wurden nur dann codiert, wenn ein expliziter Bezug zu Wettbewerbern bestand. Die Stakeholderanalyse identifiziert 14 Stakeholder im Krisenmanagement touristischer Destinationen.

Tourist:innen stellen dabei die größte Stakeholdergruppe dar (siehe Abbildung 4), welche in der Fachliteratur bisher jedoch wenig Beachtung finden (z. B. Pyke et al., 2018). Ein wirksames Krisenmanagement sollte die Bedürfnisse der Tourist:innen in den Mittelpunkt stellen und Schutzmaßnahmen wie die Bereitstellung medizinischer Versorgung, die Organisation von Rückführungen oder die Fortsetzung des Aufenthalts gewährleisten.

Abbildung 4: Beteiligte Stakeholder am Krisenmanagement in Tourismusdestinationen: Subcode-Statistik der Stakeholder in Prozent und absoluten Zahlen (n=1578) (Khardani, 2025)



Hotels nehmen eine Schlüsselrolle im touristischen Krisenmanagement ein. Aufgrund ihrer Infrastruktur, Expertise in Gästebetreuung und ihrer Funktion als sogenannte sichere Zufluchtsorte sind sie zentrale Akteure im Krisenfall (z. B. Kodijat, 2012; Muskat et al., 2015; Nguyen et al., 2017; Sheehan & Ritchie, Brent J. R., 2005). Mit einer in der Karibik durchschnittlichen Auslastung von 66,6 Prozent (Britton, 2025) kommen sie sowohl für Tourist:innen als auch für die lokale Bevölkerung als Notunterkunft in Frage. Eine enge Kooperation mit Behörden ist daher von essenzieller Bedeutung.

Als Vermittler zwischen Quellmärkten und Destinationen übernehmen *DMCs* im Krisenfall vielfältige Aufgaben und sind über ihre Tourismusverbände auch institutionell in die staatlichen Strukturen eingebunden. Sie fungieren als Beobachter vor Ort und als Informationsgeber im Krisenfall, wobei sie eine hohe Verantwortung für die Einleitung geeigneter Maßnahmen tragen. Ihre Rolle ist somit sowohl operativ als auch strategisch, indem sie Informationsströme lenken und Entscheidungsprozesse begleiten. Interessanterweise wurden, soweit der Autorin bekannt, DMCs in der bisherigen Tourismusforschung zum Krisenmanagement nicht berücksichtigt.

Tourismusverbände nehmen eine zentrale Rolle im Krisenmanagement ein, indem sie Informationen verbreiten, Reaktionsmaßnahmen koordinieren und die Kommunikation zwischen dem privaten und öffentlichen Sektor fördern (Interviewpartner:innen 5DMC_DR, 26DMC_DR; 1TA_DR, 11DMC_DR). In der Dominikanischen Republik agieren Organisationen wie Asonahores und OPETUR als institutionelle Vermittler zwischen Hotels, DMCs und öffentlichen

Behörden. Auf Dominica ist die DHTA mit dieser Funktion betraut. Eine vergleichbare Institution in Deutschland ist der DRV.

Reiseveranstalter koordinieren Maßnahmen im Quellmarkt eng mit dem Auswärtigen Amt und dem Deutschen Reiseverband (DRV), sind Teil von Krisenstäben und tragen auf Grundlage der EU-Pauschalreiserichtlinie 2015/2302 Verantwortung für das Wohlergehen der Gäste. Ihre Rolle in der Krisenkommunikation und Organisation von Rückführungen ist entscheidend (z. B. Morakabati et al., 2017). Ihre Handlungsfähigkeit hängt jedoch stark von der Informationslage aus der Destination ab (z. B. Derham et al., 2022).

Behörden gestalten den operativen Rahmen für die Tourismusorganisationen sowohl in der Destination als auch im Quellmarkt, wobei die Vielzahl beteiligter Stellen gleichzeitig eine Herausforderung darstellt (z. B. Pennington-Gray et al., 2014a). Angesichts dieser Interdependenz ist die Abstimmung von Krisenmanagementstrategien zwischen dem öffentlichen und dem privaten Sektor von wesentlicher Bedeutung für die Förderung einer resilienten Tourismusbranche (z. B. Goktepe et al., 2024). Folglich ist es wichtig, dass der Tourismussektor von den öffentlichen Behörden wahrgenommen wird, um die spezifischen Bedürfnisse der Branche wirksam in Krisenmanagementpläne einzubeziehen (z. B. Filimonau & Coteau, 2020).

4.2 Anwendung von Stakeholderkriterien für eine verbesserte Zusammenarbeit in der Krise

Im Zentrum der Stakeholdertheorie steht die Kategorisierung von Interessengruppen, um Organisationen eine effektivere Interaktion und Steuerung dieser Gruppen zu ermöglichen (z. B. Freeman, 1984). Im Tourismuskontext ist sie ein nützliches Instrument zur Analyse der Rollen und Wahrnehmungen von Stakeholdern im Destinationsmanagement (z. B. Beritelli, 2011). Im Krisenmanagement dient sie dazu, relevante Stakeholder zu identifizieren, deren Einfluss zu analysieren und geeignete Strategien zur Krisenbewältigung zu entwickeln (z. B. Morakabati et al., 2017). Der Erfolg im Umgang mit Krisen hängt dabei wesentlich von der frühzeitigen und fortlaufenden Kooperation informierter Stakeholder ab (z. B. Morakabati et al., 2017). Eine umfassende Literaturrecherche zu Stakeholderkriterien, die für den Destinationskontext geeignet sind, wurde durchgeführt. Dabei wurden vier Ansätze gewählt: der Stakeholdertyp nach Beritelli (2011), der Stakeholdereinfluss nach Clarkson (1995), der Grad der Interaktion nach Podnar und Jancic (2006) sowie die Stakeholderart nach Mitchell et al. (1997). Die Auswahl dieser Ansätze erfolgte gezielt, da sie bereits eine differenzierte Klassifizierung von Stakeholdern erlauben und teilweise auch schon in der touristischen Krisenforschung Anwendung fanden. Dadurch bieten sie

eine theoretisch robuste Grundlage, um touristische Stakeholder im Krisenkontext klar zu positionieren. Nachfolgend werden die induzierten Stakehoderansätze kurz skizziert.

Clarkson (1995) unterscheidet primäre Stakeholder, die für das Überleben der Organisation essenziell sind (z. B. Anteilseigner:innen, Mitarbeiter:innen, Kund:innen), von sekundären Stakeholdern, die indirekt Einfluss nehmen können, etwa durch öffentliche Meinung oder Kampagnen.

Beritelli (2011) nimmt eine Einteilung der Stakeholder nach Institution, Unternehmen oder Einzelperson vor.

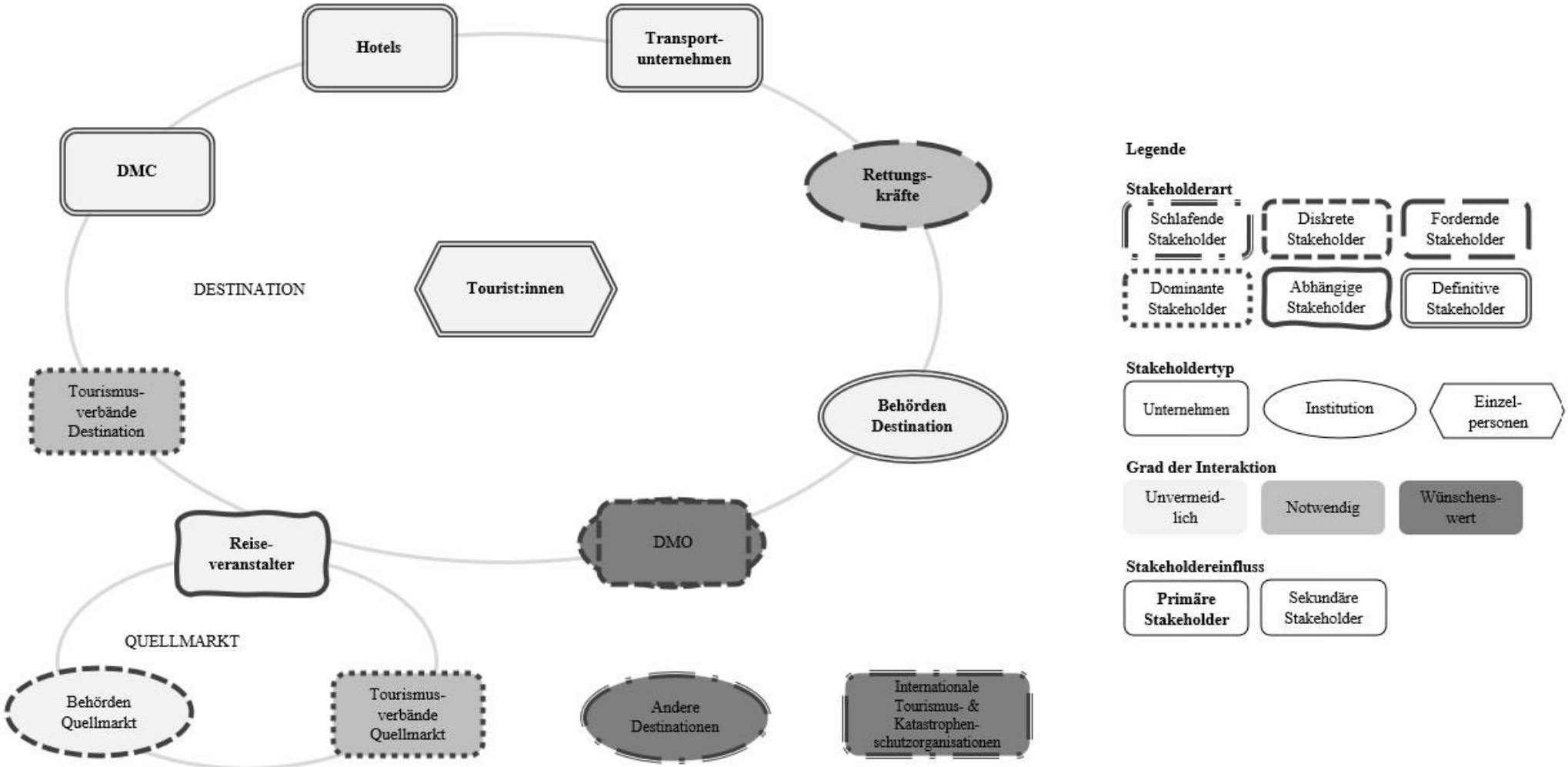
Podnar und Jancic (2006) unterscheiden drei Beziehungsebenen: unvermeidliche, notwendige und wünschenswerte Beziehungen, je nach Einflussstärke.

Mitchell et al. (1997) liefern die differenzierteste Typologie, indem sie die zentralen Attribute Macht, Legitimität und Dringlichkeit mit der Einstellung der Stakeholder gegenüber der Organisation und ihrer Bedeutung kombinieren. Daraus ergeben sich sieben Typen von Stakeholdern: schlafend, diskret, fordernd, dominant, gefährlich, abhängig und definitiv.

In Abbildung 5 werden die beschriebenen Ansätze auf die zuvor identifizierten Stakeholder in einer Krise auf die Destination und den Quellmarkt appliziert. Zum einen, um ihre Präsenz zunächst analytisch erfassbar zu machen, und zum anderen, um bestehende Strukturen des Krisenmanagements in touristischen Destinationen gezielt weiterzuentwickeln. Schlafende Stakeholder, wie *andere Destinationen* und *internationale Tourismus- und Katastrophenschutzorganisationen*, sind wünschenswert, aber sekundär. Die *Behörden* des Quellmarktes sind, auch wenn sie nach eigenem Ermessen handeln, zwangsläufig sekundäre Stakeholder; ihre Reise- und Sicherheitshinweise haben jedoch einen direkten Einfluss auf die *Reiseveranstalter* im Quellmarkt. Letztere bleiben trotz ihrer Abhängigkeit unvermeidliche Hauptakteure. *Rettungskräfte* sind anspruchsvolle, notwendige und primäre Stakeholder, während die *DMO* zwar diskret, aber wünschenswert und sekundär ist. *Tourismusverbände* sowohl in der Destination als auch im Quellmarkt werden als Unternehmen mit sekundärem, aber dominanten Einfluss klassifiziert. Sie sind notwendige Kooperationspartner, die die Kommunikation zwischen öffentlichem und privatem Sektor sicherstellen. *Tourist:innen* werden basierend auf den Ergebnissen der Studie als primäre und definitive Stakeholder dargestellt. Definitive Stakeholder – einschließlich *DMCs, Hotels, Transportunternehmen* und Behörden – sind sowohl unvermeidliche als auch primäre Akteure. Als maßgebliche Stakeholder werden ihnen die Attribute Macht, Legitimität und Dringlichkeit zugewiesen. Mojtahedi und Oo (2017) schlagen vor, dass durch die systematische Erhöhung dieser Attribute bei den spezifischen Stakeholdern auch die proaktiven Ansätze und der Einfluss auf Krisenmanagementprozesse zunehmen. Macht ermöglicht es den Stakeholdern, sozialen und politischen

Einfluss auszuüben, Legitimität stellt die Einhaltung von Normen und Mandaten sicher, und Dringlichkeit erleichtert die rasche Koordinierung von Reaktions- und Wiederherstellungsmaßnahmen (z. B. Mojtahedi & Oo, 2017). Macht, Legitimität und Einfluss werden durch einen kollaborativen Ansatz gefördert (z. B. Berlin & Carlström, 2008), der sich auf den Schutz des eigenen Wissens, den Aufbau vertrauensvoller Beziehungen, die Integration in etablierte Netzwerke und die Sicherstellung einer aktiven Beteiligung der Interessengruppen mit einem gemeinsamen Engagement zum gegenseitigen Nutzen stützt (z. B. Fyall et al., 2012). Eine zentrale Koordinationsinstanz, ausgestattet mit Legitimität, Macht, Fachwissen und Ressourcen, ist für eine wirksame Zusammenarbeit von Stakeholdern im Krisenfall unerlässlich (z. B. Jamal & Getz, 1995). Während in der Literatur häufig DMOs als geeignete Akteure genannt werden (z. B. Basurto-Cedeño & Pennington-Gray, 2016; Borzyszkowski, 2013), zeigen die Ergebnisse dieser Studie, dass in der Praxis Tourismusverbände die koordinierende Rolle übernehmen, was die Ergebnisse von Jiang und Ritchie (2017) unterstreichen. Damit diese ihre Aufgaben effektiv wahrnehmen können, müssen sie von Behörden formell mit Autorität und Legitimität ausgestattet werden. Eine interinstitutionelle Zusammenarbeit muss bereits vor einer Krise etabliert werden, beispielsweise durch regelmäßige Treffen und Workshops zur Stärkung von Netzwerken (z. B. Filimonau & Coteau, 2020). Dies gilt besonders für den stark fragmentierten Tourismussektor (z. B. Jiang & Ritchie, 2017).

Abbildung 5: Angewandte Stakeholder-Kriterien auf Stakeholder im Krisenmanagement von Destinationen auf Grundlage von Clarkson (1995), Beritelli (2011), Podnar & Jancic (2006) und Mitchell et al. (1997) (Khardani, 2025)



5 Besondere Rolle der Reiseveranstalter als raumprägende Akteure im Management touristischer Krisen

Reiseveranstalter nehmen im Krisenmanagement im Tourismus eine besondere Rolle ein, da sie aufgrund ihrer geographischen Entfernung zum Krisenort als Vermittler zwischen Reisenden und Destinationen fungieren. Obwohl sich viele Reiseveranstalter vorbereitet fühlen, ist die tatsächliche Krisenplanung – insbesondere bei den Klein- und mittelständischen Unternehmen – nach wie vor begrenzt. Die Branche zeigt eine neutrale Haltung gegenüber einem vorgeschlagenen Verhaltenskodex, was die Notwendigkeit einer stärkeren institutionellen Unterstützung unterstreicht.

Referenz: Khardani, C., Schmude, J., Namberger, P. (2024) 'Crisis planning among tour operators: an evaluation of small, medium-sized and large enterprises', Int. J. Tourism Policy, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp.207–221, https://doi.org/10.1504/IJTP.2024.137162.

5.1 Besonderheiten von Reiseveranstaltern

Reiseveranstalter im Quellmarkt spielen eine wichtige Rolle für die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung einer Destination (z. B. Becken, 2013). Da Pauschalreisen eine beliebte Reiseform in Europa sind, stellen sie z. B. in Deutschland die überwiegende Mehrheit der Tourist:innen in den klassischen Warmwasserdestinationen und üben somit einen erheblichen Einfluss auf die betreffenden Destinationen aus, was ihnen eine beträchtliche Verhandlungsmacht in Bezug auf Preise und Bettenkapazitäten verleiht (z. B. Aguiló et al., 2003). Dies gilt besonders für die traditionellen Pauschalreisedestinationen wie Spanien, Griechenland, die Türkei, Ägypten oder die Dominikanische Republik (z. B. Picazo & Moreno-Gil, 2018). Große, vertikal integrierte Reiseveranstalter, die Flugverbindungen und ihre eigenen touristischen Dienstleistungen kontrollieren, können Destinationen für internationale Tourist:innen gestalten und sogar schließen, was zu einer hohen Abhängigkeit für diese Destinationen führen kann, sollten sich diese lediglich auf bestimmte Quellmärkte und Reiseveranstalter konzentrieren (z. B. Picazo & Moreno-Gil, 2018).

Folglich nehmen Reiseveranstalter auch im Krisenmanagement eine besondere Rolle ein. Vor nahezu zwei Jahrzehnten prognostizierte Glaesser (2006), dass das Krisenmanagement ein integrales Instrument der Qualitätsstrategie von Reiseveranstaltern sein werde. Dabei betonte er die Idee der Pauschalreise, die es Reisenden ermöglicht, sorglos und sicher zu reisen, was ihnen bei der Buchung von Einzelleistungen verwehrt bleibt. Laut einer Forsa-Umfrage des Deutschen Reiseverbandes (DRV, 2019) ist ein zuverlässiges Krisenmanagement der zweitwichtigste Grund dafür, eine Pauschalreise zu buchen. Das war bei 96 Prozent der 1005 befragten Deutschen der Fall, die in den letzten drei

Jahren mindestens eine Reise unternommen haben. Dies deckt sich mit den Erkenntnissen aus der Forschung, wonach die Sicherheit für Reisende von wesentlicher Bedeutung ist und auch für die Entscheidung über das Reiseziel ausschlaggebend ist (z. B. Karl et al., 2017). Da sich transnationale Reiseveranstalter in der Regel in räumlicher Entfernung zum Ort der Krise befinden, bleiben ihre Büros davon unberührt (z. B. Derham et al., 2022). Das Krisenmanagement von Reiseveranstaltern fokussiert sich demnach primär auf den professionellen Umgang mit Kund:innen während einer Krise in der Destination, dazu gehört (z. B. Glaesser, 2006):

(1) Umbuchung von Unterkünften,
(2) Änderung der Reiseroute,
(3) Organisation von alternativen Rückflügen (Evakuierung),
(4) erste psychologische Betreuung der betroffenen Tourist:innen,
(5) Umgang mit verstorbenen Tourist:innen und Unterstützung von deren Angehörigen.

Die besondere Sorgfaltspflicht der Reiseveranstalter gegenüber ihren Kund:innen ist aus zwei Gründen wichtig: Zum einen bringt die bereits diskutierte vulnerable Gruppe der Tourist:innen (z. B. Faulkner, 2001) eine ethische Verpflichtung mit sich, zum anderen weist die EU-Pauschalreiserichtlinie 2015/2302 über Pauschalreisen und verbundene Reiseleistungen den Reiseveranstaltern eine rechtliche Verpflichtung zu, den Kund:innen unverzüglich und angemessen zu helfen. Dies umfasst die Organisation von Unterkünften und alternativen Reisearrangements auf Kosten des Reiseveranstalters sowie die Bereitstellung notwendiger Informationen.

5.2 Krisenplanung bei deutschen Reiseveranstaltern

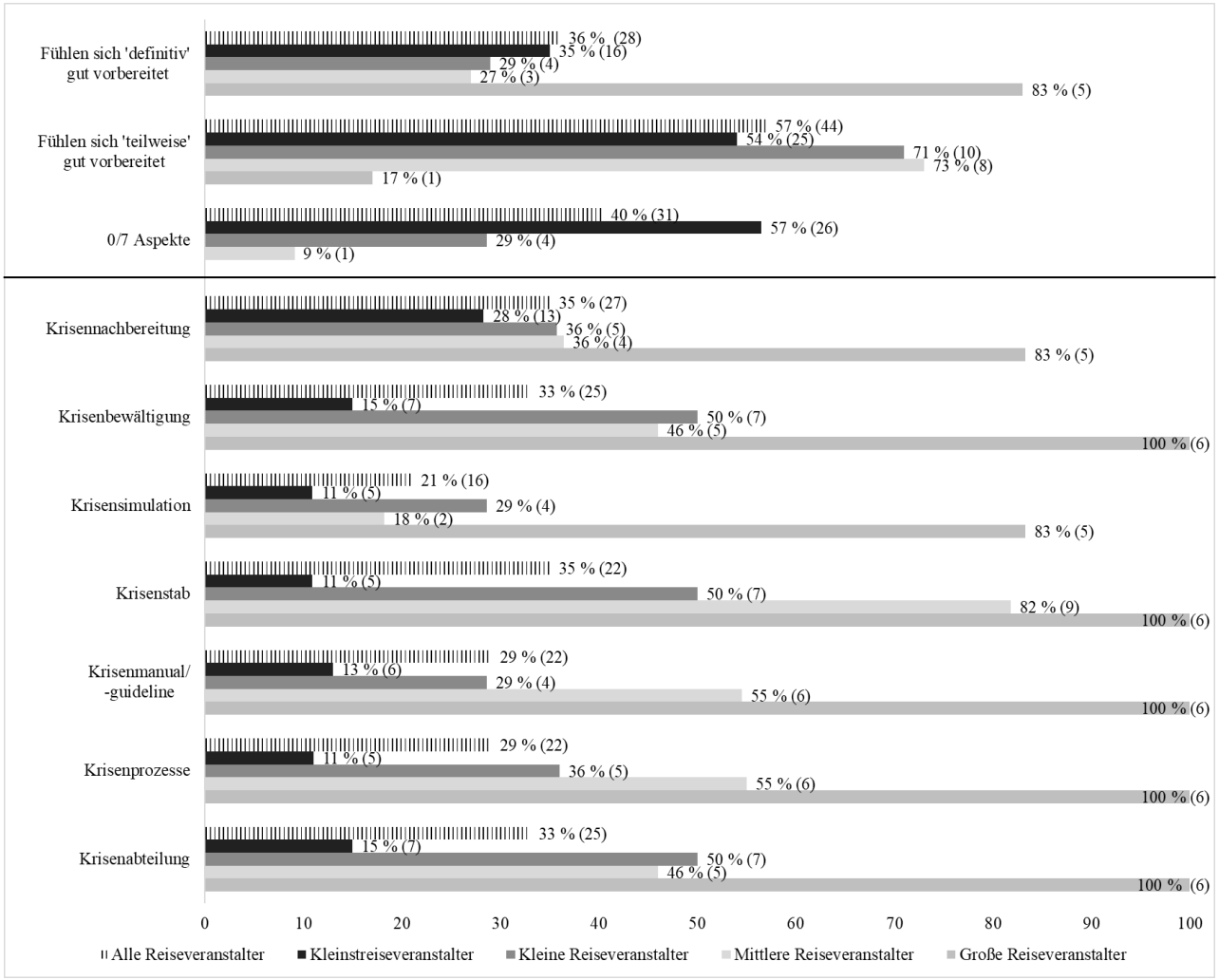
Vor dem Hintergrund der Bedeutung des Krisenmanagements bei Reiseveranstaltern nehmen Khardani et al. (2024) in ihrer explorativen Studie auf Grundlage einer Online-Umfrage mit 77 teilnehmenden Unternehmen eine Bewertung der Krisenplanung deutscher Reiseveranstalter über alle Unternehmensgrößen hinweg vor (siehe Tabelle 4).

Tabelle 4: Unternehmensgrößen (basierend auf Empfehlung EU 2003/361 der EU-Kommission), Grundgesamtheit und Stichprobe des Fragebogens (Khardani et al., 2024)

Unternehmensgröße	**Anzahl der Mitarbeitenden**	**N=599**	
		n=77 absolut	**n in Prozent**
Groß	≥ 250	6	8%
Mittel	50 – 249	11	14%
Klein	10 – 49	14	18%
Mikro	1 – 9	46	60%

Ein Vergleich zwischen der Selbstwahrnehmung der Unternehmen und dem tatsächlichen Niveau der Krisenplanung weist eine erhebliche Diskrepanz auf (siehe Abbildung 6).

Abbildung 6: Selbstwahrnehmung und Aspekte der Krisenplanung von Reiseveranstaltern nach Unternehmensgröße, in Prozent und in absoluten Zahlen (Khardani et al., 2024)



Bei den Kleinstreiseveranstaltern fühlen sich 89 Prozent der Unternehmen „definitiv“ oder „teilweise“ gut vorbereitet, obwohl 57 Prozent keinen einzigen Aspekt der Krisenplanung abdecken. Alle kleinen und mittleren Unternehmen fühlen sich „auf jeden Fall“ oder „teilweise“ gut vorbereitet, während 29 Prozent bzw. 9 Prozent keinen der Aspekte abdecken. Bei den großen Unternehmen gibt es keine Diskrepanz zwischen der Selbsteinschätzung und dem tatsächlichen Stand der Krisenplanung.

Der tatsächliche Grad der Krisenplanung unter den befragten deutschen Reiseveranstaltern ist gering, da 40 Prozent keine Aspekte der Krisenplanung in ihrem Unternehmen anwenden (siehe Abbildung 6). Große Reiseveranstalter stechen positiv hervor, da sie fünf von sieben Parametern vollständig

abdecken. Kleinstunternehmen nehmen ebenfalls eine Sonderstellung ein, denn sie weisen in allen Aspekten das niedrigste Niveau der Krisenplanung auf (siehe Abbildung 6). Die vorliegende Studie zeigt, dass der Grad der Krisenplanung unter deutschen Reiseveranstaltern mit 60,3 Prozent vergleichsweise gering ist. Im Gegensatz dazu zeigen sich in anderen Ländern wie Australien (72,7 Prozent) und Großbritannien (80,4 Prozent) deutlich höhere Werte (Rousaki & Alcott, 2006; J. Wang & Ritchie, 2011). Die Forschung versucht, diesen besonders bei KMUs verbreiteten Umstand mit fehlenden Ressourcen wie Personal- und Finanzausstattung (z. B. Cioccio & Michael, 2007; Runyan, 2006; Wang & Ritchie, 2011) und Zeit und Wissen (z. B. Cioccio & Michael, 2007) zu erklären. Die vermeintliche Komplexität der Krisenplanung (Coombs, 2019), auch bezeichnet als „Mythos der Planung“ (Evans & Elphick, 2005, Übers. d. Verf.) scheint abschreckend auf KMUs zu wirken.

Große Reiseveranstalter weisen die größte Übereinstimmung zwischen wahrgenommener Krisenbereitschaft und tatsächlicher Krisenplanung auf, während bei kleineren Unternehmen eine erhebliche Diskrepanz zwischen Wahrnehmung und Realität besteht. Zunächst wurde für diese Divergenz das Modell der Attitude-Behaviour-Gap als Erklärung herangezogen, welches den Unterschied zwischen der Einstellung und dem tatsächlichen Handeln eines Individuums beschreibt (z. B. Chatzidakis et al., 2016). Die Kommentare im qualitativen Teil der Umfrage verweisen insgesamt auf ein gering ausgeprägtes Bewusstsein für die Notwendigkeit eines strukturierten Krisenmanagements, was auch durch die Ergebnisse von Gruman et al. (2011) gestützt wird. Bollrich und Warren (2016) führen solche Einstellungen unter anderem auf psychologische und kontextuelle Barrieren zurück, die in kleinen und mittleren Unternehmen vorherrschen.

Deutsche Reiseveranstalter nehmen im Allgemeinen eine neutrale bis pessimistische Haltung gegenüber einem Verhaltenskodex und einem Gütesiegel als Zertifizierung für das Krisenmanagement ein. Diese Beobachtung korreliert mit den Ergebnissen von Pennington-Gray et al. (2014b), die bei US-Reisenden in Bezug auf Zertifizierungen zur Krisenvorsorge eine ähnliche neutrale Haltung feststellen. Diese Wahrnehmung könnte auf ein begrenztes Verständnis solcher Kodizes zurückzuführen sein. Die vorliegende Studie zeigt, dass die Unterstützung für einen Verhaltenskodex mit der Unternehmensgröße zunimmt, wobei Kleinstunternehmen – obwohl sie den geringsten Grad an Krisenplanung aufweisen – die geringste Zustimmung aufweisen, während große Reiseveranstalter „eher keinen“ Bedarf für einen Verhaltenskodex sehen. Dies ist vermutlich auf die bereits vorhandene professionelle Krisenplanung zurückzuführen. Auffallend ist, dass große Reiseveranstalter die höchste Bereitschaft zur Teilnahme zeigen.

Sowohl die Ergebnisse der vorliegenden Studie als auch die Fachliteratur deuten darauf hin, dass die mangelhafte Krisenplanung behoben werden sollte. Die bereits erwähnte EU-Pauschalreiserichtlinie 2015/2302 bietet hierfür einen rechtlichen Rahmen, sollte aber federführend von Institutionen behandelt werden. Die Wissenschaft ist sich einig, dass übergeordnete Institutionen als Katalysatoren oder Mentoren insbesondere bei KMUs eine bedeutende Rolle bei der Implementierung von Krisenmanagementstrukturen einnehmen können, um das Krisenbewusstsein zu schärfen (z. B. Hystad & Keller, 2006). Wang und Ritchie (2012) argumentieren, dass Tourismusverbände dabei eine besondere Rolle spielen, da sie als Plattform für die Ausbildung und als Netzwerk zwischen Tourismusunternehmen dienen. Die vorliegende Studie bestätigt diesen Befund, denn 84 Prozent der befragten Reiseveranstalter (alle großen, kleinen und mittleren Unternehmen) sind Mitglied eines Reiseverbandes.

6 Fazit und Ausblick

6.1 Beitrag der Dissertation zu einem akteursspezifischen Krisenmanagement in Destinationen

Das Modell auf Mikroebene für das Krisenmanagement in Destinationen (Abbildung 3) stellt einen ersten Schritt dar, um das Krisenmanagement stärker auf die Interessen einzelner Stakeholdergruppen auszurichten. Das Modell integriert dabei den Krisenlebenszyklus und die Phasen des Krisenmanagements und hebt die unterschiedlichen Verantwortlichkeiten der beiden zentralen Stakeholdergruppen (touristische Stakeholder; Behörden und NGOs) hervor. Es unterstreicht die Notwendigkeit einer koordinierten Beteiligung dieser Stakeholdergruppen in allen Krisenphasen in Destinationen. Diese Gruppen sollten jedoch detaillierter aufgeschlüsselt werden, um das Verständnis komplexer Stakeholderstrukturen während einer Krise zu verbessern (z. B. Casal-Ribeiro et al., 2023). Die Aufgaben von Behörden und NGOs sind möglicherweise nicht umfassend dargestellt. An dieser Stelle könnte die zukünftige Forschung ansetzen, um das Bild zu vervollständigen. Eine Stärke des Modells ist dessen qualitative Bestätigung, die sich im Beitrag von Khardani (2025) widerspiegelt, jedoch zusätzlich quantitativ evaluiert werden sollte.

Die in Abbildung 5 angewandten Kriterien für Stakeholder im Krisenmanagement von Destinationen legen den Einfluss dieser im Krisenmanagement von Destinationen offen. Dabei wird besonders die grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Destination und ihren Quellmärkten deutlich. Die tragende Rolle externer Stakeholder wie Reiseveranstalter, Behörden, benachbarter Destinationen und internationaler Katastrophenschutzorganisationen wie CDEMA in der Karibik wird dabei hervorgehoben. Während der letztgenannte Ansatz bereits thematisiert wurde (z. B. Filimonau & Coteau, 2020), ist die Beteiligung von DMCs in der Destination und von Akteur:innen im Quellmarkt noch nicht ausreichend erforscht. Die vorliegende kumulative Dissertation soll dazu einen substanziellen Beitrag leisten.

6.2 Implikationen für Theorie und Praxis

Die Dissertation bewertetet in der einleitenden Literaturübersicht bestehende Krisenmanagementmodelle mit Tourismus- und Organisationsfokus kritisch. Dabei werden erhebliche theoretische und methodische Lücken festgestellt. Die Forschung sollte sich intensiv mit den Definitionen, Formulierungen und Konzepten des Krisenlebenszyklus und der Krisenmanagementphasen auseinandersetzen, bevor sie ein neues Krisenmanagementmodell (weiter-)entwickelt. Eine präzise und einheitliche Begrifflichkeit sollte nicht nur innerhalb der Tourismusforschung, sondern disziplinübergreifend – etwa

in der Katastrophen-, Resilienz- und Nachhaltigkeitsforschung – als gemeinsame Grundlage etabliert werden.

Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass die Rolle der touristischen Stakeholder in den analysierten Krisenmanagementmodellen weitestgehend ignoriert wurde. Es ist davon auszugehen, dass sich touristische Akteur:innen bei der Entwicklung von Strategien zum Krisenmanagement an Modellen orientieren, die ihre spezifische Rolle innerhalb des Prozesses explizit berücksichtigen. Das Modell auf Mikroebene für das Krisenmanagement in Destinationen (siehe Abbildung 3) trägt diesem Bedürfnis insofern Rechnung, als dass es die Perspektive und Handlungsoptionen einzelner Akteur:innen auf Destinationsebene gezielt einbezieht. Das Modell veranschaulicht zudem, dass eine enge Kooperation touristischer Stakeholder sowie deren intensivere strategische Einbindung ein wesentliches Ziel behördlicher Steuerungs- und Planungsprozesse darstellen sollte.

In der Literatur wird die Notwendigkeit einer legitimierten und ressourcenstarken Koordinationsinstanz für die Krisenzusammenarbeit betont, die bislang häufig den DMOs zugeschrieben wird; die vorliegenden Ergebnisse legen jedoch nahe, dass Tourismusverbände diese Funktion wirksamer übernehmen könnten. Um dies zu ermöglichen, müssen die Behörden diese Verbände entsprechend befähigen. Die vorliegende Dissertation unterstreicht darüber hinaus die Bedeutung der Zusammenarbeit im Vorfeld einer Krise. Dies ist besonders in einer Branche wichtig, die von kleinen Unternehmen dominiert wird (z. B. Jiang & Ritchie, 2017). Wie Interviewpartnerin 21PA_DR Pos. 129 feststellte, „kann eine touristische Destination aufgrund eines schlechten Krisenmanagements scheitern“ (Übers. d. Verf.), was die Dringlichkeit eines strukturierten, proaktiven Engagements der Stakeholdergruppen in der Destination unterstreicht. Es besteht die Notwendigkeit, sowohl das Krisenmanagement selbst als auch die Zusammenarbeit im Tourismussektor weiter zu professionalisieren.

Vertrauen, offene Kommunikation und gemeinsames Verständnis sind für eine effektive Zusammenarbeit der Stakeholder im touristischen Krisenmanagement unerlässlich (z. B. Jiang & Ritchie, 2017). Aufbauend auf der vorliegenden, überwiegend qualitativ ausgerichteten Arbeit bietet sich für zukünftige Forschung die Möglichkeit, die Beziehungen sowie die Wirkungszusammenhänge zwischen den befragten Stakeholdergruppen vertiefend zu untersuchen, beispielsweise in Destinationen mit abweichenden Merkmalen oder mit quantitativen Methoden wie der in der Tourismusforschung häufig angewendeten sozialen Netzwerkanalyse (z. B. Hartman et al., 2020).

Im letzten Kapitel der vorliegenden Dissertation wird die Rolle von Reiseveranstaltern im touristischen Krisenmanagement genauer beleuchtet. Hier zeigt sich eine Diskrepanz zwischen der hohen

Selbsteinschätzung der deutschen Reiseveranstalter hinsichtlich ihrer Krisenbereitschaft und der tatsächlich geringen Umsetzung, insbesondere bei KMUs. Obwohl bisherige Studien Hindernisse für die Krisenplanung in KMU erkannt haben, sind wirksame Strategien zur Überwindung dieser Hindernisse noch nicht ausreichend erforscht. Die vorliegende Arbeit schlägt die Einführung eines Verhaltenskodexes als unterstützende Krisenmanagementinfrastruktur vor, stellt dabei jedoch eine begrenzte Akzeptanz in der Branche fest. Da die meisten teilnehmenden Reiseveranstalter Mitglieder von Reiseverbänden sind, könnten diese hier als Impulsgeber für die Einführung eines Verhaltenskodex dienen. Mehrere Tourismusverbände wie der Deutsche Reiseverband (DRV), der Rat der australischen Reiseveranstalter (CATO) und der Pazifik-Asien Reiseverband (PATA) haben Krisenleitfäden für die Branche veröffentlicht. Diese enthalten konkrete Hinweise zur Umsetzung von Krisenmanagement sowohl in der Destination als auch in Tourismusunternehmen. Dies zeigt, dass sich die Tourismusverbände der Notwendigkeit bewusst sind. Allerdings ist ein höheres Maß an Engagement, vor allem in Form von Überzeugungsarbeit und Schulungen speziell für KMU erforderlich. Die Rolle der Tourismusverbände im Krisenmanagement von Destinationen zeichnet sich also auch hier ab. Zur Unterstützung dieses Anliegens regt die Autorin an, verbraucherorientierte Studien zur Einstellung gegenüber derartigen Kodizes durchzuführen. Sofern ein Einfluss auf das Kaufverhalten empirisch nachgewiesen werden kann, könnten daraus zusätzliche Impulse für deren Implementierung abgeleitet werden.

7 Langfassung der Publikationen

7.1 A micro-level model for crisis management in tourism destinations: An interdisciplinary approach

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A micro-level model for crisis management in tourism destinations: An interdisciplinary approach

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Abstract

Crisis management models aim to prevent, prepare and successfully overcome a crisis. The tourism industry is particularly prone to crises and thus requires adequate models to deal with crises and disasters. Several researchers developed crisis management models for tourism crises. As scholars call for a more holistic approach, this systematic literature review examines 25 crisis management models with organisational and tourism focus between 1979 and 2019 applicable to the tourism field. A textual narrative synthesis is used as methodological approach to analyse and understand the identified models, not only formally but also content-wise. The findings show that crisis terminology is not consistent, that the crisis lifecycle and crisis management processes are used disparately and that stakeholder involvement within the models is low. As a result, a new model for destination crisis management is created on a micro-level with aligned terms and phases.

KEYWORDS

crisis, crisis management framework, crisis management model, destination crisis management, disaster, systematic literature review, tourism crisis management

1 | INTRODUCTION

The term crisis management was first used outside its original field—medicine—in 1962, in connection with the handling of the Cuban missile crisis by the US government (Kamei, 2019). At first, it was solely related to political dimensions, but its use was extended to corporate crises in the 1970s, mainly through the work of Fink (1986). In the field of tourism research, crisis management gained sad prominence after the terrorist attacks in the United States in 2001 (Jiang et al., 2019). What differentiates the tourism industry from other industries is that it is highly exposed to crises triggered by external shocks (e.g., natural or human-caused) which cannot be predicted, prevented or controlled (e.g., Evans & Elphick, 2005; Ritchie et al., 2011; Sönmez et al., 1999). Those crises can hit a tourism destination partly or completely and can seal the fate of this holiday location or even of the whole country. It is therefore not surprising that tourism researchers developed numerous models to predict, prepare for and master those crises.

When opening up a new field of research, it is common to start by reading literature reviews to get an overview of the current terminology and concepts. Striving to learn about crisis management models applicable to the tourism field, the authors studied six literature reviews (see Section 2.2) which suggest 39 different models of which 32 are mentioned only once. This literature review therefore aims to shed light to the 'jungle' of models applied to crisis management in tourism by providing a holistic overview and assessment of these models with organisational and tourism focus. This aligns with several tourism researchers who propose an in-depth engagement with theory development in an interdisciplinary context (Aliperti et al., 2019; Casal-Ribeiro et al., 2023; Jiang et al., 2019; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019). Beyond this, the further purpose of this article is to present a comprehensive micro-level model for crisis management in tourism destinations by synthesising the findings of the literature review. The following research questions contribute to the achievement of these two research objectives.

RQ 1. *Which elements should be considered to categorise and analyse the crisis management models?*

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RQ 2. *Are the crisis management models comparable and/or compatible?*

RQ 3. *Which features are commonly shared by all crisis management models?*

RQ 4. *How can the findings of the analysis of crisis management models contribute to the development of an enhanced crisis management model with tourism focus?*

The theoretical contribution of this article is to prepend an extensive examination of terminology use in crisis and disaster management literature tracing back the origins of common crisis management models applied to tourism to provide a better understanding of those terms and concepts. While the newly developed micro-level model aims to support tourism practitioners in their strategical crisis management considerations by giving them a holistic concept of crisis management, the necessary actions and groups involved.

The paper comprises six parts: The introduction (Section 1) is followed by a detailed literature review (Section 2) comprising a definition of related terms and a summary of pertinent existing literature reviews on crisis management models. The methodology Section 3 explains the use of textual narrative synthesis for the study and describes data collection and analysis. The descriptive results (Section 4) are presented concisely, examining the elements defined in Section 3. Based on those insights, a new micro-level model for crisis management in tourism destinations is introduced in the prescriptive results. Section 5 is dedicated to the discussion of the findings and gives answers to the research questions. The article closes with the conclusion (Section 6), which picks up theoretical and practical implications, addresses the study's limitations and recommends future research topics.

2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 | Terminology: Tourism destination, crisis, disaster, crisis management and disaster management

2.1.1 | Tourism destination

A *tourism destination* can be defined from various perspectives. The United Nations; World Tourism Organization, (2010) takes a spatial approach describing a tourism destination as the place visited by a tourist which is central to their travel decision. According to Becken (2013) tourism destinations are geographic areas where tourism activities play an economic role. Those areas may be a country, region or city but as well a hotel, a cruise ship or a specific tourist attraction such as an architectural site (Buhalis, 2000). Consequently, tourism destinations can be culturally or environmentally cohesive and are usually managed by destination management organisations (DMO). Through an economic approach, a tourism destination allocates all relevant elements for a tourist stay which are a significant offer of attractions (e.g., landscape, nature, climate, cultural attractions) and the respective infrastructure such as accommodation and recreation facilities (Buhalis, 2000; Vajčnerová et al., 2013). A precise definition as foundation for this article is the managerial approach of Bieger (1998, p. 7) who compares a tourism destination to a strategic business unit 'because the markets linked to the products are quite stable'. Consequently, crisis management models with organisational focus are suitable for the purpose of this research.

2.1.2 | Crisis and disaster

Similar to the term 'destination', there is also no common definition for crisis, although the topic has been investigated extensively. A crisis is unpredictable but not unexpected (Coombs, 2019) and is characterised by its chaotic nature, uncertainty (Ritchie, 2008), time pressure and badly structured decisions due to unclear information as well as a complexity of the situation (Glaesser, 2006; Ritchie, 2008). In their definition, Wang and Ritchie (2011, p. 781) give a clear understanding of the term: '*Crisis* refers to any unplanned event or situation emerging from the internal or external environment of an organisation which can disrupt operations, threaten customers and employees physically and mentally, and endanger an organisation's financial status and future viability'. Some scholars follow Faulkner's (2001) thoughts considering a *disaster* an external event which can neither be avoided nor controlled by the organisation while a crisis is a self-inflicted event occurring from within an organisation.

2.1.3 | Crisis management and disaster management

Crisis Management seeks to teach an organisation in advance to deal with the stress it will face when a crisis occurs (Mitroff, 1988). It comprises the tasks, processes and actions defined to prevent and handle crises affecting an organisation (Glaesser, 2006). Crisis and disaster management concepts are rooted in different conceptual debates (Aliperti et al., 2019) which might be confusing for readers unfamiliar with the topic—especially as the definition for crisis and disaster management is identical and their application in academic literature is often used interchangeably. However, according to UNISDR (2016), *disaster management* encompasses the measures taken to prepare for, respond to and recover from a disaster. It is important to understand the difference between the two research streams: While disaster management mainly concentrates its policies and actions on a state with its government as main actor to achieve a specific condition (resilience), crisis management breaks down the concrete actions to stakeholders on a meso- or micro-level such as destinations, organisations or businesses. Crisis management often appears in the context of risk management and resilience. *Risk management* is a tool used to analyse and manage an organisation's exposure to risk in accordance with the organisation's strategic goals (Dorfman & Cather, 2012). *Resilience* means the ability of a system to

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respond to change by adaption while maintaining its core functions (Walker et al., 2004). It aims to achieve an overall state, while crisis management focusses on a point in time where a sudden shock (crisis) needs to be mastered. Consequently, crisis management can be considered a part of resilience.

In the crisis management literature, the terms 'model' and 'framework' are often used interchangeably. However, the dictionary defines a model as 'a smaller copy of a real object [idea in scientific context], often used to show how something works' (Cambridge Dictionary, 2014) while a framework is 'a system of rules, ideas, or beliefs that is used to plan something' (Cambridge Dictionary, 2014).

To ensure a clear understanding of the topic, a consistent terminology is used throughout this article:

- 'Model' for both models and frameworks.
- 'Crisis' summarising crises and disasters.
- 'Crisis management' including disaster management in terms of the disaster definition introduced by Faulkner (2001).

2.2 | Existing syntheses of crisis management models in tourism

There exists a comprehensive body of literature on crisis management in tourism. Therefore, researchers aim to structure this knowledge in several literature reviews. Among the 10 identified literature reviews of crisis management in tourism, 4 articles do not discuss those models at all (Aliperti et al., 2019; Estevão & Costa, 2020; Jiang et al., 2019; Mair et al., 2016) while 4 articles address crisis management models as side topic. Only two papers dedicate their research to an evaluation of crisis management models specifically.

2.2.1 | Crisis management models in tourism as side topic

Huang et al. (2008) develop an integrated crisis management framework for tourism recovery in Taiwan based on a devastating earthquake in 1999. The modelling was preceded by an analysis (no specific methodological approach mentioned) of 11 crisis management models published between 1986 and 2006. The models are classified into four approaches: lifecycle, strategic, action-oriented and integrated. Criticism and a research agenda are not thematised.

Ritchie and Jiang (2019) analyse 142 papers published between 1960 and 2018 on tourism risk, disaster and crisis management. In their thematic synthesis they shortly discuss nine crisis management models in tourism.

Berbekova et al. (2021) analyse 207 publications about crisis management in tourism and hospitality between 1986 and 2019 using a qualitative thematic analysis. They discover eight prominent topics in the literature of which one is crisis management models and approaches. In this context, they present five crisis management models in tourism classifying them in one group of academics who dedicate their models to the specific stages of crisis management at a certain time while the second group takes a holistic approach incorporating the crisis lifecycle into the crisis management phases. According to the authors all models share the core elements risk assessment, crisis management planning and importance of collective efforts.

Wut et al. (2021) evaluate 512 articles covering crisis management in the tourism and hospitality industry published between 1985 and 2020 using the preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analysis-method (PRISMA). They shortly describe five crisis management models both for organisations and for tourism specifically. They do not further comment on those models but propose in-depth-engagement with theory development.

2.2.2 | Crisis management models in tourism as main topic

An often-cited (e.g., Jiang et al., 2019; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019; Wut et al., 2021) overview of crisis management models is given by Evans and Elphick (2005). They briefly outline the approach and limitations of eight models from different disciplines without indicating a specific methodological approach. A reference is made to the '4Rs' of crisis management without referring to its origins. Reasons why they incorporate some models with for example psychological and sociological perspective while other crisis management models designed to manage organisational crises such as Fink (1986, p. 26) or Mitroff (1988, p. 19) are not mentioned, are not given. It furthermore remains unclear why models dealing with crisis management in tourism—except for Faulkner (2001, p. 144)—are not examined.

The latest review published by Casal-Ribeiro et al. (2023) represents the most comprehensive compilation of crisis management models in tourism and hospitality using meta-analysis. It precisely summarises the gaps and recommendations for research. The authors assess 14 key crisis management models between 2000 and 2022 according to crisis type and methodology, giving special attention to Covid-19-related models. They notice a change from models with a linear, sequential approach to more holistic, integrated and flexible crisis management processes over time. According to them, most models share certain elements such as risk assessment (in accordance with Berbekova et al., 2021), crisis planning (in accordance with Berbekova et al., 2021), crisis communication and mitigation but differ in conceptualisation and variables.

As outlined in the introduction, the above literature reviews present 39 models from different disciplines although models with focus on tourism crisis management prevail. Only seven models are mentioned in more than one review: Faulkner (2001) appears in all, followed by Ritchie (2004) in four articles. This is not surprising as both crisis management models have the highest influence in tourism crisis management literature.

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3 | METHODOLOGY

3.1 | Textual narrative synthesis

A systematic literature review of crisis management models in business and tourism management literature was conducted. Contrarily to the analytical approaches of Casal-Ribeiro et al. (2023) and Wut et al. (2021), the authors follow the qualitative approaches from Berbekova et al. (2021) and Ritchie and Jiang (2019) using an in-depth content-related methodology to focus on the contextual approach. An appropriate instrument for this purpose is a textual narrative synthesis which is generally used to identify main themes across various studies (Popay et al., 2006) and aims 'to describe the existing literature; identifying the scope of what has been studied, the strength of evidence available, and gaps that need to be filled' (Lucas et al., 2007, p. 6). By attempting 'to generate new insights or knowledge', it offers a 'more systematic and transparent' approach than the narrative review summarising study findings (Mays et al., 2005, p. 12).

3.2 | Conceptual design

The research steps are illustrated in Figure 1 where data sources and search strategies are outlined as well.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria follow the standard data extraction sheet which is introduced in Table 1.

The following models were excluded from the analysis:

- Crisis models describing the different stages of a crisis or the susceptibility of a crisis.
- Crisis (management) models with psychological, medical, financial, educational or legislative approach.
- Crisis management models with focus on one element of the crisis management phase such as preparedness or recovery.
- Covid-19 models, as they are designed specifically for pandemics and can therefore not be transferred to other crises.

4 | RESULTS

4.1 | Descriptive results

Appendix Table A1 provides an overview of the identified 25 crisis management models created between 1979 and 2019 listing criteria 1–10 set in Table 1. Ten models are dedicated to the management of a crisis within an organisation (n(O) = 10), while the remaining 15 are tourism-specific (n(T) = 15), dealing either with destinations (8), tourism organisations (2), both (4) or public authorities (1). The literature review reveals three salient topics to which criteria 7–14 are assigned and which are presented hereafter.

- Emergence of crisis management models: Criteria 7–10
- Wording in crisis management models: Criteria 11 and 12
- Peculiarities of crisis management models with tourism focus: Criteria 13 and 14.

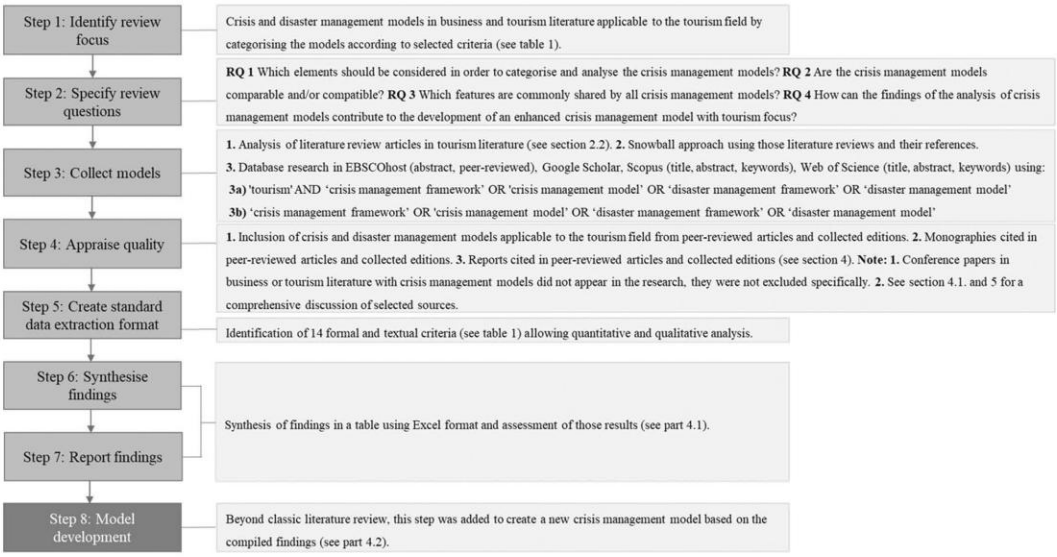

FIGURE 1 Research steps of textual narrative synthesis based on Popay et al. (2006) in consideration of annotations of Mays et al. (2005).

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TABLE 1 Standard data extraction format for crisis management models with organisational and tourism focus.

Criteria number	Name of criteria	Content of criteria
1	Authors	Name of author(s)
2	Year	Year of publication
3	Model	Name of crisis management model
4	Research focus	Organisational; tourism
5	Contextual focus	(Tourism) organisation; destination; public authority
6	Presentation format	Text; graphic; table
7	Type of source	Book (chapter); journal article; report; conference paper
8	Name of source	Name of book; journal; report; conference paper
9	Approach	Qualitative; quantitative; mixed
10	Methodology	Type
11	Crisis lifecycle	Applied/not applied; number of stages; elements
12	Crisis management phases	Applied/not applied; number of stages; elements
13	Type of crisis	General; specific
14	Stakeholder involvement	Number; type

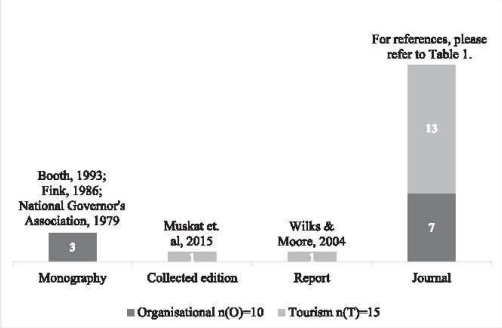

FIGURE 2 Source of crisis management models with organisational and tourism focus between 1979 and 2019 in total numbers.

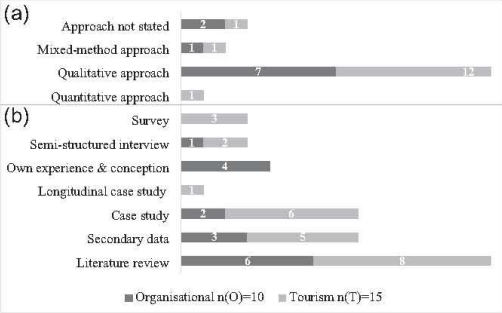

FIGURE 3 Approach and methodology used for crisis management models with organisational and tourism focus between 1979 and 2019 in total numbers (single assignment in (a), multiple assignment in (b)).

4.1.1 | Emergence of crisis management models

The crisis management models with organisational focus appearing in *monographies* (see Figure 2 and Appendix Table A1) represent the origins of crisis management models which have their roots in US-American management literature of the 1970s and 1980s. Although those models do not offer any academic background, the authors consider them for the literature review to gain an understanding of the development of crisis management models over time. The model appearing in the *report* of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is broadly known as the 'PATA crisis model' (Wilks & Moore, 2004, p. 38). It is commonly accepted among practitioners and scholars and often cited in peer-reviewed tourism crisis management literature. Therefore, it is the only report to pass the quality appraisal outlined in the methodology section. The model published as *book chapter in the collected edition* is included because it meets all inclusion criteria outlined in Section 2. The book's publisher (Ritchie, 2015) is one of the most influential scholars in the field of tourism (crisis) management what makes the source of the document scientifically reliable. Figure 2 shows that the majority of crisis management models are published as *journal articles*, which represents the most renowned way of presenting reputable scientific knowledge due to the peer-review process. Models with tourism focus dominate because research in tourism crisis management is a relatively young field (the first graphical model was published by Faulkner in 2001). Five models with tourism focus are published in *Tourism Management* starting in 2000, presumably because this journal is one of the most influential in tourism research (see Appendix Table A1). Three models (one with organisational and one with tourism focus) are released in *Disaster Prevention and Management* (see Appendix Table A1), which shows that tourism crisis management can also be routed in crisis management literature rather than focussing only on the tourism segment.

Figure 3 reveals that most models are based on qualitative methodologies while only one model uses a quantitative approach. It clearly indicates that literature reviews dominate followed by secondary data using existing models and case studies (see Appendix Table A1). An interesting finding are the three models which do not state their methodological approach. An attempt to explain this

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outcome is given in the discussion section. A small but not less surprising detail is that the model of Stafford et al. (2002, p. 39) with tourism focus is based on a case study but lacks any further explanations.

4.1.2 | Wording in crisis management models

The different usage of the terms 'crisis' and 'disaster' were shortly discussed in Section 2. Scientists also disagree about the language regarding lifecycle and management phases of a crisis. Fink (1986) introduces the four-stage crisis model in 1986, paving the way for numerous succeeding crisis models. Mitroff (1988) adds the fifth stage, 'learning', to the cycle. However, 14 models do not use these crisis lifecycles as basis. Table 2 shows that—with the two exceptions mentioned before—only models with tourism focus do. A certain consistency can be observed in four models following Faulkner's (2001) approach by dividing a crisis into six stages (see Table 2). Within the remaining six models, the number and terminology of crisis stages are not consistent at all (see Table 2).

Researchers and practitioners both use the commonly accepted four crisis management phases known as RRRR (reduction, readiness, response, recovery), MPRR (mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery) or PPRR (prevention, preparedness, response, recovery). Interestingly, its origins are only mentioned by Crondstedt (2002, p. 10), who traces the model back to the National Governor's Association (1979, pp. 9, 19). In total, only four models use the phases RRRR and MPRR, while none of the analysed models uses PPRR (see Table 2). Interestingly, Huang et al. (2008, p. 217) name those phases 'actions' instead of crisis management phases, while Lin Moe and Pathranarakul (2006) name them 'activities'. In contrast, the latter allocate 'prediction, warning, emergency relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction' to the management phases. Huang et al. (2008) assign 'formation, implementation, evaluation' to their 'normative crisis management process'.

4.1.3 | Peculiarities in crisis management models with tourism focus

Sönmez et al. (1999, pp. 16–17) are the first researchers to textually describe a crisis management model with tourism focus. Faulkner (2001) introduces the first graphical crisis management model with tourism focus whereby he paves the way for crisis management research in tourism. As one of the only models in tourism crisis management, his model is later developed further and tested in case studies by other researchers. Ritchie (2004, p. 674) develops a strategic management framework based on Faulkner's anatomy of crises. Both Faulkner's and Ritchie's work are the most popular approaches used in research.

Figure 4 shows that the majority of analysed models offers a *universal* view on crisis management. Having a deeper look at models with tourism focus, it becomes clear that most of them are dedicated to specific crises, namely disasters (in terms of inevitable external events) and terrorism in particular (see Figure 4).

Table 3 shows that eight of the 25 analysed models concentrate solely on the organisation internally without mentioning any other stakeholders. Like the previously discussed types of crises, crisis management models with tourism focus tent to involve stakeholders more extensively as the ones with organisational focus (see Figure 5). Interestingly, *victims* as directly affected persons are mentioned only in models with tourism focus although they are as well present in crises with organisational focus. The degree of involvement of *tourists* and *customers* is unclear: It remains open whether these are defined as victims affected physically and/or mentally by the crisis, as tourists on site who need to relocate or as future tourists. Figure 5 reveals that tourism stakeholders are not broken down in detail except for the terms *tourism businesses* which are mentioned by approximately two thirds of crisis management models with tourism focus and *DMOs* which are mentioned by almost half of the respective models. Stafford et al. (2002) and Paraskevas and Arendell (2007) stand out being the only researchers in tourism crisis management specifying some of the tourism industry partners (see Figure 5 and Table 3). *Tour operators* and *Destination Management Companies (DMCs)* have a significant stake in crisis management, dealing directly with the affected tourists, but are not mentioned in any of the models.

4.2 | Prescriptive results—Developing a micro-level model for crisis management in tourism destinations

The observations shared in the last subsection call for a tourism-focussed crisis management model which takes up the identified ambiguities. The integrated approach of Muskat et al. (2015, p. 111) is considered an appropriate basis to deal with those ambiguities as they offer a clear crisis lifecycle considering two groups of stakeholders and their tasks during each phase of a crisis. Those stakeholders are grouped into (1) tourism stakeholders and (2) public authorities and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) such as nonprofit organisations or communities to point out their influencing and complex functions in a crisis. Wilks and Moore (2004) build a detailed extension which is why both models are synthesised. Additionally, the enhanced model is supplemented by distinctive elements from the models of Agustan and Kausar (2019, p. 36); Faulkner (2001); Hystad and Keller (2008, p. 159); Xu and Grunewald (2009, p. 109). The micro-level model for crisis management in tourism destinations shown in Figure 6 aims to give a clear understanding of the crisis lifecycle combined with the crisis management phases and concrete actions for the stakeholder groups mentioned above in each phase.

The model is explained in the following by introducing the four wheels and the intention behind the model.

1. *Outer wheel:* Crisis lifecycle and crisis management phases were combined. As for the crisis lifecycle, the authors follow Hystad

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TABLE 2 Crisis lifecycle and crisis management phases in crisis management models with organisational and tourism focus between 1979 and 2019, sorted by number of stages in crisis lifecycle and year.

Authors (1)	Year (2)	Research focus (4)	Number and name ofcrisis lifecycle stages (11)	Number and name ofcrisis management phases (12)
Pennington-Gray	2014	Tourism	2 (predisaster, postdisaster)	0
Moe and Pathranarakul	2006	Tourism	3 (before, during, after)	4—MPRR—Mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery
Hystad and Keller	2008	Tourism	3 (predisaster, postdisaster, resolution)	0
Fink	1986	Organisational	4 (prodromal, acute, chronic, resolution)	0
Mitroff, Pauchant and Shrivastava	1988	Organisational	4 (detection, crisis, repair, assessment)	4—Prevention/preparation, damage limitation, short-/long-term recovery, learning
Muskat, Nakanishi and Blackman	2015	Tourism	4 (prediaster, disaster, postdisaster, recovery)	4—Preparedness (prevention + mitigation), emergency response (rescue + relief), short-term response (rehabilition + rebuild + redevelop), long-term strategy (renew)
Faulkner	2001	Tourism	6 (pre-event, prodromal, emergency, intermediate, long-term recovery, resolution)	2—Risk assessment, disaster contingency plans
Ritchie	2004	Tourism	6 (pre-event, prodromal, emergency, intermediate, long-term recovery, resolution)	3—Crisis/disaster prevention + planning, strategic implementation, resolution + evaluation + feedback
Huang, Tseng and Petrick	2007	Tourism	6 (pre-event, prodromal, emergency, intermediate, long-term recovery, resolution)	4—RRRR—Reduction, readiness, response, recovery
Racherla and Hu	2009	Tourism	6 (precrisis [pre-event, predromal], during crisis [emergency, intermediate], postcrisis [long-term, resolution, feedback])	3—Prevention + planning, strategic implementation, resolution + evaluation + feedback
Agustan and Kausar	2019	Tourism	6 (pre-event, prodromal, emergency, intermediate, long-term recovery, resolution)	3—Preventive planning, management plan, recovery plan
Smith	1990	Organisational	0	3—Crisis of management, operational crisis, crisis of legitimation
Smith and Sipika	1993	Organisational	0	3—Crisis of management, operational crisis, crisis of legitimation
Roberts	1994	Organisational	0	3—Chaos, confused, clear
National Governor's Association	1979	Organisational	0	4—MPRR—Mitigation, preparedness (planning + warning), response, recovery (short-term + long-term)
Stafford, Yu and Armoo	2002	Tourism	0	4—Preparation, crisis training, crisis planning, crisis practice
Wilks and Moore	2004	Tourism	0	4—RRRR—Reduction, readiness, response, recovery
Pelfrey	2005	Tourism	0	4—Prevention, awareness, response, recovery
Mitroff	1988	Organisational	0	5—Signal detection, preparation/prevention, containment/damage limitation, recovery, learning
Paraskevas and Arendell	2007	Tourism	0	5—Formation of taskforce, exposure analysis, strategy formulation, strategy implementation + management, strategy monitoring + maintenance

(Continues)

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TABLE 2 (Continued)

Authors (1)	Year (2)	Research focus (4)	Number and name ofcrisis lifecycle stages (11)	Number and name ofcrisis management phases (12)
Xu and Grunewald	2009	Tourism	0	5—Preparation + awareness strategy, disaster communication, resource management, stakeholder collaboration, resolution
Burnett	1998	Organisational	0	6—Goal formation, environmental analysis, strategy formulation, strategy evaluation, strategy implementation, strategic control

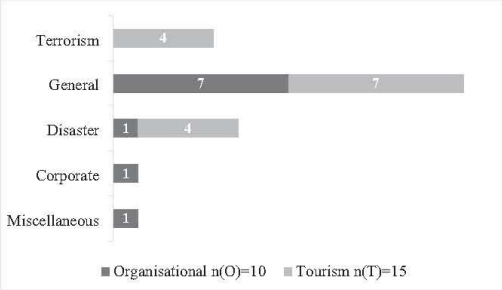

FIGURE 4 Types of crises with organisational and tourism focus between 1979 and 2019 in total numbers.

and Keller (2008) and Muskat et al. (2015), using four phases clearly describing the timeline of a crisis: Before (predisaster), during (disaster), shortly after (postdisaster) and after (resolution). The RRRR model also used by Wilks and Moore (2004) was applied to the crisis management phases with a slight adjustment: The last 'R' is divided into 'short-term response' and 'long-term response' because it is necessary to understand that a crisis does not end right after the first response which is characterised by pragmatic decision, but that it takes much more time to recover which in contrast requires strategical decisions.

2. *Second wheel:* Added by the authors to describe the tasks of all stakeholders in the destination. It clearly shows the crucial role of tourism stakeholders sharing significant tasks with the public authorities and how they could contribute to successful crisis handling. Restaurants as indirect tourism stakeholders and hotels as direct stakeholders could provide food while the latter could also supply housing along with the public shelters arranged by the state.
3. *Third wheel:* Tasks of tourism stakeholders in a destination to highlight their specific role in crisis management. Their supportive tasks (bold and in boxes) are placed between the wheel of tourism stakeholders and the public authorities and NGOs. A special role is assigned to DMOs as binding element between tourism providers and public authorities to support actors with their knowledge and networks.
4. *Inner wheel:* Tasks of public authorities and NGOs were collected from those crisis management models naming them which are Faulkner (2001), Xu and Grunewald (2009), Muskat et al. (2015) and Agustan and Kausar (2019).

5 | DISCUSSION

To analyse the 25 crisis management models with organisational and tourism focus, it turns out to be important to understand the origins of those models. Their examination furthermore reveals inconsistencies in wording and puts peculiarities of models with tourism focus into focus. All three topics are discussed hereafter.

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TABLE 3 Type of crisis and stakeholder appearance in crisis management models with organisational and tourism focus between 1979 and 2019, sorted by research focus, type of crisis and year.

Authors (1)	Year (2)	Research focus (4)	Type of crisis (13)	Number and type of stakeholders (14)
Mitroff, Pauchant and Shrivastava	1988	Organisational	Corporate	1—Organisation
Roberts	1994	Organisational	Disaster (inevitable external event)	1—Organisation
Fink	1986	Organisational	Universal	1—Organisation
Mitroff	1988	Organisational	Universal	1—Organisation
Smith	1990	Organisational	Universal	3—Organisation, rescuers, government
Smith and Sipika	1993	Organisational	Universal	6—Organisation, rescuers, government, shareholders, employees, other organisations
Booth	1993	Organisational	Universal	1—Organisation
Pauchant, Mitroff and Shrivastava	1991	Organisational	Universal	7—Oxternal experts, services in crisis management, local communities, intervening groups (police, media), stakeholders, activist groups
Burnett	1998	Organisational	Universal	1—Organisation
National Governor's Association	1979	Organisational	Miscellaneous (attacks, internal disturbances, natural disasters, technological hazards, energy and materials shortages)	1—Organisation
Faulkner	2001	Tourism	Disaster (inevitable external event)	8—Organisation, public/private sector agencies/organisations, industry stakeholder, employees, customers, community, victims
Moe and Pathranarakul	2006	Tourism	Disaster (inevitable external event)	5—National, provincial, district, subdistrict, village DMPC (Department of Mitigation and Prevention Committee)
Huang, Tseng and Petrick	2007	Tourism	Disaster (inevitable external event)	6—Government, public tourism organisation, private tourism organisation, taskforce with representatives from all industry groups, students, media
Muskat, Nakanishi and Blackman	2015	Tourism	Disaster (inevitable external event)	8—DMO, tourists, community, government, NGOs, tourism entities, hospitality industry, emergency organisations
Ritchie	2004	Tourism	Universal	8—Internal (employees, managers, shareholders), external (tourists, industry sectors, government agencies, public, media)
Wilks and Moore	2004	Tourism	Universal	4—Organisation, clients, victims, employees
Hystad and Keller	2008	Tourism	Universal	6—Emergency organisations, tourism organisations, tourism businesses, tourists, employees, media
Racherla and Hu	2009	Tourism	Universal	2—Tourism industry, hospitality industry
Xu and Grunewald	2009	Tourism	Universal	4—Government, private tourism sector, public, experts

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TABLE 3 (Continued)

Authors (1)	Year (2)	Research focus (4)	Type of crisis (13)	Number and type of stakeholders (14)
Pennington-Gray	2014	Tourism	Universal	14—Predisaster: Emergency managers, government, urban planners, engineers, NGOs, hospitality industry, DMO, citizens postdisaster: Emergency managers, government, medicial fields, sociologists, psychologists, economists, epidemiologists, hospitality industry, DMO, tourists, NGOs
Agustan and Kausar	2019	Tourism	Universal	6—Social and public facilities, disaster relief agencies, funding agencies, experts, insurance firms, investors
Sönmez, Apostolopoulos and Tarlow	1999	Tourism	Terrorism	5—DMO, local government officials, local travel and tourism industry professionals, community leaders, law enforcement officials
Stafford, Yu and Armoo	2002	Tourism	Terrorism	14—Guests, victims, employees, emergency teams, community, media, organisation, tourism stakeholder (hotels, restaurants, MICE, airports, transportation, local businesses, government tourism agencies)
Pelfrey	2005	Tourism	Terrorism	1—Organisation
Paraskevas and Arendell	2007	Tourism	Terrorism	12—DMO, tourism boards, government, hotel and travel associations, transport security administration, private security agencies, emergency services, international tourism bodies, other destinations, tourism stakeholders, local community, media

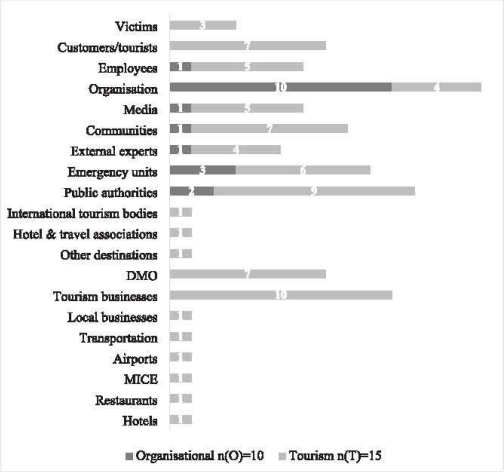

FIGURE 5 Types of stakeholders in crisis management models with organisational and tourism focus between 1979 and 2019 in total numbers (multiple assignment).

5.1 | The emergence of crisis management models

Interestingly, the models without any stated methodological approach (Fink, 1986; National Governor's Association, 1979; Wilks & Moore, 2004) are regardless among the most prominent within the scientific community. Presumably because they present (Fink, 1986) or can be traced back (Wilks & Moore, 2004 whose RRRR-model is based on the National Governor's Association, 1979) to the origins of models for managing a crisis. With solely three models based on quantitative approach (see Appendix Table A1), the study's results align with the tourism researchers' call for increased application of empirical methods (Casal-Ribeiro et al., 2023; Jiang et al., 2019; Mair et al., 2016; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019). Generally, a lack of model testing can be observed (Casal-Ribeiro et al., 2023; Mair et al., 2016; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019; Wut et al., 2021), as the majority of the analysed crisis management models are based on conceptual modelling without further testing. Ritchie and Jiang (2019) argue that the reason for scant testing might be partly the application of macro-level models to micro-level case studies. The authors share this assumption and therefore propose intensified research on a micro-level in conjunction with a proper crisis management model on a micro-level (see Section 4.2).

5.2 | Wording in crisis management models

As with the usage of the crisis lifecycle, an inconsistency and lack of clarity as regards the naming and content of crisis management phases can be observed and should be resolved to provide a clear baseline for the topic. Among the analysed model, researchers do not

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use the crisis management phases concisely. One explanation might be due to two different approaches: the strategic management approach and the crisis management approach. Consequently, alignment is necessary here to avoid confusion and to allow a comparability of models. The scientific community jointly criticises the lack of a clear crisis definition. Additionally, to the authors' knowledge the issues discussed above were not discussed yet. This is surprising because the framework of crisis management should be rigorously set before (further) developing any models.

5.3 | Peculiarities in crisis management models with tourism focus

It is assumed that a *universal* approach is chosen by most of the analysed models because a crisis usually passes the crisis lifecycle and all management phases independently of the type of crisis (Fink, 1986; Mitroff, 1988) but with varying intensity in each phase. Approximately 60% of the models deal with external crises solely: Five models concentrate on *disasters*, possibly because academics seek to find a manageable solution to deal with these events, which cannot be avoided (e.g., tropical storms, earthquakes, tsunamis) and therefore usually have the most devastating impact. Four models with tourism focus (see Table 3) centre on *terrorism*; three of them were published at the beginning of 2000, when terrorist activities targeting Western communities (e.g., New York and Washington DC 2001, Bali 2002, Madrid 2004, London 2005) increased rapidly. The circle around the discussion of a clear definition of crisis and disaster closes here as the focus of these models seems to be on external shocks only. An obvious reason is the already discussed vulnerability of the tourism field. However, it is worth questioning how the tourism industry deals with internal shocks or those crises which develop slowly (e.g., climate change). Discussions among researchers should continue on the necessity to develop models for different kind of crises or whether the 'one fits all' approach covers all eventualities and should be developed further. The scientific community agrees on the specific challenges the tourism industry faces during a crisis: First, the sheer number of stakeholders involved and second, the traditionally fragmented industry comprising numerous actors (Berbekova et al., 2021). Researchers should therefore focus on those challenges (Casal-Ribeiro et al., 2023; Mair et al., 2016), as collaboration and cooperation between the various stakeholders in a crisis are crucial (Mair et al., 2016).

Based on the preceding analyses, the research questions posed at the beginning can be answered.

RQ 1. *Which elements should be considered to categorise and analyse the crisis management models?*

The models were categorised according to 14 criteria, of which 8 were examined in depth. They could be assigned to three topics which became visible during the analysis: Emergence and wording in crisis management models and peculiarities in those models focussing on tourism. Methodology, crisis lifecycle, crisis management phases and stakeholder involvement provided most insights.

RQ 2. *Are the crisis management models comparable and/or compatible?*

Generally, compatibility is lacking for most of the models, primarily because of a lack of common basic terminology. These findings are surprising, as some models are further developments of existing ones. The most remarkable insight is the extensive neglect of stakeholders—tourism actors in particular—in the models. A lack of guidance both for practitioners and academics can be detected here.

RQ3 *Which features are commonly shared by all crisis management models?*

Crisis management as a cycle or repetitive process seems to be a common understanding among researchers, although consent is lacking regarding its components. The models acknowledge PPRR/MPRR/RRRR as elements of the crisis management phases. However, there is no consensus on the exact wording and actions. A common denominator, revealed in all models, is the complexity of the crisis management process itself and a clear endorsement regarding the necessity of crisis management models.

RQ 4. *How can the findings of the analysis of crisis management models contribute to the development of an enhanced crisis management model with tourism focus?*

The revealed findings unravelled in a structured and clear way facilitated an organised approach to combine all necessary elements to an enhanced micro-level model for destination crisis management model. This was done by clearly defining the crisis lifecycle and the crisis management phases and assigning specific tasks to the two stakeholder groups public authorities and NGOs and tourism stakeholders.

6 | CONCLUSION

This literature review strives to provide a comprehensive analysis of crisis management models which are discussed in tourism literature as applicable to the tourism field. Based on those findings, an enhanced crisis management model on micro-level is introduced to tackle the main challenges elaborated in the textual narrative synthesis which are summarised in the following thematic blocks: Emergence and wording of crisis management models and peculiarities in tourism-focussed models:

- Models cited in scientific literature are based on management literature without indication of methodological approach,
- Lack of empirical methods and model testing,

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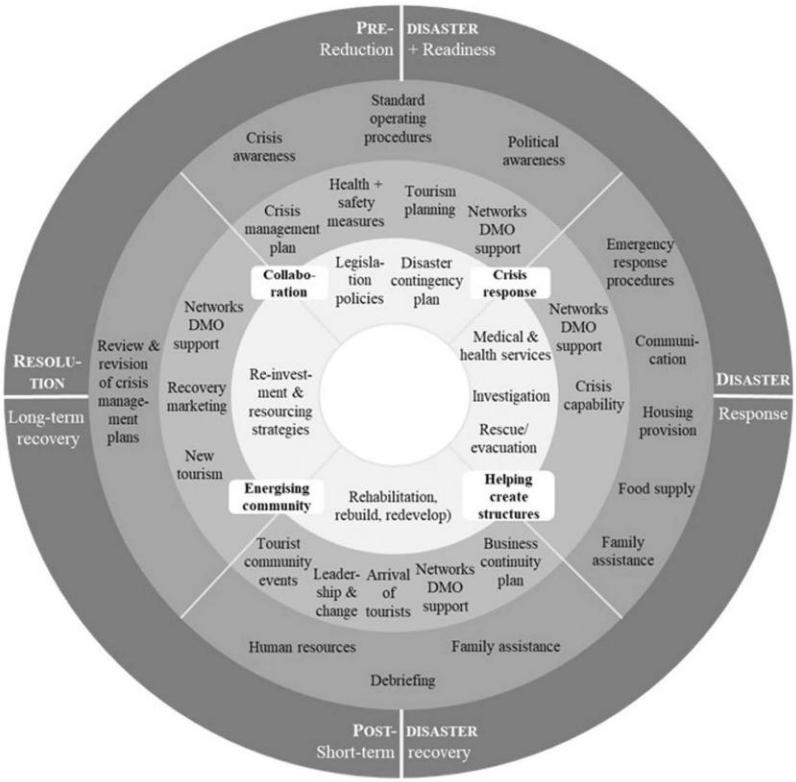

FIGURE 6 Micro-level model for crisis management in tourism destinations based on Agustan and Kausar (2019); Faulkner (2001); Hystad and Keller (2008); Muskat et al. (2015); Wilks and Moore (2004); Xu and Grunewald (2009).

- Inconsistency and obscurity in use of crisis lifecycle and crisis management phases accompanied by a lack of a clear crisis definition,
- Models with tourism focus concentrate primarily on external crises while internal crises do not seem to be covered yet.
- Lack of dedication to, differentiation and involvement of stakeholders.

The micro-level model for crisis management in tourism destinations seeks to align both crisis lifecycle and crisis management phases and highlights the role of tourism stakeholders in crisis management of destinations. Its core statement are the various activities within each phase of a crisis allocated to two groups of stakeholders which are public authorities and NGOs and tourism stakeholders.

6.1 | Theoretical implications

Researchers should intensively engage with the definitions, wording and concepts of crisis lifecycle and crisis management phases before (further) developing a new crisis management model. It is important to have a clear wording as basis throughout the scientific community, not only within tourism research but across all related disciplines such as disaster, resilience and sustainability research.

6.2 | Practical implications

The results show that the role of (tourism) stakeholders in the analysed crisis management models has been broadly ignored. Should tourism actors wish to establish their crisis management strategy, they presumably search for models where their role is mentioned. It thus becomes clear that close collaboration between and more strategic involvement of tourism stakeholders should also be a goal for public authorities.

6.3 | Limitations and future research

Although the literature review was conducted thoroughly and systematically, some limitations must be accepted. Only specific literature (peer-reviewed journals and collected editions,

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monographies and reports cited in peer-reviewed journals) in English was considered for further analysis. A single researcher collected, chose and coded the crisis management models, which narrows the research perspective. The latter also applies to the development of the micro-level model. With this model, a first step is taken to shape crisis management more stakeholder focussed. However, the two groups of stakeholders used in the new model should be unravelled in more detail to enhance the understanding of complex stakeholder structures during a crisis (Casal-Ribeiro et al., 2023). The tasks of public authorities and NGOs might not be comprehensive. Future research might start here to complete the picture. Furthermore, the model aligns with more than half the analysed models developed based on literature review without further testing. It should therefore be underpinned by qualitative and/or quantitative instruments.

This study contributes to an enhanced classification of research in crisis management in tourism. Thereby it gives not only a pure reception of existing crisis management models suitable for the tourism field but manages to create a synthesis by extending the previously analysed models to a new crisis management model.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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APPENDIX A

(Table A1)

TABLE A1 Crisis management models with organisational and tourism focus between 1979 and 2019, criteria 1–10, sorted by year of publication.

Authors (1)	Year (2)	Model (3)	Research focus (4)	Contextual focus (5)	Presentation format (6)	Type of source (7)	Name of source (8)	Approach (9)	Methodology (10)
National Governor's Association	1979	PPRR crisis management model	Organisational	Organisation, HR development	Graphical	Book	US Government Printing Office	N/a	N/a
Fink	1986	Fink's Crisis Model	Organisational	Organisation	Graphical	Book	iUniverse	N/a	N/a
Mitroff	1988	Five phases of Crisis Management	Organisational	Organisation	Graphical	Journal article	Sloan Management Review	Qualitative	Literature review, own experience and conceptions
Mitroff, Pauchant and Shrivastava	1988	A preventative model of crisis management	Organisational	Organisation	Graphical	Journal article	Technological Forecasting and Social Change	Qualitative	Literature review, own experience and conceptions
Smith	1990	Model of crisis management	Organisational	Organisation	Graphical	Journal article	Industrial Crisis Quarterly	Qualitative	Literature review
Pauchant, Mitroff and Shrivastava	1991	Towards a systemic crisis management strategy	Organisational	Organisation	Textual	Journal article	Industrial Crisis Quarterly	Mixed	Semi-structured interviews, survey (secondary data)
Booth	1993	Process model of crisis resolution	Organisational	Organisation	Graphical	Book	Routledge	Qualitative	Literature review
Smith and Sipika	1993	Three phases of crisis management	Organisational	Organisation	Graphical	Journal article	Long Range Planning	Qualitative	Literature review, secondary data, case study, own experience and conception
Roberts	1994	Management Stages of an Ongoing Disaster	Organisational	Organisation	Graphical	Journal article	Disaster Prevention and Management	Qualitative	Case study, secondary data, own experience and conceptions
Burnett	1998	Crisis Management: Strategic considerations	Organisational	Organisation	Graphical	Journal article	Public Relations Review	Qualitative	Literature review
Sönmez, Apostolopoulos and Tarlow	1999	Framework for Crisis Management	Tourism	Destination	Textual	Journal article	Journal of Travel Research	Qualitative	Literature review
Faulkner	2001	Tourism disaster management framework	Tourism	Destination, organisation	Graphical	Journal article	Tourism Management	Qualitative	Literature review, case study
Stafford, Yu and Armoo	2002	Response and recovery for malevolence-based crisis	Tourism	Destination	Graphical	Journal article	The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly	Qualitative	Case study

(Continues)

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TABLE A1 (Continued)

Authors (1)	Year (2)	Model (3)	Research focus (4)	Contextual focus (5)	Presentation format (6)	Type of source (7)	Name of source (8)	Approach (9)	Methodology (10)
Ritchie	2004	Holistic crisis and disaster management framework	Tourism	Destination, organisation	Graphical	Journal article	Tourism Management	Qualitative	Literature review
Wilks and Moore	2004	The four phases of crisis management	Tourism	Destination, organisation	Table	Report	CRC for Sustainable Tourism	N/a	N/a
Pelfrey	2005	Cycle of preparedness	Tourism	Organisation	Graphical	Journal article	Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management	Qualitative	Literature review, secondary data
Moe and Pathranarakul	2006	Level of crisis impacts and key actors	Tourism	Public authority	Graphical	Journal article	Disaster Prevention and Management	Qualitative	Case study
Huang, Tseng and Petrick	2007	Integrated crisis management framework	Tourism	Destination, organisation	Graphical	Journal article	Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing	Qualitative	Literature review, secondary data, case study
Paraskevas and Arendell	2007	Framework for destination antiterrorism strategy development	Tourism	Destination	Graphical	Journal article	Tourism Management	Qualitative	Semistructured interviews
Hystad and Keller	2008	Destination tourism disaster management framework	Tourism	Destination	Graphical	Journal article	Tourism Management	Mixed	Longitudinal case study, survey, semistructured interviews, secondary data
Racherla and Hu	2009	Conceptual framework for knowledge-based crisis management	Tourism	Organisation	Graphical	Journal article	Cornell Hospitality Quarterly	Quantitative	Survey
Xu and Grunewald	2009	A holistic tourism disaster management framework	Tourism	Destination	Graphical	Journal article	Journal of China Tourism Research	Qualitative	Literature review, secondary data, case study
Pennington-Gray	2014	Destination disaster impact framework	Tourism	Destination	Graphical	Journal article	Tourism Management	Qualitative	Literature review, secondary data
Muskat, Nakanishi and Blackman	2015	Integrated model of tourism and disaster lifecycle management	Tourism	Destination	Graphical	Book chapter	CABI series in tourism management research	Qualitative	Case study
Agustan and Kausar	2019	Urban tourism crises and disaster management framework	Tourism	Destination (urban)	Graphical	Journal article	Geographia Technica	Qualitative	Literature review, secondary data

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7.2 Tourism crisis management does not stop in a destination's front yard. Why stakeholder collaboration needs to cross borders

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Tourism crisis management does not stop in a destination's front yard. Why stakeholder collaboration needs to cross borders.

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Abstract: Tourism organisations are particularly exposed to crises and disasters. Effective crisis management requires collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including local businesses, public authorities, emergency units, and actors in source markets such as tour operators and government agencies. However, communication barriers and fragmented responsibilities hinder cooperation. This study investigates stakeholder collaboration in destination tourism crisis management by identifying key actors, analysing their interactions, and exploring ways to enhance collaboration using stakeholder theory. Findings highlight the need for cross-border collaboration, emphasising the role of tourism associations as coordinating entities. The study suggests that proactive inter-agency cooperation, trust-building, and structured crisis planning improve resilience. Theoretical and practical implications underscore the necessity for clear leadership and structured communication networks to strengthen crisis response in tourism destinations.

Keywords: tourism destination crisis management, tourism stakeholder collaboration, crisis stakeholder collaboration, disaster stakeholder management, tourism crisis stakeholder collaboration, tourism crisis and disaster management

1 Introduction

The scientific community agrees on the particular vulnerability of tourism organisations to crises and disasters (e. g. Goktepe et al. 2024): (1) The tourism sector is mostly affected by externally induced, unpredictable and inevitable crises (e. g. Xu and Grunewald 2009). These include natural disasters such as tropical storms, earthquakes, forest fires or flooding caused by extreme weather events or man-made crises such as terrorist threats or epidemics (e. g. Filimonau and Coteau 2020). (2) It is essential to acknowledge the customers of tourism organisations and des-

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tinations – namely, the tourists – who constitute a vulnerable group in unfamiliar locations and consequently require special assistance during crises (e. g. Berbekova, Uysal, and Assaf 2021). (3) The tourism industry is characterised by a fragmented small-scale structure, comprising numerous stakeholders who contribute to the tourism product and may be geographically widely distributed (e. g. Pavlovich 2003). Conversely, tourism destinations are complex and dynamic systems, encompassing multiple stakeholders with heterogeneous structures and objectives which pose significant challenges for effective management (e. g. Pyke et al. 2018).

The obvious actors in a destination may be hotels, airlines, destination management companies (DMC, also called incoming agencies), emergency units and public authorities on state, federal and local level. But does stakeholder collaboration end here, in the destination's 'front yard'? Shouldn't actors in the source markets also be considered? As intermediaries between destination and tourists and considering their economic impact, they play a determining role in the destination (e. g. Becken et al. 2014). Other important actors in the source markets include public authorities, particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which oversees travel and security advisories for destinations, and diplomatic missions within the destination, responsible for assisting their nationals during emergencies.

Effective collaboration and coordination among the numerous stakeholders within a destination remains a persistent challenge in daily operations (e. g. Zemla 2016). Hierarchical and fragmented structures in both the public and private sectors complicate communication (e. g. Morakabati, Page, and Fletcher 2017). During crises, stakeholder pressure intensifies, making collaboration crucial for the survival of both the organisations and the destination (e. g. Mistilis and Sheldon 2006). While scholars recognise the gap between stakeholders (e. g. van der Zee and Vanneste 2015), understanding their perspectives and strategies to bridge this divide – particularly between public and private actors in tourism crisis management – remains an area for further research (e. g. Nguyen, Imamura, and Iuchi 2017).

This article therefore aims to improve the collaboration of stakeholders in tourism destination crisis management by shedding light on their level of collaboration. The following research questions are designed to support this objective:

RQ 1. Who are the stakeholders influencing the outcome of a crisis in a destination and with which parties do they interact during a crisis?

RQ 2. What impact do they have on the destination during a crisis?

RQ 3. How can stakeholder theory improve the collaboration between designated stakeholders in tourism destination crisis management?

The subsequent literature review in Section 2 provides a brief theoretical introduction to crisis management in tourism, stakeholder collaboration and theories. The methodology Section 3 describes the four research steps conducted, the results of

which are presented in Section 4 along the lines of the research questions. Section 5 compares the results with scientific literature. Section 6 addresses the study's limitations and future research directions before concluding with theoretical and practical implications to improve stakeholder collaboration in tourism destination management.

2 Literature review

2.1 Crisis management in tourism destinations and its actors

Crises and disasters have been defined extensively but without consensus in academic literature. Faulkner (2001) distinguishes both terms by their origin stating that crises are inflicted internally while disasters are externally induced. For this study, one common definition is used encompassing both crises and disasters, considering the destination as a system: A crisis is a "disruption that physically affects a system as a whole and threatens its basic assumptions, its subjective sense of self, its existential core" (Pauchant and Mitroff 1992, 15). *Crisis management* encompasses the set of tasks that enable an organisation to effectively navigate a crisis, including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery (Fink 1986). Research in *tourism crisis management* gained significant momentum following the terrorist attacks of 9/11 in the United States in 2001 (e. g. Wut, Xu, and Wong 2021). Among the numerous crisis management models elaborated in tourism, crisis management of destinations is the number one contextual focus (Khardani and Schmude 2024).

Destinations have been defined, described and researched extensively in the tourism literature. As defined by Becken (2013), they are geographical areas where tourism significantly contributes to the economy. From an economic perspective, a tourism destination integrates essential elements for a tourist's experience, including a diverse range of attractions – such as natural landscapes, climate, and cultural sites – along with necessary infrastructure like transport, accommodations, food and recreational facilities (Buhalis 2000). The product is either part of a package vacation sold by outbound tour operators and (online) travel agencies, or it is booked independently by the tourists.

Tourism destinations consist of a heterogeneous composition of public (e. g. governments), private (tourism industry, hospitality, retail, transportation) or hybrid (tourism associations) *actors* who are engaged in tourism either directly or indirectly (e. g. Hartman, Wielenga, and Heslinga 2020). These stakeholders differ from other networks due to their role as productive coalitions within a highly fragmented supply structure, necessitating collaboration (e. g. Pavlovich 2003) as they

rely on mutual interdependence (e. g. Berbekova, Uysal, and Assaf 2021). According to Zemla (2016, 9) "this spatial embeddedness changes radically the rules of cooperation", which applies particularly to crisis events. Adding to the complexity, tourists actively engage with their host destination during their visit, making them an additional stakeholder group within the destination (e. g. van der Zee and Vanneste 2015). It is therefore crucial to consider both the tourists' host destination and the source market, including tourism service providers and local authorities. Tour operators should be key partners, as they play a significant role in the destination's economic development, before, during and after a crisis (e. g. Becken 2013). With their package holidays as a popular form of travel in Europe, they exert significant influence on destinations which grants them substantial bargaining power regarding rates and allotment contracts, especially in traditional sun-and-beach destinations such as Spain, Greece, Turkey, Egypt or the Dominican Republic (Picazo and Moreno-Gil 2018). Large, vertically integrated tour operators, controlling transport connections and their own tourism services, can shape and even close destinations to international tourists, creating a high dependency of destinations.

2.2 Stakeholder collaboration

Cooperation and collaboration are usually used interchangeably. While cooperation refers to "working together towards the same purpose" (Oxford English Dictionary 2023), collaboration, as defined by Jamal and Getz (1995) involves joint decision-making among stakeholders to address destination-related issues such as crises.

The role of *stakeholders* in strategic management was first discussed by Freeman (1984, 46), who defines stakeholders as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives". While traditionally linked to organisations, the concept also applies to destinations, which share similar characteristics but are often more complex, as described previously. Stakeholder collaboration has been widely studied across disciplines (e. g. Phillips, Freeman, and Wicks 2003), originating in business administration and later expanding to corporate social responsibility (e. g. Clarkson 1995) and marketing (e. g. Podnar and Jancic 2006). Scholars started to integrate stakeholder theory in tourism management in the early twentieth century (e. g. van der Zee and Vanneste 2015). There, it has been further applied to sustainable tourism (e. g. McComb, Boyd, and Boluk 2017), community-based tourism planning (e. g. Jamal and Getz 1995) and tourism crisis and disaster management (e. g. Jiang and Ritchie 2017).

The core of *stakeholder theory* tries to group the identified stakeholders into certain categories, so that the organisation can relate to and deal with them effectively (e. g. Freeman 1984). It can serve as an instrument to understanding the per-

ceptions and roles of tourism stakeholders in destinations (e. g. Beritelli 2011). Stakeholder crisis management aims to elaborate instruments for management of the diverse groups in the destination by identifying the stakeholders, analysing their impact and developing an appropriate disaster mitigation plan (e. g. Morakabati, Page, and Fletcher 2017). Stakeholders who are aware of the destination's needs and who collaborate before, during and after a crisis are key for successful crisis handling in the destination (e. g. Morakabati, Page, and Fletcher 2017).

2.3 Stakeholder theories

As discussed in the previous subsection, identifying and categorising stakeholders is a prerequisite to dealing successfully with them. In the following, the approaches applied to this study are briefly described. Stakeholders can be systematically classified, based on their level of influence, into primary and secondary stakeholders. For Clarkson (1995), an organisation's survival depends on the participation of its primary stakeholders such as shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers or investors. Secondary stakeholders do not engage directly with the organisation but can influence or be affected by it. While not essential for its survival, they may still be damaging. Examples are the media or special interest groups causing a so-called 'shitstorm' which can harm the organisation's reputation. A further distinction can be made according to the type of stakeholders, allocating them to institutions, businesses or individuals (Beritelli 2011). Podnar and Jancic (2006) introduce a three-level model of exchange and communication with stakeholders. In this model, an organisation maintains inevitable relationships with core stakeholders (shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, competitors), who hold the most power and are critical to its operations. Necessary relationships exist with entities such as trade organisations, unions, media, financial institutions, and the local community, which have moderate but notable influence. The largest group, including foundations, employees' families, political parties, pressure groups, and civil initiatives, holds a desirable but limited degree of power over the organisation. The most detailed stakeholder typology is conducted by Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997) and applied by several researchers (e. g. Mojtahedi and Oo 2017; Nogueira and Pinho 2015). Through an extensive literature review, Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997) combine the central attributes of power, legitimacy, and urgency with the stakeholders' attitude towards the organisation (latent, expectant, definitive) and their salience (low, moderate, high). The result are seven types of stakeholders, namely dormant, discretionary, demanding, dominant, dangerous, and definitive. They are presented in Section 3, Table 1 and are discussed in the context of this research in Sections 4.4 and 5.3.

3 Methodology

A mixed-methods approach was used, combining several qualitative methods to generate knowledge and deepen understanding of the research problem.

A pre-study was conducted to identify the stakeholders *(Research Step 1, Figure 1)* in a tourism destination during a crisis by examining 15 tourism crisis management models between 1999 and 2019 via a systematic literature review (Khardani and Schmude 2024). Figure 1 shows the identification and selection process of examined stakeholders in this article: First, all stakeholders mentioned in the tourism crisis management models in the study above were listed. Then, tourism stakeholders were further refined based on the models of Stafford, Yu, and Kobina Armoo (2002) and Paraskevas and Arendell (2007). Lastly, stakeholders were eliminated and refined.

Desk research conducting an extensive literature review on stakeholder theories suitable for the context of destinations is presented in Section 2.3 and applied to the selected stakeholders *(Research Step 2, Table 1)*.

To validate the selected stakeholders and their attributes, a qualitative multiple case study was conducted using semi-structured explorative interviews *(Research Step 3, Tables 2 and 3)*. Case studies go beyond quantitative data by exploring the reasons and processes behind organisational, individual, or institutional responses to specific conditions. They are a suitable method for in-depth investigation within real-world contexts, supported by prior theoretical propositions (e. g. Yin 2018). The Caribbean is ranked as the most tourism-dependent region globally. Consequently, tourism is a valuable source of income in this region (e. g. Mackay and Spencer 2017). Given the Caribbean's vulnerability to natural disasters, enhancing disaster resilience is essential for the region's tourism industry (e. g. Filimonau and Coteau 2020) to effectively address the substantial challenges faced by its island destinations (e. g. Becken et al. 2014). Therefore, the Dominican Republic and the Commonwealth of Dominica were chosen for the multiple-case study (e. g. Creswell 2013) based on their afore-mentioned similarities as well as their decisive difference in the type of tourism as per Table 2.

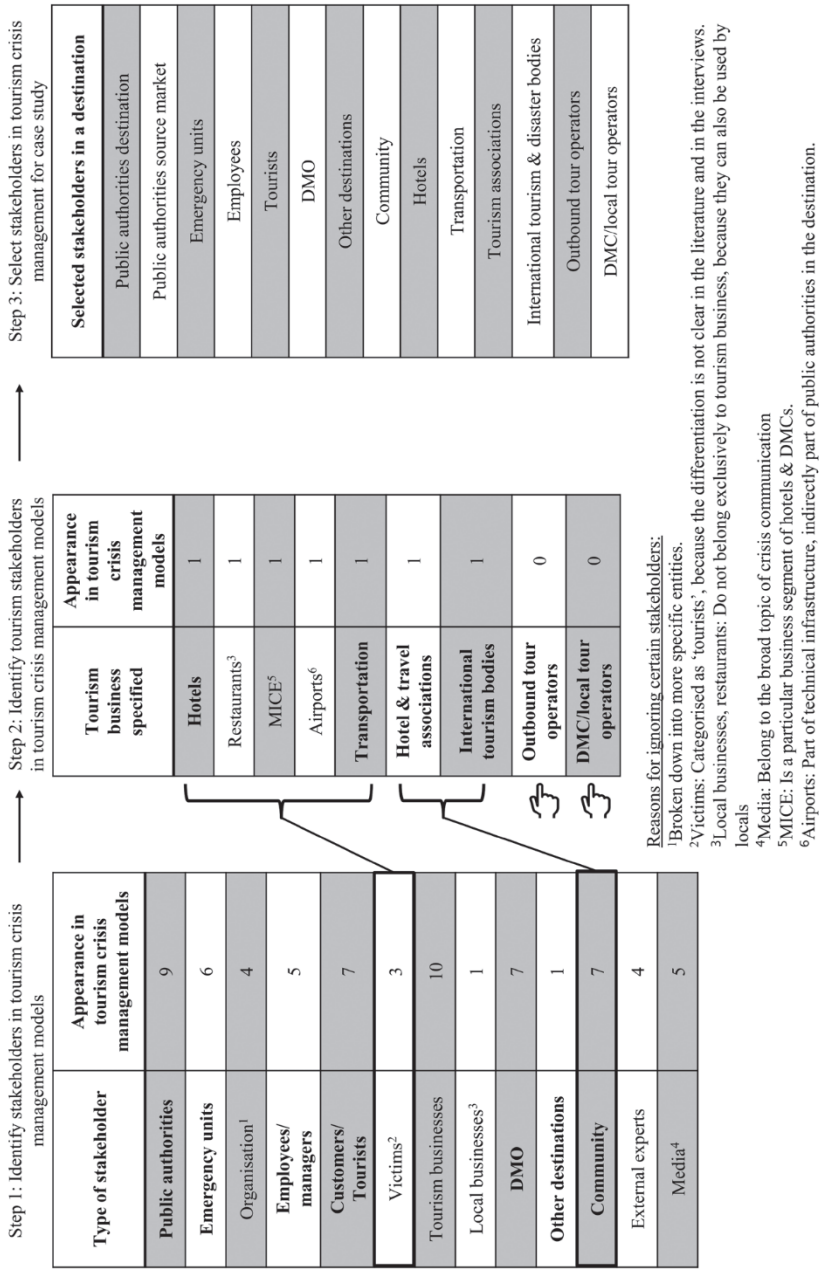

Figure 1: Research Step 1: Identification and selection process of stakeholders to be examined based on Khardani and Schmude (2024).

Table 1: Research Step 2: Form sheet with applied stakeholder theories & stakeholders in tourism destination crisis management based on Clarkson 1985, 106–107; Beritelli 2011, 613; Podnar and Jancic 2006, 301; Mitchell, Agle, and Wood 1997, 874.

	Influence of group	**Type of group**	**Level of interaction**	**Core**	**Dormant**	**Discre-tionary**	**Demanding**	**Dominant**	**Dangerous**	**Dependent**	**Definitive**
	Primary stakeholder	Institution	Inevitable	Attribute	Power	Legiti-macy	Urgency	Power + legitimacy	Urgency + power	Legitimacy + urgency	Power + legitimacy + urgency
	Secondary stakeholder	Business	Necessary	Attitude	Latent	Latent	Latent	Expectant	Expectant	Expectant	Definitive
		Individual	Desirable	Salience	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High
Public authorities source market											
Tourism associations soure market											
Outbound tour operators											
Public authorities destination											
Tourism associations destination											
Hotels											

Table 1: Continued

	Influence of group	Type of group	Level of interaction	Core	Dormant	Discre-tionary	Demanding	Dominant	Dangerous	Dependent	Definitive
DMCs											
Transportation companies											
DMOs											
Emergency units											
International tourism & disaster bodies											
Other destinations											
Employees											
Tourists											
Community											

Table 2: Research Step 3: Selected characteristics of multiple case study areas Dominican Republic and Commonwealth of Dominica.

	Dominican Republic	Commonwealth of Dominica
Touristic map	Figure 2: Touristic map of Dominican Republic (Asonahores 2024, 2)	Figure 3: Touristic map of Dominica (Discover Dominica Authority, n. d., 6)
Location	Eastern part of Hispaniola, (Western part Republic of Haiti)	Lesser Antilles
Size in km²	49 967	712

Table 2: Continued

	Dominican Republic	Commonwealth of Dominica
Inhabitants	10 500 000	68 000
International tourist arrivals in 2023	10 317 612 with 22 % cruise ship passengers (Departamento de Cuentas Nacionales y Estadísticas Económicas de la República Dominicana, 2024, 19, 25)	401 297 with 78 % cruise ship passengers (Eastern Caribbean Central Bank & Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) Central Statistical Offices, 2025)
Type of tourism	Classical sun & beach package holidays, cruise visitors	Cruise visitors, foreign independent travellers (FITs)

A semi-structured interview format was selected to examine the complex relationships and dependencies among stakeholders during Hurricane Maria in September 2017. When participants had not personally managed this crisis, they referred to similar hurricanes or the Covid-19 pandemic. This approach aligns with Patton (2015), who views interviewees as key to understanding system dynamics. All participants were required to hold a management position during the referenced crisis and have prior crisis management experience, following Creswell's (2013) emphasis on selecting participants based on expertise. A total of 26 interviews with 28 stakeholders from Dominica (8), the Dominican Republic (14), and Germany (4) were conducted by a single interviewer between July 2023 and April 2024 via recorded Zoom calls (granted by the interviewees) in English, Spanish, and German. The sample size follows the concept of data saturation in qualitative research (e. g. Boddy 2016), as interviews revealed no new insights from additional stakeholders within the same group. Table 3 provides the labelling and details of the interview partners. The labelling 'InterviewnumberStakeholdergroup_country' provides direct insight into the interviewees' stakeholder group and their organisations' seat. The interviews began with a narrative icebreaker, followed by fifteen guiding questions, and concluded with an open-ended question. Topics included (1) organisational actions before, during, and after the crisis, (2) stakeholder involvement and extent of engagement, (3) information flow and instructions, (4) strengths and weaknesses in stakeholder collaboration, and (5) key factors for effective crisis management. Transcriptions and translations from Spanish and German to English were realised with Whisper AI Open Source. The interviews were checked for spelling and correct technical terms and anonymised.

Table 3: Research Step 3: Interview partners with organisations' seat and type and interviewees' position and nationality.

Academic expert (n=1) + airline (n=1) + DMO (n=1) + tourism association (n=1) + public authorities destination (n=2) + tour operator (n=4) + DMC (n=8) + hotel (n=8) = n(I)=26.

Interview label	Organisation		Interviewee		Contact based on
	Seat	Type	Position	Nationality	
1TA_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	Tourism association (TA)	Director	Dominican Republic	Recommended by academic expert
2DMO_D	Dominica (D)	DMO	Director	Dominica	Researcher's academic network

Table 3: Continued

Interview label	Organisation		Interviewee		Contact based on
	Seat	Type	Position	Nationality	
3TO_GE	Germany (GE)	Tour operator (TO)	Head of	Germany	Excel list sent by e-mail from DMO Discover Dominica Authority in 2023
4H_D	Dominica (D)	Hotel (H)	Director	Dominica	DMO homepage Discover Dominica (2024)
5DMC_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	DMC	Operations Manager	Dominican Republic	Excel list from OPETUR sent via WhatsApp in 2024
6DMC-H_D	Dominica (D)	DMC, Hotel (H)	Owner	Dominica	DMO homepage Discover Dominica (2024)
7H_D	Dominica (D)	Hotel (H)	Owner	Netherlands	DMO homepage Discover Dominica (2024)
8H_D	Dominica (D)	Hotel (H)	Head of	Dominica	DMO homepage Discover Dominica (2024)
9DMC_D	Dominica (D)	DMC	Owner	Dominica	DMO homepage Discover Dominica (2024)
10H_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	Hotel (H)	Director	Dominica	Recommended by academic expert
11DMC_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	DMC	Director	Dominica	Excel list from OPETUR sent via WhatsApp in 2024
12H_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	Hotel (H)	General Manager	Dominican Republic	Researcher's academic network
13DMC_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	DMC	Operations Manager	Dominican Republic	Researcher's professional network
14A_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	Airline (A)	Director	France	Researcher's professional network
15AE_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	Academic expert (AE)	Lecturer, researcher	Dominican Republic	Researcher's professional network
16H_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	Hotel (A)	General Manager	Dominican Republic	Researcher's professional network
17TO_GE	Germany (GE)	Tour operator (TO)	Head of	Germany	Excel list sent by e-mail from DMO Discover Dominica Authority in 2023
18H_D	Dominica (D)	Hotel (H)	Owner	Swizerland	DMO homepage Discover Dominica (2024)
19TO_GE	Germany (GE)	Tour operator (TO)	Director	Germany	Researcher's professional network

Interview label	Organisation		Interviewee		Contact based on
	Seat	Type	Position	Nationality	
20TO_GE	Germany (GE)	Tour operator (TO)	Destination Manager	Germany	Researcher's professional network
21PA_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	Public authority government level (PA)	Former vice Minister of Tourism	Dominican Republic	Recommended by academic expert
22PA_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	Public authority local level (PA)	Tourism Specialist & Coordinator	Dominican Republic	Recommended by academic expert
23DMC_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	DMC	General Manager	Dominican Republic	Excel list from OPETUR sent via WhatsApp in 2024
24H_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	Hotel (H)	General Manager	Spain	Researcher's professional network
25DMC_D	Dominica (D)	DMC	Owner	Dominica	DMO homepage Discover Dominica (2024)
26DMC_DR	Dominican Republic (DR)	DMC	Incoming Director & Key Account Manager	Bulgaria & Germany	Excel list from OPETUR sent via WhatsApp in 2024

For the data analysis, a structuring qualitative content analysis with MAXQDA 24 *(Research Step 4, Figure 4)* was chosen (Kuckartz and Rädiker 2023) and applied as follows:

1. Concept-driven, deductive coding by category formation using the guiding interview questions and the stakeholder categorisation.
2. The codes were checked for clarity and alignment to the code descriptions, sorted, merged and subcodes were introduced by inductive coding.
3. Following the research questions as guiding instrument, the codes were sorted and merged a third time.

Figure 4 shows the theme- and stakeholder-based code structure. For this article, the highlighted codes are analysed.

Codes	2569
Stakeholder	0
Public authorities	223
Tourism associations	70
Employees	199
Others	37
DMC/local tour operators	90
Outbound tour operators	113
International tourism & disaster bodies	17
Transportation	68
Airports, ports	73
Hotels	141
Community	26
Other destinations	18
Tourists	407
Emergency units	79
DMO	17
Background profile	119
Crisis Management	0
Employees_CM	44
Evacuation	67
Crisis handling	43
Communication	33
Attitude	11
Infrastructure	142
Preparedness	158
Collaboration, cooperation, network	0
Challenges	48
Success factors	76
Roles, tasks	223
Relationship	27

Figure 4: Research Step 4: Coding scheme in MAXQDA 24

4 Results

4.1 Who are the stakeholders influencing the outcome of a crisis in a destination and with which parties do they interact during a crisis?

The stakeholders mentioned by the interviewees were coded using MAXQDA 24 text search and auto code. All codes were manually verified to ensure stakeholders were referenced exclusively in crisis-related contexts. To prevent duplicate counts, stakeholders mentioned multiple times within a single phrase were coded only once. Additionally, stakeholders belonging to the same group as the interviewees were coded only when referring to competitors. With fourteen actors (plus 'others'),

Figure 5 confirms the complexity of the destination's stakeholder structure as discussed in Section 2.1. Tourists constitute the largest stakeholder group, with a value nearly double that of public authorities, the second-largest group. They are followed by the organisations' employees and the two tourism suppliers, hotels, and outbound tour operators. Although Figures 5 and 6 show that employees are of significant importance to all stakeholders, they are not further considered for the research questions RQ2 and RQ3, because there, the focus lies on the connections of external actors inside and outside of the destination during a crisis.

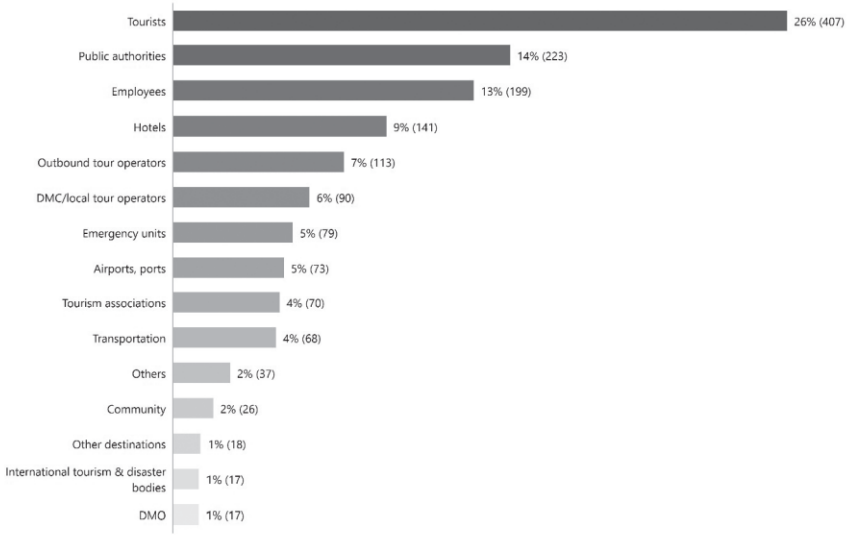

Figure 5: Stakeholders in tourism destination crisis management: Subcode statistics of stakeholders in percent and absolute numbers (n=1578).

The Code Matrix Browser in Figure 6 shows with which actors (rows) the interviewed stakeholder groups (columns) interact during a crisis. The academic expert was excluded due to their advisory function in this case. The higher frequency of mentions from DMCs, hotels, and outbound tour operators reflects their larger representation in the interviews. However, the observed trend remains valid. A top five list of stakeholder groups gives a better overview of the matrix. It shows that tourists and public authorities appear among the top five of all groups. Public authorities in the destination play a vital role for the tourism businesses and association in the destination, while the public authorities in the source market are of foremost importance for the outbound tour operators. Together with tourists, public authorities rank first among public authorities in the destination, which is

caused by the multiple local, regional, and national entities within the governmental agencies. Among the top five, employees appear in six out of seven stakeholder groups, which highlights their stake in tourism destination crisis management. With +/ – 100 counts, tourists are mentioned particularly frequently by hotels, DMCs and outbound tour operators. This hints at a strong connection between these four stakeholders.

Stakeholder	DMOs	Airlines	DMC/local tour operators	Hotels	Public authorities destination	Outbound tour operators	Tourism associations	Total
Public authorities								
Public authorities destination	7	13	56	35	20	9	18	158
Public authorities source market	1	1	8	7	3	34	3	57
Tourism associations								
Tourism associations source market						21		21
Tourism associations destination			29	9	9			47
Employees	2	6	23	83	18	53	5	190
Others		3	13	12	6	1	1	36
DMC/local tour operators	2		4	23	1	56	2	88
Outbound tour operators	3		46	17	7	30	7	110
International tourism & disaster bodies	3		1	4		1	7	16
Transportation		2	24	7	8	23	3	67
Airports, ports		16	34	9	1	7	6	73
Hotels		2	58	5	16	37	21	139
Community		2	6	13		3		24
Other destinations		2	9	6			1	18
Tourists	7	43	104	119	20	92	17	402
Emergency units	1	1	22	41	6	7		78
DMO			4	3	6	4		17
∑ SUM	26	91	441	393	121	378	91	1541
# N = Documents	1 (4,0%)	1 (4,0%)	8 (32,0%)	8 (32,0%)	2 (8,0%)	4 (16,0%)	1 (4,0%)	25 (100,0%)

Figure 6: Interaction of stakeholders in tourism destination crisis management: Code matrix browser of coded stakeholders per interviewed stakeholder group in absolute numbers (n=1541).

4.2 What impact do the stakeholders have on the destination?

Summary grids were generated in MAXQDA 24 for the codes *Collaboration, Cooperation, Network – Roles, Tasks*, *Crisis Management – Evacuation*, and *Crisis Management – Crisis Handling*. The data were aggregated, condensed, and categorised by stakeholder group, with detailed results presented in the following subsections. Table 4 provides a quantitative overview, indicating the number of tasks mentioned for each stakeholder. Rows represent active stakeholders providing tasks or information to those listed in the columns. Areas with three or more tasks are highlighted in bold and grey to identify stakeholders most involved in task execution or information exchange. The pattern indicates that public authorities hold a dominant role within the destination, primarily distributing tasks and information. Tourism associations follow in frequency, demonstrating a strong connection with both public authorities and hotels. While hotels predominantly receive tasks or information, DMCs and outbound tour operators maintain a more balanced position, both actively providing and receiving information and tasks.

4.2.1 Impact of stakeholders from the source markets

The *Ministry of Foreign Affairs* adjusts travel advisories for destinations (3TO_GE, 17TO_GE). While tour operators are not legally bound to follow them, they are requested to prioritise citizen safety (3TO_GE, 17TO_GE, 19TO_GE). In crises, they communicate directly with the Ministry or coordinate through the *German Travel Association (DRV)* (3TO_GE, 17TO_GE, 19TO_GE). Tour operators engage with market participants,

> "because of course, as a tour operator, you never act alone
> in a situation like this but as a market participant (19TO_GE, Pos. 81)".

They are part of the Ministry's crisis committee, which also liases with destination authorities (3TO_GE, 17TO_GE, 19TO_GE, 21PA_DR). *Diplomatic missions* are contacted by local stakeholders, including hotels (12H_DR, 16H_DR, 17TO_GE, 19TO_GE, 24H_DR), DMCs (5DMC_DR, 6DMC-H_D, 19TO_GE, 20TO_GE, 13DMC_DR), transport providers (6DMC-H_D, 12H_DR, 24H_DR), and tourism associations (1TA_DR). *Tour operators* request updates from DMCs and hotels and instruct suppliers to assist guests (3TO_GE, 5DMC_DR, 11DMC_DR, 19TO_GE). They organise repatriation flights with hotels, DMCs, airlines, public authorities, and their tourism association, requiring swift action due to limited flight seating capacity (3TO_GE, 5DMC_DR, 17TO_GE, 19TO_GE, 20TO_GE). They also arrange evacuations to alternative accommodations

Table 4: Impact of stakeholders in tourism destination crisis management: Number of tasks and responsibilities mentioned by the interviewees (n=26). Rows → Giving information/instructions. Columns ↓ Receiving information/instructions.

Stakeholder	Public authorities source market	Tourism associations source market	Outbound tour operator	Public authorities destination	Tourism associations destination	Hotel	DMC	Transpor-tation companies	DMO	Emergency units	International tourism & disaster bodies	Other destinations
Public authorities source market	1		1	1	1	1	1	1				
Tourism associations source market	1		**3**									
Outbound tour operators	**3**		**4**	1	2	2	**4**	2	1			
Public authorities destination	3		1	**10**	**5**	**6**	**5**	**5**	**4**	**4**	1	
Tourism associations destination	1			**11**		**9**	2	2				
Hotels	1		2	2	1		**3**	1		1		
DMCs	1		**4**	1		**5**		**3**	1	1		
Transportation companies			**3**				1					
DMOs			2	2		2	2			1		
Emergency units						**6**	1					
International tourism & disaster bodies	1		1	**3**	2	1	1	1	1	1		
Other destinations				2								

(10_DR). In the recovery phase, they support DMOs through funding, investments, and promotions (3TO_GE).

4.2.2 Impact of stakeholders in the destination

Hotels play a key role in crisis management due to their direct contact with tourists. They ensure guest safety, provide essential services, and coordinate with diplomatic missions, medical services, emergency units, tourism associations (Asonahores, DHTA), DMCs, and tour operators (12H_DR, 16H_DR, 17TO_GE, 19TO_GE, 24H_DR). Hotels manage evacuations (10H_DR, 12H_DR, 16H_DR) and repatriations with airlines (15AE_DR) while remaining largely self-sufficient in the recovery phase (11DMC_DR, 12H_DR). *DMCs* function as intermediaries between tour operators, diplomatic missions, hotels, and public authorities (5DMC_DR, 6DMC-H_D, 19TO_GE, 20TO_GE, 13DMC_DR). Following tour operator instructions (3TO_GE, 11DMC_DR, 19TO_GE), they update pax lists (3TO_GE, 13DMC_DR, 14A_DR, 26DMC_DR), check hotel conditions (20TO_GE), and arrange evacuations (3TO_GE, 10H_DR, 26DMC_DR) and repatriations (13DMC_DR, 14A_DR, 23DMC_DR, 26DMC_DR). They evaluate infrastructure damage and coordinate with emergency units and the Association of Incoming Tour Operators of the Dominican Republic (OPETUR) (6DMC_D, 13DMC_DR, 16H_DR, 25DMC_D, 26DMC_DR). *Airlines* assist in crisis response by coordinating with tour operators (19TO_GE, 20TO_GE), providing flight seats (14A_DR, 17TO_GE, 20TO_GE), transporting relief supplies and staff (14A_DR, 19TO_GE), and handling repatriation (3TO_GE, 5DMC_DR, 17TO_GE, 19TO_GE, 20TO_GE). *Tourism associations* play a key role in crisis management, informing members, coordinating responses (5DMC_DR, 26DMC_DR), and linking them to diplomatic missions (1TA_DR, 11DMC_DR). The Association of Hotels and Tourism of the Dominican Republic (Asonahores), OPETUR and the Dominica Hotel and Tourism Association (DHTA) act as intermediaries between hotels, DMCs, and public authorities, similar to the DRV in Germany. Asonahores and OPETUR hold key positions in the Tourism Cabinet and Emergency Operations Centre (COE) (1TA_DR, 21PA_DR, 22PA_DR, 16H_DR) and were instrumental in the government's Covid-19 recovery plans (5DMC_DR, 22PA_DR). Asonahores and DHTA also coordinate evacuations and repatriation efforts between hotels and public authorities (4H_D, 15AE_DR, 24H_DR). Asonahores aims to ensure business continuity, minimise financial and reputational damage, and support post-crisis recovery (1TA_DR). It assigns regional zone owners as communication channels and intermediaries for hotel members (1TA_DR, 13DMC_DR). The Dominican Republic's tourism cluster provides crisis training, documentation, and preparation for service providers while consulting with public authorities (11DMC_DR). In daily business, the *DMO* is responsible for the promotion (17TO_GE)

of the destination, which is intensified in the recovery phase of a crisis. During a crisis, it informs outbound tour operators about the destination's status (2DMO_D, 21PA_DR). As a member of the National Emergency Operations Centre in Dominica (NEOC) (2DMO_D), the DMO is responsible for the damage assessment of touristic infrastructure including tourism providers (2DMO_D) and assists the latter in clearing the infrastructure and in organising concessions for tax-free imports of goods (6DMC-H_D). As the executive arm of public authorities, *emergency units* are per definition a central part of destination crisis management (6DMC-H_D, 12H_DR, 11DMC_DR). *Public authority* directives are binding (3TO_GE, 19TO_GE). NEOC in Dominica manages crisis response, including evacuation and infrastructure assessment (2DMO_D, 8H_D). The COE in the Dominican Republic, comprising government ministries, emergency units, and tourism associations (21PA_DR, 22PA_DR), issues alerts, organises evacuations, and controls (air)port operations (12H_DR, 14A_DR, 16H_DR, 19TO_GE, 20TO_DE, 21PA_DR, 22PA_DR). The Ministry of Tourism promotes the Dominican Republic, prioritises tourist well-being, assigns regional coordinators (22PA_DR), and collaborates with Asonahores, OPETUR, and airlines on crisis response and repatriation (11DMC_DR, 14A_DR, 20TO_GE, 24H_DR). It introduced e-tickets to track tourists (22PA_DR) and led Covid-19 recovery efforts, covering flight and hotel costs, supporting unemployment, and providing international insurance (5DMC_DR, 22PA_DR). The Tourism Cabinet unites public and private sectors, including ministries, Asonahores, and OPETUR, for coordinated crisis management (1TA_DR, 21PA_DR, 22PA_DR).

4.2.3 Impact of other stakeholder groups

Among the *international tourism and disaster bodies*, the National Hurricane Centre (NHC) in the US is mentioned several times as a source of information (4H_D, 8H_D, 12H_DR). The certifier Crystal International, well-known within the tourism industry, assisted in setting up health protocols during the Covid-19 pandemic (22PA_DR). The World Bank reviewed its investment programmes after hurricane Maria (2DMO_D), and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) acts as umbrella agency for crises in the Caribbean by providing documents and staff (2DMO_D). *Other destinations* are assigned two tasks supporting public authorities in Dominica, highlighting the support which is contractually guaranteed among the small Caribbean islands (2DMO_D, 8H_D, 25DMC_D).

4.3 How can stakeholder theory improve the collaboration between designated stakeholders in tourism destination crisis management?

Figure 7 synthesises relevant academic literature (research step 2) and findings from the research questions RQ1 and RQ2 (Research Step 4), illustrating stakeholders involved in a crisis both within and outside the affected destination. Figures 5, 6, and Table 5 highlight the central concern: the well-being of tourists experiencing a crisis while on holiday. Accordingly, Figure 7 positions tourists as primary and definitive stakeholders. Definitive stakeholders – including DMCs, hotels, transport companies, and public authorities – are both inevitable and primary actors. Dormant stakeholders, such as other destinations and international tourism and disaster organisations, are desirable but secondary. Public authorities in the source market, while discretionary, are inevitable secondary stakeholders; though not active in the destination, their travel and security advisories directly influence outbound tour operators. The latter, despite their dependency, remain inevitable primary stakeholders. Emergency units are demanding, necessary, and primary stakeholders, while the DMO is discretionary yet desirable and secondary. Notably, tourism associations hold a dominant yet secondary role in both the destination and source market.

Effective stakeholder collaboration requires an understanding of both challenges and success factors. To analyse this, MAXQDA 24 summary grids were created for the codes *Collaboration, Cooperation, Network – Challenges*, *Success Factors*, and *Relationship*. The aggregated and condensed results are detailed in Table 5, which outlines current challenges, perceived success factors, and recommendations for improvement. Six key themes emerged: *relationship, collaboration/cooperation,* and *professional handling* are relatively balanced in terms of challenges and successes, while *communication* seems to face the most difficulties. *Processes* show slightly more challenges than success factors, whereas *support* is predominantly viewed positively. The findings highlight the complex interconnections between stakeholders in both the destination and source market, emphasising the crucial role of networks, cooperation, communication, and trust between tourism businesses, associations, emergency units, and public authorities.

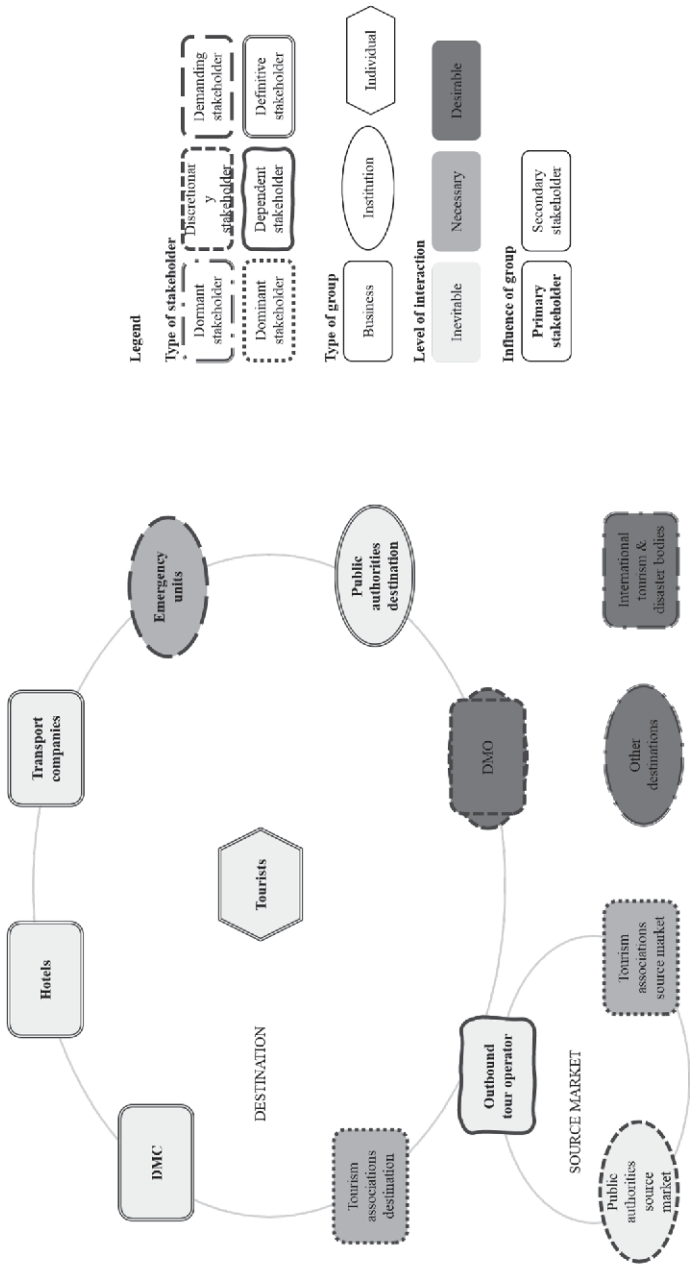

Figure 7: Applied stakeholder criteria mapped to stakeholders in tourism destination crisis management based on Clarkson 1985; Beritelli 2011; Podnar and Jancic 2006; Mitchell, Agle, and Wood 1997.

Table 5: Challenges of, success factors and recommendations for stakeholder collaboration in tourism destination crisis management.

	Challenges	Success factors	Recommendations
Relationship	Volatility of actors of public authorities source market & tour operators (3TO_GE, 19TO_DE) Dependence of actors of tourism association source market (3TO_GE) Conflicting tour operator interests across destinations hinder cooperation (19TO_GE) DMO lacks independence from government (7H_D) Passive approach of emergency units (25DMC_D)	Relationship between hotels, tour operators & DMC (12H_DR, 24H_DR), emergency units & supply companies (8H_D, 10H_DR, 24H_DR), public authorities (5DMC_DR, 15AE_DR) & other hotel managers (10H_DR) Monthly meetings of tourism associations, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Transport & suppliers (26DMC_DR) DMCs or tour operator representatives as trusted key contacts for tourists (20TO_GE, 24H_DR)	Constant contact between tourism associations destination & hotels (18H_DR) Personal relationship & trust (5DMC_DR, 12H_DR, 14A_DR, 17TO_GE) Networking (1TA_DR, 5DMC_DR, 6DMC-H_D, 11DMC_DR)
Collaboration/ cooperation	Cooperation between tour operators & DMC depends on training (3TO_GE) Lack of cooperation among DMCs (3TO_GE) Limited tourism association activities in the destination (6DMC-H_D) Poor cooperation between emergency units & hotels due to bribery (24H_DR) Competition & lack of cooperation between ministries; centralised presidential power (15AE_DR) Public authorities destination lack cooperation with tourism associations (1TA_DR, 7H_D), hotels (1TA_DR, 7H_D, 24H_DR), DMCs (19TO_GE, 25DMC_D), airlines (14A_DR) Weak network among tourism suppliers (23DMC_DR, 25DMC_D)	Tour operators with DMC (12H_DR, 24H_DR), emergency units & suppliers (8H_D, 10H_DR, 24H_DR), public authorities & other hotel managers (10H_DR) DMCs with hotels (14A_DR, 24H_DR) & airlines (14A_DR, 23DMC_DR) Tourism associations and public authorities destination (1TA_DR, 5DMC_DR) Hotels with public authorities destination (1TA_DR, 10H_DR) & tourism associations destination (1TA_DR): Monthly meetings & informal meetings to maintain network (10H_DR) Local network of tour operators (19TO_GE, 20TO_GE) Informal networking in Dominica due to small size (9DMC_D) Ongoing networking with all tourism stakeholders (19TO_GE, 20TO_GE)	Cooperation (1TA_DR, 5DMC_DR, 6DMC-H_D, 11DMC_DR): – among tour operators as priority for the guests' well-being (19TO_GE) – between hotel & DMO, public authorities, tourism businesses, tourism associations and port authorities (6DMC-H_D)

Table 5: Continued

	Challenges	Success factors	Recommendations
Communication	Measures cannot be implemented by DMC due to slow communication of tour operators (20TO_GE) Slow (4H_D) & too little (2DMO_D) communication of public authorities destination Missing communication between tour operators & airlines (20TO_GE) & public authorities destination (19TO_GE) Unclear tasks & roles of public authorities destination lead to different communication of the ministries, causing confusion among private sector (2DMO_D, 15AE_DR)	Constant communication flow among tour operators & with all tourism stakeholders including service providers (19TO_GE, 20TO_GE)	Better communication between public & private sector (12H_DR, 2DMO_D) Communication between hotel & DMO, public authorities, tourism businesses, tourism associations and port authorities (6DMC-H_D)
Processes	Unclear use of travel warning of public authorities source market as safety instrument during Covid-19 pandemic (17TO_GE, 19TO_GE) Lack of transparency of public authorities source market regarding assessment of security situation in a country (19TO_GE) No defined process between public authorities source market and tour operators & tourism association source market (3TO_GE) Missing debriefings of tourism association source market with tour operators (19TO_GE) Hesitant decision-making by tourism association source market (17TO_GE) Lack of process continuity in public authorities due to government changes (11DMC_DR) Unclear roles of public authorities destination cause inconsistent ministry communication & private sector confusion (2DMO_D, 15AE_DR)	Quick response time of emergency units & availability of medical service, standard procedures between DMCs & medical service & police (9DMC_D) Planned processes of international tourism & disaster bodies with Dominica (2DMO_D) Integration of DMO into emergency unit of public authority NEOC (2DMO_D) Defined roles for & close alignment of departments of public authorities destination due to Dominica's geographical size (8H_D) Coordination of tourism association source market with public & private sector (3TO_GE, 19TO_GE) Coordination between public authorities destination & DMCs (26DMC_DR)	Preparation between tour operators & DMCs in advance (19TO_GE) One contact person in public authorities destination per destination for tourism businesses (25DMC_D) One coordination centre per destination (3TO_GE, 19TO_GE, 23DMC_DR) & one per source market (3TO_GE, 19TO_GE) Aligned actions following crisis plan (11DMC_DR, 13DMC_DR More coordination of public authorities destination between stakeholders (4H_D)

Table 5: Continued

	Challenges	Success factors	Recommendations
Professional handling	Missing professional crisis management among some tour operators (19TO_GE) Topic of crisis management lacks priority in the travel industry (19TO_GE)	Professional handling of DMCs to assist tourists (26DMC_DR) Professional handling of police & military to assist tourists (26DMC_DR) Dedication & availability of people involved (19TO_GE)	Tour operators need to know destination's infrastructure & language (20TO_GE) Assisting tourists as national priority of public authorities destination (23DMC_DR) Task force of public authorities destination to assist tourism businesses in remote areas (6DMC-HD) Holistic approach & hands-on mentality (1TA_DR)
Support	Missing assistance from other countries (14A_DR)	Support of cruise companies & cruise ship guests for DMCs to restart tourism (9DMC_D) Support of international tourism & disaster bodies regarding Covid-19 restart programme (1TA_DR) Financial support of DMO for DMC promotion activities after crisis (6DMC-H_D) Resources from other islands (7H_D, 2DMO_D) Support within the community, among neighbours (9DMC_D)	Integration of other sub-sectors e. g. insurance companies (1TA_DR)

5 Discussion

5.1 Stakeholders' role in tourism destination crisis management

The results indicate that *tourists* play a vital role in destination crisis management, which is summarised by the following interviewee's statement regarding successful crisis management.

> "If you saved the tourists, put them in a safe place, gave them importance, communicated what happened, gave them follow-up if there was an affected person. It is how the crisis is handled that will tell you if it has really been successful or not" (21PA_DR, Pos. 133).

Interestingly, this stakeholder group has been widely ignored by crisis and disaster research in tourism (e. g. Pyke et al. 2018). It is therefore important to design a network around them which aims to offer the most suitable options for the tourists before, during or after a crisis which are, if necessary:

1. Appropriate medical treatment,
2. Evacuation to alternative hotels or public shelters,
3. Repatriation,
4. Continuation of the holiday either in the original or in an alternative hotel (see Table 5).

Hotels rank 4th among the most mentioned stakeholders (Figure 5). This aligns with the findings of Sheehan and Ritchie (2005), who name public authorities, hotels and their associations as the most important stakeholders for DMOs. Hotels are the core of the tourism product and have therefore the closest contact with tourists, being experts in customer service. Their tasks before, during and after a crisis are numerous, as they must take care of the tourists directly and immediately (see Table 5). As reported by the hotels interviewed for this study, safety regulations are high, crisis plans are usually specified by the mother companies (8H_D, 10H_DR) and there is usually designated space for evacuation (12H_DR, 16H_DR). In the Dominican Republic, hotels are usually regarded as safe havens for tourists (12H_DR, 16H_DR). Findings from several scholars (e. g. Muskat, Nakanishi, and Blackman 2015; Nguyen, Imamura, and Iuchi 2017) and the UNESCO (2012) state that hotel buildings are usually high with a sturdy structure and room capacity as well as food provision and (often independent) energy and water supply. They therefore propose a closer collaboration between hotels and public authorities because hotels can also serve as evacuation shelters for the local community on a short-term basis, given the fact that hotels have an average occupancy rate of between 60 and 70 percent – the average occupancy rate in Caribbean hotels was 66.6 percent in 2024 (Britton 2025).

The findings indicate that *tourism associations* should assume a leading role in developing collaborative crisis management strategies. This aligns with research suggesting that such involvement supports small and micro enterprises in overcoming resource limitations (e. g. Jiang and Ritchie 2017). As industry representatives, tourism associations can enhance sector-wide engagement in crisis management (e. g. Jiang and Ritchie 2017).

While ignored in tourism crisis management models, the present results assign outbound *tour operators* a substantial role in the destination, which is reflected in the following statement:

> "Well, as the tour operator, we are the most important authority for our guests, because they have a contract with us and we are the ones who speak the language. We have to remain approachable for the guest and also remain professional and calm and somehow put the guest and their needs at the centre (20TO_GE, Pos. 113–115)".

For tour operators located in the European Union, this is legally prescribed by EU Package Travel Directive 2015/2302, which requires them to offer prompt and appropriate assistance to customers. This obligation includes arranging accommodation, alternative travel plans at the tour operator's expense and providing essential information which is in line with the results. Morakabati, Page, and Fletcher (2017) argue that tourism actors in the destination are often well-prepared for crises, partly due to support from outbound tour operators. The results further confirm that tour operators depend heavily on external information because they usually do not have offices in the destination and consequently receive delayed or inaccurate information (e. g. Derham, Best, and Frost 2022).

Public authorities shape the operational framework for tourism organisations in the destination as well as in the source markets, as supported by the findings. Given this interdependence, aligning crisis management strategies between the public and private sectors is essential for fostering a more resilient tourism industry (e. g. Goktepe et al. 2024). Consequently, it is essential for the tourism sector to be recognised by the public authorities to effectively incorporate the industry's specific needs into their crisis management plans (e. g. Filimonau and Coteau 2020). Interviewee 5DMC_DR, Pos. 75 emphasises:

> "Because many times, yes, the private sector has its thing,
> but you need the support of the government."

A key challenge lies in the fragmented political landscape, characterised by multiple governance layers and competing interests, which leads to an overload of public authorities involved in crisis response (e. g. Pennington-Gray, Schroeder, and Gale 2014). In this study, attempts to integrate the needs of the tourism industry can be

registered in the Dominican Republic. However, the previously addressed overload of responsible entities can also clearly be detected by reading through the sheer number of organisations involved (see Section 4.2). Generally, cooperation between public authorities and tourism actors is influenced by the political system, economic conditions, and country-specific factors (e. g. Jiang and Ritchie 2017). To enhance crisis response, public authorities should leverage their political power to foster collaboration among tourism organisations (e. g. Jiang and Ritchie 2017). Morakabati, Page, and Fletcher (2017) provide an interesting approach for tourism destination crisis management by distributing the responsibilities in a crisis between public and private sector entities. They assign crisis prediction, warning, and response to public authorities, while activities directly related to tourists (repatriation, alternative accommodation, taking care of tourists) seem to be clearly assigned to the tourist sector. These results can be confirmed by the present study.

Filimonau and Coteau (2020) argue that, especially for small island states in the Caribbean with limited resources, collaboration is essential during crisis, as one island currently not affected may support another island and vice versa. The importance of *other destinations* aligns with the findings of the present study as well as with Arslan et al. (2021), who assign global partnerships an important role, especially for emerging and developing markets.

The present study reveals interesting findings about the role of DMCs and DMOs in tourism destination crisis management: As intermediators between the source market and the destination, the *DMCs* have numerous tasks during a crisis and are also represented in the governmental structures of the Dominican Republic with their tourism association. Interviewee 26DMC_DR, Pos. 20 puts their importance in a nutshell:

> "We are the eyes here in the destination to report how serious the situation is and what is recommended. We are responsible. It means that if we do not
> take the right measure, the problem is always ours."

To the author's knowledge, DMCs are not mentioned in the context of crisis management in academic literature. The opposite is true for *DMOs*: While the interviewees do not attach great importance to them, scholars (e. g. Basurto-Cedeño and Pennington-Gray 2016; Beirman 2018; Beritelli 2011) emphasise their potential strategic relevance in destination crisis management, highlighting their established networks and credibility as intermediator between public and private actors during a crisis.

5.2 Key factors for stakeholder collaboration in tourism destination management

Relationship is key for stakeholder collaboration, particularly during crises. As shown in Table 5, interviewees emphasise the need for consistent contact persons with whom they engage regularly, even before a crisis occurs – a recommendation also supported by Pennington-Gray, Schroeder, and Gale (2014) and Jiang and Ritchie (2017). However, research on tourism networks suggests that relational ties between stakeholders are limited, which limits resource availability and the flow of information within a destination (e. g. Pavlovich 2003). Pennington-Gray, Schroeder, and Gale (2014) highlight the importance of strengthening partnerships between public and private actors across various spatial levels, from local to international, to enhance crisis management in tourism destinations.

Table 5 highlights that *collaboration* is a primary concern for stakeholders, particularly between the public and private sectors. The already discussed fragmented and interwoven structures of tourism destinations are recognised as challenging ("It's actually a spider's web that's spun out of it" (19TOGE, Pos. 51).), particularly complicating collaboration between the public and private sector. Academic research confirms the importance of inter-agency cooperation (e. g. Filimonau and Coteau 2020), pointing out that the different level of damaging impact which the stakeholders face may lead to different goals, which impedes collaboration (e. g. Jiang and Ritchie 2017). Filimonau and Coteau (2020) stress the need for the public sector to adopt best practices at a regional level, such as within the Caribbean, to enhance crisis resilience. The concept of cross-border cooperation, as suggested by this article's title, is supported by both interviewees and scholars (e. g. Sheehan and Ritchie 2005). A relevant example is the assistance provided by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) to Dominica following Hurricane Maria in 2017 (2DMO_D).

Communication is fundamental in building crisis management networks and strengthening destination resilience (e. g. Pennington-Gray, Schroeder, and Gale 2014). Since collaboration relies on communication, it is unsurprising that stakeholders identify this as a major challenge, with only one successful communication flow reported between tour operators and service providers (see Table 5). During crises, timely and accurate information is crucial for decision-making. Pyke et al. (2018) see a weakness in the limited communication and the lack of tourism industry involvement in public authorities' crisis planning, a concern also reflected in the interviewees' responses (Table 5). However, both case studies – Commonwealth of Dominica and the Dominican Republic – have taken initial steps by integrating public and private tourism entities into their crisis units. Nevertheless, findings indicate that further progress is needed.

Crisis planning, including *processes* and plans, is a substantial part of crisis management (e. g. Wut, Xu, and Wong 2021). This becomes even more apparent in tourism destination crisis management, where stakeholders are forced to interact (e. g. Mistilis and Sheldon 2006). Table 5 shows that the interviewees struggle most with a lack of transparency, roles, tasks, and processes which they expect from the public authorities. In contrast, the coordinating role of tourism associations both in the destination as well as in the source market is praised. Interestingly, suggestions from practice and theory align here: Both call for a central entity which takes the lead in coordinating crisis management between the different stakeholder groups in a destination (e. g. Hartman, Wielenga, and Heslinga 2020).

5.3 Contribution of stakeholder theory to stakeholder collaboration in tourism destination crisis management

To successfully collaborate in a crisis, stakeholders need to accept their mutual interdependence (e. g. Jamal and Getz 1995), which is illustrated in Figure 7. The Figure applies different typologies to stakeholders in tourism destination crisis management. Firstly, to make them visible for scholars and practitioners and secondly, to improve crisis preparedness in destinations. Those steps for successful stakeholder collaboration are also suggested by scholars (e. g. Mojtahedi and Oo 2017). Figure 7 indicates that tourists, the tourism businesses, and the public authorities in the destination are key stakeholders identified as primary and inevitable. Being a definitive stakeholder assigns them the attributes power, legitimacy, and urgency. Mojtahedi et al. (2017) suggest that by systematically increasing those attributes among the specific stakeholders, proactive approaches and the influence on crisis management processes increase as well. Power enables stakeholders to exert social and political influence, legitimacy ensures adherence to norms and mandates, and urgency facilitates prompt coordination of response and recovery efforts (e. g. Mojtahedi and Oo 2017). Jamal and Getz (1995) argue that power and legitimacy are necessary to successfully implement joint decisions. Power, legitimacy and influence are fostered by a collaborative approach (e. g. Berlin and Carlström 2008) which relies on protecting proprietary knowledge, building trust-based relationships, integrating into established networks, and ensuring active stakeholder participation with a shared commitment to mutual benefit (e. g. Fyall, Garrod, and Wang 2012).

6 Conclusion

6.1 Limitations and future research

Finding participants from public authorities and DMOs who agreed to be interviewed proved challenging, which leads to their underrepresentation in this sample. The recruitment process was demanding and lengthy and relied on snowball sampling, where previous respondents recommended interview partners. This method assumes familiarity among stakeholders, potentially causing selection bias (e. g. Jiang and Ritchie 2017). However, this risk was mitigated by the small size of the tourism communities in Dominica and the Dominican Republic, as the same interviewee suggestions emerged repeatedly. The research was conducted by a single researcher, which might limit the perspective of the collected, coded and analysed data and the conclusions drawn.

Future research could build on this qualitative work by further exploring the connections and impacts of the stakeholders interviewed. With stakeholders identified, a quantitative approach, such as social network analysis, could empirically assess their connectivity. This method has been widely applied in tourism research (e. g. Hartman, Wielenga, and Heslinga 2020).

6.2 Theoretical implications to improve stakeholder collaboration

Constant and honest communication, trust and shared understanding are identified as key elements for successful stakeholder collaboration by Jiang and Ritchie (2017). This article's claim that stakeholder collaboration should cross borders is demonstrated in the results which show the numerous tasks, connections, and impact of stakeholders from outside the destination. Be it the actors in the source market such as tour operators and public authorities, be it neighbouring destinations or international tourism and disaster bodies such as CDEMA in the Caribbean. The latter approach is already studied and confirmed by scholars (e. g. Filimonau and Coteau 2020). Despite their critical roles, the involvement of tour operators and public authorities in source markets, as well as DMCs at the destination level, remains underexplored within the context of tourism crisis management. This study addresses this research gap by offering nuanced insights into the functions and responsibilities of these stakeholders during crisis scenarios. Moreover, the integrative methodological approach – linking multiple stakeholder criteria to the identified actors – enables a more precise characterisation of stakeholder roles.

Such clarity holds the potential to foster more effective stakeholder collaboration by aligning actions more closely with specific stakeholder needs, ultimately contributing to enhanced crisis management practices in tourism destinations.

6.3 Practical implications to improve stakeholder collaboration

The stakeholder mapping presented in Figure 7 provides practitioners with a structured framework for systematically identifying and evaluating the relevance of key actors in effective destination crisis management. The figure reveals the central position of tourists, tourism businesses and public authorities as definitive, primary and inevitable stakeholders. A central organisational unit possessing legitimacy, power, expertise and resources is necessary to coordinate the collaboration process among stakeholders in a crisis (Jamal and Getz 1995). The results of this study suggest that tourism associations are particularly well-suited to assume this coordinating role. Consequently, they should be formally recognised and adequately empowered by other actors within the destination governance framework. To serve as a central unit for crisis planning and response in the destination, public authorities need to provide tourism associations with the power and legitimacy. The results further indicate that inter-agency collaboration needs to be conducted in advance to function successfully in a crisis. This could be done by workshops and regular meetings to strengthen the network between all stakeholder groups (e. g. Filimonau and Coteau 2020), which is particularly necessary in view of the fact that the tourism industry consists mainly of small companies (e. g. Jiang and Ritchie 2017). As interviewee 21PA_DR, Pos. 129 points out: "A tourist destination can fail due to a poor handling of a crisis". This should motivate practitioners to further engage in the topic of crisis management and stakeholder collaboration during crisis prioritising inclusive, trust-based collaboration among key stakeholders.

Declaration of interest statement
The author reports there are no competing interests to declare.

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7.3 Crisis planning among tour operators: an evaluation of small, medium-sized and large enterprises

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Crisis planning among tour operators: an evaluation of small, medium-sized and large enterprises

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Abstract: The worldwide shutdown of borders during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019 has shown that crisis management in tourism is essential for all stakeholders and has put crisis management of tour operators in a public spotlight. Currently, there is little research on crisis management strategies of tour operators. An exploratory analysis of empirically collected data aimed at determining the current level of crisis planning among German tour operators reveals that although tour operators feel prepared for a crisis, the level of crisis planning is low. This is particularly the case for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which dominate the market. This paper therefore suggests a code of conduct to establish a minimum standard in crisis management for the industry. The findings show that the managers' attitude towards such a code of conduct is neutral. A higher level of involvement from official institutions to support SMEs in their crisis management is recommended.

Keywords: crisis and disaster management; crisis preparedness; crisis planning; code of conduct; evaluation of tour operators; SMEs; small and medium-sized companies; package travel; safety; certification in tourism.

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1 Introduction

Tour operators play a vital role in tourism crisis management, providing the vast majority of tourists in mass destination markets (Aguiló et al., 2003). However, studies examining tour operators as protagonists in crisis management are scarce (de Sausmarez, 2013) and no research has yet been conducted on their level of crisis preparedness. Over 15 years ago, Glaesser (2006) predicted that crisis management would be an integral instrument of the quality strategy of tour operators, highlighting the idea of the package tour as allowing tourists to travel carefree and safely, which is denied to them when booking individual services. According to a Forsa survey by the German Travel Association (DRV, 2019), reliable crisis management is the second most important reason for booking a package tour. That was the case for 96% of the 1005 surveyed Germans who undertook at least one journey during the last three years. This aligns with researchers' findings that safety is essential for tourists and also crucial for their destination decision (e.g., Karl et al., 2017).

This paper follows Wang's and Ritchie's (2011, p.781) crisis definition: "*Crisis* refers to any unplanned event or situation emerging from the internal or external environment of an organisation which can disrupt operations, threaten customers and employees physically and mentally, and endanger an organisation's financial status and future viability." Examples range from natural disasters to transport and technological crises, political disturbances, terrorist attacks and epidemics/pandemics.

As transnational tour operators are usually at a spatial distance from the location of the crisis, their offices remain unaffected (Derham et al., 2022). Consequently, crisis management of tour operators primarily deals with the professional handling of customers during a crisis in the destination, which includes (Glaesser, 2006):

1 rebooking accommodation

2 changing the travel itinerary

3 organising alternative return flights (evacuation)

4 initial psychological support of affected customers

5 handling of deceased customers and support of their relatives.

The specific duty of care of tour operators towards their customers is important for two reasons: Firstly, tourists are vulnerable in unfamiliar locations (e.g., Faulkner, 2001), which indicates an ethical obligation. Secondly, the EU package travel directive 2015/2302 on package travel and linked travel arrangements assigns tour operators a

legal obligation to provide the customer with immediate and appropriate assistance. This includes organising accommodation and alternative travel arrangements at the cost of the tour operator as well as providing necessary information.

A code of conduct might be a feasible approach to ensure minimum standards within the industry, serving as a nexus between the broadly formulated legal and the ethical obligations a tour operator is faced with. Codes of conduct are self-imposed sets of rules which aim to influence attitudes and behaviour (Mason and Mowforth, 1996). They are self-regulating, rely on ethical obligation and peer pressure and can be developed and introduced comparatively quickly and easily, which is why they are also used to fill a legislative gap (Garrod and Fennell, 2004). In tourism, they can be found mainly in visitor and environmental management.

This explorative and inductive study aims to pave the way for comprehensive crisis planning in the tour operator business. First, it examines the self-perception and the actual level of crisis planning of tour operators in Germany according to company size to obtain a status quo snapshot of crisis management structures in the industry. Secondly, the study reveals the managers' attitude towards a code of conduct in crisis management, to find out to what extent a code of conduct would influence the level of crisis planning of a company.

To achieve these aims, the paper is structured as follows: The next section puts crisis management in context with tour operators, certifications and SMEs. After describing the methodology, the results are presented and subsequently discussed in line with the research objectives. Finally, the contribution of the study to the current academic research is summarised and its practical and theoretical implications as well as limitations of the study are explained.

2 Literature review

Crisis management in tourism has played a role in academic research since the late 20th century (e.g., Wut et al., 2021) with an increase in the number of publications following the terrorist attacks of 9/11 in 2001 (e.g., Jiang et al., 2019). To date, the focus in academic literature has remained mainly on crisis management in tourist destinations (Jiang et al., 2019) and in the hospitality industry (Wut et al., 2021). Research about transnational tour operators is represented in only few papers (e.g., Cavlek, 2002; Evans and Elphick, 2005; Derham et al., 2022). Their omission in academic literature can also be observed in recent papers on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on several tourism sectors, where tour operators do not appear (e.g., Gössling et al., 2021).

Researchers tried to conceptualise a crisis by segmenting it according to its lifecycle. In 1986, Fink (2002) was the first to create a crisis management model. Different models with different numbers of stages followed, e.g., a five-stage model by Mitroff (1988) and one by Roberts (1994) as well as a four-stage model referred to as the PPRR or RRRR model (pre-disaster planning/reduction, preparedness/readiness, response, recovery) by Smith in 1995 (Smith, 2013). All frameworks cover the stages of planning, intervention and adaption. The most frequently discussed crisis management frameworks in tourism have been the tourism disaster management framework by Faulkner (2001) and the holistic crisis and disaster management framework by Ritchie (2004).

Several researchers (e.g., Mair et al., 2016) noted that crisis planning is not a topic of in-depth research. They tried to determine why the industry lacks commitment to crisis

preparedness (Pennington-Gray, 2018) and recommended further studies in this field because "preventing the crisis from happening is the best crisis management strategy" (Wut et al., 2021, p.13). The latest overview conducted by Wut et al. (2021) identified 16 papers related to crisis preparedness and crisis prevention between 1985 and 2020. Among these, four studies dealt with the level of crisis preparedness in the hospitality (Ritchie et al., 2011; Rousaki and Alcott, 2006; Gruman et al., 2011) and MICE industry (Smith and Kline, 2010). Most of these studies focused on the managers' perception, but not on the actual level of crisis planning, although Wang and Ritchie (2011) stated that self-assessment of crisis planning may differ from reality.

Researchers detected a huge knowledge gap between large enterprises and SMEs as well as a lack of strategic management in terms of crisis management (e.g., Bollrich and Warren, 2016). Okumus and Karamustafa (2005) argued that the ad-hoc management practices of SMEs might reflect general managerial practices in the tourism industry. Liu et al. (2021) demanded a scientific discussion of the crisis response of SMEs in the tourism industry, as they contribute significantly to economic growth.

The purpose of certifications and codes of conduct in tourism is to achieve environmental, social and behavioural standards in order to reduce the industry's negative impact on a destination (Cole, 2007). While both instruments are voluntary, certifications are based on a set of standards that need to be met, and ideally, this is monitored by an independent agency (Pennington-Gray et al., 2014). Codes of conduct have been established in tourism since the 1980s (Mason and Mowforth, 1996) and are introduced either by government, the industry or non-governmental organisations (Mason, 2007). Research contributions to certifications in tourism mainly concerned sustainability (e.g., Dziuba, 2016; Karlsson and Dolnicar, 2016). Only a few scientists covered the field of certification in safety (e.g., Beeton, 2001; Morgan, 2021) and crises (e.g., Pennington-Gray et al., 2014). In the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, some researchers foresaw an increased need for security among consumers, which is why quality commitments such as a code of conduct might gain more importance in the travel decision process (e.g., Yu et al., 2021).

3 Materials and methods

3.1 Conceptual framework

The research design (see Figure 1) outlines the conceptualisation of the two research topics. To analyse the level of crisis planning of tour operators in Germany (first research objective), crisis planning was divided into the managers' self-perception and the actual level of crisis planning. The latter was operationalised into aspects based on the components in the pre-event and prodromal phases of Faulkner's (2001) and Ritchie's (2004) crisis management frameworks, as they offer the most detailed assignment of tasks in each phase. These aspects were supplemented by reoccurring elements assigned to crisis planning taken from the current academic literature as follows:

1 crisis department (Coombs, 2019; Mitroff, 1988; Wang and Ritchie, 2011)

2 crisis processes (Pennington-Gray et al., 2011; Pforr and Hosie, 2008)

3 crisis manual or guideline(s) (Coombs, 2019; Fink, 2002; Pennington-Gray et al., 2011; Pforr and Hosie, 2008)

4 crisis unit (Coombs, 2019; Wang and Ritchie, 2011)

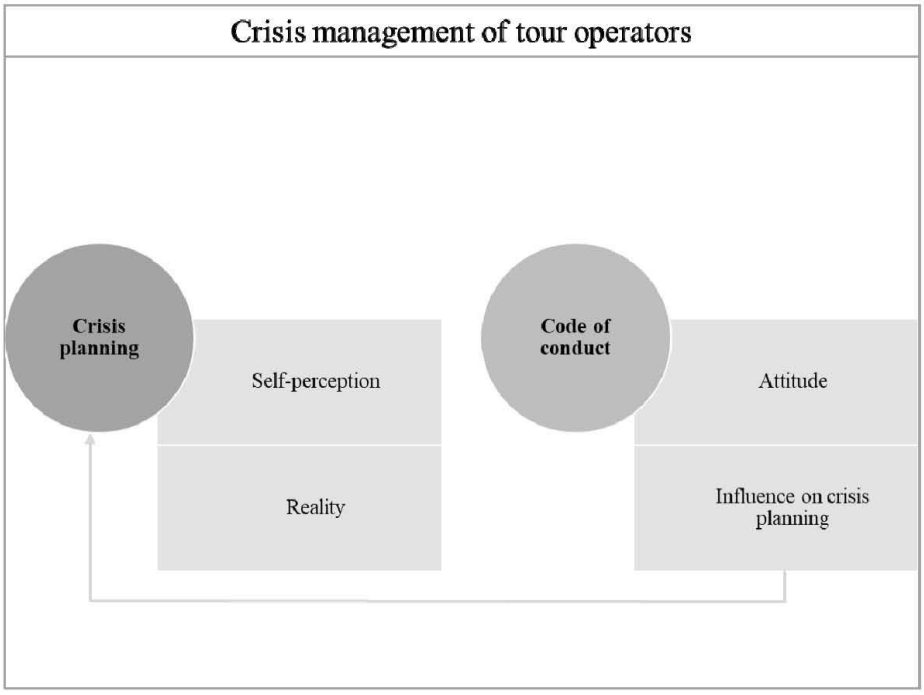
5 crisis simulation (Coombs, 2019; Mitroff, 1988; Pennington-Gray et al., 2011; Pforr and Hosie, 2008; Wang and Ritchie, 2011)

6 crisis stage 'intervention' (Pforr and Hosie, 2008).

7 crisis stage 'analysis and adaption' (Pforr and Hosie, 2008).

Quantitative, descriptive research was used for this part of the explorative study.

Figure 1 Research design



For the second research objective, the influence of a code of conduct in crisis management on the level of crisis planning of tour operators was examined by inquiring into the following aspects based on a 4-point Likert scale. Managers were asked about their attitude towards a code of conduct (need, participation, sales argument) and towards a seal as certification (need, participation, investment). Another question concerned the extent to which a code of conduct would directly influence the company's own crisis planning (supporting and stimulating own crisis planning, adapting processes in own crisis planning, feeling better prepared). Quantitative and qualitative methods were used for the second part of this inductive study.

3.2 Data collection and sampling

According to the German Federal Office of Statistics, there were 2091 tour operators liable for taxation in 2020 (latest available data) (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2022).

However, there are neither official nor unofficial listings of those tour operators. In order to guarantee accurate acquisition of information and clearly define the population of the research (e.g., Creswell, 2014), the enterprises listed in the industry's leading media fvw | TravelTalk book 'Branchenkontakte 2022' (FVW Medien GmbH, 2022) in the sections 'tour operator' and 'cruises' were selected as a sample frame and adjusted: All companies not based in Germany were removed as well as club hotels and brokers. Tour operators belonging to a parent company were also deleted because their crisis management is handled by the parent company directly. The cleared list contained 621 companies and represented the population of the research. A standardised online questionnaire with 55 questions was created using the software Unipark. The questions were arranged in six groups covering the topics crises, crisis management, crisis planning, attitude towards a code of conduct, crisis management in the destination and corporate data. Between 8 and 12 June 2022, the cover letter with a personalised link was sent to the companies as a complete survey. Of the 621 companies invited, 15 emails could not be delivered due to company liquidation and two emails for reasons unknown. Five companies stated that they act as brokers. Finally, of $n = 599$ companies participating in the study, 77 returned correctly completed questionnaires (13%) for data analysis in SPSS.

3.3 Structure of the sample

The research was conducted to detect the differences in crisis planning of micro, small, medium-sized and large tour operators. To define the companies' size, the EU Commission's recommendation 2003/361/EC concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) was used as per Table 1. The parameter 'number of employees' was chosen as a reference because it was unanimously given by all participants. Due to the lack of information about the industry structure, there was no distribution by size of the final research population of 599 companies, which emphasises the inductive character of this study. However, a university study of 2018 estimated that around 94% of tour operators in Germany are micro and small enterprises, as the tour operator market in Germany is very small-scale (Kirstges, 2018). Table 1 also indicates this finding with micro (almost two-thirds) and small (almost one-fifth) enterprises dominating the sample. Large companies were represented completely in this study.

Table 1 Types of enterprise (based on EU Commission's recommendation 2003/361/EC), research sample and random sample of questionnaire

Type of enterprise	*Number of employees*	*N = 599*		*Annual turnover total in €*	*← or →*	*Annual balance sheet total in €*
		n = 77 in total	*n in percent*			
Large	≥250	6	8%	>50 million		>43 million
Medium	50–249	11	14%	≤50 million		≤43 million
Small	10–49	14	18%	≤10 million		≤10 million
Micro	1–9	46	60%	≤2 million		≤2 million

4 Results

4.1 Level of crisis planning

4.1.1 Self-perception

The respondents were asked if they consider their company to be well-prepared for a crisis by choosing from a 4-point-Likert scale between 1 = definitely and 4 = not at all. Table 2 shows that there is a tendency towards 'partly prepared' among medium-sized, small and micro enterprises, whereas large tour operators tend to feel 'definitely' prepared. Interestingly, none of the companies chose the last option 'not at all prepared'.

Table 2 Self-perception of crisis preparedness of tour operators according to company size (mean)

Type of enterprise	*Mean*
Large	1.17
Medium	1.73
Small	1.71
Micro	1.76

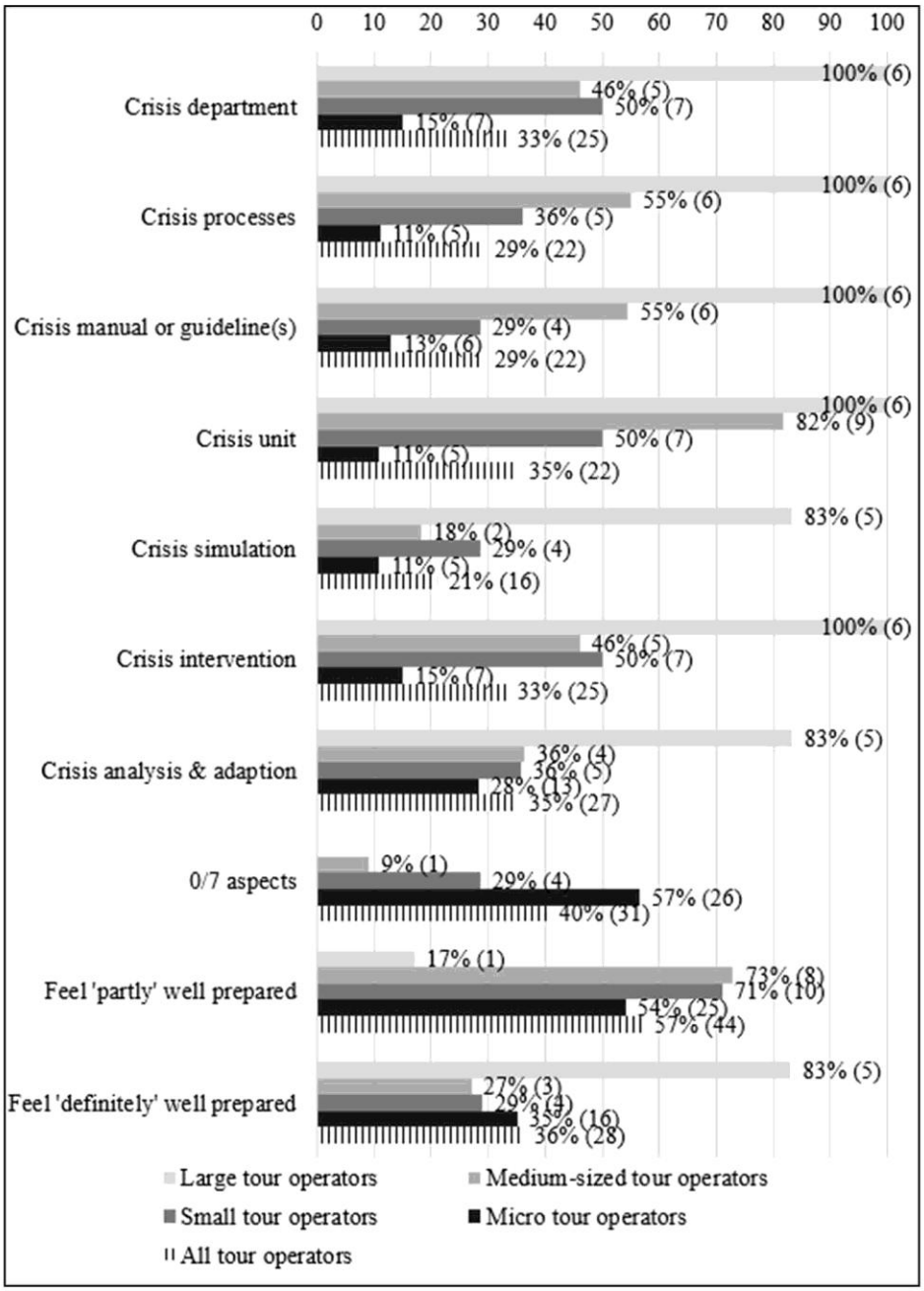
4.1.2 Actual level of crisis planning

The overall level of crisis planning among German tour operators can be considered low, as 40% apply no aspects of crisis planning in their company (see Figure 2). Large tour operators stand out, covering five of seven parameters with 100% and the remaining two parameters with 83% (see Figure 2). Micro enterprises also occupy a unique position, showing the lowest level of crisis planning throughout all aspects (see Figure 2). A comparison between companies' self-perception and the actual level of crisis planning reveals a significant discrepancy (see Figure 2). Among micro tour operators, 89% of the companies feel 'definitely' or 'partly' well-prepared, although 57% do not cover any aspect of crisis planning (see Figure 2). All small and medium-sized companies feel 'definitely' or 'partly' well-prepared, while 29% respectively 9% do not cover any of the aspects (see Figure 2). There is no discrepancy between self-perception and the actual state of crisis preparedness in large companies.

4.2 Managers' attitude towards a code of conduct

The participants were asked to state their attitude towards a code of conduct in crisis management for tour operators by choosing from a 4-point-Likert scale between 1 = definitely and 4 = not at all. Across all company sizes, the mean of the managers' agreement lies between 'partly agree' and 'rather not agree' (see Tables 3–5). The level of agreement decreases with the size of the company (see Tables 3 and 4).

Figure 2 Self-perception and aspects of crisis planning of tour operators according to company size, in percent and in absolute numbers



4.2.1 Code of conduct

Outliers to the aforementioned trend were found when managers were asked if they see a need for a code of conduct, whereby medium-sized companies exhibited the greatest level of agreement, followed by small, large and micro companies (see Table 3). Interestingly, large tour operators 'rather not' see a need for a code of conduct but show the highest willingness to participate (see Table 3). The comments in the qualitative data section outline the low level of approval:

- "A 'Code of Conduct' often contains recommendations and specifications for large tour operators with corresponding departments and trained staff, which small tour operators cannot implement" (case 69, micro company).
- "Small ones [tour operators], like ours, do not need a code of conduct because we react extremely quickly and personally to crises. In case of problems, the clients are informed immediately, and a solution is found very quickly, without scaremongering. We work with Africa; unfortunately, there is no shortage of crises there, and therefore we also have a lot of experience. In my opinion, a guideline or something similar would not help because every situation is different. And for basic things like communicating immediately and openly and honestly, you don't need a manual, that's clear to everyone anyway." (case 40, micro company)
- "A code of conduct prevents the ability to improvise" (case 58, micro company).
- "The question of setting up a crisis management system or a crisis team only arises for large companies (from 100 employees) or for hierarchically managed companies in which the employees do not feel empowered to react or take part in decisions in crisis situations. At [company name], all employees who can contribute to minimising the damage or to finding a solution (and who can be reached) are the crisis team. A healthy (cooperative) medium-sized working culture is the Code of Conduct." (case 43, medium-sized company).

One statement favours a code of conduct:

- "A code of conduct can only be the beginning of a professional crisis management" (case 57, small company).

Table 3 Tour operators' views on code of conduct according to company size (mean)

Type of enterprise	*Need*	*Participation*	*Sales argument*
Large	2.50	2.17	1.83
Medium	2.09	2.18	2.34
Small	2.29	2.21	2.52
Micro	2.67	2.63	2.59

4.2.2 Quality seal

In line with the trend described initially, large tour operators have the highest and micro companies the lowest opinion of a quality seal as certification (see Table 4). The following comments by micro tour operators in the qualitative data section support their low level of agreement again:

- "Certifications are mostly money machines, and the main thing is to have the allegedly important seals. People rarely work according to them. What is important is common sense and a trusting relationship with the local service providers" (case 34).
- "In particular, 'big players' with various quality certificates and 'stamps' often demonstrated miserable crisis management during the Coronavirus pandemic [...]. In my opinion, small companies without rigid procedures and WITHOUT a quality certificate usually reacted better. External consultants and rigid criteria for awarding certificates based on purely formal aspects often lead to expensive 'posturing' with miserable results [...]" (case 50).
- "Please, not another 'bureaucratic monster', not another certification. That doesn't help us small tour operators at all. We know our partners. In a crisis, the best thing we can do is to communicate openly, honestly, quickly and find solutions together. [..]" (case 37).

Table 4 Tour operators' views on a quality seal as certification according to company size (mean)

Type of enterprise	*Need*	*Participation*	*Investment*
Large	1.83	2.67	2.50
Medium	2.27	2.73	3.00
Small	2.5	2.93	2.93
Micro	2.93	2.96	3.20

4.2.3 Direct influence on own crisis planning

The trend that the larger the company, the higher the level of approval, was not continued in this section. Here, large tour operators show the lowest agreement in their statements, saying that a code of conduct would 'more likely not' have an influence on the company's own crisis planning (see Table 5). Large companies show the most homogenous results within the group, while small companies, as well as in two cases medium-sized companies, exhibit the most homogenous distribution within their group (see Table 5).

Table 5 Influence on tour operators' crisis planning according to company size (mean)

Type of enterprise	*Supports own planning*	*Stimulates crisis planning*	*Adapt processes accordingly*	*Feel better prepared*
Large	2.83	2.83	2.67	2.83
Medium	2.09	2.36	2.09	2.18
Small	2.14	2.43	1.93	2.29
Micro	2.67	2.76	2.50	2.67

5 Discussion

5.1 Crisis planning

The present study reveals a perceived crisis preparedness among German tour operators of 60.3%, which is considerably lower than the 72.7% in the Australian (Wang and Ritchie, 2011) and 80.4% in the UK (Rousaki and Alcott, 2006) hospitality industry. However, the figure serves as an indicator.

29% of the study's respondents have a crisis plan. The low result matches that in the literature: Only a few of the businesses in Kelowna, Canada interviewed by Hystad and Keller (2006) had a crisis plan, despite the fact that the respondents regularly deal with forest fires. Gruman et al. (2011) revealed that over 80% of respondents of the Canadian hospitality industry had either no or only a minimal plan. Pennington-Gray et al. (2011) indicated in a study with tourism stakeholders (lodging, attractions, promotions) in Florida that 45% had a crisis plan for visitors.

The present study does not reveal the reasons why particularly small enterprises face difficulties in setting up crisis management. However, researchers identified a lack of, for example:

1 staff and financial resources (Cioccio and Michael, 2007; Runyan, 2006; Wang and Ritchie, 2011),

2 knowledge and time due to high involvement in daily business (Cioccio and Michael, 2007),

3 perception of a threat of crisis (Gruman et al., 2011).

Coombs (2019) argued that it might be the complexity of the task that discourages small businesses from establishing a crisis management. Evans and Elphick (2005, p.143) called this phenomenon "the myth of planning". This attitude can also be deduced from the managers' comments (case 34, 40, 50, 58 micro company, case 60 small company) in this study.

In cases 40 and 60 of the same commentary section as well as in the literature (e.g., Evans and Elphick, 2005) it has often been argued that crisis plans are redundant because every crisis is different, and therefore it is not possible to prepare for every crisis. In contrast, Fink (2002) and Mitroff (1988) argued that crisis management is universal and should be applied independent of the content of the crisis.

Large tour operators have the highest level of self-perception and at the same time the highest level of crisis preparedness – self-perception and reality align (see Figure 2). This is not the case for the other company sizes where there is a significant gap between self-perception and reality exists (see Figure 2). To explain this discrepancy, a first approach was made with the model of behaviour-attitude gap which marks the difference between an individual's attitude and action and is mainly employed in environmental research and social psychology (e.g., Chatzidakis et al., 2016). However, the managers' comment, e.g., "Everything and every decision in the event of a crisis depends on the situation – very few can be handled by the book, know-how and flexibility are the best solutions!" (case 60, small tour operator) suggests that the model cannot be applied. In fact, all comments but that in case 57 published in this paper give the impression that the managers are not aware of the need for and importance of a functioning crisis management. Bollrich and Warren (2016) explained this behaviour, specifically in small and medium-sized

businesses, with psychological and contextual barriers incorporating the managers' personal beliefs, emotions and knowledge as well as personal experience and opinions of friends and family.

5.2 Code of conduct in crisis management

In this study, tour operators tended towards a neutral to pessimistic view of a code of conduct in crisis management. In a study examining U.S. travellers' perception of a certification of crisis preparedness for destinations, the participants were also neutral (Pennington-Gray et al., 2014). These researchers assumed that this was partly due to a lack of understanding of the concept, which might also be the case for the present study.

The larger the organisation, the higher the agreement for a code of conduct. Interestingly, micro tour operators are least convinced of the concept, although they show the lowest level of crisis planning. Large tour operators see the lowest influence, probably because they already have a high degree of crisis planning.

The results as well as the literature suggest that a lack of crisis planning needs to be faced. The initially mentioned EU package travel directive 2015/2302 provides a legal framework for this, but needs to be addressed in detail by the institutions. Researchers agree that superordinate institutions might serve as catalysts or mentors for the implementation of crisis management structures, specifically among micro, small and medium-sized companies, to enhance awareness (e.g., Hystad and Keller, 2006). Wang and Ritchie (2012) argued that tourism associations have a specific stake, serving as they do as a platform for education and a network between tourism companies. This paper follows this approach. 84% of the respondents (100% of large, small and medium-sized companies) are members of a travel association. Consequently, travel associations in Germany could indeed serve as a booster to introducing a code of conduct. Several tourism organisations such as the German Travel Association DRV, the Council of Australian Tour Operators CATO and the Pacific Asia Travel Association PATA offer guidelines for the industry with specific instructions on how to implement crisis management in a destination as well as in a tourism company, which demonstrates that they are aware of the necessity of the topic. However, more dedication and above all persuasion and training specifically for SMEs are needed.

6 Conclusion

The results of the study reveal that the self-perception among tour operators in Germany is high, while the actual low level of crisis planning among SMEs shows a completely opposite picture. Researchers already identified the main barriers for SMEs implementing crisis planning, but not how to remove those barriers. An approach was made with the present research by suggesting a code of conduct in crisis management to support crisis management structures among tour operators. The findings show that this does not seem to fall on fertile ground within the industry because the majority see no need for it, although approval increases with the size of the company.

Researchers refer to superordinate institutions providing guidance for SMEs. Considering that the majority of the tour operators involved in the study belong to a travel association and that the German travel association DRV already has a crisis guide for tour operators, the researchers see a great potential for disseminating the crisis guide

to other travel associations and intensifying training and concrete support. A study analysing the consumers' attitude towards a code of conduct in crisis management might be a further booster for tour operators, should the findings indicate that a code of conduct is a purchasing argument.

As this study is exploratory and certain market data such as a complete list of all tour operators based in Germany and their distribution by size are not available, some limitations must be accepted. Reasons why companies did not participate in the questionnaire might be that companies without a crisis management may not feel confident, that managers do not see a course or that they lack resources in the form of time and skilled labour. The latter was exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to a dramatic increase in unemployment within the tourism industry and the current shortage of skilled workers.

Declaration of interest statement

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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