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## TOURISM SAFETY AND SECURITY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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### Abstract

*There have been misconceptions with respect to tourism safety and security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century tourism discourse. Many previous studies have attempted to conceptualise it from some other dimensions other than representing it within the tourism space. This study is aimed at engaging the conceptual framework of tourism safety and security with a view to repositioning the functionalities of responsible and sustainable tourism in tourism discourse. The study adopted an explanatory research design and literature method to interrogate the conceptual framework of tourism safety and security. In the end, the study posited that while tourism safety has to do with the safety of tourists to their destinations or en route destinations, tourism security engages the security of tourism resources. More so, NWATSSEC Model was proposed to enhance discussions on tourism safety and security in the tourism space. The study has implications for responsible and sustainable tourism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.*

**Keywords:** *Tourism safety and security, Tourists; Tourism resources, Conceptual Framework, NWATSSEC Model, Responsible tourism, Sustainable tourism.*

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### Introduction

The evolving nature of tourism and heritage studies in Sub-Saharan Africa and other parts of the globe has generated debates on critical issues. These debates have climaxed since the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For instance, in Nigeria and some other African countries like Lesotho, Uganda, Togo and Morocco, the growing impact of tourism on national and regional economies has drawn interests from the academia and some other industries with a view to seeking how best to harness the potentialities of the industry for economic revitalization. This has metamorphosed into a rapid and sustained increase in tourism products and services. Tourism support sectors like the hospitality and transport sectors have witnessed a dramatic increase in business and research activities.

Nations across the globe have been motivated by this rapid growth of the tourism industry and its attendant contribution to the GDP, to invest in the industry (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, & Wanhil, 2005; Page & Connell, 2006; Nwankwo, 2017). This has resulted in the designing of an effective legal framework and responsive industrial policy to enhance the contribution of tourism to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). For instance, despite the huge effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the tourism balance across the globe, the industry has been identified as one of the global markets with high survival tendencies in post-covid-19. This is because the tourism industry is multi-industrial by nature due to its responsive collaboration with many other

industries and activities at different levels of the economy. This unique nature has been able to sustain the industry in many nations.

The progressive nature of tourism as an industry has brought about a series of conceptual frameworks that are aimed at promoting the stability and sustainability of the industry in its efforts of repositioning various degrees of economies. Some of these concepts include tourism development, tourism sustainability, responsible tourism, tourism economies, tourism resources, over-tourism, tourism impacts, heritage tourism, and tourist safety, among others. Each of these concepts was designed to address some aspects of tourism. For instance, tourism impact studies are aimed at studying various impacts of tourism in a given system. These impacts were further addressed from economic, cultural, social, religious, political, industrial, etc, dimensions. The study can be applied in any space where tourism is thriving (Mathewson & Wall, 1982; Mason, 2003; Cooper et al, 2005; Page & Connell, 2006; Nwankwo, 2017). Another notable and widely used concept in tourism studies is tourism sustainability or sustainable tourism. This concept is aimed at enhancing tourism development activities where attention is not only focused on today's gain but also on the need to preserve the future of tourism resources and the surroundings. (Prunier, Sweeney & Green, 1993; Page & Connell, 2006; Nwankwo, 2017). This particular concept has been approached from various dimensions in times and space to address sustainability issues that have hindered tourism as an industry since its conception in the global discourse.

However, the concept of tourism safety and security is among the most current concepts in tourism studies. This concept is both topical and atypical in the current global discuss on travel and tourism. Although it is a borrowed concept in tourism studies, it has been hugely misinterpreted in tourism discourse and literature. This is the basis for this paper as it seeks to look at the conceptual connotations of this concept as regards tourism studies in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The study further proposed a responsive model to be used in approaching safety and security issues in tourism. It is expected that by the end of these discussions and propositions, this paper would have been able to position the right conceptual framework for tourism safety and security, and further enhance related studies with a veritable and unique model for such studies. This study adopted an explanatory research design and literature method as the research method towards interrogating the conceptual framework of tourism safety and security. Explanatory method of data analysis and diagrammatic illustration were helpful in the representation of facts.

### **Brief Literature Review**

This section will briefly interrogate the perception of the concept of safety and security from some other sources. This will help in substantiating the true position of the concept in the tourism space. For instance, food safety and security is used in the agricultural discourse as a national concern to mean two different things that are interdependently connected. For instance, food safety has to do with the safety of food that is available for public consumption and food security has to do with the availability of food for public consumption (Walls, Baker, Chirwa, & Hawkins, 2019; Unnevelir, 2020; Ene, 2020). It is one of the concepts that have transformed global food production, trade and consumption in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Ene, 2020). However, from the engineering point of view, specifically computer engineering, the concept of safety and security is conceptualized as two components of soft and hardware protection. For instance,

while security is seen as the protection of the computer system from threats emanating from the external environment, safety is seen as the act of protecting the environment from potential damages emanating from the computer system (Gumzej, Colnaric & Halang 2009; Korneck & Zalewski, 2015). In this understanding, the concern is on the two distinctive elements of the computer system and the environment, with the central aim of protecting one from the other to ensure the mutual co-existence of the two in the same space. The two components that made up the concept are inseparable, hence one needs the other to thrive and be sustained. More so, from the industrial point of view, “safety culture is then often associated with, (a) an awareness of hazards and risks and (b) the way people involved in these activities adopt individual or group behaviours in order to manage these risks in the best possible way” (Gilbert, 2018 p. 15). In this perspective, safety is bordered on human lives and can be promoted through the right attitudes towards possible threats by industrial workers. To this end, the safety model is designed to check safety attitudes among industrial workers (Cooper, 2018; Gilbert, 2018). Therefore, safety is seen as the relationship between workers and the work environment, and this relationship can be improved through a quality safety model.

Furthermore, some studies (e.g. Buzan, Weaver, & Wilde, 1998; Smith & Brooks, 2013) see safety and security studies as not only about the military or other national security intelligence, but also about human society, human environment and other sectors of the economy. They maintained that the concept of safety and security can be viewed from different dimensions but with the central aim of securing and making it safe (Buzan et al, 1998; Smith & Brooks, 2013). More so, Lukas (2016) noted the need for a safety and security theory that will address various dimensions of safety and security across the globe. He further noted that the concept of safety and security should be addressed through some notable and related concepts and theories like Copenhagen School of Security Studies (CSSS), Risk Theory, Crisis Theory and Theory of Causality. The CSSS has its focus on safety and security as it concerns political science and governance with the aim of solving security problems among states. On the other hand, the risk theory is used to address issues about risks in a system. It looks at the causes of risks, the effects, control measures and the identification of risks in a system. This theory further anchors risk solutions in a system of risk management which focuses on eradicating or minimizing the damage or impact of risk in a system (Lukas, 2016). More so, “crisis theory as a scientific discipline is focused on the theoretical aspects of crisis research, mainly on nature and causes of crisis” (Lucas, 2019 p. 2). It is aimed at identifying crises, handling crises and preventing crises in a system. Moreover, the concept of causality “...is a scientific discipline which researches relations between cause and effect... the cause is a relation, where cause and effect are mutually connected. The law of causality determines that anything that happens has at least one cause, and also any cause has future consequences” (Lukas, 2019 p. 3). The concept addresses two basic issues(‘cause and effect’) in a system. And it further proposes that outcomes in a system should be addressed from these two fronts . Based on these expressions, Lukas (2016) asserts that the newly designed safety and security theory should be anchored on four concepts (CSSS, Risk, Crisis and Causality) to address safety and security issues from different aspects of the human environment. He further noted that this is possible hence the concept of safety and security may have different understandings from different languages (i.e. English language and Czech language) (Lukas, 2016).

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In another study, Niemisalo (2014) notes that “...tourism safety and security is broad and it combines state-centric, traditional security with more individual focusing on softer safety theories. In the tourism safety definition process – thinking takes into account the safety and security needs of the customer, company and operative environment” (Niemisalo, 2014 p. 3). He sees the concept of tourism safety and security as a concern for individuals, groups, communities and states. He gives a clear-cut definition of the concept and its application to tourism studies and engagements. More so, Iivari and Niemisalo (2013) are of the view that the concept of tourism safety and security can be understood from three principal dimensions of actors, questions and producers. They went further to illustrate this in the table below:

**Table 1: Typology of Safety and security frameworks**

The actor that defines safety and security	Main safety and security questions	Producers of safety and security
1. State	Security of state, national security	Military organizations, police force
2. Group	Communal security- safety, environmental safety and security	Associations, 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector
3. Individual	Personal safety and security, work-related (safety)	Local community municipality

*Source: Iivari and Niemisalo (2013)*

In this table, Iivari and Niemisalo (2013) see safety and security as the concern for the state, groups and individuals. These principals interpret safety and security from their respective domains. More so, Kovari and Zimanyi (n.d) in their study looked at the historical development of the concept of tourism safety and security. This includes mass tourism/1 (1950-1970), mass tourism/2 (1970-1990), and transition in global tourism (1990-present). They considered various safety and security issues and discussions in tourism within these periods in global history, and their resultant implications. They further identified safety and security components to include “...political security, public safety, health and sanitation, personal data safety, legal protection of tourists, consumer protection, safety in communication, disaster protection, environmental security, getting authentic information, quality assurance of services, etc” (Kovari & Zimanyi, n.d p. 60). In addition, Ayob and Masron (2014) see safety and security as among the challenging factors to the growth and sustainability of the Malaysian tourism industry. They cited issues like health issues, kidnappings and shooting in Sabah, riots and illegal demonstrations, Lahad Datu intrusion, poor international media reportage, twin airline incident, etc, as factors that are posing new challenges to the Malaysia tourism industry (Ayob & Masron, 2014). These works have made significant contributions to the current discourse on tourism safety and security. That notwithstanding, they did not give a conceptual framework for the concept of tourism safety and security and its application to the tourism industry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Finally, this aspect of the study has attempted to interrogate the existing literature on safety and security, including related concepts. The reviewed studies gave the framework for the current discourse on the conceptual framework of safety and security. The discussion will be further extended to tourism as a field of study and as an industry with a view to giving an expression of the concept in tourism, and proposing a tourism safety and security model for addressing safety and security issues in tourism and related disciplines.

### **Conceptualizing Tourism Safety and Security**

Literature review has shown that the majority of the existing studies on tourism safety and security has not been conceptualized within the context of tourism. Some of these studies have attempted to interpret and interrogate the concept from military, political and industrial dimensions without recourse to its application to tourism studies. This has not helped the utilization of the concept in understanding and solving basic problems within the 21st century debates in tourism discourse. Even when the concept is majorly attributed to war and terrorism, and how they affect tourism growth and sustainability within the global space, the concept of tourism safety has not been positioned within the tourism discourse. However, these previous attempts have given quality empirical background for the current study to be able to interrogate the concept of tourism safety and security and reposition it within current debates in tourism studies. This will not only present a more acceptable conceptual framework for the concept but also propose a model for safety and security interrogations in tourism studies. In this regard, this aspect of the work was aimed at conceptualizing the issue of tourism safety and security within the confines of current realities in the tourism space.

It could be misleading to delve into the concept under interrogation without looking at the general definition of the various components that make up the concept. The word *Safety* has been given diverse meanings in the literature. According to the Advanced Dictionary of English, the word *Safety* traces its etymology from different old languages i.e. Sauvete (old French), Salvitem & Salvitas (Medieval Latin), Salvus (Latin), among others. The dictionary went ahead to define it as the condition or feeling of being safe in a particular space; a state of being free from external threats or hazards. Its direct opposite is “Danger”. From this, it can be deduced that the word *Safety* can be viewed from different angles depending on the author’s research problem. It is a perfect state or feeling from eventualities like threats and hazardous elements. On the other hand, *Security* is another major component of the concept under interrogation. Advanced Dictionary of English notes that the word *Security* has different pronunciations from different languages i.e. Middle English (Securite), Latin (Securitas), Middle French (Securite), Modern French (Securite), with the same meaning: safe, secure, and preserve. The dictionary further interpreted the word as the condition of being free from physical, psychological, financial, emotional, and social threats of all kinds. The opposite is *Insecurity*, which is the condition of not being free from any of the threats mentioned above.

More so, tourism is simply seen as a temporary movement of a person or group of persons from their original place of stay to another place, to spend at least a night and not more than one year. Such visits can be motivated by different factors from which the typologies of tourism were drawn i.e. culture, health, leisure, sports, education, and birth, among others. The visitor is not expected to be involved in any income-earning activity in the place visited if he must be referred

to as a *tourist* otherwise he will be referred to as a *mere visitor* in the place visited (Matthewson & Wall, 1982; Mason, 2003; Cooper et al, 2005; Page & Connell, 2006; Nwankwo, 2017). Tourists can be classified by the purpose of visit i.e. cultural tourists, health tourists, sports tourists, birth tourists, sex tourists, education tourists, among others, or by geographical boundaries i.e. domestic tourists, international tourists, regional tourists, among others. Whichever is the case, the person or the group of persons must fulfil the criteria mentioned above to be referred to as a *tourist(s)*.

However, the above passage has been able to give the background knowledge of the three distinctive words that make up the concept, *Tourism Safety and Security*. This concept shall now be conceptualized within the context of tourism to understand its applicability, connotations and denotations in tourism studies and debates in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, two distinctive phrases (tourism safety and tourism security) were fused to make up the main concept of tourism safety and security. Each of these shall be interrogated separately to be able to appreciate their contributions or positions to the central concept.

### **Tourism Safety**

While the meanings of this concept are not far-fetched, its perception may be different in the tourism circle from its understanding within the circular usage. Most debates in the tourism circle in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are anchored on two independent variables of tourists/visitors and tourism resources. Every other variables are dependent on these two. To this end, dependent variables include destination, host community, investors, policymakers and developers. Their functionality or usefulness is dependent on the two principal variables of tourists/visitors and tourism resources. Therefore tourist safety has to do with all the safety concerns that surround the tourist experience in a particular tourist destination or en route to that tourist destination. No tourist would like to visit a destination where his or her safety is not guaranteed, nor desire a return visit to a destination where his or her safety was not guaranteed during the first visit. Most tourists desire new experiences but not to the detriment of their lives and properties. Some of the safety issues a tourist may encounter in a particular tourism experience include road accidents, terrorist attacks, armed robbery, health issues, animal attacks, contact with dangerous tourism resources, food poisoning, extortion, deceit by tour guides or other tourism providers, mosquito bites, poor sanitary condition, unfavourable weather condition, unhygienic environment, and other life and comfort threatening experiences that may deter a tourist or group of tourists from making a first or return visit to a given destination. No matter the level of attractiveness of tourism resources, they may not make sustainable tourist attractions if the safety of tourists is not guaranteed. Tourism safety has a focus on tourist safety. Hence tourism safety discourse revolves around the safety of tourists. Therefore tourism safety has to do with the safety of tourists at various tourist destinations and other issues or concerns on the safety of lives and properties of tourists or visitors in a given tourist destination. Such concerns have far-reaching implications for the sustainability of tourism projects in a given tourist destination.

### **Tourism Security**

This is another major component of the concept of tourism safety and security. Most of the reviewed literature see this concept from the angle of political, security, and military security, among others (Kovari & Zimanyi, n.d.; Kornecki & Zalewski, 2015; Gumezej et al, 2009). More

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especially, the political conception of security has been among the domineering views that have led to the misinterpretation of the concept of tourism security in tourism studies. There exists a weak connect between general misconception and the ideal meaning of tourism security. For instance, both concerns have to do with the negative effect of an external factor(s) on the comfort of an existing object or living thing. However, unlike tourism safety, tourism security is focused on the tourism resources in a given destination. It is the total security of tourism resources within a given space at a particular point in time. It has dominated debates in tourism discourse since the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There are various classes of tourism resources (i.e. built resources, cultural resources and natural resources) and each of these may not be able to provide the needed tourism services if not well secured. It could be secured from theft, destruction, misinterpretation, abuse, misconception, among others. These factors can badly affect the existence, sustainability and relevance of perceived tourism resources in a given space. For instance, these resources would enhance tourism activities in a particular destination. More so, abuse or destruction of these tourism resources will not only affect the life span of these resources but the host community and the visitors/tourists including the tourism project in the destination. These host communities see any attack on these natural and cultural tourism resources as an attack on their rich heritage value. They can put up strong resistance against the destruction and abuse of these tourism resources by external factors or developers. From the angle of misinterpretation, some tourism resources can be given a wrong interpretation either by visitors/tourists or by developers in the public media. Such misinterpretations have the tendencies to not only reduce tourist traffic to the site but also devalue the tourism resources in the global tourism discourse. Therefore tourism security is focused on the security of tourism resources in all ramifications in a given space.

However, tourism safety and security, as a 21<sup>st</sup>-century concept in tourism discourse, has to do with the safety of tourists in a given destination and the security of tourism resources in a particular destination. This concept is central since a tourist or visitor will not wish to have a tourist experience in a place his or her safety is not guaranteed, and tourism resources need to be secured to maintain tourism relevance by attracting visitors/tourists to a given destination. This understanding will not only add to the constructive debates in tourism discourse in the 21<sup>st</sup> century but will equally improve the state of various tourist destinations by adding to the standard of safety of tourists and security of tourism resources in tourist destinations. The next discussion will be on the postulation of the tourism safety and security model to enhance tourism safety and security studies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Nwankwo's Tourism Safety and Security Model (NWATSSEC Model)**

This model is designed to give a clear picture of the issues of tourism safety and security at developed, developing and undeveloped destinations. The model would also address these issues towards achieving responsible and sustainable tourism. Nwankwo's tourism safety and security model otherwise known as NWATSSEC Model has four distinctive but dependent parts, with each of these parts having sub-analytical parts that support the processes of the Model. The new model and its process flow are further discussed below:

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## NWATSSEC Model

- (a) Tourism Safety (T S<sub>1</sub>)
  - (b) Tourism Security (T S<sub>2</sub>)
  - (c) Tourism Resources Gatekeepers (TRG)
  - (d) Tourism Developers (TD)
- (a) Tourism Safety (TS<sub>1</sub>)** – This has to do with the safety of tourists in a given tourism space. This is subdivided into:
- **Perception:** This first stage has to do with the tourists/visitors' perception of safety with regard to the proposed destination before a visit.
  - **Experience:** This second stage has to do with what the tourist/visitor experienced with regard to safety, while in the destination.
  - **Conclusion:** What is the tourist's/visitor's conclusion on safety at the destination?
  - **Attitude/Reaction:** What is the visitor's/tourist's reaction after the visit? His later campaigns for the destination or decision on the possibility of a return visit could either be positive or negative.
- (b) Tourism Security (TS<sub>2</sub>)** – This has to do with the security of tourism resources to serve both domestic and tourism purposes. It is further understood through the following subdivisions:
- **Virginity:** This is the stage the tourism resource were still untouched, unharnessed or developed for tourism activities. Some of them may be put to use by the gatekeepers at this stage.
  - **Harness and Develop:** At this stage, the tourism resources are harnessed and developed for tourism activities by both visitors and tourists.
  - **Tourism Activities:** This is when the tourism resources are experiencing all sorts of tourism activities both within the destination and the internet space.
  - **Attitude/Reaction:** How have the tourism resources reacted to the activities of the previous stage? Do the activities of the previous stage promote or decimate the values of these tourism resources?
- (c) Tourism Resources Gatekeepers (TRG):** These are the owners of the tourism resources. The ownership could be either by inheritance, gift, development, acquisition or conquest. Their activities towards tourism resources in their domains are classified into three processes:
- **Request:** This is when the gatekeepers are wishing and requesting that particular tourism resources should be developed for tourism activities in their area.
  - **Acceptance:** At this stage, the TRGs interact with the various activities that were orchestrated by the development of tourism resources in their area, including visitors and tourists that have come around for various tourism activities.
  - **Attitude/Reaction:** Having interacted with the various tourists/visitors that have visited their domains since the development of the tourism resources in their domain,



over time, the people would start to exhibit some reactions or attitudes towards the project and their guests. This could either be hostility, hospitality and or docility as the case may be.

**(d) Tourism Development (TD)** – This has to do with the policymakers, developers, investors, NGOs, public sector and private sector who may develop the interest to harness the tourism resources in a given space. They have a greater role to play in the tourism safety and security model towards promoting responsible and sustainable tourism in a given area. They have various processes with regard to project execution:

- **Pre-project Stage/Perception:** This stage is filled with perceptions and anticipations. At this level, projections can be used to understand possible safety and security issues using Risk Analysis (RA), Crisis Analysis (CA), and Causal Analysis (CaA). While RA will be used to project possible risks, CA will be used to project possible crises that may occur in the system, and CaA will be used to project the causes and effects of the projected risks and crises.
- **Project Stage/Experience:** This is when the project has been developed and put into use. At this stage, NWATSSEC Model suggests that RA, CA and CaA can now be done based on experience and not on projection.
- **Feedback/Reaction:** The results of the previous stage are expected to be considered at this stage to facilitate positive feedbacks and reactions towards improved tourism safety and security in a given tourism space.

However, these various stages and processes are given needed attention to evade unnecessary tourism safety and security issues in a tourism system.

*NWATSSEC Model is quantitatively illustrated below:*

$$\begin{aligned}
 TS_1 &= P + E + C + AR \\
 TS_2 &= B + HD + TA + AR \\
 TRG &= R + A + I + AR \\
 TD &= PP + PE + FR
 \end{aligned}$$

However,  
NWATSSEC Model is

$$\frac{TS_1 (P+E+C+AR) + TS_2 (V+HD+TA+AR)}{TRG (R+A+I+AR) + TD (PP+PE+FR)} = RT \ \& \ ST$$

Where *RT = Responsible Tourism*  
*ST = Sustainable Tourism*

This quantitative illustration of the model shows that TRG and TD react to the results of TS<sub>1</sub> and TS<sub>2</sub>. And the outcome of this reaction could either promote or decimate the principles of responsible tourism and sustainable tourism in a given tourism system. However, while sustainable tourism is the principle of promoting tourism initiatives are activities that consider the future of tourism resources and the destination, responsible tourism is the principle that makes stakeholders and principal factors responsible for the sustainability of tourism initiatives

and activities in a given tourism space (Saarinen, 2014; Mihalic, 2016). NWATSSEC Model is further illustrated in the diagram below.

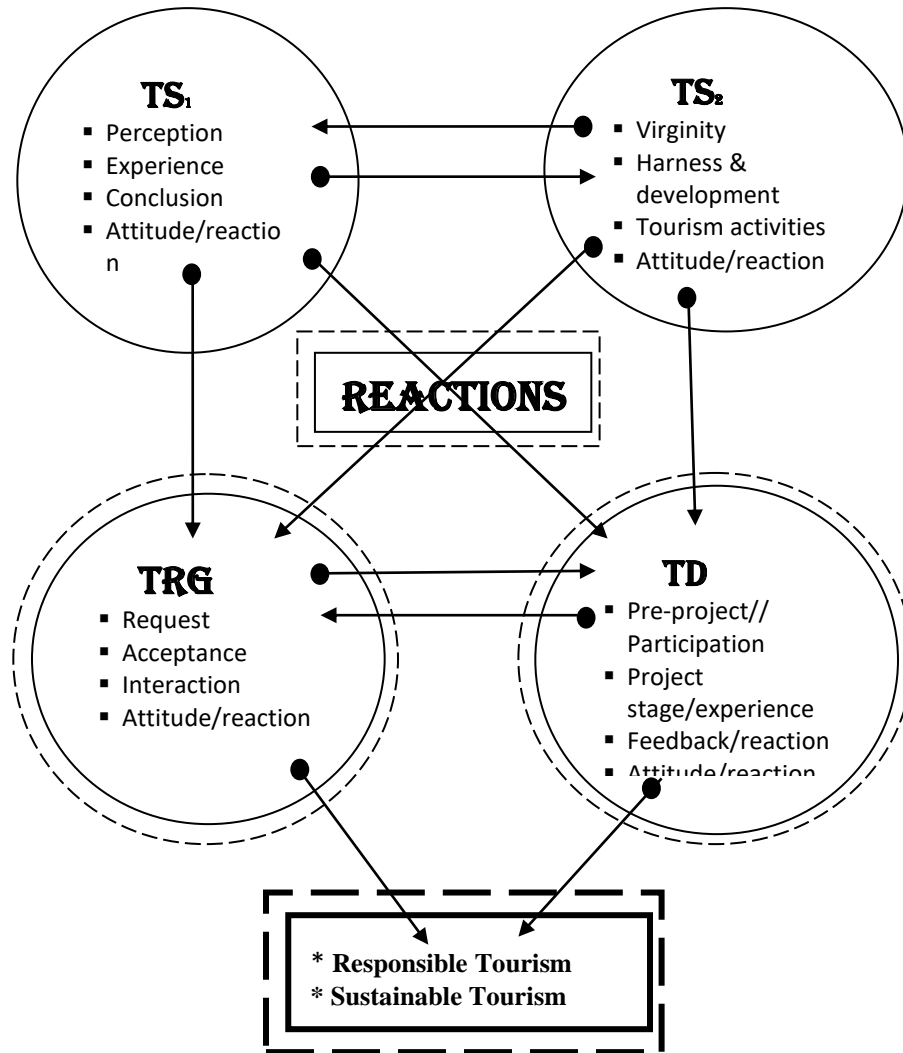


Fig. 1: NWATSSEC Model showing the processes and reactions.

**Conclusion**

Safety and security issues are among the trending debates in tourism discourse in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This is because the expected target of responsible tourism and sustainable tourism may not be achieved owing to the various issues arising from safety and security. However, not

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 minding the various interpretations of the concept of safety and security, its usefulness has not been digested in the tourism arena. This study has been able to conceptualise the issue in the domain of tourism safety and security. This implies the safety of tourists to their destination and the security of tourism resources. Both of them react to each other to promote responsible and sustainable tourism in a tourism system. More so, the Model known as Nwankwo's Tourism Safety and Security Model otherwise known as NWATSSEC Model was postulated to enhance studies and debates in tourism safety and security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Finally, it is expected that this conceptualization of safety and security, and supportive model in tourism discourse will not only support responsible and sustainable tourism but will also facilitate radical and responsible tourism in most Sub-Saharan African countries and other developing nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

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