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NATURE OR NURTURE? DETERMINATION OF WHETHER DISTANCE OR DESTINATION ATTRIBUTES ACCOUNTS FOR THE OBSERVED DIFFERENCES IN PROFILES OF THE MARKETS AT THE DESTINATIONS

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Distance decay is a universal law that also applies to tourism. Both the volume declines and type of visitor changes as distance increases. Or so say the experts. Others suggest that destinations have unique appeal that can overcome some or all of the impacts of the decaying effect of distance. An examination of three markets from geographically distinct areas is carried out using Australia, Germany and United States of America. In addition, eight destinations of New Zealand, Netherland, South Africa, United Kingdom, Ireland, Finland, Canada-British Columbia and USA-California are analyzed using different visitor profiles (quantitative and qualitative) from each market that go to each of eight distinct destinations. A detailed comparison using the visitor profiles identified was carried out.

Three main factors of market access, distance decay and a combination of the two factors were identified as key determinants that influence visitors from one generating market to a specific destination country. We conclude that it is possible to exploit the already available information on official tourism website to study complex phenomena in tourism industry and the information obtained therein be applied for policy formulation.

Keywords: Distance decay, Market access, Policy formulation, Tourism research.

Introduction

Distance decay according to Mckercher & Lew, (2003) is a theory that predicts that demand will peak at some distance relatively close to a source market and then decline exponentially as distance increases. It is considered to be a geographical term which describes the effect of distance on cultural or spatial interactions (Fotheringham, 1981). The distance decay effect states that the interaction between two locales declines as the distance between them increases (Bao, & McKercher (2008). They further argue that, once the distance is outside of the two locales activity space their interactions begin to decrease. Mckercher et.al (2003) contends that, with the advent of faster travel, distance has less effect than it did in the past. Advances in communications technology, such as phones, radio and television broadcasts, and internet, have further decreased the effects of distance.

Related terms include "friction of distance," which is described as the force that creates distance decay and Tobler, (1970) calls it the first law of geography using an informal statement that "All things are related, but near things are more related than far things." Distance decay can be mathematically represented by the expression $I=1/d^2$, where I is interaction and d is distance, among other forms. It also weighs into the decision to migrate, leading many migrants to move less far than they originally contemplated. Related to this concept is the market access. This according to Mckercher, (1998) this refers to the competitive advantage or disadvantage that competing destinations may have in relation to target markets. Accordingly, destinations that enjoy greater market access, when measured in terms of lower travel time, effort, or financial costs, should be more attractive to consumers.

In a study done by McKercher, (2002), it was established that more than 55% of all international departures go to immediate neighbouring countries that are located within 1,000 kilometres of the source market. He further contends that an aggregate global demand declines by about 50% with every 1000 Kilometre travelled, while mean demand for any destination declines at even faster rate, falling to 2% or less beyond 1000Kilometres. He further established that, beyond 1000km, most destinations attract less than 1% share and that it was rare for outbound travel to exceed 3% for long haul. Therefore, it can be stated that distance decay is universal law that has been successfully applied in tourism studies by different scholars like Baxter, 1979; Greer & Wall, 1979; Hanink& White, 1999; Kerkvliet & Nowell, 1999;McKercher, 1998; McKercher & Lew, 2003;Paul & Rimmawi, 1992; Zhang et al., 1999;Zillinger, 2005) as indicated by (Bao &Mckercher 2008. p 102). For this study, the phenomenon of distance decay was confirmed by a sample of the USA as a market to five destinations of Ireland, UK, Finland, New Zealand and South Africa as shown in Figure 1.

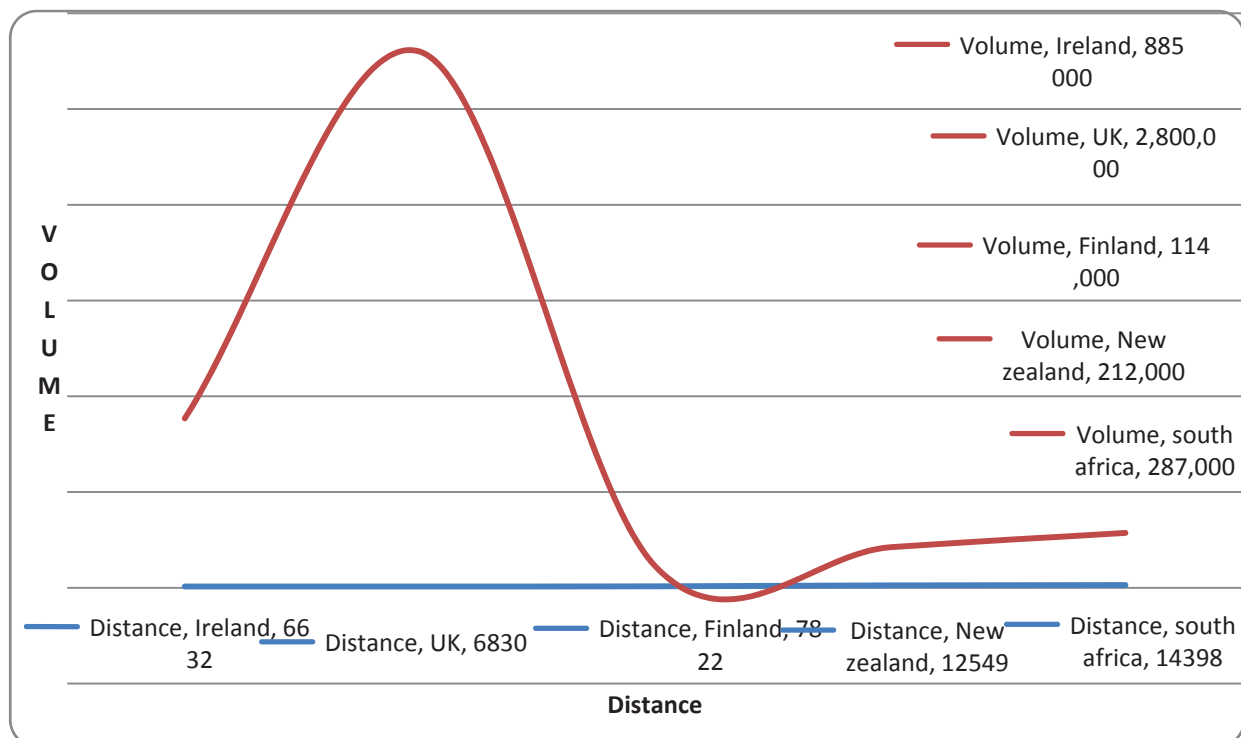


Figure 1. The figure shows the pattern of volume against distance for USA market.

The figure shows that there is a secondary peak in New Zealand and South Africa which reflects the unique appeal of distant destinations for the American market. Therefore given this known undisputable phenomenon of distance decay, it is imperative to establish whether other factors like social- demographic

characteristics like(age, gender), travel behavior, purpose of travel, expenditure, popular activities, average length of stay can influence this universal law of distance decay. This study was operationalized using three markets which were selected as a market that is; Australia, Germany and United States of America and five destinations for each market were also selected basing on the availability of secondary information regarding the above indicated demographic and psychographic characteristics as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. The selection of 3 markets and 5 destinations.

Markets	Destinations				
Australia	New Zealand	Ireland	Canada-British Columbia	United Kingdom	USA-California
German	New Zealand	South Africa	United Kingdom	Netherlands	Ireland
USA	New Zealand	South Africa	United Kingdom	Finland	Ireland

Brief Overview of Each Market

Australia

Australia is a mass of land with an area of 7.69 million square kilometres and is the Earth’s largest island but smallest continent. It stretches about 3700 kilometres from north to south and 4000 kilometres from east to west. In area, Australia is the 6th largest nation after Russia, Canada, China, the United States and Brazil. It is about twice the size of the European Union or the ten nations that make up the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Its ocean territory is the third largest in the world and it spans three oceans and covers around 12 million square kilometres. It the 14th biggest overall economy in the world and the 9th biggest industrialised economy (World Bank, 2007) and it considered to the 15th richest nation in per capita terms, and the 6th oldest continuously functioning democracy in the world. Visitors are attracted to Australia by the allure of crystal beaches, a pristine natural environment, unique fauna, friendly people and a relaxed atmosphere.

Germany

Germany is located in the central part of Europe and covers an area of 356,959-kilometer square. Germany enjoys both sea and mountain. The famous range of Alps Mountains runs along the southern border of Germany. The climate of the place is also varied but it has a general temperate climatic condition. According to the World Tourism Organization (2009), Germany received 24.2 million people and got in receipts \$34.7 Billion. In terms of expenditure, it spent \$80.8 Billion and it was ranked as number one in this category. Germany attracts innumerable tourists from all parts of the world throughout the year. The country has some spectacular and historically famous towns, provinces and cities. Berlin is the capital of Germany and is perhaps also its most popular tourist destinations.

United States of America

USA was ranked the world’s third largest country by size (after Russia and Canada), as well as by population (after China and India) by Euromonitor International, (2009). It is approximately 9.8 million square Kilometres 7.5 times larger than South Africa and made of 50 states with a population of 304.4 million and with growth rate of 0.93% from 2003–2008. Gross domestic Product (current prices), GDP of

2008 was \$14,441 billion and GDP per capita in the same year of \$47,440 and annual GDP growth, 2007–2008 of 1.64%. United States of America was ranked number two in terms of tourism arrivals with 54.9 Millions after France (UNWTO, 2009). In terms of receipts, it got \$94.2 Billion and expenditure was ranked as number two after Germany and it spent \$73.1 Billion. The United States Travel & Tourism economy is ranked number, 1 in absolute size worldwide, 82 in relative contribution to national economies and 141st in long-term (10-year) growth.

Brief Descriptions of the Destinations

New Zealand

New Zealand is comprised of two main narrow and mountainous islands, the North Island and the South Island, separated by Cook Strait, and a number of smaller outlying islands. The total land area is approximately 268,000 Square Kilometers. The capital, Wellington, is situated on the south-west tip of the North Island and is about the same latitude as Launceston. The Southern Alps include New Zealand's highest mountain, Aoraki Mt Cook (3754 m). The highest mountain in the North Island is Mount Ruapehu (2797m), an active volcano which erupted in 1995, 1996 and most recently in 2007. Not far from the mountain is Lake Taupo, the largest lake in New Zealand. New Zealand has a cool temperate climate, strongly influenced by oceanographic factors.

Netherlands

The Netherlands' name reflects its low-lying topography, with more than a quarter of its total area under sea level and its full name is The Kingdom of the Netherlands. According to United Nations, (2009), its Population is 16.6 million and it covers a total area of 41,864 sq km (16,164 sq miles). The capital city is Amsterdam; which is a seat of government and the International criminal Court in Hague. The major language is Dutch and Life expectancy is 78 years (men), 82 years (women) (UN). The GNI per capita is US \$50,150 (World Bank, 2008). In terms of tourism expenditure, it was ranked number ten with \$20.7 Billion ((UNWTO, 2009). As in many European countries, over-65s make up an increasing percentage of that population. It is mostly associated with old icons (tulips, windmills, and clogs), Amsterdam, water, bicycles and friendly people (NBTC, 2009). Negative aspects of the Netherlands include drugs, prostitution and the bad weather. However there is an indication that the image of Netherlands does not centre on the old icons, but the easy reach of the country and its suitability for short breaks. The Netherlands also offers a great diversity of attractions a short distance from each other, is an easy-going country and there is more to experience than just Amsterdam.

South Africa

South Africa is located at the southern tip of the African continent, at the confluence of the Atlantic Ocean on the west and the Indian Ocean on the south and east. Cape Agul-has marks the southernmost point of Africa, some 161 Kilometers (100 miles) south-east of the Cape of Good Hope. The land area of 1, 219, 912 square km (471 008 sq. miles) supports a population of 47.4 million people (2006 estimate), 51 per cent of which are female. The UNWTO, (2009) ranked South Africa as number two after Egypt in terms of international arrivals with a record of 9.5 million. It is a famous destination for diversity as a key attraction, from the deserts of the Kgalagadi to the lush green forests of Tsitsikamma, to the un-spoilt beaches of the Wild Coast to the vibrant nightlife of Cape Town. South Africa is considered to be a ground-breaking destination for explorers and adventurers who want to experience life in all its fullness.

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom is situated off the northwest coast of Europe between the Atlantic Ocean on the North and North West and the North Sea on the East separated from the Continent by the Strait of Dover and the English Channel, 34 km wide at its narrowest point, and from the Irish Republic by the Irish Sea and St. George's Channel. Its total area of 244,820 sq km consists of the island of Great Britain—formed by England, 130,439 sq km; Wales, 20,768 sq km and Scotland, 78,783 sq km and Northern Ireland, 14,120 sq km, on the island of Ireland, separated from Great Britain by the North Channel. It is ranked number three in terms world international arrivals at 28million and tourism receipts of \$30.1 Billion. In terms of tourism expenditure, it retained the 3rd position with \$48.5 Billion after United States of America. The top ten inbound markets for the UK in terms of number of visits during 2009 accounted for 68% of all visits. The only two long-haul markets, the USA and Australia, appear in the top ten and spending by inbound visitors, the top ten markets account for 56% of all spending, with the USA worth almost twice as much as the next most valuable market, Germany.

Ireland

An island in the eastern part of the North Atlantic directly west of the United Kingdom, on the continental shelf of Europe, Ireland covers an area of 70,280 sq km. comparatively, the area occupied by Ireland is slightly larger than the state of West Virginia. The island's length is 486 km N – S, and its width is 275 km E – W. The Irish Republic is bounded on the N by the North Channel, which separates it from Scotland; on the NE by Northern Ireland; and on the E and SE by the Irish Sea and St. George's Channel, which separate it from England and Wales. To the West, from north to south, the coast is washed by the Atlantic Ocean. Ireland's capital city, Dublin, is located on the Irish Sea coast. The Ireland Travel & Tourism economy is ranked number 42 in absolute size worldwide, 135 in relative contribution to national economies and 70 in long-term (10-year) growth.

Finland

Finland is officially called the Republic of Finland. It is a Nordic country situated in the Fennoscandian region of Northern Europe. It is bordered by Sweden on the west, Norway on the north and Russia on the east, while Estonia lies to its south across the Gulf of Finland. Around 5.4 million people reside in Finland, with the majority concentrated in the southern region. It is the eighth largest country in Europe in terms of area and the most sparsely populated country in the European Union. Finland was historically a part of Sweden and from 1809 on, an autonomous Grand Duchy within the Russian Empire. Finnish Declaration of Independence from Russia in 1917 was followed by a civil war, wars against the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, and a period of official neutrality during the Cold War. Finland joined the United Nations in 1955, the OECD in 1969, the European Union in 1995, and the euro-zone since its inception. The Finland Travel & Tourism economy is ranked number 38 in absolute size worldwide, 127 in relative contribution to national economies and 139 in long-term (10-year) growth.

Canada- British Columbia

Canada is, the second largest country in the world, is a collection of ten fairly large provinces and three territories of, Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and Saskatchewan. The three territories are, North west Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon. Major part of Canada's population is concentrated around the Great Lakes and the Saint Lawrence River and Canada has the largest number of lakes in the world, hence an important accumulation of the world's fresh water and it offers grand scenic beauty. British Columbia is located to the west coast of Canada, with the Pacific Ocean on the west and the province of Alberta on the east, British Columbia is bounded by the state of Alaska, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon on the

north and the states of Montana, Idaho and Washington on the south. British Columbia is the third largest Canadian province. British Columbia has three main mountain ranges and is two-thirds covered in forest.

USA- California

It is situated on the Pacific coast of the southwestern US, California is the nation's 3rd-largest state (after Alaska and Texas). The total area of California is 411,048 square Kilometers, of which land takes up 404,814 sq km and inland water 6,234 sq km. California extends about 560 km E-W; its maximum N-S extension is 1,260 km. California is bordered on the North by Oregon; on the East by Nevada; on the South East by Arizona (separated by the Colorado River); on the South by the Mexican state of Baja California Norte; and on the West by the Pacific Ocean. The eight Santa Barbara islands lie from 32–97 km off California's southwestern coast; the small islands and islets of the Farallon group are about 48 km West of San Francisco Bay. The total boundary length of the state is 3,299 km, including a general coastline of 1,352 km; the tidal shoreline totals 5,515 km. California's geographic center is in Madera County, 61 km East of the city of Madera.

Methodology

To determine whether it was by Nature or Nurture that tourist from certain generating markets to certain destination, distance decay which is a universal law that also applies to tourism was used. Various authors state that both the volume declines and type of visitor changes as distance increases. Others suggest that destinations have unique appeal that can overcome some or all of the impacts of the decaying effect of distance. Examination of three markets from geographically distinct areas one from Australia, one from North America and one from Europe was conducted. Comparison of the profile (quantitative and qualitative) of visitors from each market that go to five distinct destinations was carried out. A brief of each market and destinations chosen was provided based on information from official websites for the respective countries. Three markets (i.e. countries of origin) and five destinations for each market from the set of destinations identified where detailed market information was available were chosen. Comparison of the profile of visitors to each of these markets by volume where possible, age and demographic profile as well as psychographics was carried and determination of whether distance or destination attributes accounted for the observed differences in profiles of the markets at the destinations was made and justification provided.

Findings

Socio-Demographic and Trip Characteristics Australian Market

A summary of a comparison of visitor profiles for each of the five destinations is as below:

Table 2. Australia.

Socio-demographic and trip characteristics	Destinations				
	New Zealand	Ireland	British Columbia	United Kingdom	California
Age	30-59		55-64	45s	40+
Sex	53% F; 47% M	N/A	51% F; 49% M	53% F; 47% M	N/A
Distance	4049	15695	13162	15287	13203

Volume	976,000 (2008)	127,000 (2006)	407,000 (2010)		
Market share	17%		9.8%		
Purpose of visit	39% Holiday 35% VFR	65% holiday; 30% VFR	70% holiday; 21% VFR	42% holiday; 42% VFR	61% holiday; 21% VFR
Repeat visitors	69% Holiday 93% VFR				
Expenditure	\$1,800		\$ 2,977	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,144
Average length of stay	11.7 days	8.2 nights	10 nights	15 days	8.8 nights
Activities	70% sightseeing		Shopping (90%)	Eating (79%)	Dinning (95%)
Trip arrangement	91% FIT & SIT		77% group; 23% alone	37% alone; 37% spouse	33% alone; 67% group

From the above table, the analysis of Australia market to the five destinations is as below.

a) Volume

A review of the visitor profile documents from each of the destinations about Australian visitors indicate that volume of visitors decrease as distance increases and therefore the filtering effect of distance seems to be influencing this factor for this market- destination selection. This is as was expected. Bao & Mckercher, (2008) study on the effects of distance on tourism in Hong Kong established that distance has an impact on volume or marker share of visitors. This accordingly means that as distance increases from the market, the volume reduces as in this particular case.

b) Age

According to the market profiles for each of the destinations, the average age of Australians to the selected destinations appear to be 40 years and above. However for UK, the majority of the visitors appear to be in the age group of 25-34 (21%) compared to the 55-64(19%). This seems to indicate a fair balance between all ages of Australians that visit UK. This observed trend also agrees with previous studies that have established that, short haul tourists are likely to be under the age of 45, while long haul visitors are more likely to be over 46 years. This trend is also exhibited by Australian visitors to New Zealand where age brackets of; 40-49(20%), 30-39(19%) and 50-59 (18%) seem to support this general observation made by (McKercher & Lew, 2004).

c) Gender

Across all the markets females Austrians are slightly more than males with a an average of 52% compared to males (48%).Previous research has suggested that Visitors from short-haul markets are more likely to be female and younger than those originating in long-haul markets (Bao. et.al 2008).The gender for this market tallies with the age profile as observed before.

d) Purpose of Travel

The main purpose for Australians to four destinations of New Zealand, Ireland, British Columbia and California is holiday with an average of 62% compared to Visiting friends and relatives (38%). UK is an exception, where the main purpose of visit is for VFR (42%) which is perceived by Australians as a big

trip to the motherland as a key motivator. Ancestry seems to be a driving force for Australians to visit UK. Across all the markets, visiting for business purposes was the least with an average of 10%. This seems to suggest that UK has special attributes of being regarded as a mother land and most Australians trace their ancestry from there. This explains why the main reason is to visit friends and relatives. This again agrees with previous research which has suggested that some destinations are visited because of having unique attributes despite being far from the market. Distance in this case ceases to be the main filter (Lew, et. al 2004).

e) Average Expenditure

There is a big variation in the amount spent at each of the destinations. The highest spend was recorded for British Columbia with an average expenditure per person per trip at \$ 2,977 and the least for Ireland with an average spend of \$960. New Zealand also got slightly higher figure of \$1,800 followed by UK \$1,500 AND California \$1,114. There seems to be patterns of high spend as distance increases with the exception of New Zealand which slightly got more than UK and California. However, this pattern seems not to apply for Ireland.

f) Popular Activities

There is a big variation across the entire destination on the activities Australians do at the destinations studied. For example, for New Zealand and Ireland, the main activity is land based sight-seeing activities at 70%, while for UK and California, Food and drinking is the most activity done at an average of 86% followed by shopping in these two markets.

g) Average Length of Stay

The average length of stay varies across. It is observed that, the longest length of stay was recorded for UK at an average of 15 nights, followed by New Zealand at 11 nights, British Columbia, 10 nights and the least Ireland and California at 8 nights.

This profile supports the previous studies that have established that the mean length of stay for all short haul markets is almost a full night shorter than it is for long haul tourists (McKercher, 1998).

h) Travel Style

Across all the markets, Australians had a varied travel style but for Ireland 87% travelled alone, followed by New Zealand (48%). There is an observed variation in travel to British Columbia where the majority travelled in groups(77%) compared to travelling alone at(23%) and UK at 63% despite of the fact that, it has been established that for long haul, visitors were far more likely to be traveling alone or with their spouse(Lew, & McKercher, 2006). For this market- destination market analysis, it can be concluded that, the filtering effects of distance decay apply to Australia-Ireland, Australia- British Columbia, Australia-California, while market access due to unique destination characteristics describe Australia to New Zealand. For Australia-United Kingdom, it appears, the travel patterns observed are due to a combination of both filtering effect of distance and market access.

Socio-Demographic and Trip Characteristics for German Market

Table 3. Germany profile.

Socio-demographic and characteristics trip	Destinations				
	New Zealand	South Africa	United kingdom	Nether-lands	Ireland
Age	20-29	24-44	35-54		55+
Sex	50% M; 50% F	36% F; 64% M	57% M; 43% F		
Distance	18, 410	8,983	817	280	1,186
Volume			2,779,754	2,000,000	422,000
Market share					
Purpose of visit	70% holiday; 15% VFR	63% holiday; 11% VFR	46% holiday; 23% VFR	Holiday	Holiday
Repeat visitors			72% holiday market	83% of holiday market	40% of holiday
Expenditure	\$ 3,137	\$ 1, 811	\$ 671	\$ 315	
Average length of stay	43.5 days for holiday	20.9 nights	6 nights	5 days	10 nights
Activities	Visiting natural attr. 91%	Natural attr. 21.3%	Eating in restaurant (61%)	27% beach activities	Package
Trip arrangement	FIT & SIT 87%	35% alone; 36% with spouse/fr	34% alone; 27% group		

The analysis of Germany market to the five destinations is summarized below.

a) Volume

According to the visitor profiles in this category, New Zealand and Ireland attracted the same number of German visitors at 62,000 thousand each. United Kingdom got the highest number in this category at 2,779,000 and the least number was recorded for Ireland. This supports the distance decay theory, which says that, the shorter the distance, the higher the volumes of visitors (Bull, 1991).

b) Age

In this category of profile, there is a general trend of middle age group dominating with Ireland recording the youngest group category of 25 and below at 65%. Ireland seems to be getting increasingly younger holiday makers than, followed by New Zealand. This appears to be applicable to the rest of the destinations with slight variations in age group.

c) Gender

Males appear to be more than females across all destinations with an average of 57% and female at 43%.

d) Purpose of Travel

In all destinations, travel for holiday appears to be the main purpose of travel for Germans followed by VFR and least for business. However, females are more than males for New Zealand in the VFR group at 54% and 46% males.

e) Average Expenditure

Germans seem to be spending more in New Zealand at an average spend per person of \$3,137 followed by South Africa \$1,811 and spend sharply reduces for UK \$671 , Netherlands\$315 and possibly Ireland. This is a clear example of how the tendency to spend increases with distance.

f) Popular Activities

Across all the countries, visiting natural attractions, sight-seeing, appear to be the most popular activity. The only difference is observed for UK where the main activity is eating in restaurants (61%) and going to pubs (38%) with sight-seeing appearing at the bottom. I would appear that Germans travel to long distance destinations for holiday in order to visit natural attractions and this hold true for New Zealand and South Africa.

g) Average Length of Stay

This factor is also supported by earlier studies that have shown that, the long haul travellers tend to stay longer at the destinations visited. For this group, Germans spent an average of 43.5 days in New Zealand and 20.9 nights in South Africa as compared to UK and Ireland at an average of 6 nights.

h) Travel Style

Travelling alone was high for New Zealand at 87%, travelling alone or with spouse/partner or friends at 81% in South Africa, Ireland 80% and least UK 34%. For this group all the filtering effects of distance decay have been observed.

From the observed pattern of the selected profiles, one can conclude that, the travel of Germans to New Zealand, South Africa, are due to the filtering effects of distance whereas, travel to UK, Netherlands and Ireland the effect is largely due to unique destination characteristics and outlined above.

Socio-Demographic and Trip Characteristics for USA Market

Table 4. United States of America profile.

Socio-demographic and trip characteristics	Destinations				
	New Zealand	South Africa	United kingdom	Finland	Ireland
Age	40	35-54	35-54	45-64	45+
Sex	50% M 50% F	F (46%); 54% M	54% M; 46% F	58% M; 42% F	49% M
Distance	12569	14543	6997	7646	6689
Volume	212,000	287,438	2,877,212	104, 000	885,000
Market share	0.5%	1%	3.9%	1.8%	6%

Purpose of visit	Holiday-62%	56% holiday	Holiday-39%	39 holiday	82% Holiday
Repeat visitors	35%(78% repeat visitors)	65% holiday	71%; 55% of holiday visitors		25%
Expenditure	\$ 3,338	\$4,202	\$1,210	\$ 445 in 2004	\$ 793
Average length of stay	17.8 days	14-18 days	1-3; 4-7 nights	9.4	8.8 nights
Activities	Walking/trekking (89%)	Natural attraction (21%)	Dinning 82%; historic attractions 54%		82% Sightseeing
Trip arrangement	80% Ind.	63% Ind.	Group 49%	29% Ind.	70% Ind. 30% Package

From Table 4, the analysis of USA market to the five destinations is summarized below.

a) Volume

In this category, the filtering effect of distance is clear. UK got the highest figure of 2,800,000, followed by Ireland recorded 885,000, South Africa 287,000, New Zealand 212,000 and Finland 114,000 visitors from United States of America.

b) Age

The age category of 35 and above is dominant across all the destinations. In here, New Zealand recorded the age group of 40 and above at 59%, South Africa, 45+ 52%, UK 35-54 (43%), Finland 35-64 (56%) and Ireland 45+ 52%. It is clear that this age group is likely to professionals with disposable income which gives them a disposition to take long haul.

c) Gender

Gender, again is fairly balanced across all the destinations, with slight variations for United Kingdom where males were more than females at 54% and Finland 58% while the females were more than males for Ireland at 51% and males 49%.

d) Purpose

Travel by in this category again shows that the main purpose was holiday where New Zealand recorded 62%, Ireland 82% South Africa 56% UK 39%. This was however different for Finland where the majority went for Business at 39%. The next consistent purpose across the entire destination was VFR with New Zealand reporting a big percentage in this category as being females who constituted 54%.

e) Expenditure

Americans spent more money in South Africa (\$4,202) followed by New Zealand (\$3,338, United Kingdom (\$1,210), Ireland (\$793) and least Finland (\$445).

f) Popular Activities

Sightseeing and visiting natural attractions was the popular activity Americans got involved in with the exception of United Kingdom where the main activity was eating in restaurants but sightseeing also got a fair share. The destination attributes have been variously identified, by Hanink and White's (1999 cited in McKercher *et al.*, 2008). They made an observation that higher quality tourism attractions have a greater perceived value and therefore are likely to attract a bigger market share.

d) Average Length of Stay

There is a variation in length of stay for different destinations. In New Zealand, the average length of stay was 17.8 nights with the VFR group contributing 21.2 nights as compared to holiday group of 13.6 nights. This was followed by South Africa where the length of stay was 14-18 days. The rest of the destinations recorded an average length of stay of 8.8 nights. This is also a good indication of the filtering effect of distance, where the long haul travellers tend to stay for long as compared to their counterparts in the short haul category (McKercher, 2008).

e) Travel Style

This is another category that indicates that the majority of Americans travel alone. It is only in United Kingdom where travelling with a spouse or partner and children is recorded. This categorisation however still fits in the characteristics of long haul travellers. In New Zealand those who travelled alone formed 80% as compared to group travel of 20%. In South Africa, it was 60% and group 37% while in UK it was 48% as compared to group (52%). In Ireland this was at 70% and group at 30%. A difference was noted for Finland where travel in group was more at 49% and independent at 29%. This pattern is supported by Cohen (1972) and Hyde & Lawson (2003) who established that the independent travelers tended to travel further compared with their counterparts of package tourists.

Table 5. A summary of the categorization.

FACTOR	Market- Destination pairs							
<i>Distance Decay</i>	GER-NZ	AUST-IRE	GER-SA	AUS-BC	AUS-CAL	USA-NZ	USA-SA	USA-FIN
<i>Market Access</i>	AUS-NZ	GER-UK	GER-NED	GER-IRE				
<i>Combination of Distance decay and Market Access</i>	AUS-UK	USA-UK	USA-IRE					

Table 5 summarizes the different categories, out of 15 pair combinations 53.3% travel patterns between the indicated countries were due to the phenomena of distance decay. 26.7% exhibited the characteristic of Market access and 20% fell in the new categorization of a combination of filtering effects of distance and Market access attributes as summarized in table 3 above. The findings agree with what Bao, & Mckercher, (2008) established in their study on the effects of distance on tourism in Hong Kong where a comparison of short haul and long haul different visitor profiles was analyzed. From the above analysis, it can be concluded that the market- destination pairs of USA- New Zealand, USA-South Africa, USA-Finland, the filtering effect of distance is the largest determinant of the observed trends, while USA-United Kingdom, USA-Ireland, it is the combination of distance decay and market access conditions.

Conclusion

From the data presented above, it is clear that some market-destination pairs fall into three categories. First, the Distance decay factor becoming a prevalent determinant of why certain people travel to specific destinations, Market access which explains why people travel to certain destinations because of special destination attributes and others a combination of distance decay and Market access conditions. This study has revealed another category of destinations that exhibited the intra regional relationships as a key factor that determined the travel patterns as seen in Australia United Kingdom, USA-UK and USA Ireland.

Additionally, it appears that each of the three cases represents different situations that on the one hand confirm some aspects of the impact of distance, but on the other hand highlight the unique features of the destination in drawing visitors. For example, looking at Australia as an outbound market, the impact of VFR travel to the UK appears to exert a significant mitigating or moderating effect on both movements and visitor profile. Likewise, the market attracted to British Columbia seems substantially different than the markets attracted to the other destinations suggesting it may have unique appeal. Germany is an interesting case as the destinations identified tend to challenge accepted distance decay concept. The nearby travel market is fairly old, whereas as distance increase the age of the tourist declines and the overall length of stay expand dramatically. This is something that was not expected from the literature. United States of America on the other hand shows that there is no clear pattern for the selection of long haul destinations.

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