

RESEARCH BRIEF

Leisurely Travels and Global Sojourns: An Inquiry on the Human and Economic Aspects of Tourism

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International tourism involves individuals traveling to another country for at least 24 hours with the purpose of leisure or business (Cohen, 1984). Further, tourism is associated with the following ideas: commercialized hospitality, democratized travel, and modern leisure activity. Mass tourism started after World War II through the industrialization of Western societies, rising standards of living, and reduction of the work year (Cohen, 1984). This rise in tourism from the West was also accompanied by longer paid vacation and innovations in travel services. Despite the process of democratizing travel and tourism, class difference still exists in terms of the chosen destination, motivation, and traveling style. Recently, a substantial number of tourists are traveling longer distances, either to developed or developing countries, due to more efficient and affordable transportation options (Sinclair & Stabler, 2002).

The number of individuals participating in global travels today is at an unprecedented rate. Crotti and Misrahi (2017) reveal that the number of international arrivals at destination countries in the 1950s is at 25 million. However, in 2016, international arrivals at destination countries soared to 1.2 billion. In the past, a big portion of travels involves movement between developed countries. However, outbound travels

from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia-Pacific are steadily increasing. Dragouni, Filis, Gavriilidis, and Santamaria (2016) noted that the economic impact of tourism for both source and destination country is of great importance. Focusing on destination countries, tourism provides increased revenues, employment, and infrastructure.

Looking at the increase in tourism travels globally, what are the possible stimuli for this phenomenon? Several scholars explored the intersection of tourism and economic and financial indicators. Gross domestic product or gross national product per capita was considered by Halicioglu (2010) as an impetus for increased travel and tourism. In the inquiry of Song, Li, Witt, and Fei (2010), they took into account the discretionary income of individuals. Additionally, Song and Witt (2003) considered the price of alternative destinations; while Turner and Witt (2003) considered transportation costs. Hence, economics plays a key role in the rise of tourism, which in turn considerably affects both source and destination countries.

Hampton (2003) noted that tourism is an industry that provides employment and income to developing countries. Further, tourism provides international flows of people, goods, and services. Focusing on a specific subset of the tourism industry, the paper

sought to examine if backpacker tourism enables the local economy of less developed countries to move toward further development. Yogyakarta in Indonesia was used as a case in the small-scale and bottom-up tourism approach.

It is posited that international trade flows do not always lead to development for some nations. On the contrary, it may also be a potential cause of marginalization of people from less developed countries. Using tourism as a microcosm of globalization and neoclassical free market orthodoxies, less developed countries are urged to open their economies to allow transnational corporations and tourism firms based in the West. However, “a case can be made that international trade flows can actually increase marginalization and poverty” in less developed countries despite the rhetoric of economic development espoused by neoclassical economic orthodoxies (Hampton, 2003, p. 86).

Some tourism decision-makers have neglected backpacker tourism as a source of development for certain areas of the country. However, it is opined that this distinct form of tourism is an important subsector that can further boost the local economy. Conventional tourism, as exemplified by large hotels, usually employs expatriates for managerial and skilled positions. There is less employment offered to local people. On the other hand, new tourism, as exemplified by smaller establishments, has a predisposition for local ownership. In the Indonesian context, successful tourism replaces scenes of political unrest when the New Order regime was ushered in. Tourism development policy was seen to be top-down, prioritizing mass tourism and building capital-intensive infrastructures and projects. Usually, the said projects were funded by international capital and donors. The view of the government on new tourism, particularly on backpacker tourism, is discouraged and ignored. Attention is predominantly geared toward “quality” tourism. On the contrary, backpacker tourism has lower levels of expenditure and foreign currency leakage but also has less demand for imported goods and services. Examples of currency leakage include tourist consumption of items that are imported from their country of origin especially from hotels managed by fellow nationals (Sinclair & Stabler, 2002). On the

other hand, small-scale tourism can be framed as a response to some of the effects of globalization vis-à-vis the increasing flows of international tourism to less developed countries.

Etzo, Massidda, and Piras (2014) examined the possible impact of migration on outbound Italian tourism. They posited that immigrants could increase a specific destination’s attractiveness by enriching its cultural life. Furthermore, immigrants also influence outbound tourism by encouraging other individuals from their host countries to embark on a similar journey. The data analysis involved 65 countries, which represents 93% of the total tourism trips between 2005 and 2011. Results reveal that migration-led tourism (MLT) also applies to the market segments of holiday and business trips. This view is contrary to the initial findings of other researchers that MLT only applies to trips that are classified as visiting relatives or friends. Specifically, Italians already residing abroad have a positive impact on outbound tourism. In a similar vein, foreign-born citizens residing in Italy also influenced outbound Italian tourism for the purposes of business and visiting friends and relatives but not for holiday trips.

There is evidence supporting that the Italian communities abroad have a pulling effect on tourism across different travel purposes. These results are exclusive to the context of Italian tourism. Further empirical research ought to possibly extend conclusion to other countries that are “characterized by considerable flows of both immigrants and emigrants and thus have large stocks of foreigners at home and expatriates abroad” (Etzo et al., 2014, p. 248).

Zirulia (2013) conducted an analysis on Dutch outbound tourism through the data provided by CBS Statistics Netherland. Specifically, he examined the increase in outbound tourism of Dutch nationals from 1983 to 2009. It is claimed that Dutch tourists are more active in terms of outbound travel, specifically participating in holidays, as compared to their European neighbors such as the Finns and the Norwegians. Holiday, as defined in the research, is the “periods spend with family, friends, or acquaintances living abroad” (Zirulia, 2013, p. 221). The analysis involves the change over time of international Dutch holidays vis-à-vis the GDP of Netherlands as an indicator of

economic development. It is noted that income is a possible explanatory variable and has an impact on tourism flows.

Overall, the number of international holidays taken by Dutch tourists increased in the last three decades; this is applicable in absolute terms and per capita. Furthermore, the positive trend of outbound Dutch tourism is associated with the condition of the economy of Netherlands. Notably, there is no variability associated with the increase in outbound travel by other determinants. As regards the preferences for destinations for outbound tourism, it is influenced by the “sharp decreases in transport and information costs” (Zirulia, 2013, p. 227).

Olya and Mehran (2017) explored the interaction between tourism expenditure antecedents and socioeconomic indicators of prosperity. To be more specific, the indicators of prosperity such as entrepreneurship and opportunity, governance, health, safety and security, and freedom were utilized in the analysis as a precursor of tourism expenditure. The data was collected from the Legatum Institute databases. Studies on tourism expenditure and its antecedents are wide-ranging—other research used the economy; cultural and social environment; socio-demographic factors; and other trip-related antecedents. Fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis was conducted on the 5-year data for 105 countries. Tourism is considered a driver of economic progress for many countries and as an industry, tourism is flourishing. Heterogeneity in these kinds of analyses are present and can be explained by the consideration of social and economic environment and health conditions.

Results reveal that economy and education are not significant predictors of tourism expenditure as reported in past studies. As posited, educated individuals have a predilection of participating in recreational activities with opportunities for saving. Considering health, it has a significant and positive impact on tourism expenditure. Freedom as an antecedent is also significant. It is reported that tourists with low personal freedom would more likely spend more than those with greater freedom. Aside from the aforementioned factors, it is recommended that socio-cultural issues be integrated in further research.

Ghimire (2001) conducted a review of literature on regional tourism in some areas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The industry of tourism remains an integral part of the development planning of developing countries. Tourism is therefore seen as an economic savior by creating inter-sectoral demands and linkages. Developing countries, as argued in the paper, has an advantage against the industrialized nation when it comes to tourism. Developing countries possess “exceptional tourist resources and attractions, such as warm and sunny weather, attractive beaches, unique wildlife and tropical forests and exotic and authentic cultures” (Ghimire, 2001, p. 99).

In recent years, cooperation among regional organizations boosted tourism within their respective jurisdiction as exemplified by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, and the Southern African Development Community. Regional cooperation in tourism “is often seen as an exceptional means of revitalizing and diversifying the regional economic base, generating new employment and income possibilities for local communities and strengthening people-to-people contact” (Ghimire, 2001, p. 101). Simply put, regional tourism refers to leisure travel and movement of individuals within a specific region but outside of their own country.

As such, tourism is therefore seen to also expand parallel with the growth of industries, businesses, transportation, and other infrastructures. However, there are still issues in regional tourism that ought to be considered. Although regional tourism will more likely boost the development of countries, the center-periphery relationship still exists. Specifically, countries which have more political weight and have larger GDPs would tend to have dominance on regional trade as well as tourism dominance.

Dragouni et al. (2016) examined how sentiment and mood influence outbound tourism. Specifically, the Index for Consumer Sentiment and Economic Policy Index were used as a measure of sentiment. Likewise, the S&P 500 was utilized as a measure or proxy for mood. Notably, they claimed that the economic implication of tourism to destination and host countries are of great importance to society. Considering destination countries, tourism serves

to expand and extend revenues for the government, increase employment, increase employment and infrastructure, growth in the economy, and the diversification of economic activities. Mood is defined as an “emotionally motivated, pre-rational force of the human psyche spanning over short horizons” while sentiment “represents a cognitively motivated, rationalized expression of social disposition” (Dragouni et al., 2016, p. 83). Contextualizing sentiment in terms of consumer studies, it may refer to the feelings of individuals pertaining to their own finances, future financial prospects, and even the state of the economy.

A gap in tourism studies is the identification of pertinent factors that influence tourism demand. Most studies have focused on the economic aspect and its relation to demand. Mood and sentiment and their impact on tourism demand have not been thoroughly explored in the quantitative sense. For the most part, mood and sentiment and their effect on tourism have been explored through the use of qualitative surveys but the determinants in the macro level were not included. As posited, “sentiment and mood indicators reveal heterogeneous patterns in their magnitude across time” (Dragouni et al., 2016, p. 82). Furthermore, it is asserted that the increase in consumer sentiment due to optimism in economic prospects usually translates to an increase in expenditure on luxury goods and tourism. In terms of mood, when it is positive, it also translates to an increase in spending. Nevertheless, patterns of consumption are still heavily influenced by events that disturb mood. Results revealed that shocks in the consumer mood and sentiment have effects on outbound tourism demand in the US context. The magnitude of the effects, however, depends on certain socioeconomic and environmental events.

Tourism is considered to be a major social phenomenon with significant socio-cultural, economic, and environmental consequences. Further, Sharpley (2006) argued that tourism is undeniably an integral part of modern life, hence, deserving of scholarly exploration. Therefore, this present inquiry determines

the relationship of average wealth, human capital index, inclusive development, international departures, and expenditures. The data was derived from the Credit Suisse Global Wealth Book, the World Economic Forum’s Human Capital Report, World Economic Forum Inclusive Growth and Development Report, and the World Bank’s International Tourism Data.

The present inquiry fills a gap in tourism research with respect to the possible antecedents of tourism departures and expenditures. As noted in the studies mentioned, inclusive growth, individual wealth, and human capital were not explored as a possible contributor to the increase of global tourism travels. Furthermore, this study will further the discussion on how outflows of tourism affects individuals, origin, and destination countries.

Methods

The data for this study was obtained from various sources such as the Credit Suisse Global Wealth Databook (O’Sullivan, 2016), the Human Capital Report (Schwab, 2016), the Inclusive Growth and Development Report, (Samans, Blanke, Corrigan, & Hanouz, 2017) and the World Bank’s Number of International Tourism Departures and Expenditures (2011). Table 1 shows the description of the data sources utilized in this present inquiry.

In determining the relationship among the number of tourism departures, tourism expenditure, inclusive growth, human capital, and average wealth, the Spearman rank-order correlation was used. The analysis is twofold. The initial part of the examination of the data is at the aggregate level, which seeks to determine the overall relationship of the variables. Second, the relationship of variables was determined in the regional level—Asia Pacific, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and North America. The regional analysis reveals the incongruities of global tourism claims and arguments. Despite the rise in tourism on a global scale, a more nuanced examination may reveal divergent features exclusive to a specific region.

Table 1
Description of Data Sources

Data Source	Description	Variables in Focus
Credit Suisse Global Wealth Data Book (O’Sullivan, 2016)	This book provides estimates of wealth holdings of households around the world. It also provides detailed information on the evolution of household wealth levels since 2000 in the regional and country levels. Overall, it details the distribution of individual net worth, defined as marketable value of financial and non-financial assets less debt.	Average wealth per person
World Economic Forum’s Human Capital Report (Schwab, 2016)	The report provides the ranking of countries pertaining to their development and human talents are deployed. The human capital index specifically measures the level of education, employment, and skills. In essence, a country’s knowledge and skills of individuals enables growth and economic value.	Human capital index
World Economic Forum’s Inclusive Growth and Development Report (Samans et al., 2017)	The report provides sets of performance indicators that provides an assessment of structural factors “that influences the breadth of social participation in the process and benefits of economic growth” (p. viii).	Inclusive growth index
World Bank’s International Tourism Departures and Expenditures (2016)	The data set provides the number of departures and expenditures of outbound tourists.	Number of departures and expenditures

Results

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics by Region

Asia Pacific	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Average Wealth	66	1846.00	375573.00	58042.0758	88377.82532
Human Capital	36	42.98	83.44	68.2675	8.96089
Inclusive Development	29	2.87	5.18	4.1159	.52377
International Departures	28	16000	116886000	12901750.00	26477659.492
International Expenditures	49	2800000.00	29220000000.00	11718579591.8367	41712680276.32594
Africa	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Average Wealth	57	107.00	203806.00	9651.6140	28051.35281
Human Capital	32	42.33	68.62	56.4428	6.32487
Inclusive Development	24	2.79	3.94	3.2504	.30365
International Departures	10	56000	46000000	5507300.00	14273311.124
International Expenditures	36	23400000.00	11641000000.00	1188247222.2222	2549496102.64865
Europe	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Average Wealth	49	1254.00	561854.00	123987.3469	125345.89256
Human Capital	37	68.23	98.17	78.6062	5.90168
Inclusive Development	35	3.67	6.02	4.7037	.58567
International Departures	32	185700	1346000000	56122271.87	236169298.739
International Expenditures	41	14407000.00	88843000000.00	10958573341.4634	19825378190.64375
Latin America	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Average Wealth	38	3128.00	46543.00	18893.8421	9557.57061
Human Capital	22	56.24	75.55	66.8950	4.50706
Inclusive Development	17	3.67	4.53	4.2035	.24945
International Departures	20	478000	19603000	3082400.00	4569404.584
International Expenditures	25	13000000.00	20356000000.00	2095456000.0000	4218326694.12885
North America	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Average Wealth	3	270179.00	344692.00	317316.3333	40999.26090
Human Capital	2	78.86	81.95	80.4050	2.18496
Inclusive Development	2	4.44	4.90	4.6700	.32527
International Departures	2	32267000	73453000	52860000.00	29122899.890
International Expenditures	3	381000000.00	148366000000.00	59420333333.3333	78394397990.75783

Table 2 shows the correlation among the variables on the global level. All of the correlations are deemed significant. International departures vis-à-vis average wealth, inclusive development, and human capital have moderately positive correlation: $r_s = .314$, $p < .01$, $r_s = .375$, $p < .01$, and $r_s = .352$, $p < .01$. Furthermore, the correlation between international expenditure vis-à-vis average wealth, inclusive development, and human capital are significant and strongly correlated: $r_s = .514$, $p < .01$, $r_s = .569$, $p < .01$, and $r_s = .602$, $p < .01$. Therefore, on the global scale, wealth, inclusive development, and human capital positively influences outgoing tourism and strongly influences tourism-related expenditures.

Table 3 shows the correlation among the variables in the Asia Pacific region. All of the correlations are deemed significant. International departure is moderately and positively correlated with inclusive development, $r_s = .477$, $p < .01$. As opposed to the

correlation in the global level, the correlation of departure vis-à-vis average wealth is not significant. However, similar to the global level, international tourism expenditure is strongly correlated with average wealth, inclusiveness, and human capital: $r_s = .513$, $p < .01$, $r_s = .631$, $p < .01$, and $r_s = .416$, $p < .05$. Hence, in the Asia Pacific region, only inclusive development significantly influences the level of outgoing tourism. Additionally, wealth, inclusive development, and human capital positively influence expenditures.

Table 4 shows the correlation among the variables in the African region. As opposed to the global and Asia Pacific, the only significant positive correlation is between international expenditure and human capital, $r_s = .434$, $p < .05$. Wealth, inclusive development, and human capital do not significantly influence international tourism departures in this region. In this region, human capital encourages tourism spending.

Table 2

Correlation of Global Tourism Departures and Expenditures vis-à-vis Average Wealth, Inclusive Development, and Human Capital

	Average Wealth	Inclusive Development	Human Capital
International Departures	.314**	.375**	.352**
International Expenditures	.514**	.569**	.602**

Note. * $p < .05$ and ** $p < .01$.

Table 3

Correlation of Asia Pacific Tourism Departures and Expenditures vis-à-vis Average Wealth, Inclusive Development, and Human Capital

	Average Wealth	Inclusive Development	Human Capital
International Departures	.272	.477**	-.099
International Expenditures	.513**	.631**	.416*

Note. * $p < .05$ and ** $p < .01$.

Table 4

Correlation of African Tourism Departures and Expenditures vis-à-vis Average Wealth, Inclusive Development, and Human Capital

	Average Wealth	Inclusive Development	Human Capital
International Departures	-.212	.371	-.086
International Expenditures	.186	.312	.434*

Note. * $p < .05$ and ** $p < .01$.

Table 5 shows the correlation among the variables in Europe. In this region, wealth and human capital do not influence international departures. However, the correlation between inclusive development and international tourism departures is strong, significant, and positive, $r_s = .798$, $p < .01$. Consistent with the global and Asia Pacific analyses, international expenditure is significantly positively correlated with wealth, inclusive development, and human capital: $r_s = .552$, $p < .01$, $r_s = .402$, $p < .01$, and $r_s = .581$, $p < .01$.

Table 6 shows the correlation among the variables in the Latin American region. No significant correlations were discovered in the analysis.

Table 7 shows the correlation among the variables in the North American region. The only significant correlation discovered is between wealth and departures, $r_s = 1$, $p < .01$. Further, the correlation between wealth and departures is positive and perfect. However, it should be noted that there are very few countries involved in the North American analysis.

Table 5

Correlation of European Tourism Departures and Expenditures vis-à-vis Average Wealth, Inclusive Development, and Human Capital

	Average Wealth	Inclusive Development	Human Capital
International Departures	.095	.798**	.170
International Expenditures	.552**	.402**	.581**

Note. * $p < .05$ and ** $p < .01$.

Table 6

Correlation of Latin American Tourism Departures and Expenditures vis-à-vis Average Wealth, Inclusive Development, and Human Capital

	Average Wealth	Inclusive Development	Human Capital
International Departures	.144	.096	.091
International Expenditures	.138	.322	.421

Note. * $p < .05$ and ** $p < .01$.

Table 7

Correlation of North American Tourism Departures and Expenditures vis-à-vis Average Wealth, Inclusive Development, and Human Capital

	Average Wealth	Inclusive Development	Human Capital
International Departures	1.000**	-1.000	-1.000
International Expenditures	.500	-1.000	-1.000

Note. * $p < .05$ and ** $p < .01$.

Discussion

On the global scale, it is revealed the tourism departures and expenditures have positive interactions with average wealth, human capital, and inclusive growth. In this sense, countries that have individuals with higher wealth levels, more advanced human development, and greater equitable opportunities would have higher outbound tourism and expenditures. However, the analysis on the regional level diverges from the global level, that is, some significant findings in the aggregate aspect do not hold true in specific regions. This can be attributed to the variation in each region, which includes the political, economic, and cultural landscape.

Europe is a developed region that exhibits greater levels of wealth, inclusive development, and human capital. Both economic development and human development are key to greater tourism outflows, and to some extent, expenditures. In the Asia Pacific region, tourism expenditure is positively related to wealth, inclusive development, and human capital similar to Europe. Likewise, tourism departures from Asia are positively related to human development but not on average wealth and human capital. Considering North America, the relationship between tourism departures and wealth has perfect positive correlation but the sample for this specific analysis is quite limited. For the African region, human capital seems to interact positively with tourism expenditures. In the analysis of the Latin American region, no significant correlations were discovered.

The regional divergence may be derived from political, economic, and cultural forces. Sharpley (2006) opined that numerous external forces that shape the nature and direction of tourism flows hamper the rise of tourism. These external forces may include government intervention and policies, political instability, economic instability, conflict, crime, health scares, and natural disasters. Consequently, the results of the regional analysis show that tourism flows and expenditures are distributed among the different regions of the world. Despite the global increase in tourism outflows, further scrutiny shows that tourism flows from America is irregular and Europe accounts for the overwhelming proportion of both the global

supply and demand (Holden, 2005). In a more detailed description, Holden (2005) enumerated major tourism patterns: Northern Europe to the Mediterranean (120 million), North America to Europe (23 million), Europe to North America (15 million) North East Asia to South East Asia (10 million), North East Asia to North America (8 million), and North America to the Caribbean (8 million). Notably, developed countries take advantage and benefit more from tourism than less developed countries and economies (Sharpley, 2006).

Conclusion

The present inquiry examined how tourism outflows, specifically departures and expenditures, are influenced by factors such as the average wealth of individuals per country, inclusive development, and human capital. The Credit Suisse Global Wealth book (2016) shows the average wealth of individuals per country. Second, the World Economic Forum's Human Capital Report (2016) and Inclusive Growth and Development Report (2017) provide details and rankings on the level of education, employment, skills, and structural factors "that influences the breadth of social participation in the process and benefits of economic growth" (p. vii). Through the aforementioned data sets, relationships were determined on the aggregate and regional levels.

Overall, average wealth, human capital, and inclusive development are positively associated with international outbound tourism and tourism expenditures. Notably, economy and education, as embodied in the human capital index and inclusive development index, are significant predictors for tourism expenditure. Further, as argued by Olya and Mehran (2017), educated individuals have a predilection for participating in recreational activities with opportunities for saving. However, the results of the present inquiry reveal that wealth and human capital positively influences expenditure. Hence, it can also be claimed that educated individuals with the financial means do not necessarily participate in recreational activities with opportunities for saving.

On the regional level, some relationships among the variables were not deemed significant. For example, in the Asia Pacific region, the correlation between wealth and departures is deemed insignificant. However, other

relationships have the same outcome and are similar to the aggregate level. In other regions, such as Europe and Africa, there are less significant relationships. Focusing on Latin America, no significant relationship was discovered. In North America, despite the significant correlation between average wealth and departures; such is possibly inconsiderable as the number of countries in the analysis are few.

Overall, the growth of tourism is parallel to the growth of industries, businesses, transportation, and infrastructure (Ghimire, 2001). Such developments in different countries were captured by the data sets of Credit Suisse and the World Economic Forum. Additionally, the analysis affirms that the said variables positively interact with international tourism departures and expenditures in varying levels. However, some interactions present in the global level do not occur in certain regions.

To further improve this area of tourism studies, the following recommendations are made:

- Aside from human capital, inclusive growth, and average wealth, succeeding research may consider cultural factors and how it inflects desire to partake in outbound tourism and spending. Furthermore, succeeding explorations in this area may focus on individuals who are part of certain diasporas.
- Explorations of regional economic blocs such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nation in Asia, European Union, or the Mercado Común de Sur in Latin America may prove to be fruitful in examining how it facilitates the increase in tourism in the area.
- An economic investigation of how different forms of tourism bolster development should be considered. Mainstream, backpacker, religious, and sports tourisms are some examples.

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