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VARIETY-SEEKING & INERTIAL BEHAVIOR

Disutility of distance

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Abstract

This study incorporates the theories of variety-seeking and inertial behavior into the tourist decision process, by observing the dependence of an individual's current destination choice on the individual's previous choice. Literature suggests that attributes characterizing a buying alternative are crucial to understand the individual consumption pattern. In this line, this study proposes that the effect of the attribute "distance" is contingent upon a tourist's variety-seeking or inertial behavior at the moment of choosing a destination, in the sense that these behavior types could increase or diminish the negative effect of distance. The empirical application is carried out in Spain, by applying Mixed Logit Models. The results show that *variety-seeking behavior* reduces the dissuasive effect of distance and that *inertial behavior* increases it.

Key words: Tourism, Variety-seeking and inertial behavior, Mixed Logit Model

INTRODUCTION

The behavior types known as “variety-seeking” and “inertial” are two key aspects of the consumer buying pattern, since the choice made by individuals on the previous occasion helps explain the next decision. Variety-seeking behavior implies that the probability of visiting a destination when taking a vacation diminishes when it was visited on the previous vacation. The Consumer Theory explains this probability reduction through satiation with the attributes of the destination; that is, tourists obtain utility from visiting a destination, and according to Rugg (1973), they get satisfaction from the attributes of the destination; when tourists reach a certain level of consumption they become satiated with the destination and attempt to change the alternative chosen on the next vacation. This kind of tourist behaves in a variety seeking way. For example, the curiosity of an individual to discover new cultural places or unique landscapes might well lead her/him to visit different places on distinct vacations.

On the other hand, inertial behavior means that the visit to a destination increases the probability of choosing the same destination on the next vacation; that is, the more a tourist visits a destination, the more s/he likes it, and the more s/he wants to repeat the visit to the destination (e.g. the relaxation obtained by an individual from the climate and tranquility of a destination can lead her/him to revisit the same destination).

In this context, the attributes of destinations play an important role, since they provide the tourist with utility. However, there is an attribute, which is common to all kinds of destinations, and which individuals have to overcome to get satisfaction: *distance*. The spatial configuration of tourist consumption makes distance a key attribute. Many studies have analyzed the dimension “distance”, but the results are not unambiguous. This can be reasonably understood since one can readily think of a group of individuals for whom longer distances represent a deterrent factor whereas for

another group, traveling to faraway destinations is an attraction factor (or at least, not as strong a deterrent as for the other group) e.g. a tourist could be willing to visit an exotic destination even though it implies traveling overseas.

Alternatively, this study proposes that the effect of distance is contingent upon a tourist's variety-seeking or inertial behavior at the moment of choosing a destination, in the sense that these behavior types could increase or diminish the negative effect of distance. To this end, the interaction of distance with the *variety-seeking* and *inertial behavior* of the individual is analyzed. The methodology applied is based on the estimation of Mixed Logit Models in order to control possible correlations between different destinations and tourist heterogeneity. The empirical application is carried out in Spain in a context of 26 destinations.

In order to fulfill this objective, the remainder of the paper is arranged as follows: The second section proposes and justifies the moderating role of *variety-seeking* and *inertial behavior* in the effect of distance on the choice of intra-country destinations. The third section covers the design of the investigation; describing the methodology, sample and variables used. The fourth section presents the results obtained and their discussion. Finally, the fifth section summarizes the conclusions and implications.

"VARIETY-SEEKING" & "INERTIAL" EFFECTS ON DISTANCE

The literature on variety-seeking and inertial behavior suggests that attributes characterizing a buying alternative are crucial to understand the consumer pattern (Chintagunta, 1998). Based on the proposals of Rugg (1973), McAlister (1982) and McAlister & Pessemier (1982), it is possible to assume that an individual records and stores the information of past consumptions by accumulating the different attributes of

the alternatives chosen. In this regard, the accumulated level of each attribute increases as a tourist revisits a destination, and depreciates over time.

If the utility derived from visiting a destination is a decreasing function of the accumulated level of an attribute, the tourist is a variety-seeker, since utility reduces as s/he revisits the same destination. If utility is an increasing function of the stock of the attribute of the destination, the tourist follows inertial behavior. That is, utility increases as s/he revisits a destination (Note that, as inertial behavior does not necessarily imply loyalty, these increases in utility can be obtained from not having to take switching costs when opting for a different alternative in each choice occasion. This aspect will be reviewed more in depth later).

Among the attributes of the destination analyzed in literature, distance stands out because of its greater interest and importance (Wennergren & Nielsen, 1968; Stopher & Ergün, 1979; Moutinho & Trimble, 1981; Perdue, 1986; Borgers et al., 1989; Fesenmaier, 1988; Adamowicz et al., 1994; Schroeder & Louviere, 1999; Riera, 2000; Barros et al., 2008). The distance between the usual place of residence of an individual and the destination is an especially important criterion due to the clearly inherent spatial dimension of tourist destination choice. In general, distance -or geographical position of the tourist relative to destinations- is considered a restriction or a dissuasive dimension of destination choice, as the displacement of an individual to the destination entails physical, temporal and monetary cost (Taylor & Knudson, 1976). This is the result reached by the studies of Wennergren & Nielsen (1968), Perdue (1985), Borgers et al., (1988), Fesenmaier (1988), Adamowicz et al. (1994), Schroeder & Louviere (1999) and McKercher et al. (2008). In this case, the analysis is made in terms of the *disutility* of distance.

Let's assume that an individual goes to a specific faraway destination in periods 1, 4, 5 and 6. Each time the tourist visits the destination, the disutility of the attribute distance increases by one, augmenting the accumulated level. The rest of the periods (2, 3, 7, 8, 9 and 10) an alternative destination is chosen and the accumulated level depreciates at a constant multiplicative rate of, say, 0.4

[Figure 1 about here]

The critical issue is to observe the utility derived from going to a destination in function of the accumulated level of distance. If utility is a decreasing function of the stock of distance, the tourist is a variety-seeker. That is, utility reduces as s/he revisits the same faraway destination.

[Figure 2 about here]

In this line, Baxter (1979) shows that the journey itself, as a component of the tourism product, can give satisfaction in its own right so that, on occasions, longer distances are preferred. That is, an individual may choose a long-distance car journey over a quicker journey by air to the same faraway destination, because of the opportunity to see sundry sights on the way to that destination. However, it is not likely that the individual would choose the same destination and the same route on two successive occasions.

Also, sometimes individuals might prefer to travel further because they are more likely to uncover new aspects. Elements such as the "Ulysses Factor" proposed by Anderson (1970) can influence the choice of faraway destinations. The "Ulysses Factor" is a psychological aspect of special relevance in the planning of vacations, through which people feel a deep need to explore and to discover what lies beyond the known horizon (Anderson, 1970). In this line, Mayo & Jarvis (1981) suggest that this "need to

explore" is determinant in the explanation of travel, due to the fact that "travel allows one to satisfy the intellectual need to know". In this case, visiting and discovering new places can moderate the effect of the distance between the place of origin and the destination (a tourist could be prepared to travel further if it entails visiting a new place). Not for nothing is distance held a valid proxy variable that shows the latent existence of other factors such as the "willingness or ability to engage with different cultures" (McKercher et al., 2008). On this account, Mokhtarian & Salomon (2001) indicate that curiosity impels one to travel, so that an individual may wish to visit "an intriguing location on the other side of the planet". These authors suggest that *variety-seeking behavior* can have influence on distance traveled, as it can increase the utility (or reduce the disutility) of more distant destinations and allows one to satisfy this trait. Moutinho & Trimble (1991) show, in the case of the Grand Canyon, that an individual has a greater willingness to travel long distances if s/he has not visited the destination previously; thus, the additional effort implied by the long distance depends on whether it is a first or a repeat visit. Therefore, it is expected that *variety-seeking behavior* leads a tourist to travel further to a new destination. In this sense, the following hypothesis is stated:

H.1: *Variety-seeking behavior moderates the effect of distance on the choice of a destination not visited previously, in such a way that the tourist is prepared to cover longer distances.*

If utility were an increasing function of the stock of distance, the tourist would be following inertial behavior. According to Solomon (1994), inertia appears when an individual buys, out of habit, the same brand on almost every consumption occasion so less effort and time are required as s/he does not have to go through a decision process in every shopping time. Thus, an inert client is not necessarily loyal: as inertia is the

repeat purchase of the same brand passively without much thought (Yanamandram and White, 2004), a person might exhibit it even if his/her attitude toward the brand is negative. In fact, Dick and Basu (1994) coin this behaviour as "spurious loyalty" since a client shows a high repeat patronage and a relatively low attitude toward the brand. Of course, one does not have to go so far as to consider inertia just in these negative terms, as Assael (1998) suggests that this "spurious loyalty" can be displayed when a brand achieves a certain minimum level of satisfaction and the client repurchases it on a routine basis; this way, the individual saves on switching costs. If consumers are happy with their chosen alternative, problem-solving behaviour is replaced by routinized responses (Linscheidt, 999999999999999) and they do not have to show concern on looking for information on other alternatives. In terms of the household production theory, we can relate this behaviour pattern to the "consumption capital" accumulated over time (Stigler and Becker, 1977): as this capital is comprised of all the information and skills put together to "produce" a "consumption activity", if people switch this activity, the accumulated capital depreciates. In other words, it is more efficient to take advantage of the abilities formed with the experience of consuming the same brand several times in the past than to obtain new information, apply it and create new abilities for a new choice alternative.

In the tourism destination choice context, inertial behavior is more related to closer destinations because of their proximity, familiarity, accessibility, loyalty or the existence of high costs associated with the change of alternative (Mehta et al., 2001) (such as the greater level of expenditure derived from visiting distant destinations, the new routines the individual has to get used to, or the costs of searching for information, among others). Note that not only these negative switching costs -through which the individual "has to stay"- have an impact, but also the positive switching costs -by which

people "want to stay"- (Julander and Soderlund, 2003), such as benefits granted to repeat visitors that would be missed if they changed the choice (think of a holiday apartment owner that rents it to the same family year in, year out; the owner is more likely to give them a discount), or the affective ties and emotional links between the owner and the family forged over the years. In this case, utility increases as s/he revisits the same destination.

These circumstances are harder to think to apply to long-distance destinations (unless the destination offers something really especial that the tourist greatly appreciates). The study of island economies by Khadaroo and Seetanah (2007) confirms this statement: as the majority of island destinations are pretty far away from the major origin countries, they do not generate repeat visits except for those "top island destinations" perceived as luxury products. In general terms, they conclude that these remote destinations do not feature repeating phenomenon as individuals prefer to widen their experience by visiting other places and cultures[1]. Thus, in these distant destinations, inertial behaviour is not easy to apply. Therefore, for a tourist following inertial behavior, the probability of traveling to a faraway destination is lower. Hence, the following hypothesis:

H.2: *Inertial behavior moderates the effect of distance on the choice of destination, in such a way that the tourist is not prepared to cover longer distances.*

To sum up, this study proposes that the effect of distance is moderated by a tourist's variety-seeking or inertial behavior at the moment of choosing a destination, in the sense that these behavior types could increase or diminish the positive or negative effect of distance.

[1] In the same vein, Naudé and Saayman (2005) find that a non-repetition pattern and a negative effect of distance is exhibit by Europeans travelling to African destinations.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Methodology

For the analysis of the *variety-seeking* and *inertial* effect on the distance traveled to the destination, the estimation of Mixed Logit Models (MLM) is proposed due to: one, their ability to deal with the unobserved heterogeneity of tourists, by assuming that the coefficients of the variables vary among tourists; and two, their flexibility, which allows representation of different correlation patterns among alternatives.

With regard to the first point, it is highly unlikely that the whole tourist sample has the same set of parameter values, which implies the need to consider unobserved heterogeneity of tourists in parameter estimations. Hence, the utility of alternative *i* for tourist *t* is defined as $U_{it} = X_{it}\beta_t + \varepsilon_{it}$, where X_{it} is a vector that represents the attribute distance and the variety-seeking behavior of tourists; β_t is the vector of coefficients of distance and the variety-seeking effect for each individual *t,* which represents personal tastes; and ε_{it} is a random term that is iid extreme value. This specification of the MLM allows coefficients β_t to vary over decision makers with density $f(\beta)$. As β_t is not observable, the probability is the integral of $P_t(i/\beta_t)$ over all the possible values of β_t:

$$P_i = \int_{\beta_t} \frac{\exp\left\{\sum_{h=1}^{H} x_{ih}\beta_{th}\right\}}{\sum_{j=1}^{J}\exp\left\{\sum_{h=1}^{H} x_{jh}\beta_{th}\right\}} \phi(\beta_t \mid b, W)d\beta_t$$

where *J* is the number of alternatives and ϕ is the density function of β_t, assuming that β_t is distributed as a Normal with average *b* and variance *W* (in fact, a significant variance estimation implies the superiority of the Random coefficients Logit model over the Multinomial Logit model (Train, 2003)).

With regard to the second aspect, the flexibility of the MLM allows one to avoid the assumption of Independence from Irrelevant Alternatives (IIA) of the Multinomial Logit Model. In fact, the MLM does not exhibit the restrictive substitution patterns of the Logit model, as the ratio of probabilities P_{ti}/P_{tj} depends on all the data, including the attributes of alternatives other than *i* and *j*.

With regard to the estimation of the MLM, the above integral does not give a closed solution, which means that its estimation requires the application of simulation techniques (Train, 2001). Thus, the final aim is to optimize the maximum simulated likelihood function. To realize the draws of the density function, the Halton sequences method is used, which is found to be better than random draws as it reduces error (Spanier & Maize, 1991; Train, 1999; Munizaga & Alvarez-Daziano, 2001; Hensher, 2001).

In order to test whether the effect of distance on the utility derived from visiting a destination varies according to whether or not the destination has been previously visited, we estimate the interaction between "seeking-variety" and "distance", and the interaction between "repetition" and "distance" through the MLM. Moreover, the estimation of this model gives the analyst two-level results: On the one hand, direct measurement of the interactions "*variety-seeking* x *distance*" and "*repetition* x *distance*"; and on the other hand, estimation of the proportion of sample individuals who show positive or negative preferences towards an attribute -parameters greater or lesser than zero, respectively-, through the normalization $b/\sqrt{W} \sim N(0,1)$, proposed by Train (1998); where, as indicated earlier, *b* and *W* are the mean and variance of the Normal distribution $\phi(\beta_{th}|b,W)$, with β_{th} being the parameter for individual *t* that measures the effect of attribute *h*. For this particular application, this estimation allows the analyst to know the percentage of individuals willing to travel long distances in

order to reach a new destination (different from the one visited on the previous occasion) or the percentage of individuals willing to travel long distances again in order to reach a destination visited previously.

Sample, Data and Variables

To reach the proposed objectives, this study uses information on tourist choice behavior obtained from the national survey "Spanish Holidaying Behavior (III)", which was carried out by the Spanish Center for Sociological Research in 1995. This is due to the following reasons: i) The availability of information on individual tourist destination choice behavior in terms of intra-country administrative units; and ii) The survey is directed at a sample (over 18 years old) obtained in origin (at home), which avoids the characteristic selection bias of destination collected samples, leading to a more precise analysis of tourist demand. The sample is taken by using multistage sampling, stratified by conglomerations, with proportional selection of primary units -cities- and of secondary units –censorial sections-. The information was collected through personal, at home, interviews with a structured questionnaire. Starting with a sample of 2127 people, the final sample is restricted to those individuals providing information on two successive vacations and consists of 160 individuals. In order to make the choice model operative, the variables used are defined thus:

Dependent variables. The destinations are defined through the 26 Spanish provinces -out of 50- that people in the sample visit. In order to represent the alternative chosen by the tourist, 26 dummy variables are used. The appendix shows a summary of these destinations.

Independent Variables. *Distance to the destination*. For the purpose of this study, two alternative measures are used and tried so as to confirm the effect of distance through two different approaches: the real distance in kilometers and the distance in

time invested in displacement. The use of these two variables entails, in order to make the model operative, the construction of two origin-destination matrices in which kilometers and time expected between each origin and destination for the provinces are included. This information on distances and displacement times between origins and destinations is found in the Campsa Interactive Guide (taking the provincial capitals as reference points) and in Iberia's web page.

Destination Prices. Also, in order to control for other factors different from distance that might be pertinent to choosing a destination, we also use prices as explanatory variable. Regarding its measurement, authors such as Eymann & Ronning (1992) and Usach (1999) consider that the correct method of reflecting the prices of a certain tourist market is to compare destination prices with those of the home market and those of competing destinations. Along this line, Eymann & Ronning (1992) use purchase parity differentials between the origin and respective destinations, obtained from the corresponding consumer price indexes. Also, Morley (1994c) demonstrates that the Consumer Price Index of a geographical region is a good indicator of tourist prices, by showing high correlation between the two. In line with these authors, our study measures destination prices of intra-country administrative (provinces) units through consumer price index differentials among origins and destinations, which are published in the National Institute of Statistics (INE), which represent the cost of living of each origin/destination.

Variety-seeking behavior (VSB): Following Guadagni & Little (1983) and Gupta et al. (1997), in order to represent a non-repeat visit to a destination in two successive occasions, a dummy variable is constructed which takes a value of 1 if the chosen destinations on vacations *n* and *n-1* do not coincide; and zero otherwise. That is, if the destination chosen by an individual on occasion *n* is different from that chosen on the

previous occasion *n-1*, the variable will reflect this fact by displaying the value 1, meaning that the individual is changing the choice from one time to another. At the same time, we use the opposite variable -*inertial behavior (IB)* in order to observe the *repetition effect* on distance. That is, if the destination chosen is the same in occasions *n* and *n-1*, this variable will activate the number one showing repetition. These variables *VSB* and *IB* allow us to distinguish the effect of distance on the destination selection depending whether the individual follows a variety-seeking or inertial behaviour.

Results

The analysis of the moderating effect of *variety-seeking* and *inertial behaviors* on the influence of distance on the choice of destinations implies the estimation, by simulated maximum likelihood, of several Mixed Logit Models (see Tables 1 and 2). For the sake of simplicity in the exposition, we are commenting only on the results of Table 1; however, note that the same pattern of outcomes are basically obtained -both significance of the parameters and their relative size compared among equations 1, 2 and 3 within each table-, showing robustness in the results (of course, the comments on Table 1 are analogous to those that would be made about Table 2).

Equation 1 shows the effect of distance with no interactive effects. It is found that this dimension is significant at a level below 0.001 and presents a negative sign, which leads one to characterize distance as a dissuasive factor in the choice of destination, in line with Taylor & Knudson (1976). In other words, the displacement of an individual to the destination supposes physical, temporal and monetary investment. Apart from this, the significance of its standard deviation at a level of 0.001 suggests that distance has a differentiated effect among the individuals of the sample, and thus, longer distances do not suppose less utility for all the sample tourists. Specifically, according to the Normal distribution, 87.1% of the sample get negative utility from

increases in distance, whereas 12.9% obtain satisfaction from long distances. This result shows the possible existence of moderating effects.

In order to analyze *variety-seeking behavior* Equation 2 is estimated, where the interaction "*VSB* x *distance*" measures the impact of distance on the choice of destinations which have not been visited previously. Note that the interaction of the distance with the dummy variable *VSB* permits the detection of the differentiated effect that distance has on destination choice for *variety seekers* compared to *variety avoiders*. This interaction is significant at a level of 0.001, implying that the *VSB* moderates the impact of distance. Moreover, the parameter obtained is statistically smaller (in absolute terms) than that of Equation 1 (χ_1^2=75.1; p<0.001). This means that the effect of distance is not as negative when the destination has not been visited previously. This result confirms Hypothesis 1, in the sense that variety-seeking behavior moderates the effect of distance on the choice of a destination not visited previously, in such a way that the tourist is prepared to cover longer distances. In fact, distance generates positive utility for 20.2% (1-ϕ(-0.248/0.296)) of individuals showing variety-seeking behavior. In this line, it is important to stress that the significance of the standard deviation of the interaction at a level of 0.001 level suggests a differentiated effect, which is in accordance with the result obtained by Barroso et al. (2006) regarding the heterogeneity of the market with respect to the need for variety.

[Table 1 about here]

Regarding the effect of *repeat behavior* (Equation 3), the interaction "*IB* x *distance*" represents the impact of distance on destinations which have been previously visited. The interaction is significant at a level of 0.001, implying that *IB* also moderates the impact of distance. However, in this case, the parameter obtained is statistically

greater (in absolute terms) than that of Equation 1 (χ_1^2=36.1; p<0.001), meaning a greater disutility derived from revisiting faraway destinations and, thus, a reduction in the probability of this destination being chosen again. This result verifies Hypothesis 2, in the sense that inertial behavior moderates the effect of distance on the choice of destination, in such a way that the tourist is not prepared to cover longer distances. As a matter of fact, only 5.1% (1-ϕ(-0.462/0.282)) of the sample would obtain positive utility from revisiting a long-distance destination.

To sum up, although distance reduces the utility of destinations for the majority of individuals, its effect is moderated by *variety-seeking* and *repeat behaviors*. In other words, tourists are willing to put greater (lesser) effort to vary (repeat) the visit to a faraway destination.

Regarding the control variable "prices", interestingly enough, no effect is found in the context of "inertial-variety seeking" behaviour. As stated previously, there are many factors -different from prices- that might have an influence on the decision to visit the same place or to go to a distinct destination. An individual who is a variety seeker might be willing to go to a destination even paying more than in other destinations because, for instance, it allows him/her to satisfy that intellectual need to explore, know and widen their experience, and a person who is a variety avoider may want to visit the same destination irrespective of its prices because, for example, s/he can avoid switching costs -monetary and/or non-monetary- that, in all, could be greater than the prices that are to be paid at that repeated destination.

CONCLUSIONS

The idea that the effect of distance on the choice of tourist destinations could be moderated by *variety-seeking behavior* has allowed the author to analyze this aspect in

Spain in a context of destinations defined by provinces. The operative formalization to test this effect follows the Mixed Logit Model. This is due to their ability to deal with the unobserved heterogeneity of tourists, and because it is a flexible model that allows representation of different correlation patterns between different alternatives and, therefore, overcomes the inconveniences of non-compliance with the IIA hypothesis. The empirical application realized on the analyzed sample shows the following conclusions:

One, the dissuasive effect of distance is not common for all individuals. Longer distances mean greater resistance to travel to faraway destinations, but there is a percentage (11.8%) of people gaining positive utility from long distances.

Two, the dissuasive influence of distance on the selection of destinations is moderated by *variety-seeking and inertial behaviors*. In particular, the results obtained find that: i) *variety-seeking behavior* has an inverse moderating effect on the influence of distance (that is, it reduces the dissuasive effect of distance). People seeking variety from one vacation to another are more willing to travel further and make longer journeys, as it allows them to satisfy their curiosity and their yearning to explore different places; and ii) *inertial behavior* has a direct moderating effect on the influence of distance (that is, it increases the dissuasive effect of distance). In other words, it reinforces the fact that individuals reduce their preference for distant places different from their closer and habitual destinations.

As implications for management, knowledge of the moderating role of *variety-seeking* and *inertial behavior* in the effect of destination attributes (distance) enables tourism organizations to better design their Marketing strategies and policies, adapting them according to the key dimensions. In fact, the result obtained concerning distance, through which it is considered a dissuasive element in the choice of destination, implies

that public and private managers should promote tourist destinations in the closest administrative units (provinces) as Spanish tourists are more likely to travel to closer destinations. However, the results reached regarding the moderating role of *variety-seeking* and *inertial behavior* lead one to qualify and reorientate the former implication for distance.

On the one hand, destinations looking for loyal clients should be promoted in neighboring provinces, as repeat visitors are not willing to cover long distances. On the other hand, for some destinations it could be interesting to identify distant -or even "remote"- customers seeking variety, since they are prepared to travel further and, to some extent, to spend more money at a destination due to longer stays. On this account, Silberman (1985) suggests that as distance increases length of stay will increase. This is due to the fact that travel costs are fixed and independent of the number of days spent at the destination, meaning that longer stays allow individuals to spread these fixed costs over a longer period. In other words, a tourist will be prepared to make a long journey if s/he stays at the destination for at least the minimum number of days which will compensate for the effort made on the journey and allows individuals to spread the fixed costs associated with the long journey over a sufficiently long period. In this line, it is important to stress that the duration of stay is a relevant component of resort demand as it represents the "quantity of holiday" bought by the tourist (Mak & Moncur, 1979) and, thus, resort demand equals total visitors times length of stay (Silberman, 1985). In this line, Alegre & Pou (2003) point out that, assuming constant expenditures per person per day, the income received at a destination depends mainly on the number of tourists and the number of days they spend there, which allows public bodies to define strategies in order to increase aggregated expenditures: attracting a greater number of new tourists with the same constant level of per-day expenditures or

promoting longer stays. Therefore, to develop this last strategy, a destination could design promotions for distant customers seeking variety as they are more likely to stay longer.

Among the limitations of this study are the following: i) the field of study is Spain. It would be useful if the results were reinforced by applications on other geographical areas in order to be able to generalize the conclusions. ii) the lack of available information on certain variables, such as psychological distance. Psychology and Geography of Behavior show the existence of discrepancies between perceived -or subjective- distance and real –objective or geographical- distance. Ewing (1980) argues the incidence of factors such as the familiarity or monotony of a route. Baxter & Ewing (1981) propose the "perceptual barrier effect", by which a distance is perceived to increase due to a perceived rather than a real barrier (e.g. a mountain pass). Moreover, with the lack of "perceptual barriers", tourists perceive destinations closer than they physically are (Mayo & Jarvis, 1986). Finally, Baxter & Ewing (1979) propose the so called "intervening opportunities effect", which considers that the flow of people between two destinations *a* and *b* with similar characteristics and equidistant from an origin *o* is influenced by intermediary destinations. Thus, a destination *c* situated between *o* and *a* causes a greater reduction to flows between *o* and *a* than between *o* and *b*, independently of the fact that *c* competes indistinctly with *a* and *b*. In other words, these intermediary opportunities act as "distance amplifiers" between two destinations. The lack of information in this study on the perceptions of individuals prevents the author from using subjective measurements of distance. iii) Finally, a specific destination is not considered, rather all of the destinations chosen by Spanish tourists. This could impede knowledge of the impact of the characteristic factors of a particular

destination. However, this way of working allows the analyst to find the influence of *variety-seeking* and *inertial behaviors* on distance in a general manner.

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TABLE 1.
Moderating Effect of the *Variety-seeking behavior* and *Repeat behavior* on distance (Km)
(Standard error in brackets)

Independent Variables	Equation 1		Equation 2		Equation 3	
	β	SD(β)	β	SD(β)	β	SD(β)
Distance (Km)	-0.340a	0.301a				
	(0.050)	(0.046)				
VSB x Distance (Km)			-0.248a	0.296a		
			(0.061)	(0.064)		
IB x Distance (Km)					-0.462a	0.282a
					(0.084)	(0.062)
Control variable "Prices"	-0.127	0.010	-0.136	0.014	-0.123	0.219
	(0.085)	(0.027)	(0.083)	(0.064)	(0.085)	(0.221)
$\phi(\beta/SD(\beta))$	0.870		0.798		0.949	

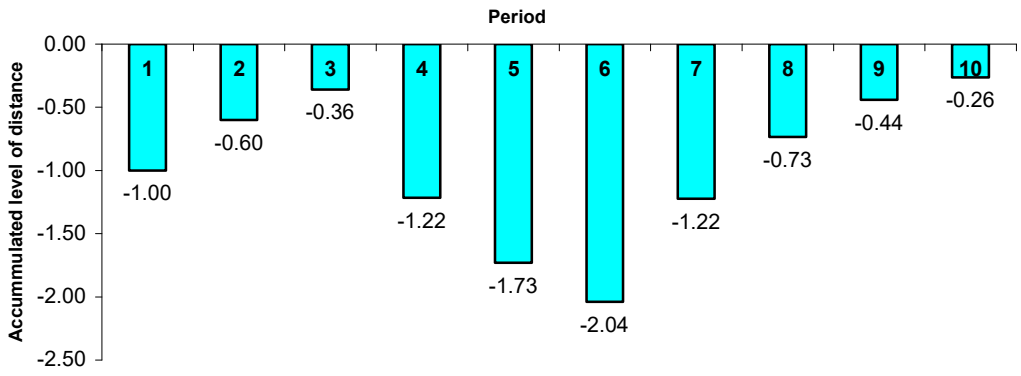
a=prob<0,1%; b=prob<1%; c=prob<5%.

TABLE 2.
Moderating Effect of the *Variety-seeking behavior* and *Repeat behavior* on distance (Time)
(Standard error in brackets)

Independent Variables	Equation 1		Equation 2		Equation 3	
	β	SD(β)	β	SD(β)	β	SD(β)
Distance (Time)	-0.452a	0.599a				
	(0.071)	(0.099)				
VSB x Distance (Time)			-0.296a	0.632a		
			(0.095)	(0.131)		
IB x Distance (Time)					-0.649a	0.529a
					(0.109)	(0.147)
Control variable "Prices"	-0.104	0.222	-0.137	0.321	-0.127	0.247
	(0.099)	(0.356)	(0.096)	(0.226)	(0.090)	(0.165)
$\phi(\beta/SD(\beta))$	0.774		0.680		0.890	

a=prob<0,1%; b=prob<1%; c=prob<5%.

Figure 1. Utility from visits to a faraway destination



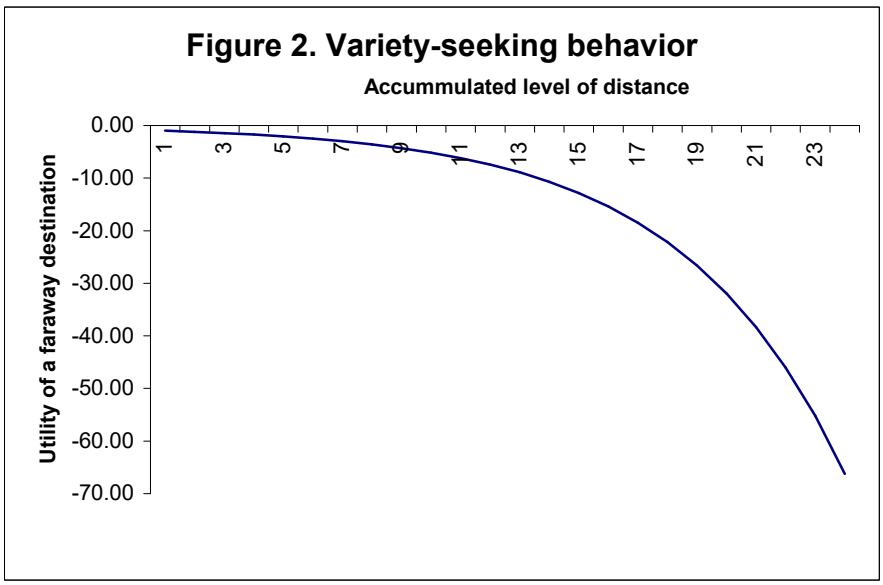


Figure 2. Variety-seeking behavior
Accummulated level of distance
Utility of a faraway destination
0.00
-10.00
-20.00
-30.00
-40.00
-50.00
-60.00
-70.00
1
3
5
7
9
11
13
15
17
19
21
23

Appendix

The provinces chosen by the people in the sample are: Alicante, Ávila, Baleares, Barcelona, Burgos, Cádiz, Castellón de la Plana, Ciudad Real, Cuenca, Girona, Granada, Huelva, Jaén, Lleida, Lugo, Madrid Málaga, Murcia, Asturias, Pontevedra, Salamanca, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Cantabria, Sevilla, Tarragona and Valencia.