RELEVANCE TREE

A relevance tree allows you to map out your initial ideas on a topic, in this case 'demand for transport', and think through various sub-topics in order to help you identify a specific area to research. Here, TWO key factors are suggested as affecting 'demand for transport': 'the individual's ability to pay' and the 'need to travel'. Although a number of ideas are considered in response to the overall topic of 'demand for transport', the sub-topic of 'work journeys' as a branch from 'need to travel' appears to offer the best focus for a research project (this is placed in a circle). Thinking through a relevance tree, and perhaps adding notes regarding possible sources of information for each topic, can help you see whether your topic is too broad or too narrow to work as a dissertation project.
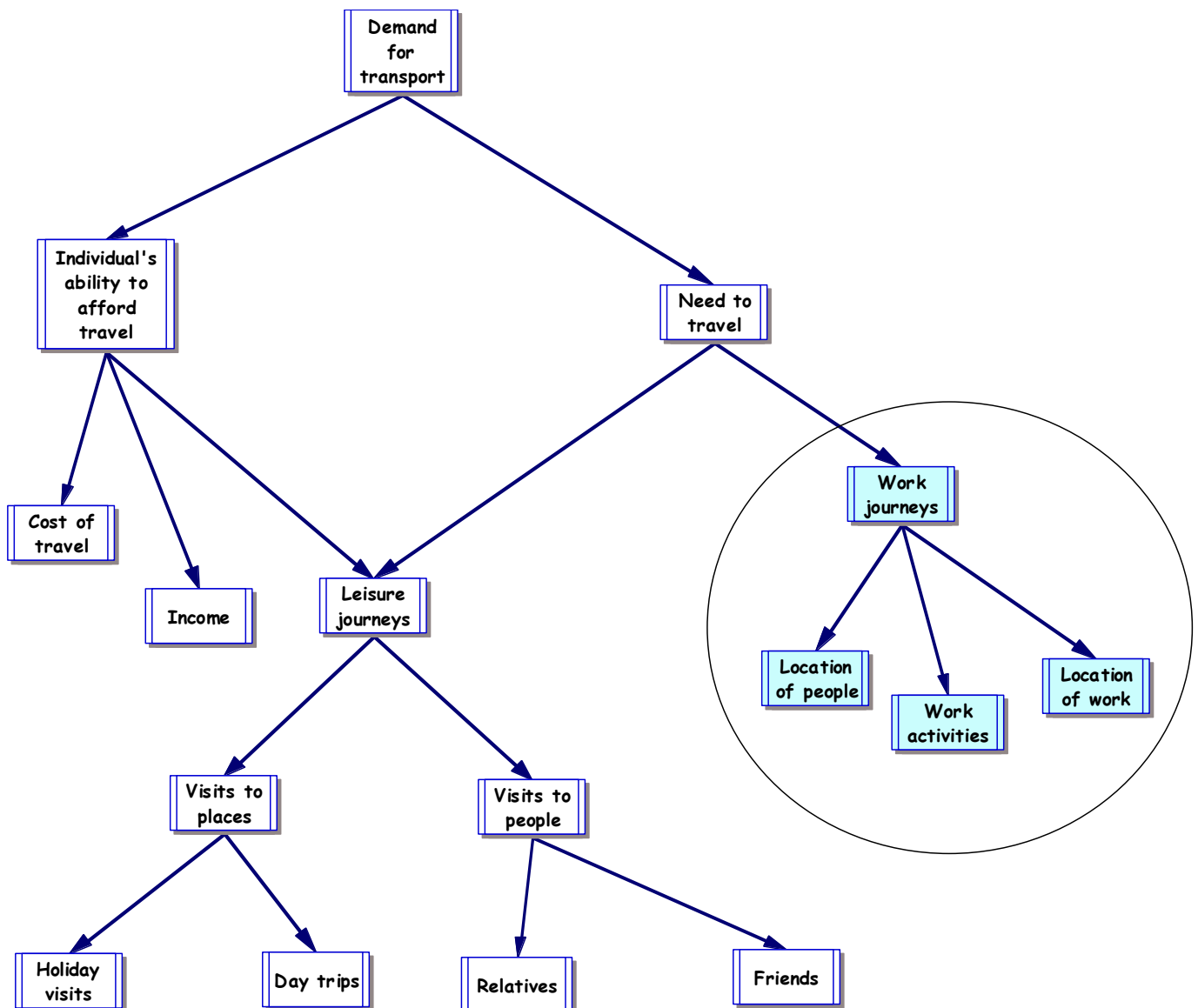

Figure 2.2 from Sharpe, J. and Howard, K. (1996) The Management of a Student Research Project. Second Edition. Aldershot: Gover. p.34