

The Expenditure Behaviour During the Trip and The Impact of the Intangible and Tangible Factors: The Case of the City of Porto

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Abstract

In order to evaluate the expenditure of tourists during their trip and the impact of intangible and tangible factors, we used a survey performed to the national and international tourists and applied a factorial analysis and a Tobit regression. In addition to the variables that are usually used to explain the tourist expenses, we innovate by including the perception of the socially responsible city as one of the intangible traits of consumer. One of the main findings was that the tourism expenditure is positively explained by socio-demographics characteristics (age, marital status, schooling, work conditions and nationality), experiences on a trip, the perception of a socially responsible city, the importance of the heritage wealth, visiting the city in general and the intention to return. This kind of information will allow a better segmentation of tourists and an improved adaptation of the tourist product. This study do not only describe the indicators that contribute to the economic impact of the tourism but also proposes the strategy in associating the city of Porto with a socially responsible brand to support for the equilibrium between profitability and sustainability in the sector.

Keywords: Tourism; tourist expenditure; tangible and intangible factors, socially responsible.

Introduction

Understanding tourist expenditure is imperative because “tourism is an expenditure-driven economic activity” and “the consumption of tourism is at the centre of the economic measurement of tourism and the foundation of the economic impacts of tourism” (Mihalic, 2002, p. 88). The tourism activities have not only become an economic phenomenon (Darbellay and Stock, 2012; Tisdell, 2001) but also a social one (Darbellay and Stock, 2012). Taking full conscience of the potential of tourism to the region, many studies have been designed under this area both at the macro and micro levels.

Nowadays, Portugal is one of the developed countries where the economy depends more on tourism. According to the World Tourism Organization (2018), among the 28 countries of the European Union, the highest direct contribution of tourism is in Spain, estimated at 11% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), in Portugal, about 9%, followed by France (7%) and Italy (6%). The tourism sector is playing a key role in the recovery of the economy and contributes to job creation and to the health of the trade balance with foreign countries.

The impact on tourism was reflected not only in quantitative terms, but also through the international recognition that came after the election of Porto as the best destination in the world and the Best European Destination award in 2017, by the World Travel Awards. Other sources related to cities and institutions have contributed to the reputation of tourist destinations, and this also happened to the city of Porto, which was elected, for the third time, the best European destination (2012, 2014 and 2017).

In Portugal, and in the specific case of the city of Porto, the tourism sector has grown in recent years and will continue to generate a series of opportunities and challenges. One of the challenges is to maintain or, if possible, achieve a sustainable growth in tourist demand. In this context, we observe that the demand for tourism is influenced not only by economic and social factors, but also by psychological factors (Ryan, 2003). Wang and Davison (2010) highlight the scarce use of psychographic variables as determinants of tourist expenditure and cannot be ignored (Wang et al.; 2006; Lehto, O'Leary and Morrison, 2002). Official datasets rarely survey psychological characteristics of the consumer directly, and this can be one of the reasons for such limited use (Brida and Scuderi, 2013). This limitation motivates us to insert in the explanation of the tourist expenditure measures intangibles as experiences on a trip and the perception of social responsibility of the city.

In this study the independent variables in empirical modelling of tourist expenditure include the sociodemographic characteristics of the tourist, the tangible - as heritage/monuments/museums and visiting the city in general - and intangible factors - experiences on a trip and the perceptions of social responsibility of the city - and the satisfaction proxy evaluated by the intention to repeat the tourist destination. Our innovation in this article has to do with the component regarding the role of the perception of social responsibility of the city of Porto and its impact in the expenditure. Furthermore, it is the first time that tourists' expenses in the city of Porto are studied with this set of variables.

This paper is organized as follows: first it is presented the literature review, followed by the methodology developed and the results obtained. Finally, we discuss the implications of the results and the limitations of this work.

Literature Review

Many countries and organisations have chosen to define tourism as the motor of their economy. In fact, part of the increase in income of the given destination is due to tourist's decisions of spending part of their earnings, obtained in their place of origin, in the destination. For this reason, tourist product consumption has been widely studied in recent years (Pulido-Fernández et al., 2017).

The information about the variables that influence the different levels of the tourists' expenditure (Craggs and Schofield, 2009), the socio-demographic characteristics (Kim and Morrison, 2005) and the intention to return have become an important management tool for local tourism. The articles of Wang and Davidson (2010) and Brida and Scuderi, (2013) described, in great detail, that several authors have been studying the tourist expenses and the articles differ by sample sizes and modelling methods, the dependent variables used (as for example, expenditure per person and per day, total travel expenditure, total party expenditure, party expenditure per day, pre-paid expenditure in the origin country, and expenditure in the destination, and so on) and independent variables included in the models (e.g. economic, sociodemographic, trip-related destination-related and psychological variables).

In this paper, we consider some sociodemographic characteristics of the tourists and we observe that in the literature review the expenditure is influenced by these variables, for instance gender, age, marital status, education level, occupation, place of residence, nationality, ethnic background, size and composition of the household (Wang and Davidson, 2010; Brida and Scuderi, 2013). However, as Wang and Davidson (2010) have pointed out, we did not observe a consensus in the effect, for instance in age (e.g. Leones et al., 1998; Agarwal and Yochum, 1999; Chhabra, Sills and Rea, 2002; Lee, 2001; Downward and Lumsdon, 2000; Jang et al., 2004; Wang et al., 2006; Henthorne, 2000,

Thrane, 2002, Wang et al., 2006; Mehmetoglu, 2007; Thrane and Farstad, 2011, 2012) or in gender (e.g. Agarwal and Yochum, 2000; Henthorne, 2000; Jang et al., 2004; Thrane, 2002) or in income (e.g. Agarwal and Yochum, 1999; Downward and Lumsdon, 2000; Leones et al., 1998 and Lehto et al. 2004; Jurdana and Frleta, 2017).

Lately the social theory has been widely applied to the tourism area and it shows that social expectations may play a role in how corporations and the society perceive their environmental obligations and responsibilities. These environmental obligations will subsequently have an impact in the way tourists see and feel the city (Lee et al., 2018). Interest in social responsibility in the tourism sector is recent.

One of the most recognized and recently implemented strategies, in this sector, is the ongoing application of social responsibility practices (Fieseler et al., 2010) not only by corporate but also by municipalities. The social responsibility practices can be defined as an organisation's commitment to a behaviour that leads to both economic development and society's welfare (WBCSD, 1999). It has already been confirmed that it is a differentiation factor in this sector (Baron, 2008).

In the specific case of the city of Porto, since 2004 a public corporation called Porto Vivo – SRU (Society for Urban Rehabilitation), has been fostering the rehabilitation of the Historic Centre and prioritizing private investment above the public actions (Santos et al., 2017). The Historic Centre was classified as Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO, in 1996, and it was only from 2004 onwards that through Porto Vivo it was assumed the importance of developing durable and strategic projects while also safeguarding the built heritage; promoting contemporary comfort conditions in buildings built many centuries ago; respecting the environment, both locally and globally; caring for people, their identity, their culture, their ways of life and their well-being; and regulating functions in order to have a suitable mix of activities (Santos et al., 2017).

The socio-cultural, economic and environmental costs brought by the exponential growth of tourism have elevated the debate on sustainability, especially in urban destinations (Cetin et al., 2017). Additionally, social responsibility has become a strong and irreversible part of corporate actions. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs and projects can create significant benefits in terms of reputation and returns, besides that CSR can also contribute towards the strengthening of valuable partnerships (Filho et al., 2010). Together, public entities and companies can create an image of a socially responsible city and transmit that image to the tourist. In this context, if the city presents a socially responsible brand image this is a result of a long-term public policy and by the behaviour of the various stakeholders, namely tour operators, customers, employees, suppliers, nongovernmental organizations, government and consumers (Ayuso, 2006, Cheyne and Barnett, 2001). In the context of city of Porto, we observed that the tourists separated the dimensions of perceptions of CSR in term of customer, environment and community domains (Borges et al., 2018).

In this article, we intend to evaluate the impact that the tourist's perception of a socially responsible city together with sociodemographic variables, relevant factors during the trip and the intention to return, have on tourism expenditure. In the next section it is presented the methodology used to test those hypotheses and the results obtained.

Methodology

Questionnaire

The questionnaires were administered by junior researchers to national and international tourists (from 15 years old onwards) in the main tourists' points of the city of Porto during the month of October 2017. Before starting the interview, the interviewers presented themselves, described the purpose of the study and asked if the respondent was doing tourism in the city of Porto. If that was the case, that questionnaire continued until the end. A sample of tourists produced 958 usable questionnaires.

The questionnaire included the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents – gender, age, marital status, schooling (complete), work conditions and nationality. In the scope of the tourist visit, the respondents were asked about the amount per day in the city by type of expense (accommodation, meals, displacement, shopping and culture/leisure) and the level of importance on a five-point Likert

scale (1 - not important, 2 - slightly important, 3 - indifferent, 4 - very important, 5 - extremely important) in relation to 11 factors of their trip.

Data analysis

All the analyses were performed with STATA (version 14). We started with the statistical description of the study variables. The data related to the 11 statements about the trip were subjected to a principal components analysis with varimax rotation in order to identify the main dimensions. We also performed the pre tests Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) of sampling adequacy and Bartlett of sphericity to confirm the factorability of the factorial analysis.

The Tobit regression was applied to explore the determinants of the expenditures of the tourist taking into account the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondent, the perception of CSR in the city of Porto, the important factors on the trip and the intention to return. The dependent variable is censored, we only observed its values above zero and the Tobit regression proposed is more appropriate (Wooldridge, 2013).

Results and Discussion

Sample Description

From the collected sample of respondents, we obtained a gender equilibrium (49,4% are female and 50,6% male) with an average age of 41 where the minimum age was 15 years old and the maximum was 91 years old. As to the marital status, 47,6% were married, 42,1% single, 7,2% divorced and 3,1% widowed. Regarding qualifications, 14,2% of the respondents had elementary or secondary studies, 85,8% had a higher level (degree), a Master or a PhD. We observed that 62% were employed and 38% were not employed or were inactive in the labour market (retired or housewives or students). In relation to nationality, 50,6% had foreign nationality (non-Portuguese). Finally, in the planning to return to visit the city of Porto, 75,8% stated the intention to return, 19,9% were undecided and 4,3% indicated that they had no intention of returning. In terms of expenditures by day in Porto, we observed that the tourist spends on average 90 EUR in accommodation, 45 EUR in meals, 43 EUR in displacements, 55 on shopping, and 33 EUR in culture and leisure. The daily expenditure is around 128 EUR.

The Main Dimensions In Relation To the Trip

The respondents evaluated the level of importance on a five-point Likert scale of the 11 factors of their trip. We observe that the statements with a higher mean level of importance were those concerning the ES1 - visit to the city in general, with 4,58, ES2 - visiting the city heritage/monuments/museums, with 4,22, ES8 - meet new people, with 4,10, ES10 - Porto is an environmentally friendly city, with 4,03, and ES11 - Porto is a socially responsible city, with 4,08.

Table 1: Scale of importance in relation to the trip, descriptive analysis

	Variables	NIMP (%)	SIMP (%)	INDIF (%)	VIMP (%)	EIMP (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
ES1	Visit the city in general	1,1	0,2	5,0	27,4	66,3	4,58	0,70
ES2	Visiting the city heritage/monuments / museums	2,9	2,0	12,8	35,4	46,9	4,22	0,94
ES3	Enjoy the nightlife	26,8	11,0	22,8	16,8	22,6	2,97	1,50
ES4	Friends and family	40,1	6,3	15,2	16,1	22,2	2,74	1,63
ES5	Business trip	71,2	3,5	11,3	7,1	6,9	1,75	1,29
ES6	Relax/unwind	10,8	10,1	26,1	27,0	26,1	3,47	1,27
ES7	Shopping	18,1	14,4	25,5	25,5	16,6	3,08	1,33

ES8	Meet new people	4,9	4,5	12,0	32,8	45,8	4,10	1,09
ES9	Try something different	3,4	5,4	11,9	44,7	34,5	4,01	1,04
ES10	Porto is an environmentally friendly city	6,7	2,5	14,7	32,9	43,2	4,03	1,13
ES11	Porto is a socially responsible city	3,4	4,0	14,4	37,6	40,6	4,08	1,00

Notes: NIMP = not important; SIMP = slightly important; INDIF = indifferent; VIMP = very important; EIMP = extremely important.

The eleven statements were subjected to a principal components analysis with varimax rotation to identify the main dimensions. The data obtained show us that the factor analysis should be performed (KMO = 0,756). The statistical value of Bartlett's test ($\chi^2= 1034,085$) is significant ($p = 0,000$), and the correlations between variables are suitable to do a factor analysis. Table 2 summarizes the main results. Four distinct factors emerged that explain 61,540% of the total variance of the data. All items loaded highly on the factors, and no item loaded on more than one factor, supporting the independence of the dimensions. The criteria for the acceptance of the results were defined by the academic literature. The factors that resulted from the data analysis were: Factor 1 - Experiences on a trip (explained 28,400% of the variance); Factor 2 – Social Responsibility of city (19,924%); Factor 3 - Heritage and the city in general (13,216%).

Qu et al. (2011) evidenced that tourism place includes both tangible attributes and intangible characteristics. Through our results, we observe that the first two dimensions represent the importance that tourists consider in the destination of Porto and we can place them in the category of intangibles. The third dimension representing less relative relevance in relation to the others is the heritage and the city in general, which is a tangible asset.

Table 2: The dimensions of the factors important on the trip: factorial analysis

Variables	Loading*		
	Experiences on a trip	Social Responsibility of city	Heritage and the city in general
ES9 - Try something different	0,767		
ES8 - Meet new people	0,740		
ES10 - Porto is an environmentally friendly city		0,891	
ES11 - Porto is a socially responsible city		0,878	
ES2 - Visiting the city heritage/ monuments / museums			0,835
ES1 - Visit the city in general			0,800
% Variance	28,400	19,924	13,216

*Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Econometric Model – Dependent Variable: the expenditures of the tourist in the city of Porto

Through the analysis of table 3, we observe that gender is not a significant determinant of spending (Agarwal and Yochum, 2000; Henthorne, 2000; Jang et al., 2004; Brida and Scuderi, 2013). We also see that the age has a positive and significant impact on expenditures (similar result observe in Downward and Lumsdon, 2000; Jang et al., 2004; Mak et al., 1977; Wang et al., 2006). With the same tendency, the respondents married or divorced also spend more in the city, 81,21 EUR and 97,39 EUR, respectively, than the singles. A different result was showed by Mak et al. (1977), but less in Asgary et al. (1997) and Nicolau and Más (2005).

Within the context of education, the tourists without a high level of education have a tendency to spend less in relation to the tourists with a higher degree. In relation to the nationality, native tourists spend less than foreign tourists (46,34 EUR). The same result we get in the dimension of the important factors on the trip, in which our results showed that the tourists who associate the socially responsible city, spend more 46,79 EUR.

These results go into account with recent research that, as previously stated, show that in-destination tourism expenditure can be explained by trip characteristic variables, namely: (i) trip purpose, (ii) socio-demographics characteristics, (iii) trip characteristics, (iv) trip preferences, and recently, (v) corporate social actions in the city (Chang, 2013; García-Sánchez et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2015).

In relation to the dimension heritage and the city in general we also observe a positive impact in expenditures in the city. These results are also in line with the academic research on this area. According to Jokilehto (2008) the heritage of the city brings up the genuine traditions and/or living culture, which gives a sense of authenticity to the city that also contributes to the way the trip is seen and to the expenditures on the city. This is an important result as the public corporation, Porto Vivo, has been promoting activities to rehabilitate the Historic Centre which is being targeted by tourists. This finding suggests that, in the future, public and private organizations need to improve the promotion of the social responsibility practices implemented in the city of Porto for tourists. This result shows the need to have a better communication of the social responsibility practices implemented in the city. One strategy to keep Porto in the radar of tourist attraction is to associate the city with a socially responsible brand. It should be noted that brand associations can be categorized into ability and social responsibility associations. The social responsibility associations reflect the brand's commitment to activities related to societal issues or, in other words, their commitment to the enhancement of social wellbeing (He and Lai, 2014; Johnson et al., 2018).

In the intention to return, the tourist who intends to come back spends more 54,54 EUR than the tourist who said he would not return. The results thus provide an empirical support to prior scholarly findings, which suggest that a positive relationship exists between tourist's satisfaction (reflected in a higher intention to return) and the expenses on the city (Jurdana and Frleta, 2017; Rahman et al., 2018).

Table 3: the expenditures of the tourist in the city of Porto

	Coefficient	Std. Err.
Gender		
Male	-	-
Female	33,33	18,34
Age	32,76***	22,34
Marital status		
Single	-	-
Married	81,21***	23,69
Divorced	97,39**	43,79
Widow	-83,55	70,69
Schooling (complete)		
With higher level	-	-
Without level	-44,46*	43,16
Work Conditions		
Employed	-	-
Not Employed	-20,77**	17,15
Nationality		
Other	-	-
Portuguese	-46,34***	25,54
Experiences on a trip	41,01***	16,25

Social Responsibility of city	46,79***	31,22
Heritage and the city in general	35,53***	19,81
Intention to return		
No	-	-
Yes	54,54***	21,49
Do not know	27,15	20,77
Constant	32,71***	10,27

*Notes: Significant at: * $p < 0.10$ level ; ** $p < 0.05$ level; *** $p < 0.01$.*

Conclusions and Future Research

Tourism is gaining an unprecedented importance in the world (Cetin et al., 2017). This study was designed with the aim of evaluating whether the tourists expenditures behavior during the trip are influenced by their sociodemographic characteristics, the relevant factors during the trip, the perception of social responsibility of the city and the intention to return.

Our results confirm that the expenditure on the city is explained by the sociodemographic characteristics (age, marital status, schooling, work condition and nationality). This information is relevant to all the stakeholders (public and private) in that it allows segmenting the profile of the tourist in the city.

About the main factors on the trip, we verify that tourists, when the factors are jointly evaluated, give more importance to the experiences on a trip and the perception of social responsibility of the city, than the heritage and visiting the city in general. In the experiences on a trip, they give more importance to try something different and meet new people. In the perception of social responsibility of the city, tourists consider that Porto is an environmentally friendly city and Porto is a socially responsible city. This result confirms the perception the tourist has of a socially responsible city and the recognition of the work is being made in the last years, by public and private companies, in order to make the city more sustainable and friendly to the environment. The heritage and the city in general were already expected not only for their wealth, but for the projection the destination has had on an international level with the awards and international events which took place in the city. And finally, in the scope of repeating the destination, we verify the positive influence in expenditures of the tourist in the city.

With these results, the goal will not only be to stimulate spending in the city, but also to associate these expenses with products, spaces of leisure and socially responsible culture. This kind of information will allow a better segmentation of the tourists and an improved adaptation of the tourist product. Creating more value for tourists can increase the competitiveness between destinations and ensure an increasing number of tourists. This article do not only describe the determinants that contribute to the expenditure in city of Porto but also recommends the strategy in associating the city of Porto with a socially responsible brand to support the equilibrium between profitability and sustainability in the sector.

Some limitations should be highlighted in the present study. We only made a quantitative approach, which should be complemented by a qualitative analysis, for example, to know the social responsibility practices tourists are aware. Other limitation is the main reasons that explain the tourists' visit to the city. We also do not know if it was the first choice as a destination and what are the main statements they associate to the city. These limitations could be considered in a future research.

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