

# invtur

conference

# 2021

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6-7 May

**Tourism and the Sustainable Development  
Goals: From Theory to Practice**

**Conference proceedings**

**Título/Title**

Proceedings of the INVTUR 2021 International Conference "Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: From Theory to Practice"

**Editores /Editors**

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**Imagem / Design**

David Loureiro

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**Editora / Publisher**

UA Editora

Universidade de Aveiro

Serviços de Biblioteca, Informação Documental e Museologia

**1ª Edição / 1st Edition**

Dezembro / December 2021

**ISBN**

978-972-789-724-7

**DOI**

<https://doi.org/10.48528/cxdg-bq28>

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## **Willingness to pay for tourism public goods: A Hedonic Price Model**

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**Keywords** | Willingness to pay, non-use value, tourism public goods, hedonic model, tourism public policy

**Objectives** | The application of the hedonic price model to private attributes in several markets is relatively common (Monty & Skidmore, 2003). However, this technique's use to evaluate willingness to pay for (pure) public goods is rather limited, particularly in the tourism market. In fact, most of the beaches are important tourism resources and considered public goods. In other words, they are non-rivalry in consumption, specifically “the cost of additional users enjoying public attributes is zero”. And also non-excludability in access, i.e., “after public attributes have been provided, it is not possible to exclude those users who have not purchased the product from enjoying/suffering them” (Rigall-I-Torrent & Fluvià, 2011, p.244). In this context, the growing number of beaches' visitors requires the engagement of governments to develop public policies capable of mitigating the adverse effects generated on these tourism resources, preserving them from the human/tourists activities (Rigall-I-Torrente & Fluvià, 2011; Alves, Rigall-I-Torrent, Ballester, Benavente, & Ferreira, 2015). In this sense, this research explores the use of hedonic price model assessing willingness to pay of visitors and evaluating the non-use value of Albufeira do Azibo, riverside beach, located in the Northeast of Portugal.

**Methodology** | Given the importance of applying a hedonic price model in the context of assessing the willingness to pay of Albufeira do Azibo beaches visitors', the methodology proposed for this study is based on a multi-method plan. Given that, so far, there are a small number of studies analyzing the use of hedonic price model in the assessment of willingness to pay for (pure) public goods, this investigation is appropriate to provide to the municipality of Macedo de Cavaleiros (responsible for managing the beaches of Albufeira do Azibo) a valuable framework for the development of efficient public policies in management and preservation of this public good. Firstly, and through a survey by questionnaire, it will be assessed the willingness to pay of beaches' visitors of Albufeira do Azibo (in 2019 and during the high season, the number of visitors rounds the 200 thousand). The questionnaire will be applied during the high season of tourism activity, in 2020. Later, the tourism department of Macedo de Cavaleiros's municipality will be asked, through

interviews, together with tourism officials, to evaluate the results of the questionnaires to (re) formulate public policies.

**Main Results and Contributions** | The main results of this research will help define public policies that promote efficient management of public goods and sustainable tourism development. Likewise, it is intended to highlight the use of the hedonic price model to assess the value that visitors attribute, particularly to beaches' characteristics of Albufeira do Azibo, and, in general, to features of the remaining beaches as public goods. This model aims to minimize the existing problems in assessing the value to pay for the use of (pure) public goods, enabling local public actors to define an efficient value. "The scientific evaluation of the non-use value of beaches tourism resources is beneficial to the sustainable development and preservation of beaches" (Liu, Liu, Zhanga, Wed, & Yu, 2019, p.63).

**Limitations** | The main limitation of this investigation, similar to the few existing studies (Liu, et al., 2019), concerns the hypothetical market bias. The amount payable by visitors to Albufeira do Azibo may be more related to symbolic reasons, thus misrepresenting the genuine willingness to pay. Other limitations are the fact that there are few studies and the difficulty in generalizing the results since the research only focuses on the beaches of Albufeira do Azibo.

**Conclusions** | This research seeks to focus on a theme that is still underdeveloped in the context of public tourism policies, assessing the willingness to pay for the use of pure public goods. In the specific case of the Municipality of Macedo de Cavaleiros, the municipal intervention must be guided by a strict and efficient public tourism policy and that allows the efficient management of the beaches of Albufeira do Azibo and the use of this public good.

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