

## Tourists' Motivation toward Visiting a World Heritage Site: The Case of Guimarães

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### Abstract:

Within the major role, the tourism industry is taking in sustaining and enhancing growth in economies all around the world, the cultural segment deserves a particular look as, in most cases, it is playing a leading role. This has to do with the idea of tourists' visits as a memorable happening and an authentic experience and relates to the psychological dimension of tourist demand. This study investigated the motivation behind the choice of a cultural/heritage destination, and particularly a World Heritage Site (WHS). Taking the case of Guimarães, the study inquired on the tourists' motivations and perceived attributes of the city to conclude on the level of satisfaction tourists get from their visits and the destination attributes. The methodology used in this research had a quantitative nature, based on a self-administered survey applied to 325 tourists who visited Guimarães during 2015. In that analytical approach, tourists were organised according to their main visit motivation, i.e., if they were mainly motivated by visiting a World Heritage Site or by other reasons. An interesting result was that despite WHS visitors reporting higher satisfaction levels, the other type of visitors want to return in greater numbers. The study concluded that the destination is performing well, but is suffering from not having a consolidated image in the market. Looking at these and other results obtained, several recommendations were made to increase tourists' satisfaction vis-à-vis the

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destination, by mainly addressing the strategy to be used in advertising the set of products and services it can provide to visitors.

**Keywords:** Heritage Tourism; Cultural Tourism; Destination Attributes; Tourists' Satisfaction; Guimarães

**Resumo:**

Considerando o papel crescente que a indústria do turismo tem vindo a desempenhar no crescimento das economias em todo o mundo, o segmento cultural merece uma atenção especial. Esta importância deriva da ideia de os turistas visitarem e vivenciarem acontecimentos memoráveis e experiências autênticas, e está relacionada com a dimensão psicológica da procura turística. Este estudo investigou a motivação da escolha de um destino cultural/patrimonial e particularmente um local classificado como Património Mundial (WHS). Tomando o caso de Guimarães, o estudo analisou as motivações dos turistas e os atributos percebidos da cidade para concluir sobre o nível de satisfação dos turistas relativamente à visita e aos atributos do destino. A metodologia utilizada neste estudo foi de carácter quantitativo, com base num questionário autoadministrado aplicado a 325 turistas que visitaram Guimarães durante o ano de 2015. Na abordagem analítica realizada, os turistas foram organizados em dois grupos, de acordo com a motivação da visita principal, ou seja, se escolheram Guimarães por se tratar de um local classificado como Património Mundial (um grupo) ou por outras razões (outro grupo). Um resultado interessante foi que, apesar de o grupo que escolheu Guimarães por ser Património Mundial reportar maiores níveis de satisfação, o outro grupo de visitantes deseja retornar em maior número. O estudo concluiu que o destino está a desenvolver-se bem, mas ressentem-se de não ter uma imagem consolidada no mercado. Analisando estes e outros resultados obtidos, várias recomendações foram feitas para aumentar a satisfação dos turistas em relação ao destino, principalmente ao nível da estratégia a ser utilizada na publicidade relativa aos produtos e serviços que pode oferecer aos visitantes.

**Palavras-chave:** Turismo Patrimonial; Turismo Cultural; Características do Destino; Satisfação dos Turistas; Guimarães

**Resumen:**

Considerando el creciente papel que la industria del turismo ha desempeñado en el crecimiento de las economías de todo el mundo, el segmento cultural merece una especial atención. Esta importancia se deriva de la idea de que los turistas visiten y vivan acontecimientos memorables y experiencias auténticas, relacionada con la dimensión psicológica de la búsqueda turística. En este estudio se investigó la motivación de la selección de un destino cultural/patrimonial, y particularmente de un lugar clasificado como Patrimonio Mundial (WHS). En este trabajo se ha seleccionado el caso de Guimarães. En este estudio se analizaron las motivaciones de los turistas y los atributos percibidos de la ciudad, con el fin de obtener las conclusiones sobre el nivel de satisfacción de los turistas en relación a la visita y a los atributos del destino. La metodología utilizada en este estudio fue de carácter cuantitativo, en base a un cuestionario auto-administrado aplicado a 325 turistas que visitaron Guimarães durante el año 2015. En el abordaje analítico, los turistas se dividieron en dos grupos, de acuerdo con las motivaciones principales de la visita, es decir, si estos escogieron Guimarães por tratarse de un lugar clasificado como Patrimonio Mundial (un grupo) o bien si estos escogieron la ciudad por otras razones (otro grupo). Como resultado destacado a resaltar en este estudio se obtiene que, a pesar de que el grupo que escogió Guimarães por ser Patrimonio Mundial reporta mayores niveles de satisfacción, el otro grupo de visitantes manifiesta mayor interés por regresar. El estudio concluye que, el destino evoluciona de forma adecuada, sin embargo no tiene una imagen consolidada en el mercado. Analizando estos y otros resultados obtenidos, se recogieron en la investigación varias recomendaciones, con el fin de aumentar la satisfacción de los turistas en relación al destino, principalmente orientados a la estrategia que debe ser utilizada en el ámbito de la publicidad, relativa a productos y servicios que se pueden ofrecer a los visitantes.

**Palabras Clave:** Turismo Patrimonial; Turismo Cultural; Características del Destino; Satisfacción de los Turistas; Guimarães

**1. Introduction**

Heritage tourism has been pointed out as one of the most ancient forms of tourism (Timothy, 2011). Nowadays, motivations to visit a destination are very diverse and can range from the desire to get an educational experience from a cultural destination to just use some free time.

Nevertheless, there is still some controversy around the concepts of heritage and cultural tourism in terms of separating one from the other. This article refers to the debate on the issue later in the review of the literature. In this chapter, it makes use of both concepts; as the authors conceive it, heritage tourism is a segment of cultural tourism.

The understanding of tourists' perceptions of a heritage destination and the motivation behind choosing to visit such a site are essential keys to developing successful marketing strategies to promote and position the destination. This chapter addresses the motivations of tourists towards visiting Guimarães and the perceived attributes of the city. The issue of visitors' general satisfaction was also inquired in the survey of 325 visitors taken during 2015.

The number of studies conducted in Portugal on the aforementioned issues is still quite scarce, and those focusing on heritage tourism destinations are even scarcer (Remoaldo *et al.*, 2014). This empirical investigation adds knowledge on the issue by contrasting the motivation of cultural/heritage tourists with the ones who don't elect world heritage sites as a primary destination but have contact with them when they do their touring through a set of neighbour cities or choose to visit them with other attributes of the destination as main motivations.

From that, the questioning of the visitors' satisfaction makes sense to be raised: do the tourists who are heritage motivated tend to express a satisfaction level greater towards a heritage destination than the other visitors? Do those visitors often tend to return to the destination? Is there a case for committing the promotion strategy more toward the capture of a larger segment of those visitors or is it more rewarding investing in attracting other segments of tourists, even if heritage or culture comes as only a second or third motive?

Inquiring on the strategy of the destination does not assume that there is a case for changing the destination image, and surely not in the case of Guimarães. In this regard, the authors believe that the most sustainable strategy to be followed by any tourism destination has to rely on its endogenous resources and singularity. Just in this way can it differentiate from the competitors and offer visitors an authentic experience.

In the remaining part, this chapter is organised in four sections along with final conclusions and recommendations. The first section briefly reviews the criteria taken into account by UNESCO to classify Guimarães as a World Heritage Site (WHS). A literature review on the concept of cultural destination and on tourists' motivations towards visiting those sites is presented in the second section. The issue of tourists' satisfaction is addressed as well in that section. In the third section, the analytical methodology used is presented as well as a summary description of the city that is the object of analysis. The 4th section is devoted to the results of

the empirical study conducted and its discussion. The last section presents the study conclusions and policy recommendations.

## **2. Guimarães – A UNESCO World Heritage Site**

The convention concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage was signed in Paris in November, 1972 (UNESCO, 1972). It is an international agreement through which nations join together to conserve a collection of the world's timeless treasures (Drost, 1996; Pedersen, 2002). Its goal was to encourage identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world that was considered to be of outstanding value to humanity (Arezki *et al.*, 2009). Many outstanding monuments make part of the list certified by UNESCO and each of them can be seen as a unique contribution to the human history (Li *et al.*, 2008).

The certification by UNESCO is important as it states their universal recognition and remembers that sites can be important sources of tourism affluence. This certification makes more visible the classified site (it increases its international visibility) and acts as a significant incentive to turn it more attractive, that is, enhances the investment in its preservation (Drost, 1996; Arezki *et al.*, 2009). To acquire the designation of a World Heritage Site is quite desired and is seen as a mean of attracting tourists (Li *et al.*, 2008; Landorf, 2009).

At present, Portugal has 15 sites that were certified by UNESCO. This corresponds to 1.5% of the whole patrimony certified by UNESCO up to the beginning of 2016. 14 of them have a cultural nature (UNESCO, 2016) and the Historic Centre of Guimarães (Northwest of Portugal) is one of them and had its certification in December, 2001 (Figures 1 and 2).



**Figure 1. View of the Historic Centre of Guimarães**

Source: Photo provided by Guimarães Turismo from Municipality Council at 07/11/2016



**Figure 2. View of the statue of the first King of Portugal and of the Paços do Duque de Bragança**

Source: Photo provided by Guimarães Turismo from Municipality Council at 07/11/2016

Guimarães is a place of deep symbolic meaning and reveals a strong cultural identity. Its main attributes are the historical and cultural elements, especially those located in its historic city centre. The city centre has only 121 hectares with 5.3% of the total area of the town (Atlante, 2005).

Several criteria were taken into account in the classification by UNESCO of the historic centre of Guimarães as a World Heritage Site. Among them, UNESCO pointed out the close relationship of the city to the birth of Portugal as an independent state in the 12th century and to the emergence of Portuguese as an autonomous language. It noted that the high level of

preservation of the buildings in the old city (particularly from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century) is an authentic example of the evolution of a medieval settlement into a modern town. Finally, it valued its rich building typology, which exemplifies the development of Portuguese architecture from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some specialised building techniques developed there in the Middle Ages were transmitted to the Portuguese colonies in Africa and the New World, becoming their typical features (Comissão Nacional da UNESCO, 2014; UNESCO, 2016).

The certification of the historical centre of Guimarães was a key factor behind the emergence of the city as a tourism destination, that is, a destination endowed with a cultural/heritage nature. In this regard, it is useful to underline that cultural tourism is, no doubt, the main motivation to choose visiting Guimarães. As proposed by Pedersen (2002), this tourism segment is associated with visiting historical, artistic and scientific or heritage attractions.

### **3. Cultural and Heritage tourism and Visiting Motivations**

#### **3.1 Cultural and heritage tourism**

Even though heritage tourism has been done over many centuries, there is not yet a complete consensus on its definition. It is difficult to separate heritage tourism from cultural tourism. Frequently, these two terms have been used as two separate ones even if related, but somehow they represent, as stated by Timothy (2011) an overlapping phenomena. The authors share this view as the overlapping area of the two concepts is greater than the divergent one.

Concerning cultural tourism, Besculides *et al.* (2002) considered it in a broader sense, focusing on visiting historical or archaeological sites, involvement in community festivals, watching traditional dances and ceremonies, or merely shopping for handcrafted art. More recently, Timothy (2011), following what researchers have found during the last decades, stated that cultural tourism is a more modern concept of tourism than heritage tourism. It refers to people that visit and participate in living cultures, including several contemporary elements of modern culture such as contemporary art or music. Remoaldo *et al.* (2014) highlighted that cultural tourism is a segment of the tourism industry that places special emphasis on heritage and cultural attractions. Along with Secondi *et al.* (2011), these authors have called attention to this is one of the fastest tourism growing segments in the world.

Richards (1997) highlighted that it includes all movements of people that visit specific cultural attractions, like heritage sites, arts, drama and cultural manifestations, outside their usual place of residence. To Richards and Munsters (2010), cultural tourism is concerned with cultural

experiences. In recent years, the search for cultural experiences has become one of the main motivations to travel.

Some factors have contributed to the fast increase in cultural tourism, such as the new middle class with higher education levels and income (Richards, 1996). This came along with the changes that occurred over time in working conditions and in the expectations about holidays. Visitors became more demanding in their holiday and tended to include more cultural elements (Remoaldo *et al.*, 2014). In this regard, Ritchie and Hudson (2009) and Yankholmes and Akyeampong (2010) highlighted tourists' desires to experience other cultures in multiple forms and the need of getting authentic and memorable experiences.

As noted by OECD (2009), creative activities and intangible heritage must be also added to the concept of cultural tourism. Russo and Van der Borg (2002) underlined that the cultural experience has to be viewed as a holistic process.

Some authors tried to differentiate cultural from heritage tourism (e.g., Pedersen, 2002; Goh, 2010; Timothy, 2011). Following Pedersen (2002: 24), heritage tourism can be viewed as "(...) a broad category that embraces both eco-tourism and cultural tourism, with an emphasis on conserving natural and cultural heritage." It can be seen as "(...) a category or market segment that includes visits to historic sites, museums and art galleries, and exploring national and forest parks". Goh (2010) also seems to follow the same perspective, including in it visiting built, cultural and natural arenas such as national parks. For some researchers (e.g., Pedersen, 2002), this kind of tourism is worried with environmental issues and tends to favour minimal environmental impacts. But others that use the concept of cultural tourism (e.g., Secondi *et al.*, 2011) underlined that cultural tourism has highly encouraged the preservation of the environment and the historical and artistic heritage, following a developing path contradicting the one of mass tourism.

Even Timothy (2011: 5) agrees that the elements that can be highlighted in cultural tourism also have meaning in heritage tourism: "Casual observers or serious hobbyists 'consuming' living and built culture in rural or urban contexts and their own personal experiences, including education and cultural edification, are an important part of the heritage tourism experience."

Covering so many activities and territory attributes and keeping so much in common with other tourism segments, it is hard to define either cultural or heritage tourism. Can the motivations of the visitors help in the clarification of this issue or should one conclude that it is unlikely to come to consensual definitions of cultural and heritage tourism? One can, of course, do as Timothy (2011) and use the two concepts, indistinctly.



### 3.2 Motivations of visiting a World Heritage Site and profile of visitors

Why does someone visit a destination? A desire to enhance his/her own cultural knowledge or mainly for spending some free time?

Since the 1960s, the literature has been concerned with tourism motivation as it is fundamental to understanding tourist behaviour (Li *et al.*, 2015). Even so, it was in the 1970s that researchers began evaluating tourism motivations using factors associated with the individuals and their context, and with the supply turned available by the destinations. The so-called “push and pull” factors are one way of materializing those two essential dimensions behind the decision of making a tourist visit and choosing a destination. The first “push” is the one that takes the tourist to decide to travel and has to do with personal and/or social status of individuals. The second “pull” is an outside force that is embodied in the attributes of a particular destination, which exert an attraction (stronger or weaker) on the visitor, are decisive in his/her choice, and that acts through the perception that the potential visitor keeps of the destination (Dias, 2009; Mendes and Vareiro, 2013).

Crompton (1979) identified seven “push” factors and two “pull” factors. As pushing factors, he listed escape to the routine environment, exploring new environments, self-evaluation, relaxation, prestige, return to the origins, and strengthening of family ties and facilitation of social interaction. The pull factors are novelty and training/learning.

Today, this “push and pull” model is still generally accepted (e.g., Mohamed and Othman, 2012; Li *et al.*, 2015). It presupposes a distinction among the different factors that determine in each individual the need to leave his/her usual environment through the journey (push), and the attributes identified in the destinations that serve as an attractive force, encouraging individuals to do the trip (pull). So while the first ones are contexts/environments that predispose the individual to visit some destination and can explain the desire of satisfying the need felt, the second ones have to do with the destination and its attributes that induce the individual “to stay away from the recreation area” (Mohamed and Othman, 2012: 176).

Li *et al.* (2015), using what was called a sociologist perspective (Wang, 2000), highlighted that motivation must be faced in a broad context using global structures and social changes. Using this kind of approach, one can not only consider bio- or psychogenesis in the individual. Instead, it is mainly “(...) a matter of sociogenesis at the levels of society and culture” (Li *et al.*, 2015: 36). Due to that, any changes in the global environment can influence the needs and desires of individuals and determine their motivations.

This leads to modern life, which begins in the home environment and continues in different environments during the day and week. The fragmentation of daily life and its relationships is a feature of society. The relationships became more fragmented and can result in anomie (following the perspective of Durkheim in the 1970s) in people's lives. This can force a person to feel the need for escaping from his/her home environment and "(...) seek authenticity and self-enhancement at a destination, through the experience of the products, services and facilities provided there" (Dann, 1981, cited by Li *et al.*, 2015). So, one can state that nowadays, the search for releasing from stress and gaining a positive psychological effect is understandable. On the other side, the behaviour of tourists has become more and more sophisticated and it is difficult to identify their motivations.

When speaking about cultural and heritage tourism, what kind of motivations must one look at? When dealing with a World Heritage Site, are the motivations different?

Do the cities declared by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites have an outstanding tourist competitive advantage over the ones not benefiting from such a label? The answer is probably "yes", as destinations are greatly affected by their image (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Secondi *et al.*, 2011). World Heritage Sites have a status that can influence positively the choice of destinations by visitors and can be used in their marketing promotion.

Heritage (or cultural) visitors have been marked as "upscale", which means they tend to have high income earnings, high education level and are of mature age. This was noted first by Silberberg (1995) and later remembered by Kima *et al.* (2007). Upscale visitors tend to spend more time and money at the destination. Meanwhile, the group of cultural tourists has been increasingly diversifying and cultural tourism has tended to attract younger people. Also over time, women have tended to do cultural tourism more than men (Remoaldo *et al.*, 2014).

#### **4. Analytical Methodology and Destination Summary**

##### **4.1 Analytical methodology**

As previously mentioned, data used in the empirical research came from a survey during 2015 among the tourists that chose to visit Guimarães. It was conducted by the Tourism Services of the Municipality and the questionnaire was designed by that entity together with the study research team. The results presented in this chapter made use of data collected in 2015 that crossed all the tourism seasons and is the first exploration of that data.

Taking advantage of the survey data, the methodology used in this empirical study had a quantitative nature and as set forth, envisaged concluding on the tourists' motivations to visit the city, its perceived attributes and the level of satisfaction tourists got from visiting the destination.

The questionnaire included a total of 20 questions, most of them categorized and closed. Portuguese and English versions of the questionnaire were used. Before its use, a pre-test was conducted to adjust some of the questions, to use language better understood by eventual respondents and to check the time the survey needed to be fully answered. The locality chosen for applying the survey was the Tourism Office that exists in the city of Guimarães. In this way, the survey respondents had full support from the staff of the office to fill it in.

The survey included three main parts: one dealing with the visit to the destination and the motivation behind it and another where the tourist was invited to express his/her opinions towards the attributes of the city and the level of satisfaction he/her got from the visit. This included the intention to return or to recommend a visit to Guimarães to family and friends (identification of who chose the destination previously was also sought). In the third part, the visitors were inquired on their socio-demographic features (gender, age, education, local of residence, being or not married, level of income).

In the questions about the attributes of the destination, a 5 points Likert scale was used, where one meant total disagreement and five meant full agreement. In this research in relation to all the research issues, just a few of the questions from the survey were analysed.

In the analysis of data, descriptive statistics, chi-squares tests and *t* tests were used to check the statistical significance of the results.

#### **4.2 Summary presentation of the destination**

Looking to the city of Guimarães, what main tourism "pull" factors should be considered? Which of its features can attract visitors?

Guimarães is a medium sized city in the northwest part of Portugal. In recent years, northern Portugal has been one of the fastest growing territories among those that have developed a tourist vocation within the country. The National Strategic Plan for Tourism implemented by the Portuguese government between 2013 and 2015 (Ministério da Economia e Emprego, 2012) assumed the following strategic products: sun and sea (which represents the most traditional and mass product); religious and cultural tourism structured in routes or circuits; city short

breaks; meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) tourism; golf; nautical tourism; residential tourism; health tourism; gastronomy and wines (OECD, 2014). The diversity of products supplied has to do both with the set of resources available around the country and with the wish to follow the customers' demand.

In the last census (2011), the municipality had a total of 156 246 inhabitants (INE, 2015). In 2013, 1,707 lodging beds were available in the Guimarães municipality, accounting for 49.5% of the NUTS III Ave accommodation capacity (sub-region where Guimarães is located) and 3.5% of the total accommodation capacity of the NUTS II northern Portugal (INE, 2014). The city received 3.8% of the guests of the NUTS II northern region in 2013. Noticeable is that, in the same year, overnight stays in Guimarães municipality accounted for 3.4% of total overnight stays of the NUTS II north region and 59.0% of overnight stays in the hospitality facilities of NUTS III Ave. Having these figures in mind, one can conclude on the increasingly tourist role played by Guimarães in the regional context (considering the Ave sub-region).

Analysing the economic structure of the municipality, highlights the importance and historical impact of the textiles and clothing industries. Despite the difficulties these industries are facing, today they still make a major contribution to exports and local employment.

The historic centre of Guimarães was classified by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site on December 13, 2001. That certification came after a consistent effort made by local authorities on the restoration and preservation of the city historic centre and can be considered one of the most durable and productive investments ever made by the municipality. As mentioned before, the unique character of the city's architectural heritage is one of its most remarkable attributes.

With regard to tourism competitiveness factors, Guimarães was also one host of the 2004 European Football Championship, a 2012 European Capital of Culture and a 2013 European City of Sport. The local authorities are presently trying to obtain the title of European Green Capital 2020. So the city has been increasingly occupying an important role in the European context, if one considers the last 15 years. Accordingly, it has been pursuing a path in the tourism industry that has allowed crossing over from an internal (domestic) consolidated destination to an emergent international one.

New cultural and sports facilities were built in recent years, including the Multipurpose Hall (Pavilhão Multiusos) of Guimarães, the Sports City, the D. Afonso Henriques Stadium restoration, the Vila Flor Cultural Centre and the Platform of Arts and Creativity. These new modern facilities improved the capacity and quality for hosting events, whether of a cultural or sports nature.

After the opening in 2005 of the Multipurpose Guimarães, able to host major cultural, sports and congress events; the opening in 2006 of the Vila Flor Cultural Centre, endowed with two auditoriums, conference rooms and a large exhibition area; and the developing of projects specially prepared with the aim of hosting the 2012 European Culture Capital 2012 (with the Platform of Arts, the House of Memory, the Laboratory of Landscape and the urban regeneration of the Leather Quarter), the city reinforced its positioning in the cultural and urban national tourism context. These public investments got a return on the installed hotel capacity, which increased a lot between 2008 and 2013. Along its central geographical location, 50 km away from Oporto (less than that from the Oporto airport, the main entrance of visitors in the northern region of Portugal), this contributed to a more sustainable development of the tourism industry.

## 5. Empirical Results and Discussion

Data considered in the empirical approach were collected using a survey applied to tourists that visited Guimarães in 2015. The results presented in this section are a first exploration of those data.

A total of 325 filled questionnaires were collected through the end of 2015 and analysed. The number of questionnaires collected was more than the average used in several other similar investigations (e.g., Poria *et al.*, 2006; Yankholmes and Akyeampong, 2010). In the first research mentioned, 205 interviews were conducted at a historical site (Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, the Netherlands), and in the second one 218 questionnaires were applied at another heritage site (Danish-Osu, Ghana).

Table 1 refers to the socio-demographic profile of the survey respondents, which was organized to differentiate WHS visitors from visitors with other motivations. Based on that, the chi-square test was used to identify structural changes in the profile of the visitors.

As can be observed in Table 1, the profile of the visitors is structured around an equilibrium of males and females, aged from 26 to 65 years old (86.4%), well educated (those with an university degree plus those with a Masters or a PhD degree account for 63.9%), married (65.6%), and mostly foreigners (84.8%).

Looking to the issue of WHS visitors versus visitors endowed with other motivations, the most remarkable thing is the major differences detected in what regards education, as indicated by the chi-square test. The results show that WHS visitors are endowed with higher levels of

education than those with other motivations, which may relate to enhancing the cultural profile of the destination. Regarding this dimension, the results were in line with the findings in relevant literature (Silberberg, 1995; Kima *et al.*, 2007).

The high number of foreigners among the visitors can be viewed either as a surplus of the image obtained from the destination abroad in recent years or as a limitation of the implementation of the survey in the Guimarães Tourism Office, where Portuguese visitors may tend to go less than foreigners.

Before addressing tourists' perceived attributes of Guimarães, it is worth commenting about the motivations behind their choice of the destination. As shown in Table 2, taking in all the sample, the choice of Guimarães had to do first with being part of a tour around the cities of the region (Touring, visiting cities in the region), mentioned by 66.5% of the respondents. This tells a lot about the importance of leisure and curiosity on the others and their places has for the tourists of our time, as mentioned by Li *et al.* (2015).

	WHS visitors		Other motivations		Total		X <sup>2</sup>	Sig.
	N (204)	% (62.8)	N (121)	% (37.2)	N (325)	% (100)		
<i>Gender</i>							0.572	0.449
Male	94	46.1	61	50.4	155	47.7		
Female	110	53.9	60	49.6	170	52.3		
<i>Age</i>							0.413	0.938
0-25	13	6.4	9	7.5	22	6.8		
26-45	98	48.0	58	48.3	156	48.1		
46-65	80	39.2	44	36.7	124	38.3		
Over 65	13	6.4	9	7.5	22	6.8		
<i>Education</i>							13.421	0.004*
Basic	14	6.9	14	11.6	28	8.6		
Secondary	44	21.7	45	37.2	89	27.5		
University	86	42.4	36	29.8	122	37.7		
Masters/Doct.	59	29.1	26	21.5	85	26.2		
<i>Marital status</i>							0.755	0.860
Single	42	21.9	28	24.1	70	22.7		

Married	126	65.6	76	65.5	202	65.6		
Divorced/Widow	24	12.5	12	10.3	36	11.7		
<i>Residence</i>							0.189	0.664
Portugal	32	15.8	17	14.0	49	15.2		
Other countries	170	84.2	104	86.0	274	84.8		

**Table 1. Some respondents' characteristics**

Source: Authors' own survey data

\* indicated  $p < 0.01$ 

The second highest reason is being a World Heritage Site (considered in the first differentiation of visitors) and the third is its architectural heritage, closely related to the previous one. This underlines the importance of the cultural patrimony of the destination in the visitors' attraction. Not far below the third reason in terms of mention comes the idea of benefiting from the Cultural activities supplied by the city, together with the circumstance of having hosted the 2012 European Capital of Culture. All considered, the reasons speak to a cultural motivation behind the choice of the destination. In other words, the image of the city is mostly associated with its cultural characteristics and being so, the authors believe this is dealing with cultural tourism in a large amount. Of course, leisure and educational experiences do not have to be seen as opposed sides of a tourist visit. Profiting from both is probably the best achievement a visitor could attain if the destination is able to supply such a set of products.

Looking again at the segmentation between WHS motivated and other visitors, it is worthy to note the importance that seems to take the Cultural activities, having hosted the 2012 European Capital of Culture and the Architectural heritage for WHS visitors, as underlined by the chi-square statistics. In the opposite situation, as a reason behind the choice of the city by other visitors, Sport events, Business and Religious motivations have higher percentages, although the latter two reasons do not show statistically significant differences.

Of course, the motivation for someone to choose a destination has a close relationship with his/her preferences, which is the kind of tourism experience he/she wants to have and the perceived attributes of the site elected.

	WHS visitors		Other motivations		Total		X <sup>2</sup>	Sig.
	N (204)	% (62.8)	N (121)	% (37.2)	N	%		
Touring, visiting cities in the region	138	67.6	78	64.5	216	66.5	0.345	0.557
Business	12	5.9	12	9.9	24	7.4	1.808	0.179
Religious motivation	22	10.8	21	17.4	43	13.2	2.857	0.091
Gastronomy and wines	75	36.8	33	27.3	108	33.2	3.084	0.079
Conferences and Seminars	11	5.4	10	8.3	21	6.5	1.037	0.309
Cultural activities	97	47.5	32	26.4	129	39.7	14.130	0.000*
Sports events	7	3.4	15	12.4	22	6.8	9.673	0.002*
Visit to family and friends	39	19.1	20	16.5	59	18.2	0.343	0.558
European Capital of Culture 2012	82	40.2	27	22.3	109	33.5	10.896	0.001*
Architectural heritage	106	52.0	31	25.6	137	42.2	21.611	0.000*

**Table 2. Tourists' Motivations**

Source: Authors' own survey data

\* indicated  $p < 0.01$ 

In the second part of the questionnaire, tourists were asked to what extent they agree/disagree with the characteristics and attributes of the city based on a five-point Likert scale (1= total disagreement to 5= full agreement). Table 3 refers to the rank of perceived attributes of Guimarães accorded by both WHS motivated and other visitors.

Generally speaking, there is not a marked difference found in the way both groups ranked the perceived attributes of the destination. Even so, a few differences do exist with WHS visitors' data presenting lower averages, except for Good Rehabilitation of Historic Centre (linked to the origin of Portuguese Nationality), Good Signage and Tourist Information, and Good Transport Service. All other attributes seem to be better perceived by those who visit Guimarães not for a WHS main motivation, although the differences are not statistically significant. From these results, one can conclude that the destination is perceived as being able to offer much more than its historic centre.

Approaching the issue of satisfaction gained by the tourists, which is a main key for returning to the destination or recommending its visit to family and friends, data on this issue is shown in



Table 3, contrasting the expressed positions of visitors more committed to visiting World Heritage Sites and the remaining others.

	WHS visitors			Other motivations			t-value	Sig.
	Rank	Mean score	SD	Rank	Mean score	SD		
Good rehabilitation of Historic Centre	1	4.47	0.607	3	4.45	0.707	0.262	0.794
Cleaning of visited sites	2	4.45	0.751	1	4.55	0.695	-1.209	0.228
Relevant, artistic and monumental heritage	3	4.41	0.707	4	4.43	0.630	-0.238	0.812
Welcoming city	4	4.37	0.742	2	4.50	0.647	-1.572	0.117
Linked to the origin of Portuguese Nationality	5	4.22	0.867	7	4.18	0.885	0.336	0.737
Safe city	6	4.19	0.805	5	4.31	0.837	-1.298	0.196
Professionalism in service delivery	7	4.16	0.766	6	4.26	0.748	-1.148	0.252
Good value for money of services	8	4.05	0.795	8	4.11	0.762	-0.602	0.547
Quality and diversity of restaurants and coffee shops	9	3.99	0.778	10	4.06	0.830	-0.780	0.436
Good gastronomy	10	3.95	0.823	9	4.07	0.838	-1.292	0.198
Good signage and tourist information	11	3.94	0.937	11	3.92	0.945	-0.175	0.861
Quality and diversity of general shops	12	3.76	0.798	12	3.86	0.799	-1.088	0.278
Good dissemination of cultural events	13	3.72	0.810	16	3.73	0.866	-0.069	0.945
Quality hotels	14	3.70	0.725	13	3.82	0.827	-1.336	0.182
Good transport services	15	3.69	0.786	18	3.68	0.829	-0.145	0.885
Good shopping opportunities	16	3.63	0.805	17	3.72	0.951	-0.876	0.381
Good range of entertainment in terms of quantity	17	3.63	0.787	15	3.73	0.866	-1.039	0.300
Good range of entertainment in terms of quality	18	3.61	0.777	14	3.79	0.827	-1.894	0.059

**Table 3. Perceived Attributes of Guimarães**

Source: Authors' own survey data

SD = standard deviation

From a first look at Table 4, what seems to be most impressive is the remarkable contrast between the overall satisfaction expressed with holidays spent in Guimarães, together with the

declared willingness for recommending its visit to relatives and friends (Recommendation to Family and Friends), and the intention to return (Will Return). In this regard, the findings of the relevant literature provide suitable explanations, that is, enjoying a destination and wishing to repeat the visit is not the same (Yoon and Uysal, 2005; Nam *et al.*, 2011).

In their approach to this issue focused on the same destination, Freitas Santos *et al.* (2013) related this with the size (small/medium) of the city, expressed in the set of tourism products perceived by visitors at first glance.

An interesting result is that despite WHS visitors reporting higher satisfaction levels, other visitors want to return in a greater amount. This is probably to do with their recognition that there is more to explore in Guimarães than just the historic/cultural component. This result is consistent with the first conclusion, commenting on the results found on the visitors motivation, that “all other attributes (other than the heritage patrimony) seem to be better perceived by those who visit Guimarães not for their WHS main motivation, although the differences are not statistically significant”.

	WHS visitors (N=204)		Other motivation (N=121)		t-value	Sig.
	Agree (%) <sup>1</sup>	Average scores	Agree (%) <sup>1</sup>	Average scores <sup>2</sup>		
Global quality of destination <sup>2</sup>	94.6	4.35	90.1	4.27	1.139	0.256
Satisfaction with holidays in Guimarães <sup>3</sup>	94.6	4.40	92.2	4.36	0.529	0.598
Will return <sup>4</sup>	38.2	3.29	46.2	3.49	-1.466	0.144
Recommendation to family and friends <sup>5</sup>	93.1	4.52	85.6	4.41	1.252	0.211

**Table 4. Satisfaction and Recommendations**

Source: Authors' own survey data

Notes: <sup>1</sup> Percentage of respondents that agree are those that answered 4 or 5 on the 5-point Likert scales; <sup>2</sup> Scale ranges from 1=bad to 5=excellent; <sup>3</sup> Scale ranges from 1=not at all satisfied to 5=very satisfied; <sup>4</sup> Scale ranges from 1=0% hypothesis to 5=100% hypothesis; <sup>5</sup> Scale ranges from 1=not recommend to 5=strongly recommend.

The results in terms of declared overall satisfaction are in line with the ones for the attributes satisfaction, not questioning the findings of Chi and Qu (2008), who claimed that attributes satisfaction can be taken as an antecedent of destination loyalty. In turn, having in mind the high level of satisfaction declared by respondents and the intention declared of repeating the visit to

the destination, one can conclude, following Nam *et al.* (2011) and Yoon and Uysal (2005), that behaviour loyalty and psychological commitment are not the same.

As a final comment on the results shown in Table 4, having in mind the results for perceived quality of the destination towards recommendation of the visit to family and friends (both for WHS and other visitors), the main idea that comes to mind is the quality of the provision of the product or service does have a positive influence on satisfaction and the intention to repeat the visit, as assumed by Bigné *et al.* (2001).

Looking to the empirical results attained as a whole, there are enough reasons to conclude the destination is performing well, even though suffering from not having a consolidated image in the international tourism market and almost certainly from not being able to adequately advertise the set of products and services it can provide to visitors. Of course, budget constrains are very relevant when dealing with the tourism promotion of the destinations.

## 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The tourism industry, and within it the cultural segment, is playing a major role in sustaining and enhancing growth in economies all around the world. The importance of cultural/heritage tourism has to do with the idea of tourists visits as a memorable happening and an authentic experience and relates to the psychological dimension of tourists demand.

This empirical study, based on a survey applied to the Guimarães visitors, inquired on the motivation behind their choice of this destination, remarkable namely by being a World Heritage Site since 2001. Besides their motivations, tourists were questioned on the perceived attributes of the city on the level of the satisfaction they got from their visits.

The survey was conducted in 2015 throughout the year. In the analysis of data, descriptive statistics, chi-squares tests and t tests were used to check the statistical significance of the results. For analytical purposes, following data on visit motivation, the survey respondents were grouped between WHS motivated visitors and other visitors.

Within the main results, the authors underline the following ones as important:

- 1) The profile of the visitors showed an equilibrium of males and females, aged from 26 to 65 years old (86.4%), well educated, married (65.6%), and mostly foreigners (84.8%);
- 2) Contrasting this data on WHS motivated visitors versus visitors endowed with other motivations, the most noticeable is the major differences detected regarding education, which is in line with the findings reported in the relevant literature;

- 3) A large number of the Guimarães visitors (66.5%) visited the city with the aim of a tour around the cities of the “region”. A second reason to go to Guimarães emerged as being a World Heritage Site and third as its architectural heritage. This shows the importance of the cultural patrimony of the destination behind its attraction of visitors. Having hosted the 2012 European Capital of Culture also mattered. Putting this data together, the authors believe there is a place to speak of a city endowed of an image associated mostly to its cultural characteristics;
- 4) Approaching the city attributes, there wasn't a marked difference in the way both groups rank the perceived attributes of the destination. However, WHS visitors' data presented lower averages, except for Good Rehabilitation of Historic Centre, Good Signage and Tourist Information, and Good Transport Service. From these results, one can conclude that the destination is perceived as being able to offer much more than its historic centre;
- 5) Regarding satisfaction taken from the visit, despite WHS visitors reporting higher satisfaction levels, the other visitors declared wanting to return in a greater amount. A possible explanation for this is the recognition by them that there is more to explore in Guimarães than just the historical/cultural component;
- 6) The results also make visible that one thing is enjoying a destination and another is wishing to return to it, even having declared in large amounts intending to recommend its visit to family and friends. These results are in line with the findings of Chi and Qu (2008), who claimed that attributes satisfaction can be taken as an antecedent of destination loyalty, but loyalty should be interpreted in the sense used by Nam *et al.* (2011) and Yoon and Uysal (2005) to whom behaviour loyalty and psychological commitment are not the same.

Looking for possible policy recommendations derived from these results, they seem to confirm the idea that the destination still does not has a consolidated image in the international tourism market. The issue of the advertising for the set of products and services the city can provide to visitors seems to be one to which tourism authorities and agents need to pay particular attention. Even so, in relative terms, the city seems to be performing well, considering its emergent nature.

The results presented in this study are from a first approach chosen for the research subject and a first exploration of data collected through the survey implemented in 2015. Deeper analysis and the use of other methods could surely help in the interpretation of the results and in the consolidation (or not) of the conclusions formulated following the results.

Finally, the adequacy of the sample is under question as the number of foreigners among the visitors was larger than expected, having in mind previous data on the structure of the destination visitors. This biased sample is probably a consequence of the option taken for implementing the survey in the Guimarães Tourism Office, where Portuguese visitors tend to go less than foreigners. That being said, one has to admit that available data can express the visit motivations, perceived attributes of the city and satisfaction towards it of the foreigner visitors. They may be more representative of their approach and not necessarily the one of Portuguese tourists. This is a major limitation that should be dealt with in future research.

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