

**CARLOS PEIXEIRA MARQUES***University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro, Portugal***From Image to Intention: The Role of Imagination and Control in Destination Volitions**

Leisure travel plans and decisions are enduring volitive processes involving cognition and affect regarding several aspects, such as destinations, transportation, accommodation, and activities. Deciding whether and when to travel to a particular destination depends on its desirability, but also on prospects of the feasibility of accomplishing the travel plans. Building on the model of Goal Directed Behaviour, this paper posits that the intention to visit a destination results from a dual process: first, fantasy is crucial for the prospective traveller to go from a positive attitude to a state of desire; second, the perceived behavioural control helps moving from desire to intention. The model was tested in a random telephone sample of 513 potential travellers living in the metropolitan areas of Lisbon and Oporto, Portugal. At the beginning of 2019, respondents were asked about their intentions to visit one rural inland destination during this year, and about the independent variables as well: on the one hand, the affective image and the fantasies or imagination about the destination; on the other, the attitude, the desire, and the perceived control regarding the behaviour of visiting the same destination. The present study thus makes a two-fold contribution: it conceptualises how fantasy relates with affective image, desire, and intention; it operationalises fantasy by applying the trait of imagination to the anticipation of visiting a particular destination. Results from a partial least squares structural equations model show that: an exciting image strongly influences the attitude to visit and the imagination; the attitude has a positive but modest effect on desire, which is largely affected by imagination; desire is the main antecedent of intention, but, as expected, the behavioural control also plays an important role explaining intention. Considering the total effects of this complex model, one concludes that a relaxing image and a positive attitude don't trigger the intention, which depends on an exciting image, on imagination and, to a smaller extent, on behavioural control. These results fully concord with the hedonic tourism motivation model (Goossens, 2000), suggesting that destination marketing should emphasise visual and vivid communication to elicit hedonic response through exciting imagery and fantasy.