

Celebrities and GreenSphere Tourism

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Abstract

The attraction of world celebrities is a dimension of economic and social dynamism that is increasingly valued by those responsible for public policy. The fascination of the presence of these celebrities leads to the dynamization of a multiplicity of activities and behaviors developed by their followers, considered to be beneficial for local and regional economies. In these terms, those responsible for public policy seek to trigger mechanisms to attract these celebrities, which in this article we will call *pop star*, to their territories. However, we want to suggest that the mechanisms associated with public policy must go beyond simple mobilization for the tourist destination. This article seeks to relate the presence of Madonna in Lisbon with the economic and social dynamism associated with the 'celebrity endorsement' and relate the effectiveness of the 'celebrity channel' to regional innovation policy. We found that the celebrity has an effective power to condition the presence and activities of fans and we suggest that it can be exploited by regional innovation policy, namely integrating that influence in 'shared governance' territorial innovation models ('share governance'_TIM).

Keywords: pop star, 'shared governance'_TIM, Madame X, greensphere tourism, Lisbon

JEL Codes: R11, R58, Z32, Z38

1. Introduction

'Turismo de Portugal did not hire Madonna (but it seems)'. The title of this report¹ reflects all the buzz generated by 'Queen of Pop' since she moves to Lisbon in 2017.

¹ <https://guia-viagens.aeiou.pt/turismo-portugal-nao-contratou-madonna-parece-160429/>

Her experiences in the Portuguese capital resulted in important works that influenced her fans, not only artistically, but also in choosing Portugal as a tourist destination. Her most recent album – ‘Madame X’ - is a *love letter* to Portugal, according to the words of the “Queen of Pop” who sings various themes in Portuguese. Among the official videos of this musical era, three were recorded in Portuguese lands: Medellín, Dark Ballet and Batuka. In the documentary ‘World of Madame X’, recorded at Miradouro de Monsanto, Madonna reveals the entire universe of creation of the album she developed in Lisbon. Also noteworthy is her photo shoot recorded in Lisbon and surroundings for the magazine Vogue Italia (August 2018), and her posts on social networks about the capital and other Portuguese cities, with emphasis on her Instagram with about 15 million followers at the time of this work. All this imagery on social media, photo shoots and videos generate a ‘compulsion for proximity’ both in relation to Madonna herself and in relation to Lisbon and Portugal.

Taking Lisbon and Portugal as a case study, this paper seeks to relate the presence of Madonna in Lisbon with the economic dynamism associated with the activities resulting from the ‘celebrity endorsement’, namely having as main object of analysis the concerts designated as ‘Madame X’ in 2020 January. It is also intended to reflect on the role of a celebrity as a mechanism for the political transformation of the territory through a ‘shared governance’ territorial innovation model (‘share governance’_TIMs) focused on green experiences and sustainability principles (Nunes & Cooke, 2020; Cooke & Nunes, 2020).

The relationship between celebrity endorsement and public policy is not a very deep aspect in the literature. This is a very important relationship, either for reasons associated with the unsustainability of tourism even before the current pandemic, or for the consequences that the pandemic will have on tourism in the post-coronavirus Era.

The tourism of the future must have a more singular, sustainable and innovative nature and the public policy will be a cornerstone.

The paper is organized in five sections. The section two deals with the theoretical framework of this work, that integrates three interdependent dimensions: The relation between celebrities and the fan base, a critical analysis of the nature of current celebrities and the promotion of green tourism experiences through territorial innovation models. From the literature review, the main hypothesis of the article and its implications are presented. Section three explains the main methodological options used in our empirical analysis. Then we present the models used to test our working hypotheses. We discuss the results obtained and their political implications in the fourth section before presenting the main conclusions in the final section.

2. Theoretical framework: celebrities and green tourism destination

2.1. The relation between celebrities and the fan base

In contemporary society, celebrities' influence on its fan base can reach different biases (Bishop & Green, 2008; Brockington, 2014; Knoll & Matthes, 2017; Nownes, 2019; Cuomo *et al.*, 2109; Schimmelpfennig & Hunt, 2019; Richey & Brockington, 2020), including perception and attitudes towards a tourist destination (Lee *et al.*, 2008; Fath *et al.*, 2017; Femenia-Serra & Gretzel, 2020; Armielia, 2019). According to Lee *et al.*, (2008: 810), this connection with celebrity has become a common social practice: *The underlying thesis of both narcissism and other-directed society is that the mass media in a contemporary society constantly create celebrities whose glory and fame are used by the public as a source of self-satisfaction and/or life direction.* This affective link provides the 'meaning transfer' of the celebrity to the product and, finally, from the product to the consumer (McCracken, 1989; Leslie, 2011). In other words, there is a transfer of celebrity qualities, which are admired and desired, to the product and fans.

Visiting the celebrity related destination is thus an act of consuming the desired qualities that the celebrity may mean (Lee et al., 2008: 814).

This transfer process is the basis for 'celebrity endorsement', a marketing strategy that uses a celebrity to promote a brand (Garthwaite, 2014). According to McCracken (1989: 310), there are a variety of endorsements: *explicit mode ('I use this product')*, *the imperative mode ('You should use this product')*, and *the copresent mode (in which the celebrity 'merely appears with the product')*. These 'celebrity endorsements' take be paid and unpaid (Rantanen, 2017). In paid celebrity endorsement, the celebrity is paid to come and promote the brands product or service. Unpaid endorsement is when a celebrity just likes a product and is wearing for example a Tesla shirt while taking a picture of themselves and posting it on social media, leading to possibly having some followers go out and buy the same shirt from that brand. By endorsing a tourist destination, the celebrity exercises its role as an image formation agent.

The type of image transmitted by a celebrity can be termed as a secondary image created before traveling to a destination. It is the opposite of the primary, an image developed after visiting the tourist destination (Lopes, 2011). According to Melo (2016), the secondary image can still be classified into two other types of images: organic (of non-specialized tourism) and induced (tourist promotion). According to Lee *et al.* (2008), many fans become familiar with a destination by participating in various celebrity-related activities (fandom). Many learn a foreign language, history and cultural lifestyle to communicate better with their idols. As a result, they can feel closer to the destination as well as the celebrity. In this sense, Urry (2016: 148) affirms that *many trips result from a powerful 'compulsion for proximity' (...) Places need to be seen by the 'people themselves' and experienced directly: to know the childhood home of someone, visit a specific restaurant (...) Thus, a co-presence encompasses the acts of seeing, touching, listening, smelling and tasting a specific place.* Still on copresence, Urry (2016)

highlights another type of trip that occurs when a 'live' event must be seen, such as the funeral of Princess Diana or a Madonna concert, for example. These are spatio-temporal moments of global condensation that transform places into special 'host cities' or 'territorial singularities' (Nunes & Sousa, 2020).

According to Norman (2011), 'tourist-fans' probably a) have decided to travel there for a host of cultural, historical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal reasons; b) that their journey will have a sense of elevated meaning for them when considered next to other aspects of their journey such as their choice of accommodation, visits to museums or other cultural sites, and so on, c) that their connection with the celebrity will have constituted leisure involvement at home in a range of ways that might include fan meetings/gatherings, reading about the celebrity/site; d) that there is a strong likelihood of a higher than normal score on the celebrity worship scale (CWS); and e) that the process by which they came to arrive at the site will have included an associative conditioning element with regard to the celebrity, thus making visiting the site, whatever it may be, a highly desirable activity.

Each level of fandom has different levels of involvement and intensity (Lee, 2012). For example, a dedicated fan watches games when they take place in his city of residence. But, a devoted fan would probably travel to other cities to have that experience. It is important to recognize and value the involvement between celebrity, destination, and fan (Kineta, 2020). As well as knowing the profile of the fans and the fandom levels, especially the devoted ones. According to Lexhagen *et al.* (2019), ABBA is closely associated with Sweden, even to the point where Swedish music was once synonymous with ABBA, and therefore attracts people's interest in Sweden as a place to visit. But, they claim that the number of tourists who visit Sweden and other related sites internationally because of ABBA is unknown. So, the authors purpose is to substantiate ABBA biographical tourism, identifying and describing its fans 'activity as tourists. It will help tourist destinations

becoming more proactive instead of reactive to the demand. Lexhagen *et al.* (2019) also highlights that South Korean government has featured K-pop in its nation-branding strategies to attract tourism, and, indeed, an increase in South Korea tourism related to K-pop has been reported. Bae *et al.* (2017) corroborates that the number of foreigners visiting Korea is increasing. The number of foreign tourists visiting Korea has increased nearly fourfold from 300000 in 1998, when the Korean Wave began, to 11.8 million in 2014. But, at the same time, they highlight the difficult to quantify the ripple effect of the Korean Wave or its range. Bolderman and Reijnders (2017) claim that live music is not always necessarily part of music-related travel, as, for example, in the U2 walking tour, in that article, music tourism is studied in its broader definition. So, fans can visit many places related to U2 in Dublin, not only attend concerts. But, the numbers of music tourism involving live concerts in UK are impressive. According to UK Music (2019), there was a total of 11.2 million music tourists going to live music events and they spent £4.5 billion in 2018. In summary, understanding the relation between the influence of a celebrity on her fan base is an important part of the process of characterizing the perception and attitudes towards a tourist destination and, consequently, for its management.

2.2. The nature of celebrities: from ‘narcissistic’ to ‘green influencer’

We note the rise of ‘celebrity power’ to influence public policy, for instance professional footballers invoking change in UK free school meals, not to mention the efforts of Greta Thunberg. In this sense, it is important to carry out a critical analysis of the nature of current celebrities, to refine how their integration can be useful to the territories and their needs. If we are thinking of adapting the contemporary ‘narcissistic’ tendency associated with ‘would-be’ influencers into the role of ‘socially innovative influencer’ (e.g. ‘green influencer’) the fashioning of a multi-streamed communication platform

consisting of, at least, literature, video, social media, TV, stadium performance, retail campaign, art exhibition and virtual or augmented reality shows is necessary. Of importance to this discussion in the present era of ‘celebrity influencer’ is the real case of the novelist William Gibson. In his science fiction novel ‘Pattern Recognition’ (2003) representation is inadvertently performed of the monetisation of taste, appropriately inverted to escape ‘brands’ by Cayce Pollard, the ‘influencer’ in the novel:

Meanwhile, a marketing think tank modelled on the one in the novel, popularized [the influencer’s] fashion philosophy in the form of ‘Normcore,’ a trend – forecast, then real – based on the idea of secretive, informed, intentional blankness. Normcore influenced design more broadly, shaping the aesthetics of real companies like Everlane and Uniqlo. The boundary between fiction and reality turned out to be even blurrier than Gibson had thought. He had rewritten the code himself (Rothman, 2019).

For Franck (2016) an even better example of ‘attention capitalism’ is precisely what the readers of academic journals do every day, the work of science and scholarship. The value of academic work is largely measured by the amount of attention it receives: the citation rate of the journal in which an article is published, the number of citations the article itself receives, the status of a book’s publisher, and the reputations of the book’s reviewers. Thus citation is essentially a fee in attention capital paid for the license to use the cited author’s information and ideas. Competition means there is a strong motivation to capture academic attention with the catchy title and cover, the attention-grabbing event, the radical critique of established positions, the provocative stance and, preferably, the association with a recognised scholarly celebrity.

As van Krieken (2018) concludes in his review of Franck’s schema: ‘...in the age of social media, this space has expanded enormously to include blog posts, Tweets, Wikipedia,

Facebook, LinkedIn and Pinterest mentions. In this sense, academic life is a key example of the fundamental logic of ‘celebrification’.

Neoliberal guru Peter Thiel devised ‘Seasteading’ for the rich but alternatively, occupying serviced, marine pods and even farms of this kind as living quarters in densely populated land-scarce countries like the Netherlands is a more respectable version of this practice. In April 2019, at a roundtable at the United Nations headquarters in New York, a Tahitian entrepreneur named Marc Collins unveiled a new model for a “sustainable floating city” designed in collaboration with the architecture firm Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) and other partners. Called Oceanix City (after Collins’s company Oceanix), it would house up to 10,000 people and aim to be as self-sufficient as possible. Oceanix calls it a response to sea-level rise and climate displacement. The 4.5-acre islands would not actually float free, but would be anchored to the sea floor by biorock, a material that’s used to build artificial coral reefs. For drinking water, the putative residents of Oceanix City would extract humidity from the air and desalinate seawater; their food would be harvested from small floating farms and under water via aquaculture. Oceanix City would be both hurricane-resistant and zero-waste. Architectural renderings of the city show *Jetsons*-esque watercraft zipping past domed greenhouses and stylish modern buildings. After the presentation, UN officials expressed skepticism, given the major unanswered questions about feasibility, cost, and the wisdom of building new infrastructure offshore when so much of what we have on land needs upgrading. Instead, officials and dignitaries praised Collins and Ingels’ concept. Victor Kisob, the deputy executive director of UN-Habitat, told *National Geographic*: “Listening to Marc and seeing his designs, this seems futuristic but it really is practical.” Joseph Stiglitz, the Nobel Prize-winning economist, spoke approvingly of the proposal as well. “It’s certainly worth trying” he told *Nat Geo*. Though invited, the UN has not committed any funding to a plan devised by developer Marc Collins and architect Bjarke Ingels’ (BIG) Group for their ‘sustainable floating city’

as a response to flooding caused by climate change, although they organized the roundtable and encourages further research into floating cities. In the Netherlands, floating homes have become more common as a solution to climate change-induced flooding. This has even included floating apartment complexes and dairy farms. Deliveries to Dutch homes and farms can be drone-transported, garbage pneumatically processed, aquaponics utilised for fish-farming and hydroponics in vertical farms or plant-friendly 'biomes' for food production. How practical this is received the lugubrious answer: "The only way you're going to find things out is to actually do these things." (Hurley, 2019). Such libertarian 'influencer' visions imply lower-paid functionaries to manage the subsistence and waste-disposal, the absence of manufacturing employment and clean, light ight, or unearned income lifestyles rather than dreary commutes to soulless offices for the 'landlubber' majority. Those few who live with lucrative incomes from being 'influencers' paid as 'helpful propagandists' for consumer culture businesses that pay them for their Instagram or You Tube posts might have to come to terms with business downturns such as the Coronavirus pandemic. Many of their erstwhile fashion outlets have been bankrupted, lost their markets and no longer have discretionary resources to pay 'influencers' anymore. Now such potential 'seasteaders' and others are daily being turned away from their once-lucrative clients. Thiel himself fled to his New Zealand fjord sanctuary far away from Covid-19 fearing the 'herd behaviour' of contagious crowds (Musgrave, 2019)

'Influencer' theory takes the analysis of Thie;'s mentality a step further:

' Thiel once said, "Thinking about how disturbingly herdlike people become in so many different contexts—mimetic theory (after René Girard, his Stanford professor) forces you to think about that, which is knowledge that's generally suppressed and hidden. As an investor-entrepreneur, I've always tried to be contrarian, to go against the crowd, to identify opportunities in places where people are not looking.'" (Packer, 2011: 2)

Girard's fundamental 'influencer' concept is 'mimetic desire'. According to Girard, most thinking devoted to imitation pays little attention to the fact that we also imitate other people's desires, and depending on how this happens, it may lead to conflicts and rivalries. If people imitate each other's desires, they may wind up desiring the very same things; and if they desire the same things, they may easily become rivals, as they reach for the same objects. Thus Girard distinguishes 'imitation' from 'mimesis'. The former is usually understood as the positive aspect of reproducing someone else's behaviour, whereas the latter usually implies the negative aspect of rivalry. Accordingly, 'celebrification' in the 'attention economy' possibly has these negative connotations although a moment's thought indicates it has – despite a superficial plausibility – several weaknesses. It cannot explain 'creativity'; it fails to deal with the death of the (charismatic) inspiration still mimicked despite being an absent exemplar; and it fails to explain what postmodernists call 'différance' or variety among different people. Rather it seeks to explain society as driven by autocratic and authoritarian motives alone. As such it is a poor guide to democratic action in the face of critical 'Grand Social Challenges' like climate change. This analysis should contribute to the care to be taken and to the pragmatism (and the limits) associated with the purity of the role of celebrities' intervention in society.

2.3. Green tourism experiences through territorial innovation models

Although the literature relates the presence of the celebrity to some effects on the tourist destination, the subject and the main channels of the recommendations are generally the advertisers and marketers, it does not explicitly address the relationship that can be established between the power of intervention of the celebrity in the society and regional innovation policies. It is in this context that we want to raise our concerns in this article. If the celebrity has an effective power to influence a significant number of people, then the celebrity can contribute to the regional innovation policy, through what Nunes &

Cooke (2021) and Cooke & Nunes (2020) defended as 'share governance'_TIM. The 'share governance'_TIM are processes it engages directly with global Grand Challenge issues in a rich and decentralised manner, communication with but not dominated by 'global controllers' (Lane, 2002). Results from a decentralist regional innovation policy that cross-fertilizes many existing cultural sub-innovations into a regional-rural 'infra-urban' sustainable locational setting powered by renewable energy. This means recruiting celebrities to get involved in a 'shared governance'_TIM that gives their activities a green and sustainable experience, that influences their fans and supporters. In this context, we want to do an analysis that goes beyond the primary effects related to celebrity shows and our central research hypothesis emerges with three sub-hypotheses: *Hypothesis 1 – Madonna personalizes an effective channel of influence with economic and social impacts*

- *Hypothesis 1.a: The expectation of spending by your fans is positively related to the number of shows to watch and other complementary activities*
- *Hypothesis 1.b: The interest in making a regional tourist itinerary depends positively on the number of places that the fans intend to visit and on the personal advertising of the celebrity about Portugal*
- *Hypothesis 1.c: Traveling for the first time to Portugal is influenced by the presence of the celebrity*

These three sub-hypotheses support the idea that fans' spending expectations are not just related to their exclusive presence at shows. The celebrity's presence and endorsement on her personal advertising channels motivate fans for additional activities (visits to museums, natural parks, gastronomy and wines, etc.) On the other hand, the celebrity's influence on the first visit to Portugal shows the effectiveness of this channel in promoting the destination. In summary, there is an effective power to condition the presence and activities of fans, and we suggest that it can be exploited by regional

innovation policy. To test these hypotheses, the following section presents the empirical work developed.

3. Empirical analysis: methodological options

The empirical analysis carried out is supported by two data sources: Madonna's Instagram analysis and an online survey conducted with her fans.

Instagram Analysis

The analysis of Madonna's official Instagram is an important tool to analyse the projected image of Portugal and identity elements. In a qualitative approach, the selection of posts took place between May 2017 and January 2020. This delimitation considers the period when Madonna came to Portugal to organize her future move to the country and the passage of the 'Madame X' tour in Lisbon, during which Madonna made several posts about the event in the city. In the quantitative approach, there was the identification of the recurrence of those texts, emojis and hashtags in the posts, as well as the accounting of likes in photos and video views.

The survey, variables and measures

The data were obtained through a convenience sample, a non-probability sample. The main objective is not to make inference to the universe, which is difficult to know, but to assess to what extent the presence of a celebrity attracts an external demand capable of dynamizing a territory. The survey (Appendix) was applied for 'tourist-fans' in January 2020, with the aim of analysing the profile of those who chose Portugal as a tourist destination influenced by Madonna and evaluating the activities undertaken during this visit. The survey was first publicized through some events that took place in the city during the concerts like biographical tours, parties and movies. Potential interviewees

also were found by searching for hashtags on social networks, during that period, that involved ‘Madonna’, ‘Lisbon’, ‘Madame X’. Then, it was sent by email the survey link in their respective language. Surveys were conducted in Portuguese and English. We obtain 253 valid observations, since only responses from individuals outside the Lisbon region were considered valid and whose visit was motivated by the presence of Madonna in Lisbon.

The statistical model of analysis

The general model for the ordered dependent variables can be motivated through an underlying continuous latent variable y^* , where

$$y^* = x'\beta + u$$

with x' a vector of k regressors, β an unknown vector of k parameters and u an unobservable error term. We do not observe the latent variable y^* but some discrete values y or categories such as,

$$y = j \text{ if and only if } \mu_{j-1} < y^* < \mu_j, \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, J.$$

If the distribution of u is known with distribution function $F(u)$ we can compute the probabilities of observing $y = j$,

$$\begin{aligned} P(y = j | x) &= P(\mu_{j-1} < y^* < \mu_j) \\ &= P(\mu_{j-1} - x'\beta < u < \mu_j - x'\beta) \\ &= F(\mu_j - x'\beta) - F(\mu_{j-1} - x'\beta). \end{aligned}$$

Maximum likelihood is the standard procedure to estimate the unknown parameters β . For a sample of n independent pairs of observations, (x_i, y_i) , the likelihood function is given by,

$$L(\theta | y, x) = \prod_{i=1}^n \prod_{j=1}^n P(y = j | x)^{\delta_{ij}},$$

where $\delta_{ij} = 1(y_{ij} = j)$ is a binary indicator variable and $P(y = j | x)$ is defined above. The ordered logit is used in what follows, that is $F(u)$ is the cumulative logistic function defined by

$$F(u) = \frac{\exp(u)}{1 + \exp(u)}.$$

The parameters can be interpreted in several ways. For example, exponentiated coefficients are interpreted as partial odds ratios for being in the higher categories of y rather than in the lower half of the categories of y . To simplify, assume that x is a single variable. For a variation of x in Δx , the partial odds ratio is given by

$$OR_j = \frac{P(y \leq j | x + \Delta x) / P(y > j | x + \Delta x)}{P(y \leq j | x) / P(y > j | x)} = \exp(-\Delta x \beta)$$

Table 1 set out all the variables used in our estimations.

[table 1]

The hypothesis and models used

We estimate three models. Model 1.a seeks to relate the expenses of the fans associated with the trip to Portugal with the number of shows that the fans hope to watch and with the desire to realize an itinerary through the Lisbon region. This model seeks to test hypothesis 1.a. It is expected that the expectation of expenditure is not only associated with the exclusive presence at the singer's shows. Model 1.b associates the desire to make an itinerary to the Lisbon region with the number of places that fans intend to visit in the region and with Madonna's endorsement of Lisbon and Portugal on her social networks (Instagram, videos and photo shoot made by Madonna in Portugal). It is expected to find a positive relationship between these variables to confirm hypothesis 1.b. Finally, Model 1.c relates the desire to visit Portugal without the presence of Madonna in the national territory with the number of trips the individual has previously made to Portugal. Hypothesis 1.c is expected to be confirmed if Madonna's presence in Portugal stimulates the first visit to the country. That is, those who have already visited the country are more

likely to want to visit Portugal without the presence of Madonna, since past visits condition their willingness to return. For all models, gender was used as a control variable, seeking to understand whether this variable introduces any additional variability to the analysis.

4. Empirical Results: Instagram and estimation results

Instagram results

After the analysis, 253 posts were selected that contain texts, emojis and hashtags making references to Portugal and identity representations. The elements identified were grouped into 13 categories and almost 85 million likes and views were recorded. The five categories with the most occurrences in the analysis were: 1) Love (23%) - heart emojis, etc ...; 2) Portugal (23%) - Portuguese flag emojis, texts and hashtags "Lisboa" and "Lisbon", etc...; 3) Soccer (12%) - soccer ball emojis, "Benfica" hashtags, @slbenfica tag, etc...; 4) Music (11%) - emojis of musical instruments, texts and hashtags "Fado", "Music", etc...; 5) Equestrian Activities (8%) - horse emojis. In terms of percentage, the Equestrian Activities category is tied with Nature and Cape Verde. The latter stands out with the presence of Cape Verde flag emojis, texts and hashtags 'Batukadeiras', and tag @orquestra.batukadeiras.pt. The 'Batukadeiras' are important figures in this era musical 'Madame X'. In the accounting of likes in photos and video views, the 5 most prominent categories are: 1) Portugal (32%); 2) Love (21%); 3) Music (14%); 4) Cape Verde (11%); 5) Nature (7%). Interestingly, there is a difference between what was designed by Madonna and what was perceived by her followers. In the chart below, you can see this difference.

[figure 1]

From the figure 1, 3 categories stand out due to the percentage difference between the occurrence and the likes and views: Equestrian Activities, Football and Portugal. Horseback riding is one of Madonna's favourite activities, wherever she is. But in Portugal, with the Comporta beach as a backdrop, it gained special significance. Madonna is passionate about horses and has already incorporated this element in several artistic works. However, Equestrian Activities was not a topic that attracted the attention of fans. This category had 8% of occurrences, but only had 2% of likes or views. Football was the driving force behind Madonna's move to Portugal. Madonna calls herself a “soccer mom”, as her son David Banda trains at the Sport Lisboa e Benfica Training Center. The Football category had 12% of occurrences, but only 3% of likes and views. Unlike the Equestrian Activities and Football categories, the Portugal category saw a percentage increase between the occurrence (23%) and likes and views (32%). It follows that Madonna's followers on Instagram were attentive to all texts, emojis and hashtags to Portugal and attributed great value to them. This is one of the findings that corroborates Madonna's influence – ‘power of celebrity endorsement’ – in choosing Portugal as a tourist destination.

Fan and trip profile

According to the survey results (table 2), the ‘fan profile’ has the following characteristics: 51.4% are between 31 and 43 years old, 62.5% speak English, 77.5% are male and 62.5% are homosexuals. Regarding sexual orientation, this value may appear to be oversized and may be a source of bias in the analysis. However, it is our belief that the iconoclastic nature of the celebrity and its public support for different causes in this matter does not make this indication unusual or improbable. It is very likely that this sample variable represents in an acceptable way the composition, in terms of sexual orientation, of Madonna fans present in Lisbon in these shows. 36% have higher education (with only

7.5% having basic and secondary education) and 75.1% are employed, with only 2.8% being unemployed. In terms of nationality and residence, most respondents are of nationality and reside in Europe. If we extend the fan profile to the nature of the trip, table 3 allows us to say that 61.7% of the fans make their first visit to Portugal, 18.2% would not travel to Portugal except for the presence of Madonna and 65.6% intend to make an itinerary around the region. 88.5% of fans are influenced by direct advertising carried out by the artist (Instagram, videos and photo shoot) and 38.7% plan to spend between 1000 and 2000 euros on this trip.

[table 2]

Models estimation results

Table 3 presents the main results from the three models estimated (odds ratios) and [table 4](#) presents the marginal effects for each model.

[table 3]

About model 1.a, the results show that the probability of being at higher levels of expenditure (in the face of lower levels) increases as individuals intend to attend an increasing number of shows. As for the variable 'Tourist Itinerary' and taking as a reference those who do not wish to undertake a tourist itinerary to the Lisbon region, the results show that the probability of being at higher levels of expenditure increases as individuals answer 'maybe' and 'yes' to the desire to complete the tourist itinerary. The magnitude of the marginal effects also supports our argument. As we can see in table 4, as the desire to attend a greater number of shows increases, the probability of being in the first level of expenditure decreases 18%, while the probability of being in the second level increases 3.7% and in the highest-level increases 14.2%. The results for the variable

'tourist itinerary' are equally coherent and consistent, noting only that those who respond positively ('yes') to the desire to carry out the tourist itinerary increase by 17.3% the probability of being in the highest level of travel expenses. The control variable is not statistically significant for this model.

[table 4]

The results of model 1.b, show that the probability of wanting to make a tourist itinerary in the Lisbon region increases in relation to the number of visits that the fans hope to make in Lisbon and the publicity that the artist makes of Portugal. That is, as the number of places that fans want to visit and that are influenced by the 'celebrity endorsement' by the region increases, the likelihood of wishing to make an itinerary around the region increases. The marginal effects also support our argument. As we can see in [table 4](#), all results equally coherent and consistent with our hypothesis. As the number of places that fans intend to visit in the region increases and as fans recognize the influence of the celebrity's endorsement on the desire to carry out this activity, the probability of wanting to carry out the tourist itinerary increase by 12.2% and 55.3% respectively. In this case, the control variable is statistically significant, both in general (table 3) and for each response item (table 4). The results suggest that it is women (taking men as a reference) who have a greater desire to make a tourist itinerary in the region.

Finally, the results of Model 1.c suggest that the probability of wanting to travel to Portugal without the presence of the singer increases when the individual has travelled to Portugal before. The marginal effects help to clarify this result. When individuals go from 'first visit' to 'more than once', the probability of answering 'no' to the possibility of traveling without the presence of the singer decreases 6.6%. On the other hand, the probability of wanting to travel to Portugal without this desire being motivated by the

presence of the singer increases 10.4% for those who have visited the country more than once. These results allow us to affirm that for the 'first trip' to Portugal the presence of Madonna is an important factor in the decision-making process.

These results allow us to validate the sub-hypotheses under analysis and confirm our main hypothesis: Madonna personalizes an effective channel of influence with economic and social impacts on the territory. This result is similar in nature to other studies that sought evidence of this same association (Glover, 2009; Fath *et al.*, 2017; Armielia, 2019).

5. Discussion and policy implications

As for the social and direct economic impacts, we can add some figures. Madonna started the European tour Madame X in Lisbon at the Coliseu dos Recreios, between the 12th and 23rd of January 2020. Eight concerts were planned in the city, but due to health issues there were only six concerts. According to data from Touring Data, the total collection of the concerts was \$ 2,930,802 and 15,493 spectators attended the concerts. With the figures presented we can infer that the average ticket price was \$ 189.17. Considering the last-minute cancellations and the average values above, it is concluded that there was a loss in the collection in the amount of \$ 976,874 referring to 5164 refunded tickets.

Knowing that our sample may not be representative of the universe of fans who visited Portugal in the period in question, if only the spectators of the six concerts in Lisbon are considered (15,493, a conservative value compared to the actual number, even by the reduction of the planned concerts) and the estimated expenditure levels in our sample come to \$ 21 829 637. This is a much higher value than the value for only concert tickets, 2,930,802. This [suggests](#) that the indirect and induced effects of the estimated expenditure are relevant to the economic dynamism of the region.

In terms of social impacts, with implications for the preservation and enhancement of public heritage, during the recording of the documentary *World of Madame X*, at the Monsanto Viewpoint, Madonna made a graffiti with the Madame X brand. This was one of the reasons that made the viewpoint a must-see for ‘tourist-fans’ who come to Lisbon. The art created by Madonna lasted a few months until it was covered with another graffiti. The fans, disappointed and frustrated, to discover that the original art no longer existed, recreated it to reaffirm and rescue the connection between Madonna and the place. It is important that the preservation of these symbolic elements is part of the objectives of public policy, namely at the local and regional level. Often public policy effectiveness is not associated with traditional channels (financing, tax benefits, etc.) but rather simply with the preservation of heritage, in this symbolic case. The social interactions like emotional bonding, in-group norm and trust in cooperation are effective channels of pro-environmental behaviour in travel destinations (Li & Wu, 2020) and to contribute to sustainable tourism modes through sustainability-focused events (Mair & Laing, 2013). Madonna stands out among a select group of international personalities who not only reside (or have resided) in the country but have also been immensely inspired by their culture. We can mention names like Ian Fleming, J. K. Rowling, Christian Louboutin, and Monica Bellucci. Christian Louboutin, a famous fashion designer who has a home in Lisbon and Melides, also paid tribute to Portugal in his creations. He created a portfolio with materials and patterns typically Portuguese and named it Portugaba. Louboutin also created a line of shoes in honour of Melides, in addition to investing in a charming hotel in the region. Italian actress and model Monica Bellucci, who also has a residency in Lisbon, conducted a photo shoot for the French magazine *Elle* in 2018. The photo shoot entitled “Espírito Latino” was performed in scenarios typical of the Portuguese capital, such as Bairro Alto, area of Castelo de São Jorge and has the 25 de Abril bridge as a backdrop for the cover. These personalities not only invest financially in Portugal, but

also contribute to the image of the tourist destination and the generation of demand for Biographical Tourism.

It is now important to discuss to what extent the role of attraction that celebrities play can be made compatible with the economic and social dynamization of the territories. Despite the aspects highlighted in section 2.2, there are innovative approaches that must be explored. Several studies find evidence of the positive role that celebrities can play in the face of some societal challenges, whether they are local or even global (Fuqua, 2011; Goodman & Littler, 2013; Anderson, 2013; Williams, 2016; Font & Lynes, 2018). Following Nunes & Cooke (2021) and Cooke & Nunes (2020) our suggestion is to deepen these experiences, integrating the influence of celebrities in territorial innovation models as part of solutions for 'post city urbanity'.

More specifically, tourism has positive economic and social impacts but, at the same time, consumes places (Hall, 2015; Urry, 1995) in different forms and, in its majority, space and public goods. Two important policy implications result from this. On the one hand, it is important to safeguard that the celebrity-tourism-territory relationship is not mediated only by market mechanisms, public policy is fundamental to manage different externalities. On the other hand, it is in the interest of those responsible for public policies to involve celebrities in building models of territorial innovation. In addition to creating value in the territorial brand, this involvement can function as an integrating element of the various sectoral policies (culture, mobility, health, heritage, employment) in the territory. This approach seeks to challenge the 'dark side' of capitalism, illuminating some dimensions associated with the future sustainability of society in specific territories, engage into practical alternatives to existing global tourism innovation. It allows innovation and tourism to be coherently and consistently integrated in a territorial framework. In this context, how to mobilize an effective channel for transmitting actions and behaviors to the non-monetary sphere of society? The spatial

location is the first step: embedded to transform. The territorial embedding of daily experiences sensitizes and contextualizes the needs and problems that we face and, thus, establishes an appropriate intervention channel. Some countries, such as the USA, have a “special visa” to attract individuals with extraordinary skill or achievement such as athletes, artists and members of the entertainment industry. In Portugal, the visa that comes closest to that previously mentioned is the “Golden Visa” – Residence Permit for Investment Activity. Following the American model, obviously with the necessary adjustments, Portugal (and other countries and their regions) could create a ‘special visa to sustainability’ to attract celebrities and, consequently, their endorsement power to trying make some urban and territorial changes, namely in terms of sustainability and green spheres experiences (Cooke & Nunes, 2020; Font & Lynes, 2018).

Policy, predictably, has been slow to catch up with the power of ‘celebrity’ and the role of ‘influencers’ both in the directions and nature of power reversals in recent times. The reversal of protest power upwards rather than downwards caught policymakers asleep with the rise of ‘cancel culture’, ‘Black Lives Matter’ and ‘slaver commemoration’ statue questioning or removal. Rules and conventions have only belatedly responded with limited and contested acquiescence to popular dissent. In the UK, a single footballer Marcus Rashford, has caused two if not three policy reversals by the Johnson administration regarding providing adequate children’s school meals initially deemed illegitimate during school closure time but legitimate during only teaching term-time. But such ‘knee-jerk’ responses scarcely count as ‘policy’ but mere ‘piecemeal populist’ responses. Populism also characterises political responses to ‘influencer’ bending of lockdown rules by flights to the Gulf States for narcissistic beachside photo-opportunities under the guise of ‘essential employment’ wavers. Covid-19 has revealed just how threadbare and mere feeble discourse much ‘policy’ masquerading as ‘political anguish’ actually is.

6. Conclusions

As main conclusions, we would like to highlight three aspects. First, resulting from the theoretical-conceptual framework presented, allows us to affirm that Madonna's presence and her endorsement activities had positive effects in economic and social

terms, essentially associated with the tourist dimension of the territory. The confirmation of this effect led to the suggestion of its transformation into a channel to integrate the regional innovation policy that aims to deal with major societal challenges: climate change and economic and social unsustainability of the current model of energy extraction, production and consumption for the survival of the human species. Second, celebrities (pop stars, exclusive technocrat billionaires, sportsmen) show 'explicit social personality' traits that contribute to the unsustainability of such contexts. This downside should be, at least complemented, by the upside: democratic, sustainably minded 'green' citizens and communities/governments of their 'influencing' upon the populace. Their influence should be integrated in concrete territorial projects, where 'share governance'_TIM that integrate a myriad of resources, actors and strategies with territorial coherence in the same territorial context. Finally, the current pandemic crisis clearly shows the degree of economic, social and territorial interdependence in modern society. The distance, whether in its economic, social or institutional form, between influencers and influencers, between billionaires' technologists and the populace, between public policy and commercial policy (advertisers and marketers) is much smaller than is sometimes believed. The current crisis and its consequences, namely the reduction of production and consumption (materials and algorithmic foam), are the flapping of wings of the butterfly that is structurally fanning the techno-structures that support the way of life of the current celebrities. Blurring the distance mediated by inducing consumption (usually superfluous and excessive) what remains on the skeleton form are the problems that are, after all, of all humanity. In these difficult moments that we are going through, older feelings and passions that overlap interests and business are emerging, in a broader and more structured way: enthusiasm for less CO₂, NO_x, methane, consumption, less diesel, petrol, more battery, cycle, walk, no junk food,

circular economy, forest baths and well-being for live. Revolution 'in the head' making old consumption paradigm unpleasant, unpopular, redundant and unsustainable.

Celebrities are human, after all; as we saw many of them seek to engage in various social commitments. It is sometimes possible to find signs of these concerns, even if subtle and often unconscious. Madonna had a hit with 'Material Girl' (1985) followed by 'Papa Don't Preach' (1986). But by 1987 she was 'Causing a Commotion' then 'Rescue Me' (1991) and in 1992 'This Used to be my Playground' came out before 'Die Another Day' (2002). The chronology is quite good for a timeline of her 'conversion' from 'Celebrity Consumerist' to 'Apocalyptic Dystopian'. Maybe is time to go further.

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