



(Un)willingness to pay to visit a national park from a sustainable entrepreneurial tourism perspective

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ABSTRACT

As the number of protected areas increases in a country, there is a need for entrepreneurial action to maximize the environmental and economic benefits of nature-based tourism and to complement government funding. Establishing an entrance fee to visit these protected areas could be a good option to ensure long-term economic sustainability. Therefore, using Herzberg's theory of motivation-hygiene and the fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis methodology (fsQCA) as a valid theoretical framework, this study aims to analyze the combined effects of both motivating and hygiene variables which lead to the absence of willingness to pay (WTP) an entrance fee to visit a national park. The findings indicate that motivating factors, such as prior visits to other national parks, the inclination to visit a national park, or a strong commitment to environmental issues, were more important than hygiene factors, such as value for money and overall satisfaction with the visit. Managerial implications and directions for future studies are also discussed.

1. Introduction

Sustainable, ecotourism or nature-based tourism are concepts intended to reconcile economic and ecological objectives (Swan & Morgan, 2016). According to the World Tourism Organization (UNEP-UNWTO, 2005), the principles of sustainability in the tourism sector refer to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects revolving around tourism development, which must be consistent with one another to guarantee long-term sustainability. In this sense, sustainable tourism must guarantee the optimal use of environmental resources. By aiding in their conservation, respecting the sociocultural authenticity of host communities, and ensuring the viability of economic activities in the long term to report socioeconomic benefits distributed equitably among the agents involved (UNWTO-UNDP, 2017). No destination is immune to losing its original identity and resources if it does not control the development of tourism. Therefore, it is essential to promote responsible entrepreneurial tourism initiatives based on the triple-bottom-line sustainability framework, which aims to balance

economic, social, and environmental spheres (Allal-Chérif, Costa Climent, & Ulrich Berenguer, 2023; Gu & Wang, 2022).

In the field of sustainable tourism, there has been considerable scientific interest in tourism within protected areas (Goh, Ritchie, & Wang, 2017; Oviedo-García, Vega-Vázquez, Castellanos-Verdugo, & Orgaz-Aguera, 2019; Thur, 2010). In the Eagles' study (2014) ten protected areas that required more scientific research were considered. Specifically, this study analyzed aspects such as the use of visitors; the economic impact of park tourism; park financing; professional skills for tourism management; public support; visitor satisfaction; licenses, permits, leases, and concessions for tourism; pricing policies; management capacity; and governance of park tourism. Eagles et al. (2012) emphasize the critical significance of research outcomes in these domains, asserting that their enduring political and social pertinence and the efficacy of their management and pursuit of sustainability hinge upon them. As the number of protected areas in a nation increases, public funding for their support decreases. This highlights the need to explore entrepreneurial ventures and alternative management frameworks

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(Whitelaw, King, & Tolkach, 2014) to ensure efficient visitor management and maximize the environmental and economic benefits of nature-based tourism (Eagles & Hillel, 2008).

This research centered on Ons Island, situated within the Marine-Terrestrial National Park of the Atlantic Islands of Galicia in the north-western region of Spain. Despite relying heavily on tourism, the island lacks consistent, essential infrastructural facilities such as water, electricity, and sewage systems. This deficiency has led to notable tension, concerning the care and protection of the island, among local and regional authorities, business entities, inhabitants of the island, and environmental conservation associations. Among other alternatives (Piñeiro-Chousa, López-Cabarcos, Romero-Castro, & Vázquez-Rodríguez, 2021), the establishment of an entrance fee could be used to improve the quality of sustainable tourism on the island entirely and a viable option to ensure its economic sustainability in the long-term. To implement this, it is imperative to conduct an in-depth analysis of the potential factors that both entice visitors to pay or dissuade them from paying an entrance fee to the national park. Identifying and categorizing these factors constitutes the primary goal of this research.

The establishment of entrance fees to visit protected areas which complement government budget funds is a controversial issue in the media and scientific literature (Platania & Rizzo, 2018; Reynisdottir, Song, & Agrusa, 2008). Many studies consider that they can be an effective approach in improving the efficiency of protected areas (Miller, Jorgenson, Nickerson, & Pitas, 2018) and providing adequate sources of funding to support innovative efforts in the field of sustainable tourism (Shasha, Geng, Sun, Musakwa, & Sun, 2020). However, to implement a long-term sustainable management system that relies less on public funds, whilst simultaneously understanding the preferences and behavior of visitors who seek and value a more sustainable form of tourism, is essential (Alves, Ballester, Rigall-I-Torrent, Ferreira, & Benavente, 2017; Mandić, 2019). Traditionally, these preferences have been examined using contingent valuation (CV) or choice experiment (CE) and are typically represented as a 'willingness to pay' (WTP) measure (Barrio & Loureiro, 2013). The first contribution of this study involves taking a step forward and delving deeper into the motivations behind the willingness to pay for a particular service. Furthermore, it suggests employing Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, which has not been previously used for this objective (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). This theory, commonly used to analyze job satisfaction, differentiates between two categories of factors: motivational factors, which positively impact individuals' satisfaction and motivation, and hygienic factors, whose presence alone does not spur motivation, but their absence can result in dissatisfaction. By applying this theory, it becomes feasible to discern between factors that can influence an individual's willingness to pay (motivators) and those that do not (hygienic).

Furthermore, research efforts have mainly been focused on the analysis of the willingness to pay (WTP) an entrance fee, but not on the non-intention to pay. The second contribution of this study is centered around the analysis of the absence of WTP of visitors to a national park. This contribution takes into consideration the fact that there is no entrance fee for national parks in Spain owing to financing by public administrations. Understanding the reasons behind unwillingness to pay provides crucial information about the barriers or concerns faced by tourists that may be preventing them from adopting the proposed payment strategy. Conversely, understanding why tourists are willing to pay can prove useful. Unless the reasons behind their unwillingness to pay are addressed, significant barriers may persist which could cause the failure of an initiative to implement a pay-to-enter system.

The final contribution of this study stems from the employed methodology. Although previous research has analyzed the causes that can lead to the design of successful sustainable tourism entrepreneurial strategies, there is very little research analyzing the combined effect of different conditions on peoples' pro-environmental behaviors (Pedroso

& Kung'u, 2019). This study examines a novel methodology used to assess the lack of willingness to pay (WTP) within the context of sustainable tourism. Specifically, the study proposed a model that analyses how the combined effects of motivating variables related to pro-environmental behavior (pre-visit variables) and hygiene factors (non-motivating) associated with pro-environmental behavior (post-visit variables) lead to an unwillingness to pay an entrance fee to visit a national park, using the fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA). This methodology makes it possible to identify various paths leading to the same outcome. Specifically, it pinpoints those conditions that ought to be fostered or discouraged in the management of a natural park to either enhance or diminish users' willingness to pay.

This study aims to simplify the assessment of implementing payment strategies, such as visitor fees, to strengthen sustainable ecosystems and services in the tourism sector, while considering the constraints of limited public finances and restricted funds for conservation. This information is valuable to park managers who can therefore redesign their management strategies related to park financing, public support, visitor satisfaction, and pricing strategies (Eagles, 2014).

2. Literature review

2.1. Sustainable tourism in protected areas

The relationship between tourism development and environmental degradation is one of the major concerns on political agendas for sustainable tourism (Bigerna, Micheli, & Polinori, 2019). An important area in the field of sustainable tourism relates to the way in which a balance can be achieved between commercial and environmental interests (Pearce & Dowling, 2018), and how responsible tourism practices can significantly contribute to the 'greenification' of the economy of certain geographical areas (Markose, Vazhakkatte, & George, 2022).

Tourism in protected areas is a complex phenomenon, which has both positive and negative effects on the environment and the local communities (Bigerna et al., 2019). Among the positive effects is the ability to put people in contact with nature and thus spread awareness about environmental problems, which can lead to sustainable behaviors capable of creating a new generation of responsible consumers. In addition, this type of tourism has the potential to strengthen economic and business opportunities of the local population; improve local infrastructure, transportation, and communication; transmit the values of the protected area through education and interpretation; create economic value; and protect resources that are not otherwise perceived as valuable (Spenceley, Snyman, & Eagles, 2017). Possible negative effects could be the loss of aesthetic value; higher levels of noise, emissions, and garbage; possible deforestation due to the construction of buildings; soil erosion; surface, groundwater, and air contamination; ecosystem disturbance; and landscape changes (Muhanna, 2006).

Achieving the desired equilibrium between conservation goals and socioeconomic progress within protected areas necessitates a conducive environment for responsible entrepreneurial growth. This environment should be founded on the principles of sustainable development (Lordkipanidze, Brezet, & Backman, 2005), and it demands significant efforts to reconcile the diverse perspectives of various stakeholders involved in tourism exploitation, such as those of tourism entrepreneurs, residents, visitors, and government authorities (Piñeiro-Chousa et al., 2021).

One of the key issues that need to be addressed concerns the management of visitors by park managers and government authorities (Jamal & Stronza, 2009; Whitelaw et al., 2014), as this management has a direct impact on ecological outcomes and the potential revenue generated from entrance fees (Thur, 2010). As a result, a heated debate has arisen around the notion of implementing a fee to enter a natural park. While some researchers believe that public goods should always be financed by public organizations (Whitelaw et al., 2014), others maintain that tourists visiting protected areas receive exclusive recreational

benefits, and they should therefore be willing to pay an entrance fee (Eagles & Hillel, 2008).

Hence, the choice to visit a natural park may depend on visitors' willingness to pay, influenced by, among other factors, their socioeconomic and demographic characteristics, as well as how appealing the park is to visitors (Thur, 2010; Whitelaw et al., 2014).

2.2. Willingness and unwillingness to pay

Willingness to pay is defined as the "amount that stakeholders are willing to pay to maintain the changes in quantity and rehabilitation in the quality of environmental attributes" (Ramdas & Mohamed, 2014, p. 379). This measure reflects the value, encompassing both use and non-use aspects, that visitors attribute to a protected area (Alves et al., 2017; Togridou, Hovardas, & Pantis, 2006). It is therefore the theoretically correct measure of the changes that people are willing to accept regarding their well-being to maintain and increase environmental quality (Alberini, Rosato, Longo, & Zanatta, 2005). From a management perspective, it is important to identify what type of tourists are willing to pay for sustainable destinations to achieve new tourism models whose central value is sustainability (Pulido-Fernández, & López-Sánchez, 2016). These tourists would be willing to pay a certain amount of money to compensate for the use and non-use value related to the environment (Togridou et al., 2006).

Conversely, understanding the underlying reasons for reluctance to pay provides vital information about the obstacles or apprehensions experienced by tourists that might hinder their acceptance of the proposed payment approach. For this reason, the approach taken in this paper seeks to analyze the characteristics of visitors who are unwilling to pay an entrance fee in national parks (specifically, on the island of Ons).

2.3. Antecedents of (un)willingness to pay: motivating and hygiene factors

The motivation-hygiene theory, also known as Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), distinguishes between motivation and hygiene factors, highlighting the former as the most important. Hygiene factors are associated with the need to avoid unpleasant things, and their presence eliminates dissatisfaction but does not directly cause motivation. Motivation factors are related to the individual's need for personal growth and self-actualization. Their presence leads to an increase in satisfaction and motivation. Furthermore, motivational factors are intrinsic to the individual, while hygiene factors are extrinsic. Both factors, intrinsic and extrinsic to the individual, can interact and influence each other (McGinlay et al., 2023).

It is advisable to apply this theory to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that can motivate individuals to support a protected area, potentially prompting tourists to be willing to pay an entrance fee. The presence of hygiene factors, normally expected by tourists, predictably does not impact their willingness to pay.

Concerning motivating factors, the scientific community has identified several that can have an impact on the degree of support for a protected area (Jones et al., 2022). Within the realm of individual-related factors, various elements have been identified, including environmental beliefs and attitudes (Carrus, Bonaiuto, & Bonnes, 2005), personal values and environmental worldview (Wynveen, Wynveen, & Sutton, 2015), traditions, norms, and ethical considerations (Hoelting, Hard, Christie, & Pollnac, 2013), location concerning the protected area (Jones, Malesios, Kantartzis, & Dimitrakopoulos, 2020), and personal and demographic circumstances (Tonder & Jurvelius, 2004). In this final category, factors such as the purpose of the visit, the frequency of visits to the protected area, as well as age, gender, educational level, and income of the individual would be included (Jones et al., 2022).

Among the factors mentioned, this study focuses on the analysis of the motivational effects derived from the purpose of the visit (Jones

et al., 2022), and the visitor's environmental beliefs and attitudes (Carrus et al., 2005). Sustainable tourism in these areas aims to attract environmentally conscious visitors with sustainable and ecological interests (Arabatiz & Grigoroudis, 2010; Togridou et al., 2006). These visitors frequently exhibit awareness, attitudes, motivations, and concerns for the environment (Hollweg et al., 2011), along with respectable and responsible behaviors (Ramdas & Mohamed, 2014). All these factors could encourage people's willingness to face environmental problems, promote the maintenance and improvement of green spaces (Daudi, 2008), and act as motivating factors to boost the willingness to pay an entrance fee to a natural park. Thus, tourists with high levels of 'sustainable intelligence' (commitment, attitude, knowledge, and/or behavior in terms of sustainability) are willing to pay more to visit a more sustainable tourist destination (Pulido-Fernández, & López-Sánchez, 2016). Similarly, the absence of these pro-environmental behaviors could lead to the absence of the willingness to pay an entrance fee. Therefore, the following propositions were tested.

P1. The absence of visitors' willingness to pay an entrance fee stems from the primary reason for their visit not pertaining to the exploration of a national park.

P2. The absence of visitors' willingness to pay an entrance fee arises from the lack of prior payment for access to a national park.

P3. The absence of visitors' willingness to pay an entrance fee derives from the absence of involvement in environmental issues.

The two hygiene conditions under consideration are associated with ensuring tourists' satisfaction during their visit. It is understood that their expectations regarding the value for money of the visit and their anticipated level of satisfaction are established before the visit (Togridou et al., 2006). Hence, visitors to protected areas have previously idealized the experiences they will derive from their visit (Taplin, Rodger, & Moore, 2016), which will manifest as physical and emotional responses to the services they encounter (Oviedo-García et al., 2019). While the 'quality of the service' offered refers to the visitors' perception of the quality of the actions or activities performed by the natural park, the 'satisfaction with the tourist experience' comes from a more general and subjective visitors' evaluation (Rodger, Taplin, & Moore, 2015). Although these concepts are different, both affect behavioral intentions after the visit, that is, the stated intention of tourists to behave in a certain way after visiting a specific destination (Moore, Rodger, & Taplin, 2015; Oviedo-García et al., 2019). Applying Herzberg's theory, it is logical that the absence of satisfactory experiences during the visit will result in the absence of the intention to pay an entrance fee to the natural park on subsequent visits. Thus, the following propositions were tested.

P4. When visitors perceive a lack of value for money during their visit, it results in a reluctance to pay an entrance fee on subsequent visits.

P5. If visitors do not experience overall satisfaction during their visit, it leads to a reluctance to pay an entrance fee on subsequent visits.

3. Study area

The institution of the national park has a history spanning over a century in Spain. At the beginning of the 20th century, a series of exceptional sites were selected for the respect and conservation of natural values and the enjoyment of society.

The Marine-Terrestrial National Park of the Atlantic Islands of Galicia, located in the northwest of Spain, is the most recent maritime-terrestrial park to be designated as a national park in Spain. Established in 2002, this park encompasses four archipelagos: Ons, Cíes, Cortegada, and Sálvora.

Ons Island, the only inhabited island within the park, spans a protected area of 2171 ha of marine and 470 ha of terrestrial land. The Ons Archipelago constitutes the largest terrestrial protected area within the

national park designation. The island is entirely owned by the public administration (Xunta de Galicia, Government of Spain), and there is no private property. There are plots of land that are used by different people under the concession (former settler workers, concessionary companies, etc). These services are managed by the regional government (Xunta de Galicia) and are governed by specific regulations. In terms of resources, water is sourced from wells, while the island operates a wastewater treatment plant. Electricity primarily comes from solar panels, although there is still some reliance on fossil fuel generators for power generation. Waste management on the island includes selective waste collection; non-recyclable waste is transported to the mainland for further treatment.

Characterized by a predominantly rural landscape, the primary economic activity in the area is tourism. Tourist use of the island is limited to the high season (from May 15 to September 15 and Easter), during which there is a daily cap of 1300 visitors arriving on the island by boat, with an additional 300 people allowed to stay in the camping area. This totals approximately 137,000 visitors per year. The average length of stay on the island is less than 24 h and tourist activities include water-related activities, hiking, and wildlife watching. The development of recreational tourist activities is explicitly considered a primary management objective on Ons Island, together with the preservation of biodiversity and the maintenance of environmental services (Sotelo-Navalpotro, García-Quiroga, & Sotelo-Pérez, 2012).

4. Methodology

4.1. Participants and procedure

Data were obtained through a questionnaire of people who visited Ons Island between August and September 2019. A questionnaire was designed to ask respondents about their willingness to pay a hypothetical daily entrance fee. Based on previous studies, the questionnaire included several questions related to the characteristics of the visit (before and during the visit) and to visitors, as well as their potential motivations for paying (Juutinen et al., 2011; Togridou et al., 2006; Voltaire, Pirrone, & Bailly, 2013).

Due to the lack of tourist registries for visitors to Ons Island, as well as their substantial numbers and constant mobility, probabilistic sampling techniques cannot be implemented. Consequently, respondents were selected randomly. The interviewers sought the participation of every tenth individual to mitigate any potential group influence on the respondents' opinions (Togridou et al., 2006). This elucidated the purpose of the study and solicited the respondents' cooperation. The surveys, lasting roughly 20 min each, were conducted on both weekends and weekdays during the summer season. Surveyors carried out the interviews during morning and afternoon shifts before visitors departed back to the mainland. In the end, 159 questionnaires were obtained from 1000 people contacted, yielding 151 useable questionnaires (15.1% response rate).

Most of the respondents were female (60.9%), in an age range of 31–50 years (57.6%), with university studies (64.9%), without children (57%) and with a monthly income between €1001 and €2500. The vast majority were visitors (96%) from Galicia (49.7%) and other parts of Spain (45%).

4.2. fsQCA method: outcome, causal conditions, and calibration

By adhering to the principle of equifinality, the QCA methodology permits the establishment of asymmetrical configurations by utilizing causal conditions and/or their combinations (Roig-Tierno, Kun-Huang, & Ribeiro-Soriano, 2016). Within the QCA methodology, the fuzzy-set QCA (fsQCA) allows for various degrees of categorization of the conditions and is an optimal method to study causally complex social phenomena that can be explained in terms of sufficiency and necessity (Woodside, 2016). Although this method is particularly suitable for

studying small and medium-sized samples (Fiss, 2011), it is equally valid for larger samples (Vis, 2012). The fsQCA method was applied following the steps proposed by Schneider and Wagemann (2010), that is, calibration, analysis of necessity, and analysis of sufficiency.

The outcome variable was the willingness to pay an entrance fee to access a national park: "Although the National Park has public funding, would you be willing to pay an entrance fee to the Island entirely allocated to improve its management and sustainability?" This variable is analyzed dichotomously (yes/no) (Togridou et al., 2006). The significance of the outcome variable being studied and the necessity to thoroughly analyze how the selected conditions can explain it clearly have prompted an examination of its absence rather than its presence. This approach aims to ascertain which combinations of conditions may result in the absence of willingness to pay an entrance fee to Ons Island. Three motivating conditions related to previous experience visiting other national parks and two hygiene conditions related to the current experience visiting Ons Island were taken from the previous literature (Juutinen et al., 2011; Togridou et al., 2006). The variables related to the pre-experience were the following.

- (i) The main reason for the visit is to visit a national park (Yes/No) (adapted from Togridou et al., 2006).
- (ii) The fact of having previously paid a fee to access a national park (Yes/No) (Togridou et al., 2006).
- (iii) The level of involvement in environmental issues (High/Medium/Low) (Juutinen et al., 2011; Togridou et al., 2006).

The variables related to the post-experience were the following.

- (iv) Value for money (High/Medium/Low) (Togridou et al., 2006).
- (v) Overall satisfaction with the visit to the national park (ten-point Likert scale, from 1 (*totally dissatisfied*) to 10 (*totally satisfied*). This variable was created ad-hoc for this study to reflect the visitors' overall satisfaction with the visit.

The study also includes the gender of the respondents as a classification variable. As suggested by Jones et al. (2022), the gender of the visitor may influence their motivations for supporting a protected area. While some authors argue that women are more willing to pay for nature conservation than men (López-Mosquera, 2016; Song, Xue, Jing, & Zhang, 2021), others find non-significant differences between men and women in willingness to pay to enter a protected area (Reynisdottir et al., 2008).

Table 1 shows the description of the outcome and condition variables.

After evaluating the psychometric properties of the scales, calibration was used to transform the data into fuzzy sets. Three anchors were established for calibration of the condition related to overall satisfaction: full membership, maximum ambiguity, and full non-membership (Ragin, 2008), with thresholds at the 90th, 50th, and 10th percentiles, respectively (Woodside, Feurer, & Baumbach, 2016).

Table 1
Outcome and conditions.

Type	Label	Description	Codification
Outcome	~WTP	Absence of willingness to pay an entrance fee to access to national park	Crisp value
Condition	MOT	The main reason for this trip is to visit a national park	Crisp value
Condition	OTRPAG	The respondent has visited a national park paying an entrance fee previously	Crisp value
Condition	IMP MED	Level of involvement in environmental issues	Crisp value
Condition	QPREC	Value for money current visit	Crisp value
Condition	SAT	Overall satisfaction with current visit	Fuzzy value

5. Results

67.5% of surveyed individuals expressed a willingness to pay an entrance fee to visit the Ons Island, while 32.5% indicated otherwise. This study focuses on the latter group, seeking to analyze the variables that influence their reluctance to pay for entry into a protected area.

To conduct the necessary condition analysis, three conditions related to the pre-experience and two conditions related to the post-experience (considering the gender variable as a classification variable) were examined to explain the absence of willingness to pay an entrance fee to access a national park (Table 2).

The results indicate that none of the five conditions considered herein on its own leads to the absence of willingness to pay. However, the joint absence of the three pro-environmental motivations before visiting the natural park (~MOT*~OTRPAG*~IMP MED) emerges as a necessary condition for the absence of WTP, both in the case of men (consistency = 0.90) and women (consistency = 0.91). In addition, the fact that at least one motivating element is present (MOT + OTRPAG + IMP MED) also emerges as a necessary condition for men (consistency = 0.90) and as a quasi-necessary condition for women (consistency = 0.83) (Schneider, Schulze-Bentrop, & Paunescu, 2010) (Table 3).

Analysis of sufficient conditions was also conducted in the two samples to identify the causal configurations that led to the outcome:

$$\sim\text{WTP} = f(\sim\text{MOT}, \sim\text{OTRPAG}, \sim\text{IMP MED}, \sim\text{QPREC}, \sim\text{SAT})$$

Intermediate solutions for the absence of WTP for the two samples are presented in Table 4. Two solutions led to the absence of WTP among female and male tourists who visited Ons Island.

6. Discussion

The results of this study contribute to the identification of the key variables that may contribute to the absence of WTP concerning paying an entrance fee to visit a protected area. This study has analyzed five conditions grouped into motivating factors (pro-environmental behaviors before the visit) and hygiene factors (behaviors after the visit), following the classification of the motivation-hygiene theory by Herzberg. This theory is used as a ‘mirror theory’ to differentiate those factors which can motivate behaviors (motivating factors), in this case, the absence of WTP, from those whose presence does not motivate behaviors, but its absence can cause dissatisfaction (hygiene factors). The results indicate that no individual condition is necessary for the absence of WTP, neither those considered as motivating factors nor hygiene factors. However, the joint analysis of the pro-environmental behaviors reveals that the absence of the three motivation factors is necessary for the absence of WTP for men and women. This result implies that when people do not show pro-environmental behaviors and ‘sustainable intelligence’, they will most likely not exhibit the intention to pay to visit a sustainable tourist destination (Pulido-Fernández, & López-Sánchez, 2016). Furthermore, they do not have the profile of visitors with ecological and sustainable interests or environmental motivations to be

Table 2
Analysis of necessary conditions (absence of willingness to pay).

Conditions	Female		Male	
	Consistency	Coverage	Consistency	Coverage
MOT	0.469697	0.645833	0.583333	0.600000
~MOT	0.530303	0.795455	0.416667	0.625000
OTRPAG	0.303030	0.625000	0.277778	0.476190
~OTRPAG	0.696970	0.766667	0.722222	0.684211
IMP MED	0.570000	0.125000	0.614167	0.626168
~IMP MED	0.430000	0.723980	0.385833	0.586323
QPREC	0.610000	0.713450	0.632500	0.600000
~QPREC	0.390000	0.723644	0.367500	0.628504
SAT	0.551212	0.726583	0.539167	0.632660
~SAT	0.448788	0.706415	0.460833	0.585805

Table 3
Analysis of necessary conditions (absence of WTP).

Outcome	Conditions	Consistency	Coverage
~WTP (MEN)	~MOT*~OTRPAG*~IMP MED	0.908333	0.628001
~WTP (MEN)	MOT + OTRPAG + IMP MED	0.905556	0.597288
~WTP (WOMEN)	~MOT*~OTRPAG*~IMP MED	0.915000	0.738535
~WTP (WOMEN)	MOT + OTRPAG + IMP MED	0.831212	0.695928

Note: (~) means absence of the condition; (+) is the logical operator ‘OR’; (*) is the logical operator ‘AND’.

Table 4
Analysis of sufficient conditions for the absence of WTP.

	Female		Male	
	1	2	1	2
Main reason for the trip (MOT)	○	○	○	○
Previous visits paying an entrance fee (OTRPAG)	○	○	○	○
Involvement in environmental issues (IMP MED)	○	●		●
Value for money current visit (QPREC)	●	○	●	
Overall satisfaction with current visit (SAT)			●	●
Consistency (incl.)	0.836570	0.842203	0.793286	0.783740
Raw coverage (cov.r)	0.156667	0.136667	0.124722	0.133889
Unique coverage (cov.u)	0.050000	0.030000	0.009167	0.018333
Solution coverage:	0.230758		0.143056	
Solution consistency:	0.847995		0.794753	

Note: ● denotes the presence of the condition and ○ denotes the absence of the condition. Large circles denote core conditions, and small circles denote peripheral conditions (Fiss, 2011). Consistency cut-off: 0.79 and 0.90. Frequency cut-off: 5.00. Vector of expected directions (0,0,0,0) (Ragin & Sean, 2016).

willing to pay (Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010; Togridou et al., 2006). In the same way, the fact that at least one of the motivating factors (having previously paid a visit to another national park, the desire to visit a national park, or having a high degree of involvement in environmental issues) must be present, also emerges as a necessary condition (for men) and quasi-necessary condition (for women) for the absence of WTP with regards to an entrance fee when visiting a national park.

From the results of the study, it can be deduced that, in line with previous research, motivating factors play a relevant role in determining the absence of WTP (Togridou et al., 2006). One of the most frequently cited reasons among respondents for not paying an entrance fee is associated with the public nature of national parks in Spain, suggesting that their maintenance should be funded by the government (more than 50% of respondents). This result is in accordance with the idea that public goods should always be financed by public organizations (Togridou et al., 2006; Whitelaw et al., 2014). Furthermore, the results of the necessary analysis do not indicate substantial differences between men and women, which contradicts the idea that women tend to respond more positively than men to the ‘principle of payment’ (Ioannis & Tasos, 2005).

Continuing with the analysis of the absence of WTP, the results indicate that combinations of several conditions are sufficient for the absence of WTP among men and women.

The first configuration that leads to the absence of WTP in women is the absence of the three motivation factors as core conditions and the presence of value for money of the current visit as a peripheral condition (Ragin & Sean, 2016). That is, the absence of the three pro-environmental behaviors is sufficient to lead to the absence of WTP, even if women feel that there is a balanced relationship between the

price paid for the visit and the quality of the service received. The second configuration also refers to the absence of two motivation factors (having previously paid a visit to another national park and the desire to visit a national park) and the lack of general satisfaction with the current visit (hygiene factor). Even though women demonstrate a strong commitment to environmental issues, they may hesitate to pay if their primary motive for visiting Ons Island is not to appreciate its protected natural environment, designated as a natural park, or if they have not experienced formerly paying an entrance fee to a natural park. These concerns are exacerbated if their satisfaction with the visit is low or negative, regardless of a heightened awareness of environmental issues.

In the male sample, the first configuration that leads to the absence of WTP is the absence of two motivation factors (having previously paid a visit to another national park and the desire to visit a national park), regardless of whether the assessment of the visit made to the island is positive in terms of general satisfaction and value for money of the services received (hygiene factors). Finally, the second configuration refers to the absence of the same two motivating factors, irrespective of the presence of high involvement in environmental issues and overall satisfaction with the current visit.

Two conclusions can be drawn for both the male and female samples: 1) the motivating factors play a fundamental role as determinants of the absence of the intention to pay to enter a natural park (especially after having previously paid a visit to another national park and having had the desire to visit a national park, which always act as core conditions), and 2) the lack of 'habit' leads women and men to be unwilling to pay (habit of having previously paid a visit to another national park, habit in the desire to visit a national park, and even the lack of involvement in environmental issues in the case of women). This is in line with the idea that visitors who have ecological and environmental motivations and interests (Arabatzi & Grigoroudis, 2010; Tougridou et al., 2006) have already generated a habit of environmental awareness that may lead them to be more willing to pay to visit a sustainable tourist destination (Pulido-Fernández, & López-Sánchez, 2016). Similarly, the absence of this 'habit' related to pro-environmental behaviors and attitudes would lead to the absence of the WTP and entrance fee to visit a national park, regardless of the assessment made of the current visit in terms of value for money and overall satisfaction. Hygiene factors do not play a decisive role in explaining the absence of willingness to pay in either men or women, which corroborates the theory set forth by Herberz et al. regarding the importance of motivating factors over hygiene factors.

In summary, the results of the empirical analysis support propositions P1 and P2. Propositions P3 and P4 are partially supported. Only proposition P5 is not supported by the data because the presence of satisfaction with the current visit leads to the absence of WTP in the case of men and this condition does not appear to be present in the case of women.

7. Conclusions and managerial implications

The management of protected areas faces complex challenges in the current context of climate change and the need to preserve biodiversity. These areas play a crucial role in conserving species and ecosystems. Simultaneously, sustainable tourism emerges as a key trend aiming to balance economic development with environmental conservation and the well-being of local communities. However, the significant increase in the number of protected areas and the increasingly scarce public funding allocated to these areas makes it necessary to launch entrepreneurial initiatives aimed at achieving sustainable tourism development that reconciles economic, social, and environmental spheres. In this regard, setting entrance fees not only helps regulate visitor flow and reduce their environmental impact but also ensures that the funds collected are reinvested in the protection and management of these spaces, promoting a tourism model that contributes both to environmental preservation and local development.

One of the objectives of sustainable tourism is to attract a type of

visitor with environmental motivations and sustainable and ecological interests (Arabatzi & Grigoroudis, 2010). In the marketing and management of protected areas, it is essential to highlight the perceived value for visitors by combining natural beauty with quality services and educational experiences and reflecting this in pricing strategies. Market segmentation allows for tailoring these strategies to the diverse motivations of visitors, while effective branding emphasizes the uniqueness and conservation efforts of the area. Furthermore, ensuring a satisfying visitor experience enhances their willingness to pay and generates positive word-of-mouth, contributing to the destination's sustained success. Attracting this type of tourist will stimulate the growth of sustainable entrepreneurial ventures offering environmentally friendly products and services. These initiatives intend to cater to tourists with high levels of 'sustainable intelligence'—those committed to and knowledgeable about sustainability—and who are willing to pay more to visit sustainable tourist destinations (Pulido-Fernández, & López-Sánchez, 2016). This type of tourist will not only demand a protected and well-maintained space but will also require that all services and products offered in that space are consistent with the principles of sustainable tourism (UNEP-UNWTO, 2005). Therefore, it is necessary to promote responsible entrepreneurial tourism initiatives based on the framework of triple-bottom-line sustainability, whose objective is to balance economic, social, and environmental spheres. One such alternative could be the establishment of an entry fee dedicated exclusively to the maintenance and environmental care of the protected area, for which it is essential to understand the factors that may influence tourists' willingness to pay.

In this respect, this study focuses on identifying the reasons which may lead a person to not be willing to pay to enter a national park. To this end, factors grouped into motivating and hygiene factors have been considered. The results reveal that the motivating factors (having previously paid a visit to another national park, the desire to visit a national park, or having a high degree of involvement in environmental issues) proved to be more important than the hygiene factors (value for money and overall satisfaction with the visit). This implies that park managers must try to attract a profile of green tourists (Arabatzi & Grigoroudis, 2010), concerned about environmental sustainability (Hollweg et al., 2011), and it, in turn, suggests that one of their main objectives, consistent with their environmental values, is to visit protected areas. It is expected that this type of tourist presents a favorable mindset in supporting the implementation of actions aimed at protecting the environment (Daudi, 2008) and the payment of an entrance fee to preserve its use (Pulido-Fernández, & López-Sánchez, 2016). Owing to this, the managers of the national park should consider utilizing a tool to control the number of visitors who are more environmentally involved (Jamal & Stronza, 2009; Whitelaw et al., 2014), which, in turn, has the potential to counteract any possible negative impacts of the visit (Muhanna, 2006) which arise from charging an entrance fee (Thur, 2010). In this way, a better fit between commercial and environmental interests could be achieved (Pearce & Dowling, 2018). Such an initiative entails fostering a collaborative dialogue among national park managers, public institutions, policymakers, residents, and visitors. The goal is to achieve an integrated and sustainable approach to managing natural heritage, along with the establishment of dedicated conservation areas that benefit from the revenue generated through entrance fees (Thur, 2010).

A primary contribution of this study lies in employing Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory to investigate unwillingness to pay by utilizing a pioneering methodology in this field, namely fsQCA. Consequently, the study has thus been able to report the combined effect of three motivating variables and two hygiene variables on unwillingness to pay an entrance fee to visit a national park. Frequently, national park managers are concerned about the satisfaction that visitors may report on their visit to the protected area (Arabatzi & Grigoroudis, 2010). However, this study shows that satisfaction with the visit is not a fundamental criterion when asking visitors to pay for a ticket,

corroborating the results obtained by previous research (Pedroso & Kung'u, 2019). However, the fact that visitors have already acquired a 'habit' concerning emerging pro-environmental behaviors and attitudes, significantly affects their (un)willingness to pay. Barrio and Loureiro's (2018) study carried out in Ons Island concludes that there are individuals who are willing to pay more to carry out actions that result in greater protection and quality of the national park. These individuals tend to agree more with the payment mechanism and with the idea that society needs the contribution of every citizen. However, other people are not willing to pay because they consider that the government must efficiently use public funds and not seek additional funds. This type of individual is used by public authorities overseeing the funding of national parks (Whitelaw et al., 2014) and does not have the acquired 'habit' of paying. The study by Strazzer, Genius, Scarpa, and Hutchinson (2003) on visiting forests and woodlands in Scotland supports this idea. The study reveals that people who frequently visit forests for free, regardless of the value they place on the site, find it more difficult to accept the idea of having to pay for something they believe they are entitled to for free. However, people who are used to paying show a greater willingness to pay. Therefore, if what is being evaluated is to establish an entrance fee, all the promotion strategies of the national park should be aimed at attracting the type of tourist who has the custom of paying to visit protected natural spaces; that is, a green tourist, aware of the protection offered by environmental and sustainable tourism. Similarly, it is necessary to transparently explain how resources are managed and where the financial funds obtained by the park for its maintenance are allocated.

The second contribution of this study is the absence of differences between men and women regarding the intention to pay or to not pay. Although some authors maintain that women are more willing to pay for nature conservation than men (López-Mosquera, 2016; Song et al., 2021), others find non-significant differences between men and women in the willingness to pay to enter a protected area (Reynisdottir et al., 2008). The results of these last studies are in line with those obtained in this research, which concludes that it is the habit of previous environmental behaviors that determines or does not determine the intention to pay an entrance fee to visit a national park (Ioannis & Tasos, 2005). The current study, like any other empirical study, has several limitations that must be considered when interpreting the results.

One of the main limitations is the generalization of the results to other protected areas in other countries due to the study's low response rate. The reasons that can explain this response rate are data collection at the island exit immediately before boarding, the length of the survey, and the sampling approach. To enhance the generalizability of the survey results and eliminate small sample bias, it would be advantageous to conduct the survey with larger sample sizes and extend the duration over which the survey is conducted. Another issue affecting the generalizability of the data is that the survey was mostly completed by Spanish visitors who predominantly believe that visiting national parks should be free. In fact, in Spain, entry to national parks is free, with their maintenance and funding being the responsibility of the state. So, it is possible that if this study is replicated in other geographical areas where the visit to protected areas or national parks is not free, the results will be different. In any case, given the great differences that exist regarding this issue throughout the world, it is complicated (regardless of where the study is carried out) to generalize valid results for all natural spaces.

Future research could be conducted in other protected areas (not solely national parks) to strengthen the conclusions of the present findings. Future studies could also focus on the identification and analysis of other possible causes that lead tourists to have a greater or lesser intention to pay to visit a national park or any other type of protected area. Likewise, future studies could focus on estimating the entrance fee that visitors would be willing to pay.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Paula Vázquez-Rodríguez: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Visualization, Validation, Supervision, Software, Resources, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Noelia Romero-Castro:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Investigation, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Aleksandar Sević:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Conceptualization. **Lara Quinoá-Piñero:** Software, Resources, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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