

**BRIDGING PERCEIVED DESTINATION IMAGE AND MARKET SEGMENTATION – AN APPLICATION TO GOLF TOURISM**

Antónia Correia<sup>a\*</sup>, Nuno

Oliveira

b

and Filipa Silva

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CASEE Centre for Advanced Studies in Economics and Econometrics University of Algarve, Campus de Gambelas, 8000 Faro, Portugal; tel: +351 289 800 900 ext 7426, e-mail: [acorreia@ualg.pt](mailto:acorreia@ualg.pt)

<sup>b</sup> London School of Economics – Department of Management, UK, e-mail:

[n.r.oliveira@lse.ac.uk](mailto:n.r.oliveira@lse.ac.uk)

<sup>c</sup> University of Algarve – Faculty of Economics, Portugal

\* Corresponding author      **Abstract** □□□□□ □□□

Motivations, perceptions and expectations are crucial in the build-up process of perceived destination image. This research aims at exploring the multidimensionality of golf destination image, and its heterogeneity among market segments. This research relies on a sample of 100 interviews to golfer tourists visiting six of major golf courses in Vilamoura, Algarve. The findings suggest that motivations, expectations and perceptions are inter-correlated. The findings also highlight three market segments of golf players, namely ‘tourist’, ‘social tourist’, and ‘player’. Grounded by expectancy value theory framework, we conclude on the heterogeneity of perceived image among segments. Indeed there is a gap between the real destination image and the image perceived by tourists. We argue for the explanatory capital of intrinsic motivations in understanding the idiosyncratic images. Finally this paper enumerates some implications research, management and planning policies.