

# ***Estimation of the Non-Use Value (Existence Value) of the University's Old Campus by Contingent Valuation Method***

—A Case Study in Central and Western China

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**Abstract**—The old campus of universities have a long history and thick culture. As the cultural heritage, its existence value should be given a high attention. This paper uses Contingent Valuation Method to explore the existence value of eight old campus in the central and western China, including Lanzhou University (LZU), Lanzhou University of Technology (LZUT), Lanzhou City University (LZCU), Northwest Normal University (NWNU), Xi'an Polytechnic University (XAPU), Xi'an University of Architecture and Technology (XAUAT), Zhengzhou University (ZZU) and Henan University (HNU). The results show that 91.9% of the respondents were willing to pay (WTP) a certain amount of money for the perpetual existence of the old campus, and the average WTP was 184.9 RMB per month. WTP was correlated with the interviewees' expected monthly incomes and region. WTP was significantly difference on household registration, the expected income, the level of education and the region where these colleges and universities located in. WTP was different among each college and university. HNU, XAPU and XAUAT had significantly higher WTP than the other five colleges and universities. The total existence value of the old campus in the central and western China was about  $49.7 \times 108$  RMB per year. The results showed that existence value of the old campus was very large, so they should be given a priority on protection and development. Due to the value evaluation of old campus have never been explored, but the old campus's social function, cultural function and historical contribution, development of social economy shows that the existence value of the old campus of colleges and universities is very large. However, because of the limited samples, the results of this paper maybe are not so accurate and reliable. In order to comprehensively understand the existence value of old campus in our study areas and even at the national level, further work should be needed.

**Keywords**—contingent valuation method; the number of willingness to pay; colleges in central and western China; the old campus; the existence value

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Contingent Valuation Methodology (CVM) and the closely related "contingent choice" methods have become

increasingly popular in cultural economics, and empirical researchers use CVM to explore the non-use values of various resources [1]. It was originally proposed by Ciriacy-Wantrup (1947), who believes the prevention of soil erosion generates some 'extra market benefits' that are public goods in nature. Therefore, one possible way of estimating these benefits is to stimulate the individuals' willingness to pay (WTP) for these benefits through a survey method [2-4], but Davis (1963) was the first to use the CVM empirically when he estimated the benefits of goose hunting through a survey among the goose-hunters [5]. Briefly, it allows respondents to simulate their maximum WTP for the protection of environmental resources in the hypothetical market in the form of questionnaires by utilizing the maximization of utility principle [6-9], and becomes the mainstream of value evaluation of public goods [10-11].

In non-use value (including existence, bequest, option and altruistic value), the existence value is usually as a dominant value, because it often accounts for about 60% of the total non-use value [12-13]. Existence value refers to the value that respondents are willing to pay to ensure that the service function of the resource lasts for a long time [14-15]. This evaluation has nothing to do with its present or future use, but knows the persistence of the environmental characteristics of objects from the perspective of a sense of satisfaction, regardless of whether others benefit from it or not. In addition, the evaluation results can be used in policymaking [16]. Many scholars have studied the existence values of aquatic animals (e.g., sea otters, monk seals and sturgeon), terrestrial animals (e.g., giant pandas, tigers, wolves and Chinese Asian elephants, etc.), plants (e.g., mushrooms and trees), and ecosystems (e.g., forests, oceans, wetlands, arable land, meadows and estuaries) [14-15, 17-24]. In addition, some scholars have in-depth research on the existence value of biodiversity, farm leisure landscape, park, cultural heritage and nature reserve [1, 19, 25-27].

As the birthplace of colleges and universities, the old campus integrate with intangible culture and spirit that

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## **Table of Contents Value Existence**

1. Understanding the eBook Value Existence
  - The Rise of Digital Reading Value Existence
  - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Value Existence
  - Exploring Different Genres
  - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
  - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
  - Popular eBook Platforms
  - Features to Look for in an Value Existence
  - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Value Existence
  - Personalized Recommendations
  - Value Existence User Reviews and Ratings

- Value Existence and Bestseller Lists
- 5. Accessing Value Existence Free and Paid eBooks
  - Value Existence Public Domain eBooks
  - Value Existence eBook Subscription Services
  - Value Existence Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Value Existence eBook Formats
  - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
  - Value Existence Compatibility with Devices
  - Value Existence Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
  - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Value Existence
  - Highlighting and Note-Taking Value Existence
  - Interactive Elements Value Existence
- 8. Staying Engaged with Value Existence
  - Joining Online Reading Communities
  - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
  - Following Authors and Publishers Value Existence
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Value Existence
  - Benefits of a Digital Library
  - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Value Existence
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
  - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
  - Minimizing Distractions
  - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Value Existence
  - Setting Reading Goals Value Existence
  - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Value Existence
  - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Value Existence
  - Distinguishing Credible Sources

13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
  - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
  - Exploring Educational eBooks
14. Embracing eBook Trends
  - Integration of Multimedia Elements
  - Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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