

**XXVI CONGRESO  
DE MARKETING**  
**AEMARK 2014**  
Elche, 17 al 19 de Septiembre





**XXVI CONGRESO  
DE MARKETING  
AEMARK 2014**

**AEMARK  
ELCHE  
17-19 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 2014**

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# 1. Presentación

*En la presente XXVI edición del Congreso de Marketing de AEMARK se pueden destacar cuatro cuestiones interesantes. La primera es su consolidación como congreso internacional. Los Encuentros de Profesores Universitarios de Marketing se transformaron en congreso nacional y desde hace pocos años se ha dado un salto cualitativo: hay una creciente colaboración de académicos procedentes de diferentes países. En menos de cinco ediciones se ha pasado de una presencia casi testimonial de autores internacionales a una presencia significativa. Así, en la presente edición hay autores españoles, de América Latina, europeos y asiáticos, lo que hace de él un congreso auténticamente internacionalizado. Esto es un magnífico síntoma de colaboración que seguro que irá creciendo en los próximos años.*

*La segunda cuestión es que se ha reducido de forma significativa el número de ponencias presentadas. Así, de las 177 presentadas al XXV Congreso realizado en Barcelona hemos pasado a 132, incluyendo comunicaciones, trabajos en curso y tesis. Sin embargo, se ha incrementado de forma muy importante la calidad de los trabajos, como lo demuestra el porcentaje de ponencias aceptadas (tras un proceso de doble revisión ciega) pasando de un 69 a casi un 83 por ciento.*

*En tercer lugar, cabe destacar que en la presente edición se abandona el formato en papel y el soporte CD y se opta por la edición digital. El acceso a las ponencias a través de la Red es más sencillo y facilita la posibilidad de recibir consultas y citas. Los investigadores usamos principalmente los documentos accesibles vía Internet como input para nuestras investigaciones. Como sabemos, las nuevas tecnologías no sólo suponen una mayor y más rápida obtención y difusión de*

*la información sino también una nueva forma de trabajar, en la que el nuevo formato digital puede resultar más útil.*

*La cuarta y última cuestión es que el XXVI Congreso está pensado, al igual que los que le han precedido, como un punto de encuentro para la reflexión y puesta en común de los avances en nuestras respectivas áreas de trabajo. Ya no sólo se trata de realizar nuevos hallazgos sino aflore su verdadero valor para la academia, para las empresas y para la sociedad.*

*Desde el punto académico un vistazo a las ponencias presentadas muestra la especialización progresiva de los contenidos y un mayor empuje de los enfoques multidisciplinares bajo un trabajo grupal (que se ha hecho imprescindible). Desde el punto de vista empresarial, muchas de las comunicaciones presentadas se centran en aspectos que aportan valor directo a las empresas. Finalmente, hay una mayor preocupación de los investigadores por los aspectos no directamente lucrativos y de responsabilidad social.*

*El documento que el lector tiene en su mano es el resumen del esfuerzo de cientos de investigadores, de sus ideas y de ese triple enfoque académico, empresarial y social. Sin embargo, no es suficiente. Como científicos sociales, todos pensamos ya en mejorar nuestros trabajos y en dar respuestas a los retos y cuestiones que la sociedad demanda.*

FRANCISCO J. SARABIA-SÁNCHEZ  
Presidente del Comité Organizador  
del XXVI Congreso de Marketing AEMARK 2014

## 2. Comité Organizador

Ha estado formado por profesores del Área de Comercialización e Investigación de Mercados del Departamento de Estudios Económicos y Financieros de la Universidad Miguel Hernández. Su composición ha sido:

*Tabla 2.1. Comité Organizador de AEMARK 2014*

<b>CARGO</b>	<b>NOMBRE Y APELLIDOS</b>	<b>EMAIL</b>
<b>Presidente</b>	Francisco J. Sarabia Sánchez	fransarabia@umh.es
<b>Vocales</b>	María Elena González Gascón	elena.gonzalez@umh.es
	Andreas Kanther	kanther@umh.es
	Liudmila Ostrovsкая	lostrovsкая@umh.es
	José Francisco Parra Azor	jofra.parra@goumh.umh.es
	Carla Rodríguez Sánchez	c.rodiguez@umh.es



### 3. Comité Científico

Como en las anteriores ediciones, se ha realizado una evaluación de las comunicaciones (sean ponencias o trabajos en curso) presentados por los investigadores basándose en un *proceso de revisión ciega por pares y a una única evaluación*. Este sistema está garantizado por la existencia de un Comité Científico estructurado de la siguiente forma:

- a) Responsables de Área, que asignan revisores en función del área temática de la que sean especialistas. Por tanto, son Responsables de Área investigadores de reconocida trayectoria investigadora (Titulares y Catedráticos con al menos un sexenio de investigación).
- b) Presidencia del Congreso, que actúa como ‘Responsable de Área’ para las comunicaciones firmadas por otros responsables de área.
- c) Revisores, que son profesores especialistas en una o varias temáticas elegidos por los Jefes de Área entre los socios de AEMARK. De forma previa tienen que inscribirse como revisores y demostrar con publicaciones de calidad que tienen experiencia investigadora acreditada.

El proceso de evaluación que realiza el Comité Científico es el siguiente:

1. Los autores introducen en la aplicación Web del congreso una copia anónima de su trabajo. También eligen el área temática en la que desean ser evaluados.
2. Una vez pasado el plazo para introducir los trabajos, la aplicación Web los asigna en función del Área Temática elegida por el/los autor/es de cada trabajo.
3. Cada Responsable de Área asigna dos revisores anónimos por trabajo. La evaluación sigue un proceso estándar e igual para todos los trabajos asignados. La evaluación final es motivada.
4. Los trabajos se aceptan o rechazan por los dos evaluadores anónimos. Sólo en caso de discrepancia es el Responsable de Área quien decide sobre la aceptación o rechazo.

5. Una vez concluido el plazo de evaluación, se informa a los autores del resultado de la misma, indicándoseles los motivos por los que se acepta o rechaza el trabajo para su presentación en sesiones paralelas durante el congreso.

A este proceso hay que añadirle el filtro previo que imponen los propios autores sobre sus expectativas en relación al nivel de calidad de su trabajo (tanto en sí mismo como comparado con otros presentados en años anteriores).

Más información sobre las normas del proceso de evaluación de trabajos pueden verse en <http://www.aemarkcongresos.com/congreso2014/callforpapers.php#evaluacion>.

### 3.1. Responsables de las Áreas Temáticas

RESPONSABLE	UNIVERSIDAD	ÁREA TEMÁTICA
BARRUTIA LEGARRETA, JOSÉ MARÍA	Universidad del País Vasco	Marketing de Servicios
CERVERA TAULET, AMPARO	Universidad de Valencia	Marketing no Lucrativo y Responsabilidad Social
CERVIÑO FERNÁNDEZ, JULIO	Universidad Carlos III	Marketing Internacional
DEL BARRIO GARCÍA, SALVADOR	Universidad de Granada	Comunicación Comercial
DELGADO BALLESTER, ELENA	Universidad de Murcia	Dirección de Marca
FLAVIÁN BLANCO, CARLOS	Universidad de Zaragoza	Nuevas Tecnologías y e-Marketing
FRÍAS JAMILENA, M. DOLORES	Universidad de Granada	Marketing Turístico
GIL SAURA, IRENE	Universidad de Valencia	Distribución Comercial y Gestión Minorista
GONZÁLEZ BENITO, OSCAR	Universidad de Salamanca	Investigación de Mercados y Modelización
MARTÍN ARMARIO, ENRIQUE	Universidad de Sevilla	Docencia en Marketing e Innovación Educativa
MOLINER TENA, MIGUEL ÁNGEL	Universidad Jaume I	Marketing Relacional
MUÑOZ GALLEGO, PABLO	Universidad de Salamanca	Marketing Industrial, Agroalimentario y otras Aplicaciones Sectoriales del Marketing
RODRÍGUEZ ESCUDERO, ANA ISABEL	Universidad de Valladolid	Innovación, Creación de Valor y Nuevos Productos
ROMÁN NICOLÁS, SERGIO	Universidad de Murcia	Dirección de Ventas y Equipos
RUIZ DE MAYA, SALVADOR	Universidad de Murcia	Comportamiento del Consumidor
SANTOS VIJANDE, MARÍA LETICIA	Universidad de Oviedo	Marketing Estratégico
SARABIA-SÁNCHEZ, FRANCISCO J.	Universidad Miguel Hernández	Presidencia (*)
YAGÜE GUILLÉN, MARÍA JESÚS	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid	Decisiones de Precios

(\*) El Área de Presidencia recoge aquellas ponencias de distintas áreas que son presentadas al Congreso por los responsables de áreas.

### 3.2. *Evaluadores de los trabajos de investigación*

Los especialistas que han contribuido en el proceso de revisión de los trabajos recibidos han sido (por orden alfabético):

<b>APELLIDOS</b>	<b>NOMBRE</b>	<b>UNIVERSIDAD</b>
Aguirre García	María Soledad	Universidad del País Vasco
Alarcón del Amo	María del Carmen	Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha
Aldás Manzano	Joaquín	Universidad de Valencia
Alen González	María Elisa	Universidad de Vigo
Álvarez Álvarez	Begoña	Universidad de Oviedo
Andreu	Luisa	Universidad de Valencia
Aparicio de Castro	María Gloria	Universidad del País Vasco
Baena Graciá	Veronica	Universidad Europea de Madrid
Barlés Arizón	María José	Universidad de Zaragoza
Barreda Tarrazona	Raquel	Universidad de Jaén
Barrutia	José María	Universidad del País Vasco
Blanco Gonzalez	Alicia	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos
Blázquez Lozano	Félix	Universidad de A Coruña
Blázquez Resino	Juan José	Universidad Castilla-La Mancha
Blesa Pérez	Andreu	Universidad Jaume I
Bocigas Solar	María Olga	Universidad Pontificia Comillas
Bordonaba Juste	María Victoria	Universidad de Zaragoza
Callarisa Fiol	Luis José	Universidad Jaume I
Calvo Dopico	Domingo	Universidad A Coruña
Camarero Izquierdo	Carmen	Universidad de Valladolid
Cambra Fierro	Jesús	Universidad Pablo de Olavide
Campo Martínez	Sara	Universidad Autonoma de Madrid
Canales Ronda	Pedro	Universidad de Valencia
Carbonell	Pilar	York University
Carrete Lucero	Lorena	Itesm Campus Toluca
Carvajal Trujillo	Elena	Universidad de Huelva
Casaló Ariño	Luis Vicente	Universidad de Zaragoza
Castañeda García	José Alberto	Universidad de Granada
Cebollada Calvo	Javier	Universidad Pública de Navarra
Cervantes Blanco	Miguel	Universidad de León
Cerviño	Julio	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
Chocarro Eguaras	Raquel	Universidad Pública de Navarra
Collado Agudo	Jesús	Universidad de Cantabria
Cordente Rodríguez	María	Universidad CEU San Pablo

Cortiñas Ugalde	Mónica	Universidad Pública de Navarra
Crespo Almendros	Esmeralda	Universidad de Granada
Cristóbal Fransi	Eduard	Universidad de Lleida
Cuesta Valiño	Pedro	Universidad de Alcalá de Henares
Cuestas Díaz	Pedro Jesús	Universidad de Murcia
Currás Pérez	Rafael	Universidad de Valencia
De Elizagarate Gutiérrez	Victoria	Universidad del País Vasco
Del Alcázar Martínez	Benjamin	Universidad de Málaga
Del Barrio García	Salvador	Universidad de Granada
Delgado Ballester	Elena	Universidad de Murcia
Díaz Armas	Ricardo J.	Universidad de La Laguna
Díaz Meneses	Gonzalo	Univ. de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
Estrada Guillén	Marta	Universidad Jaume I
Fandos Herrera	Carmina	Universidad de Zaragoza
Fandos Roig	Juan Carlos	Universidad Jaume I
Fenollar Quereda	Pedro	Universidad de Murcia
Fernández Sabiote	Estela	Universidad de Murcia
Fraiz Brea	José Antonio	Universidad de Vigo
Fraj Andrés	Elena	Universidad de Zaragoza
Frasquet Deltoro	Marta	Universidad de Valencia
Frías Jamilena	Dolores María	Universidad de Granada
Fuentes Blasco	María	Universidad Pablo de Olavide
González-Gallarza Granizo	Martina	Universidad de Valencia
Galán Ladero	María de las Mercedes	Universidad de Extremadura
Galera Casquet	Clementina	Universidad de Extremadura
García de los Salmones	María del Mar	Universidad de Cantabria
García de Madariaga	Jesús	Universidad de Complutense
García Ferrer	Gemma	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos
García Martínez	Gabriel	Universidad Politécnica de Valencia
Garrido Morgado	Álvaro	Universidad de Salamanca
Gázquez Abad	Juan Carlos	Universidad de Almería
Gilsanz López	Ainhize	Universidad del País Vasco
Gómez Rodríguez	Pedro Manuel	Universidad del País Vasco
Gómez Suárez	Mónica	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
González Mieres	Celina	Universidad del País Vasco
Guinaliu Blasco	Miguel	Universidad de Zaragoza
Gurrea Sarasa	Raquel	Universidad de Zaragoza
Gutiérrez Arranz	Ana María	Universidad de Valladolid
Gutiérrez Rodríguez	Pablo	Universidad de León
Hartmann	Patrick	Universidad del País Vasco
Hernández Espallardo	Miguel	Universidad de Murcia
Hernández Fernández	Asunción	Universidad de Valencia
Hernández Maestro	Rosa María	Universidad de Salamanca

Herrero Crespo	Ángel	Universidad de Cantabria
Huertas García	Rubén	Universidad de Barcelona
Izquierdo Yusta	Alicia	Universidad de Burgos
Jiménez Castillo	David	Universidad de Almería
Jiménez Martínez	Julio	Universidad de Zaragoza
Jiménez Zarco	Ana Isabel	Universidad Oberta de Catalunya
Küster Boluda	Inés	Universidad de Valencia
Laguna García	Marta	Universidad de Valladolid
Liébana Cabanillas	Francisco	Universidad de Granada
Llonch Andreu	Joan	Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona
López Bonilla	Jesús Manuel	Universidad de Sevilla
López Carrillo	Enrique	Universidad de Barcelona-Euht Cett
López López	Inés	Universidad de Murcia
López Sánchez	José Ángel	Universidad de Extremadura
López-Sintas	Jordi	Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona
Lorenzo Romero	Carlota	Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha
Luque-Martínez	Teodoro	Universidad de Granada
Marín Rives	Longinos	Universidad de Murcia
Martín-Consuegra Navarro	David	Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha
Martín Armario	Enrique	Universidad de Sevilla
Martín Castejón	Pedro Juan	Universidad de Murcia
Martín Santana	Josefa D.	Univ. de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
Martos-Partal	Mercedes	Universidad de Salamanca
Matute Vallejo	Jorge	Universidad de Zaragoza
Miquel Romero	María José	Universidad de Valencia
Molina Collado	Arturo	Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha
Moliner Velázquez	Beatriz	Universidad de Valencia
Mondéjar Jiménez	Juan Antonio	Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha
Monferrer Tirado	Diego	Universidad Jaume I
Montaner Gutiérrez	Teresa	Universidad de Zaragoza
Moreno Moya	María	Universidad de Murcia
Muñoz Gallego	Pablo Antonio	Universidad de Salamanca
Navarro García	Antonio	Universidad de Sevilla
Navarro Bailón	María Ángeles	Universidad de Murcia
Nicolau González	Juan Luis	Universidad de Alicante
Núñez Barriopedro	Estela	Universidad de Alcalá de Henares
Palazon Vidal	Mariola	Universidad de Murcia
Pérez Cabañero	Carmen	Universidad de Valencia
Pérez del Campo	Enrique	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos
Pérez Ruiz	Andrea	Universidad de Cantabria
Periáñez Cañadillas	Iñaki	Universidad del País Vasco
Pina Pérez	José Miguel	Universidad de Zaragoza
Polo Peña	Ana Isabel	Universidad de Granada

Ponzoa	José Manuel	Universidad de Complutense de Madrid
Portilla Manjón	Idoia	Universidad de Navarra
Reinares Lara	Eva	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos
Reinares Lara	Pedro	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos
Rey Pino	Juan Miguel	Universidad de Granada
Rodríguez Ardura	Inma	Universidad Oberta de Catalunya
Rodríguez Daponte	Rocío	Universidad de Vigo
Rodríguez del Bosque	Ignacio	Universidad de Cantabria
Rodríguez Escudero	Ana Isabel	Universidad de Valladolid
Rodríguez Molina	Miguel Ángel	Universidad de Granada
Rodríguez Oromendía	Ainhoa	Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia
Rodríguez Pinto	Javier	Universidad de Valladolid
Romero de la Fuente	Jaime	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
Royo Vela	Marcelo	Universidad de Valencia
Rubio Benito	Natalia	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
Ruiz Conde	Enar	Universidad de Alicante
Ruiz de Maya	Salvador	Universidad de Murcia
Ruiz Molina	Eugenia	Universidad de Valencia
Ruiz Moreno	Felipe	Universidad de Alicante
Ruzo Sanmartín	Emilio	Universidad de Santiago de Compostela
Sabiote Ortiz	Carmen María	Universidad de Granada
San Martín Gutiérrez	Sonia	Universidad de Burgos
San Martín Gutiérrez	Héctor	Universidad de Cantabria
Sánchez Fernández	Raquel	Universidad de Almería
Sánchez Fernández	Juan	Universidad de Granada
Sánchez Franco	Manuel Jesús	Universidad de Sevilla
Sánchez García	Isabel	Universidad de Valencia
Sánchez García	Javier	Universidad Jaume I
Sánchez Pérez	Manuel	Universidad de Almería
Sanzo Pérez	María José	Universidad de Oviedo
Sarabia-Sánchez	Francisco José	Universidad Miguel Hernández
Segovia López	Cristina	Universidad de Almería
Segui Alcaraz	Antoni	Universidad Jaume I
Sellers Rubio	Ricardo	Universidad de Alicante
Serra	Antoni	Universidad de Les Illes Balears
Servera	David	Universidad Católica de Valencia
Sesé Oliván	Francisco Javier	Universidad de Zaragoza
Sicilia Piñero	María	Universidad de Murcia
Sierra Murillo	María Yolanda	Universidad de La Rioja
Valero Amaro	Víctor	Universidad de Extremadura
Vallet Bellmunt	Teresa	Universidad Jaume I
Vázquez Burguete	José Luis	Universidad de León

Vázquez Casielles	Rodolfo	Universidad de Oviedo
Vila López	Natalia	Universidad de Valencia
Villarejo Ramos	Ángel Francisco	Universidad de Sevilla

### 3.3. Resultados del proceso de evaluación

Al XXVI Congreso de Marketing AEMARK 2014 se han presentado un total de 132 trabajos entre ponencias, trabajos en curso y tesis doctorales. El índice de aceptación ha alcanzado el 82,6 por ciento, lo que mejora el índice de la anterior edición (del 68,9 por ciento). Esto nos habla de un incremento de la calidad de los trabajos. La siguiente tabla muestra los indicadores básicos por Área Temática.

ÁREA TEMÁTICA	RECIBIDOS	ACEPTADOS	% DE ACEPTACIÓN
01. Comportamiento del Consumidor	14	11	79
02. Marketing Estratégico	11	8	73
03. Dirección de Marcas	5	4	80
04. Comunicación Comercial	7	5	71
05. Nuevas tecnologías y e-marketing	14	14	100
06. Marketing Internacional	3	2	67
07. Marketing Turístico	18	14	78
08. Marketing no lucrativo y Responsabilidad social	11	8	73
09. Dirección de Ventas y Equipos	2	2	100
10. Distribución Comercial y Gestión Minorista	8	7	88
11. Innovación, creación de valor y nuevos productos	5	4	80
12. Decisiones de Precios	0	0	–
13. Docencia en Marketing e Innovación Educativa	8	7	88
14. Marketing de Servicios	6	6	100
15. Investigación de Mercados y Modelización	2	2	100
16. Marketing Industrial, Agroalimentario y otras Aplicaciones Sectoriales del Marketing	7	5	71
17. Marketing Relacional	1	1	100
18. Presidencia	10	9	90
<b>TOTAL DE TRABAJOS</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>83</b>

### *3.4. Premios que AEMARK concede durante el congreso*

En cada congreso anual, AEMARK concede cuatro premios en colaboración con distintas organizaciones: a la mejor Tesis Doctoral de Marketing, al Mejor Artículo de Investigación, al Mejor Artículo Publicado en la REIM y Trayectoria de Profesor de Marketing (ver en <http://aemark.es/premios.php>). Igualmente AEMARK da ayudas a autores latinoamericanos que presenten comunicaciones al congreso y cumplan las condiciones que se señalan en las bases de dichas ayudas.

En la Website de AEMARK se actualiza la información y las bases y normativas pueden cambiar de año en año. Se recomienda a quienes deseen optar a estos premios o ayudas en futuras ediciones, que sigan la Website de AEMARK para disponer de información actualizada.



## 4. Índice alfabético de trabajos seleccionados

### COMPORTAMIENTO DEL CONSUMIDOR

#### *Ponencias*

**Análisis transcultural de los estilos de compra del consumidor: el caso de España y Finlandia.** ANA R. PERTEJO, ANA M. GONZÁLEZ-FERNÁNDEZ, CARMEN R. SANTOS (Universidad de León), JENNIINA HALKOAHO y PIRJO LAAKSONEN.

**Antecedents of attitudes toward the website: a crosscultural analysis.** JUAN MIGUEL ALCÁNTARA-PILAR y SALVADOR DEL BARRIO-GARCÍA (Universidad de Granada).

**Diferencias en el recuerdo de la marca entre la publicidad online con descuentos y con regalos.** ESMERALDA CRESPO ALMENDROS y SALVADOR DEL BARRIO GARCÍA (Universidad de Granada).

**Does the smart labelling add value to the product?** DOMINGO CALVO DOPICO (Universidad de A Coruña).

**Environmental arousal and shoppers' moods: effects on shopping behavior.** LAURA LUCIA PALACIOS, RAÚL PÉREZ LÓPEZ y YOLANDA POLO REDONDO (Universidad de Zaragoza).

**La influencia parental en los niveles de etnocentrismo regional de los jóvenes extremeños: un análisis exploratorio.** M. PILAR FERNÁNDEZ FERRÍN (Universidad del País Vasco), BELÉN BANDE VILELA (Universidad de Santiago de Compostela) y M. MERCEDES GALÁN LADERO (Universidad de Extremadura).

**Satisfaction and trust: the main determinants of older consumers' loyalty in times of crisis.** MIGUEL ANGEL MOLINER, JUAN CARLOS FANDOS, DIEGO MONFERRER, MARTA ESTRADA, JAVIER SÁNCHEZ y SANDRA TENA (Universidad Jaume I de Castellón).

**Segmentando clientes por su lealtad: una aproximación experiencial en el comercio minorista de ropa.** IRENE GIL SAURA, MARTINA G. GALLARZA y María Eugenia Ruiz Molina (Universidad de València).

**The impact of external recommendations on the consumer's multichannel search experience and decision: the moderating role of motivation to touch.** CARLOS FLAVIÁN BLANCO, RAQUEL GURREA SARASA y CARLOS ORÚS SANCLEMENTE (Universidad de Zaragoza).

**The moderating effects of consumer's characteristics in the relationships between privacy, security and online trust.** M.<sup>a</sup> ISABEL PASCUAL DEL RIQUELME MARTÍNEZ (Universidad Jorge Tadeo Lozano) y SERGIO ROMÁN NICOLÁS (Universidad de Murcia).

**What's up in smartphone services: analysis of switching costs, customer satisfaction and loyalty in the spanish market.** CRISTINA CALVO PORRAL (Universidad de A Coruña) y JEAN-PIERRE LÉVY-MANGIN (Universidad du Québec In Outaouais).

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**S-O-R model proposal for online travel purchasing.** JANA PRODANOVA y SONIA SAN MARTÍN GUTIÉRREZ (Universidad de Burgos).

**What are generative consumers looking for?** MIGUEL GIMÉNEZ GARCÍA-CONDE, LONGINOS MARÍN RIVES y SALVADOR RUIZ DE MAYA (Universidad de Murcia).

**What if the share sensations after trasting new products?** SALVADOR RUIZ DE MAYA, INÉS LÓPEZ LÓPEZ (Universidad de Murcia) y SARAH MOORE (Universidad of Alberta, Canadá).

## MARKETING ESTRATÉGICO

### *Ponencias*

**Gestión del conocimiento sobre el cliente y co-innovación: efectos sobre los resultados de marketing.** PILAR FIDEL, AMPARO CERVERA, WALESSKA SCHLESINGER, M. ÁNGELES INIESTA (Universidad de Almería) y RAQUEL SÁNCHEZ (Universidad de Almería).

**La transferencia entre un gran evento deportivo y la marca patrocinadora: la visión del visitante deportivo.** CRISTINA ARAGONÉS JERICÓ (Florida Universitaria), INÉS KUSTER BOLUDA y NATALIA VILA LOPEZ (Universidad de València).

**Possible success factors in a CRM strategy: a study in the spanish banking sector.** JESÚS J. CAMBRA FIERRO, ANA OLAVARRÍA JARABA, ROSARIO VÁZQUEZ CARRASCO (Universidad Pablo de Olavide) y EDGAR CENTENO (Itesm Monterrey).

**Reacción publicitaria de las empresas establecidas ante la entrada al mercado: análisis de los costes de cambio en el sector aéreo español.** FRANCO MANUEL SANCHO ESPER y FRANCISCO JOSÉ MAS RUIZ (Universidad de Alicante).

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**Efectos de la normalización del sistema de reclamaciones y quejas.** CHANTHALY SPHABMIXAY SPHABMIXAY, ANA ISABEL RODRÍGUEZ ESCUDERO y JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ PINTO (Universidad de Valladolid).

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**Multimarket rivalry: how strategic groups act withing and across markets?** FRANCISCO JOSÉ MAS RUIZ y FELIPE RUIZ MORENO (Universidad de Alicante).

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**¿Cómo construir una enseña con personalidad auténtica a través del marketing experiencial?** NATALIA VILA-LOPEZ, CARMEN TORRECILLA-MORENO, INÉS KUSTER-BOLUDA, PEDRO CANALES-RONDA y ASUNCIÓN HERNÁNDEZ-FERNÁNDEZ (Universidad de València).

**La influencia de las gratificaciones derivadas del uso de la red social Qzone en el grado de interacción con las marcas de los adolescentes chinos.** VANESSA APAOLAZA IBÁÑEZ, PATRICK HARTMANN, CRISTINA LÓPEZ CARO (Universidad del País Vasco) y JIAXUN HE (East China Normal University, Shanghai).

**The impact of collective brands on the economic efficiency of experience goods producers.** RICARDO SELLERS RUBIO y FRANCISCO MAS RUIZ (Universidad de Alicante).

## COMUNICACIÓN COMERCIAL

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**Does integrated corporate communication really enhance business performance? Insights from the spanish hospitality industry.** LUCÍA PORCU y SALVADOR DEL BARRIO-GARCÍA (Universidad de Granada).

**Duración de los spots y recuerdo publicitario: optimización en función de las variables de planificación del medio televisión.** JOSEFA D. MARTÍN-SANTANA

(Universidad de Las Palmas), PEDRO REINARES-LARA y EVA REINARES-LARA (Universidad Rey Juan Carlos).

**Efecto de los reclamos en los envases de alimentos orgánicos sobre las percepciones del consumidor. Grado de explicitud y temática del mensaje.** MARÍA HIDALGO-BAZ, MERCEDES MARTOS-PARTAL y ÓSCAR GONZÁLEZ-BENITO (Universidad de Salamanca).

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**Eficiencia de la actividad ferial en España: análisis longitudinal.** MARÍA CORDENTE RODRÍGUEZ (Universidad San Pablo C.E. Universidad), JUAN ANTONIO MONDÉJAR JIMÉNEZ (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha) y JUAN CARLOS GÁZQUEZ ABAD (Universidad de Almería).

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## NUEVAS TECNOLOGÍAS Y E-MARKETING

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**Análisis comparativo de la adopción de sistemas de pago móvil SMS, NFC y QR.** FRANCISCO LIÉBANA-CABANILLAS, IVIANE RAMOS DE LUNA, JUAN SÁNCHEZ FERNÁNDEZ, FRANCISCO MUÑOZ-LEIVA y FRANCISCO MONTORO RÍOS (Universidad de Granada).

**Branding in interactive media: brand connection platforms and their influence on customer engagement and brand image.** LORENA BLASCO-ARCAS, BLANCA HERNÁNDEZ-ORTEGA y JULIO JIMÉNEZ-MARTÍNEZ (Universidad de Zaragoza).

**¿Influye la lealtad del cliente bancario y el cross-buying en la adopción de la banca online?** ANTONIA M. ESTRELLA-RAMÓN y MANUEL SÁNCHEZ-PÉREZ (Universidad de Almería).

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**Smart cards consolidation from a citizen oriented perspectiva: an empirical study.** DANIEL BELANCHE GRACIA y LUIS VICENTE CASALÓ ARIÑO (Universidad de Zaragoza).

**Website design as moderating factor of online user behavior.** JUAN MIGUEL ALCÁNTARA-PILAR y SALVADOR DEL BARRIO-GARCÍA (Universidad de Granada).

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- Comercio social vs comercio electrónico: ¿Influyen los estímulos sociales en el comportamiento del individuo?** LORENA BLASCO ARCAS, BLANCA ISABEL HERNÁNDEZ ORTEGA y BEATRIZ VELILLA BLASCO (Universidad de Zaragoza).
- Identificación de líderes de opinión a través de Twitter: cómo saber si son leales a la marca.** MANUELA LÓPEZ PÉREZ (Universidad Católica del Norte, Chile) y MARÍA SICILIA PIÑERO (Universidad de Murcia).
- La búsqueda del estado de flow en entornos social commerce.** CAROLINA HERRANDO SORIA, JULIO JIMÉNEZ MARTÍNEZ y MARÍA JOSÉ MARTÍN DE HOYOS (Universidad de Zaragoza).
- Las características del boca-oído electrónico y su influencia en la intención de recompra online: una propuesta de investigación.** JORGE MATUTE VALLEJO, YOLANDA POLO REDONDO y ANA UTRILLAS ACERETE (Universidad de Zaragoza).
- «My posts cannot be bought». Strategies to encourage bloggers to spread the word.** MANUELA LÓPEZ PÉREZ (Universidad Católica del Norte, Chile), MARÍA SICILIA PIÑERO (Universidad de Murcia) y PEEETER VERLEGH (Universidad of Amsterdam).
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- Why do marketers really need to work with digital engineers?** ANTONIO HYDER (Universidad Cardenal Herrera-Ceu).

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- Influencia de los valores de los directivos de Pymes internacionalizadas en los resultados exportadores.** F. JAVIER RONDÁN CATALUÑA, ANTONIO NAVARRO GARCÍA y JORGE ARENAS GAITÁN (Universidad de Sevilla).

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- Factores que afectan la dinámica de las empresas internacionales: un análisis empírico en Colombia.** DIANA ESCANDÓN (Universidad Javeriana), MIGUEL HERNÁNDEZ ESPALLARDO (Universidad de Murcia) y AUGUSTO RODRÍGUEZ (Universidad del Valle).

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**A comparison of the antecedents of satisfaction in city break travelling.** JON CHARTERINA ABANDO y M<sup>a</sup> GLORIA APARICIO DE CASTRO (Universidad del País Vasco).

**Análisis de la influencia del medio de compra en la evaluación de un servicio turístico: un análisis multipaís.** CARMEN M. SABIOTE ORTIZ, DOLORES M. FRÍAS JAMILENA y JOSÉ ALBERTO CASTAÑEDA GARCÍA (Universidad de Granada).

**Antecedentes del valor de marca en la industria hotelera.** MAJA \_ERI\_, IRENE GIL-SAURA y ALEJANDRO MOLLÁ-DESCALS (Universidad de València).

**Crisis económica y actitud de los residentes hacia el turismo en destinos turísticos maduros. Un enfoque longitudinal.** DESIDERIO GUTIÉRREZ TAÑO (Universidad de La Laguna), JOAN B. GARAU VADELL (Universidad de Illes Balears), RICARDO J. DÍAZ ARMAS (Universidad de La Laguna) y MARÍA D. DE JUAN VIGARAY (Universidad de Alicante).

**El impacto de la motivación en la imagen percibida, la satisfacción y la lealtad del visitante.** MARTA LAGUNA GARCÍA y ANDRÉS PALACIOS PICOS (Universidad de Valladolid).

**Examining the hierarchy of destination brands and the effects between the dimensions of brand equity of a regional destination.** ÁNGEL HERRERO CRESPO, MARÍA DEL MAR GARCÍA DE LOS SALMONES SÁNCHEZ, HÉCTOR SAN MARTÍN GUTIÉRREZ y JESÚS COLLADO AGUDO (Universidad de Cantabria).

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**La relación entre satisfacción y lealtad en el turismo rural.** ANA MARÍA CAMPÓN CERRO, JOSÉ MANUEL HERNÁNDEZ MOGOLLÓN (Universidad de Extremadura) y HELENA MARÍA BAPTISTA ALVES (Universidade da Beira Interior, Portugal).

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**El astroturismo como atractivo primario de un destino rural.** BELÉN ROYO NAVARRO, CARMINA FANDOS HERRERA (Universidad de Zaragoza) y JAVIER SANCHEZ GARCÍA (Universidad Jaime I de Castellón).

**¿Existe algo más allá f g Hofstede? Influencia de los cambios culturales en la creación de segmentos turísticos.** ANA M. GONZÁLEZ FERNÁNDEZ (Universidad de León).

**La calidad del servicio online y de su recuperación a través de dispositivos fijos y móviles: una comparación entre Portugal y España.** MYRIAM MARTÍ SÁNCHEZ, VANESSA ROGER MONZÓ, MARÍA GUIJARRO GARCÍA y ANTONIO NATURIL ALONSO (Esic Business & Marketing School).

**User-generated content and tourism destination image throught emotions and cognitions.** MARÍA DEL CARMEN HIDALGO ALCÁZAR (Universidad Católica del Norte, Chile), MARÍA SICILIA PIÑERO y SALVADOR RUIZ DE MAYA (Universidad de Murcia).

## MARKETING NO LUCRATIVO Y RESPONSABILIDAD SOCIAL

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**Análisis de la interacción entre reporting a grupos de interés e industria para explicar la reputación corporativa en España.** ANDREA PÉREZ RUIZ, MARÍA DEL MAR GARCÍA DE LOS SALMONES SÁNCHEZ y CARLOS LÓPEZ GUTIÉRREZ (Universidad de Cantabria).

**La compleja conceptualización del voluntario y la riqueza de la dimensionalidad de su experiencia: una aplicación en el ámbito de los eventos.** MARTINA G. GALLARZA, TERESA FAYOS (Universidad de València) y FRANCISCO ARTEAGA (Universidad Católica de Valencia).

**La innovación social como resultado de los acuerdos de cooperación empresa-organización no lucrativa.** M.<sup>a</sup> JOSÉ SANZO PÉREZ, LUIS IGNACIO ÁLVAREZ GONZÁLEZ (Universidad de Oviedo) y MARTA REY GARCÍA (Universidad de A Coruña).

**¿Qué es un consumidor responsable y sustentable? Reflexiones y consideraciones para como medirlo.** ENRIQUE BIANCHI (Universidad Nacional de Córdoba).

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**Expectativas y percepciones del consumidor español respecto a la responsabilidad social: diferencias sociodemográficas.** RAFAEL CURRÁS PÉREZ, CONSUELO DOLZ DOLZ y MARÍA JOSÉ MIQUEL ROMERO (Universidad de València).

**Media effects on environmental activism: the moderating role of optimistic bias.** DAVID JIMÉNEZ CASTILLO y JOSÉ MANUEL ORTEGA EGEA (Universidad de Almería).

**Responsabilidad social del consumidor: desarrollo de una escala.** SYLVIA LÓPEZ DAVIS, LONGINOS MARÍN RIVES y SALVADOR RUIZ DE MAYA (Universidad de Murcia).

**The intersection between anti-consumption, organizations and environmental sustainability: a literature review.** NIEVES GARCÍA DE FRUTOS, JOSÉ MANUEL ORTEGA EGEA y JAVIER MARTÍNEZ DEL RÍO (Universidad de Almería).

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**El estilo de liderazgo como factor moderador en la generación de confianza en equipos de trabajo virtuales.** MIGUEL GUINALIU BLASCO y PAU JORDAN BLASCO (Universidad de Zaragoza).

**Examining the impact of emotional intelligence on salesperson adaptive and proactive performance.** BELÉN BANDE VILELA (Universidad de Santiago de Compostela) y PILAR FERNÁNDEZ FERRÍN (Universidad del País Vasco).

**The influence of adaptive selling on customer satisfaction.** PEDRO JUAN MARTIN CASTEJÓN y SERGIO ROMAN NICOLÁS (Universidad de Murcia).

## DISTRIBUCIÓN COMERCIAL Y GESTIÓN MINORISTA

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**Aceptación de surtidos sin marcas nacionales: ¿Qué papel juega la actitud del consumidor hacia la situación económica?** JUAN CARLOS GÁZQUEZ ABAD (Universidad de Almería), FRANCISCO J. MARTÍNEZ LÓPEZ (Universidad de Granada), IRENE ESTEBAN MILLAT (Universidad Oberta de Catalunya) y JUAN ANTONIO MONDÉJAR JIMÉNEZ (Universidad Castilla-La Mancha).

**Efectividad de las técnicas de merchandising para categorías hedónicas y utilitarias.** ÁLVARO GARRIDO MORGADO, ÓSCAR GONZÁLEZ BENITO y MERCEDES MARTOS PARTAL (Universidad de Salamanca).

**Efecto de la crisis sobre el sector comercial español.** EVA TOMASETI SOLANO, JOSÉ HORACIO GARCÍA MARÍ y NOELIA SÁNCHEZ CASADO (Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena).

**El conocimiento de los distribuidores y su influencia en la estrategia de innovación de los fabricantes.** MANUEL SÁNCHEZ PÉREZ, MARÍA BELÉN MARÍN CARRILLO (Universidad de Almería) y CRISTINA SEGOVIA LÓPEZ.

**Estimación de los efectos del tamaño del surtido sobre las ventas de la categoría: análisis empírico en el formato hipermercado a partir de elasticidades.** JUAN CARLOS GÁZQUEZ ABAD (Universidad de Almería), FRANCISCO J. MARTÍNEZ LÓPEZ (Universidad de Granada), JUAN ANTONIO MONDÉJAR JIMÉNEZ (Universidad D. Castilla-La Mancha) y IRENE ESTEBAN MILLAT (Universidad Oberta de Catalunya).



**La satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio: efecto moderador de la edad en el boca-oído posterior.** BEATRIZ MOLINER VELÁZQUEZ, MARÍA EUGENIA RUIZ MOLINA y TERESA FAYOS GARDÓ (Universidad de València).

**Relación entre el capital de marca de la tienda y la lealtad: propuesta de dos modelos causales alternativos.** IRENE GIL SAURA, MAJA \_ERI\_, MARÍA EUGENIA RUIZ MOLINA y GLORIA BERENGUER CONTRI (Universidad de València).

**Private label brands: measuring the role of image, loyalty and manufacturer identification.** CRISTINA CALVO PORRAL (Universidad de A Coruña) y MARK LANG (St. Joseph University, Philadelphia, USA).

## INNOVACIÓN, CREACIÓN DE VALOR Y NUEVOS PRODUCTOS

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**Be creative but not so much. Decreasing benefits of creativity in firms.** VÍCTOR DEL-CORTE-LORA, TERESA M. VALLET-BELLMUNT y F. XAVIER MOLINA-MORALES (Universidad Jaume I de Castellón).

**La influencia de la innovación sobre los beneficios de la relación y la lealtad hacia la tienda.** MARÍA EUGENIA RUIZ MOLINA, IRENE GIL SAURA (Universidad de València) y DAVID SERVERA FRANCÉS (Universidad Católica de Valencia).

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**Creatividad, innovación y gestión de la experiencia del visitante en industrias creativas.** CARMEN CAMARERO IZQUIERDO, MARÍA JOSÉ GARRIDO SAMANIEGO y EVA VICENTE HERNÁNDEZ (Universidad de Valladolid).

**The effects of predevelopment activities on new product performance.** MARÍA MORENO MOYA y JOSÉ LUIS MUNUERA ALEMÁN (Universidad de Murcia).

## DOCENCIA EN MARKETING E INNOVACIÓN EDUCATIVA

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**Cómo optimizar el trabajo cooperativo: una experiencia docente.** MARTA ESTRADA GUILLÉN, DIEGO MONFERRER TIRADO, MERCEDES SEGARRA CIPRÉS y MIGUEL ÁNGEL MOLINER TENA (Universidad Jaume I de Castellón).

**Competencias transversales y su influencia en la satisfacción de los estudiantes de marketing. Un estudio internacional.** ELENA GONZÁLEZ-GASCÓN (Universidad Miguel Hernández de Elche), MARÍA D. DE-JUAN-VIGARAY (Universidad de Alicante) y BEYZA GÜLTEKIN (Hacettepe University).

**Consecuencias afectivas y objetivas del uso de un canal de YouTube de apoyo a la docencia en marketing.** CARLOS ORÚS SANCLEMENTE, MARÍA JOSE BARLÉS ARIZÓN, DANIEL BELANCHE GRACIA, LUIS VICENTE CASALÓ ARIÑO, ELENA FRAJ ANDRÉS y RAQUEL GURREA SARASA (Universidad de Zaragoza).

**Estilos de aprendizaje y tecnología: perfil del estudiante y herramientas docentes de web social.** CARLOTA LORENZO ROMERO (Universidad D. Castilla-La Mancha) y MARÍA DEL MAR BUENDÍA NAVARRO (Ies Julián Zarco, Mota del Cuervo, Cuenca).

**Modelización del valor percibido en la educación superior y su efecto en la satisfacción.** LUIS DOÑA TOLEDO, TEODORO LUQUE MARTÍNEZ, SALVADOR DEL BARRIO GARCÍA (Universidad de Granada) y CLAUDIO RUY PORTELA DE VASCONCELOS (Universidad Federal da Paraíba).

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**¿Cómo dinamizar el aula a través de competencias transversales en marketing?: el papel del relator.** CARMINA FANDOS HERRERA y MARIAN PELIGERO DOMEQUE (Universidad de Zaragoza).

**Los sistemas de evaluación según las guías docentes publicadas desde la introducción del EEES.** SONIA SAN MARTÍN GUTIÉRREZ (Universidad de Burgos), MARCOS SANTAMARÍA MARISCAL (Universidad de Burgos), REBECA SAN JOSÉ CABEZUDO (Universidad de Valladolid), ESTEFANÍA JERÓNIMO BEATO (Universidad Europea Miguel de Cervantes), BLANCA LÓPEZ CATALÁN (Universidad Pablo de Olavide), NADIA JIMÉNEZ TORRES (Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí) y ELENA ROMERO MERINO.

## MARKETING DE SERVICIOS

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**¿De quién es la culpa? Atribución y gravedad del fallo en servicios prestados por más de un proveedor. Aplicación a la compra por Internet.** ÓSCAR AGUILAR ROJAS (Universidad de Costa Rica) y CARMINA FANDOS HERRERA (Universidad de Zaragoza).

**La estructura de preferencias de los clientes de entidades financieras: análisis del efecto región de origen.** ANTONIO CHAMORRO MERA y JOSÉ MANUEL GARCÍA GALLEGO (Universidad de Extremadura).

**La orientación al mercado interno y su influencia en los empleados y clientes: análisis comparativo según la experiencia laboral.** VICENT TORTOSA EDO, JAUME LLORENS MONZONÍS, MIGUEL ÁNGEL MOLINER TENA y JAVIER SÁNCHEZ GARCÍA (Universidad Jaume I de Castellón).

**La repetición de compra en el comercio minorista: efecto moderador del tipo de producto.** BEATRIZ MOLINER VELÁZQUEZ, IRENE GIL SAURA (Universidad de València) y MARÍA FUENTES BLASCO (Universidad Pablo de Olavide).

### *Trabajos en curso*

**Examining an economic value-based model and unobserved heterogeneity for university services.** RAQUEL SÁNCHEZ FERNÁNDEZ, M.<sup>a</sup> ÁNGELES INIESTA BONILLO, DAVID JIMÉNEZ CASTILLO (Universidad de Almería), AMPARO CERVERA TAULET y WALESSKA SCHLESINGER (Universidad de València).

**Improving call centers experience: the key role of fluency.** ESTELA FERNÁNDEZ SABIOTE e INÉS LÓPEZ LÓPEZ (Universidad de Murcia).

## INVESTIGACIÓN DE MERCADOS Y MODELIZACIÓN

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**Análisis de los factores que influyen en la unidimensionalidad de Cetscale: un enfoque meta-analítico.** JOSÉ FELIPE JIMÉNEZ GUERRERO y JUAN CARLOS GÁZQUEZ ABAD (Universidad de Almería).

**Modelos de gestión de inventarios para varios artículos, considerando demanda determinista dependiente del tiempo.** MANUEL GONZÁLEZ DE LA ROSA, ISABEL MONTERO MURADAS, JAIME FEBLES ACOSTA y JOAQUÍN SICILIA RODRÍGUEZ (Universidad de La Laguna).

## MARKETING INDUSTRIAL, AGROALIMENTARIO Y OTRAS APLICACIONES SECTORIALES DEL MARKETING

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**El efecto región de origen en la compra de vino.** JOSÉ MANUEL GARCÍA GALLEGO, ANTONIO CHAMORRO MERA y MARÍA DEL MAR GARCÍA GALÁN (Universidad de Extremadura).

**¿Es eficaz en términos de transmisión de imagen patrocinar a un equipo de fútbol con poco éxito deportivo?** MANUEL ALONSO DOS SANTOS, STEVE BAEZA (Universidad Católica Santísima Concepción), LEANDRO POBLETE, JOSÉ VÁZQUEZ y DANIELA HIDALGO (Universidad de Concepción).

**The mediation effects of trust and contracts on know-ledge exchange and innovation. Evidence from the european machine tool industry.** JON CHARTERINA ABANDO, JON LANDETA RODRÍGUEZ e IMANOL BASTERRETxea MARKAIDA (Universidad del País Vasco).

**Transferencia de conocimiento entre empresas y centros de investigación: contribución de la capacidad de absorción al desempeño de la investigación.** MANUEL SÁNCHEZ PÉREZ, CRISTINA SEGOVIA LÓPEZ y MARÍA BELÉN MARÍN CARRILLO.

*Trabajos en curso*

**Factores comportamentales que influyen en la elección de la cartera de productos del cliente bancario.** ANTONIA M. ESTRELLA-RAMÓN y MANUEL SÁNCHEZ-PÉREZ (Universidad de Almería).

## MARKETING RELACIONAL

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**El uso de las redes sociales en el proceso de toma de decisiones.** NOELIA SÁNCHEZ CASADO, EVA TOMASETI SOLANO y JUAN GABRIEL CEGARRA NAVARRO (Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena).

# ANÁLISIS TRANSCULTURAL DE LOS ESTILOS DE COMPRA DEL CONSUMIDOR: EL CASO DE ESPAÑA Y FINLANDIA<sup>1</sup>

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## RESUMEN

*Las diferencias culturales entre los mercados de consumo existentes continúan siendo un reto, especialmente para las compañías internacionales. Se hace necesario comprender los diferentes estilos de toma de decisión del consumidor, su comportamiento de compra, así como los factores contextuales que les afectan, puesto que juegan un papel fundamental en sus preferencias, tanto hacia el producto como hacia el medio de compra. En este sentido, esta investigación pretende analizar las diferencias entre el consumidor español y finlandés de acuerdo a sus estilos de compra. Los datos se han obtenido gracias a la encuesta internacional llevada a cabo por la COConsumer BehaviouR Erasmus Network (COBEREN). La presente investigación señala y discute las diferencias culturales entre los estilos de compra del consumidor español y finlandés, proporcionando información relevante para las compañías interesadas en estos mercados, al permitirles concentrar sus esfuerzos de manera efectiva. También es útil como punto de partida para llevar a cabo futuras investigaciones transculturales sobre la orientación a la compra, gracias a la revisión de la literatura realizada y a las conclusiones obtenidas.*

## Palabras clave:

Estilos de compra, tipologías de comprador, orientación a la compra, comportamiento transcultural, COBEREN, España, Finlandia

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## 1. Introducción

La evolución constante del consumidor y de las tecnologías obliga a las empresas a estar continuamente pendientes de las tendencias del mercado. Los mercados multiculturales, la compra por internet y la preocupación por el consumo ético han ido incrementándose durante los últimos años, acompañados por significativos cambios en el comportamiento de compra de los consumidores. Varios estudios sugieren que muchos aspectos del comportamiento del consumidor están ligados a la cultura, lo que significa que al menos parte de la variación en los comportamientos del consumidor se debe a diferentes influencias culturales (De Mooij, 2014; De Mooij y Hofstede, 2011). Con el fin de tener éxito en este entorno cambiante, parece necesario que las compañías se centren en definir los requisitos que los consumidores buscan a la hora de comprar.

Investigaciones previas han utilizado diferentes marcos teóricos y perspectivas para comprender las tendencias existentes en la compra. Los procesos mentales del consumidor relativos a la compra han sido abordados a través de conceptos como la orientación a la compra (Stone, 1954), la motivación de compra (Westbrook y Black, 1985) y los estilos de toma de decisión (Sproles y Kendall, 1986), mientras los procesos comportamentales incluyen lealtad a la marca/tienda (Cunningham, 1961) y estilos de vida de compra (Mason, Durand y Taylor, 1983).

En lo referente a las diferencias culturales, dentro de la propia Unión Europea se pueden encontrar importantes contrastes comportamentales. Un ejemplo es el existente entre los países nórdicos y los países mediterráneos. España y Finlandia muestran fuertes choques en su cultura. Uno nórdico, otro del mediterráneo, contrastan en geografía y clima, así como en su economía, población, infraestructuras y desarrollo. Por ello, los patrones de consumo de los consumidores finlandeses y españoles también difieren marcadamente en términos de gasto de consumo, compra de alimentos, tipos de establecimientos a las que se acude, etc. (EMDS, 2014). Esto indica diferencias fundamentales entre España y Finlandia, justificando así el interés de la presente investigación.

Por todo ello, se pretenden lograr tres objetivos: conceptualizar los estilos de compra como una característica de la cultura de consumo, analizar y comparar las diferentes dimensiones de los estilos de compra entre Finlandia y España y analizar los segmentos de compradores en estos dos países, vislumbrando si las diferencias encontradas son mayores dentro del país que entre países.

## 2. Revisión de la Literatura

### 2.1. Orientación a la compra

El constructo de orientación a la compra es útil cuando se trata de comprender y describir a los consumidores y su comportamiento (Moye y Kincade, 2003; Shim y Kotsiopoulos, 1993). De acuerdo a Rigopoulou, Tsiotsou y Kehagias (2008) la orientación a la compra representa uno de los más valiosos enfoques de segmentación, puesto que refleja la categorización de los consumidores basándose en varios estilos de compra actuales (Shim y Kotsiopoulos, 1992). Por lo que una mejor comprensión de la orientación a la compra ayudará a los minoristas a refinar su *merchandising*, el ambiente de sus tiendas y sus programas de marketing, satisfaciendo así los gustos y deseos de sus compradores (Domina y Koch, 1998).

En la revisión de la literatura se han encontrado numerosas definiciones para explicar el constructo de orientación a la compra. En términos generales, Li, Kuo y Russell (1999) definen la orientación a la compra como la predisposición general hacia la tarea de compra. De forma similar, Shim y Gehrt (1996) explican que la orientación a la compra representa un aspecto cognitivo del comportamiento del consumidor, ya que se relaciona con una predisposición general hacia el acto de ir de compras y caracteriza el enfoque mental de un consumidor a la hora de tomar decisiones en el punto de venta. Mientras Visser y Du Preez (2001) subrayan que el concepto de orientación a la compra se compone de una dimensión personal (actividades, intereses, opiniones, motivos, necesidades y preferencias) y una dimensión de comportamiento

en el mercado, la cual refleja la dimensión personal e indica necesidades específicas y preferencias para la compra. Laaksonen (1993) ve la orientación a la compra como un elemento actitudinal que revela hasta qué punto un atributo es valorado por el comprador. En relación con esto, Marjanen, Pitkääho y Uusitalo (2005) definen la orientación hacia la elección como la tendencia del consumidor para seleccionar un lugar donde comprar, que se corresponde con su evaluación de la importancia de varias características del punto de venta.

Según Moschis (1992), la orientación a la compra es el resultado de varios patrones generales de compra, que incluyen las actividades, intereses y opiniones del consumidor en el proceso de compra. En este sentido, la orientación a la compra puede utilizarse para representar al consumidor con motivaciones económicas, recreativas, ambientales o sociales en la compra. En otras palabras, los compradores con diferentes orientaciones tienen diferentes características de consumo y comportamientos en el punto de venta, incluyendo, por ejemplo, diferentes necesidades y preferencias para las fuentes de información consultadas (Moschis, 1976), las formas de compra (Gutman y Mills, 1982; Domina y Koch, 1998; Lumpkin, Hawes y Darden, 1986) y los atributos buscados en el punto de venta (Swinyard y Rinne, 1995).

Por otra parte, en la literatura se puede encontrar orientación a la compra como sinónimo del estilo de compra (Hawks y Ackerman, 1990; Shim y Kotsiopoulos, 1993; Papatla y Bhatnagar, 2002), que es la forma en que los consumidores realizan la tarea de compra (Sinha, 2003). Es decir, la orientación a la compra es conceptualizada como una dimensión específica del estilo de vida. Lo que sugiere que el concepto de orientación a la compra abarca los intereses, opiniones, actitudes, necesidades y preferencias de los consumidores hacia las actividades de compra, pudiendo referirse a ello como estilos de compra o comprador.

## **2.2. Tipologías de compradores**

Durante al menos los últimos 60 años, se puede encontrar una gran variedad de tipologías de compra/comprador en la literatura. Los numerosos enfoques, contextos y técnicas de análisis dan lugar a una amplia variedad de tipologías de compradores, dificultando su comparación y generalización (Westbrook y Black, 1985; Ganesh, Reynolds y Luckett, 2007).

La literatura sobre el consumidor sugiere que hay tres tipos de enfoques para caracterizar los estilos del consumidor: el enfoque de la tipología del consumidor (Stone, 1954), el enfoque psicográfico/estilo de vida (Valencia, 1982; Ownbey, 1991; Tai, 2008) y el enfoque de características del consumidor (Sproles y Kendall, 1986; Scott y Bruce, 1995; Bauer *et al.*, 2006).

Numerosos estudios, así como el presente, han utilizado el enfoque de tipología del consumidor para identificar la orientación a la compra que guía al consumidor en su toma de decisiones y/o en su patrón de comportamiento, proporcionando diferentes tipologías de comprador (ver Tabla 1). Estas tipologías se basan fundamentalmente en los motivos del consumidor para ir de compras (Tauber, 1972; Bellenger y Korgaonkar, 1980; Westbrook y Black, 1985). Se sugiere que los consumidores compren por una variedad de motivos, definiendo los motivos de compra como los “conductores del comportamiento que llevan al consumidor al punto de venta para satisfacer sus necesidades internas” (Jim y Kim, 2003, p. 399).

Los motivos de compra son clasificados de manera amplia en dos categorías: utilitaria/funcional frente a hedónica/emocional/recreacional (Laaksonen, 2010; Yue-Teng et al., 2011). Sin embargo, varios motivos han sido utilizados en la literatura para clasificar al comprador: el deseo de posesión inmediata, la búsqueda de información, búsqueda de variedad, el disfrute o experiencia recreacional, conveniencia (incluyendo ahorro de tiempo), interacción social, etc. De acuerdo a estas diferentes motivaciones para comprar, se pueden identificar diferentes perfiles de compradores: apático (Brown, Pope y Voges, 2003; Ganesh, Reynolds y Luckett, 2007; Stone, 1954; Westbrook y Black, 1985; Williams et al., 1978), recreacional (Bellenger y Korgaonkar, 1980; Brown, Pope y Voges, 2003), implicado en el proceso (Westbrook y Black, 1985), entusiasta (Arnold y Reynolds, 2003; Ganesh, Reynolds y Luckett, 2007), consciente de la marca (Korgaonkar, 1984), económico/conveniencia (Bellenger y Korgaonkar, 1980; Brown,

Pope y Voges, 2003; Ganesh, Reynolds y Luckett, 2007; Korgaonkar, 1984; Rohm y Swaminathan, 2004; Stone, 1954; Westbrook y Black, 1985; Williams et al., 1978), optimización de la elección (Westbrook y Black, 1985), orientado al precio (Korgaonkar, 1984), proveedores (Arnold y Reynolds, 2003), buscador de ofertas (Ganesh, Reynolds y Luckett, 2007), buscador de variedad (Ganesh, Reynolds y Luckett, 2007; Rohm y Swaminathan, 2004)...

TABLA 1  
Algunas de las tipologías de comprador más recientes (últimos 5 años)

Autor/Año	País	Población	Muestra	Técnica	Tipologías (N)
Angell et al. (2014)	Reino Unido	Compradores de 60 años o más en tiendas de comestibles	524 Hombres (38%) Mujeres (62%)	Entrevista en profundidad y encuesta autorealizada por vía postal; análisis clúster	(1) Neutrales prudentes (152) (2) Exigentes en todos los aspectos (120) (3) Reacios casuales (98) (4) Sociables Exigentes (84) (5) Utilitaristas pudientes (70)
Jayasankaraprasad y Kathyayani (2014)		Compradores en tiendas de comestibles	1040	Encuesta personal en centro comercial; análisis clúster	(1) Económico (2) De conveniencia (3) De promociones-precio (4) Hedónico (5) Social
Angell et al. (2012)	Reino Unido	Comprador mayor en tienda de comestibles	36 individuos: Hombres (16.7%) Mujeres (83.3%)	Entrevista; análisis cualitativo	(1) Orientado al producto (2) Prudente (3) Selectivo-Conveniencia (4) Restrictivo-Conveniencia (5) Orientado a la tienda (6) Personalista
Mortimer (2011)	Australia	Comprador en tienda de comestibles	Hombres (140)	Cuestionario; análisis clúster	(1) Consciente del presupuesto (2) Controlado (3) Egocéntrico (4) Equitativo (5) Conveniencia
Yue-Teng et al. (2011)	Malasia	Estudiantes	Hombres (100) Mujeres (100)	Cuestionario auto-administrado; análisis factorial exploratorio	(1) Económico (2) Adicto (3) Conveniencia
Ganesh et al. (2010)	Estados Unidos	Mayores de 18 años	3059 Mujeres (67%) Hombres (33%)	Cuestionario online enviado a un panel; análisis clúster	Según motivaciones de compra: (1) interactivo (2) destino (3) apático (4) comprador e-window (5) básico (6) buscador de ofertas y (7) entusiasta de las compras



					Según atributos de la tienda online: (1) básico (2) aversión al riesgo (3) apático (4) entusiasta de las compras (5) buscador de ofertas
Ruiz y Lassala (2010)	España	Comprador online	380 compradores online	Entrevistas asistidas por ordenador; CHAID	Convenienciam-orientado a lo nuevo (96) Convenienciam-orientado a la experiencia (47) Implicado (60) Dual (26) Orientado al precio (85) Recreacional (66)
			1605 no compradores online		On-off (88) Amantes de la era tecnológica (68) Navegadores frecuentes (115) Tradicionales (296) Miedo a ser robados (163) Rezagados online (652) Compradores de moda (223)
Takkinen (2009)	Finlandia	Residentes en Helsinki de 18 a 74 años	446 mujeres	Cuestionario postal; análisis clúster	(1) Sin prisa (2) Buscador de servicios tradicional (3) Recreacional (4) Exigente y competente

### 3. Metodología

#### 3.1. Población y muestra objeto de estudio

Para llevar a cabo esta investigación se han analizado los datos obtenidos por la *CONsumer BEhaviour ERasmus Network* (COBEREN). COBEREN es una red internacional, subvencionada por la Comisión Europea, en la que colaboran expertos de 38 universidades pertenecientes a 30 países europeos. Su principal objetivo es proveer, al mundo académico y empresarial, con una amplia base de conocimiento sobre cultura y comportamiento del consumidor, así como una base de datos actualizada en cultura.

La recopilación de datos se llevó a cabo mediante el envío de un cuestionario online, traducido en los diferentes idiomas, a consumidores de los 30 países europeos. En la presente investigación se muestran parte de los resultados, los referentes al mercado español y finlandés.

Con carácter previo al análisis de la información recogida, los datos fueron sometidos a un proceso de depuración y validación para velar por la buena gestión de la información. Al centrarse en el consumidor español y finlandés, como ya se ha mencionado, el análisis se ha limitado al grupo de encuestados que señalaron que su país de origen era España o Finlandia y su nacionalidad, la española o la finlandesa. Los encuestados que no respondieron a estas preguntas, fueron eliminados de la muestra. Finalmente, la muestra seleccionada es de 968

españoles y 580 finlandeses, mayores de 18 años. La muestra está equilibrada en función del sexo y la edad. En la Tabla 2 se recogen las características sociodemográficas de la muestra.

TABLA 2  
Perfil de la muestra (%)

	ES	FI		ES	FI
<b>Sexo</b>			<b>Situación laboral</b>		
Hombre	52,4	47,9	Desempleado	14,1	6,3
Mujer	47,6	52,1	Empleado	64,8	64,9
<b>Edad</b>			Estudiante	5,2	8,7
Jóvenes (18-37 años)	33,6	28,9	Jubilado	15,9	20,1
Adultos (38-57 años)	38,0	37,5	<b>Ingresos netos mensuales del hogar</b>		
Mayores (58 ó más)	28,4	33,5	Menos de 200 Euros	1,5	0,2
<b>Nivel educativo</b>			200 – 499 Euros	1,7	1,8
Primaria	6,0	8,3	500 – 999 Euros	7,9	5,3
Secundaria	14,1	37,7	1000 – 1999 Euros	28,8	13,7
FP	15,1	22,4	2000 – 2999 Euros	23,7	24,7
Grado Universitario	38,8	8,2	3000 – 4999 Euros	27,2	40,9
Máster o Doctorado	26,0	23,4	5000 Euros o más	9,3	13,3

### 3.2. Dimensiones y análisis

El cuestionario elaborado por COBEREN se estructura en seis apartados: (1) significado de beber, (2) bebidas preferidas y consumo, (3) circunstancias, motivos de consumo y gasto en bebidas, (4) comportamiento de consumo en general, (5) cultura del consumidor y (6) descripción del perfil sociodemográfico.

Para esta investigación se utilizan los apartados 4 y 6, es decir, se analizan las variables *estilos de toma de decisión* y *perfil sociodemográfico*. El *perfil sociodemográfico* abarca las características que se observan en la tabla 2, mientras los *estilos de toma de decisión* aparecen recogidos en 44 ítems, 24 de los cuales utilizan una escala likert de 5 puntos y dos cuestiones dónde se pide seleccionar las 5 afirmaciones que mejor describen el comportamiento del encuestado. Estos ítems, procedentes principalmente del Inventario de Estilos de Consumidor de Sproles y Kendall (1986), han sido contrastados por el conjunto de expertos que forman la red COBEREN y, posteriormente, con la realización de un test piloto.

Las once dimensiones de estilos de compra (ver Tabla 3) se obtienen a partir de estas afirmaciones, basándose en la revisión de la literatura, así como en un análisis de componentes principales de las afirmaciones medidas en escala likert de 5 puntos y un análisis de correspondencias múltiples sobre el resto.

Antes de llevar a cabo el análisis empírico, los datos han sido recodificados con objeto de facilitar el análisis e integrar los diferentes tipos de escalas. La escala likert de 5 puntos ha sido recodificada en una escala de 3 puntos (Totalmente desacuerdo y En desacuerdo = -1, No sabe = 0, Totalmente de acuerdo y De acuerdo = +1), mientras las afirmaciones seleccionados se codificaron con +1 y las no seleccionadas con -1. Esta recodificación también varía dependiendo de la relación de la afirmación con la dimensión, siendo modificadas en nueve casos (ver Tabla 3).

Se utiliza un análisis de medias, porcentajes y la varianza para detectar las diferencias claves entre los estilos de compra de ambos países. Y posteriormente, se ha llevado a cabo un análisis clúster para cada uno de los países, a partir de las dimensiones de estilos de compra, con objeto de identificar y comparar las tipologías de compradores en España y Finlandia.

## 4. Resultados

### 4.1. Estilos de compra del consumidor español y finlandés

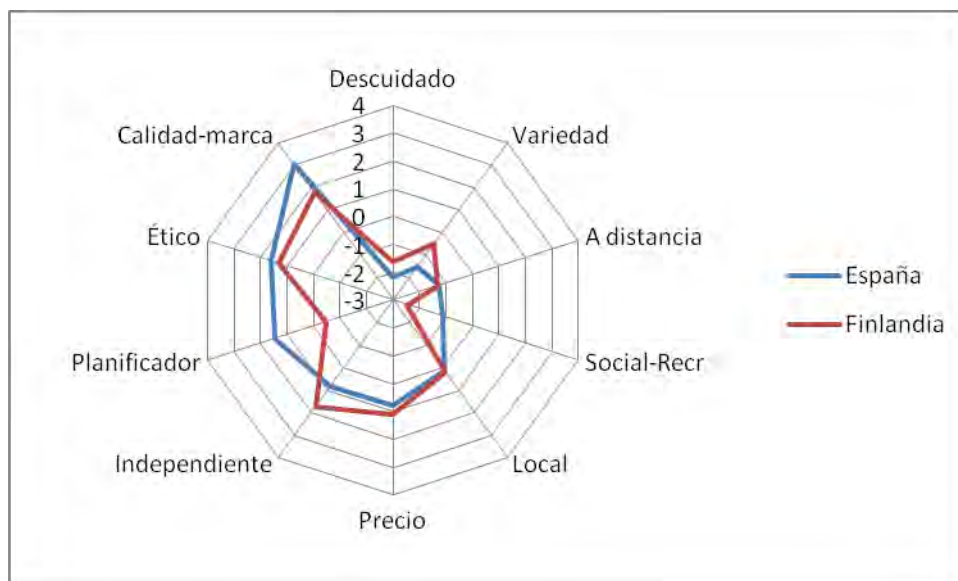
Se observan significativas diferencias estadísticas entre los estilos de compra de los consumidores españoles y finlandeses (ver Tabla 3). En particular, se encuentran importantes diferencias en dos dimensiones muy ligadas, la *social-recreacional* y la *independiente*. Si bien, la dimensión social-recreacional muestra una media negativa en ambos casos, existe una gran diferencia entre las medias y los porcentajes de cada país. Así, mientras los españoles son compradores más dependientes y recreativos, a los que les gusta ir de compras sólo por diversión, acompañados de amigos y a los que consultar qué comprar, los finlandeses deciden independientemente qué comprar y son compradores poco recreativos.

Otras dos dimensiones que también parecen estar ligadas y presentan diferencias significativas son las de *planificador* y *consciente de la calidad-marca*. Mientras los españoles dedican más tiempo a buscar información, comprar cuidadosamente (buscando calidad y prestando atención a las marcas) y reclamar cuando no están satisfechos, los finlandeses no dedican tanto tiempo a las compras, prefiriendo realizar compras rápidas de productos o marcas que les parecen suficientemente buenos.

Al analizar la *dimensión búsqueda de variedad-desleal*, se observa como los españoles muestran una media muy negativa, siendo por tanto compradores que no buscan variedad y leales, frente a los finlandeses que muestran una media próxima al cero, pero positiva. Son principalmente significativas aquellas sentencias referentes a la lealtad como: “cuando encuentro un producto o marca que me gusta, me mantengo fiel” o “tengo marcas favoritas que compro una y otra vez”. Sin embargo, resulta interesante que los españoles se sientan en mayor medida atraídos por las cosas nuevas que salen al mercado, que los finlandeses.

En la *dimensión ética*, ambos presentan medias positivas, pero los consumidores españoles parecen comprar productos de comercio justo o respetuosos con el medio ambiente en mayor proporción que los finlandeses. Ocurrendo algo similar en la *dimensión local*, donde ambos parecen preferir las tiendas pequeñas y los productos locales, mostrando una mayor diferencia en lo que se refiere a acudir al mercado municipal, donde los españoles muestran un porcentaje más elevado.

FIGURA 1  
Diferencias entre los estilos de compra del consumidor español y finlandés



Tanto españoles como finlandeses son compradores *conscientes del precio* (dimensión significativa estadísticamente con medias positivas), aunque los finlandeses se muestran algo más preocupados por el precio que los españoles.

La *dimensión descuidado* en ambos casos presenta medias negativas, considerándose por tanto compradores cuidadosos. Si bien la única afirmación significativa estadísticamente es la de “a veces compro sin pensar”, donde los compradores finlandeses muestran un mayor porcentaje que los españoles.

Respecto a la *dimensión de compra a distancia*, aunque no presenta diferencias estadísticas significativas, parece que ninguno de los países se siente atraído por este tipo de compra, mostrando ambos medias negativas. Los españoles señalan en mayor proporción comprar por internet o catálogo, aunque también son los más desconfiados en sus compras por internet.

En resumen, se puede decir que las diferencias más importantes entre España y Finlandia se encuentran en las dimensiones social-recreacional, consciente de la calidad-marca, buscador de variedad-desleal, planificador e independiente. Es decir, el comprador español se caracteriza por ser más social, dependiente, leal y perfeccionista que el finlandés, al dedicar más tiempo a la compra en sí, compartiéndola con amigos, así como a planificarla, además de estar más preocupado por la calidad, marca y procedencia de los productos que compra. Mientras el comprador finlandés es más independiente y descuidado, gustándole realizar sus compras más rápido, aunque trata de comprar productos suficientemente buenos.

TABLA 3  
Diferencias entre los estilos de compra del consumidor español y finlandés

	Medias / Porcentajes			Test	
	Españoles	Finlandeses	Dif. Es-Fi	$\chi^2$	p <0,05
<b>SOCIAL-RECREACIONAL</b>	-1,10	-2,45	-1,35		
Me gusta la atmósfera de los centro comerciales	51,5	35,1	16,4	15,940	0,000
Las tiendas llenas de gente me resultan estimulantes	14,2	8,4	5,8	15,552	0,000
Me encanta ir de compras con amigos	33,5	18,0	15,5	18,244	0,000
Me gusta ir acompañado cuando voy de compras	56,8	33,2	23,6	31,503	0,000
Con frecuencia voy de compras sólo por diversión	29,2	14,7	14,5	12,635	0,002
(-) Me aburre ir de compras	43,1	38,8	4,3	51,899	0,000
<b>ÉTICO</b>	1,63	1,30	0,33		
Los consumidores deberían boicotear los productos producidos por compañías irresponsables	77,1	44,1	33,0	3,450	0,178
Compro productos de Comercio Justo siempre que puedo	43,6	28,2	15,4	23,940	0,000
Me veo como un consumidor preocupado por la salud	80,7	56,0	24,7	1,964	0,375
Intento escoger productos respetuosos con el medio ambiente siempre que puedo	74,4	50,3	24,1	7,833	0,020
<b>LOCAL</b>	0,13	0,17	-0,04		
Prefiero las tiendas pequeñas a los supermercados	40,0	41,3	-1,3	12,858	0,002
Cuando puedo, voy al mercado municipal	58,4	31,0	27,4	39,375	0,000
Intento escoger productos fabricados localmente	54,0	50,0	4,0	16,687	0,000
<b>A DISTANCIA</b>	-1,26	-1,29	-0,03		
Compro regularmente por internet	33,6	19,3	14,3	3,807	0,149
Con frecuencia compro por catálogo	15,8	11,3	4,5	0,168	0,919
(-) No se puede estar del todo seguro de los productos que se venden online	61,9	40,4	21,5	1,964	0,374
<b>CONSCIENTE DE LA CALIDAD-MARCA</b>	3,03	1,77	1,26		
Los estándares y expectativas que aplico a lo que compro son altas	73,5	53,5	20,0	5,183	0,075
Comprar buena calidad es importante para mi	94,3	52,0	42,3	85,560	0,000
Lo que compro dice mucho sobre la clase de persona que soy	67,1	49,8	17,3	5,877	0,053
Tiendo a elegir las marcas más famosas	28,1	22,4	5,7	1,510	0,470
Pongo mucha atención a las marcas que compro	66,0	26,7	39,3	164,701	0,000
Reclamo cuando no estoy satisfecho con algo que he comprado	82,4	42,6	39,8	8,556	0,014

(-) Compro rápido, escojo el primer producto o marca que encuentre suficientemente bueno	13,0	19,0	-6,0	9,934	0,002
<b>BUSCADOR DE VARIEDAD &amp; DESLEAL</b>	<b>-1,53</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>1,04</b>		
(-) Cuando encuentro un producto o marca que me gusta, me mantengo fiel	62,6	34,3	28,3	116,318	0,000
Cambio de marcas regularmente, sólo por cambiar	7,4	6,6	0,8	0,432	0,511
(-) Tengo marcas favoritas que compro una y otra vez	42,4	26,2	16,2	40,900	0,000
(-) Voy a las mismas tiendas, siempre que puedo	49,3	39,7	9,6	13,532	0,000
(-) Ir a muchas tiendas es una pérdida de tiempo	21,4	16,4	5,0	5,786	0,016
Siempre me atraen las cosas nuevas que salen al mercado	24,6	18,1	6,5	8,839	0,003
Para variar, compro en tiendas diferentes y elijo marcas distintas	16,9	17,4	-0,5	0,057	0,812
<b>CONSCIENTE DEL PRECIO</b>	<b>0,78</b>	<b>1,11</b>	<b>-0,33</b>		
(-) No presto mucha atención al precio de lo que compro	22,7	12,9	9,8	9,865	0,007
Compro tanto como puedo en rebajas	61,6	44,1	17,5	18,333	0,000
<b>PLANIFICADOR</b>	<b>1,48</b>	<b>-0,46</b>	<b>1,94</b>		
Me gusta planificar antes de ir a comprar	68,9	61,0	7,9	10,006	0,002
Me gusta tomarme mi tiempo y comprar cuidadosamente	52,8	32,6	20,2	59,761	0,000
Trato de obtener tanta información como puedo antes de comprar algo	66,8	37,2	29,6	128,790	0,000
Me gusta comparar ofertas antes de elegir qué comprar	73,7	74,1	-0,4	0,043	0,835
Intento asegurarme mucho de que siempre compro lo mejor	61,8	22,1	39,7	229,625	0,000
<b>DESCUIDADO</b>	<b>-2,17</b>	<b>-1,61</b>	<b>0,56</b>		
Con frecuencia realizo compras sin control de las que me arrepiento	9,5	7,8	1,7	1,370	0,242
A veces compro cosas sin pensar	28,2	56,6	-28,4	122,725	0,000
A menudo compro sin pensar demasiado	20,2	17,9	2,3	1,246	0,264
Mis salidas de compras son tan rápidas como puedo	33,5	37,1	-3,6	2,069	0,150
<b>INDEPENDIENTE</b>	<b>0,83</b>	<b>1,75</b>	<b>-0,92</b>		
Me considero un comprador independiente	53,3	68,3	-15,0	33,579	0,000
Decido independientemente qué comprar y qué no	58,5	85,5	-27,0	123,176	0,000
(-) Me gusta saber la opinión de los demás antes de comprar	20,1	16,4	3,7	3,378	0,066

#### 4.2. Segmentos de consumidores españoles basados en sus estilos de compra

A partir de las dimensiones de estilos de compra anteriores, se ha llevado a cabo un Análisis Clúster en dos pasos, para obtener los diferentes segmentos de compradores en España. Primero, se realizó un Análisis Clúster Jerárquico, utilizando el método de Ward, con el objetivo de identificar a través del histograma el número apropiado de segmentos. Posteriormente, se realizó un Análisis Clúster de K-medias para perfeccionar la identificación de dichos segmentos. Así, la mejor solución corresponde a la de tres clúster, que según muestra la prueba de Scheffé, que rechaza la igualdad de medias para todos los casos ( $p < 0,05$ ), pueden ser diferenciados a través de las diez dimensiones de estilos de compra. La Tabla 4 muestra la solución final basada en las dimensiones de estilos de compra y los porcentajes para cada uno de los clúster, así como sus características socio-demográficas.

Por tanto, los 968 encuestados españoles pueden ser clasificados en tres segmentos de compradores, los cuales son denominados:

Los *racionales*, que caracterizan a la mayor parte de la muestra (39,26%), son compradores muy éticos y planificadores, que prestan especial atención a la calidad y al precio. Son muy independientes, no yendo a comprar con amigos y no gustándoles las tiendas llenas de gente o comprar a distancia. Son consumidores localistas y leales a las tiendas, productos o marcas. En cuanto a sus características socio-demográficas, no existen diferencias significativas, aunque se puede apreciar que se trata de consumidores algo más mayores que los compradores de los otros segmentos.

Los *irracionales*, los cuales constituyen el 31,61% de la muestra, se caracterizan por ser los compradores menos conscientes de la calidad-marca y del precio, siendo los más descuidados y no planificadores. Sin embargo, se trata de los compradores más leales, no interesados en la variedad o en las cosas nuevas que salen al mercado. Este grupo también se caracteriza por su independencia, no gustándoles comprar con amigos, por diversión o a distancia. Tampoco son éticos, ni localistas. Respecto a sus características socio-demográficas, se aprecia un porcentaje algo superior de hombres (57,8%) que de mujeres (42,2%) en este segmento.

Los *sociales* representan el 29,13% de la muestra. Se diferencian principalmente de los otros dos segmentos por ser los más sociales-recreacionales y dependientes, además de ser los más desleales y buscadores de variedad y novedad. Compran a distancia, aunque desconfían de los productos online y se trata de consumidores éticos, localistas y marquistas. No son descuidados, planifican sus compras y compran tanto como pueden en rebajas. En cuanto a sus características socio-demográficas, no existen diferencias significativas, aunque se puede apreciar que se trata de consumidores algo más jóvenes que los compradores de los otros segmentos.

TABLA 4  
Características de los segmentos de consumidores españoles

	Clusters		
	Irracional (31,61%)	Social (29,13%)	Racional (39,26%)
<b>CARACTERÍSTICAS SOCIO-DEMOGRÁFICAS</b>			
<b>Sexo</b>			
- Hombres	57,8	49,6	50,0
- Mujeres	42,2	50,4	50,0
<b>Edad</b>			
- Jóvenes (18-37 años)	34,0	42,6	26,6
- Adultos (38-57 años)	35,3	35,8	41,8
- Mayores (58 ó más años)	30,7	21,6	31,6
<b>Nivel educativo</b>			
- Primaria	8,5	6,8	3,4
- Secundaria	12,8	16,1	13,7
- FP	13,1	18,2	14,5
- Grado universitario	33,8	40,4	41,6
- Máster o Doctorado	31,8	18,6	26,8
<b>Situación laboral</b>			
- Estudiante	3,6	7,8	4,5
- Desempleado	10,3	18,8	13,8
- Empleado	68,5	62,1	63,8
- Jubilado	17,5	11,3	18,0
<b>Número de personas que viven en el hogar</b>			
- Una	29,0	15,8	24,9
- Dos	30,0	23,2	26,1
- Tres	22,9	30,9	25,5
- Cuatro	12,5	23,5	17,8
- Cinco	4,0	4,4	4,9
- Más de 5	1,6	2,2	0,8
<b>Ingresos netos mensuales del hogar</b>			
- Menos de 200 €	0,3	3,6	0,8
- 200 – 499 €	2,0	1,1	1,9
- 500 – 999 €	8,4	7,2	8,0
- 1000 – 1999 €	26,5	26,6	32,2
- 2000 – 2999 €	23,5	30,6	18,7
- 3000 – 4999 €	25,8	23,7	30,9
- 5000 € ó más	13,4	7,2	7,4
<b>SOCIAL-RECREACIONAL</b>	<b>-2,84</b>	<b>2,41</b>	<b>-2,30</b>
Me gusta la atmósfera de los centro comerciales	35,0	83,0	40,5
Las tiendas llenas de gente me resultan estimulantes	5,2	38,3	3,2
Me encanta ir de compras con amigos	11,8	71,3	22,1
Me gusta ir acompañado cuando voy de compras	40,8	83,0	48,9
Con frecuencia voy de compras sólo por diversión	15,0	63,1	14,7
(-) Me aburre ir de compras	56,2	21,6	47,4
<b>ÉTICO</b>	<b>0,22</b>	<b>1,90</b>	<b>2,56</b>

Los consumidores deberían boicotear los productos producidos por compañías irresponsables	61,8	76,6	87,4
Compro productos de Comercio Justo siempre que puedo	19,9	53,5	53,9
Me veo como un consumidor preocupado por la salud	63,7	81,2	91,6
Intento escoger productos respetuosos con el medio ambiente siempre que puedo	54,2	76,6	87,6
<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>-0,78</b>	<b>0,63</b>	<b>0,49</b>
Prefiero las tiendas pequeñas a los supermercados	32,0	47,2	40,0
Cuando puedo, voy al mercado municipal	40,2	68,1	65,3
Intento escoger productos fabricados localmente	33,0	61,7	64,2
<b>A DISTANCIA</b>	<b>-1,39</b>	<b>-0,92</b>	<b>-1,40</b>
Compro regularmente por internet	26,5	44,7	30,5
Con frecuencia compro por catálogo	10,8	26,2	11,6
(-) No se puede estar del todo seguro de los productos que se venden online	56,5	66,3	61,6
<b>CONSCIENTE DE LA MARCA - CALIDAD</b>	<b>1,37</b>	<b>3,94</b>	<b>3,69</b>
Los estándares y expectativas que aplico a lo que compro son altas	57,2	77,7	81,6
Comprar buena calidad es importante para mí	87,9	94,7	97,1
Lo que compro dice mucho sobre la clase de persona que soy	51,6	75,2	71,1
Tiendo a elegir las marcas más famosas	23,9	41,5	20,8
Pongo mucha atención a las marcas que compro	47,1	74,1	73,4
Reclamo cuando no estoy satisfecho con algo que he comprado	65,4	86,5	91,3
(-) Compro rápido, escojo el primer producto o marca que encuentro suficientemente bueno	23,9	8,5	7,6
<b>BUSCADOR DE VARIEDAD &amp; DESLEAL</b>	<b>-2,61</b>	<b>0,02</b>	<b>-1,81</b>
(-) Cuando encuentro un producto o marca que me gusta, me mantengo fiel	69,9	48,6	67,1
Cambio de marcas regularmente, sólo por cambiar	4,6	13,8	5,0
(-) Tengo marcas favoritas que compro una y otra vez	42,8	39,4	44,2
(-) Voy a las mismas tiendas, siempre que puedo	59,8	34,4	51,8
(-) Ir a muchas tiendas es una pérdida de tiempo	37,6	12,1	15,3
Siempre me atraen las cosas nuevas que salen al mercado	15,7	41,8	18,9
Para variar, compro en tiendas diferentes y elijo marcas distintas	9,2	29,8	13,7
<b>CONSCIENTE DEL PRECIO</b>	<b>0,41</b>	<b>0,82</b>	<b>1,04</b>
(-) No presto mucha atención al precio de lo que compro	29,4	29,4	11,6
Compro tanto como puedo en rebajas	49,0	70,6	63,2
<b>PLANIFICADOR</b>	<b>-0,21</b>	<b>1,11</b>	<b>3,11</b>
Me gusta planificar antes de ir a comprar	60,8	58,2	83,4
Me gusta tomarme mi tiempo y comprar cuidadosamente	31,0	54,3	69,2
Trato de obtener tanta información como puedo antes de comprar algo	48,7	59,6	86,8
Me gusta comparar ofertas antes de elegir qué comprar	55,6	74,5	87,6
Intento asegurarme mucho de que siempre compro lo mejor	43,5	59,2	78,4
<b>DESCUIDADO</b>	<b>-1,23</b>	<b>-2,19</b>	<b>-2,91</b>
Con frecuencia realizo compras sin control de las que me arrepiento	14,4	13,8	2,4
A veces compro cosas sin pensar	38,6	34,8	15,0
A menudo compro sin pensar demasiado	34,3	24,8	5,5
Mis salidas de compras son tan rápidas como puedo	5,0	17,0	31,6
<b>INDEPENDIENTE</b>	<b>0,59</b>	<b>0,45</b>	<b>1,31</b>
Me considero un comprador independiente	46,4	50,0	61,3
Decido independientemente qué comprar y qué no	49,3	51,8	70,8
(-) Me gusta saber la opinión de los demás antes de comprar	16,3	29,4	16,3

### 4.3. Segmentos de consumidores finlandeses basados en sus estilos de compra

Del mismo modo que en el caso español, a partir de un Análisis Clúster Jerárquico y un Análisis Clúster K-medias posterior, se han obtenido tres clúster. En este caso, la prueba de Scheffé no encuentra diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los clúster a través de todas las dimensiones de estilos de compra. Así, las dimensiones de *compra a distancia*, *consciente del precio* e *independencia* no permiten diferenciar los tres segmentos obtenidos a partir de los 580 encuestados.

De acuerdo a la Tabla 5 se ha denominado al primer segmento *apático*. Este representa a la mayor parte de la muestra (56,03%) y se caracteriza principalmente por aburrirle las compras y no gustarle ir a comprar acompañado. No planifica sus compras y es un poco descuidado, acudiendo siempre a las mismas tiendas y comprando las mismas marcas. Sin embargo, se trata de un comprador ético, localista y que busca calidad en lo que compra. En cuanto a sus características socio-demográficas, este grupo es el que localiza un mayor porcentaje de hombres, adultos-mayores, con estudios de máster o doctorado y con los mayores ingresos.

El segmento *irracional* (28,45%) se diferencia de los otros segmentos por estar formado por aquellos compradores menos éticos, localistas, conscientes de la calidad-marca, planificadores y cuidadosos. Al igual que en el caso de los apáticos, aunque en menor medida, no se trata de un comprador social-recreacional y se muestra como un consumidor leal a las tiendas. Se caracteriza por estar formado en un porcentaje algo superior por mujeres, adultos y jubilados.

El *social-racional* representa un pequeño porcentaje de la muestra (15,52%) caracterizado significativamente por ser es el más social y al que más le gusta ir a comprar. Es un comprador muy ético y muy localista, así como muy consciente tanto de la calidad como de la marca, buscador de variedad-novedad, planificador y muy cuidadoso. Está formado principalmente por mujeres, jóvenes y estudiantes.

TABLA 5  
Características de los segmentos de consumidores finlandeses

	Clusters		
	Apático (56,03%)	Social- racional (15,52%)	Irracional (28,45%)
<b>CARACTERÍSTICAS SOCIO-DEMOGRÁFICAS</b>			
<b>Sexo</b>			
- Hombres	52,5	35,6	45,7
- Mujeres	47,5	64,4	54,3
<b>Edad</b>			
- Jóvenes (18-37 años)	26,0	38,2	29,6
- Adultos (38-57 años)	39,5	30,3	37,7
- Mayores (58 ó más años)	34,5	31,5	32,7
<b>Nivel educativo</b>			
- Primaria	8,1	10,1	7,9
- Secundaria	37,3	36,0	39,4
- FP	21,1	25,8	23,0
- Grado universitario	6,2	11,2	10,3
- Máster o Doctorado	27,3	16,9	19,4
<b>Situación laboral</b>			
- Estudiante	7,5	13,6	8,5
- Desempleado	6,2	9,1	4,9
- Empleado	67,0	59,1	64,0
- Jubilado	19,3	18,2	22,6
<b>Número de personas que viven en el hogar</b>			
- Una	23,3	20,5	22,2
- Dos	42,7	53,0	41,2
- Tres	14,0	12,0	9,8
- Cuatro	13,7	8,4	19,0
- Cinco	5,7	2,4	3,9
- Más de 5	0,6	3,6	3,9
<b>Ingresos netos mensuales del hogar</b>			
- Menos de 200 €	0,0	0,0	0,6
- 200 – 499 €	1,6	3,4	1,3
- 500 – 999 €	5,7	5,6	4,4
- 1000 – 1999 €	12,4	11,2	17,7
- 2000 – 2999 €	22,5	30,3	25,9
- 3000 – 4999 €	42,2	39,3	39,2
- 5000 € ó más	15,6	10,1	10,8
<b>SOCIAL-RECREACIONAL</b>	<b>-3,95</b>	<b>1,63</b>	<b>-1,71</b>
Me gusta la atmósfera de los centro comerciales	23,7	80,0	52,7
Las tiendas llenas de gente me resultan estimulantes	3,4	18,9	10,3



Me encanta ir de compras con amigos	8,3	66,7	30,9
Me gusta ir acompañado cuando voy de compras	28,6	82,2	45,5
Con frecuencia voy de compras sólo por diversión	8,6	54,4	26,7
(-) Me aburre ir de compras	74,5	22,2	57,0
<b>ÉTICO</b>	<b>1,57</b>	<b>2,08</b>	<b>0,35</b>
Los consumidores deberían boicotear los productos producidos por compañías irresponsables	80,3	85,6	72,1
Compro productos de Comercio Justo siempre que puedo	37,5	46,7	18,8
Me veo como un consumidor preocupado por la salud	82,2	88,9	61,8
Intento escoger productos respetuosos con el medio ambiente siempre que puedo	72,0	73,3	55,8
<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>0,37</b>	<b>0,89</b>	<b>-0,61</b>
Prefiero las tiendas pequeñas a los supermercados	53,8	62,2	31,5
Cuando puedo, voy al mercado municipal	41,5	54,4	35,2
Intento escoger productos fabricados localmente	69,2	73,3	49,1
<b>A DISTANCIA</b>	<b>-1,21</b>	<b>-1,45</b>	<b>-1,36</b>
Compro regularmente por internet	30,5	30,0	27,3
Con frecuencia compro por catálogo	12,9	17,8	17,0
(-) No se puede estar del todo seguro de los productos que se venden online	52,6	68,9	61,8
<b>CONSCIENTE DE LA MARCA - CALIDAD</b>	<b>2,62</b>	<b>4,58</b>	<b>-1,44</b>
Los estándares y expectativas que aplico a lo que compro son altas	89,2	95,6	45,5
Comprar buena calidad es importante para mí	88,3	94,4	49,1
Lo que compro dice mucho sobre la clase de persona que soy	64,6	80,0	40,0
Tiendo a elegir las marcas más famosas	28,0	53,3	5,5
Pongo mucha atención a las marcas que compro	34,8	66,7	6,7
Reclamo cuando no estoy satisfecho con algo que he comprado	81,2	90,0	60,0
(-) Compro rápido, escojo el primer producto o marca que encuentro suficientemente bueno	13,2	8,9	35,8
<b>BUSCADOR DE VARIEDAD &amp; DESLEAL</b>	<b>-0,78</b>	<b>0,07</b>	<b>-0,22</b>
(-) Cuando encuentro un producto o marca que me gusta, me mantengo fiel	36,3	38,9	27,9
Cambio de marcas regularmente, sólo por cambiar	3,7	10,0	10,3
(-) Tengo marcas favoritas que compro una y otra vez	28,6	36,7	15,8
(-) Voy a las mismas tiendas, siempre que puedo	40,9	30,0	42,4
(-) Ir a muchas tiendas es una pérdida de tiempo	18,2	5,6	18,8
Siempre me atraen las cosas nuevas que salen al mercado	17,5	25,6	15,2
Para variar, compro en tiendas diferentes y elijo marcas distintas	13,8	28,9	18,2
<b>CONSCIENTE DEL PRECIO</b>	<b>1,09</b>	<b>1,08</b>	<b>1,16</b>
(-) No presto mucha atención al precio de lo que compro	15,1	21,1	14,5
Compro tanto como puedo en rebajas	69,8	75,6	72,7
<b>PLANIFICADOR</b>	<b>-0,19</b>	<b>0,60</b>	<b>-1,57</b>
Me gusta planificar antes de ir a comprar	66,2	60,0	51,5
Me gusta tomarme mi tiempo y comprar cuidadosamente	32,3	58,9	18,8
Trato de obtener tanta información como puedo antes de comprar algo	39,4	50,0	26,1
Me gusta comparar ofertas antes de elegir qué comprar	75,7	77,8	69,1
Intento asegurarme mucho de que siempre compro lo mejor	27,1	33,3	6,1
<b>DESCUIDADO</b>	<b>-1,72</b>	<b>-2,62</b>	<b>-0,85</b>
Con frecuencia realizo compras sin control de las que me arrepiento	5,8	5,6	12,7
A veces compro cosas sin pensar	52,0	50,0	69,1
A menudo compro sin pensar demasiado	12,6	6,7	34,5
Mis salidas de compras son tan rápidas como puedo	43,4	6,7	41,2
<b>INDEPENDIENTE</b>	<b>1,83</b>	<b>1,38</b>	<b>1,79</b>
Me considero un comprador independiente	70,8	62,2	66,7
Decido independientemente qué comprar y qué no	86,8	82,2	84,8
(-) Me gusta saber la opinión de los demás antes de comprar	16,0	25,6	12,1

#### 4.4. Comparación segmentos de consumidores españoles y finlandeses

Tanto en el caso de los españoles, como en el de los finlandeses se han obtenido tres segmentos diferenciados de compradores basados en sus estilos de compra. Sin embargo, sus características no son exactamente las mismas.

La principal diferencia que se encuentra entre los segmentos hallados en ambos países es que las dimensiones de *compra a distancia*, *consciente del precio* e *independencia* no permiten diferenciar los tres segmentos finlandeses. Es decir, estas dimensiones no son buenas diferenciadoras para el mercado finlandés, pero sí para el mercado español. Así, en todos los casos, el comprador finlandés se va a caracterizar por ser un comprador al que no le gusta comprar a distancia, muy consciente del precio y muy independiente. Sin embargo, en el caso del mercado español, sí que se encuentran diferencias respecto a estas dimensiones entre los segmentos descubiertos.

Si se analizan las diferencias entre los tres segmentos encontrados para cada país, se observa que dos de los tres segmentos obtenidos, *irracional* y *social*, a pesar de no mostrar unas características completamente idénticas, son compradores bastante parecidos, cuyas demandas son similares. Sin embargo, el tercer segmento es distinto para el caso de España y Finlandia. Mientras en España se ha identificado un segmento de compradores *racionales*, en Finlandia se ha encontrado un segmento de compradores *apáticos*.

Así, mientras los *racionales* se caracterizan por ser compradores muy planificadores, que prestan especial atención a lo que compran, los *apáticos* no planifican sus compras y son un poco descuidados. Sin embargo, ambos se caracterizan por ser compradores adultos, éticos, localistas, a los que no les gusta ir a tiendas llenas de gente o comprar acompañados, aunque la intensidad de estas dimensiones varía de unos a otros.

Como se hacía mención anteriormente, en ambos países se identifica un segmento de compradores *irracionales*, con porcentajes similares en ambas muestras (España con 31,61% y Finlandia con 28,45%) y características también afines. Se trata de compradores poco éticos y poco localistas, no preocupados por la calidad o la marca, siendo además descuidados y no planificando sus compras. Si bien, el comprador finlandés busca variedad y está compuesto principalmente por mujeres, frente al español que no está interesado en la variedad y está principalmente compuesto por hombres.

También se encuentra en ambos países el segmento de compradores *sociales*, con características similares. Se diferencia especialmente de los otros segmentos por tratarse de los compradores más sociales-recreacionales, además de ser muy éticos y muy localistas, así como muy consciente tanto de la calidad como de la marca, buscadores de variedad-novedad, planificadores y muy cuidadosos. Ambos segmentos están formados mayoritariamente por jóvenes.

## 5. Conclusiones

Durante los últimos cincuenta años, tanto académicos como profesionales del marketing, han utilizado las tipologías de compradores como una herramienta eficaz que permite identificar y satisfacer adecuadamente las necesidades de los consumidores (Angell *et al.*, 2012). Estos estudios habitualmente se han basado en los motivos de compra y las características del consumidor para construir taxonomías de comprador en diferentes contextos. Sin embargo, a pesar de aparecer de manera constante la necesidad de replicar y contrastar estas clasificaciones en diferentes países, hasta la fecha, muy pocas investigaciones se han centrado en las variaciones de los tipos de comprador en base a su cultura nacional. Además, debido al auge de internet, los últimos estudios realizados se enfocan en el análisis del comprador online, dejando olvidado al comprador tradicional, que representa aún hoy un gran porcentaje del mercado. Por todo ello, el objetivo de la presente investigación ha consistido en estudiar en profundidad las tipologías de compradores en España y Finlandia, permitiendo percibir las diferencias tanto entre países como dentro de cada uno de los países.

Para lograr estos objetivos, y tomando como referencia las diferentes tipologías de compra de la literatura, se han identificado diez características en el comprador, que son: social-recreacional, ético, local, a distancia, consciente de la marca-calidad, buscador de variedad-desleal, consciente del precio, planificador, descuidado e independiente. Al analizar las diferencias entre España y Finlandia, se ha encontrado que mientras el comprador español se caracteriza por ser

más social-recreativo, dependiente, planificador y leal, el comprador finlandés es más independiente y descuidado, gustándole realizar sus compras más rápidamente y sin planificarlas.

Sin embargo, el encuentro clave de esta investigación reside en los tres segmentos de mercado hallados en cada uno de los mercados, español y finlandés. Si se analizan las diferencias entre los segmentos, se observa que dos de los tres segmentos obtenidos en cada país (irracional y social) muestra características casi idénticas. Sin embargo, el tercer segmento es diferente. Así, mientras para España se ha identificado un segmento de compradores racionales, para Finlandia se ha encontrado un segmento de compradores apáticos.

Por tanto, de este estudio emerge que a pesar de existir claras diferencias culturales en las tipologías y segmentos de compradores, también se encuentran importantes semejanzas. Estos resultados son de gran relevancia para el mundo empresarial (ver apartado 6), aunque también lo son para el mundo académico y para aquellas instituciones preocupadas por el consumidor. Además, estudios futuros podrán hacer uso de las diez dimensiones obtenidas, así como de los segmentos que emergen a partir de ellas, y replicarlos en otros países y contextos.

## **6. Implicaciones empresariales**

El mercado de consumo es un mercado en constante evolución, que cada vez se presenta más diversificado. Como resultado de ello, existe una amplia variedad de productos y servicios disponibles para el consumidor medio, lo que implica que el proceso de toma de decisión del consumidor español es cada vez más complejo, emergiendo nuevos segmentos en el mercado. Así, uno de los aspectos más importantes del comportamiento del consumidor para las empresas es comprender cómo los consumidores realizan sus compras.

La información sobre los estilos de comprador, será particularmente útil para los minoristas y anunciantes. Perfilar a los consumidores mediante la combinación de sus estilos de toma de decisión proporciona información de gran utilidad para los minoristas en su lucha por atraer un gran número de compradores, así como en sus esfuerzos para prevenir la pérdida de sus clientes actuales.

Por otra parte, el consumidor medio está expuesto a cientos de anuncios al día, la mayoría de los cuales reciben una baja atención y comprensión por parte del consumidor. Desarrollar mensajes que capturen la atención del consumidor y generen una comprensión apropiada se convierte en uno de los mayores retos de los anunciantes. Los estilos de comprador proveen una forma más eficaz para identificar y comprender los diversos segmentos de decisores y orientar estrategias más adaptadas a sus gustos y necesidades, puesto que los anuncios en los que el consumidor se siente identificado, hacen que presten más atención, los comprenden mejor y crean una actitud positiva hacia la marca y hacia la intención de compra.

## **7. Limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación**

Existen varias limitaciones que justifican las posibles líneas de investigación futuras.

En primer lugar, hay otros factores que pueden influir en las tipologías de comprador y que no se han tenido en cuenta, como el estilo de vida o el tipo de producto o servicio sobre el que se realiza la compra.

También hay que tener en cuenta que los datos utilizados en este estudio han sido obtenidos de COBEREN, por lo que los autores de este estudio han tenido un control parcial sobre las cuestiones realizadas.

Además, como en cualquier encuesta, se debe señalar la dependencia de los resultados de los datos aportados por los encuestados. Es importante reconocer que los participantes pueden no haber respondido con sinceridad a todas las preguntas, más al tratarse de una encuesta online donde no se sabe exactamente quién está respondiendo el cuestionario. Los encuestados pueden haber respondido de una manera socialmente aceptable o de la manera que ellos creen que coincide con las expectativas del investigador.

Algunas posibles líneas de investigación que surgen de las limitaciones del presente estudio, podrían dirigirse a responder las siguientes cuestiones:

- Cómo las tipologías de compradores pueden variar en función del tipo de producto o servicio que se vaya a adquirir
- Cómo las tipologías de comprador pueden variar dependiendo de si la compra es presencial u online
- Y si se ven las tipologías de comprador afectados por la situación y el contexto en el que se encuentra el consumidor

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# ANTECEDENTS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD THE WEBSITE: A CROSS-CULTURAL ANALYSIS<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

*This present research analyzes the moderating role of the cultural dimensions of long-term orientation and individualism on the relationships between satisfaction online during the browsing, message involvement and perceived usefulness of the website on attitude toward the website. The sample comprised 491 users from Spain and United Kingdom. The findings indicate that the long-term orientation dimension moderates the relationship between satisfaction online and perceived usefulness and attitudes toward the website. However, the relationships between message involvement and attitudes toward the website, moderated by the individualism dimension, could not be confirmed as the scores were very similar for both samples.*

## KEYWORDS

*Attitudes toward the website, perceived usefulness, satisfaction online, message involvement, long-term orientation, individualism*

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## 1. Introduction

The Internet, as a medium registering over 2,400 million users world-wide by the end of 2012 (Internet World Stats, 2013), has transformed the purchasing environment (Varadarajan & Yadav, 2002). Customers will browse a website only if they perceive it to be entertaining, informative and useful as they do not want to waste their time. The main mission of website designers is therefore to develop sites where customers can easily find the information they are looking for while also being entertained (Mazaheri, Richard & Laroche, 2013).

Users create their attitudes toward the website they are browsing depending on how useful they perceive it to be (Castañeda, Muñoz & Luque, 2007), the relevance of the information they find (Chen & Tsai, 2008; Yoon & Joo-Ho, 2001) and the satisfaction they feel during their browsing experience (McKinney, 2004; Szymanski & Hise, 2000).

Within this context, it is vital to take into account the cultural differences that exist in the different markets. As suggested by certain authors, the Internet may be considered to be the greatest contributor to the globalization of markets and to the sophistication and growing power of the consumer (Constantinides, Lorenzo-Romero & Gómez, 2010), thanks to its capacity to give users of different cultural profiles the opportunity to interact with firms located anywhere in the world. Given the wide reach of the Internet and the fact that culture impacts in consumers behavior (Davis, Wang & Lindridge, 2008), it is crucial to explore the role of culture in the reactions of online users when developing attitudes toward different websites.

The present research examines these two questions in some depth. The first goal is to analyze how satisfaction online during browsing, the degree of message involvement, and the perceived usefulness of the site all influence in the developing of attitude toward the website. The second goal is to study how the behavioral and emotional responses reflected in the attitude toward a website vary between users from different cultures (and thus with different value systems): (1) collectivism *vs.* individualism; and (2) long-term orientation *vs.* short-term orientation (Hofstede, 2001). To fulfill these objectives a promotional website was built, representing a fictitious tourist destination, and users from two countries with markedly different cultures were invited to browse the site with a view to putting together a tourism package. More specifically, the participants selected for the study were British Internet users (belonging to an individualist culture with a short-term orientation) and Spanish users (more collectivist and with a long-term orientation). The rationale for using a tourist destination as the sector for the study was that the websites of such destinations are visited by users from many different countries and cultures, who tend to have to browse standardized sites that are not adapted to their particular culture values and that are often presented in a language that is not their mother tongue.

## 2. Conceptual framework

### 2.1. *The influence of site features on attitudes toward a website.*

Many studies have focused on examining the influence of site features on online consumer behavior. Among the features that have been addressed are the global search function, humor, language options, the extent to which the layout is well or badly organized, the quality of the display, ordering policy, and customer feedback (Eroglu *et al.*, 2003; Hausman & Seikpe, 2009; Mazaheri *et al.*, 2013). These are divided into two categories. First, the interface features, such as text, font size and color or background music (Davis *et al.*, 2008) and a second category that contains items such as information and site effectiveness. The perception and the effect of the former on consumers, through message involvement (MI) or perceived usefulness (PU) are very important for firms. Mazaheri *et al.* (2013), following Eroglu *et al.* (2001), divided this category into two groups: high and low task-relevant cues. First, high task-relevant cues are related to the features that facilitate the acquisition target with the font used, font size, etc. And the latter, low task-relevant cues, are inconsequential to the completion



of the shopping task, such as those additional features of the design that would ensure visitors enjoy themselves while browsing the site (Eroglu *et al.*, 2001).

For this work, we selected website informativeness, related to message involvement, and website effectiveness, related to perceived usefulness, as high task-relevant cues. For the low task-relevant cue we chose the site's entertainment value, measured in terms of satisfaction online during browsing. Eighmey (1997) defines the Internet as an "Infotainment" medium, since information and entertainment are two essential elements of websites.

These three elements can be considered as antecedents of attitude toward the website. On the one hand, with regard to the involvement of users with the information contained on the site, if it is accurate, up-to-date and relevant, customers perceive the site to be more informative, and thus develop a positive attitude toward it (Chen & Tsai, 2008; Hausman & Siekpe, 2009; Yoon & Joo-Hoo, 2001). On the other hand, there is expected to be a positive and direct relationship between perceived usefulness and attitude toward the website, because the more useful a user perceives a website to be, the more positive their attitude toward it (Castañeda *et al.*, 2007). Finally, as several studies have shown, the subject's level of satisfaction online during browsing will positively affect their attitude toward the site (Bigné *et al.*, 2005; Castañeda *et al.*, 2009; Szymanski & Hise, 2000).

## 2.2. The moderating role of culture

Culture, from the point of view of many authors, may be considered one of the most abstract and difficult elements to measure that influences human behavior (Liu, Furrer & Sudharshan, 2001; Voss, Roth & Rosenzweig, 2004). The majority of cross-cultural studies in the field of management draw on the cultural framework developed by Hofstede (2001), as identified in various different works (Craig & Douglas, 2011; Engelen & Brettel, 2011; Taras, Steel & Kirkman, 2011). The model classifies cultures into five dimensions: a) *power distance* (POD), *uncertainty avoidance*, *individualism* (IND), *masculinity* (MAS) and *long-term orientation* (LTO). In light of this classification, it is to be expected that purchasing behavior on the Internet should be moderated by the country – and therefore the culture – to which the subject belongs.

The LTO dimension is the extent to which members of a society place great significance on values of thrift, persistence, and long-term alliances. It is also related to the importance the individual attaches to his/her time when seeking benefits from personal projects. An individual with a short-term orientation seeks immediate benefits and enjoys the moment, while one who has long-term orientation will make sacrifices in the present in order to secure future benefits. For this reason, satisfaction online, as an antecedent of attitude toward the website, will be more important for those subjects with a short-term orientation than for those with a long-term orientation (Sabiote, Frias & Castañeda, 2012a).

On the other hand, subjects who belong to cultures that focus on the long term prefer useful web sites, and they are prepared to spend time getting to know how a website is used so as to obtain benefits in the future (Alcántara-Pilar, Del Barrio & Porcu-García, 2013).

In light of these factors we submit the following research hypotheses:

*H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive and direct relationship between satisfaction online and attitudes toward the website which will be greater for users belonging to short-term orientation cultures than for those belonging to long-term orientation cultures.*

*H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive and direct relationship between the perceived usefulness of a website and attitudes toward the website which will be greater for users belonging to long-term orientation cultures than for those belonging to short-term orientation cultures.*

Meanwhile, the IND dimension is the extent to which the members of a society pursue primarily their own interests rather than that of others. In collectivism societies individuals look after the interest of their group before themselves. Collectivism is a high context culture and emphasizes causal reasoning and forming perceptions about social contexts and situational constraints (Davis *et al.*, 2008). Individualist and collectivist values create different symbolic-subjective cultures. On the one hand, individualist societies tend to place less importance on general information, emphasizing instead individual demands as a reflection of a low-context culture. On the other hand, collectivist cultures

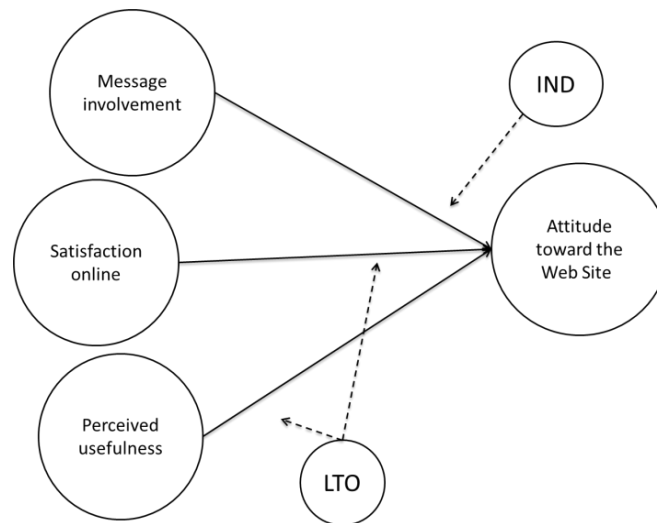
tend to promote group wellbeing, and place more emphasis on the social rather than the individual context; hence, they pay more attention to all of the information on offer via the website, not only the aspects that interest them individually (Oyserman, Coon & Kimmelmeier, 2002). For this reason, when comparing the two collectives, the individualist user will be more involved in all of the information presented on the website and will not solely focus on what they are looking for personally. Bu, Kim and Son (2013) compared users from the USA (individualists) with those from China and Japan (both collectivist cultures), and found that subjects' level of involvement with the product was directly related to this dimension, such that US users were less involved than the Chinese and Japanese users.

As a result, the positive relationships between message involvement and attitude toward the website, demonstrated by Chen and Tsi (2008) and Yoon and Joo-Hoo (2001), are likely to be higher for individuals from a collectivist culture because they value more highly than their individualist counterparts those websites that offer a high volume of content that can supplement the basic information, such as pictures, music, or reviews from other users. We therefore propose the following hypothesis:

*H<sub>3</sub>: There is a positive and direct relationship between user message involvement and attitudes toward the website, which will be greater for users belonging to collectivist cultures than for those who belong to individualistic cultures.*

The hypotheses can be summarized in the theoretical model in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1.  
Proposed theoretical model



### 3. Experimental design, data collection and measures

#### 3.1. Independent variable

In order to test the proposed hypotheses, a between-subjects experimental design was chosen, using one independent variable with two levels, namely: culture (Spanish vs. British). The choice of cultures for the experiment was based on cultural differences distinguished by using Hofstede's indices (Hofstede, 2001). Spain and Great Britain were selected due to their differences in the LTO and IND dimensions (LTO: Spain, 19 vs. Great Britain, 35; IND: Spain, 51 vs. Great Britain, 85).

#### 3.2. Experimental website design and sample selection

The experiment required a professional website to be purpose-built, with its own domain name, providing information on a fictitious tourist destination called Buyuada ([www.buyuada.org](http://www.buyuada.org)). A

fictitious location was devised with a view to avoiding a scenario in which subjects' previous awareness of, or attitudes toward, the destination might affect the results. The site was hosted via a domain pertaining to the researchers, enabling them to simulate natural browsing conditions at all times for the subjects. Two versions of the site were created – one written in Spanish and the other in English (see Figures 2 and 3).

The subjects were selected by an external company commissioned to establish an online survey panel for the experiment. Internet users from Great Britain and Spain were invited to participate. The external company made email contact with each panel member and were sent a link to the appropriate version of the website, together with instructions. The users were to browse through the website and put together their own tourism package based on an outward flight, a return flight, hotel accommodation, and a restaurant, from the multiple options on offer. The instructions explained to the users that they should complete the task of creating their package as if they really were going to undertake a trip to Buyuada, and that they should therefore process all the information on the website. This approach ensured that participants would have to read about the features of the different services on offer, which would oblige them to process the information to a significant depth of detail – an important condition when subsequently measuring the variables of perceived usefulness, satisfaction online, message involvement and attitudes toward the website.

FIGURE 2.  
Example of the home page of the website



FIGURE 3.  
Example of the Restaurants section of the website



Once browsing was complete, subjects were redirected to a questionnaire. The final sample was distributed by treatment, as follows: Spanish sample (228 subjects) and British sample (263 subjects). The sample was well balanced in gender terms, comprising 53% men (258) and 47% women (233). Finally, the sample represented an average age of 38.66 years (see Table 1).

TABLE 1.  
Sample by gender, age and culture

Spanish			
	Men	Women	N
18-24	11 (4.82%)	4 (1.75%)	15 (6.58%)
25-34	93 (40.78%)	42 (18.42%)	135(59.21%)
35+	51 (22.38%)	27 (11.85%)	78 (34.21%)
N	155 (67.98%)	73 (32.02%)	228 (100%)
British			
	Men	Women	N
18-24	11 (4.18%)	25 (9.50%)	36 (13.69%)
25-34	20 (7.60%)	55 (20.91%)	75 (28.52%)
35+	72 (27.38%)	80 (30.43%)	152 (57.79%)
N	103(39.16%)	160 (60.84%)	263 (100%)
Total sample			
	Men	Women	N
18-24	22 (4.48%)	29 (5.9%)	51 (10.39%)
25-34	113 (23.01%)	97 (19.75%)	210 (42.77%)
35+	123 (25.06%)	107(21.8%)	230 (46.84%)
N	258 (52.55%)	233 (47.45%)	491 (100%)

As regards educational level, the sample was divided into three sub-groups: primary-level education, secondary-level education, and university-level education. The highest percentage was for Higher Education (56.01% of the sample), followed by secondary-education qualifications (40.73%) and no qualifications (3.26%). In the case of both Spain and the UK, over 95% of users had secondary-level qualifications or a university education (AIMC, 2010; Office for National Statistics, 2010). These percentages were similar for both cultures (see Table 2).

TABLE 2.  
Sample distribution by educational level and culture

Culture	Primary-level education	Secondary-level education	University-level education
Spanish	7 (3.07%)	92 (40.35%)	129 (56.58%)
British	9 (3.42%)	108 (41.06%)	146 (55.51%)

To ensure that users came from Spain and the UK, Google Analytics was used during the data-collection phase (see Figure 4). To minimize the risk of contamination a strict criterion for participation was applied, in that any users who accessed the experimental website from outside the UK or Spain would automatically be excluded from the study.

### 3.3. Measures

All the measurement scales were adapted from validated instruments used in the literature. To measure satisfaction online during the browsing, a 7-point semantic differential scale was employed - as used by Szymanski and Hise (2001).

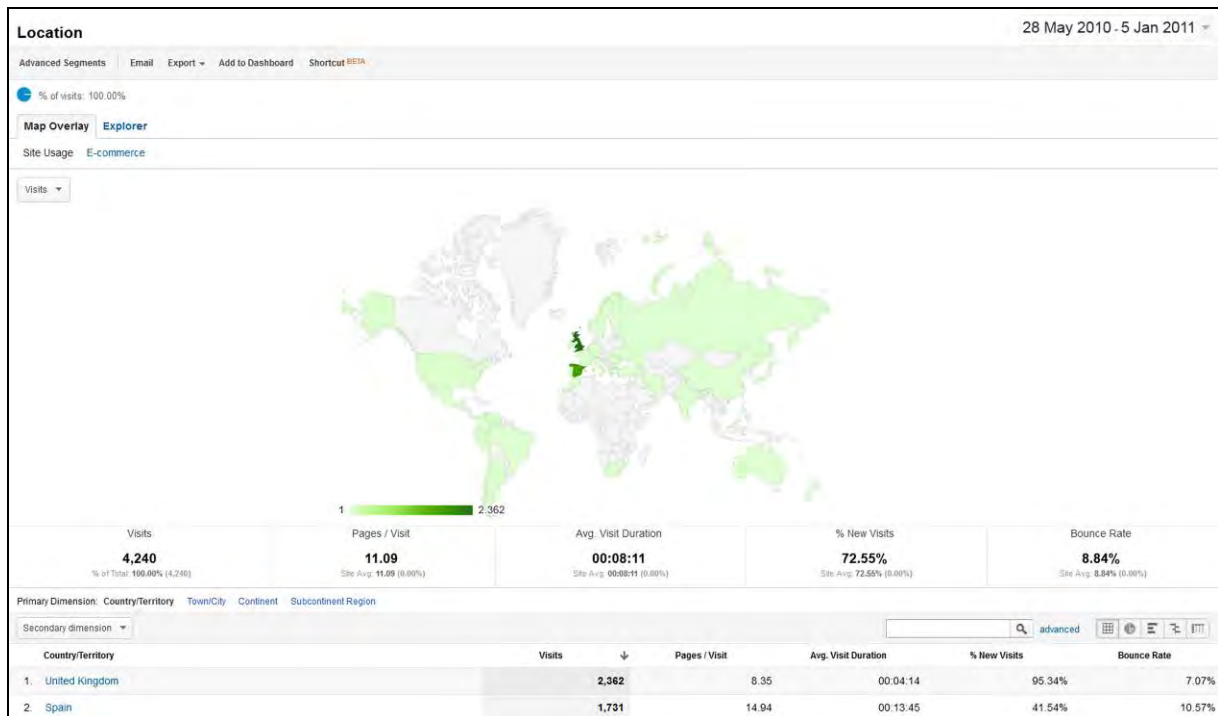
With regard to measurement of message involvement, perceived usefulness and attitudes toward website, 7-point Likert scales were used, on which 1 equaled *totally disagree* and 7 equaled *totally agree*. Message involvement was measured by a scale adapted from previous works (Malär, Krohmer, Hoyer & Nyffenegger, 2001; Schmitt, Zarantonello & Brakus, 2009; Zaichkowsky, 1985).

Attitude toward website was measured using the scale adapted from Chen, Clifford and Wells (2002). Finally, perceived usefulness was measured using the scale employed by Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw (1989) in its scaled-down version by Koufaris, Kambil and Labarbera (2002) (see Annex 1).

The study also measured variables of a socio-demographic nature such as gender and age, together with the cultural dimensions using the VSM94 scale developed by Hofstede (2001)<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> The complete questionnaire (VSM94) can be found on Professor Hofstede's website, together with the formulas for calculating cultural scores (<http://www.geerthofstede.nl/research--vsm>).

FIGURE 4.  
Google Analytics statistics during data-collection.



## 4. Findings

### 4.1. Standardization of cross-cultural studies and manipulation check for the cultural factor

When working with samples from different cultures it is important to address any issues arising from equivalence and deviation and take into account whether the scores obtained are comparable (Van de Vijver and Leung, 1997). The method proposed by Cheung & Resvold (2000) was applied, using factorial invariance analysis, examining whether members of both cultures gave equal weight to the different indicators used to measure the theoretical constructs. The results obtained revealed the existence of cultural response bias. In light of the most widely-used models proposed in the literature, it was decided that the 'standardization among cultures method' should be applied, which involves subtracting all values of each culture from the mean of the culture in question and then dividing it by the standard deviation (Fischer, 2004).

### 4.2. Manipulation check

Before testing the hypotheses we undertook a manipulation test for the experimental factor 'culture'. The cultural scores obtained for the sample Spanish sample were 88.37 (IND) and 58.25 (LTO). The British sample obtained 89 (IND) and 24.67 (LTO). These results allowed us to conclude the existence of cultural differences between the two subsamples for the case of the LTO dimension, although not for IND dimension whose scores were very similar.

### 4.3. Results

Testing the proposed hypotheses required us to estimate the proposed causal model by means of a multigroup SEM analysis (Spanish vs. British). To this end, we used the LISREL 8.8 program. The measurement model was found to be satisfactory, with all the items presenting individual reliability ( $R^2$ ) above 0.50, and composite reliability and average variance extracted values for the three scales being above recommended values (0.7 and 0.50, respectively). The overall goodness-of-fit indices revealed that the estimated multigroup model was quite acceptable (see Annex 2) (Hair & Anderson, 2010).

Likewise, the discriminant validity of the four constructs in each group was tested following the procedure proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981), according to which the square root of the extracted variances must be greater than the correlations between constructs (see Table 3).

TABLE 3.  
Discriminant Validity

	Spanish					British				
	AVE	Perc. useful.	Satisf.	Mess. involv.	Att. toward the website	AVE	Perc. useful.	Satisf.	Mess. involv.	Att. toward the website
Perc. useful.	0.88	<b>0.94</b>				0.88	<b>0.94</b>			
Satisf.	0.77	0.69	<b>0.86</b>			0.79	0.72	<b>0.89</b>		
Message involv.	0.84	0.56	0.56	<b>0.92</b>		0.84	0.56	0.56	<b>0.92</b>	
Att. toward the website	0.78	0.88	0.69	0.58	<b>0.88</b>	0.79	0.76	0.72	0.55	<b>0.89</b>

\* Square root of AVE on the diagonal in bold. Correlations on the off-diagonal

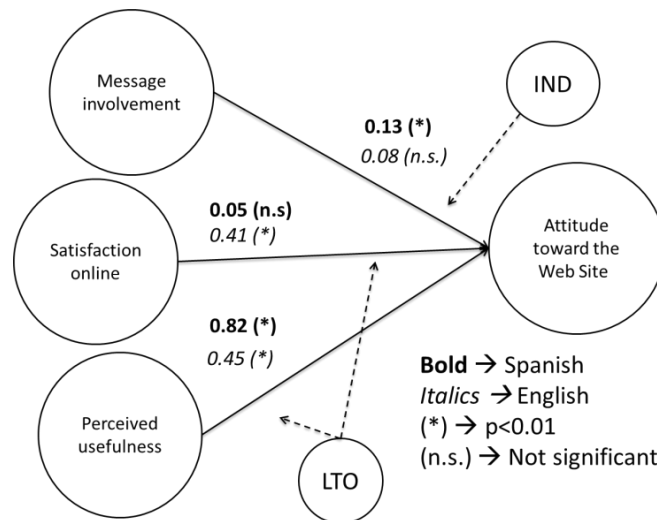
To test the proposed hypothesis we carried out an analysis of invariance between the parameters of the model in order to compare them between groups, using the Chi-squared differences test for this purpose (see Table 4).

The testing of H<sub>1</sub> and H<sub>2</sub> required us to compare the estimated parameters for group with high LTO and group with low LTO. H<sub>1</sub> proposed a positive effect of satisfaction online on attitude toward website, this being greater for British sample than for Spanish one. As can be seen in Table 4 and Figure 5, the coefficients were positive, significantly different between both groups and in the expected direction ( $\beta_{1\text{-Spanish}} = 0.05$ ;  $\beta_{1\text{-English}} = 0.45$ ), being this effect greater for British than for Spanish ( $p < 0.01$ ); hence H<sub>1</sub> is confirmed.

TABLE 4.  
Multigroup invariance analysis results (non-standardized parameters)

Relations	Spanish sample		English sample		Δ Chi-square (p-value)
	Parameter	t-value	Parameter	t-value	
Satisfaction online → Attitude toward website	0.05	0.77	0.45	4.92	14.0842 (p<0.01)
Perceived usefulness → Attitude toward website	0.82	11.05	0.44	5.01	8.3127 (p<0.01)
Message involvement → Attitude toward website	0.15	2.09	0.10	1.16	0.3284 (p>0.10)

**FIGURE 5.**  
**Estimated structural model (Common Metric Completely Standardized Solution)**



With regard to the relationship between perceived usefulness and attitude toward website, H<sub>2</sub> proposed that the relationship is positive and greater for Spanish sample compared to British one. The results showed coefficients in the expected direction ( $\beta_{2\text{-Spanish}} = 0.82$ ;  $\beta_{2\text{-English}} = 0.44$ ), being the parameter for Spanish significantly higher than for the UK shows ( $p < 0.01$ ), confirming H<sub>2</sub>. Confirmation of both hypotheses was due to the fact that the Spanish sample registers a higher score for LTO than British one.

Meanwhile H<sub>3</sub> propose basically the relationship between message involvement and attitude toward website, this being greater for British sample than for Spanish one. H<sub>3</sub> is not confirmed as no significant differences were observed between the coefficients of the relationship between message involvement and attitude toward website ( $\beta_{3\text{-Spanish}} = 0.15$ ;  $\beta_{1\text{-English}} = 0.10$ ;  $p > 0.10$ ). It is due to the fact that Spanish sample and British one register similar score in IND.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Conclusions

The main objective of the present work was to examine the extent to which cultural differences between Spain and UK are able to moderate the influence of some of the key antecedent variables of attitude-formation and change of attitude toward a website (for a tourist destination, in this case). To date several works have addressed the antecedent effect of perceived usefulness (Lee et al., 2003), satisfaction (Sabiote, Frias & Castañeda, 2012a) and message involvement (Chen & Tsai, 2008; Hausman & Siekpe, 2009; Yoon & Joo-Hoo, 2001) on the formation of attitudes toward a website. However, no other works have examined the combined effect of the three variables moderated by the cultural dimensions of IND and LTO. We believe it is of both theoretical and practical interest to adopt a holistic approach to examining the degree to which users from cultures with different levels of IND and LTO also differ when forming their attitudes toward the website they are browsing.

Analysis of the results reveals that the user's culture moderates attitude-formation. Using Hofstede's cultural dimensions as a reference point, we can conclude that the differences in LTO partly explain the formation of user attitudes toward the website. Users belonging to cultures such as that of Spain, with a high LTO, attach more importance to perceived usefulness than users with a lower LTO score, such as the British culture. British users attach more importance to variables such as satisfaction online, which develops positive attitudes toward the website, than Spanish users. Furthermore,



regarding the relationship between message involvement and attitude toward the website, conclusions could not be drawn as both samples presented very similar scores for IND.

One original feature of our work compared to earlier studies is that we did not simply assume that Spanish and British users have different IND and LTO values, as per the seminal work of Hofstede (2001). Rather, we endeavored to examine via the sample to what extent those original cultural scores remain true today. By contrast, other studies have used the original values obtained by Hofstede (2001) as their cultural reference framework, without confirming their validity in the samples they use (Karahanna, Williams, Polites, Liu & Seligman, 2013; Lim, Yeow & Yuen, 2010); indeed this is one of key criticisms typically leveled at cross-cultural studies. In the present work, however, before users were submitted to the experimental treatment they were given a questionnaire designed to capture their cultural values, in line with the VSM94 scale proposed by Hofstede (2001). This step made it possible to detect similarities between the British and Spanish in the IND dimension, contrasting with the original values obtained by Hofstede which were markedly different. This enabled us to test that in the sample of Internet users that we selected there were no major differences in the IND dimension, which undoubtedly affected the results obtained for the relationship between website message involvement and attitudes toward the site. These results demonstrate, in cross-cultural studies, the importance of testing the cultural values present in the samples used rather than simply relying on the original scores ascertained by Hofstede (2001), so as to avoid erroneous conclusions being drawn from the data analysis.

A further contribution of the present work is the fact that it was based on an experiment using a website promoting a fictitious tourist destination presented in two versions (depending on the mother tongue of the sample user group) and designed to encourage users to browse freely while putting together a tourism package. This approach sought to create a task in which information-processing during the experiment would be as similar as possible to a real-life browsing scenario and contracting process for tourists. By contrast, other works in the cross-cultural sphere have focused only on inviting subjects to complete a questionnaire, without previously having undertaken a complete and detailed browsing process (Li & Huang, 2009; Noh, Lee, Kim & Garrison, 2013).

Similarly, there are few works to date that have examined the moderating role placed by the LTO cultural dimension in online information-processing and attitude-formation. The present study demonstrates that this dimension affects the antecedent relationships of attitude and thus is worthy of greater attention in academic cross-cultural research. In this regard we hope these findings will serve as a foundation on which future research can build.

### *5.2. Managerial implications*

The findings derived from the present study have important implications for both web designers and marketing managers, particularly in the tourism sector. National culture has been found to be of major importance in the formation of attitudes in the online context. This is of particular interest for this sector as the potential tourists who visit destination or hotel websites come from many different countries and cultures. If marketers and website designers can better understand how cultural factors affect tourist attitudes, this will enable them to market their destinations and services more effectively. For example, for users belonging to a culture very similar to that of Spain, it is essential to develop useful websites to generate positive attitudes toward the sites. These users do not care so much about enjoyment during their browsing time as do those from cultures similar to that of the UK.

Meanwhile, users from cultures similar to that of the UK (who therefore have less of a short-term orientation) look to achieve results as quickly as possible. This explains why, for them, the effect of satisfaction with the browsing experience on the ultimate formation of attitudes toward the website is greater than for Spanish users. By contrast, the Spanish are more concerned with finding usefulness over the long-term during their browsing and are more willing to invest time in processing information, with a view to securing greater usefulness in the future.

Previous studies (Alcántara-Pilar and Del Barrio-García, 2013) have identified that LTO has a moderating effect on the formation of loyalty toward websites. Our work indirectly corroborates this finding, to the extent that attitude is one of the key determinants of user behavior, as asserted by many

other works from the last few decades (Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999). This finding shows how important it is that firms marketing their products over the Internet, and more specifically managers of accommodation or tourist destination websites, create positive browsing experiences that lead to a high level of satisfaction and perceptions of usefulness. This is particularly important in the case of users from cultures with a high LTO due to the benefit of this approach in terms of attitude and, in turn, loyalty.

In light of our findings, it is important to note that many firms mistakenly believe that adapting the website to the user simply involves translating the content, when the academic literature has shown that this is insufficient (Okazaki, 2004a, 2004b, 2005; Okazaki & Alonso, 2002; Okazaki & Skapa, 2008). It is a common mistake among many firms operating in international markets to think that simply translating website content or even the information they convey via their social network profiles is an adequate means of adapting their offer to an international audience. Marketers and advertisers need to be aware of the importance of cross-cultural differences when designing their online presence, as the Internet is a place well suited to creating a rich product experience (Evans & Wurster, 1999; Okazaki, 2004b). An in-depth study of the differentiating elements between cultures, and its application to the website, would enable firms to achieve the so-called ‘come&stop’ effect (Coyle & Thirson, 2001) whereby consumers enter the website and stop, satisfied that their search is over. Therefore, in addition to a simple translation it is important to adapt the entire structure of the website and its content according to the culture of those users the site needs to appeal to (Alcántara *et al.*, 2013).

### 5.1. Limitations and future research

The main limitation of this study is the comparison of only two cultures, Spain vs. the UK. However, this limitation is justified by the complexity of the experimental design and the cost of extending the study to other cultures. Importantly, much of the cross-cultural research of the last few years has been based on comparing two cultures presenting different cultural dimensions (Benet-Martínez, V., Lee, F. & Leu, J., 2006; Chai & Pavlou, 2001; Jin, Park & Ki, 2008; Mazaheri *et al.*, 2011; Noriega & Blair, 2008; Sabiote, Frías & Castañeda, 2012a, 2012b; Singh, 2006 ; Sun, 2006). In this sense, a possible line of research for the future could be to extend the comparison to users from cultures with different values in the IND and LTO dimensions.

Another limitation is the fact that the sample we analyzed showed similar values for the IND dimension. It is not clear whether this is due to the characteristics of the final sample or if it is a genuine result of the growth in IND that is being witnessed among Internet users due to the globalization process indicated by Hofstede *et al.* (2010). Therefore, future research could focus on solving the above limitations.

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ANNEX 1:

Dimensions	Items
<b>Message involvement</b>	When I was browsing the website I felt that the information it contained was... INVOLV1. Of little importance–very important INVOLV2. Of little relevance–very relevant INVOLV3. Of little value–very valuable INVOLV4. Of little use–very useful INVOLV5. Of little interest–very interesting INVOLV6. I doesn't give me new ideas–It gives me new ideas.
<b>Satisfaction online</b>	Overall, How do you feel about your internet-shopping experience? SAT1. Very dissatisfied–Very satisfied SAT2. Very displeased–Very pleased
<b>Perceived usefulness</b>	To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements... UP1. Using this website can help me to carry out the purchase adequately. UP2. Using this website enables me to make the purchase more quickly. UP3. Using this website makes it easier to make a purchase. UP4. In general, I find the website useful.
<b>Attitude toward the Web site</b>	After having browsed the website I think that . . . ATT1. This website is convenient. ATT2. This website saves me time. ATT3. This website is not secure.



ANNEX 2.

**Analysis of the psychometric properties of the scales (non-standardized parameters) and overall goodness-of-fit indices**

Observed Variables	Latent Variables	Coefficients		t-value		R <sup>2</sup>		Average Variance Extracted		Composite Reliability	
		Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English
UP1	Perceived usefulness	1	1	*	*	0.82	0.82	0.88	0.88	0.97	0.97
UP2		1.03	1.02	32.15	35.41	0.89	0.89				
UP3		1.03	1.09	33.87	39.30	0.94	0.95				
UP4		0.99	0.99	29.86	29.28	0.86	0.86				
SAT1	Satisfaction online	1	1	*	*	0.94	0.94	0.77	0.79	0.86	0.88
SAT2		0.83	0.95	19.14	0.95	0.59	0.65				
INVOLV1	Message involvement	1	1	*	*	0.87	0.87	0.84	0.84	0.97	0.97
INVOLV2		1.04	1.05	35.69	27.70	0.86	0.86				
INVOLV3		1.01	1.07	38.77	27.29	0.87	0.88				
INVOLV4		1.05	1.05	29.66	23.46	0.88	0.88				
INVOLV5		1.08	1.10	30.30	18.74	0.81	0.82				
INVOLV6		1.01	1.05	23.47	17.07	0.72	0.76				
ATT1	Attitudes toward the website	1	1	*	*	0.91	0.90	0.78	0.79	0.91	0.92
ATT2		0.96	1.07	34.80	30.20	0.92	0.92				
ATT3		0.79	0.77	19.90	13.93	0.58	0.53				

Satorra-Bentler Chi-Square (p-value): 324.70 (0.000)  
d.f.: 190  
Normed Chi-Square: 1.70  
RMSEA: 0.054  
ECVI: 0.87  
NFI: 0.99

NNFI: 0.99  
IFI: 0.99  
RFI: 0.99  
CFI: 0.99  
Critical N: 359.83

# DIFERENCIAS EN EL RECUERDO DE LA MARCA ENTRE LA PUBLICIDAD ONLINE CON DESCUENTOS Y CON REGALOS

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## RESUMEN

*Esta investigación pretende analizar el impacto de los descuentos y regalos online sobre el recuerdo de la marca, así como explorar la influencia del perfil sociodemográfico del internauta sobre dicho nivel de impacto. Los resultados obtenidos indican que los descuentos favorecen el recuerdo del producto frente a los regalos online que favorecen el recuerdo de la marca y el producto simultáneamente. A su vez, los individuos que más recuerdan la marca tras visualizar un descuento son jóvenes, estudiantes o trabajadores por cuenta propia y con ingresos bajos. Sin embargo, los que más recuerdan la marca tras visualizar un regalo online son de edad media, preferentemente hombres con un nivel de formación alto, trabajadores por cuenta ajena e ingresos medio-altos. Esta investigación ayuda a profundizar en el perfil del internauta más adecuado para cada acción promocional online.*

## Palabras clave:

Promoción de ventas online, Recuerdo del Internauta, Recuerdo de producto, Recuerdo de marca, Perfil sociodemográfico.



## 1. Introducción

Según los últimos datos proporcionados por ZenithOptimedia, la publicidad online creció en torno al 16,2% durante 2013 y se prevé un crecimiento medio anual para el periodo 2014-2016 del 16% (ZenithOptimedia, 2014). Cada minuto, en la Red, estamos expuestos a miles de impactos publicitarios cuya finalidad va desde darnos a conocer una determinada marca o producto hasta persuadirnos para que nos hagamos amigos de su página en Facebook. Ante esta situación, distintos informes y estudios basados en métricas como el Click Through Rate –CTR parecen indicar que la publicidad online en la actualidad comienza a sufrir los mismos síntomas que la tradicional, esto es la pérdida de eficacia como consecuencia de su alta saturación con valores de CTR inferiores al 0,3% en toda Europa (IAB, 2011).

Para tratar de solventar este problema, las empresas innovan cada vez más en el uso de herramientas y formatos de comunicación distintos y creativos que llamen la atención del usuario y lo inciten a procesar el mensaje emitido. Muchas de ellas han optado por utilizar la promoción de ventas online como forma de incrementar su visibilidad convirtiéndola en una de las herramientas más utilizadas online (emarketer.com, 2011). Alrededor de 7,7 millones de internautas españoles han utilizado alguna vez los cupones proporcionados por sitios de compra colectiva y un 25% de ellos buscan expresamente este tipo de incentivos promocionales (Nielsen, 2011). Entre las ventajas que aporta esta herramienta de comunicación a los anunciantes se encuentran el ofrecimiento de un valor añadido que lleva al internauta a procesar más profundamente el mensaje contenido en ella. Esto ayuda a la marca a diferenciarse de la competencia y a incrementar la eficacia de sus comunicaciones online.

Este incremento en la atención que proporciona la promoción de ventas online influirá en el recuerdo del mensaje, la marca y el producto (Crespo-Almendros y Del Barrio-García, 2014). La generación de recuerdo de marca es un elemento esencial en la construcción de notoriedad e imagen de marca, además de ser considerado como uno de los mayores predictores del comportamiento de compra online (Lim et al., 2011). Así pues, el estudio del impacto de las acciones de promoción de ventas online sobre el recuerdo del internauta se constituye como un objetivo principal y primordial de los responsables de comunicación, sobre todo por su impacto sobre la notoriedad e imagen de marca y, por ende, sobre el valor de marca.

Aunque existen algunas investigaciones acerca del impacto de la publicidad online sobre el recuerdo y el reconocimiento de los propios anuncios (Danaher y Mullarkey, 2003; Dahlen, 2002; Gong y Maddox, 2003; Lee y Thorson, 2009; Van Steenburg, 2012; Yoo, 2007), son pocos los estudios existentes que aborden el impacto que este tipo de mensajes publicitarios centrados en incentivos promocionales online generan sobre el recuerdo de la marca, el mensaje o el producto (Crespo-Almendros y Del Barrio-García, 2014,; Hupfer y Grey, 2005).

Al margen del posible gap existente en la literatura acerca del impacto de este tipo de publicidad en el recuerdo, también se conoce poco sobre qué tipo de moderadores pueden estar afectando dicha relación. Revisando la literatura sobre promoción de ventas, parece claro que uno de los principales moderadores del impacto de la promoción de ventas online es el tipo de incentivo utilizado. Cada tipo de promoción de ventas online (descuentos vs regalos) provocará un procesamiento distinto del mensaje (Buil et al., 2013; Nunes y Park, 2003) y, por tanto, deberá afectar al recuerdo del mismo de forma diferente.

De otro lado, es posible considerar como otras variables moderadoras las relacionadas con el perfil sociodemográfico del destinatario. Investigaciones previas han demostrado que el perfil sociodemográfico de los usuarios afecta a su respuesta ante la promoción de ventas tanto en Internet como fuera de ella (Huff y Alden, 1998; Kang et al., 2006; Chiou-Wei e Inman, 2008).

Así pues, el presente estudio pretende profundizar en el análisis del impacto de los mensajes publicitarios sobre descuentos y regalos online en el recuerdo de la marca, así como analizar y explorar la influencia que tienen distintas variables sociodemográficas del internauta sobre dicho nivel de impacto. Se pretende analizar cuál es el perfil del internauta que mejor recuerda la marca, el producto y el mensaje online y si existen diferencias en dicho perfil en función de si se ha visualizado una publicidad sobre un descuento o un regalo online. Esta investigación aporta una contribución

adicional a la literatura existente sobre promoción de ventas online dado que, a día de hoy, no se conocen otros trabajos que analicen el perfil del internauta que presenta un mayor nivel de recuerdo frente a los descuentos y los regalos online.

## **2. Revisión de la literatura**

### ***2.1. Importancia de la medición del recuerdo online***

Diversos estudios sobre el estado actual de la eficacia publicitaria online parecen arrojar síntomas de sobresaturación y, por tanto, de pérdida de eficacia del medio. De ser así, cabe preguntarse ¿por qué las empresas y sus gestores siguen invirtiendo en publicidad y promoción de ventas en este medio e incluso incrementando la inversión destinada a este medio cada año? Muchos autores responden a esta pregunta trasladándonos a las medidas clásicas de eficacia publicitaria. Según los mismos, la publicidad online tiene una serie de fines distintos y complementarios al cambio de comportamientos del internauta tales como la generación de notoriedad, imagen de marca, etc. Por tanto, su eficacia publicitaria no puede ser medida únicamente con variables comportamentales sino que habrá que utilizar métricas tradicionales de medición de eficacia publicitaria (Beerli y Martin, 2010; Machanda et al., 2006). A este respecto, la medición del recuerdo es clave como elemento constructor de imagen de marca y ventas a corto plazo. Buena prueba de ello es que los responsables de marketing incluyen la generación de notoriedad y reconocimiento de marca como dos de los objetivos primordiales para su plan de marketing online (Hollis, 2005).

El primer paso para que una marca se instale en la mente del consumidor y termine influyendo sobre su proceso de toma de decisiones es que dicho consumidor sea capaz de reconocer y recordar la marca como proveedora de un servicio o producto concreto (Vakratsas y Ambler, 1999). En el caso de la publicidad online sobre un descuento o regalo una vez que el estímulo ha sido capaz de captar la atención del internauta y generarle un cierto interés para que procese la información contenida en el banner se accionarán los mecanismos de almacenamiento de la información vista generando o influyendo sobre el recuerdo. Los autores demuestran que la simple exposición al mensaje online tiene efectos sobre la memoria del consumidor en términos de recuerdo y reconocimiento de la marca, el producto y el mensaje (Dahlén et al., 2003; Hollis, 2005; Moore et al., 2005; Shamdasani et al., 2001).

### ***2.2. El efecto de la promoción de ventas online sobre el recuerdo del internauta***

A pesar de la importancia del recuerdo como medida de la eficacia promocional online, son pocas las investigaciones existente hasta fecha (Chen, 2004; Hupfer y Grey, 2005). La mayoría de estudios encontrados sobre promoción de ventas online se limitan al análisis de su eficacia en términos de redención de cupones (Cheng y Dogan, 2008; Chiou-Wei y Inman, 2008; Chtourou et al., 2002; Kang et al., 2006). Para los medios tradicionales, los estudios concluyen que los anuncios que incluyen información sobre una promoción de ventas incrementan la probabilidad de que el consumidor recuerde el anuncio (Gati y Tversky, 1987).

A nivel publicitario, Shankar y Hollinger (2007) argumentan que solamente un pequeño porcentaje de los individuos que son expuestos a un anuncio Web son capaces de recordar su contenido (incluyendo la marca) y de interactuar con él. Más de la mitad de los internautas no prestan atención a los anuncios Web, al menos atención consciente (Dreze y Hussherr, 2003). Navegan por el site en el que se ubica el banner sin percibir de forma consciente su existencia. Sin embargo, es posible que el efecto de la publicidad online sobre el recuerdo no siempre sea el mismo, la literatura se ha centrado en analizar las distintas variables que moderan el efecto sobre el recuerdo del mensaje publicitario online (Lim et al., 2011; Lohtia et al., 2007). Los autores consideran que entre los factores que pueden afectar al recuerdo publicitario se encuentran el tipo de atención prestada (Chandon et al., 2003; Lim et al., 2011), la experiencia de uso Web (Dahlen, 2002), el tipo de publicidad y las necesidades de cognición (Van Steenburg, 2012) o la actitud hacia el Website (Danaher y Mullarkey, 2003; Menon y Soman, 2002). De otro lado, las propias características del banner también influyen sobre la habilidad del individuo para recordar el anuncio. El mensaje, la información sobre la promoción y la actitud hacia el mensaje comunicado a través del banner influirán directamente sobre el recuerdo del anuncio y sobre la notoriedad de marca alcanzada (Dreze y Hussherr, 2003; Goldsmith y Lafferty, 2002). Por tanto, la

promoción de ventas online afecta al recuerdo de la marca, el producto y el mensaje. El interés despertado por el banner promocional se traducirá en un procesamiento o decodificación de la información contenida en el mensaje, que será traducida y almacenada en forma de asociaciones o adjetivos de marca (Chtourou et al., 2005), favoreciendo así el recuerdo. Chen (2004) concluye que los individuos expuestos a una promoción de ventas recuerdan un mayor número de ítems que aquellos no expuestos y, por tanto, que la promoción de ventas incrementa el recuerdo. Además, puntualiza que entre las variables que influyen sobre el recuerdo de la promoción de ventas se encuentra la incertidumbre. En aquellas situaciones en las que la promoción es incierta se recuerdan un mayor número de características que en aquellas otras en las que la promoción es cierta. También, cuanto más difícil es la elección por parte de consumidor se recuerdan un mayor número de características.

A su vez, tal y como se ha demostrado, las experiencias emocionales son más recordadas por los individuos (Coyle y Thorson, 2001; Hoffman y Novak, 1996), por tanto, aquellas promociones de ventas online capaces de generar experiencias gratificantes para el consumidor incrementarán el recuerdo sobre aquellas que no lo hacen. Según Gilbert y Jackaria (2002) y Ndubisi (2005) no todas las promociones de ventas servirán para incrementar la notoriedad y el recuerdo de marca previo a la compra. Consideran que si la promoción es lo suficientemente perceptible facilitará el reconocimiento y el recuerdo de marca para compras futuras. A este respecto, Crespo-Almendros y Del Barrio-García (2014) concluyen que los descuentos en precio y, en general, las promociones monetarias online son especialmente buenas para centrar la atención del internauta en el producto promocionado incrementando el nivel de recuerdo de éste frente a sus homólogas no monetarias. Sin embargo, las promociones hedónicas serán especialmente buenas para conseguir altos niveles de recuerdo de producto y marca conjuntamente. Otra variable que afecta al nivel de recuerdo alcanzado con la promoción es la congruencia entre el Web site anfitrión y el producto ofrecido en la promoción online. Moore et al. (2005) demuestran que la incongruencia entre el sitio Web anfitrión y el producto ofrecido en un banner online provoca un mayor nivel de recuerdo y reconocimiento del mismo aunque su efecto sobre las actitudes hacia el sitio y el banner es menor que en el caso de existir congruencia.

Así pues, la promoción de ventas online parece afectar al recuerdo de la marca, al producto y a la oferta promocional, dependiendo dicho efecto del tipo de promoción de ventas empleado (descuentos vs regalos), entre otras variables.

A partir de lo anteriormente expuesto proponemos la siguiente hipótesis de trabajo:

*H1: La publicidad online sobre descuentos genera un nivel de recuerdo de marca inferior que la publicidad online sobre regalos*

### **2.3. Influencia del perfil del internauta sobre el recuerdo generado por los descuentos y los regalos online**

Si tal y como se ha comentado la eficacia de la promoción de ventas online en términos de recuerdo depende de su capacidad para generar experiencias gratificantes y de su nivel de congruencia con los objetivos buscados por el internauta, cabe preguntarse: ¿qué perfil sociodemográfico tendrán los individuos que mejor recuerden los elementos contenidos en la publicidad de un descuento o regalo online?

El estudio “NetRadar” realizado por ZenithOptimedia (2012) pone de manifiesto que no todos los internautas presentan los mismos niveles de recuerdo. Las características del internauta afectan de forma significativa a su recuerdo de las informaciones comerciales vistas online. Durante décadas, los científicos han analizado como los estilos de procesamiento de la información difieren en función de una serie de variables demográficas tales como el género. La mayoría de las diferencias encontradas se han atribuido a fuentes biológicas o sociológicas (Darley y Smith, 1995). Según estas investigaciones los hombres procesan de una forma más analítica y lógica mientras que las mujeres son más subjetivas e intuitivas (Broverman et al., 1968; Poole, 1977). Además, las investigaciones aseguran que los hombres tienen un estilo de atención distinto llevándolos a ser más selectivos o a utilizar “efficiency-striving heuristics information”. Por tanto, es de esperar que el nivel de recuerdo por tipo de género sea distinto ante una acción de comunicación online. Autores como Banerjee et al. (2011) demostraron que el género es una variable moderadora del efecto de las promociones de ventas sobre el recuerdo.

Con respecto al nivel de ingresos, el estado laboral y el nivel de estudios no se han encontrado investigaciones que analicen su influencia sobre el recuerdo de la promoción de ventas online. Sin embargo, la literatura tradicional sobre promoción de ventas ha venido asegurando que dichas variables afectan de forma significativa al efecto de la promoción de ventas sobre las variables cognitivas, actitudinales y comportamentales del consumidor. La percepción de los beneficios y de los costes asociados con la adquisición de productos en promoción dependerá de las características personales del individuo (Mittal, 1994; Ailawadi et al., 2001). Teel et al. (1980) hallaron que los usuarios de promociones de ventas y, en concreto de cupones, son más jóvenes, pertenecen a familias más numerosas y poseen mayores ingresos que los no usuarios.

Dotson y Hyatt (2000) analizaron si diferentes características demográficas influyen en la actitud hacia la promoción de ventas y en el uso de la misma, en función del tipo de promoción utilizada. Obtuvieron que los individuos con una mayor probabilidad de utilizar la promoción de ventas eran aquellos que no estaban casados, eran jóvenes y de raza negra. Los individuos casados y más mayores parecen presentar una conciencia del descuento menor y, quizás, son más propensos a comprar al precio acostumbrado, probablemente, porque poseen una menor presión financiera.

Lee y Brown (1985) encontraron que a mayores ingresos más probabilidad de utilizar cupones. Sin embargo, Bawa y Shoemaker (1987) encontraron que el efecto de esta variable no era significativo. Mittal (1994) destaca que el estado laboral de la persona puede reducir la probabilidad de utilizar cupones, debido, sobre todo, al efecto que dicha variable puede tener sobre el tiempo disponible para realizar actividades promocionales. Strober y Weinberg (1980) hallaron que para las mujeres trabajadoras la probabilidad de utilizar cupones era menor que para las no trabajadoras.

Finalmente, el nivel de educación también ha sido analizado como posible determinante del uso de cupones. Los consumidores con un nivel de educación mayor buscan más variedad, tiene menores costes de sustitución y podrían utilizar más cupones. Según Bawa y Shoemaker (1987) los consumidores con niveles de educación más altos son de media más usuarios de cupones. De acuerdo a la revisión de la literatura anterior proponemos las siguientes hipótesis de investigación:

*H2: Existen diferencias en el perfil sociodemográfico de los usuarios que recuerdan la publicidad según el tipo de incentivo promocional online en el que se basen (descuentos vs regalos)*

### **3. Estudio Empírico**

#### ***3.1. Variable independiente***

Para contrastar las hipótesis se llevó a cabo un diseño experimental basado en la observación del comportamiento del individuo y completado con una encuesta asistida por ordenador. La variable independiente fue el tipo de incentivo promocional utilizado en el mensaje publicitario: descuento vs regalo.

#### ***3.2. Selección del producto, diseño de los incentivos y pretest***

El producto seleccionado fue un billete de avión. Esta decisión estuvo avalada por el hecho de que según el estudio “Comercio electrónico B2C” (ONTSI, 2011) el 52,4% de los artículos comprados online durante 2010 fueron billetes de transporte.

Para el diseño de los dos tratamientos experimentales se optó por simular las condiciones más habituales de exposición de los sujetos durante la navegación Web, utilizando como vehículo de comunicación de los incentivos promocionales un banner alojado en la página Web de un Diario digital nacional. La selección de los incentivos promocionales (descuento vs regalo) para cada banner se realizó tratando que fueran concordantes con los beneficios buscados por el internauta (disfrute, diversión, etc.), percibidos como del mismo valor monetario y congruentes o complementarios con el producto ofrecido como forma de incrementar su capacidad para captar la atención del consumidor.

Para ello se llevó a cabo un pretest con 90 estudiantes para comprobar a priori que los dos incentivos eran percibidos como del mismo valor monetario (en torno a 120€). Los incentivos finalmente escogidos fueron un descuento de 120 € y el regalo de dos noches en un hotel nacional (véanse figuras

1 y 2). Asimismo, dicho pretest permitió comprobar que el producto elegido, un billete de avión, era percibido principalmente como utilitario o hedónico, utilizando para ello el procedimiento propuesto por Batra y Ahtola (1990). El análisis de datos mostró que el producto billete de avión obtuvo un índice de -0,1271 en una escala de -7 a 7 pudiendo concluir que tanto la componente utilitaria como la hedónica estaban presentes en ese producto, si bien la componente hedónica parecía ser la dominante.

FIGURA 1  
Publicidad promocional sobre un descuento



FIGURA 2  
Publicidad promocional sobre un regalo



### 3.3. Desarrollo del experimento y composición de la muestra

El experimento se llevó a cabo en dos provincias españolas diferentes, ya que como consecuencia del tipo de producto elegido era posible que existieran diferencias en la respuesta entre los sujetos pertenecientes a provincias con aeropuertos grandes y aquellas con aeropuertos pequeños o sin aeropuertos. Teniendo en cuenta el número de pasajeros registrados en los aeropuertos se seleccionaron como ciudades para llevar a cabo el trabajo de campo la ciudad del principal aeropuerto nacional y otra ciudad con uno de los aeropuertos que ocupan el último lugar del ranking según el informe anual de 2010 de AENA (AENA, 2012). Con el fin de evitar los problemas derivados de la selección de los sujetos en el medio Internet y tratar de extrapolar en la medida de lo posible los resultados obtenidos se decidió seleccionar a los integrantes de la muestra, internautas en todo caso, de forma aleatoria en la calle y no a través de la Red, manteniendo cuotas de sexo y edad proporcionales a la población española.

Concretamente, el experimento consistió en mostrar al individuo la página Web del diario El Mundo.es en la que debía navegar de forma natural durante un tiempo máximo de 10 minutos. En ese tiempo el internauta podía ver el banner promocional asignado que estaba alojado en dicha página Web. Ante la imposibilidad de poder ubicar en realidad los tratamientos experimentales en la página de ese Diario digital, se recurrió a la ayuda de un experto ingeniero informático que creó una aplicación Web capaz de capturar en tiempo real la página Web y llevarla a una URL propia ubicada en un servidor y sobre la que sí se tenía plena autonomía para hacer aparecer los tratamientos. La aplicación Web consistió en 2 *frames*, en uno se cargaba la Web de El Mundo.es en tiempo real y en el otro aparecía el tratamiento promocional. Mediante la combinación de ambos se conseguía que aparecieran los tratamientos sobre la Web del diario en cuestión. El usuario expuesto al experimento era incapaz de percibir que estaba fuera del sitio Web del diario digital ya que lo que visualizaba era el contenido real existente en dicho instante, sólo que copiado y ubicado en otra URL distinta que el sujeto no veía. En el caso de que los usuarios cliquearan en el banner les saltaba el cuestionario. En el caso de que no cliquearan transcurridos los 10 minutos se le pedía que rellenase dicho cuestionario.

La muestra final estuvo compuesta por 445 individuos, de los que el 57,5% fueron hombres y el 42,5% mujeres, con edades comprendidas entre los 19-34 años (73,3%) y más de 34 años (26,7%). La mayoría tenía ingresos mensuales inferiores a 1,500€, y utilizaban el e-mail, e Internet varias veces a la semana, todos los días o varias veces al día (véase tabla 1).

TABLA 1

**Descripción de la muestra**

Género	Hombre	57,5%
	Mujer	42,5%
Edad	de 18 a 24	49,7%
	de 25 a 34	23,6%
	de 35 a 44	7,9%
	Más de 44	18,9%
Ingresos mensuales	hasta €499	57,3%
	€500-€999	10,6%
	€1,000-€1,499	15,5%
	€1,500-€1,999	8,1%
	€2,000-€2,499	4,3%
	Más de €2,500	4,2%

**3.4. Medidas**

El **recuerdo del internauta** acerca de la publicidad del descuento o del regalo online fue medido utilizando el tipo de recuerdo registrado. Para ello, se codificó el recuerdo espontáneo del individuo en 4 categorías denominadas: (0) No recuerda nada, cuando el individuo decía no recordar ningún anuncio visualizado durante su navegación; (1) Recuerdo de producto, cuando el individuo recordaba haber visto un anuncio de billetes de avión; (2) Recuerdo de marca y producto, cuando el individuo decía haber visto un anuncio de billetes de avión de Iberia; (3) Recuerdo de marca, producto y mensaje (3) cuando el individuo recordaba el descuento o el regalo visto para volar con Iberia.

Son diversos los estudios que demuestran que la familiaridad con la marca y la propensión a la promoción son dos de los principales moderadores de la respuesta del consumidor a la promoción de ventas (Bagozzi, 1981; DelVecchio et al, 2006; Palazón y Delgado, 2009; Yi y Yoo, 2011). Por este motivo, se decidió controlar ambas variables para garantizar que los distintos grupos experimentales no presentaran diferencias con respecto a estas variables. Con este fin, la **familiaridad con la marca** se midió utilizando una versión adaptada de la escala propuesta por Gefen (2000), consistente en un ítem tipo Likert de 1 a 7: “¿Cómo de familiar considera la compra de billetes de avión de la marca Iberia? Para medir la **propensión a la promoción de ventas** se utilizó la escala propuesta por Lichtenstein et al. (1993) y aplicada por Palazón and Delgado (2011) al mismo área geográfica: (1) Tengo marcas favoritas pero la mayor parte de las veces compro la marca que está en promoción; (2) Debería comprar la marca que está en promoción; (3) Es más probable que compre esta marca que está en promoción; (4) Comparado con mis familiares y amigos, es más probable que compre la marca que está en promoción.

Por último, se midieron variables sociodemográficas tales como el género, la edad, la situación laboral, el nivel de estudios y el nivel de ingresos. Para ello se utilizaron las escalas utilizadas en la encuesta Navegantes en la Red realizada por la AIMC (AIMC, 2010).

**4. Resultados****4.1. Chequeo de manipulación**

Para comprobar que los incentivos utilizados eran percibidos como de igual valor monetario se utilizó el procedimiento establecido por Nunes y Park (2003) y utilizado más tarde por Palazón y Delgado (2005). El test t llevado a cabo corroboró la inexistencia de diferencias significativas en el valor percibido de los distintos incentivos, lo que nos permitió confirmar que el incentivo basado en el regalo se percibía en torno a 120 ( $p > 0.05$ ) correspondiente al valor del incentivo monetario (véase tabla 2).

TABLA 2  
**Resultados del test t para una muestra**

	Valor = 120			
	t	gl	Sig. (2-colas)	Diferencia de medias
Precio percibido de las 2 noches de hotel	-1,81	675	0,07	-3,35

Finalmente se comprobó que los grupos experimentales estaban igualmente distribuidos en términos de edad, género, familiaridad con la marca y propensión a la promoción. Asimismo, ambos grupos estuvieron distribuidos homogéneamente en términos de composición y tamaño (descuento, 230; regalo, 220). Utilizando un test de Kolmogorov-Smirnov se comprobó que no había diferencias significativas en ambos grupos ( $p > 0,05$ ).

Para comprobar las diferencias entre los grupos con respecto a la propensión a la promoción, previamente se validó la escala multi-item mediante un AFC y cuyos resultados no se presentan por limitaciones de espacio. Dado que la escala multiitem era adecuada se creó una variable que reflejaba la media de las puntuaciones obtenidas en los distintos items que la componen. El test de diferencia de medias para cada grupo experimental reveló que no existían diferencias significativas en relación a la propensión a la promoción y la familiaridad con la marca ( $p > 0,05$ ).

#### 4.2. Contraste de hipótesis

Para contrastar las hipótesis propuestas se llevó a cabo una segmentación jerárquica mediante el algoritmo de segmentación C&RT, por ser el más adecuado para este caso. Dicho algoritmo no realiza suposición alguna sobre el tipo de variables dependientes e independientes (pueden ser continuas, categóricas o nominales), no se basa en la hipótesis de normalidad de las variables, sus resultados no tienen por qué ser dicotómicos y permite que un mismo predictor aparezca en diferentes niveles del árbol (Breiman et al., 1984). Calcula una medida de impureza (variabilidad de los datos dentro del nodo) y elige las variables que aportan una mayor reducción de la misma.

En concreto, se llevaron a cabo dos segmentaciones jerárquicas, una para cada tratamiento (descuento vs regalo) con el fin de analizar las posibles diferencias obtenidas en cuanto al perfil del internauta. En ambos casos, como variable dependiente se utilizó el nivel de recuerdo del internauta y como variables independientes se utilizaron el género, la edad, la situación laboral, el nivel de estudios y el nivel de ingresos. De esta manera, para el caso del descuento online se obtuvo un árbol de segmentación con un poder predictivo del 51,8%, mientras que para el caso del regalo online el árbol obtenido tuvo un poder predictivo del 52,1%. Las figuras 3 y 4 muestran los árboles resultantes en cada caso.

Los resultados indican que a nivel general, el anuncio que incluye el descuento online consigue un mayor nivel de recuerdo de producto (12,4%) que el que incluye como reclamo el regalo (4,6%). Sin embargo, este último genera un mayor nivel de recuerdo de marca (50,2%) que el anuncio con el descuento (45%). Estos niveles de recuerdo se ven afectados por distintas variables sociodemográficas, tal y como muestran los resultados. La situación laboral del usuario y su edad son las variables que más influyen en el nivel de recuerdo del internauta acerca de la publicidad online del descuento. Sin embargo, para la publicidad online del regalo el nivel de recuerdo del internauta queda determinado, en primer lugar, por su nivel de estudios, seguido de su situación laboral. Estos resultados ponen de manifiesto la existencia de diferencias en cuanto al nivel de recuerdo alcanzado por los regalos y los descuentos online, dependiendo este de determinadas variables sociodemográficas del usuario. Así pues, se confirman H1 y H2.

Al objeto de explicar mejor los perfiles encontrados se presenta una tabla para cada tipo de incentivo promocional utilizado, en la que se muestran los perfiles encontrados junto con las principales características sociodemográficas estudiadas (véanse tablas 3 y 4).

Los usuarios que visualizaron el **anuncio con el descuento** pueden clasificarse en 3 grupos o perfiles:

- Grupo 1: MUY INTERESADOS EN EL PRODUCTO. Formado por 66 individuos (29,2% de la muestra) estudiantes o trabajadores por cuenta propia. Su edad suele estar comprendida entre los 20 a 24 años y los 45 a 54. Está compuesto igualmente por hombres (51,5%) y mujeres (48,5%), con estudios de grado medio o superior y con ingresos principalmente

inferiores a 499€ (90%). Este grupo posee un porcentaje superior de personas con estudios a nivel de diplomatura que el resto de los grupos. Ante un descuento ofrecido en la Red, la mayoría de ellos son capaces de recordar la marca y el producto promocionado asociadamente (54,5%). Este porcentaje es el más alto de los tres grupos. Por tanto, si se desea conseguir un recuerdo conjunto de marca y producto este es el perfil más indicado. A su vez, un 15,2% de los usuarios de Internet es capaz de recordar sólo el producto pero no la marca. Para este grupo, la publicidad online con el descuento consigue un nivel de recuerdo de marca del 62,1% siendo, por tanto, el grupo que mayor nivel de recuerdo alcanza de los tres. Poseen un nivel de no recuerdo del 22,7%.

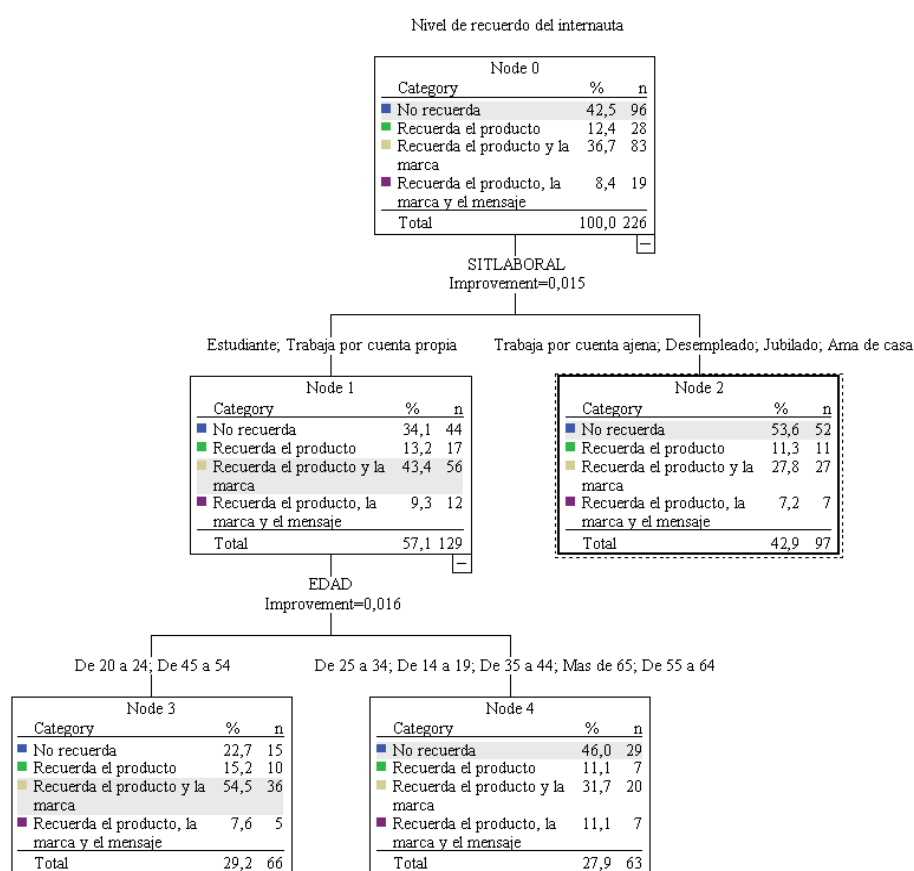
TABLA 3  
Perfil de cada grupo que visualizó el anuncio online con descuento

		Grupo 1	Grupo 2	Grupo 3
GÉNERO	Hombre	52,4%	51,5%	62,9%
	Mujer	47,6%	48,5%	37,1%
ESTUDIOS	Sin estudios	1,6%	1,5%	0,0%
	Estudios primarios/Certificado escolar	11,1%	3,0%	4,1%
	Secundaria/Bachiller/FP	54,0%	40,9%	44,3%
	Diplomatura/Título de grado medio	15,9%	24,2%	16,5%
	Licenciatura/Título superior	17,5%	30,3%	33,0%
	Otros	0,0%	0,0%	2,1%
INGRESOS MENSUALES	Hasta 499€	84,1%	90,9%	24,7%
	Entre 500-999€	6,3%	3,0%	16,5%
	Entre 1000-1499€	3,2%	3,0%	29,9%
	Entre 1500-1999€	4,8%	3,0%	15,5%
	Entre 2000-2499€	0,0%	0,0%	6,2%
	Entre 2500-2999€	0,0%	0,0%	4,1%
	Entre 3000-4999€	0,0%	0,0%	3,1%
	Más de 5000€	1,6%	0,0%	0,0%

- Grupo 2: PREOCUPADOS POR EL PRECIO. Formado por 63 individuos (27,9% de la muestra). Su edad está comprendida principalmente entre los 14 a 19 años, los 25 a 44 y más de 55. De nuevo, al igual que en el caso anterior son estudiantes o trabajadores por cuenta propia. Está compuesto por un porcentaje de hombres (52,4%) ligeramente superior al de mujeres (47,6%), con estudios sobre todo medios (secundaria o similar) a nivel de diplomatura y con unos ingresos inferiores a 499€ (84,1%). Ante un descuento ofrecido en la Red, la mayoría de ellos no son capaces de recordar nada (46%). Poseen un nivel de recuerdo de producto del 11% y conjunto de marca y producto del 31,7%. Este grupo destaca por ser el que presenta un mayor nivel de recuerdo conjunto de marca, producto y mensaje (11%) de los tres. Por este motivo, se considera que este grupo es el más preocupado o al que más le interesan los descuentos online. El 42,7% de ellos recuerda la marca tras la exposición a la publicidad sobre el descuento online.
- Grupo 3: POCO INTERESADOS EN EL PRODUCTO O EL DESCUENTO. Formado por 97 individuos (42,9% de la muestra) es el grupo más numeroso de los tres. En este caso la única variable que afecta a su nivel de recuerdo es la situación laboral, no afectando la edad de los internautas. Son trabajadores por cuenta ajena o que no trabajan en la actualidad. Está compuesto principalmente por hombres (63%) con estudios de grado medio o superiores y con unos ingresos inferiores a 2000 €. Ante un descuento ofrecido en la Red, la mayoría de ellos no recuerdan nada (53,6%), siendo este el grupo que presenta un mayor nivel de no recuerdo de los tres considerados. El 27,8% son capaces de recordar la marca y el producto promocionado, mientras que poseen un nivel de recuerdo conjunto de la marca, producto y el mensaje de solo el 7,2%. El 35% de ellos recuerda la marca tras la exposición a la publicidad sobre el descuento online registrando el porcentaje más bajo de los 3 grupos.



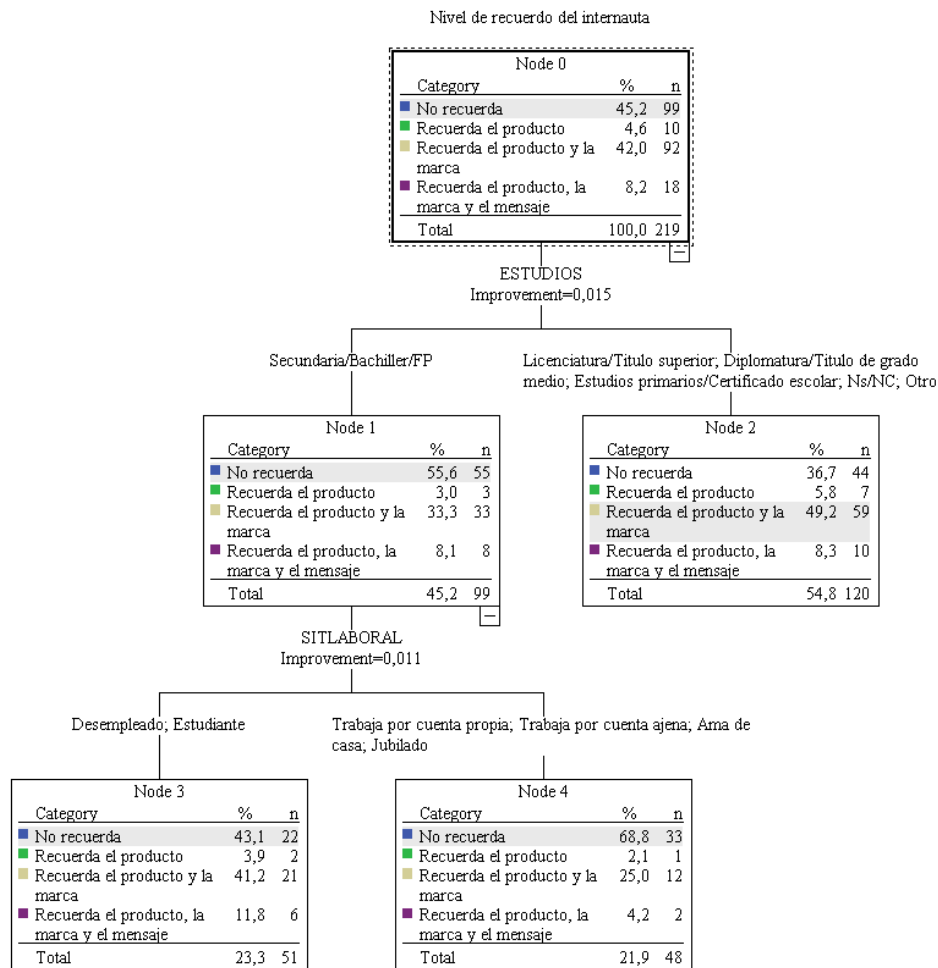
**FIGURA 3**  
**Perfil del internauta según su nivel de recuerdo del descuento online**



Por otra parte, los usuarios que **visualizaron el anuncio online con el regalo** quedan clasificados en otros 3 grupos como se muestra a continuación:

- Grupo 1: MUY INTERESADOS EN EL REGALO. Formado por 51 individuos (23,3% de la muestra) con estudios secundarios, bachillerato o equivalente, y cuya situación laboral actual es estudiantes o desempleados. Está formado por un porcentaje ligeramente superior de hombres (52,9%) que de mujeres (47,1%), con edades comprendidas mayoritariamente entre los 14 y los 24 años (82,3%) y con unos ingresos inferiores a 499 € (92,2%). Ante un regalo ofrecido en la Red, el 43% no recuerda nada y el 41% recuerda la marca y el producto conjuntamente. Destacan principalmente por ser el grupo que más porcentaje de recuerdo de marca, producto y mensaje de forma conjunta presenta (11,8%). El 63% de ellos son capaces de recordar la marca tras la exposición al regalo promocional. Por tanto, la comunicación del regalo online es más eficaz para este perfil de usuario junto con el grupo 3. Así pues, puede decirse que es el mejor perfil para generar recuerdo de marca y producto conjuntamente con un regalo online. Sin embargo, es posible que este no sea el perfil idóneo para considerarlo como target. Es posible que de forma inmediata no cierren la compra del producto al no tener ingresos, sin embargo puede que cuando dicha situación cambie se conviertan en público potencial. Al contar con menos ingresos, son más susceptibles a los regalos promocionales que el resto de internautas que visualizaron este estímulo, lo que los lleva a procesar más la información sobre el regalo ofrecido en la Red y, por tanto, a recordarlo más.

**FIGURA 4**  
**Perfil del internauta según su nivel de recuerdo del regalo online**



- Grupo 2: POCO INTERESADOS EN EL PRODUCTO. Formado por 48 individuos (21,9% de la muestra). De nuevo, al igual que en el caso anterior tienen estudios secundarios. Su situación laboral es trabajador, ama de casa o jubilado. Está formado principalmente por hombres (58,3%), con edades superiores a los 20 años (95,8%) y con unos ingresos inferiores a 1500 € (83,4%). Este grupo destaca por tener el mayor porcentaje de personas con edades superiores a 35 años (45,8%). Ante un regalo ofrecido en la Red, la mayoría de ellos no son capaces de recordar nada (68,8%). Poseen un nivel de recuerdo de producto del 2% y de recuerdo conjunto de marca y producto del 25%. Este grupo destaca por ser el que presenta un menor nivel de recuerdo conjunto de marca y producto y, en general, recuerdo de marca (29,2%). Por tanto, este tipo de instrumento de comunicación parece ser poco eficaz en este segmento.
- Grupo 3: MUY INTERESADOS EN EL PRODUCTO. Formado por 120 individuos (54,8% de la muestra) es el grupo más numeroso de los tres. En este caso la única variable que afecta a su nivel de recuerdo es el nivel de estudios, no afectando para este caso la situación laboral de los internautas. Poseen estudios primarios o universitarios. Está formado principalmente por hombres (60,8%), con edades comprendidas entre los 20 y los 35 años (61,7%) y con unos ingresos inferiores a 2000€ (89,2%). Cuando visualizan un anuncio sobre un regalo en la Red la mayoría recuerdan la marca y el producto (49,2%), siendo este el grupo que presenta un mayor nivel de este tipo de recuerdo de los tres considerados. A su vez, son el grupo que menor nivel de no recuerdo presenta (36,7%). El 8,3% son capaces de recordar la marca, el producto y el mensaje. El 57,5% de ellos recuerdan la marca tras visualizar el estímulo promocional online. Probablemente, dado su nivel de estudios, este grupo sea el más implicado con los viajes lo que lo lleva a prestar más atención a este tipo de informaciones

online. Al igual que en el caso del grupo 1, estos individuos parecen ser el perfil adecuado de este tipo de incentivo online, incrementando la eficacia de la comunicación del regalo online.

TABLA 4  
**Perfil de cada grupo que visualizó el anuncio online con regalo**

		Grupo 1	Grupo 2	Grupo 3
GÉNERO	Hombre	52,9%	60,8%	58,3%
	Mujer	47,1%	39,2%	41,7%
EDAD	De 14 a 19	43,1%	12,5%	4,2%
	De 20 a 24	39,2%	26,7%	22,9%
	De 25 a 34	11,8%	35,0%	27,1%
	De 35 a 44	3,9%	5,8%	12,5%
	De 45 a 54	2,0%	12,5%	20,8%
	De 55 a 64	0,0%	5,0%	10,4%
	Más de 65	0,0%	2,5%	2,1%
INGRESOS MENSUALES	Hasta 499€	92,2%	44,2%	37,5%
	Entre 500-999€	5,9%	10,8%	18,8%
	Entre 1000-1499€	0,0%	19,2%	27,1%
	Entre 1500-1999€	0,0%	10,0%	8,3%
	Entre 2000-2499€	2,0%	7,5%	6,2%
	Entre 2500-2999€	0,0%	5,8%	0,0%
	Entre 3000-4999€	0,0%	1,7%	2,1%
	Más de 5000€	0,0%	0,8%	0,0%

## 5. Conclusiones y recomendaciones

Con este trabajo se ha pretendido analizar si los anuncios online que incluyen incentivos promocionales, ya sean descuentos o regalos, son eficaces en términos de generación de recuerdo de la marca y en qué medida el perfil sociodemográfico del internauta afecta a su capacidad para generar recuerdo. Este trabajo profundiza y contribuye a la literatura de marketing online ya que es el primero en analizar cómo el recuerdo registrado por los descuentos y los regalos online depende del perfil del internauta. De los resultados obtenidos puede concluirse que los anuncios online sobre descuentos son especialmente eficaces para generar recuerdo de producto mientras que los anuncios online sobre regalos lo son para generar recuerdo de marca.

A su vez, como novedad del trabajo, se obtiene que estos niveles de recuerdo dependen de distintas variables sociodemográficas tales como la situación laboral y la edad del internauta, que son las variables más explicativas del recuerdo registrado tras la visualización de la publicidad con descuento online. En cambio, el recuerdo en la publicidad con regalos queda explicado en mayor medida por el nivel de estudios y la situación laboral del internauta. Este resultado está en línea de lo establecido en los medios tradicionales por Bawa y Shoemaker (1987) ya que según sus investigaciones el nivel de educación afecta a la respuesta frente a la promoción de ventas. También está en concordancia con lo obtenido por Mittal (1994) y Strober y Weinberg (1980), ya que estos autores obtuvieron que la respuesta del consumidor depende de su estado laboral.

En función del recuerdo alcanzado tras ver un anuncio de descuento se han clasificado a los internautas en 3 grupos: Muy interesados en el producto, preocupados por el precio y poco interesados en el producto o el descuento. El primer grupo, los interesados en el producto, son personas de edad media con pocos ingresos aunque con formación, esta característica los lleva a recordar más el mensaje del descuento online identificando la marca y el producto. El segundo grupo, los preocupados por el precio, son personas sobre todo jóvenes o mayores con unos ingresos muy bajos y estudiantes o trabajadores por cuenta propia. Este grupo cuando le interesa el producto es el que más recuerda de forma conjunta el mensaje del descuento online demostrando que quizás son de los individuos más propensos a los descuentos. Por último, el tercer grupo, los poco interesados en el producto o el descuento, son principalmente hombres formados, trabajadores por cuenta ajena o que no trabajan y con ingresos moderadamente altos. Este grupo es el que presenta un mayor nivel de no recuerdo de los tres. Este resultado es posible que se deba a que dado su perfil sean más expertos en la navegación web que los otros grupos siendo más capaces de evitar los mensajes publicitarios promocionales que en ella aparecen. Es decir, es posible que naveguen de una forma más guiada por objetivos tratando de

evitar todos los mensajes que no tengan que ver con sus objetivos de navegación (Hammond et al., 1997; Novak et al., 2000). A este respecto, Dahlen (2002) establece que cuanto mayor es la experiencia del internauta con el medio menos impacto a nivel de recuerdo tendrá sobre el la publicidad online. Otra posible explicación, es que dado su poder adquisitivo y su situación laboral, es posible que los descuentos no sean de los incentivos que más se adaptan a sus gustos y preferencias haciendo que capten menos su atención. Así pues, para este grupo de usuarios habrá que buscar formas alternativas de comunicar para lograr niveles de recuerdo de marca aceptables.

Por otro lado, los usuarios que visualizaron el anuncio online con el regalo pueden clasificarse también en 3 grupos según su nivel de recuerdo: muy interesados en los regalos, poco interesados en el producto y muy interesados en el producto. El primer grupo son jóvenes poco formados y sin ingresos. Este tipo de internauta recuerda más el contenido conjunto del mensaje promocional que el resto de grupos probablemente debido a esa escasez de ingresos. El segundo grupo son personas poco formadas y en un porcentaje bastante alto de edad elevada. Estas características los hacen ser el perfil menos adecuado para este tipo de producto por lo que son el que presentar un nivel de no recuerdo más elevado. El tercer grupo son personas de edad media, formados y con ingresos altos, esto los lleva ser el perfil más adecuado para este tipo de producto y por tanto a presentar los mejores niveles de recuerdo de todos.

Dada la importancia puesta de manifiesto en la gestión de la promoción de ventas online por su capacidad para afectar al recuerdo de la marca, es necesario conocer cuáles son las acciones más eficientes y sobre qué público deben lanzarse en aras a realizar un buen targeting online. Es decir, es primordial que los gestores de marketing conozcan cómo la promoción de ventas online puede ayudar a conseguir recuerdo de marca y por ende, notoriedad de marca.

Obviamente los banner a través de los que se comunique la promoción de ventas deben facilitar el recuerdo del internauta. Para ello, es recomendable conocer el perfil del usuario de la información promocional como forma de adaptar perfectamente el mensaje promocional en sí.

Para alcanzar mayores niveles de recuerdo de la acción promocional se recomienda alojarlo en web sites congruentes con los beneficios buscados por el cliente y aportados por el producto promocionado como forma de mejorar la capacidad del mismo para captar la atención del usuario y que éste lo procese.

Así pues, se recomienda tanto para diseñar como para decidir donde alojar la publicidad sobre los descuentos online teniendo en cuenta que el target son personas medianamente formadas, jóvenes y con unos ingresos no muy elevados. Por el contrario, para el diseño y elección de la estrategia de difusión de la publicidad online sobre los regalos habrá que tener en cuenta que sus usuarios serán sobre todo hombres, de edad media, muy formados y con unos ingresos bastante altos.

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# DOES THE SMART LABELLING ADD VALUE TO THE PRODUCT?

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## ABSTRACT

*The globalisation of markets has enabled consumers to have far more possibilities and alternatives when it comes to picking and choosing. However, the huge number of fraudulent cases is a common occurrence. The consumers therefore not only have to tackle the problem of correctly inferring the quality, but also the probability of making a mistake or having to process information with which they are often unfamiliar (e.g. barcode). One of the solutions to this problem is smart labelling. The aim of this work is to investigate whether or not smart labelling provides value to the consumer. We have conducted a market research using a category of products in which this problem is highly representative: fish products. We selected a sample of 300 homes that were potential consumers of fish products and asked them about the value or importance that smart labelling could have on the purchase process. The results show that the clarity of the labelling, as an informative cue, and by way of credibility, improves the perception of quality, reduces the perceived risk or likelihood of making a mistake and saves the consumer costs when it comes to seeking information. In addition, the usability of labelling also improves the clarity of the signal as it allows the consumer to check and recognise certain intrinsic attributes or characteristics that imbue the product with authenticity.*

**KEY WORDS:** *Labelling, Consumer behavior, Traceability, Signaling Theory.*



## **1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES**

Companies are facing an ever-more globalised and competitive environment, with growing demand from consumers for better guarantees of quality. Unlike experts, consumers cannot easily know which properties are intrinsic to products and which are those that give them their perceived quality. There is thus a problem of uncertainty regarding the quality of products (Akerlof, 1970), also known as imperfect information on product quality. This problem becomes more complex when consumers are faced with many alternatives of a similar perceived quality, which makes them have to decide on one without being completely sure. Consumers do not have a clear understanding of the multitude of alternatives that exist, which leads to a problem with managing the information and, therefore, the risk associated with the purchase.

To sum up, we faced with two problems: one the one hand, how to infer quality and, on the other hand, how to solve the problem of making the right choice from so many alternatives, the so-called perceived risk (Mitchell and Greated, 1988a). The signalling theory (Erdem and Swait, 1998, 2004; Ye and Van Raaij, 2004) has provided a solution to the problem of information asymmetries, looking into the properties that informative signals must have. Among these variables are price, labelling, guarantees, brand (manufacturer or distributor) origin, advertising and packaging design. From the consumer point of view, one the most reliable signal is the one that commits the firm to fulfil quality promises. Concretely, we need to come up with clear and credible indicators (Erdem et al., 2006) that allow consumers to infer the quality. This fact reveals the need to design useful informative signs both from the standpoint of information processing as well as to ensure the product's intrinsic properties. Use of such indicators could appreciably help the consumer to infer product quality, minimize the risk in the purchase process and reduce information-processing costs in the purchase process.

However, there are attributes that cannot be assessed by the consumer, even once the product has been consumed. These are the so-called credence attributes. It is therefore necessary to equip the consumer with new mechanisms that enable him to not only verify product quality but also make sure that those properties are true and authentic. This problem has become even more acute with the globalisation phenomenon, where there are many occasions of fraud. In fact, firms can sell the product in one country but the raw material comes from another region. In other cases, confusing information is provided (e.g. made in the PRC). To respond to this problem, literature has stressed the need to introduce mechanisms that allow the consumer not only to be aware of what intrinsic properties the product has, but also to guarantee these. One of the tools that help firms to track the trajectory or path of a product throughout the chain is traceability. However, most of consumers do not recognise what the term traceability means (Giraud and Halawany, 2006). By the same token, there are few studies that have performed research, from the consumer behaviour standpoint, the importance of traceability for consumers (Chrisochoidis et al, 2006; Van Riswijk and Frewer, 2008, 2012; Vervecke and Ward, 2006) However, still no empirical studies simultaneously research the signalling of quality and the importance of traceability. From the signalling theory, this problem may be tackled through the introduction of smart labelling, which would enable us to assess whether the consumer can clearly recognise the intrinsic properties of a product -to infer the product quality- as well as distinguish one product from another -risk reduction-. For this reason, we will investigate whether smart labelling can add value to the product. First, we need to assess whether the consumer is interested in introducing a system of traceability and how this is to show on the quality labelling. At the same time, discovering the hierarchy of quality attributes also enables us to design a better system of traceability. Lastly, and this is the leading contribution of the work, it would enable us to know whether smart labelling adds value to the product. We have based our work on fish products.

To respond to this objective, we have divided this work into five sections. First of all, we will explain in detail the theoretical framework on which the principles of brand as a signal are based. Next, based on these foundations, we will build the model. We will then explain the methodology and, finally, the analysis of results from which we will extract the main conclusions.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SIGNALLING THEORY AND IMPERFECT MARKETS**

As we explained at the start of this work, we are thus faced with a problem of imperfect market information. Literature on the information economy (Stigler, 1961; Akerlof, 1970) has contributed to the solution of

signals to this problem of asymmetric and imperfect information. To be able to infer those properties and, as a result, perceive the quality that the product possesses, consumers make use of signals or indicators. For the case of fish, the signals that have been researched the most are region of origin (Ericsson et al., 1984; Bertozzi, 1995); brand, price and label; and intrinsic characteristics –texture, appearance, taste-. From the point of view of the Information Economy, and considering markets that are imperfect and have major asymmetry of information which prevents consumers from evaluating the product quality at the time of purchase, we investigate the characteristics of the signal that allow the consumer to infer product quality. Erdem and Swait (1998) explain that the clarity and credibility placed in the signal increases utility, improving their perception on product quality and reducing the risk and costs of searching for information associated with the purchase. This is what we will explain in more detail.

### **Smart Labelling, Traceability and Perceived Quality**

As has already been indicated, there is considerable uncertainty about product quality. Fish and a seafood product is a very good example. The signals into which there has been the most research have been price, guarantees (Boulding and Kirmani, 1993; Erelles et al., 1999); manufacturer or distributor's brand (Yoo et al, 2000); umbrella branding (Wernerfelt, 1988; Erdem, 1998); origin (Bertozzi, 1995; Biljana et al., 1996; Papadopoulos and Heslop, 1993); advertising (Kirmani, 1990) and packaging design. Although the signal that stands out from all of them is brand, since it is presented as the most reliable and credible signal for end consumers (Erdem et al., 2006); the labelling is becoming more and more important because of the value of attributes such as nutritional information, energy value or attributes related to the manufacture or production. Labelling can therefore act as a signal from which consumers infer a specific level of objective quality, since consumers confer a confidence value on it (Cox, 1967). It is obvious and justified that it is a credible signal because it is exposed to market approval and because it is closely linked with the intrinsic properties of the product. Since it is so closely linked to these properties, it also transmits other benefits that are directly connected with these intrinsic properties, such as the positive associations and images evoked by these attributes.

### **Smart Labelling and Perceived Risk**

Perceived risk was defined by Bauer (1967) as a subjective belief in the probability of something bad happening or unfavourable consequences arising after buying the product (for example, incorrect assessment of its quality, other members of the household not liking it, or simply the product in question not being the right one). Marketing literature subsequently began to develop the concept (Cox, 1967; Bettman, 1973; Dowling, 1986). Since the level of uncertainty about the quality or quality attributes is considerable, good signalling of them is a determining factor in the selection process. It is obvious that since they cannot process these attributes or properties, consumers are going to base their opinion on the signal that allows them to recognise these attributes, i.e., on the informative signal that allows them to recognise many of these quality attributes. On the other hand, as well as recognising these quality attributes, consumers need to make sure that these attributes correspond to what would objectively be a quality product. It is logical and immediate to check how the smart labelling reduces the search for all of this information because it is presented as a highly credible signal.

### **Smart Labelling and Utility**

This approach is based on the idea that consumers make use of labelling to infer the characteristics of products due to the existence of imperfect and asymmetric information in markets. For this reason, and due to the existence of the problems of adverse selection, smart labelling may constitute, for the company, a very effective signal to infer quality and to reduce the information-processing costs. Thus, smart labelling is a credible signal that can help consumers to infer the level of objective quality and to reduce the perceived risk associated with the purchase, i.e., the risk of not knowing what the result of the product may be. It therefore allows for the reduction of information costs and an increase in the utility of the product.

Based on these principles, we are going to develop a theoretical model that we intend to prove. This is explained below.

### **3. MODELLING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CLARITY, USABILITY, CREDIBILITY, PERCEIVED QUALITY, RISK, AND COSTS OF SEARCH OF INFORMATION**

As indicated in the introduction, we are presented with two problems: on the one hand, how to infer quality and, on the other hand, how to solve the problem of making the right choice from so many alternatives, the so-called perceived risk. To solve this problem, we should make use of the Signalling Theory. Based on this theory, the hypotheses will be built. This is explained in detail below.

#### **Clarity, Usability and Credibility**

As explained by Erdem and Swait (2004), the clarity of the informative signal is vital in achieving markets that are more transparent. Clarity of the informative signal has a notable influence on credibility. However, even if that information is visible for the consumer, in many cases the consumer is unable to understand it, process it or interpret it properly. We therefore need to provide the consumer with a mechanism that enables him to do a reliable check of the information given by that signal. In this case, we need to improve the usability of the signal (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Both clarity and usability will therefore appreciably improve signal credibility.

#### **Credibility and Perceived Quality**

There are some intrinsic attributes that imbue the product with quality (e.g. the origin of a raw material; the texture and origin of a fish product (Acebrón and Dopico, 2000)). However, consumers may not recognise those features of the product. What consumers are therefore seeking is for the signal to be credible. As we have mentioned, to be able to infer those properties and, as a result, perceive the quality that the product possesses, consumers are searching for credible signals or indicators. Given the fact that quality labelling is subject to a check by independent organisations, this is why we are now looking into the importance of the labelling. The logic that endorses the signalling properties of the labelling is the credibility. Credibility of smart labelling has been based on two basic elements. On the one hand, there are independent agencies that control quality and that can ensure a certain level of quality. Thus, this objectivisation is responsible for credibility, which is the basis for recognising quality. On the other hand, the signalling of traceability would allow the consumer to recognise those intrinsic properties, as they could examine those product properties (the origin, the method of capture, etc.). Smart labelling is therefore set to give an appreciable improvement to the overall quality perceived in the product.

#### **Credibility and Perceived Risk**

The diversity of alternatives, -e.g. the wide variety of fish caught-, generates a lot of uncertainty and confusion in consumers (Mitchell and Grottel, 1988b). This fact arose - as we explained previously - because of the globalisation phenomenon, where consumers are faced with numerous alternatives that in many cases are not identified or they do not know. In this context, application of the smart labelling reduces perceived risk. The smart labelling serves to reduce risk of the probability of error, since it provides a credible indication of its attributes such as specie, region of origin, method of capture, etc. Furthermore, the role of the smart labelling as a reliable signal is reflected in the guarantee of non-variability of quality. Therefore, the objectivity of the attributes guaranteed by the smart labelling, together with the subsequent learning derived from the experience of consumption, increases reliability regarding the levels of the attributes and therefore reduces the risk associated with the purchase.

#### **Credibility and the Search for Information**

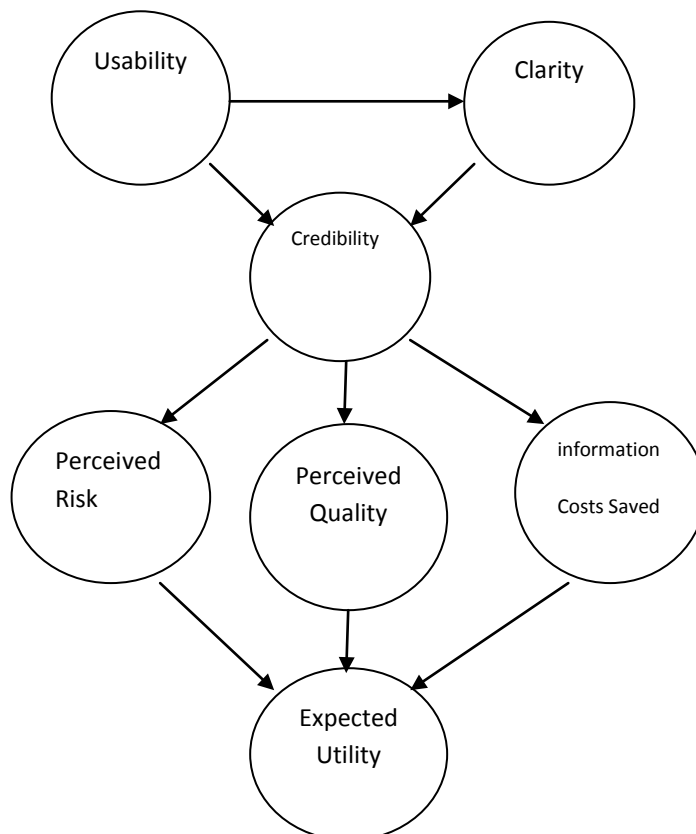
Consumers who buy products incur multiple costs when they gather and process information to reduce uncertainty and perceived risk. To solve this, consumers will look for a signal that allows them to reduce the effort involved in searching for information and to reduce the costs of processing this information, while ensuring that the properties that this product possesses are real. We understand that the smart labelling fulfils this purpose. To a certain extent, the labelling provides consumers with information for which is also very reliable. The smart labelling reduces both the costs of collecting information and the costs of processing it

(processing and abstraction). This happens because smart labelling reduces the effort that consumers have to make to recognise the attributes that the product possesses (origin, method of capture, specie, etc). Furthermore, as it is a credible signal, it guarantees that these attributes that give the product quality are certain. Thus, the credibility of the signal allows maximum reduction of the costs of searching for and processing that information. While the costs of information on the product generally increase –since they depend directly on the asymmetry and informative imperfection of the market (Erdem and Swait, 1998)-, these same costs will be reduced based on the credibility of the smart labelling.

**Perceived Quality, Risk, Costs of search for Information and Expected Utility**

We have already seen that labelling is a good indicator of quality. In addition, the labelling not only guarantees a certain quality status but it also transmits and evokes symbolic elements generating better perception of those attributes (Del Rio et al., 2001). Thus, a higher perceived quality of the product, -based on the credibility of the smart labelling-, increases expected utility. At the same time, as the theoretical and empirical evidence suggests, the aversion to risk in product markets also has an influence on expected utility (Anand, 1993). The explanation is based on the fact that the perceived risk causes confusion about the perceived attributes and the consumer's low level of self-confidence reduces the probability of objective assessment of the product attribute. Consequently, at the time of purchase the costs of the search for information required to convert the visible attributes into perceptible quality signals will remain constant or will even increase. Compared to this, today's consumers, always aiming for as few efforts as possible, will find a lot of utility in labelling as information signal that is necessary for its assessment. Therefore, it is expected that the effects of labelling on perceived risk and the search for information indirectly have a positive impact on its expected utility. This would ratify the value of the labelling as a credible quality signal for consumers. After establishing the cause and effect of relationships existing between the Credibility of the smart labelling, the Perceived Quality, the Perceived Risk and the Information Costs involved, we can express the structural model proposed as a graph with respect to the effects of Credibility on the Utility Expected by consumers (See Figure 1).

**FIGURE1.** Relationships between Clarity, Credibility, Usability and Perceived Quality, Perceived Risk and Information Costs Saved



### **3. METHODOLOGY**

To perform this work we compiled a questionnaire entitled “*Questionnaire on purchase habits and the importance of labelling and traceability of fish products*”. The questionnaire is divided into five blocks. The first block focuses on analysing fish-product purchase habits. The second block deals with signs of quality and the influence these have on purchases. The third section deals with traceability. More specifically, it analyses i) spontaneous awareness of traceability; ii) the importance of introducing a system of traceability, and iii) the willingness to pay a premium for the introduction of this traceability system. The fourth block covers the relationships between clarity, credibility, perceived quality, risk and costs of searching for information. We asked to the interviewee to give their level of agreement or disagreement with each item. Lastly, the final section analyses the socio-demographic profile of the person who makes the purchases. This therefore analyses the type of home, age, gender and level of education.

#### **3.1 Sampling: size of the sample and sampling procedure**

The sampling unit of this study is the person responsible for household purchases. To select each one, a market research company called AGORA performed a random sampling of households, which allowed us to obtain a representative sample of the target population. The sampling size was 300 and there was a sampling error of 5,66%. The sampling error was calculated in accordance with an infinite population (population that exceeds 100,000 inhabitants) and with a confidence interval of 95%, whereby  $p=q=0,5$ . The selection of sampling homes followed the methodology proposed by Ministry of Agriculture, Fishing and Environment (2013), also called MAGRAMA (2013); which involves selecting locations from different geographical areas of Spain. A total of 300 questionnaires were conducted throughout Spain. The fieldwork was performed by the company AGORA Market Studies. The questionnaire was carried out personally and directly at the home, and any possible doubts or concerns of the interviewee were clarified using a more colloquial example or explanation. We performed a pre-test to identify any aspect that required improvement. The conclusions of this pre-test have been used to define the subsequent briefing. The aim of the briefing was to perform a training and instruction session with the interviewers to reveal the aims of the survey and the meaning to be given to each question. This enabled effective collection of the answers from the interviewees. Data were collected between 21 October and 4 November 2013, both inclusive. Once the data had been collected, we debugged the database making sure that all data were properly entered and have been correctly recorded. We also coded the open questions in accordance with the table of codes created in the pre-test stage. There were 295 valid questionnaires (N=295). The characteristics of the sample are shown below, in the following table (see table 1).

**TABLE 1.**Socio-demographic Structure of the Sample (N=295)

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE	RESPONSE CATEGORIES	RELATIVE FREQUENCY (Cod)	SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE	RESPONSE CATEGORIES	RELATIVE FREQUENCY (Cod)
<b>Typology of household</b>	Independent young person	8,1%	<b>Gender</b>	Male	28,8%
	Retirees	10,5%		Female	71,2%
	Independent adult	10,2%		<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
	Single-parent homes	7,1%	<b>Age</b>	18 – 28	9,7%
	Family unit with young children	21,0%		29 – 38	26,6%
	Family unit with teenagers	9,5%		39 – 48	25%
	Family unit with grown-up children	13,2%		49 – 58	22,4%
	Family unit with children, but not under their charge	9,2%		59 – 68	10%
	Family unit (young couple) no children	4,4%		69 – 78	4,6%
	Family unit (adult couple) no children	6,8%		>78	1,7%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Monthly income of the family</b>	less than 1,000 €	20,0%		<b>Level of studies</b>	No studies
	from 1,000 to 2,000 €	41,7%	Incomplete primary studies (infant school)		1,7%
	from 2,000 to 3,000 €	14,6%	First level learning/first stage, General Basic Education – EGB)		4,1%
	from 3,000 to 4,000 €	4,1%	Secondary school/first stage		30,2%
	from 4,000 to 5,000 €	0,3%	Secondary school/second stage		34,5%
	Over 5,000€	0,7%	Higher education		13,2%
	Doesn't know/doesn't answer	18,6%	Higher education (bachelor degree)		14,6%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>100.0%</b>

Source: own Elaboration

### 3.2 Measurement of variables

The consumers were asked to show their degree of agreement or disagreement with different propositions related to clarity, credibility, usability, perceived quality, perceived risk and utility. The items assessed by interviewees and representing the latent variables were elaborated on the basis of a review of the literature and traditional scales. They also were asked for other questions related to consumption of fish products (frequency of buying/consumption, willingness to buy), consumption motives, hierarchy of quality cues, the introduction of a traceability programme as well as the willingness to pay for the implicit quality guarantees in said traceability programme. The final part of the questionnaire collected socio-demographic data of the respondents.

**TABLE 2.** Latent variables and reflective indicators used to measure the importance of Smart Labelling

<b>Latent variables</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
<b>Credibility</b> (based on Erdem and Swait, 1998)	Credi1: The smart label that guarantees the properties of the product is a signal in which information can be trusted Credi2: Buying a product with a smart labeling that tells you about the whole process of production that has followed the product is very reliable Credi3: A smart labeling that guarantees the product has followed a quality control is very reliable Credi4: I can trust in the smart labeling because provides information on the authentic properties of product
<b>Clarity</b> (based on Erdem and Swait, 1998)	Clarity1: I think that the smart labeling offers the consumer very clear information. Clarity2: I have no trouble in understanding the information contained in the smart labeling Clarity3: An smart label intend to offer a very clear information for the consumer
<b>Usability</b> (based on Davis et al., 1989)	Use1: Use this smart labeling can help me know the path followed by the product since caught until it reaches the point of sale Use2: Use this labeling would allow me to get the information in relation to the origin, and know the route from the origin to the point of sale Use3: Use this smart labeling makes it easier to buy
<b>Perceived Quality</b> (based on Zeithmal, 1988)	Calper1: I consider that a product with a labeling that guarantees their intrinsic properties (species, origin, date of capture) is of very good quality Calper2: A product with a smart label reflects a very high quality Calper3: I think that a product that contains a smart labeling which specifies all its main features is of very good quality
<b>Perceived Risk*</b> (Based on MiErdem and Swait, 1998)	Risk1: If the product I want to buy does not have a label that tells about the main features, the probability that suits what I want is very low Risk2: If I buy a product without labeling that ensures quality, increase my confusion at the time of purchase Risk3: Buying a product without labeling which tells you about the whole process that has followed the product increases the possibility of fraud
<b>Information costs Saved</b> (based on Erdem and Swait, 1998, 2004)	Infocost1: I have to search for information (e.g. check the labelling) before deciding on the product I'll buy Infocost2: If the product has a smart labeling saving time and effort in buying process Infocost3: I know that a very clear labeling saves me having to spend much time in the buying process
<b>Expected Utility</b>	Utility1: I consider that the smart labeling incorporates added value to the product Utility2: The smart labeling provides a more valuable product Utility3: In general, I find useful smart labeling

\* The perceived risk has been measured considering that the existence of a latent risk. That is, when consumers buy the products, feel that, in their choices, there is a latent risk in making the correct choice.

Source: Own elaboration

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 Demand of guarantees, Quality signalling and Traceability in the Smart Labelling

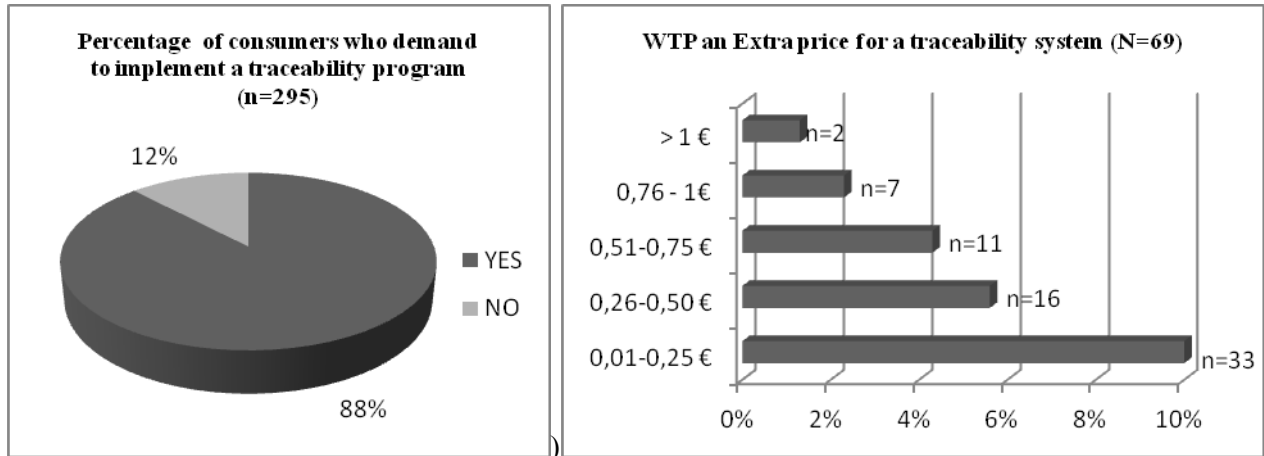
In this section we analyse the consumer's demand vis-à-vis the introduction of a traceability programme as well as the willingness to pay for the implicit quality guarantees in said traceability programme. We also assess whether the consumer is able to understand the codes or signals that can help him recognise product traceability.

#### 4.1.1 Demand of quality guarantees

As figure 2 shows, most consumers are demanding the introduction of traceability systems. However, consumers are not willing to pay a price premium. In fact, they believe that the excess price payable should be assumed by the producers. Only a small percentage (27,9%) would pay it. In most cases, this extra price would

not exceed €0,50 (see figure 2). A similar price premium can be seen in the study conducted by Zheng et al., (2012). Apart from there being few consumers willing to pay that extra price, the price premiums are low (Wang et al., 2009). This data reveals a challenge for the sector, viz., the need to collaborate and to share information.

**FIGURE 2.**The demand to introduce a Traceability Programme of fish products (N=295) and Extra price per kilo that the consumer would be willing to pay for the introduction of a traceability system (N=69)

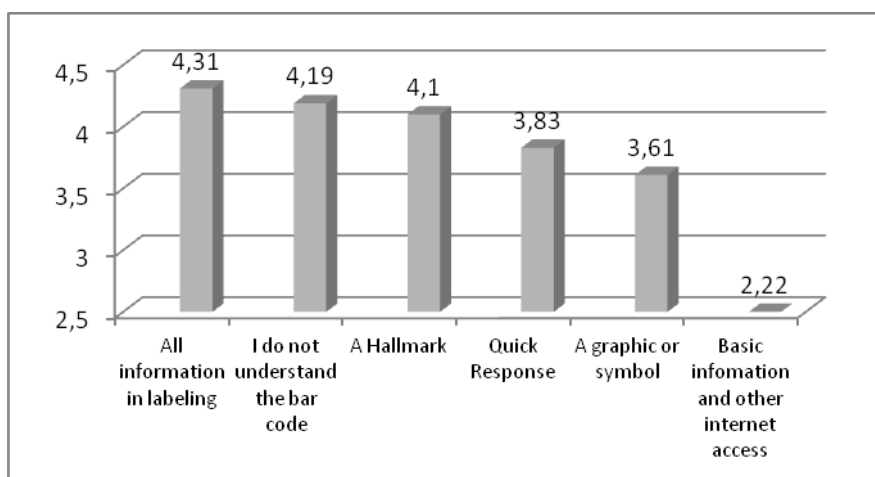


Source: Own elaboration

#### 4.1.2 Signalling traceability in the Smart labelling

As it can be seen in figure 3, consumers agree that all relevant information -understood as any relevant information that helps determine quality - should be on the label. That information refers to the relevant intrinsic properties that determine quality. The quick response codes (3,63) and Internet use (2,22) score relatively low. Similarly, these consumers do not understand what the barcode means (4,19). Therefore, it would be necessary to improve the signalling and understanding of those codes or signals, and also to educate or guide the consumer and facilitate the use of new technologies. Of primary importance is to improve the usability of both the quick response (QR) codes and understanding of the barcodes.

**FIGURE 3.**Ranking of indicators to signal Traceability in the Smart Labelling (Average scores of traceability on 1-5 Likert Scale (N=295))



Source: Own elaboration

#### 4.2 Usefulness of smart labelling. Quality signaling, perceived risk and information processing

*Analysis of the measurement model*



Prior to analysing the relations we will briefly examine the measurement model. This required a confirmatory factor analysis for the purpose of corroborating both reliability and statistical validity. The first analysis revealed the need to remove several items from the proposed scales in order to measure credibility (credibility4;  $\lambda_{14}=-0,162$  and credibility3;  $\lambda_{13}=-0,270$ ) as well as one indicator of perceived quality (Calper2;  $\lambda_{22}=0,425$ ) and one indicator of Information Costs ( $\lambda_{61}=0,377$ ) as they had loadings with a value below the minimum required ( $t < 1,96$ ). Similarly the GFI = 0,876 (below 0,90) and the RMSEA = 0,133 (above 0,08) offer values that do not comply with the necessary requirements. Having removed these indicators, the results showed an appropriate specification of the proposed factorial structure (table3). In fact, Chi-square  $\chi^2$  improves significantly given that the value decreases ( $\chi^2=595,1$ ;  $df= 142$ ;  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ) and the goodness of fit indicators improves - GFI =0,92 and CFI=0,92-. Finally, the RMSEA (0,078) also improves as it decreases. Besides that, all of the indicators presented significant standardised lambda coefficients in excess of 0,50, which verifies the convergent validity of the scales. By the same token, the coefficients presented a good ratio with each of the underlying factors ( $R^2 > 0,3$ ). With regard to the analyses concerning reliability, the composite reliability coefficients and analysis of the variance extracted exceeded the suggested values of 0,6 (Anderson and Gerbin, 1988) and 0,5, respectively (Hair *et al.*, 2006). Similarly, the discriminating validity of the measurement model was also ratified by checking that none of the confidence intervals of the estimated correlations between each pair of dimensions contained the value 1. Finally, the quality indicators of the goodness of fit exceeded the established limits (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Hair *et al.*, 2006).

**TABLE 3.** Reliability and Validity of the constructs

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Reflective indicators (label)</b>	<b>Lambda</b>	<b>CR Composite Reliability (&gt;0,60)</b>	<b>AVE Average Variance Extracted (&gt; 0,5)</b>
<b>Credibility</b>	Credi1	0,573	0,66	0,504
	Credi2	0,824		
<b>Clarity</b>	Clarity1	0,573	0,85	0,667
	Clarity2	0,824		
	Clarity3	0,995		
<b>Usability</b>	Use1	0,694	0,76	0,52
	Use2	0,735		
	Use3	0,742		
<b>Perceived Quality</b>	Calper_1	0,714	0,66	0,503
	Calper_3	0,587		
<b>Perceived Risk</b>	Risk1	0,854	0,83	0,63
	Risk2	0,859		
	Risk3	0,640		
<b>Information Costs Saved</b>	Infocost2	0,775	0,78	0,64
	Infocost3	0,828		
<b>Utility</b>	Util1	0,686	0,76	0,52
	Util2	0,615		
	Util3	0,757		

Source: Author's own

As shown in table 4, the clarity of the signal ( $\beta_{23}=0,994$ ) is a fundamental variable as it has a notable influence on credibility. This reveals the importance of transparency in both reducing informative asymmetries as well as improving the consumer's perception. In fact, traceability can allow the transparency of markets (Van Riswijk and Frewer, 2012). As can be seen, in accordance with the signalling theory, the credibility of labelling improves the perception of quality ( $\beta_{34}=0,284$ ), reduces the perceived risk or likelihood of making a mistake in the purchase ( $\beta_{35}= -0,152$ ) and saves costs in seeking and processing information ( $\beta_{36}=0,521$ ).

In addition, the usability of the informative signal improves clarity ( $\beta_{12}=0,585$ ) of the signal. This is a very interesting finding, as in many cases the consumer does not fully understand that information (Giraud and Halawany, 2006) -e.g. barcode digits-. By improving the usability of the informative signal, the consumer is able to have a clear perception of attributes that are difficult to comprehend and to process (e.g. origin of the product or method of production). However, it has not been demonstrated that usability directly improve the credibility of the signal ( $\beta_{13} = 0,004$ ), but there is an indirect and positive effect between usability and credibility because credibility is enhanced by the clarity. The consumer, on being able to check the information of certain intrinsic attributes (e.g. product origin), feels more reliable and trustworthy (Vervecke and Ward, 2006). We can therefore state that the information provided is very reliable and credible.

Lastly, reducing the perceived risk ( $\beta_{57}= -0,120$ ), improving the perceived quality ( $\beta_{47}= 0,396$ ) and saving costs in seeking or processing information ( $\beta_{67}= 0,739$ ), provides utility to the consumer.

**TABLE 4.** Relationships between Clarity, Credibility, Usability and Perceived Quality, Perceived Risk and Saved information Costs

	Weight of Regression	p
Usability → Clarity**	$\beta_{12}=0,585$	0,01
Clarity → Credibility**	$\beta_{23}=0,994$	0,001
Usability → Credibility <sup>ns</sup>	$\beta_{13}=0,004$	0,770
Credibility → Perceived Quality**	$\beta_{34}=0,284$	0,01
3Credibility → 5Perceived Risk**	$\beta_{35}=-0,152$	0,053
3Credibility → 6Saved Information Costs**	$\beta_{36}=0,521$	0,033
4Perceived Quality → 7Utility**	$\beta_{47}=0,396$	0,01
5Perceived Risk → 7Utility**	$\beta_{57}=-0,120$	0,01
6Saved Costs → 7Utility**	$\beta_{67}=0,739$	0,01
$\chi^2 = 162.84$ ; $df = 60$ ; $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ CFI=0.96; GFI=0.92; NFI= 0.93; RMSEA=0.059 $R^2$ (Utility) = 0,77; $R^2$ (Perceived Risk) = 0,90; $R^2$ (Perceived Quality) = 0,18; $R^2$ (Info Costs) = 0,60; $R^2$ (Credibility) = 0,90		

Source: Author's own;

ns=not significant; \*\* significant ( $p < 0.05$ ); \* ( $p < 0.1$ )

## 5. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Below we set out the main implications obtained through the performance of this study.

### 5.1 Improve the signage through the labelling of relevant intrinsic properties

We need to improve the signage of the relevant intrinsic properties, especially those which the end consumer finds difficult to perceive (Van Riswijk and Frewer, 2008) -i.e. specific origin, family or specie, level of freshness, method of capture, etc. -. The aim is to favour and simplify the end-consumer's task of looking for

and processing information. This can be achieved through the design of codes or well-known symbols that the end consumer can easily remember.

## **5.2 Guaranteeing those intrinsic properties: Control and monitoring throughout the chain**

It is essential to control the quality of products to ensure that those intrinsic properties satisfy the quality standards set by experts. Viz., we must ensure that the origin, species, freshness, etc. to satisfy the standards established by experts. As we could see, most consumers are demanding the introduction of traceability systems. However, they are not willing to pay a price premium. In fact, they believe that the extra price payable should be assumed by the food chain agents. Only a small percentage of consumers (27,9%) would pay it. In most cases, this extra price would not exceed €0,50. In addition to there being few consumers willing to pay the extra price, the price premiums are low (Wang et al., 2009). This data reveals a challenge for the sector, viz., the need to collaborate and to share information.

By the same token, majority of consumers are unfamiliar with what the barcode or the rapid response code (QR code) means. Therefore, it would be necessary to educate the consumer and facilitate the use of new technologies. This fact reveals that it would be advisable to give information on the meaning of such codes or indicators. A further implication that we have seen, and which is also consistent with the results already remarked upon, is that many consumers favour a distinctive symbol that guarantees the validity of the label information. This same result is backed by prior research (Giraud and Halawany, 2006).

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

The most relevant informative signals the consumer uses in the purchase process may be intrinsic or extrinsic. In the purchase process, smart labelling is an informative signal that is acquiring huge relevance and interest. However, use of this is still incipient because of insufficient transparency, the difficulty in understanding this information and the reduced usability. As we have already seen, most of these issues would enable the utility for the end consumer to improve notably. We set out the main conclusions of the study below.

### *Demand for greater quality guarantees*

Most consumers are demanding greater quality guarantees. However, they are not willing to pay a premium price. In fact, they believe that the extra price payable should be assumed by the food chain agents. Only a small percentage of consumers would pay it. In most cases, this extra price would not exceed €0.50. Similar results could be demonstrated by other studies (Wang et al., 2009).

### *Greater informative transparency*

The clarity of the informative signal improves the consumer's perception and helps make the entire information processing more credible. We need to improve the signalling of the relevant intrinsic properties that are difficult to the end consumer to perceive (e.g. specific origin, family or species, health claim or level of freshness). The aim is to favour and simplify the end-consumer's task of looking for and processing information. We can achieve this through the design of codes or well-known signs that the end consumer can easily remember.

### *Monitoring of the supply chain through a quick and efficient control mechanism*

As well as improving the clarity of the informative signal, this signal has to be credible. It is therefore essential to control the quality of products to ensure that those intrinsic properties satisfy the quality standards set by experts. Viz., we must ensure that the origin, species, freshness, etc., satisfy the standards established by experts. Independent agencies must carry out this control through quick and efficient control mechanisms. In fact, a quick response must be provided that enables verification -at the time of the check- of whether those informative signals are correct.

## **7. FURTHER RESEARCH**

The conclusions drawn by the study are interesting, as they reveal how we can improve the understanding of informative signals to enhance the perception of quality and reduce the risk and the cost of processing information in imperfect markets. The next step would involve experimentally testing how to improve the usability of smart labelling (e.g. to stimulate the use of quick response codes) and of the information available to the user in a real setting.

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# ENVIRONMENTAL AROUSAL AND SHOPPERS' MOODS: EFFECTS ON SHOPPING BEHAVIOR

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper aims to demonstrate how both valence and arousal of incidental moods can moderate the relationship between the level of excitement triggered by a mall environment and shopping behavior. We follow the mood regulation theory together with Mano's (1999) cautions to establish our theoretical framework. Our method is based on a 4x2 between subjects experiment with a sample of 377 Spanish undergraduates. Our findings support the mood regulation theory for positive low-arousal individuals, while reject this theory for negative low-arousal shoppers. Additionally, Mano's (1999) cautions are confirmed for high-arousal shoppers. We suggest that mall managers should include relaxing atmospheric zones in order to improve customers' welfare and shopping behavior, as well as reduce the number of exciting elements.*

## Keywords:

*Shopping behavior, atmospherics, incidental moods, shopping malls, mood regulation theory.*

## 1. Introduction.

Shopping is an activity where people do not only take into account utilitarian aspects of products or services, but also they want to be entertained, stimulated and emotionally affected (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982; Nicolao et al. 2009). In response to this fact, mall managers are centered on managing customers' feelings, emotions and affective states (Naylor et al. 2008). They have often created exciting environments to encourage shopping behavior. However, the assumption that an exciting environment encourages shopping at malls might not be stable, and might depend on customer's characteristics and situational variables.

Academicicians have widely demonstrated the effect of mood during the retail experience on strategic variables such as monetary spending (Furnham and Milner, 2013), time perceptions (Ursavas and Hesapci-Sanaktekin, 2013), memory (Arnold and Reynolds, 2009), unplanned purchases (Atalay and Meloy, 2011), variety seeking (Chien-Huang and Hung-Chou), and product choice (Fedorikhin and Patrick, 2010). Furthermore, previous research has analyzed the effect of store atmospheric characteristics on shoppers' affective responses and subsequent behaviors (Bitner, 1992; Lin and Mattila, 2010; Baker and Wakefield, 2012; Yim et al. 2012), and consider situational and consumer-related characteristics that can moderate the effects of store characteristics on shopping behavior (Kaltcheva and Wirtz, 2006; Massara et al. 2010). Among these situational variables, consumers' incidental pre-existing moods can play a significant role. This paper focuses on two dimensions of moods, valence and arousal that have been proved to have the most important effect on consumer behavior. Thus, although mall managers have focused on creating exciting environments, this excitement may not always have the same effect on shopping behavior, as this relationship might be moderated by incidental moods (Mano, 1999; Mattila and Wirtz, 2001). So, how can differences in incidental mood lead to different perceptions, and subsequently different behaviors?

To address this question, our research seeks to demonstrate how both valence and arousal of incidental moods can moderate the relationship between the level of excitement triggered by a mall environment and shopping outcomes. Our methodology is based on an experiment carried out in a laboratory setting, where 446 students from a North-eastern Spanish university participated. To do so, we induced four discrete affective states that differed in valence and arousal. Afterwards, respondents were exposed to one of two laboratory mall environmental sceneries (low vs. high arousing atmospheres), and finally, asked to report their shopping behavior.

The contribution of this paper to marketing literature is twofold. First, we demonstrate that both valence and arousal of incidental moods moderate the relationship between the level of excitement triggered by a mall environment and shopping behavior. Second, we extend the mood regulation theory to explain shopping behavior in an exciting (vs. non-exciting) mall environment for shoppers in low-arousal moods.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. The next section reviews the theoretical background existent in the literature about environment and shopping behavior, as well as incidental moods. The third section presents our hypotheses to be tested. Afterwards, we will explain the experiment that will serve to test these hypotheses. In the fourth section our results will be presented. Finally, we will discuss our results highlighting our main conclusions, as well as pointing out interesting managerial implications, and possible future lines of research.

## 2. Theoretical background.

### 2.1. *Atmospherics and shopping behavior.*

A vast body of research has demonstrated that store environmental factors play a critical role on shopping behavior, through both cognitive and affective processes. Specifically, affective states have acquired an important role in the path by which these environmental cues affect consumer behavior. Most research has treated these feeling states as consequences of atmospheric factors or mediators between environment and behavioral outcomes, such as propensity to buy (Turley and Milliman, 2000), time spent on the visit (Spies et al. 1997), money spent (Sherman et al. 1997), patronage intentions (Baker et al. 2002; Wakefield and Baker, 1998), satisfaction (Babin et al. 2003), store

attitude (Yoo et al. 1998), and loyalty (Bigné et al. 2008). This previous research has focused on the effects of pleasant environments on shopping behavior. Differences among them are based on the number of atmospheric variables analyzed. While some articles have focused on one or a few atmospheric variables, others have collected the general effects of an environmental setting on consumer behavior. For example, Spies, Hesse and Loesch (1997) chose two different store layouts with different levels of pleasantness. Their results confirmed that pleasant environments led to more satisfaction and more money spent in the store. In contrast, Bigné, Andreu, Chumpitaz, and Swaen (2005) studied the shopping experience at a mall. They found that ambience factors, such as illumination, decor, accessibility cleanness and temperature affected satisfaction through positive emotions.

Whilst the effects of pleasant environments are stable in the literature, the effects of exciting atmospheric variables are less consistent (Massara et al. 2010; Morrison et al. 2011). Sherman, Mathur and Smith (1997) found that an exciting environment increased money and time spent, and the number of items purchased. Donovan and Rossiter (1982) found that arousal triggered by the environment had a positive influence on shopping behavior only in pleasant retail environments. Chebat and Michon (2003) reported that a light and pleasant ambient scent arouses (or excites) consumers. These contradictions made Kaltcheva and Weitz (2006) include motivational orientations in the relationship between the excitement triggered by the mall atmosphere and shoppers' pleasure, finding a moderating effect. Thus, an exciting environment had a positive effect on shopping behavior for those with a task-oriented goal, but a negative impact for those with a recreational-oriented objective. Additionally, Massara, Liu, and Melara (2010) found that the level of excitement elicited by a virtual store environment led to a better shopping behavior only if it matched the consumer's expectations. Our study tries to demonstrate how moods can play a moderating role between the mall atmospheric excitement and shopping behavior (SB). To do so, we will differentiate between a high arousing atmosphere (HAA) and a low arousing atmosphere (LAA) in terms of light, colors and crowding density. This categorization has been used in previous research (Pan and Siemens, 2012; Wansik and Van Ittersum, 2012).

## ***2.2. Incidental moods and shopping behavior.***

Gardner and Vandersteel (1984, advances in consumer research) defined mood as "*a mild, transient, pervasive feeling state*". As this research delves into the feeling state that a person can live previously to the purchase experience and with relative stability over time, we focus on pre-existing moods (Luong, 2005; Pollai et al. 2010), and specifically on incidental mood, that it is originated from external factors unrelated to the shopping experience with no specifiable causes (Garg et al. 2005; Pocheptsova and Novemsky, 2010).

The most common argument that is present in previous research on retailing is that positive incidental moods lead to approach behaviors, such as propensity to buy, time spent at the store or intentions to return, and negative incidental mood entails avoidance behaviors and more negative evaluations of environmental cues (Andrade, 2005; Donovan and Rossiter, 1982; Donovan et al. 1994; Keltner et al. 1993). Accordingly, Forgas (1991) recognizes that positive moods lead people to make decisions more quickly, to use less information, to be more confident of their decisions and to be more heuristic-systematic evaluators. Clore, Wyer, Dienes, Gasper, Gohm, and Isbell (2001) suggested that those in a bad mood are more flexible and more easily adaptable to the environment. This circumstance enhanced approach behaviors.

Marketing literature has often distinguished several types of incidental moods depending on two dimensions: valence and arousal. The traditional view of mood has focused on valence differentiation, positive versus negative mood (Watson et al. 1988; Maier et al. 2012). However, Tellegen (1985) argued that mood is also characterized by intensity. Intensity of affective states is a function of arousal and the control that a person can execute on his or her feelings (Bagozzi, 1999). Mehrabian and Russell (1974) defined arousal as "*the subjective experience of energy mobilization, which can be conceptualized as an affective dimension ranging from sleepy to frantic excitement*". Mano (1999) stated that differences in arousal in shoppers' negative emotions can lead to different evaluations of environmental cues in a retail setting. More recent research has demonstrated that two different



affective states with the same valence can drive different judgments and decisions (Raghunathan et al. 2006; Kim et al. 2010; Di Muro and Murray, 2012). For example, Kim et al. (2010) demonstrated that consumers in a positive mood but with different level of arousal (excitement vs. peacefulness) made different choices between two vacational options. Excited consumers evaluated more favorably an adventurous vacation, while peaceful individuals preferred the serene vacation. Raghunathan et al. (2006) achieved similar conclusions with participants in two negative moods, anxiety and sadness.

As a consequence, this paper will distinguish among four types of incidental pre-existing mood as a function of two dimensions, valence and arousal. Individuals will be able to feel positive high-arousal mood (PHA), which is related to enthusiasm, elation and excitement; positive low-arousal mood (PLA), characterized by feelings of calmness and peacefulness; negative high-arousal mood (NHA), which reflects a state of distress and nervousness; and negative low-arousal mood (NLA), which is related to sadness and boredom.

### **3. Hypothesis development.**

Incidental moods can influence perceptions of environmental cues and act as moderators of the shopping experience (Swinyard, 1993; De Rojas and Camarero, 2008; Morrison et al. 2011). Thus, we propose that incidental pre-existing moods moderate the relationship between an exciting (or arousing) atmosphere and approach behaviors. The development of our hypotheses puts down its roots into the mood regulation theory.

Mood regulation theory posits two basic assumptions: (1) people are motivated to maintain positive moods, and (2) people are motivated to mitigate negative affective states (Isen, 1987; Andrade, 2005; Kim et al. 2010; Di Muro and Murray, 2012). Prior research applied this theory to study the role of mood valence on shopping behavior (Arnold and Reynolds, 2009; Meloy, 2000; Zillman et al. 1980). For example, Meloy (2000) demonstrated that consumers in a pleasant mood preferred to maintain their good mood even though the option taken lead them to a poor choice. Additionally, Zillman et al. (1980) among others found that consumers preferred a TV show that offered them relief from negative affective experiences. Kim et al. (2010) and Raghunathan et al. (2006) suggested, and Di Muro and Murray (2012) demonstrated that the same mechanism may underlie the effects of mood arousal on decision making. The later authors showed that consumers misattributed the affect they were feeling toward products that they perceived as representative of those feelings. Thus, if consumers are in a positive high-arousal mood (e.g. enthusiasm) they will prefer arousing products, as they are encouraged to maintain their positive high-arousal feeling state. Equally, when a consumer is experiencing a positive low-arousal mood (e.g. relaxation), he or she will find that a low level of arousal is pleasant and, therefore, prefer a product that offers low arousal. However, consumers in a negative mood will want to change their actual state of arousal according to mood regulation theory. Those with an unpleasant low-arousal mood (e.g. boredom) will perceive this feeling state as unpleasant and they will prefer high-arousing products that could help them to change their affective state. The same but inverse reasoning can be applied to consumers in a negative high-arousal affective state.

We can extrapolate this argumentation to the retail setting. However, we must be cautious and only apply this theory to low-arousal shoppers, since high-arousal shoppers' behavior seems to be guided by other reasoning. For shoppers in a positive low-arousal mood, an arousing environment will trigger a state of discomfort and will make them show a less favorable behavior. On the other hand, shoppers in a negative low-arousal mood will be more comfortable and pleased in an environment that could help them to change this feeling state, what subsequently will lead them to approach behaviors. So that, we state the following hypotheses:

H1: The level of atmospheric arousal will have a positive effect on shopping behavior for shoppers in a negative low-arousal mood.

H2: The level of atmospheric arousal will have a negative effect on shopping behavior for shoppers in a positive low-arousal mood.

Regarding high-arousal shoppers, our reasoning disentangles the mood regulation theory and follows the argument of Mano's (1999) work. According to this work, affective states characterized by higher arousal restrict attentional capacity. Additionally, more previously aroused individuals tend to simplify their decisions by focusing on fewer and more remarkable attributes, and exhibit reduced ad recall (Griskevicius et al. 2010). This reduced cognitive elaboration could prevent high-arousal consumers from being able to accurately evaluate shopping experience. Since both negative and positive high arousal shoppers will show a lower discrimination between the two retail settings (high vs. low arousing environments), both of them will not present differences between these two environments. As a consequence, our third hypothesis states as follows:

H3: The level of atmospheric arousal will have no effect on shopping behavior for a) shoppers in a positive high-arousal mood and b) shoppers in a negative high-arousal mood.

Additionally, we have included gender and frequency of visit as control variables. According to previous research, a better shopping behavior is expected within women compared to men due to cultural reasons, since women are considered the principal agents involved in shopping in our society (Grewal et al. 2003; Kuruvilla et al. 2009). Additionally, more frequent shoppers will show a better behavior, since the more they go shopping, the more they like it (Johnson and Mathews, 1997).

## 4. Method.

### 4.1. Participants, design, and procedure.

We conducted a 4 (incidental mood: PHA, PLA, NHA, vs. NLA) x 2 (HAA vs. LAA) between-subjects experiment during November 2013. 446 undergraduate students from a North-eastern Spanish University participated in the study. After a depuration process, 380 questionnaires were valid. The 61.6 % were women and the medium age was 21.05. The 82.9% of them goes to the shopping center at least once a month. As an incentive, they took part in a raffle of a 60 Euros coupon to spend in a well-known Spanish department store.

Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the four mood conditions. The experiment had two different stages: mood induction and manipulation of arousal. The experimenter informed participants that they would be asked to complete several unrelated tasks. The tasks were presented in a document consisted of three different pages. Participants were given instructions of doing each task separately and were informed about the impossibility of going back once they had completed each one.

#### - Mood induction.

Participants were first asked to put a set of 10 words in alphabetical order with the aim to remove any mood differences due to extraneous factors (Wegener et al. 1995). Mood induction was achieved through two techniques, video exposure and descriptions of past life experiences. Both of them have been previously followed in marketing research (Kim et al. 2010; Puccinelli, 2007). First, they were exposed to a video that evoked the corresponding mood state. We based the choice of the induction videos on previous literature (Zwosta et al. 2013). In order to induce a positive high-arousal mood, participants were exposed to a video that displayed several sportspersons and athletes from the Olympic Games with the song "We are the champions". The positive low-arousal mood was induced by a video that showed several landscapes with a relaxing background music. The negative high-arousal condition was achieved by displaying a fragment of the film "Buried". Finally, a video with repetitive images of the ancient videogame "Pong" served to induce a negative low-arousal mood. All the videos had a last between 2.50 and 3.50 minutes.

After the video exposure, participants completed a manipulation task following Bless et al. (1996). They were asked to list three life experiences that had made them feel the correspondent mood state and then to provide a detailed written description of one of those experiences. In the positive high-arousal condition, we asked them to remember three life experiences that evoked feelings of enthusiasm, excitement, and joy, while we defined the positive low-arousal experience with the words calmness, serenity, and peacefulness. The negative high-arousal experience was defined by distress, affliction, and anxiety, and the negative low-arousal one by the feelings of boredom, laziness, and

apathy. We encouraged participants to describe the event in such a way that a person who read it might experience the same sensation. Once the participants had written their task, they were asked to indicate how they were feeling on a seven-point scale.

- *Manipulation of atmospheric arousal.*

After the induction task, the participants were randomly exposed to one of two pictures depicting an arousing or a non-arousing environment at a mall. The variables that can be relevant for differences in the level of arousal triggered by a mall atmosphere are three: lighting, perceived crowding and colors. Lighting has demonstrated to be one of the most important environmental variables that influence consumer behavior in shopping environments, and prior research has found that brighter compared to softer lights triggered more arousal (Summers and Herbert, 2001; Wansik and Van Ittersum, 2012). Retail crowding arises as a consequence of spatial, social and psychological factors related to the scarcity of space (Stokols, 1972; Van Rompay et al. 2012). Recent research has demonstrated that a moderate crowd ambient at the mall is arousing, whilst a non-arousing scenery is that in which a few people are present (Pan and Siemenes, 2011). Finally, colors have demonstrated to be a very important variable arising arousal that has interrelated effect with lighting level. Specifically, warmer colors and higher color saturation increase arousal (Valdez and Mehrabian, 1994; Kaltcheva and Weitz, 2006).

To sum up, bright lights, moderate crowding, and warmer and higher saturation colors are present in the arousing condition, whilst soft lights, minimum levels of crowding, and cooler and less saturations colors form the non-arousing environment in our study. After having seen the image, participants were asked about the level of arousal that the image triggered, and about their shopping behavior.

#### **4.2. Pre-test.**

In order to determine if the videos and the images effectively evoked the feelings they were supposed to trigger, we conducted a pre-test with 80 participants (53 were women and the medium age was 22.23) that evaluated the videos and the photographs. They rated the degree to which each video evoked the corresponding feeling states on a seven-point scale (1="I am not feeling this mood state at all", 7="I am definitely feeling this mood state"). Additionally, we asked them to rate the level of arousal that the two images transmitted in terms of lighting, colors and crowding perceptions in a seven-point semantic differential scale. In each mood condition, results of ANOVA showed that the induction was successful. Thus, in the PHA condition, participants punctuated higher on feelings of enthusiasm, excitement and activation ( $F_{3,79}=26.407$ ,  $p<0.01$ , with  $\mu=5.409$ ). The same happened in the rest of the mood conditions: PLA ( $F_{3,78}=42.684$ ,  $p<0.01$ , with  $\mu=5.741$ ), NHA ( $F_{3,79}=34.659$ ,  $p<0.01$ , with  $\mu=4.56$ ), and NLA ( $F_{3,79}=17.265$ ,  $p<0.01$ , with  $\mu=5.038$ ). As well as mood conditions, the level of atmospheric excitement was clearly different between the HAA and the LAA images ( $F_{1,77}=118.436$ ,  $p<0.01$ , with  $\mu=5.388$  and  $\mu=2.925$  respectively).

#### **4.3. Measures.**

All the variables were measured by applying scales previously used in marketing literature. We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis and obtained acceptable levels of the Cronbach's Alpha for all these measures. Mood states were measured with seven point scales that ranged from (1) "definitely I do not feel this mood" to (7) "definitely I do feel this mood". Positive moods measures were based on Kim et al. (2010), while negative moods were measured with the scale proposed by Mano (1999). Positive high-arousal mood was built with four adjectives: excited, enthusiast, active, and lively ( $\alpha=0.864$ ); while tranquil, peaceful, serene, and calmed ( $\alpha=0.939$ ) were used to measure positive low-arousal mood. Negative high-arousal mood was measured with five adjectives: distressed, upset, nervous, anxious and distraught ( $\alpha=0.899$ ); and negative low-arousal mood by bored, tired, drowsy, sluggish and sleepy ( $\alpha=0.907$ ). Atmospheric arousal was measured by a seven-point semantic differential scale adapted from Kaltcheva and Weitz (2006). Thus, participants had to indicate what feeling transmitted the mall image: relax versus stimulation, calmness versus excitement, laziness versus frenzy, dull versus jittery, sleep versus activation, and pessimism versus liveliness ( $\alpha=0.867$ ). Finally, measures of the shopping behavior were based on the study of Donovan and Rossiter (1982), also used by Kaltcheva and Weitz (2006). They had to score on a seven-point

Likert scale, anchored by “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree”. The items were the following: “I would enjoy shopping in this mall”, “I would return to this mall”, “I would spend more time at this mall looking around or exploring this environment”, “I would be willing to buy things at this mall”, “This is a place where I might try to avoid other people, and avoid having to talk to them” (reversed), “I would be willing to recommend this mall to my friends”. The reversed item was eliminated, since its load on the construct of shopping behavior was very low, which allows us to get an accepted value of Cronbach’s Alpha for this construct ( $\alpha=0.904$ ). Regarding control variables, gender was a dichotomous variable (0/1) and frequency was a categorical variable with four categories: “I go to shopping malls less than once a month”, “I go to shopping malls once a month”, “I go to shopping malls between 2 and 4 times a month”, and “I go to shopping malls 5 or more times a month”.

**4.4. Manipulation checks.**

First, as a check of the effectiveness of the mood induction, the adjective-scale ratings of mood were examined. Table 1 shows the means of every mood state experienced by participants in each mood condition. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) yielded at  $p=0.05$  that participants in the PHA condition reported significantly higher positive high-arousal mood states ( $F_{3,373}=142.21, p<0.01$ ) compared to participants in the other mood conditions. Individuals in the PLA condition punctuated higher in the adjectives corresponding to the positive low-arousal mood state ( $F_{3,375}=195.23, p<0.01$ ), as it is the case in the NHA condition ( $F_{3,369}=156.69, p<0.01$ ), and in the NLA condition ( $F_{3,372}=109.23, p<0.01$ ).

Second, the level of arousal that mall images effectively triggered was assessed. Those subjects that were assigned to the high-arousing environment condition reported that their image significantly evoked higher atmospheric arousal ( $F_{1,374}=322.83, p<0.01$ ) than those who were exposed to the low-arousing mall setting as it can be seen in Table 2.

**TABLE 1.**  
**Mean adjective-scale ratings of induced mood (scale from 1 to 7).**

Incidental mood conditions	Positive valence				Negative valence			
	High-arousal		Low-arousal		High-arousal		Low-arousal	
	Mean	(SD)	Mean	(SD)	Mean	(SD)	Mean	(SD)
PHA	<b>5.186</b>	0.893	3.053	1.032	2.582	1.188	2.082	0.924
PLA	3.114	1.105	<b>5.769</b>	0.928	2.327	1.037	4.193	1.373
NHA	2.225	0.980	1.576	0.704	<b>4.638</b>	1.237	2.466	1.298
NLA	2.033	1.004	3.142	1.389	2.882	1.223	<b>5.321</b>	1.111

**TABLE 2.**  
**Mean differential semantic scale ratings for arousal (scale from 1 to 7).**

Atmospheric arousal conditions	Mean	SD
High-arousing atmosphere (HAA)	5.332	1.058
Low-arousing atmosphere (LAA)	3.373	1.056

**4. Findings.**

The hypotheses were tested using ANOVA. Table 3 shows the main and interaction effects of exogenous and control variables on shopping behavior (SB). The main effect of mood on SB is not significant, while the main effect of atmospheric arousal is statistically relevant ( $F_{1,377}=5.177, p<0.01$ ). As expected, we find a significant two-way interaction between moods and atmospheric arousal on shopping behavior ( $F_{3,377}=5.971, p<0.01$ ). Means of shopping behavior by experimental condition and results of ANOVA by mood condition are displayed in Table 5. Differences in consumer behavior are only significant for PLA individuals. As a consequence, H1 is rejected, since the effect of atmospheric arousal on shopping behavior is not significant for NLA individuals. In contrast, H2 is confirmed as

shopping behavior arises when atmospheric arousal decreases. In the case of PHA and NHA individuals, atmospheric arousal has no effect on shopping behavior, confirming H3a) and H3b). Figure 1 depicts these effects.

**TABLE 3.**  
**Results of ANOVA. Main and interaction effects of exogenous and control variables on SB.**

Source of variation	d.f.	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<i>Main effects</i>					
Mood	3	2.423	.808	.448	.719
AA	1	9.331	9.331	5.177	.024
Gender	1	1.862	1.862	1.033	.310
Frequency	3	28.299	9.433	5.234	.002
<i>Interaction effects</i>					
Mood * AA	3	32.288	10.763	5.971	.001
Mood * Gender	3	2.274	.758	.421	.738
Mood * Freq.	9	21.436	2.382	1.321	.225
AA * Gender	1	1.052	1.052	.584	.445
AA * Freq.	3	8.036	2.679	1.486	.218
Gender * Freq.	3	11.865	3.955	2.194	.089
Mood * AA * Gender	3	1.115	.372	.206	.892
Mood * AA * Freq.	9	15.869	1.763	.978	.458
Mood * Gender * Freq.	9	10.125	1.125	.624	.776
AA * Gender * Freq.	3	1.563	.521	.289	.833
Mood * AA * Gender * Freq.	9	13.102	1.456	.808	.609
Error	311	558.559	1.796		
Total	377	741.615			

\* AA: Atmospheric arousal; Freq: frequency.

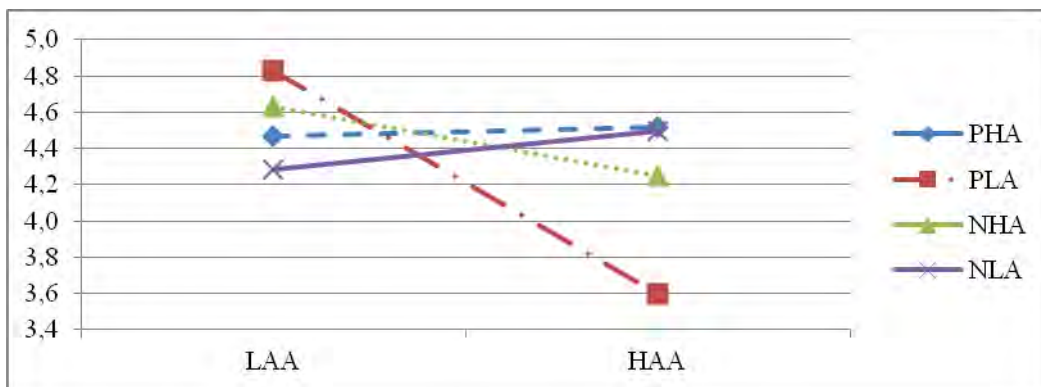
**TABLE 4.**  
**Mean and SD of SB (scale from 1 to 7) and significance of differences by condition.**

Incidental moods	Mall atmospheric arousal						ANOVA	
	HAA			LAA			F	Sig.
	N	Mean	(SD)	N	Mean	(SD)		
PHA	45	4.519	1.405	34	4.471	1.401	.023	.881
PLA	52	3.597	1.324	68	4.829	1.416	23.694	.000
NHA	53	4.248	1.432	45	4.630	1.247	1.940	.167
NLA	43	4.500	1.393	40	4.285	1.279	.751	.389

\* PHA: positive high-arousal mood; PLA: positive low-arousal mood; NHA: negative high-arousal mood; NLA: negative low-arousal mood; HAA: High-arousing atmosphere; LAA: Low-arousing atmosphere; SB: shopping behavior.

**FIGURE 1.**

**Two-way interaction of moods and atmospheric arousal on shopping behavior.**

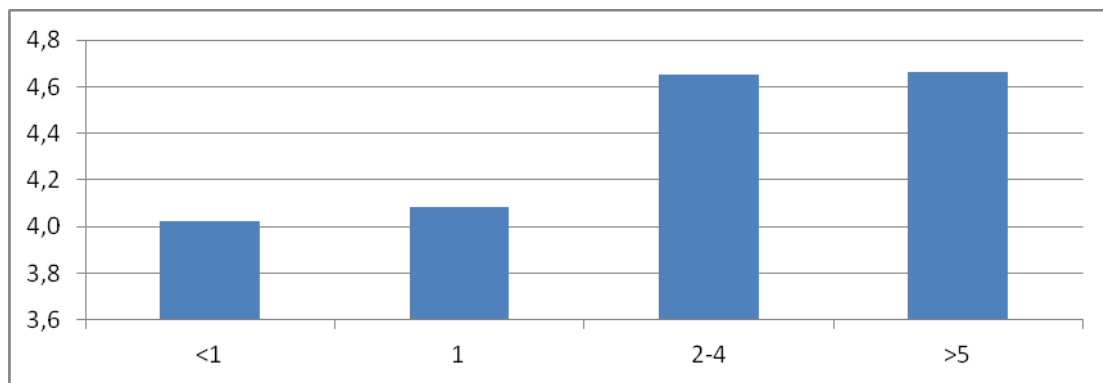


\* PHA: positive high-arousal mood; PLA: positive low-arousal mood; NHA: negative high-arousal mood; NLA: negative low-arousal mood; HAA: High-arousing atmosphere; LAA: Low-arousing atmosphere.

For control variables, only the main effect of frequency on shopping behavior is significant at 5% ( $F_{3,377}=5.234, p<0.05$ ). Particularly, those who visit the mall more than once a month (categories 3 and 4,  $\mu=4.649$  and  $\mu=4.662$  respectively) show a better behavior than the less frequent shoppers (categories 1, and 2,  $\mu=4.021$  and  $\mu=4.082$  respectively) as can be seen in Figure 2. Although the main effect of gender is not significant, the interaction between gender and frequency is significant at 10%. The results show that among those who visit shopping malls between 2 and 4 times a month, females have a better behavior than males ( $F_{1,141}=9.209, p<0.01, \mu=4.874$  and  $\mu=4.195$  respectively) as Figure 3 shows. Thus, for this group our expectations are fulfilled.

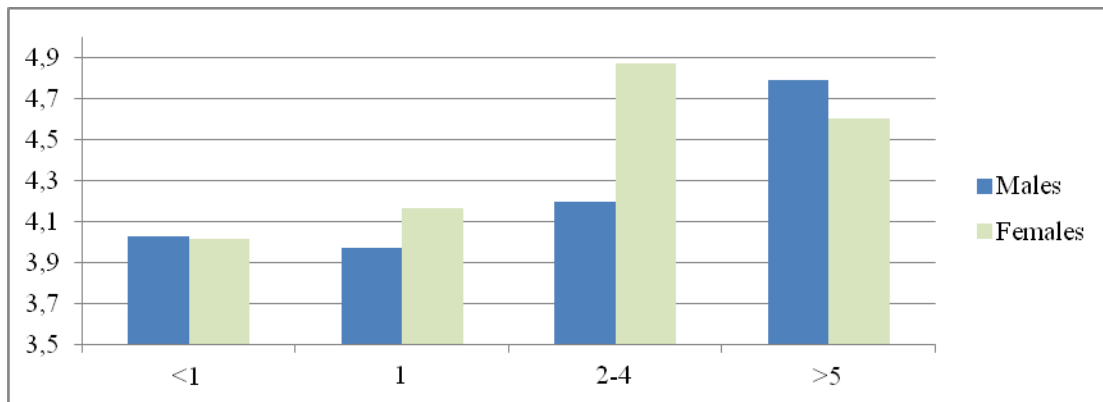
In relation to the rest of interaction effects, none of them are significant. No differences in shopping behavior are found in terms of gender or frequency for each incidental mood and any of these control variables moderate the relationship between mall atmospherics and shopping behavior.

**FIGURE 2.**  
**Shopping behavior (mean) by category of frequency of visit (times a month).**



**FIGURE 3.**

**Two-way interaction of frequency (times a month) and gender on shopping behavior (mean).**



## 5. Discussion, managerial implications, and further research.

Our research aims to demonstrate that the effects of an exciting (or arousing) mall atmosphere on shopping behavior are moderated by valence and arousal of incidental moods. To achieve our goals we have carried out an experiment using a sample of 380 students. Our theoretical framework is based on mood regulation theory for low-arousal shoppers, while Mano's (1999) work is followed to conceptualize the effects of mall atmospherics on shopping behavior for high-arousal shoppers. Our analysis demonstrates that the excitement triggered by a mall atmosphere worsens shopping behavior for shoppers in a positive low-arousal mood. This finding is consistent with the mood regulation theory (Isen, 1987). Thus, relaxed, calmed or serene shoppers prefer a non-exciting atmosphere to maintain their quiet, peaceful and pleased mood state. The discomfort when approaching an arousing

environment leads them to a worse shopping behavior. In contrast, for shoppers in a negative-low arousal mood, our results show a positive relationship between the level of atmospheric arousal and shopping behavior. This is consistent with the idea supported by the mood regulation theory and confirms previous research (Korpela, 2003; Mano, 1999; Wirtz et al. 2001). However, although an improvement in the approach behavior is found in this kind of shoppers, this change is not significant.

Regarding positive and negative high-arousal shoppers, the direction of the effects is consistent with mood regulation theory. Positive high-arousal shoppers' behavior slightly improves in an exciting environment while the influence of this environment is negative for negative high-arousal shoppers. Nonetheless, since these effects are not significant, mood regulation theory is rejected for both groups, confirming our expectations. Enthusiastic and joyful people, as well as anxious or nervous shoppers, are not influenced by the level of atmospheric arousal.

Two control variables were included in the model: gender and frequency of visit. Our results suggest that shoppers show a better shopping behavior than infrequent shoppers. This finding supports previous research that argues that the more the frequency of executing an activity or purchasing a product, the more they like it (Johnson and Mathews, 1997). As frequency of visit to malls rises, shopping behavior improves. This result is consistent with the findings of previous research that relates frequency with motivations, as they found that more frequent shoppers are guided more by hedonic and social value what implies to stay longer at the mall or having a better experience, whilst infrequent shoppers are guided by utilitarian values (Reynolds et al., 2002; Roy, 1994). Our study not only analyzes the main effect of this variable on shopping behavior but also its interaction effect with other exogenous variables. Previous research has suggested that less frequent shoppers give less importance to mall atmospheric cues, while frequent shoppers tend to be more bothered by odors and decoration (Ruiz et al., 2004). However, our findings have not found a significant effect of the interaction effect between frequency and atmospheric arousal. A possible explanation for our finding may be that we have just provided an image of the mall, so odors and music are not taken into consideration. Therefore, further research is needed to better know the influence of frequency. In contrast to our expectations, the main effect of gender on shopping behavior is not significant. This contradicts previous studies that have found that women show a better shopping behavior than men (Grewal et al., 2003; Kuruvilla et al., 2009). This traditional point of view is only confirmed for medium frequent shoppers. Our results suggest that men require going shopping very frequently in order to show a significant positive shopping behavior.

Our paper contributes to the consumer behavior research and the retailing literature by analyzing the moderating role of both valence and arousal of incidental moods in the relationship between atmospheric arousal and shopping behavior. We expand the stream of research followed by Kaltcheva and Wirtz (2006) and Massara et al. (2010), since these authors identified shopping orientation and expectations as situational moderators. Our results for shoppers in negative moods are similar to Mano's (1999) conclusions. However he differentiated between a favorable and an unfavorable environment, while we differentiate between a high-arousing and a low-arousing mall environment. Additionally, we contribute by demonstrating that differences in arousal within shoppers in a negative mood do not lead to different behaviors. For shoppers in positive moods, differences in arousal have previously demonstrated that lead to different product choices (Di Muro and Murray, 2012; Kim et al. 2010), but have not been addressed in the context of the retail environment and its effects on shopping behavior. Thus, our paper shows that an exciting environment may have a negative effect on shopping behavior for shopper in positive low arousal moods, while the effects are not significant for shoppers in a positive high-arousal mood.

### ***5.1. Managerial implications.***

Important managerial implications can be provided from our findings. Firstly, mall managers should be careful with the level of excitement that they try to create by designing environmental cues. This excitement may worsen shopping behavior for relaxed, peaceful, and serene shoppers. So managers should differentiate some zones of the mall depending on the visitors' mood, making relaxing atmosphere zones inside of the mall. Secondly, if they are not able to modify the excitement level of the mall atmosphere, they should encourage positive high-arousal moods among shoppers that

are in a positive low-arousal mood previous to the shopping activity. That is, they should try to change relaxation, peacefulness and calmness into enthusiasm, joy and positive activism. Thus, the level of excitement would not worsen behavior for those shoppers. Thirdly, although according to our results, it is not necessary to worry about shoppers in negative moods, we should get positive feelings to improve their welfare.

### **5.2. Limitations and further research.**

We must acknowledge several limitations in our investigation that represent opportunities for further research. Firstly, our study has been carried out in a laboratory setting with a sample formed by students. So, field research could make our conclusions more reliable and generalizable. Secondly, we focus on mood states as moderators of the effect of atmospheric arousal on shopping behavior, but we do not consider the different sources of those moods. Further research should address this question and try to identify how to influence on shopping behavior taking into account mood states. Finally, our study looks into shopping activity at malls, but other retail settings could also be interesting and moods can differently moderate the effect of their environmental cues on shopping behavior.

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# LA INFLUENCIA PARENTAL EN LOS NIVELES DE ETNOCENTRISMO REGIONAL DE LOS JÓVENES EXTREMEÑOS: UN ANÁLISIS EXPLORATORIO

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## RESUMEN

*Este trabajo estudia la influencia de los padres en los niveles de etnocentrismo regional de sus hijos a través del planteamiento y contrastación de un modelo en el que la identidad regional y los niveles de etnocentrismo regional de los padres son considerados posibles antecedentes del etnocentrismo de los hijos, junto con otras variables como la percepción sobre la situación financiera particular y el estado de la economía o el sexo del individuo.*

*Los resultados, basados en 197 triadas formadas por consumidores jóvenes extremeños y sus padres, muestran que, a pesar de que los niveles de etnocentrismo de los jóvenes son relativamente bajos, la influencia de los padres es muy significativa y, en todo caso, muy superior al efecto de otras variables. El análisis exploratorio realizado apoya el supuesto de que el etnocentrismo del consumidor es una tendencia general adquirida durante la infancia, por medio del proceso de socialización.*

## Palabras clave:

Etnocentrismo regional del consumidor, consumidores extremeños, influencia parental, grupos de referencia

## 1. Introducción

Tanto en el ámbito empresarial como en el académico ha habido siempre un gran interés por conocer los factores relacionados con la elección de los consumidores entre productos de distinto origen, pero ese interés se ha centrado durante décadas en el estudio de los factores que determinaban la preferencia de los consumidores por los productos nacionales frente a los extranjeros. El estudio de la demanda de productos locales o regionales es mucho más reciente y los trabajos en el ámbito del marketing son muy escasos, especialmente en el ámbito español. Una manifestación de que el tema objeto de estudio está en una fase inicial es la falta de una definición clara en la literatura de lo que se entiende por producto local o por producto regional.

Estudios recientes revelan que la tendencia hacia la compra de productos de alimentación con un origen cercano al consumidor (productos producidos en la misma región del consumidor o en un entorno próximo) va en aumento (Campbell, 2011), en parte motivada por la aparición en todo el mundo de grupos de consumo local, que buscan apoyar las economías locales frente a la competencia de grandes empresas globales. Ya sea porque a los productos con un origen cercano se les atribuyen una serie de características deseables por parte del consumidor (mayor calidad/mayor frescura), porque son un medio para impulsar la economía local, partiendo del apoyo a las normalmente pequeñas explotaciones locales, o porque comprando productos que han sido producidos a una distancia menor el impacto sobre el medio ambiente de las actividades de transporte es menos lesivo, en algunos países la tasa de productos locales y regionales sobre el total de productos de alimentación consumidos va en aumento. En definitiva, las motivaciones de compra de productos locales son una combinación de atributos privados y públicos (Bond *et al.*, 2008; Thilmany *et al.*, 2008) que cada vez preocupan más a los distribuidores, que están viendo en los cambios en el comportamiento de compra del consumidor una oportunidad. Así, varias cadenas de distribución norteamericanas, entre ellas el líder de la distribución a nivel mundial, Wal-Mart, han mostrado un gran interés por este segmento de mercado. Responsables de la empresa Mercadona, líder de la distribución de alimentación en España, han manifestado recientemente (Zafra, 2013) su intención de cambiar su estrategia con respecto a los productos frescos de alimentación, buscando un mayor abastecimiento de proveedores locales y regionales, ante la constatación de que el consumidor prefiere consumir productos locales, aunque su consumo no se extienda todo el año, que otros productos con un origen más lejano, a los que atribuye una menor calidad.

Si la investigación sobre el tema en otros países es bastante limitada, en España el estudio del consumo local o regional desde la perspectiva del marketing es prácticamente inexistente. Es necesario, por tanto, avanzar en el conocimiento de la importancia del origen del producto en la elección del consumidor y contribuir a la literatura sobre el origen del producto. Algunos autores como Samiee (2011) y Usunier (2011), que representan la corriente crítica, sostienen que la mayoría de los consumidores desconocen el origen de los productos y tienen poco interés por averiguarlo, y sugieren que el efecto del origen del producto se ha exagerado en las investigaciones de las últimas décadas. Sin embargo, para otros autores, el origen del producto sigue siendo muy relevante, tanto para las empresas como para los investigadores (Diamantopoulos *et al.*, 2011; Magnusson *et al.*, 2011 a, b).

Aunque la literatura sobre antecedentes del etnocentrismo del consumidor es bastante amplia, se basa en estudios empíricos realizados en un número elevado de países y considera múltiples variables, de su revisión puede concluirse un cierto sesgo hacia variables sociodemográficas, que son las más comúnmente analizadas: edad, sexo, nivel de estudios y nivel de ingresos (Caruana, 1996; Erdogan y Uzkuurt, 2010; Good y Huddleston, 1995; Kottasz y Bennet, 2006; Watson y Wright, 2000). Además, no hay evidencias claras sobre el efecto de algunas de estas variables. Así, algunos estudios encuentran una relación positiva de la edad en el etnocentrismo del consumidor (Crysochoidis *et al.*, 2007; Marín y Miquel, 1997); pero otros no observan relación significativa (Nijssen y Douglas, 2004; Saffu y Walker, 2005) e incluso un mismo

estudio encuentra resultados dispares en Turquía (relación positiva) y República Checa (ausencia de relación) (Balabanis *et al.*, 2001).

Otros antecedentes del etnocentrismo del consumidor menos estudiados en la literatura son el estado civil o el lugar de residencia (Caruana, 1996), el patriotismo (Klein y Ettenson, 1999; Sharma *et al.*, 1995), la apertura cultural y el colectivismo (Kottasz y Bennet, 2006; Sharma *et al.*, 1995), o el estilo de vida (Spillan *et al.*, 2007).

Hasta donde llega nuestro conocimiento, no se ha contrastado hasta la fecha la posible influencia parental en los niveles de etnocentrismo de los hijos, a pesar de que en uno de los primeros trabajos sobre el tema Shimp (1984) afirmaba que las tendencias etnocéntricas de un consumidor se derivan principalmente de sus experiencias de socialización, siendo la familia y, en menor medida, los líderes de opinión, compañeros y medios de comunicación los que influyen en la orientación etnocéntrica de un individuo desde la infancia.

Este trabajo pretende cubrir estos dos huecos en la literatura: por una parte, considerar un nivel regional de análisis (productos regionales frente a no regionales), que complete el nivel habitual (productos nacionales frente a extranjeros); por otra, estudiar uno de los antecedentes del etnocentrismo del consumidor menos estudiados, concretamente, la influencia de un grupo de referencia: los padres de los consumidores jóvenes.

La teoría que sirve de base a este trabajo es la teoría de la identidad social, que sostiene que los individuos tienden a clasificarse en grupos (grupos propios) que se diferencian de otros grupos de individuos (grupos ajenos). En la literatura esta teoría ha servido para explicar la elección del consumidor entre productos nacionales y extranjeros, asimilando que el grupo propio es el formado por los ciudadanos de un país, mientras que los grupos ajenos son los formados por ciudadanos de otros países. Los productos fabricados en el país del consumidor son considerados productos del grupo, mientras que los productos extranjeros son considerados productos ajenos (Tajfel, 1981; Verlegh, 1999). La tendencia natural de cada grupo es apoyar todo lo relacionado con el propio grupo, en detrimento de otros grupos.

Este trabajo se estructura como sigue. En primer lugar, se revisan las definiciones de producto local, regional o con un origen cercano que se han propuesto en los últimos años en la literatura y se resalta la ausencia de una definición universalmente aceptada de estos conceptos. En segundo lugar, se estudia la evolución del concepto de etnocentrismo, desde su concepción original hasta llegar a la de etnocentrismo regional, pasando por la de etnocentrismo del consumidor. En tercer lugar, se exponen algunos de los fundamentos de la teoría de la identidad social, en la que se asienta este trabajo. En cuarto lugar, se plantean las hipótesis del estudio a partir de la revisión de la literatura sobre antecedentes del etnocentrismo del consumidor. En quinto lugar, se presenta la metodología del estudio. En sexto lugar, se exponen los principales resultados del análisis empírico realizado. Por último, se resumen las principales conclusiones de este trabajo.

## **2. Definición de producto local o regional**

Thilmany *et al.* (2008) consideran que una manifestación de la importancia del movimiento “local food” es la elección del término *Locavores* en 2007 como la palabra del año por el New Oxford American Dictionary, que lo define como un residente local que trata de consumir alimentos producidos en un radio de 100 millas.

Sneed *et al.* (2012) recogen que, según el Congreso Americano, para que un producto agrícola se considere local la distancia total recorrida entre el origen del producto y el mercado debe ser inferior a 400 millas o estar comprendida en el estado de producción. Para Hand y Martínez (2010), esta definición es una manifestación de la dificultad de delimitar lo que es un producto local mediante criterios geográficos, especialmente en un país (EE.UU.) en el que algunos condados de los estados de la costa Oeste son más grandes que los estados de la costa Este.

Chambers *et al.* (2007) consideran que un producto de alimentación local es aquel producido y vendido en un radio máximo de 20-50 millas de distancia con respecto a la residencia del consumidor, aunque consideran que en la literatura académica y gubernamental (Reino Unido)

los productos locales de alimentación han sido descritos como aquellos cultivados y vendidos dentro de la misma región o condado (Edward-Jones *et al.*, 2008).

Algunos autores empiezan a cuestionar que las definiciones de producto local con criterios geográficos recojan adecuadamente las percepciones de los consumidores. Han y Martínez (2010) plantean que a los consumidores que buscan productos locales les preocupa cómo se elaboran los productos y quién los produce y apuntan dos elementos que completan el concepto de producto local: por una parte, los consumidores parecen estar buscando una interacción personal con los productores y, por lo tanto, persiguen reducir la distancia social producción-consumo más que la distancia geográfica; por otra, a los consumidores les preocupa la sostenibilidad medioambiental y social asociada a los métodos de producción y empiezan a manifestar su apoyo a las pequeñas explotaciones y las prácticas asociadas con el bienestar animal (Martínez *et al.*, 2010).

La literatura no ofrece una definición universal de producto local que pueda aplicarse a distintas regiones, empresas o consumidores y, además, los conceptos de producto local y producto regional son muy próximos. Sin embargo, conocer la percepción de lo que los consumidores entienden por producto local o regional puede ser fundamental para las empresas que quieren destacar en sus estrategias el origen cercano de los productos (Darby *et al.*, 2008).

### **3. Distintos niveles de etnocentrismo**

#### **3.1. Etnocentrismo**

El concepto de etnocentrismo del consumidor parte del término más general de etnocentrismo, que Sumner (1906, p.13) definió como “la visión de las cosas en la que el propio grupo es el centro de todo y los demás son valorados y clasificados con referencia a él...cada grupo alimenta su propio orgullo y vanidad, se jacta de ser superior, exalta sus propias virtudes y mira con desprecio a los foráneos”. Definiciones posteriores siguieron la misma línea al considerar el etnocentrismo como parte de la naturaleza humana (Lynn, 1976), un fenómeno universal profundamente enraizado en muchas relaciones intergrupos (Lewis, 1976), que no sólo se inscribe a nivel de nación, sino que se manifiesta en multitud de grupos sociales dando lugar a orgullo familiar, prejuicios religiosos, discriminación racial o patriotismo (Murdock, 1931).

La causa principal de que el etnocentrismo exista en las sociedades actuales es la tendencia a simplificar y generalizar sobre otras culturas. El etnocentrismo lleva a analizar el entorno desde la perspectiva del grupo del que se es parte y a aceptar ciegamente a las personas afines culturalmente, a la vez que se rechaza a aquellas personas con distintas culturas (Booth, 1979; Worchel y Cooper, 1979).

Para Howard (1996) el etnocentrismo tiene un carácter dual. Por una parte, el etnocentrismo es una fuerza positiva en el sentido en que proporciona al individuo un sentimiento de orgullo, bienestar y seguridad. Despreciar a otras culturas puede contribuir a aumentar los sentimientos patrióticos del grupo y considerar que el estilo de vida propio es superior. Por otra parte, en sentido negativo, el etnocentrismo es el factor que más puede inhibir el conocimiento de otras culturas y en su forma más acusada puede conducir al chovinismo, la creencia de que las costumbres y normas propias son automática e incuestionablemente superiores a las de otros.

El etnocentrismo ayuda a asegurar la supervivencia de los grupos y aumenta sus lazos de solidaridad, cooperación y lealtad (Shimp y Sharma, 1987). Levine y Campbell (1972) especificaron las propiedades del etnocentrismo; en concreto, consideraron que este concepto consistía en la tendencia a: (1) distinguir varios grupos; (2) percibir los sucesos en términos de los intereses económicos, políticos o sociales del propio grupo; (3) ver al propio grupo como el centro del universo y considerar su forma de vida superior a las demás; (4) sospechar de otros grupos y despreciarlos; (5) ver al propio grupo como superior, fuerte y honesto; y (6) ver a otros grupos como inferiores, débiles y causantes de problemas. Para Brislin (1993), las personas

etnocéntricas consideran el grupo como algo central porque aporta estándares de comportamiento adecuados y protección frente a posibles amenazas de los ajenos al grupo.

La descripción de etnocentrismo que se recoge en estos últimos párrafos y que refleja la posición dominante en la literatura está plagada de expresiones como: “mira con desprecio a los foráneos”, “se rechaza a aquellas personas con distintas culturas”, “sospechar de otros grupos y despreciarlos” o “ver a otros grupos como causantes de problemas”. Sin embargo, Cahsdan (2001), tras un estudio basado en una muestra intercultural de 286 sociedades (Murdock y White, 1969), concluye que etnocentrismo y xenofobia no van de la mano y que la lealtad intra-étnica no implica necesariamente hostilidad inter-étnica.

De manera similar, Adams (1951) cuestiona también que la hostilidad con otros grupos sea una consecuencia inevitable del etnocentrismo, como dan a entender otros estudios. Este autor considera necesario aclarar en su artículo la aparente confusión en la literatura entre dos conceptos distintos: conciencia de grupo y etnocentrismo.

La conciencia de grupo es lo que Murdock (1949, p. 83), equivocadamente para Adams, denomina etnocentrismo y que se refiere a la “tendencia a exaltar el propio grupo y despreciar a otros grupos” que lleva a “sentimientos antagonistas y comportamientos hostiles” como una consecuencia “inevitable de la solidaridad intra-grupo”. Esta conciencia de grupo surgiría, a juicio de Adams, del contacto cara a cara, diario y cubre todo el espectro, desde “orgullo local” hasta “conflicto internacional”, pasando por “espíritu corporativo”, “intolerancia religiosa” o “prejuicio racial”.

Sin embargo, para Adams (1951) el etnocentrismo es más lo que Herskovits (1948, p.68) describe como “el punto de vista por el que el modo de vida propio es preferido al de otros” y que es una consecuencia lógica del proceso de “enculturización temprana”. Este sentimiento de superioridad respecto al estilo de vida propio o a su cultura hace que un estadounidense pueda pensar, por ejemplo, que hace las cosas mejor, y de una manera más correcta y eficiente que un japonés o que un brasileño. Adquirir la propia cultura y estar condicionado a hacer las cosas de una determinada forma supone creer que hacer las cosas de otra forma es incorrecto o de mala educación. Para Adams (1951), este es el origen fundamental del sentimiento de etnocentrismo. El etnocentrismo, pero no la conciencia de grupo, es una característica humana y, por lo tanto, cultural.

### **3.2. Etnocentrismo del consumidor**

El concepto de etnocentrismo del consumidor fue planteado inicialmente por Shimp (1984) para recoger las percepciones de los consumidores estadounidenses acerca de la oferta de productos procedentes de otros países. Posteriormente, Shimp y Sharma (1987) y Sharma *et al.* (1995) utilizaron este término para referirse a las creencias de los consumidores acerca de lo adecuado y moral de adquirir productos hechos en el extranjero.

Desde la perspectiva de los consumidores etnocéntricos, “comprar productos importados es inadecuado porque se daña la economía nacional, genera pérdidas de puestos de trabajo y es muy poco patriótico; los productos de otros países son objeto de desprecio para los consumidores muy etnocéntricos” (Shimp y Sharma, 1987, p.280).

Shimp (1984) considera que las tendencias etnocéntricas de un consumidor se derivan principalmente de sus experiencias de socialización. La familia y, en menor medida, los líderes de opinión, compañeros y medios de comunicación influyen en la orientación etnocéntrica de un individuo desde la infancia

La literatura señala una serie de propiedades específicas del etnocentrismo del consumidor (Shankarmahesh, 2006; Sharma *et al.*, 1995; Shimp y Sharma, 1987): (1) Es una tendencia general, más que una actitud específica; (2) es el resultado del “amor y preocupación por el propio país y el temor a perder control sobre los propios intereses como resultado de los efectos perjudiciales de las importaciones sobre uno mismo y sobre los compatriotas” (Sharma *et al.*, 1995, p.27); (3) incluye una intención y disposición a no adquirir productos de otros países; (4) se refiere a un nivel personal (individual) de prejuicio negativo hacia las importaciones, si bien

el nivel global de etnocentrismo del consumidor en un determinado sistema social sería la agregación de los niveles individuales de tendencias etnocéntricas; (5) tiene una dimensión ética que indica que comprar productos importados es poco patriótico y una desconsideración con respecto a los compatriotas en paro; (6) es inelástico con respecto al precio y otros atributos del producto; (7) se supone que es adquirido desde la infancia por medio del proceso de socialización; (8) no afecta únicamente a productos de consumo, sino también a productos industriales.

### **3.3. Etnocentrismo regional del consumidor**

Aunque la investigación sobre etnocentrismo del consumidor se ha ceñido casi en exclusiva a la elección entre productos nacionales y extranjeros, también es posible encontrar en la literatura apoyos a la necesidad de considerar un nivel subnacional de análisis. Burger y Harris (1999) se basan en el estudio de catorce identidades sociales en Sudáfrica y encuentran una relación entre la identidad social del consumidor y la elección de productos propios. Para estos autores es fundamental considerar distintas identidades sociales en la investigación sobre los efectos país de origen, especialmente en mercados emergentes y economías en transición. Oullet (2007) plantea el concepto de etnocentrismo étnico, con antecedentes y consecuencias similares al etnocentrismo del consumidor introducido por Shimp y Sharma (1987) y medido mediante la CETSCALE. En este caso, el país es sustituido por el grupo étnico, de tal manera que el consumidor con etnocentrismo étnico valorará positivamente y mostrará una mayor disposición a comprar los productos de su grupo étnico frente a los productos de grupos ajenos. Sus resultados, basados en las respuestas de 954 consumidores estadounidenses, canadienses y franceses apoyan esta suposición. Otros estudios sobre etnocentrismo inter-étnico son los realizados por Vida *et al.* (2008) en Bosnia-Herzegovina y Poon *et al.* (2010) en Australia, que utilizan una versión reducida de la CETSCALE. En el primer caso, la identidad Bosnia, Serbia o Croata del consumidor tenía una influencia clara en los niveles de etnocentrismo y en la predisposición a adquirir productos nacionales. En el segundo, en el que se distinguieron tres grupos étnicos (australianos, inmigrantes occidentales e inmigrantes orientales), se observó que los inmigrantes orientales eran los menos etnocéntricos de los tres grupos considerados, que cuanto más tiempo llevasen en el país los inmigrantes, mayor era su nivel de etnocentrismo y que sólo en el caso de los inmigrantes occidentales el nivel de etnocentrismo de los hombres era significativamente mayor que el de las mujeres.

Otros niveles de análisis subnacional han sido más descuidados y podemos considerar que la investigación sobre la presencia de etnocentrismo regional es prácticamente inexistente, con la excepción de las aportaciones de Siemieniako *et al.* (2011) y Fernández-Ferrín y Bande-Vilela (2013). Siemieniako *et al.* (2011) sostienen que es importante considerar un nivel regional en el estudio del etnocentrismo del consumidor. Llevan a cabo un estudio preliminar, a partir de un análisis focal con 9 estudiantes polacos, en el que entre otros aspectos estudian si los estudiantes sienten una obligación moral de adquirir marcas locales de cervezas. Este trabajo reveló fuertes niveles de identidad regional y de etnocentrismo regional, así como una mayor preferencia por marcas locales.

A su vez, el análisis cuantitativo realizado por Fernández-Ferrín y Bande-Vilela (2013) basado en una muestra de 138 consumidores gallegos, obtenida a través de un muestreo bietápico (hogares e individuos) aleatorio, permitió comprobar que la escala de tendencias etnocéntricas del consumidor (CETSCALE), desarrollada por Shimp y Sharma (1987), tiene buenas propiedades psicométricas cuando se aplica a un nivel regional de análisis y que las tendencias etnocéntricas del consumidor influyen de manera significativa en sus intenciones de compra con respecto a los productos regionales y no regionales.

## **4. Teoría de la identidad social**

Según recogen Lantz y Loeb (1996), el “auto-concepto” se compone de dos aspectos: (1) la identidad personal, que se refiere a atributos específicos de un individuo como la competencia, el talento o la sociabilidad; y (2) la identidad social, que se deriva del conocimiento de



pertenencia al grupo, junto con el valor e importancia emocional de dicha pertenencia. Para los teóricos sociales la necesidad de mantener una autoestima positiva incluye una identidad personal y varias identidades sociales (Luhtenan y Crocker, 1992; Turner, 1982; Tajfel, 1981). Parece ser que existe una propensión a crear una identidad positiva a través de la identificación con varios grupos sociales, entre los cuales estarían la familia, la etnia o raza, los amigos o el propio país.

Un individuo puede mantener varias identidades sociales simultáneamente y para que una destaque sobre el resto la combinación de sus características personales y de la situación debe propiciar la “despersonalización” de la identidad personal. Según Lantz y Loeb (1998), esto ocurre cuando las diferencias entre individuos de un grupo social se minimizan y las diferencias entre grupos sociales se maximizan. La despersonalización está relacionada con el proceso de “auto-estereotipo”, en el que el individuo se ve a sí mismo como un elemento intercambiable de una determinada categoría social, más que alguien con una personalidad única. Es la identificación con el grupo la que provoca que el individuo haga continuamente comparaciones entre el grupo propio y los ajenos, especialmente en aquellos aspectos en los que el propio grupo sale bien parado (Shimp *et al.*, 2004).

Según Shimp *et al.* (2004) el autoconcepto de un individuo se basa en diferencias reales o percibidas (estereotipos) entre el propio grupo y los ajenos, que pueden influir en sus evaluaciones y comportamientos. Por ejemplo, un gallego podría compararse con un individuo de otra región y considerarse especialmente amante de su tierra, hospitalario u honrado. De acuerdo con la investigación sobre auto-categorización, el etnocentrismo es una de las posibles consecuencias de la despersonalización.

Dentro de las múltiples identidades sociales que puede presentar un individuo, Lantz y Loeb (1998) se centran en la identidad local y estudian su impacto en las tendencias etnocéntricas del consumidor y en su preferencia por la compra de productos locales. Para estos autores, la identidad local no tiene por qué desarrollarse de la misma forma que la identidad nacional. Gran parte de la investigación sobre identidad nacional tiene que ver con las tendencias etnocéntricas de los consumidores y, según Sumner (1906), el etnocentrismo se debe muchas veces a la existencia de una percepción de amenaza de otros grupos sociales y suele ser mayor en individuos con un patriotismo elevado. Sin embargo, no está claro que lo mismo ocurra cuando hablamos de identidad local y es que “es mucho más fácil sentirse amenazado por otro país que por otra ciudad dentro del mismo país” (Lantz y Loeb, 1998).

Estos autores sostienen que la percepción de una amenaza no es un elemento necesario para que se desarrolle una identidad local. Aunque la percepción de una amenaza procedente de otros municipios reforzaría esa identidad, sería suficiente con que un individuo manifestase sentimientos positivos que le impulsasen a distinguirse de individuos de otras localidades para que esa identidad local aflorase: “En términos de la teoría de la identidad social podría decirse que los consumidores tienen una identidad nacional. La identidad nacional puede ser fuerte en algunos consumidores y débil en otros. La CETSCALE, que se centra en la compra de productos, mide la manifestación económica de la identidad nacional” (Lantz y Loeb, 1996, p. 375).

Sin embargo, para Lantz y Loeb (1998), identidad local y etnocentrismo local son dos conceptos distintos, siendo el primero antecedente del segundo. La identidad local no necesita un incentivo económico para activarse, pero cuando ésta es fuerte, seguramente lleve a expresiones de apoyo a la economía local, particularmente por parte de los consumidores.

La teoría de la autocategorización sostiene que los individuos desean considerarse parte de grupos de los que tienen una imagen positiva. Por eso es de esperar que cuando un consumidor tenga una fuerte identidad local perciba los productos locales como de mayor calidad, incluso en ausencia de información objetiva que sustente esa valoración.

## **5. Antecedentes del etnocentrismo regional: la influencia parental**

Un nivel elevado de identidad con una categoría social lleva a tendencias etnocéntricas elevadas con esa categoría social (Lantz y Loeb, 1998). Dentro de las múltiples categorías sociales posibles, estos autores estudiaron la identidad local y su influencia en el comportamiento del consumidor, concretamente en las tendencias etnocéntricas y sus preferencias por los productos locales. Encontraron que la identificación de un individuo en su entorno local era un claro antecedente de su nivel de etnocentrismo y éste a su vez predecía su preferencia por los productos locales. Resultados similares fueron encontrados al estudiar consumidores turcos (Kaynak y Kara, 2000) y guatemaltecos (Spillan *et al.*, 2007). A nivel regional, Fernández-Ferrín y Bande-Vilela encontraron una relación positiva y significativa entre la identidad regional de una muestra de consumidores gallegos y sus niveles de etnocentrismo regional. Cabe esperar, basándose en las evidencias previas las siguientes hipótesis:

**H1a: La identidad regional de los padres influirá positivamente en sus niveles de etnocentrismo regional.**

**H1b: La identidad regional de las madres influirá positivamente en sus niveles de etnocentrismo regional.**

**H1c: La identidad regional de los hijos/as influirá positivamente en sus niveles de etnocentrismo regional.**

Según la teoría de la identidad social, la identidad personal y la identidad social de un individuo forman el auto-concepto y ambas son necesarias para que el individuo tenga una autoestima positiva. Además, es habitual que éste tenga varias identidades sociales (Luhtenan y Crocker, 1992; Turner, 1982; Tajfel, 1981), que no tienen por qué ser excluyentes (Lantz y Loeb, 1998).

La literatura señala que los comportamientos de jóvenes se ven afectados claramente por otras personas con las que entran en contacto, directa o indirectamente, y que actúan como modelos de referencia (Bandura, 1977). Algunos autores consideran que la familia y especialmente los padres actúan como modelos a seguir por los hijos, siendo su influencia sobre los actitudes y patrones de consumo muy superior a la de otros modelos de referencia, como profesores o compañeros (Moschis, 1985), especialmente durante la adolescencia (Martin y Bush, 2000)

Además, según recogen de Run *et al.* (2010), siguiendo a Feltman (1998) y Gunter y Furnham (1998) los padres desempeñan un papel muy importante en la formación de las actitudes y comportamiento de sus hijos al actuar como agentes de valores, proporcionando reglas, perspectivas y principios mediante la interacción y comunicación con ellos.

Ante la falta de conocimiento sobre el proceso de formación de la identidad regional de un individuo, en este trabajo exploratorio planteamos que los padres contribuirán de manera significativa a formar la identidad regional de sus hijos:

**H2a: La identidad regional de los padres influirá positivamente en la identidad regional de sus hijos/as.**

**H2b: La identidad regional de las madres influirá positivamente en la identidad regional de sus hijos/as.**

Asimismo y basándonos en los primeros trabajos sobre etnocentrismo del consumidor (Shimp, 1984) que apuntan a la familia como uno de los elementos más determinantes del proceso de socialización de un individuo y de sus orientaciones etnocéntricas, por encima de otros grupos de referencia, planteamos que los niveles de etnocentrismo regional de los padres y madres influirán de manera positiva en las tendencias etnocéntricas de sus hijos/as.

**H3a: El nivel de etnocentrismo regional de los padres influirá positivamente en los niveles de etnocentrismo regional de sus hijos/as**

**H3b: El nivel de etnocentrismo regional de las madres influirá positivamente en los niveles de etnocentrismo regional de sus hijos/as**

Las tendencias etnocéntricas del consumidor son especialmente prominentes entre los individuos cuya calidad de vida y situación económica se ve amenazada por la competencia extranjera (Shimp y Sharma, 1987) y tienen un efecto más fuerte en las actitudes hacia los productos extranjeros cuando esos productos amenazaban de una manera más clara la economía individual (Sharma *et al.*, 1995). En un estudio de consumidores estadounidenses y su actitud hacia los productos japoneses, Klein y Ettenson (1999) encontraron que la percepción de que la economía personal había mejorado en el último año estaba relacionada negativamente con los niveles de etnocentrismo, es decir, que aquellos consumidores que creían que sus finanzas personales habían mejorado, manifestaban menores niveles de etnocentrismo. Basándonos en evidencias previas planteamos que:

**H4: La percepción de mejora en la economía particular influirá negativamente en el etnocentrismo regional de los consumidores jóvenes.**

**H5: La percepción de mejora de la economía extremeña influirá negativamente en el etnocentrismo regional de los consumidores jóvenes.**

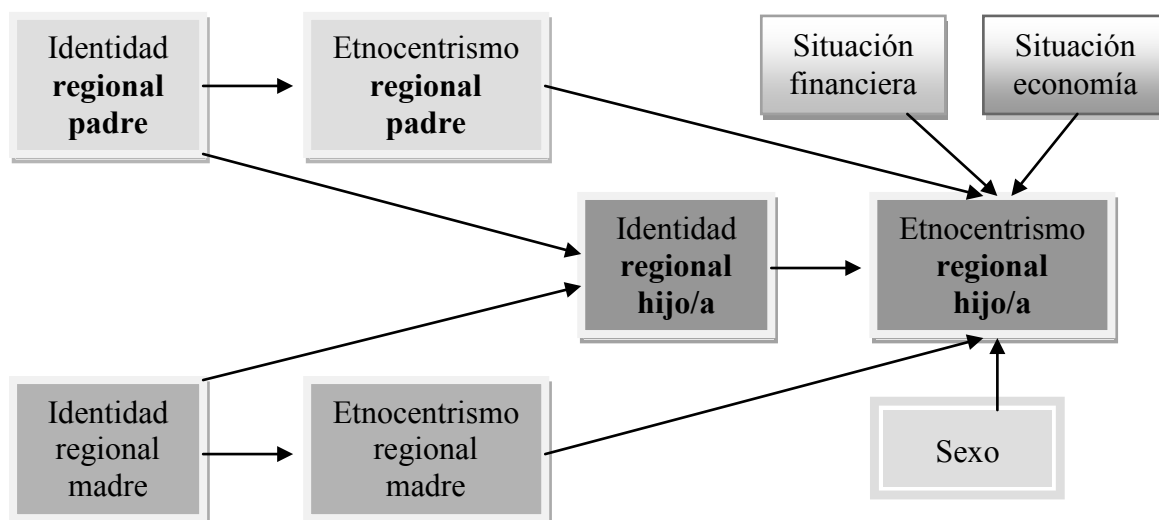
Algunos autores encuentran que los niveles de etnocentrismo del consumidor son mayores en las mujeres que en los hombres. Es el caso de Good y Huddleston (1995) en su análisis de consumidores polacos, Sharma *et al.* (1995) al estudiar las tendencias etnocéntricas en Corea del Sur, Ibáñez (2001) en su estudio de consumidores españoles, Klein y Ettenson (1999) con su trabajo basado en una muestra de consumidores estadounidenses, o Balabanis *et al.* (2001) y Erdogan y Uzkuurt (2004) al estudiar el etnocentrismo de los consumidores turcos. Sin embargo, estudios basados en muestras de consumidores rusos (Good y Huddleston, 1995; Saffu y Walker, 2005), españoles (Marín y Miquel, 1997), checos (Balabanis *et al.*, 2001), holandeses (Nijssen y Douglas, 2004), canadienses (Saffu y Walker, 2005), húngaros y británicos (Kottasz y Bennet, 2006), griegos (Chrysochoidis *et al.*, 2007) o malteses (Caruana, 1996) concluyen con una ausencia de relación entre el sexo del individuo y sus tendencias etnocéntricas.

Ante las evidencias encontradas en la literatura en general y en particular para España, la variable sexo será introducida en el análisis como una variable control. No obstante, dado que de existir una relación entre sexo y nivel de etnocentrismo es más probable que sean las mujeres las que presenten mayores niveles de etnocentrismo regional, proponemos lo siguiente:

**H6: La variable sexo estará relacionada significativamente con los niveles de etnocentrismo regional siendo éstos mayores en el caso de las mujeres.**

Las relaciones propuestas aparecen recogidas en la Figura 1.

FIGURA 1  
Modelo teórico planteado



## **6. Metodología**

### **6.1. Muestra**

Para lograr los objetivos de la investigación y estudiar si los niveles de identidad regional y etnocentrismo regional de los padres influyen significativamente en los valores observados en los hijos consideramos oportuno fijar dos condiciones que deben reunir los consumidores jóvenes para formar parte de la muestra: primero, que sean adultos, es decir, que hayan cumplido los 18 años y tengan cierta capacidad de decisión y, segundo, que padres e hijos formen una misma unidad familiar. Estos dos requisitos son habitualmente satisfechos en el caso de los estudiantes universitarios.

Aunque la recogida de datos entre estudiantes es a veces criticada en la literatura, en algunos trabajos se defiende la idoneidad de las muestras de “adultos jóvenes con niveles de estudios elevados” (Martin y Bush, 2000; Vermeir y Verbeke, 2008) al considerar que éstos: (1) son los consumidores del futuro; (2) están en la etapa de formación de su identidad personal y de su sistema de creencias y valores; (3) tienen poder de compra creciente e influencia en las decisiones de compra de su familia; y (4) actúan como marcadores de tendencias de consumo. Para Strizhakova et al. (2012) los consumidores jóvenes son un segmento atractivo para las empresas multinacionales, especialmente en mercados emergentes, al ser muy innovadores, mostrarse favorables a la prueba de nuevos productos, ser muy conscientes de su identidad y estar muy expuestos a los medios de comunicación globales.

Los estudiantes seleccionados para formar parte de la muestra cursan estudios en el Grado en Administración y Dirección de Empresas (GADE) en el Campus de Badajoz, de la Universidad de Extremadura. Es de esperar que, siendo Extremadura una Comunidad Autónoma caracterizada por sus niveles de nacionalismo inferiores a los de otras CC.AA. como Cataluña o el País Vasco, los niveles de etnocentrismo regional del consumidor no serán muy elevados y, además, al tratarse de consumidores jóvenes, también cabe esperar niveles bajos de etnocentrismo. De confirmarse la influencia parental en el etnocentrismo de los consumidores jóvenes extremeños, es razonable esperar una influencia mayor en otras CC.AA. con mayores niveles de etnocentrismo.

A los estudiantes se les pidió que completasen un cuestionario que recogía escalas de medida de etnocentrismo del consumidor a nivel regional y alguno de los antecedentes analizados en la literatura, que son considerados en el modelo teórico planteado: identidad regional, percepción de la situación financiera personal y la situación de la economía y sexo del individuo. Además, para completar la recogida de datos y poder medir las tendencias etnocéntricas regionales de sus padres y sus niveles de identidad regional, se pidió a los estudiantes que actuasen como encuestadores y llevasen a sus casas la parte del cuestionario referida a las puntuaciones de sus padres. Se les instruyó para que no influyesen en las respuestas de sus padres, pero que aclarasen las dudas que éstos pudiesen tener sobre el tema. Se acompañó el cuestionario de una carta explicativa con el propósito del estudio.

### **6.2. Medidas**

La medida de etnocentrismo regional del consumidor es una adaptación de la versión reducida de la CETSCALE, de seis indicadores, de Klein *et al.* (2005), testada previamente en seis países y con buenas propiedades psicométricas. Esta escala también resultó ser fiable y válida en el contexto de compra de productos regionales/no regionales de los consumidores gallegos (Fernández-Ferrín y Bande Vilela, 2013).

Para medir los dos antecedentes económicos del etnocentrismo regional del consumidor, la preocupación por la situación financiera familiar y la preocupación por la situación de la economía regional, se adaptaron dos medidas de Klein y Ettenson (1999): “Valore su situación financiera personal (familiar) con relación a un año atrás” y “Valore la situación de la economía extremeña con relación a un año atrás (1: mucho peor; 7: mucho mejor). La medida del antecedente psicosociológico considerado, la identidad con la Comunidad Autónoma o identidad regional, es una adaptación de la escala de Lanz y Loeb (1998). La variable sexo es

incluida en el cuestionario y posteriormente en el análisis como un posible antecedente demográfico del etnocentrismo regional.

## 7. Resultados

Los análisis descriptivos realizados permiten comprobar que los niveles de identidad regional son bastante altos, tanto en los hijos/as ( $m = 5.210$ ) como en los padres ( $m = 5.605$ ) y madres ( $m = 5.607$ ). Un test t de medias para muestras emparejadas confirma que la identidad regional de los padres y madres es significativamente distinta de la de los hijos/as ( $t = - 3.728$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $t = - 4.016$ ,  $p < .001$ , respectivamente) y que no hay diferencias significativas entre las puntuaciones de los dos cónyuges. Los niveles de etnocentrismo regional de los hijos ( $m = 3.063$ ), como cabía esperar, son significativamente más bajos ( $t = - 6.634$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $t = - 6.932$ ,  $p < .001$ , respectivamente) que los niveles observados en sus padres ( $m = 3.773$ ) y madres ( $m = 3.782$ ), que no difieren entre sí. Estos resultados son coherentes con los de otros estudios que señalan que los individuos jóvenes tienen menor probabilidad de ser etnocéntricos (Orth y Firbasová, 2003).

El análisis del alfa de Cronbach arroja unos niveles muy elevados de consistencia interna de las dos escalas de medida de la identidad regional y del etnocentrismo regional del consumidor, superiores a 0.9 en los tres colectivos analizados: padres, madres e hijos/as (ver Tabla 1).

TABLA 1  
Fiabilidad de las escalas de medida y estadísticos descriptivos

Constructos e indicadores	Media	Desviación típica	$\alpha$ de Cronbach
<b>Identidad regional hijo/a</b> Me siento fuertemente identificado con Extremadura Me gusta vivir en Extremadura Me siento comprometido con Extremadura Me gusta ser parte de mi Comunidad Autónoma Para mí el sentimiento de orgullo hacia Extremadura es importante	5.210	1.433	0.924
<b>Etnocentrismo regional hijo/a</b> Sólo deberían comprarse productos de fuera de Extremadura cuando aquí no estén disponibles Productos extremeños, por encima de todo Un verdadero extremeño debería comprar siempre productos fabricados en Extremadura Los extremeños no deberían comprar productos fuera de la Comunidad, ya que daña a las empresas extremeñas y causa desempleo Puede que me cueste a largo plazo, pero prefiero apoyar los productos extremeños Los consumidores extremeños que adquieren productos fabricados en otras regiones son responsables de la pérdida de empleo de sus paisanos	3.063	1.392	0.905
<b>Identidad regional padre*</b>	5.605	1.481	0.940
<b>Etnocentrismo regional padre**</b>	3.773	1.621	0.923
<b>Identidad regional madre*</b>	5.607	1.375	0.927
<b>Etnocentrismo regional madre**</b>	3.782	1.641	0.917
<b>Situación financiera personal</b>	4.041	1.216	---
<b>Situación economía extremeña</b>	3.396	1.266	---
<b>Sexo</b>	0.554	0.498	---

\*La escala de medida de la identidad regional de los padres es la misma que la de los hijos. \*\*La escala de medida del etnocentrismo regional de los padres es la misma que la de los hijos. Todas las variables están medidas en una escala Likert de siete puntos (1: en total desacuerdo; 7: totalmente de acuerdo), salvo la situación financiera personal y la situación financiera particular, que tienen los siguientes extremos (1: mucho peor; 7: mucho mejor). Sexo (0: hombre; 1: mujer)

Para contrastar las hipótesis planteadas se construye un modelo estructural con el etnocentrismo regional de los hijos como variable dependiente principal, que resulta afectada directamente por: (1) los niveles de etnocentrismo regional de sus padres, (2) los niveles de identidad regional propios; (3) la percepción sobre la situación financiera personal y la percepción sobre la situación de la economía extremeña; y (4) el sexo. Además se plantea un efecto indirecto de la identidad regional de los padres en el etnocentrismo regional de sus hijos a través de la identidad regional de éstos. Los análisis se realizaron con el programa AMOS 20.0 y las variables consideradas para medir los constructos son las medias de los indicadores originales.

El ajuste del modelo estructural es muy bueno ( $\chi^2$  (df = 23) = 29.355,  $p = .169$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 1.276$ , CFI = 0.986, GFI = 0.968, TLI = 0.978, RMSEA=0.038) y se confirman las hipótesis referidas a la influencia directa de los niveles de etnocentrismo regional de los padres en los niveles de etnocentrismo de los hijos/as, así como la influencia de los niveles de identidad regional de los padres en los niveles de identidad regional de los hijos/as y éstos a su vez en el etnocentrismo regional de los hijos/as. Los índices de modificación aconsejan introducir en el modelo la relación entre el nivel de etnocentrismo regional de los padres en el nivel de etnocentrismo de las madres, ya que ésta es significativa ( $b = 0.502$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

Los resultados obtenidos apoyan las hipótesis H1a, H1b y H1c y permiten comprobar la influencia positiva y significativa de la identidad regional en el etnocentrismo regional, en el caso de los padres ( $b = 0.530$ ,  $p < .01$ ), las madres ( $b = 0.251$ ,  $p < .01$ ) y los hijos/as ( $b = 0.177$ ,  $p < .01$ ). También resultan apoyadas las H2a, H2b, H3a y H3b, ya que se comprueba que la identidad regional de los padres ( $b = 0.209$ ,  $p < .01$ ) y de las madres ( $b = 0.355$ ,  $p < .01$ ) influye significativa y positivamente en la identidad regional de los hijos/as y que los niveles de etnocentrismo regional de los padres ( $b = 0.251$ ,  $p < .01$ ) y de las madres ( $b = 0.311$ ,  $p < .01$ ) afectan positiva y significativamente en el etnocentrismo regional de sus hijos/as.

Las hipótesis referidas a las restantes variables planteadas como posibles antecedentes del etnocentrismo regional no son aceptadas. Ni la percepción sobre la situación financiera particular (H4), ni la situación de la economía extremeña (H5), ni el sexo (H6) de los jóvenes consumidores parecen tener una influencia significativa en sus niveles de etnocentrismo regional cuando se considera la influencia de las percepciones de identidad regional y etnocentrismo regional de sus padres (ver Figura 2 y Tabla 2).

FIGURA 2  
Modelo estructural: coeficientes estandarizados

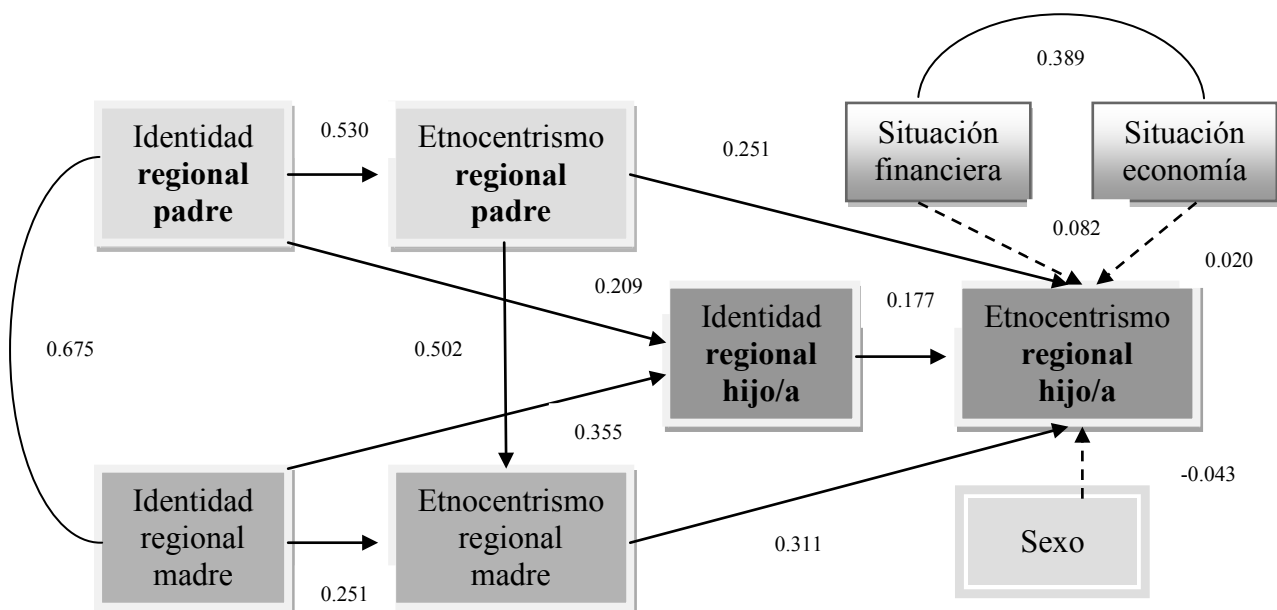


TABLA 2  
**Resultado del modelo de ecuaciones estructurales: parámetros estimados**

Hipótesis	Efectos	Coefficiente no estandarizado	S.E.	C.R.	Coefficiente estandarizado
H1a	Identidad regional padre → Etnocentrismo regional padre	0.582***	0.067	8.706	0.530
H1b	Identidad regional madre → Etnocentrismo regional madre	0.300***	0.071	4.233	0.251
H1c	Identidad regional hijo/a → Etnocentrismo regional hijo/a	0.171***	0.058	2.931	0.177
H2a	Identidad regional padre → Identidad regional hijo/a	0.214***	0.086	2.508	0.209
H2b	Identidad regional madre → Identidad regional hijo/a	0.385***	0.090	4.271	0.355
H3a	Etnocentrismo regional padre → Etnocentrismo regional hijo/a	0.226***	0.066	3.442	0.251
H3b	Etnocentrismo regional madre → Etnocentrismo regional hijo/a	0.271***	0.064	4.257	0.311
H4	Situación financiera personal → Etnocentrismo regional hijo/a	0.094ns	0.072	1.304	0.082
H5	Situación economía extremeña → Etnocentrismo regional hijo/a	0.022ns	0.069	0.313	0.020
H6	Sexo → Etnocentrismo regional hijo/a	-0.018ns	0.160	-0.739	-0.043
	<b>Otros efectos</b>				
	Etnocentrismo regional padre → Etnocentrismo regional madre	0.519***	0.061	8.473	0.502
		<b>Covarianza</b>	<b>S.E</b>	<b>C.R.</b>	<b>Correlación</b>
	Identidad regional padre ↔ Identidad regional madre	1.223***	0.157	7.794	0.675
	Situación financiera personal ↔ Situación economía extremeña	0.587***	0.116	5.044	0.389

Indicadores de bondad del ajuste:  $\chi^2$  (df = 23) = 29.355, p = .169,  $\chi^2/df$  = 1.276, comparative fit index [CFI] = 0.986, goodness-of-fit index [GFI] = 0.968, root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = 0.038.

R<sup>2</sup>: Etnocentrismo regional hijo/a = 0.341; Etnocentrismo regional padre = 0.281; Etnocentrismo regional madre = 0.406; Identidad regional hijo/a = 0.270.

\*\*\*p < .01, ns = no significativo.

## 8. Conclusiones

El análisis exploratorio realizado, basado en las respuestas de 197 tríadas formadas por 197 jóvenes extremeños y sus padres, permite aumentar nuestro grado de conocimiento sobre varios aspectos que la literatura sobre etnocentrismo del consumidor ha ignorado hasta ahora. Por una parte, nuestros resultados indican que, a pesar de que los jóvenes extremeños no presentan niveles de etnocentrismo regional muy elevados, éstos se ven claramente influidos por los niveles de identidad regional de sus padres y madres, a través de dos efectos indirectos: uno a través del etnocentrismo regional de los progenitores y otro por medio de la identidad regional de sus hijos/as. Por otra parte, los antecedentes económicos (percepción de la situación financiera particular y percepción de la situación de la economía extremeña) y el antecedente demográfico (sexo) considerados no tienen ningún efecto sobre el etnocentrismo regional de los jóvenes. Estos resultados contradicen los de Klein y Ettenson (1999), quienes encuentran dichos efectos para una muestra de consumidores estadounidenses. Creemos que una de las principales contribuciones de este trabajo es la incorporación en el mismo modelo de antecedentes ya considerados previamente en la literatura, principalmente de naturaleza demográfica y económica, junto con dos variables asociadas con la influencia parental: la identidad regional y el etnocentrismo regional de los padres, reuniendo así las valoraciones de tres fuentes distintas. Además, creemos que la consideración de un nivel subnacional de análisis en el estudio del etnocentrismo del consumidor es otra aportación importante, dada la escasez de estudios a nivel regional.

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# SATISFACTION AND TRUST: THE MAIN DETERMINANTS OF OLDER CONSUMERS' LOYALTY IN TIMES OF CRISIS

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper studies the formation of loyalty in older consumers in these times of deep economic crisis. Considering the increasing percentage of elderly people in our society, it's necessary to evaluate the characteristics and the different needs of this growing group in order to develop more appropriate strategies.*

*Testing a classic model of loyalty in a general crisis situation, it's confirmed that even in environments of instability, satisfaction and trust remain as the basic pillars of loyalty. In addition, it has been found that the information processing shows singularities in the elderly. The older consumer can be described as a more loyal, nostalgic and resistant to change type of consumer.*

## Key words:

Loyalty, Trust, Switching Costs, Older Consumers, Crisis

## **1. Introduction**

All developed societies are affected by the trend towards population ageing. In 2009, the median population age in EU-27 was 40.7 years and is projected to reach 47.9 years by 2060. One of the main demographic trends in EU-27 is that life expectancy continues to rise, especially from gains at older ages. But not only are people living longer lives; they may be living longer healthy lives. Populations that are currently the oldest, such as Germany's and Italy's, will age rapidly for the next twenty years, then stabilise. Of the 499,703,311 inhabitants of EU-27 in 2010, 17.4% were over 64, whereas in 1990 the percentage was 13.4% (Eurostat, 2011).

Differences in attitudes and behaviours between older and younger consumers have been well documented in the literature in relation to various factors: media habits, socialisation, adoption of technologies, complaining behaviour, shopping behaviour, general expenditure patterns, and information processing (Moschis and Nguyen, 2008). Traditionally, these differences have been justified by biological, psychological and socio-relational changes that occur during the ageing process (Carrigan and Szimigin, 1999; Reisenwitz et al, 2007; Lambert-Pandraud and Laurent, 2010). A new approach has been posited recently, the life-course paradigm, that represents a major change in how researchers think about and study consumer behaviour in later life, because it makes time, context, and process more salient dimensions of theory and analysis (Moschis, 2012; Lee et al, 2012).

The life-course paradigm posits that consumer thoughts and actions should differ according to the life circumstances people collectively experience. These circumstances include factors in the physical or social environment experienced for a relatively long time, known as period effects, such as periods of economic prosperity or crisis (Moschis, 2012). The world crisis that began in 2008, with a particular impact on the financial sector in the most developed countries has undoubtedly affected the attitudes and behaviours of consumers in general and older consumers in particular. The most evident consequence has been the loss of trust in financial institutions as pointed out by the Marketing Science Institute (MSI, 2011). One country that has suffered most from this crisis is Spain, where the banking sector has undergone radical transformation, with the almost complete disappearance of the savings banks that represented 50% of bank deposits. This situation meant that in June 2012 the European Union approved a financial bailout of a hundred billion Euros for the Spanish banking system. At microeconomic level, the crisis has had a negative effect on bank credibility and has eroded customers' trust in their banks. Thus the percentage of Spanish citizens who said they had little or no trust in banks went from 61% in October 2005, to 65.3% in December 2008 and to 76.7% in October 2010 (CIS, 2013). This loss of trust in banks can also be seen in other countries like the United States (Stevenson and Wolfers, 2011). However, although these macroeconomic data demonstrate the effects of the crisis, they do not enable identification of the changes that have occurred in consumer attitudes and behaviours (Deb and Chavali, 2010; Stevenson and Wolfers, 2011).

The aim of this work is to analyse older consumer's trust during a financial crisis, studying its antecedents and consequences. First of all the paper describes the conceptual framework for older consumers on which the study is based, the life-course paradigm. Then it analyses the variable older consumers' trust during a financial crisis, followed by a study of the consequences (loyalty and positive switching costs) and the antecedents (satisfaction, negative switching costs and brand image) of trust in these circumstances. The proposed hypotheses are tested on a sample of users of Spanish banks, a paradigmatic industry in the financial crisis that began in 2008.

## **2. Older consumer theoretical framework**

The life-course paradigm assumes that biological and psychological changes during a person's life and social demands across the life course define typical life events and social roles that serve as turning points and affect a person's life; they create physical, emotional and social demands and circumstances to which people must adapt by changing their thoughts and actions (Moschis, 2012; Lee et al, 2012). Therefore, study of older consumers' attitudes and behaviours

must not only take into account the biological and psychological effects of ageing but also personal events and the surrounding circumstances that condition those habits.

The biological and psychological effects of ageing are quite well known. Changes in bodily systems, such as declines in vision and hearing, and the onset of chronic conditions and disease occur at different ages and at different rates of psychological decline (Moschis, 2012; Lee et al, 2012). Ageing brings with it changes in the way the senses perceive information from the surrounding environment. In general, the senses become increasingly less sharp and limitations in distinguishing nuances appear. The ageing process also brings changes in the ability to concentrate and memorise.

Psychological models focus on changes in cognition, personality and self. Models of cognition have been used in the field of consumer behaviour to study the development and change in patterns of information processing and decision making in later life. The processing-resource framework, which conceptualizes age-related differences in cognition in terms of deficits in processing resources has been the most frequently (Lambert-Pandraud, et al, 2005; Yoon et al, 2009).

Particularly relevant in this regard is the work by Lambert-Pandraud and Laurent (2010) which established that three specific mechanisms intervene in the formation of preferences in older consumers: nostalgia, declining innovativeness and attachment. The first mechanism is the theory about nostalgia that posits that consumers develop preferences at an early age and maintain them for the rest of their lives (Holbrook and Schindler, 1991; Reisenwitz et al, 2007). Nostalgia is an emotional state in which an individual yearns for an idealized or sanitized version of an earlier time period (Stern, 1992). Some works supports the idea that nostalgia can influence the consumer's lifelong preferences in any product associated with a strong affective experience (Holbrook and Schindler, 1996; Schindler and Holbrook, 2003)

The second mechanism is declining innovativeness, an explanation that asserts that younger consumers have a greater propensity to adopt new products (Botwinick, 1978; Reisenwitz et al, 2007). Finally, the third mechanism is the attachment approach that argues that consumers develop affective links over time with objects or brands because of their personal history with and usage of these objects or brands (Thomson, MacInnis and Park, 2005; Price, Arnould and Curasi, 2000).

Additionally, the life-course paradigm posits that people also tend to experience various events at different ages that affect their behaviour in later life. These events affect a person's mind-sets, lifestyles, and consumption patterns for the rest of his or her life (Moschis, 2012; Lee et al, 2012). Together with personal events, the life-course paradigm highlights the importance of life circumstances. Consumer thoughts and actions also should differ according to the life circumstances people collectively experience. These circumstances include factors in the physical or social environment experienced for a relatively long time, known as period effects, such as periods of financial crisis; they also include cohort effects, which refer to influences shared by people growing up in a particular time period that persist as the individual ages (Moschis, 2012; Lee et al, 2012; Obal and Kunz, 2013).

In short, emotional, relational and experience-linked variables acquire greater importance as the individual gets older, in contrast to more cognitive evaluations. Furthermore, throughout their lives individuals encounter personal events and circumstances that modify their attitudes and behaviours.

### **3. Trust and financial crisis in older consumers**

#### ***3.1. Trust in older consumers***

El-Manstrly et al. (2011) defines trust as a function of the perceived reliability and integrity of a brand or service provider. The concept of trust is directly associated with perceived risk in terms of feelings of uncertainty and possible adverse consequences about some future event (Reisenwitz et al, 2007). Consumer trust implies consumer familiarity and comfort with a

service provider that should reduce the consumer's feelings of anxiety and risk (Aurier and N'Goala, 2010). Trust is a prevision consumers make on a company's ability to satisfy their expectations in the future (Guenzi, Johnson and Castaldo, 2009; Aurier and N'Goala, 2010). Trust can be based on cognition when individuals are looking for a rational reason to rely on the other party (McAllister, 1995). But trust can also be based on emotion when it involves emotional bonds between individuals. These two dimensions of trust can be linked together. A relationship between two parties may begin with an expression of cognitive trust, and after a while, based on accumulated experience, it may become affective trust (McAllister, 1995).

Therefore, in general terms, in younger consumers and in the initial stages of a relationship, trust has a high cognitive component, whereas in older consumers and advanced phases of a relationship, the emotional component predominates. This evolution is explained by some authors through Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (SST) that suggests that people's motivation changes as they grow older (Carstensen, 2006; Jahn et al, 2012). Adult development involves a shift from expansionist motives, like achievement or identity development, to motives involving security or threat avoidance (Helson and Soto, 2005). When the future is perceived as limited, people tend to be more present oriented and immediate needs, such as emotional states, become the most salient. The proportion of emotional to nonemotional information recalled from social narratives increases from an earlier age group (50-65) to a successive one (70-83 years) (Jahn et al, 2012). This emotional drift is also justified by three mechanisms that modulate the preferences of older consumers and lead them to prefer old brands for affective reasons: nostalgia, declining innovativeness and attachment (Lambert-Pandraud and Laurent, 2010).

The key question is, what effect has the irruption of a life circumstance of the magnitude of the 2008 financial crisis on consumer confidence? It seems logical to think that the effect will differ according to age. In younger consumers, where the cognitive vision of trust prevails, rational arguments will have a greater impact. In this segment of the population, trust has been eroded with negative news from each bank. In contrast, in older consumers with a longer relationship with banks and where the emotional dimension of trust predominates, negative information will have less effect, as the personal and affective links established with the financial institutions will be paramount. Jahn et al (2012), from the SST view, posits that the elderly are less likely to question items they have known for a long time. Instead of searching for evidence that a favoured brand might have trust deficits, older people focus on the positive aspects of a previously chosen option. Unless older people become really dissatisfied with a product, they do not look for alternatives. Laufer, Silvera and Meyer (2006) show that in a trust threatening product harm crisis, older consumers did not blame the company and did not react with reduced purchase.

### ***3.2. Trust, loyalty and financial crisis***

Consumer trust is a key element for the supplier to be able to maintain long term relationships (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Kantsperger and Kunz, 2010; Aurier and N'Goala, 2010). Loyalty can be defined as a deep commitment to repurchase or repeat purchase behaviour for a consistently preferred product/ service in the future, which causes repeat purchase of the same brand or set of brands despite situational influences and marketing efforts which have the potential to bring about changes in behaviour (Oliver, 1999).

In short, loyalty is the customer's likelihood of generating positive word-of-mouth and repurchase intentions (Zeithaml et al 1996; Guenzi, Johnson and Castaldo, 2009; Dagger and David, 2012). It is important to emphasise that the focus must not be on repeat purchase behaviour alone because of the impact of situational factors which may hide consumers' true intentions (Oliver, 1999; Al-Hawari, Ward and Newby, 2009). Therefore, following Oliver (1999), loyalty must be considered mainly at the affective and intentional level.

In services industries, like retail banking, trust becomes crucial in many relational exchange situations and reduces the perceived risk of the service outcome (Dimitriadis, Kouremenos and Kyrezis, 2011). Many studies have found that customer trust determines customer behavioural and attitudinal loyalty (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Chiou and Droge, 2006; Rauyruen et al,

2007; Guenzi, Johnson and Castaldo, 2009; Deb and Chavali, 2010; Kantsperger and Kunz, 2010; Aurier and N'Goala, 2010; Dimitriadis, Kouremenos and Kyrezis, 2011; Trif, 2013). In the absence of trust, customer loyalty would not be sustained in the medium to long-term (Bove and Johnson, 2006). In the case of older consumers, given the pre-eminence of the emotional dimension, trust plays a more significant role than it does in younger people. As McAllister (1995) points out, accumulated experience leads to the development of affective trust in consumers which represents a stronger link than the cognitive trust that develops at the start of a relationship in the younger segment. Thus it can be posited that the financial crisis has had less effect on this causal relation in older consumers because negative news has less impact.

*H1: During a financial crisis, trust has more of a direct positive influence on loyalty in older consumers than in younger consumers.*

### **3.3. Trust, satisfaction and financial crisis**

Customer satisfaction is defined as an emotional state arising from a cognitive process that implies a comparison between customer expectations and customer perceptions of service performance, and an emotional evaluation experienced during consumption (Westbrook and Oliver, 1991). Customer satisfaction can be generated by a discrete transaction, in which episodic satisfaction occurs, and by a long-term relationship between a customer and a supplier (Lam et al 2004). Overall satisfaction describes the consumer's cognitive and affective state resulting from a personal consumption experience (Chandrashekar et al, 2007).

The literature holds that customer satisfaction with a supplier is an antecedent of trust in the supplier (Johnson and Grayson, 2005; Kantsperger and Kunz, 2010; Trif, 2013). Satisfaction remains an evaluation of past service experiences, while trust is more concerned with the future service relationship (Aurier and N'Goala, 2010).

From the theoretical perspective, overall older customer satisfaction, where experience accumulates, is more important than episodic satisfaction, which takes situational events into account. Therefore negative news from the crisis will have a greater impact on younger consumers, who are more sensitive to episodic satisfaction, and their cognitive evaluation will have a great impact on their future expectations (trust). In contrast, episodic satisfaction is more important for older consumers than for younger ones, and so negative news will have less impact. Furthermore, in the formation of trust and satisfaction in older consumers, other emotional mechanisms intervene like nostalgia and attachment, and therefore during a financial crisis, the relationship between satisfaction and trust will be less important than in the younger segment. Hence:

*H2: During a financial crisis, satisfaction has less of a direct positive influence on trust in older consumers than in younger people.*

Customer satisfaction is considered a key driver of the long-term relationship between suppliers and buyers (Westbrook and Oliver, 1991). A satisfied customer's affection towards a service provider could motivate the customer to patronize the provider again and recommend the provider to other customers (Yu and Dean, 2001; Rauyruen et al, 2007; Trif, 2013). Satisfaction is often perceived as a factor that influences the likelihood of repurchase or reuse of the service provided by a supplier.

In this case, the impact of the financial crisis has made episodic satisfaction particularly relevant, and so the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty is stronger in younger people than in older consumers. Therefore we posit that satisfaction in older consumers will have less impact on loyalty than in the younger segment.

*H3: During a financial crisis, satisfaction has less of a direct positive influence on loyalty in older consumers than in younger people.*

### **3.4. Trust, switching costs, brand image and financial crisis**

To assume that satisfied customers are also loyal customers ignores the likelihood that customer and contextual factors moderate and thus alter this relationship (Dagger and David, 2012). A

variable that has deserved much attention in recent years is switching costs. Switching costs are the costs customers associate with the process of changing from one provider to another (El-Manstrly et al, 2011). The higher the perceived switching costs, the less likelihood there is of changing brand or provider (Fornell, 1992).

Dagger and David (2012) consider that high switching costs make customers feel locked into the relationship. This can wrongly lead the firm to assume that repeat purchasing reflects a loyal and satisfied customer base, when in fact many customers may be less than satisfied but perceive the costs of switching to another firm as being too high (Bell, Auh and Smalley, 2005).

In this regard it is interesting to categorise switching costs based on the underlying nature of the constraint: positive switching costs, those deriving primarily from positive sources of constraint, and negative switching costs, those deriving primarily from negative sources of constraint (Jones et al, 2007; Maicas, Polo and Sesé, 2006).

The key to this distinction is whether or not switching cost derive primarily from creating benefits and value for the customer. Positive switching costs (social and lost benefits costs) create such benefits and value, whereas negative switching costs (such as procedural and economic switching costs), deriving primarily from negative sources of constraint, do not.

Trust and positive switching costs have a significant influence on attitudinal and behavioural loyalty in bank branch customers in the UK (El-Manstrly et al, 2011). When customers perceive a service provider as trustworthy, they are more likely to develop a positive attitude towards that service provider and in turn a positive buying behaviour. The perceived risk associated with this particular service provider is more likely to be reduced as a result of perceived trust. De Matos et al. (2009) found that, in the Brazilian banking industry, switching costs are a significant antecedent of loyalty, and that they played a mediating role between satisfaction and loyalty, particularly on attitudinal loyalty.

Positive switching costs involve loyalty benefits that customers have to give up by when their relationship with the service provider ends. The enjoyment of these benefits may lead the customer to recommend the provider to other customers. As a result, a positive relationship between switching costs and the recommend dimension of loyalty may exist (Lam, et al., 2004; El-Manstrly et al, 2011; Tong, Wong and Lui, 2012). In fact, switching costs increase as relationships deepen and broaden (Kamakura et al, 2003; Bell, Auh and Smalley, 2005; Aurier and N'Goala, 2010). In the case of older consumers it should be remembered that they base their purchase decisions on accumulated experience and emotions whereas younger people are exposed to a broad range of cognitive influences. Nostalgia, declining innovativeness and attachment strengthen the importance of positive switching costs in older consumers, so that their influence on loyalty will be greater than among younger consumers. Moschis and Nguyen (2008) find that lower fees and discount programmes seem to be ineffective in attracting affluent older people to services. In line with Moschis et al (2003), marketers should not use price appeal to mature consumers to create competitive advantage. It can also be posited that positive switching costs will be more significant than negative ones for older people.

*H4: During a financial crisis, positive switching costs have more of a direct positive influence on loyalty in older consumers than in younger people.*

*H5: During a financial crisis, negative switching costs have less of a direct positive influence on loyalty in older consumers than positive switching costs.*

As regards switching costs in relation to the other variables, satisfaction and trust, Maicas, Polo and Sesé (2006) and El-Manstrly et al (2011) consider that trust reduces the perception of risk and increases the feeling of wanting to remain in the relationship, and so it can be posited that trust promotes positive switching costs. Customers decide to make durable and non-retrievable inputs in the exchange relationship because they trust their providers and can thus overcome the risks associated with higher dependence (Dwyer et al, 1987; Aurier and N'Goala, 2010). Older consumers will see this relationship promoted due to the three affective mechanisms that determine their preferences



*H6: During a financial crisis, trust has more of a direct positive influence on positive switching costs in older consumers than in younger people.*

However, negative switching costs can be perceived as opportunistic behaviours by suppliers in a position of power (De Matos et al., 2009). Therefore, reductive elements of freedom can adversely affect individual trust. Due to the above three major mechanisms, older consumers have greater emotional inertia due to duration of the relationship and they become less sensitive. We therefore propose:

*H7: During a financial crisis, negative switching costs have less of a direct negative influence on trust in the supplier in older consumers than in younger people.*

In the relationship between switching costs and satisfaction, it can also be established that satisfaction will favourably influence positive switching costs, promoting the sensation of wanting to remain in the relationship. The influence of the mechanisms of nostalgia, declining innovativeness and attachment reduce the influence of satisfaction in older consumers, while the greater importance of episodic satisfaction for younger consumers promotes the importance of satisfaction in that segment. Therefore we posit:

*H8: During a financial crisis, satisfaction has less of a direct positive influence on positive switching costs in older consumers than in younger people.*

Brand image is considered an important antecedent of satisfaction, trust and indirectly, loyalty (Fredericks and Salter, 1995; Bigné et al, 2001; Eskildsen et al, 2004; Faullant, Matzler and Füller, 2008). A good brand image leads to greater perception of affective satisfaction and trust in a service company and consequently becomes an important incentive for maintaining the relationship in the long term. In the case of older consumers Lambert-Pandraud and Laurent (2010) found that nostalgia, declining innovativeness and attachment induce this segment to prefer established national brands. Therefore, as consumers age the emotional links with their preferred brands intensify and so it can be posited that brand image is a more significant antecedent of satisfaction and trust than in the younger segment. Therefore:

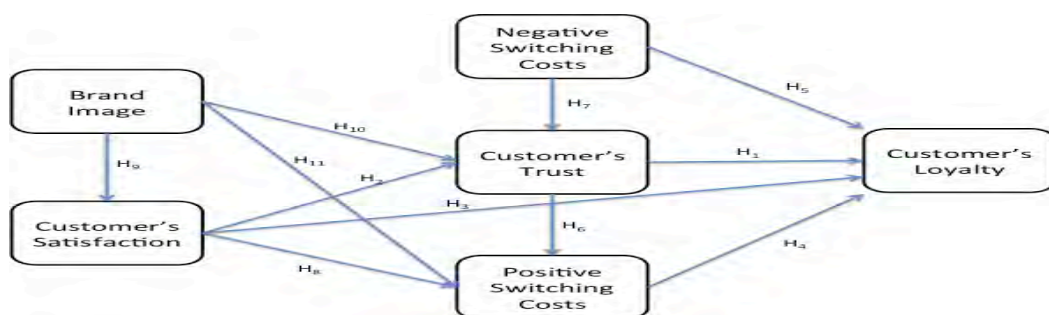
*H9: During a financial crisis, brand image has more of a direct, positive influence on satisfaction in older consumers than in younger people.*

*H10: During a financial crisis, brand image has more of a direct, positive influence on trust in older consumers than in younger people.*

The final question is whether there is a causal relation between brand image and switching costs. It seems evident that there is, as positive switching costs are barriers to leaving a relationship that make consumers want to remain in the relationship. Brand image is an important argument in favour of continuing the relationship because it implies an affective link which will also be more relevant for older consumers due to the emotional mechanisms that determine the formation of their preferences.

*H11: During a financial crisis, brand image has more of a direct, positive influence on positive switching costs in older consumers than younger people.*

FIGURE 1.  
Causal model



## 4. Method

This study focuses on the Spanish banking industry. The 2008 financial crisis hit the southern part of the European Union especially hard, and particularly the banks in Spain which in October 2011 received a bailout from the European Union for up to one billion euros. The enormous volume of negative news on this sector has severely eroded citizens' trust in banks since 2008.

The questionnaire was designed using scales from previous research, adapting some of the items to the specific characteristics of this study. The scales used to measure brand image, satisfaction and trust used the items proposed by Martínez et al. (2008), Bloemer and Odekerken-Schroeder (2002) and Ganesan (1994), respectively. The items for loyalty were based on the paper by Caruana (2004), and switching costs were measured using the scales by Burnham et al. (2003) and De Matos et al. (2009). The questionnaire contained closed questions and a 5-point Likert scale. A pre-test was carried out on 104 users of bank services with the aim of obtaining a final version of the questionnaire, making small changes in the drafting of the items for greater clarity and adapting them to the bank context.

The fieldwork was carried out in March and April 2011. Until that date the Spanish government had undertaken two restructurings of the banks, based on merging savings banks which at the time represented 50% of bank deposits. In March 2011 Moody's downgraded the long term debt for 30 Spanish banks and savings banks.

Because there has been no clear definition of when someone should be classified older or mature, in this paper we consider people aged 50 and over as mature consumers and sometimes use mature and older person interchangeably (Moschis and Nguyen, 2008). 634 valid surveys were conducted in Spain on customers of financial entities. There were 322 interviews with individuals under 49 years old and 312 older than 50 years old. A sampling error of  $\pm 3.97\%$  was assumed for a confidence level of 95.5%.

## 5. Analysis and results

### 5.1. Measure reliability and validity

The data were analyzed using structural equation models by means of multi-group analysis, following recommendations from earlier studies for moderating effects (Hombourg and Giering, 2001). The models were estimated from the matrices of variances and covariances by the maximum likelihood procedure with the EQS 6.1 statistical software application (Bentler, 1995).

In the first phase of the analysis we focused on studying the psychometric properties of the scales for the whole sample (Table 1). The probability associated with chi-squared is over 0.05, thus indicating an overall good fit of the scales (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1996). Convergent validity is demonstrated in two ways.

TABLE 1.  
Analysis of scale dimensionality, reliability and validity (Fully standardized solution).

Items	Factor loading	t-Value
<i>Brand image</i> (CR=.80; AVE=.63)		
There are good reasons for using this bank rather than another	.75	6.59**
The company has personality	.66	6.61**
It doesn't disappoint its customers	.85	6.65**
<i>Satisfaction</i> (CR=.93; AVE=.80)		
I am satisfied with the quality/ price relationship	.80	17.45**
I am satisfied with the service they provide	.89	18.91**
I am satisfied with the company	.91	19.27**
Generally I am really satisfied	.93	19.59**
<i>Trust</i> (CR=.91; AVE=.74)		
I trust the good intentions of this bank/savings bank	.82	19.52**
I consider that the bank/saving bank behaves ethically	.78	18.42**
This bank is serious and fulfils its promises	.87	13.83**

At this bank they are concerned about making the customer happy <i>Loyalty</i> (CR=.84; AVE=.68)	.89	20.99**
I will try to continue with my usual bank/savings bank in the next few years	.82	10.38**
I will encourage my family and friends to become customers of my bank	.66	14.88**
If they continue to treat me like they are now, I doubt I will change financial institution	.89	19.61**
<i>Negative switching costs</i> (CR=.70; AVE=.60)		
Changing bank will probably have an economic cost	.67	10.04**
Changing will take quite a lot of time	.79	18.06**
<i>Positive switching costs</i> (CR=.79; AVE=.62)		
I already know the staff. Changing means starting from scratch	.62	13.57**
I am happy with the staff at my bank	.88	18.59**
My financial institution has a good reputation	.73	15.68**

Note: Fit of the model:  $\chi^2=146.4488$ ,  $df=130$ ,  $P=0.15364$ ;  $RMSEA=.014$ ;  $CFI=.997$ ;  $NFI=.973$ ;  $NNFI=.996$ . CR= composite reliability; AVE=average variance extracted

\*\*  $p<.01$

First because the factor loadings are significant and greater than 0.5 (Bagozzi, 1980; Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Hair et al., 2006) and second because the average variance extracted (AVE) for each of the factors is higher than 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Scale reliability is demonstrated because the composite reliability indices for all the dimensions are above 0.6 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988).

The discriminant validity of the constructs considered was evaluated through AVE (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The square root of the AVE between each pair of factors was higher than the estimated correlation between those factors in all cases confirming the scale's discriminant validity.

## 5.2. Hypothesis testing

As recommended by Byrne (2001), multi-group analysis must begin with a suitably tested fit in each of the separate samples. This analysis is conducted prior to the verification of the differences in the parameters that are common to the study variables between the groups considered (Byrne, 2006; Hair et al., 2006). As Table 3 shows, separately the model fits well in the two samples, younger ( $\chi^2=607.934$ ;  $df=130$ ) and older ( $\chi^2=427.652$ ;  $df=130$ ). The second step is the simultaneous estimation of the model in both samples. Again the model also fits adequately ( $\chi^2=1035.586$ ;  $df=260$ ). The third step refers to the equality of the factor loadings in the two groups (metrical invariance). When this restriction is introduced into the model, the model fit is not significantly worse than that of the previous step, as deduced from comparison between the  $\chi^2$  of steps 2 and 3 ( $\Delta\chi^2=10.282$ ;  $\Delta df=19$ ;  $p=0.9456>0.05$ ), thereby confirming the invariance of the factor loadings.

TABLE 3.  
Invariance measurement test.

	$\chi^2$	$df$	$\Delta\chi^2$	$\Delta df$	$p$	RMSEA (90%CI)	SRMR	CFI	NNFI
<b>Individual groups:</b>									
Younger	607.93	130				.003 (.02-.03)	.048	.97	.96
Older	427.65	130				.04 (.03-.05)	.046	.97	.97
<b>Measurement of Invariance:</b>									
Simultaneous model	1035.59	260				.043 (.03-.05)	.047	.97	.97
Model with restricted factor loadings	1045.87	279	10.28	19	.94	.05 (.04-.06)	.052	.97	.96

To test hypotheses 1 to 11, the causal relationships are analysed for the total sample (Table 4). This approach is adequate because the probability of the chi-squared is higher than 0.05 (0.30), NFI (0.98) is close to unity and RMSEA is close to zero (0.01).

TABLE 4.  
Summary results of the structural model.

Hypothesis	Path	Parameter	t-Value	Results
H <sub>1</sub>	Trust → Loyalty	0.36	4.61**	Supported
H <sub>2</sub>	Satisfaction → Trust	0.66	8.62**	Supported
H <sub>3</sub>	Satisfaction → Loyalty	0.18	2.43*	Supported
H <sub>4</sub>	Positive switching costs → Loyalty	0.46	6.61**	Supported
H <sub>5</sub>	Negative switching costs → Loyalty	0.01	0.41	Not supported
H <sub>6</sub>	Trust → Positive switching costs	0.23	2.81**	Supported
H <sub>7</sub>	Negative switching costs → Trust	-0.07	-2.14**	Supported
H <sub>8</sub>	Satisfaction → Positive switching costs	0.24	2.35*	Supported
H <sub>9</sub>	Brand image → Satisfaction	0.85	18.74**	Supported
H <sub>10</sub>	Brand image → Trust	0.18	2.54*	Supported
H <sub>11</sub>	Brand image → Positive switching costs	0.42	2.81**	Supported

Note: Fit of the model:  $\chi^2=147.06$ ;  $df=139$ ,  $P=0.30$ ;  $RMSEA=0.01$ ;  $CFI=0.99$ ;  $NFI=0.98$ ;  $NNFI=0.99$ .

\*  $p<.05$ ; \*\*  $p<.01$

$R^2$  Satisfaction 0.72;  $R^2$  Trust 0.74;  $R^2$  Loyalty 0.75;  $R^2$  Positive switching costs 0.69

The result of the analysis shows that the majority of the relationships hypothesised in the model are supported for the sample as a whole in the direct and positive relationships between trust and loyalty (supporting H1), between satisfaction and trust (supporting H2), between satisfaction and loyalty (supporting H3), between positive switching costs and loyalty (supporting H4), between trust and positive switching costs (supporting H6), between negative switching costs and trust (supporting H7), between satisfaction and positive switching costs (supporting H8), between brand image and satisfaction (supporting H9), between brand image and trust (supporting H10) and between brand image and positive switching costs (supporting H11). The effect of negative switching costs on loyalty is not significant and so H5 is rejected. Furthermore, this result supports H4 which proposes that the effect of positive switching costs on loyalty (0.46) is greater than the effect of negative switching costs on loyalty (not significant).

Next, the existence of significant differences in the causal relationships is estimated (Table 6). The analysis carried out to establish the causal relationships between the variables being studied is adequate because the probability of the chi-squared is higher than 0.05 (0.32), NFI (0.98) is close to unity and RMSEA is close to zero (0.01). Thus age group (younger vs older) in financial services was found to partially moderate the model. Table 5 shows the significant differences between younger and older customers in some of the causal relationships considered in the model.

TABLE 5.  
Moderating effects of age in the proposed relationships.

Path	Younger		Older		$\Delta \chi^2$	$p$	Results
	Parameter	t-Value	Parameter	t-Value			
Trust → Loyalty	0.27	2.36*	0.44	5.16**	4.46	0.03*	Supported
Satisfaction → Trust	0.71	7.71**	0.64	3.90**	1.29	0.25*	Not Supported
Satisfaction → Loyalty	0.20	1.98*	0.24	2.39*	0.07	0.79*	Not Supported
Positive switching costs → Loyalty	0.43	5.25**	0.32	3.81**	5.75	0.02*	Supported
Negative switching costs → Loyalty	0.05	0.74	-0.01	-0.30	0.58	0.44	No supported
Trust → Positive switching costs	0.29	2.40*	0.13	1.44	5.17	0.02*	Supported
Negative switching costs → Trust	-0.14	-3.25	0.06	0.92	11.44	0.00**	Supported
Satisfaction → Positive switching costs	0.24	1.99*	0.19	1.06	4.13	0.04*	Supported
Brand image → Satisfaction	0.81	13.73**	0.89	14.12**	1.43	0.23	No supported
Brand image → Trust	0.19	2.31*	0.18	0.96	0.05	0.83	No supported
Brand image → Positive switching costs	0.33	2.74**	0.56	3.39**	3.95	0.04*	Supported

Note: Fit of the model:  $\chi^2=302.78$ ;  $df=292$ ;  $P=0.32$ ;  $RMSEA=0.01$ ;  $CFI=0.99$ ;  $NFI=0.98$ ;  $NNFI=0.99$ .

Simultaneously latent variables test:  $\Delta \chi^2=34.17$ ;  $\Delta df=11$ ;  $p=0.00033<.05$

\*  $p<.05$ ; \*\*  $p<.01$

In view of the results it can be said that six hypotheses are confirmed entirely (in both the proposed relationship and in the differences between groups): H1, H4, H6, H7, H8 and H11.

Four hypotheses are partially supported (the moderator effect of age has not been confirmed): H2, H3, H9 and H10. Only one hypothesis is completely rejected (in both the proposed relationship and the moderator effect of age): H5.

## 6. Discussion

The purpose of this present study has been to analyse trust in older consumers during a financial crisis. The study makes several contributions. Firstly, it studies the effects of the deep global financial crisis which began in 2008 on consumer trust, analysing an exceptional cycle that has not occurred in western economies for decades. Secondly, it applies the life-course paradigm, which enables the identification of differences between cohorts of age and the most significant variables surrounding trust in different segments in an exceptional period. Thirdly, this study underlines the central role of trust for older consumers and the shield it represents against negative news.

The serious financial crisis has affected the banking sector in particular and eroded consumer trust. Trust, however, continues to play a central role in loyalty among older consumers. The tested model shows that older consumers make decisions linearly, taking fewer variables into account. Thus older consumers' trust only has satisfaction as antecedent and loyalty as the only consequence. In contrast, in younger people, brand image, satisfaction and negative switching costs influence trust which in turn, determines positive switching costs and loyalty. As posited, trust has a greater effect on loyalty among older consumers, due to the predominance of the emotional dimension and the intervention of the three mechanisms that shape their preferences (nostalgia, declining innovativeness and attachment). Accumulated experience and cognitive deficiencies in older consumers leads them to place less trust in external stimuli and rely more on internal factors which makes them less vulnerable to negative news and persuasive campaigns. This finding explains the significantly higher measurements of trust among older consumers.

In a time of financial crisis the loyalty of older consumers is mainly determined by trust. Expectations that the bank will continue to satisfy their future needs and the perceived reliability and integrity of the service provider are essential for older consumers to continue the relationship. In a time of crisis, negative switching costs have no relevance for the loyalty of older consumers, confirming that marketers should not use price appeal to mature consumers to create competitive advantage (Moschis et al, 2003). As in younger people, positive switching costs generate loyalty among older consumers. The difference between the two segments is that the cornerstone of older consumers' loyalty is trust, whereas for younger people it is positive switching costs. Therefore following the life-course paradigm, in times of financial crisis, it appears that positive switching costs become more important for generating loyalty in younger consumers; in older people loyalty begins to depend on emotional variables linked to experience, to the detriment of positive switching costs. Satisfaction appears to be a necessary condition whose importance remains invariable with age. Negative switching costs do not generate loyalty at any age.

In contrast to the hypothesis, this study has found that in a period of crisis positive switching costs are less important for older consumers. Exploring the relations in the model in greater depth shows that in older consumers, the only antecedent of positive switching costs is brand image, and the influence of satisfaction disappears. It would seem that the poor image projected by banks has reduced the social costs of the decision to change thereby reducing the influence of satisfaction. This finding seems to be supported by the fact that brand image ceases to generate trust directly among older consumers (although it is maintained indirectly through satisfaction). This aspect is the first symptom of the shield that surrounds trust and hinders the effects of negative news and a deteriorated brand image.

Thus while switching costs play a very significant role in younger people, their influence is more limited in older consumers. The study has found that negative switching costs are not relevant for older consumers, but in younger people they generate mistrust and do not influence

loyalty. It seems that during a financial crisis the strategy of generating negative switching costs causes mistrust as younger people see them only as obstacles designed to retain them, associating this strategy with the bad banking practices that have come to light with the financial crisis. Negative switching costs can be perceived as opportunistic behaviours performed by suppliers in a position of power (De Matos et al., 2009). Therefore, reductive elements of freedom adversely affect individual trust. In contrast, positive switching costs act as an exit barrier and contribute to loyalty in younger people and older consumers.

In this line the identification of different levels of trust by Guenzi, Johnson and Castaldo (2009) in the retail store is of interest. If a consumer-centric perspective is adopted, customer-to-firm, customer-to-brand, customer-to-product/service, and customer-to-employee relationships can be identified. A model of customer relationship with a store should incorporate not only the focal construct of customer trust in the firm, but also the related constructs of customer trust in the store's salespeople and products. It is therefore possible that trust in the brand and products may have diminished in older consumers, whereas trust in salespeople may have been promoted.

Satisfaction continues to play a central role in the generation of consumer trust and loyalty. No significant differences between the two segments can be found in contrast to the hypothesis. The influence of negative news on episodic satisfaction does not lead to a greater influence on trust and loyalty in younger people. The only difference between the two models refers to the impact of satisfaction on positive switching costs, significant only among younger people, which appears to respond to a consequence of the crisis (episodic satisfaction) and the pre-eminence of the image projected by the banks.

Brand image plays a very relevant role in a time of crisis. It is not only a fundamental antecedent of satisfaction, it also generates positive switching costs (significantly higher among older consumers). In contrast to the hypothesis, brand image does not influence trust in older consumers. The justification may come from the emotional shield which appears to surround the attitudes of older consumers. Older consumers rely more on their experience and their emotions than on information from the surrounding environment. Given the large quantity of negative news, older consumers appear to hide behind an emotional shield full of experiences that protects their key variable, trust. In contrast, younger people are cognitively more sensitive and in a time of crisis their decisions are complex or at least more multivariate than in older consumers.

This work has significant managerial implications. The banks that have based their crisis strategy on generating or maintaining negative switching costs have made a mistake. The refusal to refinance loans with better terms and conditions and the policy of being strict with penalties has generated mistrust among younger people and indirectly, less loyalty. The correct strategy is a customer-friendly orientation used by banks who have looked after their brand image with a long term vision. In a time of crisis, older consumers need to reaffirm their trust in the company and so the service provider must continue to generate cognitive and affective satisfaction. In our opinion, contact staff play a fundamental role in this aspect, as they are the main generator of satisfaction and trust.

The pillars of trust in older consumers are solid as they are based on mechanisms like nostalgia, declining innovativeness and attachment. Older consumer loyalty is more difficult to break because of the conservative nature of their habits and values, but that does not mean that the service company can rest on its laurels thinking that the chain cannot be broken. There is less likelihood of losing an older consumer in a period of crisis than a younger consumer (Lambert-Pandraud and Laurent, 2010). Although the economic environment generates a negative state of opinion, older consumers are fairly impermeable to negative news and they are protected behind their emotional and experiential shield which leads them to continue trusting their traditional brands. Seeing the differences between younger and older consumers, service providers need to adopt a long term orientation with their customers (relationship marketing), given that in periods of financial crisis older consumers could be an important asset. In this regard, older

consumers become a strategic segment for service providers because their loyalty has a solid base.

Caution must be exercised when extending these conclusions to other service contexts. The peculiarities of the financial crisis in the western world and especially the southern countries of the European Union is a very specific context where the effects have been extreme and there has been a lot of negative news since 2008. It is difficult for this situation to occur in another type of services given the strategic nature of the financial sector.

The sample has a limited geographical scope. Spain is in the European Union where the situation in the financial sector is similar to that in other Euro zone countries like Ireland, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Cyprus. Although the crisis in the financial sector has affected all western countries, it has not been as intense as in these countries.

We would also point to a final limitation which is the way the sample has been segmented. The 50 years limit separating older consumers is not an agreed limit. In this regard, we think it would be very interesting to explore the segment of older consumers in greater depth and establish different subsegments. It would also be interesting to adopt the multilevel vision of trust proposed by Guenzi, Johnson and Castaldo (2009), in order to specify more accurately where the erosion of consumer trust has occurred

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# SEGMENTANDO CLIENTES POR SU LEALTAD: UNA APROXIMACIÓN EXPERIENCIAL EN EL COMERCIO MINORISTA DE ROPA<sup>1</sup>

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## RESUMEN

*Cualquier conceptualización de la noción valor es un buen prisma para segmentar mercados, pero los enfoques experienciales lo son aún más ya que de por sí el marketing de experiencias enfatiza la personal e intrínseca relatividad del comportamiento del consumidor. Este trabajo explora la existencia de diferentes segmentos de consumidores de servicios (compradores de moda) a través del conocimiento de qué dimensiones del valor experiencial (eficiencia, calidad, estatus, estima, entretenimiento, estética, ética y escape) influyen en mayor medida en la fidelidad del consumidor hacia el proveedor del servicio (minoristas de moda). Con la ayuda de análisis CHAID, hemos identificado tres segmentos diferentes: los valores emocionales (entretenimiento) y altruistas (ética) parecen ser los más relevantes para la segmentación de los consumidores basándonos en su fidelidad hacia la cadena de venta de ropa. Las conclusiones revelan la utilidad del enfoque de marketing experiencial para hallar segmentos leales en la compra minorista.*

## Palabras clave

*Dimensiones de valor, valor experiencial, lealtad, segmentación, CHAID, comercio minorista*

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## 1. Introducción

De todos los cambios de paradigma del marketing, el enfoque experiencial del comportamiento del consumidor está entre los más frecuentemente revisitados (Gallarza, Gil-Saura y Holbrook, 2011; Woodward y Holbrook, 2013). Como se menciona en un estado del arte sobre el tema “*el marco conceptual del marketing experiencial... parece incorporar una serie de elementos derivados de un largo periodo relativo a su conceptualización del que resulta una vía potencialmente fructífera para aproximarse a los cambios actuales de mercado*” (Arnould, 2007: 185). De hecho, los aspectos experienciales del consumidor son un aspecto crucial para el proveedor tanto de servicios como de productos. En lo que respecta al *retailing*, los aspectos experienciales del comportamiento de compra son reconocidos como potentes conductores de nuestro entendimiento de dicho comportamiento, tanto en la compra *on-line* (e.g. Mathwick, Malhotra y Rigdon, 2001; 2002) como presencial (e.g. Babin, Dardem y Griffin, 1994; Arnold y Reynolds, 2003; Sullivan, Kang y Heitmeyer, 2012). Pero los dos ámbitos están también relacionados, puesto que las experiencias del consumidor en la tienda son cruciales para los vendedores al por menor en multicanal, ya que la lealtad a la tienda es el predictor más fuerte de las intenciones de compra *on-line* (Jones y Kim, 2010).

Como es sabido, el marketing experiencial subraya la relatividad del comportamiento del consumidor, de carácter altamente personal e intrínseco (Holbrook, 1999; Arnould 2007; Woodward y Holbrook, 2013). En consecuencia, la mayoría de enfoques experienciales, desde los pioneros (e.g. Holbrook y Hirschman 1982), hasta los más recientes (e.g. Sullivan, Kang y Heitmeyer, 2012) subrayan la importancia de los aspectos intrínsecos del consumo (personalidad, sentimientos, estados de ánimo) para entender en profundidad las motivaciones experienciales de los consumidores. De ello se desprende que el enfoque experiencial sea una herramienta idónea para la segmentación de mercados.

Con esta literatura como base, el objetivo principal de este trabajo es explorar la existencia de diferentes segmentos de consumidores de servicios (compradores de moda) en relación a su fidelidad hacia el proveedor del servicio (tiendas de ropa). Centrándonos en las relaciones de los consumidores con sus marcas de tiendas de moda, el presente escrito tiene por objetivo la evaluación de la utilidad de las dimensiones de valor experienciales como variables de segmentación de los consumidores (de moda). Basándonos en su fidelidad hacia sus proveedores, nos centramos en identificar las dimensiones de valor experienciales que influyen en mayor medida en la fidelidad del consumidor en una situación específica de servicio (venta al por menor). Lo que este trabajo ofrece como novedad es: a) la consideración de una conceptualización más amplia de valor experiencial multidimensional (a saber, el marco conceptual de Holbrook (1999)), que incluye ocho dimensiones de valor desde nuestro conocimiento nunca antes estudiadas juntas en una misma situación de compra minorista, y b) la búsqueda de relaciones entre estas ocho dimensiones de valor y un comportamiento de lealtad, ofreciendo así un enfoque del comportamiento de compra diferente de la clásica cadena calidad-satisfacción-valor-lealtad.

El trabajo se organiza de la siguiente manera: después de esta introducción, el marco conceptual expone el enfoque experiencial del consumo, la propuesta conceptual elegida para este trabajo (Holbrook, 1999), y la importancia de la fidelidad y del valor para la segmentación de mercados. Después, exponemos la metodología del análisis CHAID, y a continuación se exponen y describen los resultados del análisis. Por último se recapitulan las conclusiones más relevantes de este estudio y se señalan las limitaciones así como las futuras líneas de investigación.

## 2. Marco Conceptual

### 2.1. El enfoque experiencial en el estudio del comportamiento de consumo

El estudio del enfoque experiencial del consumo tiene su origen en los trabajos de los años 80 que defienden la existencia de una dicotomía de valores hedonistas vs. utilitaristas (Holbrook y Hirschman, 1982; Hirschman y Holbrook, 1982). Esta aproximación a la naturaleza conceptual del valor ha tenido, desde entonces, una amplia influencia en el posterior estudio del comportamiento del consumidor (Gallarza et al., 2011; Arnold y Reynolds, 2003). Esta aproximación surge como oposición al

paradigma del proceso de información por el que el comportamiento del consumidor es objetivo y racional. Por el contrario, en el enfoque experiencial, los consumidores se mueven por aspectos más subjetivos, emocionales y simbólicos. Así, no se debe entender el acto de compra y el de consumo como simples hechos funcionales, sino que poseen dimensiones emocionales que deben ser aprehendidas para comprender el fenómeno del consumo en su totalidad. Proponer esta dualidad introducida como decimos en los años 80, en los trabajos de Holbrook y colegas (Holbrook y Hirschman, 1982; Hirschman y Holbrook, 1982), supuso un hito en la historia de la investigación del comportamiento del consumidor: se pudo, con ello, despegar de las concepciones más utilitaristas del comportamiento humano en el mercado, aportando una perspectiva experiencial y fenomenológica del consumo en la que se incluyeron nuevos aspectos como los hedonistas, simbólicos y estéticos.

Lo cierto es que esta dicotomía del valor de consumo, tal y como reconocen Kivetz y Strahilevitz (2001), permite abarcar amplias y muy diversas experiencias. La consideración de una dimensión hedonista de la compra permite arrojar mayor luz sobre determinados consumos como la compra impulsiva y/o compulsiva que resultan difícilmente explicables desde una óptica funcional (Babin et al., 1994; Kivetz y Strahilevitz, 2001, Callarisa et al., 2002, Duman y Mattila, 2005). El debate relanzado en la actualidad sobre la dimensionalidad afectiva/cognitiva del valor plantea interesantes reformulaciones de esta tipología clásica de valor.

Inicialmente, la perspectiva experiencial del valor se percibe como más apropiada para entornos de servicios debido a la importancia de los aspectos psicológicos y sociales del consumo (Sheth, Newman y Gross, 1991; Zeithaml, 1988). Con posterioridad, la adopción de esta perspectiva es la que permite difuminar las diferencias entre las ofertas de productos y servicios, siendo relevante únicamente la noción de experiencia, en la medida en que el consumidor experimenta sensaciones, emociones y recuerdos en su consumo (Holbrook, 1999; Sánchez-Fernández, Iniesta-Bonilla y Holbrook, 2009; Gallarza, Gil-Saura y Holbrook, 2011). Así, la aplicabilidad de la dicotomía utilitarista vs. hedonista puede extenderse a todas las ofertas en el mercado (de servicios o de productos manufacturados). Y de entre todos estos contextos, en donde mayor sentido cobra la aproximación experiencial, es en los llamados híbridos (aquellas ofertas con igual proporción de elementos tangibles e intangibles) donde este juego de percepciones racionales y emocionales ha tenido mayor eco. Estos incluyen principalmente los servicios de ocio y restauración, y la distribución minorista. Entre los primeros, existen relevantes aportaciones empíricas de escalas multidimensionales de valor (e.g. Gallarza y Gil, 2006; Sánchez, Callarisa, Rodríguez y Moliner, 2006; Sánchez-Fernández e Iniesta-Bonilla, 2007), algunas de ellas incluso con vocación de ser válidas en cualquier ámbito de servicio, como los trabajos de Petrick (2002, 2003) que proponen una estructura multidimensional de valor que contempla aspectos sociales, funcionales y emocionales.

Entre los segundos, los entornos de distribución minorista, esta dicotomía de valores utilitaristas vs. hedonistas ha sido ampliamente investigada de manera empírica, con un continuo juego en la combinación de productos tangibles y servicios, que permite una interesante perspectiva del enfoque experiencial. De entre estas aproximaciones empíricas, la escala del valor de compra (*shopping value scale*) de Babin, Darden y Griffin (1994) ha sido una de las más replicadas en diferentes formatos de distribución minorista; a saber, en *centros comerciales* (e.g. Stoel, Wickliffe y Lee, 2004), *grandes almacenes* (e.g. Seo y Lee, 2008), o *tiendas de descuento* (e.g. Carpenter, 2008).

También la propuesta de Sheth et al. (1991) ha sido relevante por su posterior aplicabilidad a entornos minoristas; en ella se distingue un valor *funcional* (como utilidad, ejemplo la fiabilidad, la durabilidad o también el precio), *social* (como un valor simbólico derivado del sentimiento de identidad grupal), *emocional* (como un reconocimiento expreso de la naturaleza afectiva de las evaluaciones de valor), *epistémico* (como la utilidad percibida como forma alternativa de desvelar curiosidad y novedad, y *condicional* (como la utilidad percibida de una alternativa como resultado de circunstancias a las que se enfrenta el consumidor en su toma de decisión). Este trabajo teórico es el que da origen a la famosa escala PERVAL, propuesta por Sweeney y Soutar (2001) y testada inicialmente en *retailing* y utilizada posteriormente por la doctrina para estudiar múltiples formatos de distribución: por ejemplo para *grandes almacenes* (e.g. Grace y O'Cass, 2005), *tiendas de ropa deportiva* (e.g. Chi y Kilduff, 2011), y en su parte más utilitarista, en *supermercados* comparados con *grandes almacenes* (e.g. Wong y Dean, 2009).

De manera más precisa, en lo que respecta a la industria minorista de moda, se ha argumentado que el enfoque experiencial permite analizar beneficios a la vez utilitaristas y hedonistas en la compra física en la tienda (Sullivan y Heitmeyer, 2008). En este sentido, Mathwick et al. (2001) argumentan como los consumidores pueden percibir valor experiencial en la tienda derivado del mobiliario y las evidencias físicas de la disposición de los productos, incluso sin necesidad de ultimar una compra.

Esta dualidad de valores hedonistas vs. utilitaristas ha sido ampliamente utilizada como base para estudios enfocados al análisis de segmentación de mercados (e.g. Arnold y Reynolds, 2003; Seo y Lee, 2008; Wong y Dean, 2009). En realidad, el concepto de valor, en su raíz axiológica, está indefectiblemente unido a la noción de segmentación de mercados, estrategia clave para el marketing (Gallarza et al., 2011), puesto que los consumidores difieren unos de otros en sus percepciones de valor, que son por definición subjetivas. En palabras de Holbrook (1999: 7) “*la personal relatividad del valor de consumo rige nuestra atención como especialistas de marketing, da forma a la lógica de la segmentación de mercados y consecuentemente conduce a la clave para ser efectivos en ellos*”. Retomar la esencia de esta realidad, ontológica para la investigación de mercados, es una de las justificaciones de un trabajo como el presente.

### **2.2. La propuesta integral de Holbrook (1999) sobre la dicotomía utilitarista vs. hedonista**

Uno de los escasos consensos existentes en torno a la conceptualización del valor es su naturaleza multidimensional (Gallarza et al., 2011). Estas dimensiones son concebidas por muchos autores como tipologías de valor, como una consecuencia inmediata de la naturaleza relativa de la noción valor, que varía entre personas, entre productos y entre situaciones (Holbrook, 1999). Así, muchos autores abordan las definiciones de valor de forma conjunta con las tipologías: por ejemplo Woodruff (1997), Holbrook (1999), o Sweeney y Soutar (2001). Esto se debe a que la consideración de tipologías de valor está en la raíz misma de la noción: tan importante como una completa e inequívoca definición de valor es una completa e inequívoca tipología. Además, metodológicamente, el hecho de considerar diferentes dimensiones de valor en una misma experiencia de consumo permite una mejor adaptación a la idiosincrasia de cada individuo consumidor, en la medida que se conciben puntuaciones diferentes para diferentes dimensiones en diferentes individuos.

Como es sabido, por un lado, existe una amplia corriente que entiende el valor como concepto bidireccional, inspirada por el trabajo seminal de Zeithaml (1988) que reconoce el valor como un *trade-off*, es decir un balance personal que el consumidor realiza sobre los beneficios y costes de una opción de mercado. Son muy numerosos los trabajos en esta línea tanto conceptualmente (e.g. Zeithaml y Bitner, 1996) como empíricamente (e.g. Dodds et al., 1991). No obstante esta bidimensionalidad del valor es una aproximación inicial a las tipologías de valor, completada después con otros enfoques de la noción que dan lugar a otras tipologías de valor (emocionales, sociales,...), en un enfoque más multidimensional pero sin hacer necesariamente referencia a un *trade-off*. Entre todas ellas, señalamos por su relevancia la de Babin et al. (1994), y la ya citada escala PERVAL de Sweeney y Soutar (2001), que suponen una sofisticación de la dicotomía básica de valor hedonista y utilitarista, a la que se van añadiendo nuevas dimensiones. En la misma línea, las propuestas de Mathwick et al. (2001; 2002) y la de Yuan y Wu (2008) de corte experiencial pueden también considerarse nuevas formas, más depuradas y complejas, de valores clásicos como los utilitaristas y hedonistas. Todas ellas son una expresión de la contemporaneidad y continua renovación de la investigación del valor. Entre todas ellas, para los objetivos de este trabajo de perspectiva experiencial, y por su carácter pionero e integral, hemos decidido adoptar la propuesta de ocho dimensiones de valor de Holbrook (1999).

Esta propuesta es el resultado de casi dos décadas de investigación (Holbrook y Hirschman, 1982; Holbrook, 1994; 1996; 1999) y ha sido objeto de amplias y continuadas discusiones entre la doctrina (Rust y Oliver, 1996; Babin y Kim, 1996; Oliver, 1999b; Smith, 1999; Brown, 1999). Dada la profundidad y continuidad de esta contribución, podemos considerar el marco del profesor Holbrook como un paradigma, parafraseando el comentario de Smith (1999: 157): “*en definitiva, el marco puede incluso tener el potencial necesario para servir de paradigma para algunos investigadores sobre consumo*”.

La tipología de valor propuesta por Holbrook reconoce tres ejes o dimensiones que permiten clasificar los diferentes tipos de valor que pueden darse en la experiencia de consumo: *valor extrínseco* vs. *intrínseco*, *valor orientado hacia sí mismo* vs. *hacia otros*, y *valor activo* vs. *reactivo*. La combinación de los tres ejes en una matriz da lugar a ocho tipos de valor: eficiencia, excelencia, entretenimiento, estética, estatus, estima, ética y espiritualidad (cf. Cuadro 1).

- Valor extrínseco vs. valor intrínseco: el primero es aquél que se deriva de “*una relación medios-fin en el consumo*”, mientras que el segundo se da cuando la experiencia de consumo es apreciada “*como un fin en sí mismo*” (Holbrook, 1999: 10). Esta dicotomía tiene su raíz en la tipología clásica de valor hedonista vs. utilitarista, aunque supone una cierta sofisticación de ésta. En otros textos se reconocen los términos hedonista, emotivo e intrínseco como muy similares (Babin et al., 1994). En el caso del paradigma de Holbrook, creemos que la consideración de esta dimensión es una forma de refrendar la idea de que el valor es experiencial y de que el sujeto es soberano en el acto de consumo puesto que “*sólo una experiencia de consumo puede ofrecer valor intrínseco. El objeto que sirve como medio para esa experiencia, puede, en el mejor de los casos, poseer valor extrínseco como medio para un fin deseado en sí mismo*” (Holbrook, 1999: 10).
- Valor orientado hacia sí mismo vs. orientado hacia otros: esta dimensión procede de la axiología y es, según Holbrook, la de mayor consenso. Así, el valor es *orientado hacia sí mismo* cuando se valora un aspecto del consumo egoístamente, por el efecto que tiene sobre el sujeto consumidor; el *valor orientado hacia otros*, por el contrario, es aquél que es buscado por su efecto sobre los demás, desde un nivel *micro* (familia, amigos, compañeros) hasta un nivel intermedio (comunidad, país, mundo) e incluso un nivel *macro* (el Cosmos, la Madre Naturaleza). Pese al consenso axiológico, esta dimensión es la que resulta más controvertida, por su difícil aplicación a algunas situaciones de consumo (Oliver, 1999b; Smith, 1999; Leclerc y Schmitt, 1999).
- Valor activo vs. valor reactivo: esta tercera dicotomía corresponde a la actividad desempeñada por el sujeto en la experiencia de consumo; así “*el valor de consumo es reactivo cuando resulta de la aprehensión, de la apreciación, de la admiración o de cualquier otra respuesta hacia un objeto*”, mientras que el valor es *activo* “*cuando lleva consigo cosas hechas por un consumidor en o con un producto como parte de una experiencia de consumo*” (Holbrook, 1999: 11). En esta dicotomía el acento se pone en un eje parecido al de la pasividad/actividad, o el control y la dependencia.

CUADRO 1.  
Dimensiones de valor (Holbrook, 1999)

		<b>Extrínseco</b>	<b>Intrínseco</b>
<b>Orientado hacia sí mismo</b>	Activo	Eficiencia	Entretenimiento
	Reactivo	Excelencia	Estética
<b>Orientado hacia otros</b>	Activo	Estatus	Ética
	Reactivo	Estima	Espiritualidad

### 2.3. La lealtad y el valor percibido, conceptos de utilidad para la segmentación de mercados

Como anunciábamos en la introducción, la justificación y fundamento de este trabajo estriba en que los vínculos existentes entre los clientes leales y las empresas de distribución minorista pueden deberse a la percepción de una experiencia satisfactoria, y que esta experiencia procede de la combinación de valores racionales y emocionales que el proveedor del servicio pone a disposición de sus clientes en el entorno físico de la tienda. Esta forma de entender el comportamiento de *shopping* se espera pueda arrojar luz sobre cuáles son los determinantes de una lealtad a largo plazo de los consumidores de moda minorista.

El concepto de lealtad, desde los trabajos pioneros de Oliver (1980) y también en las décadas que siguieron, se ha definido como una combinación de una actitud positiva y una repetición en el comportamiento, con antecedentes de diferente naturaleza (Dick y Basu, 1994). En este sentido, se han identificado diferentes fases del comportamiento de lealtad, que contemplan cuatro estadios posibles (Oliver, 1999a): lealtad cognitiva, lealtad afectiva, lealtad conativa y lealtad de acción. Consecuentemente, existen diferentes formas de definición de la lealtad percibida del cliente. Entre las

más recientes, en la literatura minorista, destacamos las que se entroncan en la corriente que apuesta por procesos de co-creación de valor, en los que el consumidor se implica activamente en la experiencia. En estos procesos, el tipo de lealtad resultante como vínculo entre el detallista y el cliente es eminentemente afectivo, y adopta expresiones interesantes como “embededness<sup>2</sup>” (Landry, Arnold y Stark, 2005) o “consumer relationship proneness” (i.e. propensión a la relación con el consumidor) (Wong y Dean, 2009).

En lo que respecta a su operativización, la lealtad puede medirse desde dos perspectivas diferentes: la comportamental, que se centra en experiencias pasadas, y la actitudinal que lo hace en acciones futuras (Zins, 2001). Es la segunda la que mayor eco ha encontrado en la literatura de *retailing* (e.g. Omar y Musa, 2011; Zhao y Huddleston, 2012), y es por tanto la adoptada en este trabajo. Así, debido al carácter altamente competitivo de la industria investigada (minoristas de moda), la lealtad es entendida como un compromiso profundo de los clientes para con la recompra del producto o *servicio* “a pesar de los impactos situacionales o las actividades promocionales que obviamente tienen la potencialidad de provocar comportamientos de cambio” (Oliver, 1999a: 34). En este sentido, la medida de lealtad elegida para este trabajo es la de Arnett et al. (2003) porque: a) se concibió para estudiar entornos de *retailing* como es nuestro caso; b) ayuda a proponer medidas de lealtad que pueden usarse como medidas de *benchmarking* “como medio para evaluar el atractivo de los segmentos de mercado” (p. 161); esto es, se corresponde con nuestra aproximación experiencial (al ser una medida relativa: personal, comparativa y situacional).

La elección del valor y de su multidimensionalidad para predecir el comportamiento de lealtad tiene su lógica en el papel crucial que estas dos nociones poseen, situándose ambas en el centro de toda aproximación al comportamiento del consumidor, ya que “los dos (valor y lealtad) coexisten en el objetivo común de construir relaciones estrechas con clientes” (Chu y Shiu, 2009: 99). En consecuencia, tanto conceptual como metodológicamente, usar el valor para predecir la lealtad tiene un refrendo máximo en la literatura de servicios, en la que el valor percibido es muy ampliamente reconocido como un antecedente positivo de la lealtad (e.g. Oliver, 1999a; Grace y O’Cass, 2005; Gallarza et al., 2011).

### 3. Metodología

Para lograr los objetivos de este trabajo, se realiza una encuesta personal a clientes de tiendas de moda con el fin de evaluar sus percepciones de valor experiencial y su lealtad hacia la tienda que acaba de visitar. El cuestionario incluye ítems para medir las dimensiones de valor según la aproximación de Holbrook (1999). Hasta donde tenemos conocimiento, ningún trabajo anterior ha analizado simultáneamente las ocho dimensiones de valor; eficiencia, excelencia (calidad), estatus, estima, entretenimiento, estética, ética y espiritualidad. Así, hemos seleccionado dos indicadores para cada dimensión de las escalas de valor previamente validadas por la literatura con el fin de progresar en la propuesta de ocho dimensiones de Holbrook.

En primer lugar, la escala de *eficiencia* se ha adaptado de Mathwick, Malhotra y Rigdom (2001). Segundo, la dimensión de valor de *excelencia* es reactiva, extrínsecamente auto-orientada. Conceptualmente, se ha relacionado con calidad (Holbrook, 1999) y metodológicamente, para un contexto de servicios, debería reflejar calidad de servicio. La escala utilizada es una adaptación de la escala de calidad de servicio de Sweeney, Soutar y Johnson (1999). En tercer y cuarto lugar, las escalas de *estatus* y *estima* proceden de la escala PERVAL (Sweeney y Soutar, 2001). En quinto lugar, la escala de valor emocional en el PERVAL es la que la conforma la escala de *entretenimiento*. En sexto lugar, la dimensión *estética* se mide a través de una adaptación de la escala de atractivo visual de Mathwick, Malhotra y Rigdom (2001) a entornos minoristas físicos. En séptimo lugar, la dimensión *ética* se mide a través de un indicador sobre transparencia de precios adaptada de Román (2007) y un indicador relacionado con prácticas sostenibles medioambientalmente, con el fin de contemplar nuevas tendencias en el comercio minorista en España (Retail-Index, 2013). Por último, para la dimensión de

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<sup>2</sup> El término “embededness” no tiene traducción directa: corresponde a la idea de total integración y asunción del consumidor en su relación con el detallista.

*espiritualidad*, a imagen de los trabajos anteriores de Mathwick, Malhotra y Rigdom (2001), se realiza una adaptación de dicha variable a entornos de consumo minorista, adoptando otra variable afin denominada *escape*, que recoge la idea de desconexión y de huida de la rutina, experimentada durante una compra de naturaleza intrínseca, hedonista y experiencial. Con respecto a la escala de lealtad, se ha utilizado la de Arnett et al. (2003). Todos los ítems han sido medidos en una escala Likert de 7 puntos y se presentan en la Tabla 1. Adicionalmente, se ha incluido una serie de variables de clasificación.

TABLA 1.  
Variables, indicadores y fuentes utilizadas

Variable y fuente	Indicadores
<b>EFICIENCIA</b>	
Mathwick, Malhotra y Rigdom, (2001). Eficiencia (ítems 1 y 2)	Comprar en esta tienda es una forma eficiente de gestionar mi tiempo
	Comprar en esta tienda hace la vida más fácil
<b>CALIDAD DE SERVICIO</b>	
Sweeney, Soutar y Johnson (1999). Calidad de servicio funcional (ítems 1 y 2)	Los empleados de esta tienda son corteses.
	Los empleados de esta tienda están deseosos de ayudar
<b>ESTATUS</b>	
Sweeney y Soutar (2001). PERVAL, Valor social (ítems 3 y 4)	Comprar en esta tienda da una buena impresión de mi a otras personas
	Comprar en esta tienda me aporta aprobación social
<b>ESTIMA</b>	
Sweeney y Soutar (2001). PERVAL, Valor Social (ítems 1 y 2)	Comprar en esta tienda me ayuda a sentirme aceptado
	Comprar en esta tienda mejora la forma en que me perciben
<b>ENTRETENIMIENTO</b>	
Sweeney y Soutar (2001). PERVAL, Valor emocional (ítems 1 y 4)	Disfruto comprando en esta tienda
	Comprar en esta tienda me hace sentir bien
<b>ESTÉTICA</b>	
Mathwick, Malhotra y Rigdom, (2001). Atractivo visual (ítems 1 y 3)	La forma en que esta tienda dispone sus productos es atractiva
	Me gusta la estética que tiene esta tienda
<b>ETICA</b>	
Román (2007). No engaño (ítem 1)	Esta tienda exagera los beneficios y características de sus ofertas (ítem invertido)
Ad hoc	Esta tienda con sus acciones protege el medioambiente
<b>ESCAPE</b>	
Mathwick, Malhotra y Rigdom, (2001). Escape (ítems 1 y 3)	Comprar en esta tienda me permite desconectarme de todo
	Me implico tanto cuando compro en esta tienda que me olvido de todo lo demás
<b>LEALTAD</b>	
Arnett, Laverie y Meiers (2003). Lealtad al minorista (escala completa)	Me considero un cliente leal a la tienda XYZ
	Cuando compro ropa, la tienda XYZ es mi primera elección
	No compraré en otras tiendas de ropa si puedo comprar lo mismo en la tienda XYZ
	Aunque encuentre productos similares en otras tiendas, suelo comprar en la tienda XYZ

Los clientes minoristas en la muestra han sido seleccionados aleatoriamente y entrevistados personalmente a la salida de la tienda. Se han considerado las tres cadenas de tiendas de ropa más populares en España (i.e. H&M, Zara y Mango), en función de su relevancia y posicionamiento diferenciador en el mercado español y europeo (Retail-Index, 2013). La muestra final consta de 180 cuestionarios válidos obtenidos en una región española durante febrero y marzo de 2013.

Para identificar los segmentos de clientes, se aplica una Detección Automática de Interacciones (*Automatic Interaction Detection* o AID) considerando la lealtad como la variable clave en el proceso de segmentación. El método AID es una técnica de análisis estadístico no paramétrica que estudia la relación de dependencia entre una variable dependiente y diversas variables explicativas que opera



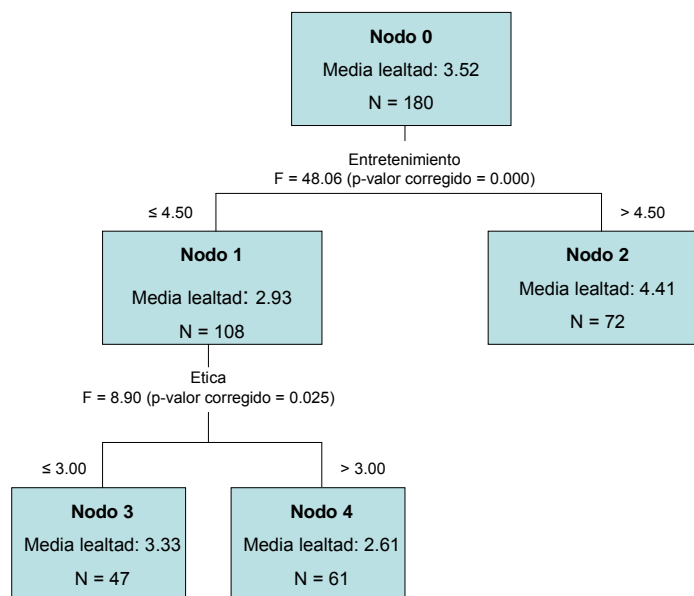
## SEGMENTANDO CLIENTES POR SU LEALTAD: UNA APROXIMACION EXPERIENCIAL...

secuencialmente a través de análisis de varianza, para detectar aquellas variables independientes que contribuyen en mayor medida a explicar la variabilidad en la variable dependiente (Kass, 1980). En particular, el procedimiento CHAID subdivide un conjuntos de datos en segmentos exclusivos y exhaustivos, comparado a través del estadístico *chi*-cuadrado (Magidson, 1993). En el presente estudio, el algoritmo CHAID ha sido utilizado para caracterizar la lealtad del cliente basándose en las dimensiones de valor. Adicionalmente, se utiliza el análisis de la varianza (ANOVA) para comparar los segmentos resultantes con respecto a otras variables.

### 4. Resultados

El algoritmo CHAID ha sido aplicado considerando la lealtad hacia el minorista como la variable dependiente, y las ocho dimensiones de valor (i.e. eficiencia, calidad de servicio, estatus, estima, entretenimiento, estética, ética y escape) como variables independientes. Los resultados se muestran en la Figura 1. A partir del algoritmo CHAID, se identifican tres segmentos finales de clientes de establecimientos minoristas de ropa. Para caracterizar cada segmento final, contrastamos la existencia de las diferencias entre los segmentos en cuanto a sus puntuaciones en lealtad y las dimensiones de valor (Tabla 2).

FIGURA 1.  
Árbol de clasificación generado por el algoritmo CHAID



Estimación de riesgo: 1.885. Error estándar: 0.165

TABLA 2.  
Variables de clasificación CHAID: Valores medios y diferencias significativas

Variables CHAID	1	2	3	F	Diferencias significativas entre subgrupos $\alpha = 0.05^*$
<i>Variable dependiente: Lealtad</i>	4.41	3.33	2.61	28.34	1-2, 1-3, 2-3
<i>Variables independientes: dimensiones de valor</i>					
Calidad de servicio	5.89	5.16	5.17	7.04	1-2, 1-3
Entretenimiento	5.63	3.32	3.14	126.50	1-2, 1-3
Estima	3.15	1.62	1.74	25.87	1-2, 1-3
Estatus	3.01	1.56	1.73	20.90	1-2, 1-3

Eficiencia	4.82	3.06	3.54	25.40	1-2, 1-3
Estética	5.86	4.50	4.81	27.09	1-2, 1-3
Escape	3.44	2.20	2.44	11.99	1-2, 1-3
Ética	3.80	2.21	4.16	77.34	1-2, 1-3, 2-3
<b>Variables de clasificación (%)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Chi<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>p-valor</b>
<b>Género</b>					
- Hombre	5.6	10.6	13.1	2.31	0.315
- Mujer	94.4	89.4	86.9		
<b>Edad</b>				15.57	0.112
- Menor de 26 años	29.2	36.2	21.3		
- 26-35 años	19.4	17.0	16.4		
- 36-45 años	19.4	10.6	14.8		
- 46-55 años	16.7	25.5	18.0		
- 56-65 años	13.9	4.3	26.2		
- Mayor de 65 años	1.4	6.4	3.3		
<b>Nivel de estudios</b>				2.42	0.659
- Educación primaria	7.0	6.5	11.5		
- Educación secundaria	36.6	43.5	31.1		
- Educación superior	56.3	50.0	57.4		
<b>Nº consumidores</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>61</b>		
<b>%</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>33.9</b>		

\* Para contrastar la significatividad de las diferencias entre los segmentos de consumidores, se calcula el test post-hoc de comparación múltiple de Tukey. Sólo se muestran las diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los grupos con  $p < 0.05$ .

Respecto de la variable dependiente para el algoritmo CHAID (i.e. lealtad de cliente hacia el minorista de moda), se observa que segmento 1 (i.e. nodo 2 en la Figura 1) es el grupo más numeroso, representando 40% de la muestra total, mostrando una puntuación media significativamente más alta en comparación con el resto de grupos. En contraste, el segmento 3 (i.e. nodo 4) muestra un valor medio en la lealtad del cliente significativamente más bajo, mientras que el segmento 2 (i.e. nodo 3) se encuentra en una posición intermedia. En concreto, en este proceso de segmentación, el algoritmo CHAID identifica las dimensiones de entretenimiento y ética como las más pertinentes para diferenciar los segmentos de clientes. Como primer resultado, en el marco de la discusión entre valores hedonistas y utilitaristas como inductores del comportamiento de compra y de la lealtad (e.g. Mathwick et al., 2001; Seo y Lee, 2008), nuestros hallazgos muestran un predominio claro de los valores intrínsecos frente a los extrínsecos (i.e. destacan los aspectos afectivos y hedonistas de la experiencia de compra en el caso de ropa y complementos). Estos resultados se encuentran, en general, en línea con trabajos anteriores donde las emociones experimentadas en la tienda influyen sobre las preferencias del consumidor (Arnold y Reynolds, 2003). Sin embargo, nuestro estudio va más allá, al mostrar que la combinación de valores orientados hacia sí mismo (entretenimiento) y orientados hacia otros (ética) permite explicar el comportamiento de consumo y, de esta forma, definir diversos segmentos de consumidores, que se encuentran motivados por diferentes razones de índole hedonista (principalmente diversión y cuestiones morales).

Por lo que respecta a las dimensiones de valor como variables independientes, en general, los clientes que pertenecen al segmento 1 (i.e. el grupo con los niveles más altos de lealtad) muestran también puntuaciones más altas para el resto de dimensiones de valor en comparación con los otros dos segmentos de clientes, excepto para ética, para la que se encuentran en una posición intermedia. Por tanto, el segmento más leal muestra puntuaciones significativamente más altas en su valoración del servicio proporcionado por el detallista en términos de calidad de servicio, entretenimiento, estatus, estima, eficiencia, estética, y espiritualidad como vía de “escape”.

En cambio, los segmentos 2 y 3 sólo se diferencian entre sí y con respecto al segmento 1 gracias a la valoración de la dimensión ética por parte de sus clientes. En particular, el segmento 3, aquel que reúne los clientes menos leales, es el que muestra la puntuación más alta en ética, mientras que el segmento 2 ofrece las puntuaciones más bajas para ética, y el segmento 1 (clientes altamente leales) se sitúa en una posición intermedia. Los clientes del segmento 3, que representan un 33.9% de la muestra total, parecen ser más leales a sus propios principios, valores y concepciones acerca de qué prácticas son correctas o incorrectas en el comercio minorista de ropa en lugar de ser fieles a la enseña o marca comercial. Este grupo de consumidores probablemente se muestre altamente preocupado por el uso de

reclamos centrados en cuestiones medioambientales por parte del minorista (p.e. prácticas ecológicas sobre el uso de bolsas de plástico, uso de materiales orgánicos) así como por una política de precios justos. Por último, en un análisis adicional, se observa que las variables sociodemográficas (género, edad y nivel de educación) no muestran diferencias significativas. Como ha sido señalado en la literatura previa, las variables tradicionalmente consideradas para la segmentación ya no son tan útiles para identificar grupos diferenciados de clientes (Yoon y Kim, 2000; Story y Hess, 2006), como queda demostrado en el caso que nos ocupa. No obstante, esta cuestión se encuentra lejos de estar zanjada, en la medida en que otros trabajos que evalúan el efecto de las variables sociodemográficas en las percepciones de valor de compra encuentran efectos significativos; así, Seo y Lee (2008) encuentran que la clase social modera los valores de compra de manera diferente en función del formato comercial (en concreto, se observa un efecto moderador importante en grandes almacenes y no significativo en tiendas de descuento).

### 5. Conclusiones

La literatura en el ámbito del comercio minorista señala que la comprensión de los comportamientos basados en el valor constituye un desafío de creciente importancia para los gestores de establecimientos detallistas (Sullivan, Kang, y Heitmeyer, 2012). La experiencia de consumo descrita en este trabajo, y las particulares dimensiones de valor descritas en el mismo – el modelo de ocho dimensiones de valor de Holbrook (1999) – presentan resultados de interés tanto para académicos como para profesionales. Según nuestros hallazgos, hoy en día, los clientes de establecimientos minoristas de moda esperan, por la comparación permanente y siempre posible con los competidores, más y mejores servicios, experiencias, beneficios y por tanto más y mejores valores de la compañía. A partir de una aproximación experiencial como la nuestra, los clientes no buscan únicamente comprar un producto, sino que desean cubrir sus necesidades emocionales y altruistas con productos beneficiosos y valiosos así como experiencias lúdicas. Además, de los resultados obtenidos entendemos que la lealtad del cliente y el valor percibido derivado de la relación con el detallista son dos criterios válidos para la segmentación de clientes en el comercio minorista de moda, de manera que pueden facilitar las decisiones ejecutivas en cuanto a sus políticas de marketing.

En el presente trabajo se han identificado tres segmentos de clientes que difieren en su lealtad declarada al establecimiento detallista y su valoración de las distintas dimensiones de valor. En particular, la emoción (entretenimiento o “play” en inglés) y el altruismo (ética) parecen ser las variables más pertinentes para segmentar a los clientes de tiendas de moda en función de su lealtad a la cadena de tiendas. La caracterización de segmentos de clientes nos permite concluir que los clientes altamente leales muestran significativamente puntuaciones más altas para todos los tipos de valor, a excepción de la dimensión ética, en la que destacan los clientes menos leales. Por tanto, en primer lugar, los directores de tiendas deberían concentrar sus esfuerzos en crear una atmósfera que elicite emociones positivas en los visitantes de la tienda en conexión con su marca y surtido. Esto apoya la importancia de la aproximación experiencial en el proceso de compra en el sector del comercio minorista de moda. En segundo lugar, los detallistas deberían proporcionar a sus clientes evidencia acerca de la misión, valores y prácticas éticas de la compañía, y transformar aquellos clientes con nivel bajo de lealtad y altamente preocupados por cuestiones éticas en clientes leales.

Sin embargo, las variables sociodemográficas (i.e. género, edad, nivel educativo) no muestran diferencias significativas entre los distintos segmentos de clientes, mientras las variables relacionales como lealtad y valor permiten a los minoristas de moda definir grupos de clientes que difiere en la intensidad de sus percepciones del valor proporcionado por el detallista. La discusión referida a las semejanzas y discrepancias con otros trabajos acerca de los valores de compra experiencial (e.g. Seo y Lee, 2008) nos sugiere la necesidad de estudiar la combinación de criterios sociodemográficos y psicográficos, y sus efectos en los valores de compra y la lealtad del cliente hacia el establecimiento.

### 6. Limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación

Cabe señalar diversas limitaciones relacionadas tanto con el marco teórico como con el estudio empírico. En primer lugar, como se destacó en nuestra introducción, la aproximación experiencial ha sido una de las áreas más fructíferas en la investigación del comportamiento del consumidor, siendo para algunos investigadores como la única perspectiva válida. Así, resulta conceptualmente muy difícil de aprehender, en un único esfuerzo de revisión de la literatura, una noción de experiencia del consumidor desarrollada en su integridad (Arnould, 2007).

Segundo, la elección del marco conceptual de Holbrook sobre el valor es un paso metodológico que asume que el valor es un beneficio completamente libre de coste, representado por una función de preferencia independiente del precio (Holbrook, 1999). El tiempo es el único coste no monetario (evaluado como parte de la eficiencia) que nuestro trabajo considera, si bien en la literatura en el ámbito de los servicios y del comportamiento del consumidor (e.g. Cronin, Brady y Hult, 2000) se viene señalando desde hace muchos años la existencia de una relación negativa entre sacrificios y lealtad (a través de valor y satisfacción). Estudios posteriores acerca de la capacidad de los valores de compra experiencial como criterios de segmentación para explicar la lealtad hacia el minorista deberían incluir otros costes monetarios y no monetarios, diferentes del tiempo (p.e. ruido u olores, que deberían ser considerados desde una aproximación experiencial, en la medida en que se relacionan con nuestros sentidos).

Tercero, la forma de hacer operativas las variables en escala contempla limitaciones en el número (sólo dos indicadores por dimensión) y en las fuentes, ya que cuatro de las ocho escalas de valor han sido adaptada de un contexto de compra on-line a entornos off-line (*eficiencia, estética, escape y ética*). Según nuestros resultados, la última de las dimensiones, i.e. ética, debería ser explorada en mayor medida, con escalas más comprehensivas procedentes de la literatura (implicando aspectos de cumplimiento y fiabilidad); aproximaciones adicionales más amplias, completadas con el examen de variables adicionales, podrían enriquecer la visión real proporcionada en este estudio. En particular, motivaciones de compra, variables psicográficas o rasgos de la personalidad del consumidor, como implicación, carácter innovador, autoexpresión e impulsividad, pueden jugar un papel importante en la segmentación de clientes en el comercio minorista de moda, en la línea de Cardoso et al. (2010).

Por último, la consideración conjunta de los conceptos de valor y lealtad sugieren vías aún no exploradas en el contexto del comercio minorista. La consideración de otros grupos de interés diferentes de los clientes, como empleados de contacto y/o líderes de opinión (personal shoppers, blogueros de moda...) puede alentar futuros estudios acerca del valor experiencial en contextos interpersonales, poniendo mayor interés en las dimensiones sociales de la compra. La inclusión de otros grupos de interés en esta industria de moda "stakeholders" puede ser contrastada con el valor percibido y la lealtad del cliente. Esta clase de estudio comparado nos debería proporcionar ideas adicionales sobre los procesos reales de co-creación de valor.

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# THE IMPACT OF EXTERNAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE CONSUMER'S MULTICHANNEL SEARCH EXPERIENCE AND DECISION: THE MODERATING ROLE OF MOTIVATION TO TOUCH

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## ABSTRACT

*Searching for information online and then buying the product offline is the most extended shopping behavior among online users. With the advent of new technologies, consumers perceive an enhanced control and power during the purchase process. One of the main innovative elements that new technologies have incorporated into the purchase process is the ubiquitous access to information generated by other customers about the product. Nevertheless, at the physical store consumers face a new environment which may influence their behavior. The aim of this research is to analyze how online customer recommendations, and offline salesman recommendations, affect the consumer's search experience and decision in a multichannel setting based on an online-offline sequence. The moderating role of the motivation to touch the product is also examined. The results of two studies show that the combination of an online search and an offline purchase improves the consumers' purchase experience. Moreover, external recommendations can influence the outcomes of the search experience and decision to a great extent, although these effects depend on the motivation to touch the product.*

## Keywords:

Multichannel shopping, confidence, customer recommendations, salesman recommendations, motivation to touch



## 1. Introduction

The shopping environment is being affected by a dramatic proliferation of new channels through which customers can interact with retailers (Neslin et al., 2006). Consumers can easily combine different channels to search for the information about products, corroborate it and/or purchase them. Specifically, the most extended behavior among online users is based on an online information search and a subsequent visit to the physical store to purchase the product (Zhang et al. 2010; Hsiao, Yen and Li, 2012; Sevitt and Samuel, 2013). In this way, the advances in information technology and the new consumer information needs are driving the companies to implement new routes to interact with customers. One of the most beneficial innovations that new technologies have incorporated into the consumer's purchase process is the access to other consumers' opinions and evaluations in anytime and anywhere (Henning-Thurau et al., 2010). However, despite the great body of research analyzing the effects of traditional word of mouth, and of electronic word of mouth in e-commerce, there is a lack of research on how the opinions of other customers impact on consumer's purchase behavior at the physical outlet. With the aim of filling this gap, this research examines the consumer's purchase decision process based on the combination of the online and physical channels. Specifically, a new framework is proposed, namely the Multichannel Search Experience and Decision (MSED), in which the consumer first searches for information on the Internet and then goes to the store to confirm the information and make a decision with a high degree of confidence. Within this framework, we analyze how online customers' recommendations help the consumer to improve their multichannel shopping experience in terms of satisfaction and confidence, and how offline recommendations made by salespeople confronts with this initially generated impression of the product. Moreover, the moderating role of the motivation to touch the product is examined.

## 2. Conceptual Framework: The Multichannel Search Experience and Decision

Our demarcation of the multichannel behavior is in line with recent definitions developed by the literature, specifically the research shopper proposed by Scott Neslin and colleagues (e.g., Verhoef et al., 2007; Neslin and Shankar, 2009). These authors refer to this type of behavior as "the propensity of consumers to research the product in one channel (e.g., the Internet), and then purchase it through another channel (e.g., the store)" (Verhoef et al., 2007; p. 129). Although the definition does not treat the Internet as the exclusive channel to search for information, it could be considered as the most suitable medium to research products. The physical store is (still) the most preferred channel to carry out purchases (Chen, Jiang and Hsiao, 2008).

The Multichannel Search Experience and Decision (MSED henceforth) is defined as the combination of the online and offline channels in which the consumer firstly search for information online, and secondly confirm the information offline and makes the decision with a high degree of confidence. In this buying behavior, we analyze the stages prior to the consumer's choice (information search and evaluation of alternatives, i.e. purchase intentions), purchase decision, and post-purchase evaluation of the experience. Specifically, we focus the analysis on two key outcomes of the MSED: search-process satisfaction and choice confidence. Search-process satisfaction is defined as the satisfaction with the information search process (Creyer and Kozup, 2003). Consumers may perceive value of the purchase experience (Davis, Spohrer and Maglio, 2011; Zeithaml, 1988), and they experience satisfaction not only with the product but also with the shopping decision process itself. This affective evaluation may affect willingness to shop at a given store and/or channel (Zhang and Fitzsimons, 1999; Montoya-Weiss, Voss and Grewal, 2003). Confidence is a mental state of certainty with which a product, brand, or purchase situation is evaluated (Tormala, Rucker and Seger, 2008). For this research, achieving confidence represents an approaching goal (Heitmann et al., 2007) that motivates the MSED. The elimination in information asymmetries and the enhanced control over the purchase process allow consumers to use the online and the offline channels to arrive at a decision with a high degree of confidence. When consumers exert effort to systematically process the information and use more complete decision strategies, confidence in decision making arises

(Bettman, Luce and Payne, 1996). Thus, choice confidence is viewed as an important outcome of the multichannel shopping based on an online-offline search sequence, reflecting the extent to which the consumers may feel that they have performed the combination of media that allows them to arrive at the best decision.

We follow Dholakia et al.'s framework (2010) for studying the multichannel consumer behavior. Consumers bring several particularities with them that may affect their interaction with the physical store. In this research, consumers bring an initial impression of the product formed in a previous online interaction, which is confronted and/or confirmed through a physical experience at the store. In addition, consumers encounter new elements at the physical store that may influence their final evaluations and decisions (Dholakia et al., 2010). In this context, consumers may encounter a new alternative which can be compared to the previously considered for the purchase. Thus, we examine the differences in purchase intentions and choice at the physical store between a product initially considered in the online channel (target product) and a new product (rival) which has the potential to take part into the consideration set. The goal is to determine the stability of the initial preference and the outcomes of the experience. Moreover, this research analyzes how external recommendations, provided by other customers or the retailer's sales force, influence the MSED. We analyze whether the presence of online customer reviews help consumers to reinforce their impression about the product, improving their search experience and decision. On the other hand, we examine how the relative stability of the consumer's opinion about the product is affected when he or she receives a salesman's recommendation against it. Finally, the motivation to touch the product is examined as a possible moderator of the multichannel shopping behavior.

### 3. Hypotheses

In the multichannel context, several authors have analyzed the effects of different types of virtual experiences and direct experiences, as well as the differential impact of sequential combinations of online and offline experiences (Daugherty, Li and Biocca, 2008; Griffith and Chen, 2004; Ken, Liao and Yang, 2012; Li, Daugherty and Biocca, 2001, 2003; McCabe and Nowlis, 2001). Past research generally support the benefits derived from the combination of virtual and direct experiences in an online-offline sequence, compared to each one in isolation, in consumer's knowledge about the product, brand attitude and purchase intentions. If the individual establish a favorable impression of the product through an initial virtual experience, this evaluation may be enhanced once he/she obtains a direct experience with it (Daugherty et al., 2008). In the same way, given the lack of previous experiences with other products available in the physical store, it is expected that the purchase intentions toward a new, rival product will be less favourable than toward the target product. In this way, this research aims at replicating previous literature by showing a positive effect of the combination of online and offline experiences on the consumer's purchase intentions. Also, we try to extend previous research by analyzing the consumer's choice of the product. If the consumer combines the online and offline channels to reinforce the idea that the product considered is the best to match with their needs and goals, the choice of this product, compared to new alternatives, is expected to be higher.

*Hypothesis 1: Purchase intentions toward the product will be higher when the consumer searches for information online and then confirms the information offline than when the consumer has only (a) an online interaction, or (b) a physical inspection, with the product.*

*Hypothesis 2: The choice of a product will be higher when the consumer searches for information online and then confirms the information offline than when the consumer has only a physical inspection of a product.*

Following the same reasoning, we propose that the incorporation of the online channel to offline purchases allows the consumer to face the purchase-decision process with a high degree of information and power (Van Bruggen et al., 2010), thus improving the resulting outcomes of their experience. In this way, the consumer's search-process satisfaction may increase after having a physical interaction with a product previously considered on the online environment. The multichannel shopping behavior is a step-by-step process in which consumers evaluate the information in one channel and later updates it with information obtained in another channel

(McCabe and Nowlis, 2001). If the consumer visits the physical store in order to overcome the lack of physical interaction with products of the online medium, it may be expected that the satisfaction with the search process will increase once the direct experience takes place.

*Hypothesis 3: Search-process satisfaction will be higher when the consumer searches for information online and then confirms the information offline than when the consumer has only an online interaction with the product.*

In addition, the multichannel shopper defined within the MSED framework combines the virtual and physical channels to make choices with a high degree of confidence. Information processing literature establishes that consumers carry out exhaustive information searches and analyze every piece of information carefully with the goal of being confident in their judgments (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Petty, Briñol, and Tormala, 2002; Tormala et al., 2008). In multichannel shopping processes, consumers exert a certain degree of physical and cognitive effort to search for information in the online and physical channels. We expect that when consumers choose a product which has been researched through the combination of the online and offline channels, will be more confident in their choice than when consumers choose a product which is only evaluated at the physical store.

*Hypothesis 4: The level of choice confidence will be higher in a product for which the consumer searches for information online and then confirms the information offline than in a product whose search experience has been based only on the physical inspection.*

We focus on online product reviews as a particular form of electronic word-of-mouth (Chen and Xie, 2008; Lee, Park, and Han, 2006). Online product reviews are generated by other consumers who have acquired the product and used it, and communicate their experiences, evaluations, and opinions about it (Park et al., 2007). Specifically, and taking into account our research proposal, we focus on positive online product reviews, which are intended to favor and reinforce individuals' preferences towards it (Chevalier and Mayzlin, 2006). In this way, any persuasive attempt may have assimilation or contrast effects on consumers (Mason, Conrey and Smith, 2007). According to Janseen and Jager (2001), assimilation effects are likely to occur when the consumer's goal is to form an accurate judgment of the object. This research argues that the multichannel shopper combines the virtual and physical channel in order to form an accurate impression of the product so that it matches with their goals and needs. If the consumer is committed to accomplish with this objective, the positive information of an online product review tends to be consistent with this tendency (Khare, Labrecque, and Asare, 2011). Therefore, we expect that the presence of a positive product review posted by a customer online will have a positive impact on the consumer's MSED. The information generated by other consumers may be considered as more reliable and relevant than that from the company, because it comes from people who -a priori- do not respond to commercial interests (Park et al., 2007). Purchase intentions and the choice of the initially considered product should be higher in the presence of this type of external recommendations. Moreover, consumers may value the information obtained through customer reviews, experiencing increased levels of satisfaction with the search process. Finally, given the reinforcing effect that the customer review may have on the consumer's impression of the target product's adequacy, we propose a positive effect of this external recommendation on the confidence in the choice of target product.

*Hypothesis 5: The presence (versus absence) of a positive online customer recommendation in the MSED will have a positive influence on (a) purchase intentions, (b) choice, (c) search-process satisfaction, and (d) choice confidence.*

This research examines the effects of a salesman's recommendation which does not support but goes against the initial impression of the consumer. Taking into account that the combination of different media empowers consumers to obtain product knowledge and generate a stable impression of the product, it seems interesting to examine how persuasive attempts that consumers may encounter at the physical store affect the relative stability of their impression of the product formed in a previous online interaction. The influence of salespeople's recommendations may depend on the fact that the consumer has already formed an initial preference toward the product on the Internet. Individuals may implement different strategies when interacting with salespeople, with the goal of obtaining a high degree of confidence in the purchase of the product or defending themselves from their persuasive attempts (Kirmani and

Campbell, 2004). When consumers have established preferences toward a product, the reception of salespeople's recommendation against it may result in a rejection of the recommendation; furthermore, it may result in a reinforcement of the preferences toward the product initially considered. Fitzsimons and Lehmann (2004) demonstrated that an expert recommendation against a dominant option, or against a preliminary considered alternative, resulted in a "reactance-style" response. Rather than adjusting their decisions according to the expert recommendation or simply ignoring it, a backlash occurred such that an increase in the choice of the option that was recommended against was observed. This negative reaction is also consistent with the contrastive response of consumers to persuasive attempts (Khare et al., 2011). Furthermore, the recommendation against the initially considered alternative provoked an increased level of choice confidence of this alternative rejected by the recommendation. The authors showed that these effects are especially evidenced when the degree of involvement was high. Consumers in the MSED will experience reactance when receiving the salesman's recommendation. Purchase intentions, choice, and choice confidence in the target product are expected to be higher when the consumer receives a salesman's recommendation. However, one of the affective responses derived from reactance is reduced satisfaction with the decision process and increased difficulty in making a decision (Fitzsimons and Lehmann, 2004).

*Hypothesis 6: The presence (versus absence) of an offline salesman recommendation against the product initially considered in the MSED will have (a) a positive influence on purchase intentions toward the target product, (b) a positive influence on the choice of the target product, (c) a negative influence on the search-process satisfaction, and (d) and positive influence on choice confidence of the target product.*

Motivation to touch the product is considered a source of variation in consumer behavior (Citrin et al., 2003; Peck and Childers, 2003a; Dholakia et al. 2010). Consumers differ in their intrinsic motivation to touch the product (i.e. Need for Touch; Peck and Childers, 2003a) which may determine the evaluation obtained after a direct experience with the product differently. For example, consumers with a high motivation to touch the product obtain more confidence in their judgments after a direct experience with the product, whereas low motivated consumers had the same levels irrespective of touching the product (Grohmann, Spangenberg and Sprout, 2007).

When the motivation to touch the product is high, we may expect that consumers will pay special attention to the information obtained through the physical interaction. Tactile information is highly diagnostic under this circumstance (Grohmann et al., 2007). Consumers value it and may rely on it to a greater extent than other information sources to form a final decision. Therefore, when the motivation to touch the product is high, either stimulated internally by the consumer or externally by the situation, the influence of external recommendations will be rather low. However, when the motivation to touch the product is low, the consumer may rely on other information sources to achieve at the right decision. In this way, one of main advantages of the physical shopping environment is derived from the possibility of interacting with the sales team and receiving their recommendations (Frambach, Roest and Krishnan, 2007). In situations in which the physical interaction with the product does not provide with valuable information to consumers, receiving the salesman's recommendation could be viewed as a positive aspect of the shopping experience. Recommendations may serve to reduce the effort required and the uncertainty in the decision making process, increasing the satisfaction with the decision-making process and increasing the degree of confidence in it (Fitzsimons and Lehmann, 2004). We expect different effects of the salesman's recommendation on the resulting outcomes of the MSED, depending on the motivation to touch the product.

*Hypothesis 7: When the motivation to touch the product is high, the influence of a customer recommendation on the consumer's (a) purchase intentions, (b) choice, (c) search-process satisfaction, and (d) choice confidence, will be lower than when the motivation to touch the product is low.*

*Hypothesis 8: The motivation to touch the product will moderate the impact of a salesman recommendation on the consumer's (a) purchase intentions, (b) choice, (c) search-process satisfaction, and (d) choice confidence.*

## 4. Methodology

Two studies examine the relationships proposed. In the first study, we analyze how the presence of a customer recommendation in the online search episode, operationalized by means of a positive review of the product, influences the subsequent physical interaction with the product. At the physical encounter with the product, the differences with respect to a new alternative and the effects of a salesman's recommendation against the product initially considered are examined. In addition, the motivation to touch the product is included into the analyses by means of measuring the consumer's internal motivation. In this way, Need for Touch (NFT henceforth) is defined as the individual's "preference for the extraction and utilisation of information obtained through the haptic system" (Peck and Childers 2003a; p. 431). In the second study, the customer recommendation is received at the same moment as the physical interaction is taking place. Mobile technologies allow consumer to access this type of online recommendations at the physical store. The introduction of a rival product and the salesman's recommendation against the target product are also analyzed. Moreover, the motivation to touch the product is operationalized extrinsically by using different product types.

### 4.1. Study 1

The design of the experiment was full factorial, with 2 (online review: yes vs. no) x 2 (salesman recommendation: yes vs. no) between-subjects conditions. Participants were one hundred online users (44% male; between 18 and 35 years old) with a representative profile of the indices of Internet penetration and experience (e.g. Lin et al., 2011; ONTSI 2010). Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (cell sizes ranged from 22 to 27). Need for Touch was measured as a within-subjects factor. The context of the study was the purchase of a smartphone in a realistic shopping environment. The choice of smartphones was deemed as appropriate since this type of products is especially attractive to the demographic sample. In addition, both search and experience attributes are important for their evaluation (Gupta and Harris 2010). Thus, the combination of the online and the offline channels seems to be the ideal for consumers to obtain complete information about the product.

The experiment was developed in two parts. In the first part (T1), participants had an online information search episode in which they retrieved information about the product. The online presentation contained a small paragraph describing the product, a list of attributes, and a picture of the product. At this point, the manipulation of the online product review was introduced. Participants in the "review" condition additionally read a positive online review of the product. The review contained a text of 150 words approximately in which an anonymous consumer evaluated some of the product characteristics and related several use experiences<sup>1</sup>. After interacting for a few minutes, participants indicated their satisfaction with the search process (4 items adapted from Heitmann et al., 2007;  $\alpha = .89$ ) and the likelihood of buying the product to account for their purchase intentions. All the scales used 7-point Likert basis. In the second part of the experiment (T2), participants had a physical interaction with the product. The product presentation replicated the conventional presentations used in multichannel physical stores (e.g., FNAC). A new product (rival) was placed just beside the product previously considered in the online channel (target)<sup>2</sup>. The participants were instructed to touch and handle the products at their pace. At this point, participants in the "recommendation" condition received the salesman recommendation. The purpose of the recommendation was not to discredit the target product, but to persuade the participants that the rival product was the best for them. After interacting with both products, the participants completed the questionnaire (T2). In addition to the measures of satisfaction with the search process ( $\alpha = .92$ ) and purchase intentions towards the two products, participants were asked to choose between them. After that, they were asked about their degree of choice confidence (4 items adapted from Petty et al.,

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<sup>1</sup>Suggestions from the specialized literature were followed in order to create an adequate online product review (McCabe and Nowlis, 2003; Park et al., 2007; Lin et al., 2011; Li and Zhan, 2011).

<sup>2</sup>The rival product was chosen because it presented similar characteristics with the target in terms of appearance and functionalities.

2002;  $\alpha = .91$ ). Finally, under the guise of a different study about youth personality, the participants completed the NFT scale (Peck and Childers 2003a;  $\alpha = .88$ ).

The analyses focused on the changes occurred from the online interaction to the physical inspection of the target product (T2-T1) as well as on the differences between the target and the rival products. The results of a repeated-measures ANOVA indicated that purchase intentions toward the target product in T2 ( $M = 4.36$ ,  $SD = 1.74$ ) was significantly higher than in T1 ( $M = 3.90$ ,  $SD = 1.61$ ;  $F(1, 96) = 10.813$ ,  $p < .01$ ). In support of H1a, the combination of the online and physical channels produced higher purchase intentions than the online channel exclusively. However, the presence of the customer review in the online interaction did not affect the change in purchase intentions ( $p = .52$ ), rejecting H5a. Moreover, and contrary to H6a, the presence of the salesman recommendation against the target product had a negative impact on the increase in purchase intentions ( $F(1, 96) = 6.079$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Purchase intentions increased more when the participants did not receive the recommendation ( $\Delta M = .83$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ) than when they received it ( $\Delta M = .12$ ,  $SD = 1.56$ ). The interaction between the review and the recommendation was not significant ( $p = .86$ ).

Purchase intentions toward the target product was not significantly different from purchase intentions toward the rival product ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $SD = 1.57$ ;  $p = .83$ ). The fact of reading an online review previously did not affect this difference ( $p = .95$ ), but the salesman recommendation had a significant impact ( $F(1, 96) = 8.946$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Purchase intentions toward the target were higher than for the rival in the absence of recommendation ( $F(1, 48) = 5.765$ ,  $p < .05$ ); the opposite happened with the salesman recommendation, although the difference was marginally significant ( $F(1, 52) = 3.808$ ,  $p = .06$ ). The interaction term was not significant ( $p = .57$ ). Therefore, compliance with H1b is contingent on the existence of the salesman recommendation. If the participant did not receive the recommendation, the purchase intentions toward the product whose search experience was based on the combination of the online and offline channels was higher than for the product whose search experience consisted only of a physical inspection.

Regarding choice, the results of a three-way loglinear analysis with choice, review, and recommendation as factors revealed a significant two-way interaction between choice and salesman recommendation ( $\chi^2(1) = 6.979$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Without recommendation, 67% of participants chose the target product; when participants received the recommendation, only 34% chose the target. Support for H2 depends on the existence of the salesman recommendation, which had a negative effect on the choice of the target product (H6b is rejected). Also, participants' choice did not depend on the fact reading a customer review in the previous online interaction ( $p = .72$ ). H5b is thus rejected.

A repeated-measures ANOVA was carried out to examine whether the levels of search-process satisfaction increased after physically interacting with the product. Indeed, satisfaction in T2 ( $M = 5.52$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ) was significantly higher than in T1 ( $M = 4.99$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ ;  $F(1, 96) = 36.085$ ,  $p < .001$ ), supporting H3. Contrary to H5c, the presence of an online review had a significant negative influence in this increase ( $F(1, 96) = 4.271$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The increase in satisfaction was higher when the participants did not read the online review ( $\Delta M = .71$ ,  $SD = .99$ ) than when they read it ( $\Delta M = .35$ ,  $SD = .75$ ). Nor the salesman recommendation ( $p = .47$ ) nor the interaction between the review and recommendation ( $p = .52$ ) affected the increase in search-process satisfaction. Thus, H6c must be rejected.

Finally, H4 which proposed that choice confidence should be higher for a product whose search experience is based on the combination of the online and the offline channels. The ANOVA showed no significant differences in choice confidence between the target ( $M = 6.13$ ,  $SD = .93$ ) and the rival product ( $M = 5.98$ ,  $SD = 1.07$ ;  $p = .22$ ). However, the interaction between the salesman recommendation and the product chosen was significant ( $F(1, 99) = 5.869$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Without recommendation, confidence in the choice of the target ( $M = 6.20$ ,  $SD = .78$ ) was significantly higher than confidence in the choice of the rival ( $M = 5.47$ ,  $SD = 1.35$ ;  $F(1, 47) = 5.576$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The opposite occurred in the presence of the salesman recommendation,

although the effect was not significant ( $p = .42$ ). Again, compliance with H4 was contingent on the existence of a salesman recommendation against the target product. Regarding the choice of the target product, choice confidence was not significantly different for participants who received the recommendation ( $M = 6.02$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ) than for those who did not ( $p = .51$ ). H6d is rejected. Supporting H5d, the online review had a positive and significant effect ( $F(1, 99) = 4.207$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Choice confidence was higher if the participants read previously a review ( $M = 6.24$ ,  $SD = .92$ ) than if they did not ( $M = 5.85$ ,  $SD = 1.05$ ), regardless of the product chosen ( $p = .77$ ).

The PROCESS macro developed by Hayes (2013) was used to test for the moderating effects of participants' NFT. First, participants' level of NFT did not moderate the effect of the recommendation ( $p = .83$ ) and the review ( $p = .64$ ; the three-way interaction was not significant,  $p = .16$ ) on the increase in purchase intentions. However, the analysis yielded a significant interaction between NFT and the salesman recommendation on the differences in purchase intentions between the target and the rival product ( $\beta = .71$ ,  $se = .30$ ;  $t(92) = 2.364$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Following the Johnson-Neyman technique (Hayes, 2013), the data showed that the recommendation had a negative impact on this difference until the participants' NFT reached the point of 5.96 of the scale (60% of the sample). Therefore, H7a must be rejected, whereas support is found for H8a: the effect of the recommendation was evidenced when the motivation to touch the product was low, rather than high. In this line, participants' NFT moderated the impact of the salesman recommendation on choice ( $\beta = 1.21$ ,  $se = .51$ ;  $z = 2.370$ ,  $p < .05$ ). In support of H8b, the recommendation had an impact on choice for participants with a level of NFT below 5.88 of the scale (55% of the sample). NFT did not moderate the lack of effect of the online review on choice ( $p = .48$ ), thus rejecting H7b. Regarding search-process satisfaction, the interaction between NFT and the salesman recommendation was significant ( $\beta = -.51$ ,  $se = .15$ ;  $t(92) = -3.506$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The recommendation had a positive impact for participants with a NFT below 5.03 of the scale (31% of the individuals). H8c is supported. The negative impact of the review on the increase in satisfaction was not moderated by NFT ( $p = .53$ ; H7c is rejected). Finally, the analysis revealed a significant three-way interaction between the online review, the salesman recommendation, and the participant's NFT on choice confidence ( $\beta = -.81$ ,  $se = .35$ ;  $t(92) = -2.318$ ,  $p < .05$ ). When participants received no salesman recommendation, the positive effect of the online review on choice confidence was not affected by participants' level of NFT (non-significant interaction  $p = .22$ ). When participants received the salesman recommendation, the interaction between the online review and participants' NFT was significant ( $\beta = -.48$ ,  $se = .23$ ;  $t(48) = -2.113$ ,  $p < .05$ ), indicating that the review had a positive effect on choice confidence until NFT reached the level of 4.53 of the scale (25% of cases). Thus, some support is found for H7d. The positive effect of the online customer review was more evidenced for low NFT participants, but only when they received the salesman recommendation. However, H8d must be rejected, given that the salesman recommendation did not have significant effects on the confidence of the target product depending on NFT (non-significant interaction:  $p = .29$ ).

Overall, the results show that the consumer's search experience and decision improves when using a combination of the online and offline channels, compared to each one separately. The purchase intentions toward the product initially considered in the online environment increased after a physical interaction, and were higher than toward a new alternative. In addition, the previously considered product was chosen by more participants than the rival product, who held their choice with a higher degree of confidence. Furthermore, the search-process satisfaction increased significantly when the online interaction was subsequently accompanied by a physical inspection of the product.

However, the presence of external recommendations and the motivation to touch the product influenced significantly these effects. Contrary to our expectations, the presence of a salesman's recommendation did not reinforce the preferences toward the product initially considered. Indeed the reverse occurred, given the negative impact of the salesman's recommendation on the difference in purchase intentions between the target and the rival product, and on participants' choice of the target product. Thus, although consumers may be empowered due to

the incorporation of virtual experiences into their purchase decision process, they may be still sensitive to the persuasive attempts made by the retailer's sales force at the point of purchase. Nevertheless, the negative effects of the salesman's recommendation on purchase intentions and choice was significant for those participants with a low motivation to touch the merchandise. If low motivated consumers derived no valuable information from the direct experience with the product, they might rely on other elements that assist them in the physical store, such as the salesman's recommendation. When the motivation to obtain tactile information of the product was high, the fact of receiving a salesman's recommendation did not influence purchase intentions and choice. This notion was further confirmed in the outcomes of the MSED. Search-process satisfaction increased when the participants combined the online and offline channels. The presence of a salesman's recommendation had a positive impact on satisfaction for low NFT participants, whereas NFT participants appeared to ignore the recommendation. Furthermore, participants' confidence in the choice of the target product was higher than in the choice of the rival, but only for those who did not receive the salesman's recommendation. Again, the expected reactive response on choice confidence was not supported. Participants who received the salesman's recommendation and chose the target product did not show different levels of choice confidence than participants who did not receive the recommendation.

Regarding the effects for the presence of the customer recommendation, the analyses did not generally support our propositions. The online review did not affect purchase intentions and choice after touching the product. Moreover, the presence of an online review had a negative impact on the increase in satisfaction. This result may be due to the fact that participants had valued positively the customer recommendation in the online interaction and this effect was diluted in the physical encounter with the product. In fact, search-satisfaction after the physical interaction (T2) was not significantly different with ( $M = 5.43$ ,  $SD = 1.20$ ) or without ( $M = 5.51$ ,  $SD = .95$ ) the online review ( $p = 0.40$ ). As previously stated, the multichannel shopping behavior is a step-by-step process in which consumers evaluate the information in one channel and later updates it with information obtained in another channel (McCabe and Nowlis, 2001). Thus, consumers might have already discounted the positive effect of the online review when visiting the physical store. Nevertheless, the presence of an online customer review generally had a positive influence on participants' choice confidence, regardless of the product chosen or their level of NFT.

The next study seeks to extend and clarify some of the effects previously found regarding the presence of the customer recommendation. Specifically, with the goal of analyzing whether the lack of (or even the negative) effects of the customer review may be due to the consumers' discount of its value, participants in study 2 accessed user-generated content during the physical encounter with the product. These days, consumers can reach other consumers almost anywhere at any time through their mobile devices. They can easily read reviews of a product when shopping in a retail store (Henning-Thurau et al., 2010). Finally, motivation to touch the product was not measured but directly manipulated in study 2. Specifically, two product types differing in the relative importance of their material properties to evaluate and purchase them are included into the analysis. By including different product categories, we also aim at offering more generality to the results.

#### **4.2. Study 2**

Study 2 consisted of a full factorial design, with 3 (recommendation: no vs. customer vs. salesman) x 2 (product type: strap bag vs. usb memory stick) between-subjects conditions (cell sizes ranged from 21 to 27). Participants ( $N = 145$ ; 53% male; between 18 and 29 years old) were placed on a realistic purchase scenario. The participants were potential customers from a well-known multichannel retailer selling a wide variety of products. Participants were instructed to imagine that they had to buy a gift from the multichannel retailer for a person who was important to them. Participants had an online interaction with the product information and a subsequent physical experience with it, in which a new alternative was offered. The manipulation of the external recommendation was introduced at this point. On the one hand, participants who received customer recommendation were told that the university shop was



testing a new mobile application which allowed the consumer to access additional information about the product through scanning a QR code. In this way, participants were directed to the “customer reviews” option of the application and read a positive review of the target product. On the other hand, the salesman recommendation against the target product was developed in the same terms as in Study 1.

The selection of the products was made on the basis of the results of a pretest ( $n = 41$ ). The goal was to select two product categories differing on their material properties (Klatzky and Lederman, 1992; Peck and Childers, 2003b) to obtain an adequate manipulation of the motivation to touch the product. In addition, the pretest aimed at choosing two products, within each category, with similar levels of likeability to control for possible noise in the data. The results of the analyses showed a clear difference in favor of strap bags over usb memory sticks in the importance of touch and material properties for the evaluation and purchase. In addition, each pair of strap bags and usb memory sticks were equally rated in terms of likeability and similarity.

Measures of search-process satisfaction ( $\alpha = .88$  in T1;  $\alpha = .87$  in T2) and purchase intentions were collected in the first and second moments of the sequence, as well as for the rival product. Study 2 also included the actual choice of the participants and the measure of choice confidence ( $\alpha = .91$ ). For participants who received any of the recommendations, several measures about the recommendation’s source were gathered in order to ascertain what the effects may be due to. Specifically, participants rated on 7-point Likert scales the perceptions about the trustworthiness (5 items adapted from Ohanian, 1990;  $\alpha = .93$ ), familiarity with the product type (4 items adapted from Gefen, 2000;  $\alpha = .89$ ), and the expertise (4 items adapted from Ohanian, 1990;  $\alpha = .88$ ) of the person who did the recommendation.

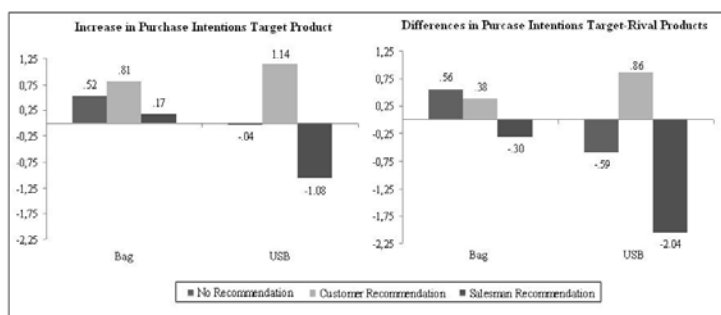
Given the significant correlations between the variables (all  $r_s > .43$ ,  $p_s < .001$ ), a MANOVA was conducted with the three dependent measures and the type of recommendation as the independent factor. The analysis revealed a significant multivariate effect (Wilks’s  $\lambda = 0.622$ ,  $F(3, 87) = 17.647$ ,  $p < .001$ ). There were significant effects of the type of recommendation on perceived product familiarity ( $F(1, 90) = 12.070$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The customer recommendation was perceived as more familiar with the product type ( $M = 5.95$ ,  $SD = .81$ ) than the salesman recommendation ( $M = 5.29$ ,  $SD = .97$ ). In addition, the salesman recommendation was perceived with higher levels of expertise ( $M = 5.26$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ ) than the customer recommendation ( $M = 4.53$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ;  $F(1, 90) = 7.607$ ,  $p < .01$ ). However, participants did not perceive higher trustworthiness in the customer recommendation ( $M = 5.06$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ) or in the salesman recommendation ( $M = 5.16$ ,  $SD = .95$ ;  $p = .64$ ). Thus, we could expect that the effects of the customer recommendation may be due to the high familiarity of the customer with the product, whereas the effects of the salesman recommendation may be attributed to higher levels of expertise.

The results of the repeated-measures ANOVA revealed that purchase intentions toward the target product in T2 ( $M = 4.36$ ,  $SD = 1.57$ ) were significantly higher than in T1 ( $M = 4.15$ ,  $SD = 1.38$ ;  $F(1, 139) = 3.945$ ,  $p < .05$ ), supporting H1a. The effect of the recommendation was significant ( $F(2, 139) = 9.378$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Post-hoc Bonferroni tests showed that, compared to the control condition, the increase in purchase intentions with customer recommendation was higher, but marginally significant (mean diff. =  $.74$ ,  $p = 0.07$ ). H5a is marginally supported. Contrary to H6a, purchase intentions decreased in the presence of salesman’s recommendation (mean diff. =  $-.73$ ,  $p = 0.06$ ). However, the within-subjects interaction term was significant ( $F(2, 139) = 2.998$ ,  $p = .05$ ), revealing different patterns for each product (Figure 1). The positive effect of the customer recommendation and the negative effect of the salesman recommendation were significant for the usb memory stick ( $F(2, 73) = 12.759$ ,  $p < .001$ ) but not for the strap bag ( $p = .41$ ). So, support for H7a and 8a is found. The effects of the customer and the salesman recommendations are stronger when the motivation to touch the product is low, rather than high.

The difference in purchase intentions between the target and the rival product ( $M = 4.60$ ,  $SD = 1.63$ ) was not significant ( $p = .23$ ). However, the repeated-measures ANOVA yield a significant

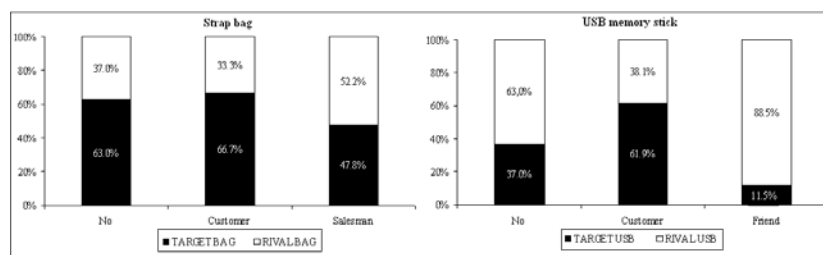
direct effect of the type of product ( $F(1, 139) = 6.450, p < .05$ ), meaning that the difference in purchase intentions was favorable to the target strap bag (mean diff. = .23,  $SD = 1.87$ ) and favorable to the rival usb memory stick (mean diff. = -.69,  $SD = 2.36$ ). Thus, H1b is supported only for the strap bag. In addition, the recommendation had a significant effect on the difference in purchase intentions ( $F(2, 139) = 11.481, p < .001$ ), which was qualified by a significant recommendation x product interaction ( $F(2, 139) = 4.085, p < .05$ ; see Figure 1). Again, the effects of the recommendation on the difference in purchase intentions was significant for the usb memory stick ( $F(2, 73) = 13.249, p < .001$ ), and non-significant for the strap bag ( $p = .25$ ). Thus, H5a is supported but the effect of the customer recommendation was statistically significant only when the motivation to touch the product is low (H7a is confirmed). Although H6a is rejected, given the negative impact of the salesman recommendation, H8a is further confirmed due to the stronger effect on the usb memory stick than on the strap bag.

FIGURE 1  
**Recommendation x Product Interactions on Purchase Intentions (Study 2)**



Regarding the participants' choice between products, the results of the loglinear analysis (Field, 2009) revealed a significant interaction between the type of product and choice ( $\chi^2(1) = 8.678, p < .01$ ). Choice of the target product was higher for the strap bag (59% vs. 41%), whereas the contrary occurred for the usb memory stick (35% vs. 65%). Thus, support for H2 is found only for the strap bag. Also, the recommendation x choice interaction was significant ( $\chi^2(1) = 12.419, p < .01$ ). Taking into account the different choices of participants depending on the product type, separate analyses were run for the strap bag and the usb memory stick to examine the effects of the recommendations. The Figure 2 shows the choice percentages of the target and rival products for each type of recommendation. In this way, the target strap bag was chosen over the rival. Although the salesman recommendation had a negative effect on the choice of the target, the effect of the recommendation was not significant ( $p = .18$ ). However, the effect of the recommendation on the choice of the usb memory stick was significant ( $\chi^2(2) = 13.844, p < .01$ ). The rival was chosen over the target product, and the salesman recommendation significantly affected this difference ( $\chi^2(1) = 4.861, p < .05$ ). On the contrary, when the participants read the customer review, choices overturned ( $\chi^2(1) = 8.983, p < .01$ ; see Figure 2). Overall, support for H5b is found especially for the usb memory stick, which supports H7b. H6b is rejected, although the effect of the salesman recommendation was stronger for the usb memory stick than for the strap bag, thus supporting H8b.

FIGURE 2  
**Choice of Target and Rival Products (Study 2)**



The analyses of the outcomes of the search experience and decision revealed that search process satisfaction in T2 ( $M = 5.47, SD = 1.01$ ) was significantly higher than in T1 ( $M = 4.93, SD =$

1.08;  $F(1, 139) = 70.885, p < .001$ ). H3 is supported. However, the type of the recommendation affected this increase ( $F(2, 139) = 3.253, p < .05$ ), and type of product moderated this effect ( $F(2, 139) = 5.200, p < .01$ ). The salesman recommendation had a negative impact on the increase in satisfaction for the strap bag, although this effect was not significant ( $p = .22$ ). The positive effect of the customer recommendation was not significant ( $p = 1.00$ ). On the other hand, compared to the control condition, both the customer recommendation (mean diff. =  $-.63, p < .05$ ) and the salesman recommendation (mean diff. =  $.59, p < .05$ ) had positive effects on the increase of search-process satisfaction of the usb memory stick. Hypotheses 7c and 8c are supported. The effect of the customer recommendation was more evidenced when the motivation to touch the product was low rather than high, and the salesman recommendation had different influences depending on the type of product.

Finally, supporting H4, confidence in the choice of the target product ( $M = 6.27, SD = .56$ ) was significantly higher than in the rival product ( $M = 5.92, SD = .86; t(131.679) = 2.784, p = .05$ ). Taking into account that both products followed different patterns in the previous analyses (the target was apparently preferred over the rival strap bag, whereas the opposite occurred for the usb memory stick), separate analyses were conducted for each product. Figure 3 displays the means of choice confidence for the target and rival products, comparing the type of recommendation for each product. In this way, choice confidence was significantly higher for the target strap bag ( $M = 6.21, SD = .57$ ) than for the rival ( $M = 5.55, SD = .89; F(1, 70) = 17.509, p < .001$ ). Furthermore, the type of recommendation had a significant effect on the choice of the target strap bag ( $F(2, 41) = 6.190, p < .05$ ). Significant differences were found in the customer vs. no recommendation comparison ( $p < .01$ ), whereas the difference between the salesman recommendation and the control condition was not significant ( $p = .11$ ). On the other hand, the interaction effect of the type of recommendation and the choice of the usb memory stick was significant ( $F(2, 73) = 7.035, p < .01$ ). In this way, choice confidence in the target product was significantly higher with the customer recommendation than with no recommendation ( $p < .05$ ; see Figure 3). The effect of the salesman recommendation on the choice of the target usb memory stick was not significant ( $p = .94$ ). However, we found a significant effect of the recommendation on the choice confidence in the rival usb memory stick ( $F(2, 47) = 12.742, p < .001$ ). The salesman recommendation had a significant effect on choice confidence in this case, compared to the no-recommendation condition ( $p < .001$ ), whereas the customer recommendation had no effects ( $p = 1.00$ ). In sum, H5d may be generally supported, although the positive effect of the customer recommendation was stronger for the usb memory stick than for the strap bag (support to H7d). In this case, H8d must be rejected given that no different patterns were observed for each type of product.

These results showed that participants did not trust more in a recommendation made by an anonymous customer in a mobile application than in a recommendation made by the salesman at the store, regardless of the direction of the recommendation (in favor or against the target product). This result may be due to the fact that the customer recommendation was embedded into the retailer's own application. Thus, participants may have had suspicion about the authenticity of the customer recommendation. Nevertheless, participants perceived that the customer who made the review was more familiarized with the product, whereas they perceived higher expertise for the salesman.

Regarding the effects of the online-offline search sequence, the analyses generally supported the positive effect on the participants' MSED. After a physical interaction with the product previously considered online, an increase in purchase intentions and search-process satisfaction was observed. However, significant differences depending on the existence of external recommendations and on the type of product were identified. The customer recommendation had a positive influence on purchase intentions toward the target product, whereas the effect of the salesman recommendation was negative, but only for the usb memory stick. Confirming the results of the previous study, the effects of external opinions were stronger when the motivation to touch was low and thus the information derived from the direct experience was not especially valuable for participants. The difference in purchase intentions in favor of the target product

over the rival was supported only for the strap bag, whereas the opposite occurred for the usb memory stick. The same happened with regard to participants' choice. These results may be due to the manipulation of the type of product in the study. Products such as usb memory sticks may be low-involving for consumers due to its low cost. Thus, the attachment to the initially considered alternative may have been not so strong, making the preferences toward the target product less stable. In addition, the results of the pretest showed that both usb memory sticks were liked the same and were perceived as similar. However, the sample of the main study could have perceived a clear superiority for the rival product, thus contaminating the analyses. Nevertheless, external recommendations had stronger influences (positive for the customer, negative for the salesman) on this type of product than on the product whose motivation to touch was high. Furthermore, for the strap bag, the purchase intentions and choice of the target product were higher than for the rival.

FIGURE 3  
Choice Confidence of Target and Rival Products (Study 2)



The results supported the positive effect of the customer recommendation on the increase in satisfaction. It appears that consumers value the fact of accessing and receiving other customers' opinions at the physical store. Again, the motivation to touch the product moderated this effect, given that the customer recommendation had a significant impact only for the usb memory stick. In the same vein, the salesman recommendation had different effects on search-process satisfaction depending on the type of product. When the motivation to touch was low, participants perceived positively the fact of receiving the salesman recommendation. When touching the product did not provide with valuable information for the participant (just to see physically what was previously evaluated in the online environment), the presence of other informative cues, such as an expert recommendation, improved the satisfaction with the search experience. On the contrary, when touching the product offered new and diagnostic information, the effect of external recommendations is less relevant. In this way, although we found a directional "reactance-style" response to the salesman recommendation on the satisfaction with search experience of the strap bag (Fitzsimons and Lehmann, 2004), an "ignorance-style" response appears to fit better the data.

Finally, confidence in the choice of a product initially considered in the online environment was higher than confidence in the choice of a new product found at the physical store. Importantly, the customer recommendation had a positive influence on this outcome of the MSED. Customer recommendations may help consumers to make purchase decisions with a high degree of confidence. Regarding the effects of the salesman recommendation, the findings showed no effects on the choice confidence strap bag, which was higher for the target than for the rival product. For the usb memory stick, the salesman recommendation decreased the choice confidence in the target product and increased choice confidence in the rival product. These results may be consistent with our previous explanation regarding the superiority of the rival over the target product, and with the higher value that participants could have attached to the salesman recommendation when the motivation to touch the product was low. In this case, the salesman recommendation could be perceived as coherent with the participants' preferences, producing a significant increase in their choice confidence.

## 5. Summary and Implications

The Multichannel Search Experience and Decision developed in this research offers an adequate framework for studying this behavior. Overall, consumers who search for information online

and then go to the physical store to confirm the information and make decisions with a high degree of confidence, improve their purchase intentions and satisfaction with the experience along this path. In addition, they are more likely to choose the initially considered alternative instead of a new one, and are more confident in their decision when they chose this product. Thus, multichannel search experiences can be highly satisfactory for consumers.

Our findings show that consumers are still sensitive to external recommendations which may influence their MSED to a great extent. Companies must bear in mind the effects of the online reviews made by their customers on potentially new ones. In addition, both multichannel and traditional retailers could benefit from innovations in mobile technologies to incorporate applications which offer in situ recommendations from other customers of the store, which may influence the consumer's decision and experience to a great extent. In the same vein, although consumers may take the advantage of the ubiquitous access to other customers' recommendations, the presence of recommendations made by the sales force may have a strong influence on their behavior. All the effort that consumers exert to convince themselves about the suitability of a product to satisfy their needs could be worthless in the physical store, where the presence of multiple external attempts to persuade them could influence their behavior.

The motivation to touch the product has been proposed as a key moderator of the MSED and of the influence of external recommendations. External recommendations can have a special influence when the motivation to touch the product is low. When the motivation to touch is high, consumers rely on the information they obtain through the tactile input, thus reducing the effect of external recommendations or even ignoring them. Overall, retailers should allow consumers to access other customers' recommendations, especially when the motivation to touch the product is not high, given that touching the product may not provide with valuable information beyond confirming physically what has been seen online. In situations in which the motivation to touch is high (e.g. apparel stores) it seems less plausible that consumers rely on recommendations made by anonymous customers, given that they are obtaining highly diagnostic information by themselves. In the same way, salesman's recommendations may be positively perceived when the motivation to touch is low. When the motivation is high, it would be advisable for the sales force to let the consumer to freely handle and touch the merchandise, offering their assistance only when solicited. Otherwise, recommendations may be unwelcome or ignored.

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# THE MODERATING EFFECTS OF CONSUMER'S CHARACTERISTICS IN THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PRIVACY, SECURITY AND ONLINE TRUST

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## ABSTRACT

*The relationships between privacy, security and online trust have been the focus of numerous studies in previous research in online settings. Results from this literature, however, still present some confusion and inconsistent findings. In this study, we propose several reasons for these confusion and inconsistent findings, explaining how consumers' characteristics (gender, age, education and extraversion) can moderate the influence of both privacy and security in online trust. In doing so, this research expands previous literature by identifying the conditions under which perceived privacy and security are likely to have the greatest positive effects on consumer trust in the online retailer. Our results revealed that the influence of both privacy and security on online trust was stronger for male, younger, more educated and less extraverted consumers. Implications for theory and management are discussed.*

## Keywords:

Online trust, perceived privacy, perceived security, moderating effects, extraversion, demographics



## 1. Introducción

Since the birth of the Internet, privacy and security have been recognized as critical elements that online businesses have needed to address in order to build consumer online trust, and they are the most often cited antecedents of online trust (Bart et al. 2005; Urban et al. 2009). In spite of the general agreement among both practitioners and researchers that privacy and security are key determinants of online trust (Belanger et al. 2002; Gefen et al. 2003; Schoder and Haenlein, 2004; Kim et al. 2008) the academic literature still presents some confusion and inconsistent findings about the conceptualization of privacy and security and their effects on online trust. Among the empirical studies, a major problem includes the extent to which privacy and security issues are conceptualized as distinct variables, and the lack of understanding of how they are related to each other. To begin with this, although privacy and security represent two clearly distinct constructs (Miyazaki and Fernandez 2000; 2001; Belanger et al. 2002; Román 2007; Román and Cuestas 2008), many researchers tend to collapse them into one concept or dimension (Cheskin and SA 1999; Culnan 1999; Lee and Turban 2001; Wolfenbarger and Gilly 2002; Zeithaml et al. 2002; Corbitt et al. 2003; Flavián and Guinalíu 2006; Schlosser et al. 2006; Jin and Park 2008; San Martín and Camarero 2008; Chen and Dibb 2010). Yet, some important distinctions can and should be drawn between security and privacy, as we will explain further in this paper. According to this, some of the studies that have considered privacy and security as the same construct, do not take into account all aspects covering privacy and security issues, and hence their conceptualization and measurement is limited (Belanger et al. 2002; Davison et al. 2003).

In addition, research still presents a pattern of inconsistent findings with regard to the effects of privacy and security on online consumer trust. In some studies, researchers have found that both security and privacy have a significant and positive impact on online trust, usually being the effect of security stronger than the effect of privacy (e.g. Kim 2005; Kim et al. 2008; Dolatabadi and Ebrahimi 2010; Hu et al. 2010; Ganguly et al. 2011). Other studies, however, do not find a significant impact of security (Lee and Turban 2001; Belanger et al. 2002; Bart et al. 2005) or privacy (Cheung and Lee 2006; Gurung et al. 2007; Roca et al. 2009) in online trust. Accordingly, the first objective of this research is to analyze how perceived privacy and security, considered as distinct variables, influence consumers' trust in the online retailer.

Furthermore, beyond the problems related to the conceptualization of privacy and security argued earlier, another potential explanation for the inconsistent findings may be that most of the prior literature implicitly assumes that the impact of privacy and security on online trust are identical across customers. Yet, scholars have long argued that this assumption might be too simplistic, and recent evidence suggests that relationships among online trust and its antecedents may vary depending on the characteristics of consumers (e.g. Leonard and Riemenschneider 2008; San Martín and Camarero 2008; Hwang 2009; Chen and Dibb 2010; Ganguly et al. 2011; Liao et al. 2011; San Martín and Jiménez 2011). Accordingly, this research adds to the existing literature by analyzing the moderating role of consumer's level of extraversion and demographics (i.e., age, education and gender) in the influence of perceived privacy and security on trust. Consumer's extraversion includes characteristics such as talkativeness, sociability, and a high confidence in one's ability to social relations with others (Costa and McCrae 1992; Benet-Martínez and John, 1998). Importantly, consumer's extraversion along with the demographic variables have been found to play a key role when it comes to explain consumers' online attitudes and purchasing behavior (Kini and Chobineh, 1998; Tan and Sutherland, 2004; Junglas and Spitzmüller, 2006; Barnes et al., 2007; Chen and Lee, 2008; Román, 2010; Bae and Lee, 2011; San Martín and Jiménez, 2011; Ulbrich et al., 2011), yet their moderating influence in the privacy-security-trust link has been rarely studied and results are inconsistent, as shown in the Appendix.

In what follows, we present the theoretical framework in which our core variables (perceived privacy, security and trust) are defined. Hypotheses are then presented and tested. Finally, implications of the study are discussed.

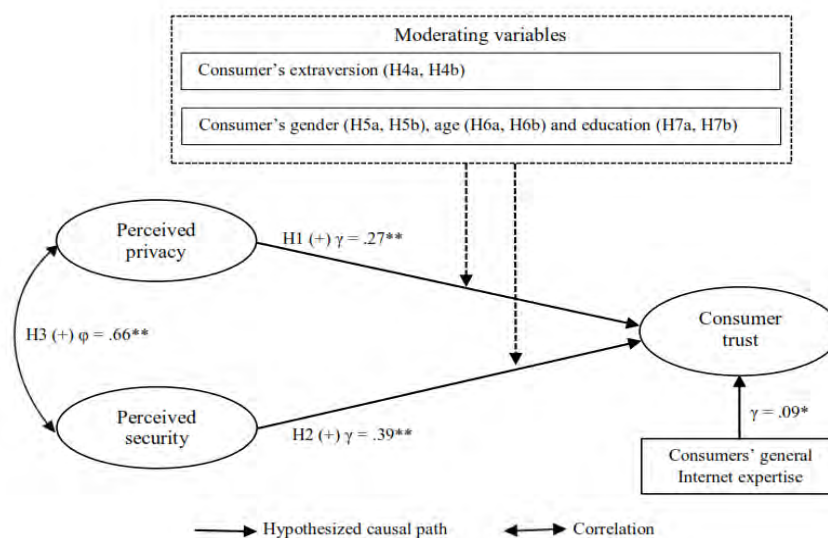
## 2. Research model and hypotheses development

Figure 1 represents our conceptual model. Following several scholars (e.g. Miyazaki and Fernandez 2000; 2001; Belanger et al. 2002; Román 2007; Román and Cuestas 2008), we see security and privacy as two different, yet related constructs. In particular, privacy issues refer to the uncertainty associated with providing personal information on a website and the risk of such information being exposed (Bart et al. 2005). Privacy issues on the Internet include “spam”, usage tracking and data collection, choice, and the sharing of information with third parties (Belanger et al. 2002). For instance, the practice of collecting consumer information for one purpose and then using that information to make unsolicited contacts represents a privacy issue (Román and Cuestas 2008). Another privacy concern is the degree to which consumer information is shared (i.e., rented or sold) to third parties that have marketing-related interests in such data (Miyazaki and Fernandez 2000). Accordingly, in this study perceived privacy refers to consumers’ perceptions about the protection of individually identifiable information on the Internet (Román 2007). Security, on the other hand, refers to the uncertainty of incurring monetary losses while interacting on a website (Román and Cuestas 2008). This may happen, for example, as a result of online credit card fraud (Miyazaki and Fernandez 2000). Perceived security, then, refers to consumers’ perceptions about the security of the online transaction (i.e., the safety of the payment methods) along with the protection of financial information from unauthorized access (Román 2007).

Consumer trust in the online retailer is conceptualized in this study as the consumer’s subjective belief that the selling party (online retailer) will fulfill its transactional obligations as the consumer understands them (Anderson and Srinivasan 2003; Kim et al. 2008). Perceived privacy and security are proposed as the two main antecedents of consumer trust (Hypothesis 1 and 2). We will also propose a positive relation between these two antecedents in Hypothesis 3. Furthermore, the direct effect of these two variables on online trust is proposed to be moderated by consumer’s level of extraversion (H4a-b) and demographics (H5a-b; H6a-b; H7a-b). Finally, Figure 1 also includes the effect of consumers’ general Internet expertise (in the box) on online trust as control variable. The rationale for each hypothesis follows.

FIGURA 1

The research model and results of direct effects (standardized coefficients) **\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \* $p < 0.05$**



$\chi^2(84)=336.66$   $p < .01$ ; GFI=.90; CFI=.97; RMSEA=.08; RMSR=.04; TLI (NNFI)=.96

### ***2.1. Privacy and security as antecedents of consumer trust in the online retailer***

Perceived privacy protection on the website helps to reduce consumers' perceptions of the risk that stems from online disclosure of personal information (Metzger, 2006), and thus encourage online transaction by increasing the perceived trustworthiness of the website (Kim et al. 2008). Numerous previous studies have already shown that perceived privacy positively influences consumer trust in online transactions (e.g. Friedman et al. 2000; Chellappa and Sin 2005; Bart et al. 2005; Román 2007; Van Dyke et al. 2007; Ganguly et al. 2011). Accordingly, we propose the following:

H1: Perceived privacy positively influences consumer trust in the online retailer.

Consumer perceptions of these security enforcement principles positively contribute to their trust perceptions regarding online transactions (Chellappa and Pavlou 2002). There is a significant body of research that has tested the positive influence of perceived security on consumer trust in online retailers (e.g. Belanger et al. 2002; Kim et al. 2004; Schoder and Haenlein 2004; Kim 2005; Cheung and Lee 2006; Mukherjee and Nath 2007; Román 2007; Kim et al. 2008; Roca et al. 2009; Hu et al. 2010; Kim et al. 2010). Accordingly, we propose that:

H2: Perceived security positively influences consumer trust in the online retailer.

### ***2.2. The relationship between privacy and security***

Although privacy and security are accepted to be two clearly distinct constructs (Miyazaki and Fernandez 2000; 2001; Belanger et al. 2002; Román 2007; Román and Cuestas 2008), there is strong evidence that they interactively influence each other (Belanger et al. 2002; Schlosser et al. 2006; Hu et al. 2010). For example, high concern for personal privacy would directly produce negative attitudes toward web security, and consumers who lack knowledge about online security and the third party security identification would worry about disclosing personal information during the process of online shopping. Accordingly, we propose that:

H3: Perceived privacy is positively correlated to perceived security.

### ***2.3. The moderating role of consumer characteristics***

Extraversion is a personality trait that relates to an individual's approach to dealing with their environment (Korzaan and Boswell 2008). Individuals high in extraversion are usually characterized as sociable, assertive and talkative, whereas individuals low in extraversion are more introverted, reserved and quiet (Costa and McCrae 1992). People high in extraversion are also excitement-seeking and have a higher need for stimulation and communication (McCrae and Costa 2003). In the online context, these characteristics of extravert consumers are reflected in a greater interest in the social or experiential aspects of online shopping (Cheung and Lee 2008; Huang and Yang 2010), such as the desire to be entertained, to socialize in the website and to enjoy with the shopping experience (Wolfenbarger and Gilly 2001; Huang and Yang 2010). Findings from Ganguly et al. (2011) reveal that this higher disposition toward hedonic or excitement value-seeking behavior (e.g., fun, playfulness) associated with extravert people positively moderates the influence of some interactivity website-related factors (e.g., communication exchange, social presence) on consumer trust in the website.

We believe that this personality trait will also moderate the influence of perceived privacy and security on trust in the online retailer. First, extant research has shown that the level of consumer extraversion is related to individual privacy concerns, risk and trust beliefs on the Internet (Tan and Sutherland 2004; Wang and Yang 2005; Junglas and Spitzmüller 2006; Barnes et al. 2007; Brunet and Schmidt 2007; Chen 2011). For example, some studies have found that, since extraverted individuals are more likely to make efforts to be actively involved and interested in opportunities to socialize and communicate with others (McCrae and Costa 2003; Chen 2011), they are less likely to voice strong online privacy concerns (Junglas and Spitzmüller 2006), and therefore they are also more willing to disclose personal information in the online environment, as compared to individuals who are less extraverted (Brunet and Schmidt 2007). Accordingly, consumers high in extraversion can be expected to be less concerned about disclosing personal information online, and hence privacy perceptions will not be as important to them as they could be for individuals low in extraversion. Other studies have

confirmed that the higher disposition toward excitement-seeking of extravert individuals is positively related to a more risk-taking propensity and a high disposition to trust online retailers (Tan and Sutherland 2004; Wang and Yang 2005; Chen 2011). Given that prior literature suggests that highly extraverted individuals tend to perceive fewer risks in online shopping than those less extraverted, we expect following:

H4a: The positive influence of perceived privacy on consumer trust in the online retailer will be stronger for less extraverted consumers than for more extraverted consumers.

H4b: The positive influence of perceived security on consumer trust in the online retailer will be stronger for less extraverted consumers than for more extraverted consumers.

A number of studies indicate that women tend to be more concerned about online privacy and security issues than men (Milberg et al. 1995; Sheehan 1999; Gauzente et al. 2004; San Martín and Jiménez 2011). At first sight, these findings seem to suggest that women might give more emphasis to privacy and security perceptions than men. However, the literature has also produced some contradictory findings. For example, several studies have not found significant differences between men and women on perceived privacy protection (Kolsaker and Payne 2002; Bart et al. 2005; Ulbrich et al. 2011) and perceptions about transaction security (Lightner 2003; Cyr and Bonanni 2005). Furthermore, prior research reveals that some women-related online behaviors are contradictory with their alleged high privacy concerns. For instance, results from Stern (2004) suggest that females are more likely to disclose personal information on the Internet. In line with this, scholars have argued that the relationship between consumers' privacy and security concerns and actual behavior neither is straightforward nor has any link been established incontrovertibly (Li and Sarathy 2006; Joinson et al. 2010). Accordingly, although several studies have shown that women may voice strong privacy or security concerns than men, we believe that these concern-based differences are insufficient or even inadequate to sustain the moderating effect of gender in our research model.

A plausible explanation for this privacy or security paradox found among women is that users' privacy and security concerns can be affected by other factors, such as consumers' shopping preferences or orientations (Kim and Benbasat 2003; Smith et al. 2011). In particular, researchers have found that some expected benefits, such as the desire of personalized service or social benefits, can override consumer's privacy concerns (Chellappa and Sin 2005). For example, prior evidence indicates that, unlike men, women tend to view online shopping as a social activity (Smith and Whitlark 2001; Van Slyke et al. 2002). Researchers have also showed that women give more importance than men to emotional appeals (such as community building activities in the online store) (Venkatesh and Agarwal 2006) or interactivity features (social presence and communication with the website) (Ganguly et al. 2011) to generate online trust. These findings suggest that, in spite of their claimed privacy or security concerns, when shopping online, women seem to focus more on these social or communicative aspects of shopping than in privacy or security related aspects. Accordingly, the proposed positive influence of both privacy and security perceptions on online trust is expected to be attenuated for female consumers.

On the other hand, men are more goal-directed and more motivated by functional factors (e.g., economy, efficiency, usefulness) than women in their online shopping attitudes and behaviors (Swaminathan et al. 1999; Dittmar et al. 2004; Doong and Wang 2011). Privacy and security issues on the website undoubtedly represent functional or utilitarian aspects of the online shopping process (Chen and Lee 2008), and previous research suggest that such functional website features receive more attention and are perceived as more valuable among functional-oriented consumers than among experiential-oriented ones (Dittmar et al. 2004; Chen and Lee 2008). Moreover, researchers have also argued that, while privacy and security concerns tend to be lessened as the consumer's experience and familiarity with online shopping increases (Miyazaki and Fernandez 2001; Corbitt et al. 2003), such greater familiarity also improves consumer knowledge and understanding of these privacy and security issues (Dutton and Shepherd 2003), which in turn, strengthen the role of perceived privacy and security website features on consumer's trust (Chen and Dibb 2010). Given the more functional shopping orientation and also the greater familiarity of men compared to women with online shopping related activities (Bae and Lee 2011), we expect the following:

H5a: The positive influence of perceived privacy on consumer trust in the online retailer will be stronger for male than for female consumers.

H5b: The positive influence of perceived security on consumer trust in the online retailer will be stronger male than for female consumers.

Several studies maintain that privacy and security concerns tend to be stronger as consumer's age increases (Gattiker and Kelly 1995; Gauzente et al. 2004; Reisenwitz et al. 2007; Wong et al. 2009). However, similarly to women-related findings, prior research has yielded some contradictory findings that suggest perceived privacy and security to be more important for younger than for older consumers (Dommeyer and Gross 2003; Lightner 2003). For example, Lightner (2003) found that, as age of consumers increased, their preference for security features against other website characteristics (such as navigation and buying speed) diminished. This evidence suggests a greater degree of awareness amongst younger users of the potential problems on the Internet. The older generation is also concerned about security and protection, but may be less aware of the operational issues (Dommeyer and Gross 2003). Accordingly, we propose that:

H6a: The positive influence of perceived privacy on consumer trust in the online retailer will be stronger for younger than for older consumers.

H6b: The positive influence of perceived security on consumer trust in the online retailer will be stronger younger than for older consumers.

To a lesser extent, previous research has analyzed the effect of consumers' level of education on their online privacy and security concerns (Dutton and Shepherd 2003; Lightner 2003; Bart et al. 2005; Yang et al. 2009). Again, this stream of research has also produced some inconsistent results. For instance, whereas findings from Lightner (2003) and Bart et al. (2005) suggest that the importance of perceived privacy and security tend to be weaker for more educated than for less educated consumers, results from Dutton and Shepherd (2003) and Yang et al. (2009) indicate the opposite. In line with these latter studies, we believe that a higher level of education can improve consumers' knowledge and understanding of privacy and security issues on the Internet. Furthermore, prior evidence indicates that more educated consumers place a higher value on perceived website ethical performance than less educated consumers (Yang et al., 2009; Román, 2010). Accordingly, we expect that:

H7a: The positive influence of perceived privacy on consumer trust in the online retailer will be stronger for more educated than for less educated consumers.

H7b: The positive influence of perceived security on consumer trust in the online retailer will be stronger more educated than for less educated consumers.

#### ***2.4. Control variable: Consumers' general Internet expertise***

Consumer's general Internet expertise refers to consumer's knowledge of, and experience with, the Internet (Montoya-Weiss et al. 2003). Several studies report that this general expertise positively contributes to consumer online trust (Miyazaki and Fernandez, 2001; Corbitt et al., 2003; Bart et al., 2005). Accordingly, including this construct as an additional predictor of consumers' trust in online shopping allows us to determine whether the hypothesized antecedents have a significant impact on online trust after accounting for the variance explained by consumer's Internet expertise.

### **3. Research method**

#### ***3.1. Data collection and sample***

A survey instrument was administered to a sample of 398 consumers. A marketing research firm was hired to assist with the data collection. Trained interviewers randomly approached respondents among individuals who passed the data collection point located on the pedestrian walkway in three major metropolitan cities. A similar procedure can be seen in previous research (e.g. Frambach et al. 2007). Screening questions were administered before the respondent was invited for an interview. An invitation only followed if the respondent proved to be eligible for the study (that is, he/she should have purchased a product online in the last 6 months). The latter condition was required in order to facilitate consumers' evaluations of the online retailer's website. Then, subjects were taken to the

company office (conveniently located in the metropolitan area) were they asked to complete the questionnaire.

The respondents were representative of online consumers across numerous e-retailers, having purchased a variety of items (e.g., travel, books, CDs, and computers). They were balanced in terms of gender (51% of them were male), relatively young (65% of them were between 20 and 35 years old), generally highly educated (68.2 of them had completed their university studies) and experienced with the Internet. Prior research has found that these characteristics are common among Internet shoppers (Girard et al. 2003; Swinyard and Smith 2003).

### **3.2. Measures**

Existing multi-item scales, adapted to suit the context of the study, were used for the measurement of the constructs (all items of the questionnaire are reported in Table 1). Three items from Anderson and Srinivasan (2003) were used to measure consumer trust in the online retailer. Both perceived privacy and security were measured with five items, respectively, developed by Román (2007). Consumer's extraversion was measured with three items from the BigFive scale (Benet-Martinez and John 1998). Shortened versions of such scale have been successfully used in other studies (Gosling et al. 2003; Chen and Lee 2008). Consumers' general Internet expertise was approached using two items adapted from Montoya-Weiss et al. (2003) and Belch et al. (2005). Consumers were asked to characterize their level of expertise with the Internet (ranging from "1 = no expertise" to "5 = high expertise"), and their knowledge about Internet in general (ranging from "1 = very poor" to "5 = excellent").

### **3.3. Confirmatory factor analyses: reliability, convergent, and discriminant validity**

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) by means of LISREL 8.80 was conducted to assess measurement reliability, convergent, and discriminant validity. The measurement model had a good fit ( $\chi^2(165) = 491.08$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ; GFI = 0.89; CFI = 0.96; RMSEA = 0.07; RMSR = 0.04; TLI (NNFI) = 0.94). Reliability of the measures was confirmed with composite reliability index higher than the recommended level of 0.60 (Bagozzi and Yi 1988) and average variance extracted was higher than the recommended level of 0.50 (Hair et al. 1998) as shown in Table 2. Following the procedures suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and Bagozzi and Yi (1988), convergent validity was assessed by verifying the significance of the t values associated with the parameter estimates (Table 1). All t values were positive and significant ( $p < 0.01$ ).

Discriminant validity was tested by comparing the average variance extracted by each construct to the shared variance between the construct and all other variables. For each comparison, the explained variance exceeded all combinations of shared variance (see Table 2). The analysis also revealed that Internet expertise was significantly and positively correlated with consumer's education level ( $\sigma = 0.12$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and significantly and negatively correlated with gender ( $\sigma = -0.20$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and age ( $\sigma = -0.15$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), which indicates that such Internet expertise is increased among male, younger and more educated consumers.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1. Direct effects**

The hypothesized relationships were estimated via LISREL 8.80. The results indicated a good fit between the model and the observed data ( $\chi^2(84) = 336.66$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ; GFI = 0.90; CFI = 0.97; RMSEA = 0.08; RMSR = 0.04; TLI (NNFI) = 0.96). The model explained 41% of the variance in consumer trust. Results of hypothesized relationships are reported in Figure 1.

After accounting for the variance explained by consumer's Internet expertise ( $\gamma = 0.09$ , t-value = 2.14), the analyses provided strong support for the direct positive influence of both perceived privacy ( $\gamma = 0.27$ , t-value = 4.34) and security ( $\gamma = 0.39$ , t-value = 6.40) on consumer trust. Thus, Hypotheses 1 and 2 were confirmed. In line with Hypothesis 3, perceived privacy and security were also found to be highly and positive correlated ( $\phi = 0.66$ ; t-value = 19.67).

TABLE 1  
**Construct measurement summary: Confirmatory factor analysis of multi-item measures**

Item description <sup>a</sup>	SD loading (t-value)
Consumer trust in the online retailer	
I can trust the performance of this website to be good	0.95 (25.25)
This site is reliable for online shopping	0.95 (25.26)
This site is trustworthy	0.92 (23.72)
Perceived privacy	
The site clearly explains how user information is used	0.81 (18.91)
It is easy to have access the privacy policy	0.78 (18.07)
The site shows that it complies with the rules and regulations governing online data protection	0.87 (21.13)
Only the personal information necessary for the transaction to be completed needs to be provided	0.77 (17.63)
Information regarding the privacy policy is clearly presented	0.80 (18.54)
Perceived security	
The site displays the terms and conditions of the online transaction before the purchase has taken place	0.73 (16.42)
The site appears to offer secure payment methods	0.91 (22.94)
The security policy is easy to understand	0.84 (20.48)
You can confirm the details of the transaction before paying	0.81 (19.21)
This site has adequate security features	0.84 (20.37)
Extraversion	
I am outgoing, sociable	0.86 (19.60)
I have an assertive personality	0.77 (17.19)
I feel comfortable around people	0.82 (18.63)
Consumer's general Internet expertise	
How would you characterize your level of expertise with the Internet?	0.99 (28.14)
How would you characterize your knowledge about Internet in general?	0.88 (22.44)
$\chi^2(165) = 491.08; p < 0.01; GFI = 0.89; CFI = 0.96; RMSEA = 0.07; RMSR = 0.04; TLI (NNFI) = 0.94$	

<sup>a</sup>All the remaining scales consisted of 5-point Likert questions, ranging from "1 = strongly disagree" to "5 = strongly agree."

#### 4.2. Moderating effects

Hypotheses 4a–b, 5a–b, 6a–b, and 7a–b examined the effects of the moderating variables. We tested moderating effects through multigroup LISREL analysis. The samples were splitted into subsamples according to whether consumers scored high or low on the moderating variables (as far as gender is concerned, males versus females was compared) to ensure within-group homogeneity and between-group heterogeneity (Stone and Hollenbeck 1989).

The results of the multi-group LISREL analyses are shown in Table 3. As anticipated, the positive influence of both perceived privacy and security on consumer's trust in the online retailer was stronger among: less extraverted ( $\gamma_{\text{privacy}} = 0.39, p < 0.01; \gamma_{\text{security}} = 0.49, p < 0.01$ ) versus more extraverted individuals ( $\gamma_{\text{privacy}} = 0.14, p < 0.1; \gamma_{\text{security}} = 0.22, p < 0.05$ ), males ( $\gamma_{\text{privacy}} = 0.35, p < 0.01; \gamma_{\text{security}} = 0.49, p < 0.01$ ) versus females ( $\gamma_{\text{privacy}} = 0.17, p < 0.05; \gamma_{\text{security}} = 0.25, p < 0.01$ ), more educated ( $\gamma_{\text{privacy}} = 0.43, p < 0.01; \gamma_{\text{security}} = 0.51, p < 0.01$ ) versus less educated consumers ( $\gamma_{\text{privacy}} = 0.19, p < 0.05; \gamma_{\text{security}} = 0.18, p < 0.05$ ), and younger ( $\gamma_{\text{privacy}} = 0.45, p < 0.01; \gamma_{\text{security}} = 0.50, p < 0.01$ ) versus older individuals ( $\gamma_{\text{privacy}} = 0.21, p < 0.05; \gamma_{\text{security}} = 0.28, p < 0.01$ ). In all these cases, as reported in Table 3, the decrease in chi-square when moving from the

restricted (equal) model to the more general model was significant, providing support for Hypothesis 4a–b, 5a–b, 6a–b, and 7a–b, respectively.

TABLE 2  
Mean, SD, scale reliability, AVE, and correlations

	Mean	SD	SCR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Consumer trust	3.98	0.83	0.96	0.88		0.30	0.35	0.08	0.07			
2. Perceived privacy	3.69	0.65	0.90	0.65	0.55		0.44	0.06	0.07			
3. Perceived security	3.90	0.62	0.92	0.69	0.59	0.66		0.04	0.07			
4. Extraversion	3.65	0.82	0.86	0.67	0.28	0.25	0.20		0.04			
5. Internet expertise	3.91	0.79	0.88	0.88	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.20				
6. Gender (0=women, 1=men)	na	na	na	na	0.00	-0.12	-0.08	-0.01	0.20			
7. Education (0=low, 1=middle, 2=high)	na	na	na	na	0.04	-0.05	-0.02	-0.06	0.12	0.19		
8. Age (years)	30.29	9.76	na	na	0.00	-0.09	-0.02	-0.14	-0.15	0.01	0.04	

SCR Scale Composite Reliability, AVE average variance extracted, na not applicable.

Shared variances of multi-item measures are reported in the upper half of the matrix. Correlations are reported in the lower half of the matrix. Correlations higher than 0.09 significant at 95%.

TABLE 3  
Results of moderating effects

Relationship	Moderator variable		Chi-Square Difference ( $\Delta df=1$ )	Hypothesis supported
	Less extraverted consumers (n=219)	More extraverted consumers (n=179)		
Privacy→Trust	$\gamma=.39$ ( $t=5.30$ )	$\gamma=.14$ ( $t=1.81$ )	$\Delta\chi^2=8.1^{**}$	H4a supported
Security→Trust	$\gamma=.49$ ( $t=6.50$ )	$\gamma=.22$ ( $t=2.84$ )	$\Delta\chi^2=9.29^{**}$	H4b supported
	<b>Women (195)</b>	<b>Men (n=203)</b>		
Privacy→Trust	$\gamma=.17$ ( $t=2.46$ )	$\gamma=.35$ ( $t=4.96$ )	$\Delta\chi^2=4.05^*$	H5a supported
Security→Trust	$\gamma=.25$ ( $t=3.64$ )	$\gamma=.49$ ( $t=6.82$ )	$\Delta\chi^2=6.32^*$	H5b supported
	<b>Younger (n=194)</b>	<b>Older (n=204)</b>		
Privacy→Trust	$\gamma=.45$ ( $t=6.75$ )	$\gamma=.21$ ( $t=2.96$ )	$\Delta\chi^2=8.09^{**}$	H6a supported
Security→Trust	$\gamma=.50$ ( $t=7.61$ )	$\gamma=.28$ ( $t=4.04$ )	$\Delta\chi^2=5.33^*$	H6b supported
	<b>Less educated no university studies (n=127)</b>	<b>More educated university studies (n=271)</b>		
Privacy→Trust	$\gamma=.19$ ( $t=2.50$ )	$\gamma=.43$ ( $t=7.31$ )	$\Delta\chi^2=7.84^{**}$	H7a supported
Security→Trust	$\gamma=.18$ ( $t=2.34$ )	$\gamma=.51$ ( $t=8.33$ )	$\Delta\chi^2=4.38^*$	H7b supported

## 5. Conclusions

The main objective of this study was to expand understanding of the effect of perceived privacy and security on trust in online retailers, and how consumer's level of extraversion and demographic variables moderate the effect of these factors on trust. Our findings revealed that both perceived privacy and security are positively related to consumer trust in the online retailer after accounting for



the variance explained by consumer's Internet expertise. Moreover, privacy and security were highly and positively correlated, which means that positive perceptions of one of them lead to positive perceptions of the other. Overall, these results highlight the importance of considering security and privacy as two distinct, yet related concepts which have their own contribution to trust.

The study of the moderating effects represents an initial effort in the process of identifying the conditions under which the influence of perceived privacy and security in consumer trust is stronger. Importantly, researchers have long argued that "hypothesizing direct effects may be somewhat redundant and obvious" (Dabholkar and Bagozzi 2002, p.185), and it is much more meaningful to investigate the moderating effects of consumer personal traits and demographics (e.g. Dabholkar 1996; Dabholkar and Bagozzi 2002; San Martín and Jiménez 2011). Our results revealed that the positive influence of both perceived privacy and security on consumer trust was stronger among individuals low in extraversion, males, younger and more educated consumers. These results contribute to prior literature in several ways.

The moderating role of personality traits in the relationships between online trust and its antecedents has received little attention in prior literature (Dabholkar and Bagozzi 2002; Chen and Lee 2008; Hwang 2009; Dolatabadi and Ebrahimi 2010; Ganguly et al. 2011). However, Dabholkar and Bagozzi (2002) argued that the variation in consumer differences arising from personality traits offers important contributions because such variation is at the heart of consumer attitude formation and behavioral intentions. Chen and Lee (2008) found that extraversion positively moderated the relationship between consumer beliefs about several peripheral route website contents (e.g., reputation, product quality) and consumer's online trust. Importantly, our findings extend Chen and Lee's (2008) study since we show that this personality trait also moderates the relationship of perceived privacy and security, which represent beliefs about central route website contents, on consumer trust.

Previous studies suggest that women are more concerned than men about privacy and security issues on the Internet (Milberg et al. 1995; Sheehan 1999; Gauzente et al. 2004; San Martín and Jiménez 2011). Interestingly, our results indicate that these higher concerns do not translate into a stronger influence of perceived privacy and security on trust, but rather the opposite takes place. This finding confirms previous contentions about the limited relationship that often exists between individuals' stated privacy and security concerns and their actual online behavior (Li and Sarathy 2006; Joinson et al. 2010). It also highlights the role that other consumer-related factors, such as their shopping preferences or orientations, may play in such context (Kim and Benbasat 2003; Smith et al. 2011). In particular, our results seem to suggest that the high preference of women for a personalized, engaging interaction with the Web site (Venkatesh and Agarwal 2006; Ganguly et al. 2011) may override their privacy or security concerns, and therefore such experiential or social value-seeking behavior can lead female consumers to rely more on the trusting beliefs that arise from the interactivity aspects of the website, than those which arise from the privacy or security policy features.

Finally, the influence of privacy and security on trust was stronger among younger and more educated consumers. This suggests that older consumers may be less aware than younger users of the potential problems on the Internet and the operational issues. It also implies that a higher level of education can improve consumers' knowledge and understanding of privacy and security issues on the Internet, and, hence, their potential positive role on the trusting perceptions of these consumers. Importantly, moderating effects of both age and education seem to indicate that the potential of websites' privacy and security policies to generate consumer trust may largely depend on the consumer-related abilities to fully understand such policies.

### ***5.1. Managerial implications***

There are a number of managerial implications derived from this study. Our results about the moderating role of consumer demographics provide online retailers a better understanding of how they can effectively communicate their trustworthiness to different consumers. In particular, for women, older and less educated consumers, who are usually concerned about privacy and security protection in online shopping, but also may be less aware of the operational issues or less motivated to understand them, we encourage online retailers to enhance or establish easy to access (and understand) privacy

and security policies. Importantly, the weaker influence of both privacy and security perceptions on trust by older and less educated consumers may be due to the lack of usability of privacy and security policies themselves, as most of them currently require greater than high school education or more than average online user's knowledge to be comprehended (Joinson et al. 2010). Therefore we encourage online retailers to expend more educational and promotional efforts to clearly explain their privacy and security policies and seals, as well as to adapt their language and information content so that statements can be easily recognizable and understood by all kind of consumers, regardless of their prior knowledge or experience. In addition, when targeting female customers, online retailers could provide more web-enabled communication along with their privacy and security policies to enhance trust by including features that facilitate the information exchange, such as virtual sales agents, online message boards or third party evaluations.

On the other hand, when targeting male, younger and more educated consumers, who are found in this study to be more experienced with the use of Internet in general than their counterparts (see Table 2), we suggest online retailers to provide more detailed or in-depth information about their privacy and security protection mechanisms. Moreover, given that younger and more educated consumers are more likely to be more aware of these issues (Dommeyer and Gross 2003; Yang et al. 2009), these segments may be willing to pay a premium for those websites that made readily available this kind of information (Joinson et al. 2010).

## **5.2. Limitations and future research**

This study represents an initial step into the analysis of the moderating effects of consumers' personality and demographic variables on the relationship between online trust and two of the most important antecedents, perceived privacy and security. Further research is needed to examine a more comprehensive set of online trust antecedents, such as the potential role that individuals' personal knowledge about privacy and security issues on the Internet would play in their trust beliefs. The role of other moderator variables, such as shopping orientations (e.g., goal-directed or utilitarian, social or experiential, etc.), could also be considered in further studies. For example, it would be interesting to analyze to what extent the different knowledge or shopping motivations of the various moderating groups (men versus women, younger versus older, high education versus low education) may be causing some of the differences found between these groups in our research.

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## APPENDIX

### A summary of prior empirical studies examining privacy and/or security as antecedents of online trust which have included moderating effects

Authors	Moderators	Main findings
Kim et al. (2004)	Purchase experience with an Internet store	Structural assurance does not influence trust for potential and repeat customers. Reputation and information quality are the main antecedents of trust for potential customers, whereas that for repeat customers the main antecedents are the service quality and satisfaction.
Koufaris and Hampton-Sosa (2004)	Website categories	Perceived security control positively influences trust. Among the other antecedents, the effect of perceived security control on trust is stronger for websites of goods than for websites of services.
Bart et al. (2005)	Web site categories; Consumer demographics	The relative importance of privacy on online trust differs depending on: (1) the type of commercial Web site, being more important for travel websites, and (2) the level of education and income of consumers, being less important for highly educated, high-income consumers.
Kim (2005)	Individualism-Collectivism Cultural Dimension	For individualistic consumers privacy has a positive effect on trust, whereas this effect is not significant for collectivistic consumers. Security protection has a significant and positive effect on consumer's trust in e-vendor for both collectivistic and individualistic consumers
Schlosser et al. (2006)	Consumers' purpose for visiting the website; Perceived risk in online shopping.	Both the presence and strength of privacy/security statements positively influence trust: such beliefs are significantly higher for consumers who received a strong statement than for those who received weak or no statement.
Jin and Park (2006)	Online Purchase Experience	Online purchase experience does not significantly moderate the relationship between Security/Privacy and trust.
San Martin and Camarero (2008)	Attitudes toward online shopping	The motives and inhibitors the individuals perceive when buying online moderate the relationship between privacy/security policies and trust: whereas potential users are the group that more importance give to security and privacy policies as determinants for trust, for

		relational users such privacy and security policies are not significant determinants of trust.
Chen and Dobb (2010)	Familiarity with the site	Security and privacy assurances have a greater influence on trust when people are familiar with the site.
Dolatabadi and Ebrahimi (2010)	Propensity to trust	Respondents with high propensity to trust consider perceived risks and perceived reputation as the significant predictors of their trust in online shopping; while perceived risks, perceived security protection and perceived reputation were the factors considered by respondents with low propensity to trust.
Ganguly et al. (2011)	Enjoyment of online shopping; Trust Propensity; Age; Gender	Customers who are low on trust propensity give more stress on security of the website in order to generate trust with the travel portals. The relationship between privacy and trust is moderated by consumer gender, but age does not a significant moderate effect.
Liao et al. (2011)	Shopping experience	The effect of Internet literacy, social awareness and disposition to trust on privacy concern and trust was weaker for experienced shoppers.
San Martín and Jiménez (2011)	Gender	Privacy and security (measured as the same construct) positively influences online trust. Privacy and security concerns are more important for women than for men.

# WHAT'S UP IN SMARTPHONE SERVICES?: ANALYSIS OF SWITCHING COSTS, CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY IN THE SPANISH MARKET

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** *With the rapid introduction of the smartphones in the marketplace, along with the increasing availability and demand of the Internet, the industry of mobile services is making great efforts in order to attract more customers and retain current ones.*

**Purpose:** *In this scenario, this study aims to analyze how the switching costs and perceived value influence customer satisfaction in the smartphone communication services. Additionally, the mediating role of customer loyalty is also examined.*

**Methodology:** *For this purpose, drawing on a sample of 370 customers, an analysis was developed through structural equation modeling.*

**Findings:** *Our findings suggest that customer satisfaction is determined by two variables –perceived value and corporate image-, while the switching costs exert a lower influence on customer satisfaction. Finally, our findings do not support the mediating role of customer loyalty on the relationship between customer satisfaction and switching intention.*

**Implications:** *Consequently, since our findings highlight low switching costs, smartphone services companies should focus their marketing efforts towards gaining new customers.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Smartphones, Switching costs, Satisfaction, Perceived value, Loyalty.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The mobile communication service industry is entering a new period. On one hand, fostered by the rapid development of information and communication technologies, the growing availability of internet services and the increasing demand from customers, the mobile communication services companies are currently shifting from voice-based communication to a combination of multimedia and data services (Kim et al., 2004). And on the other hand, the launching and popularization of the intelligent mobile phones - the so-called smartphones-, contribute to a transformation in the mobile



communication service market (Kim et al., 2004). The intelligent mobile phones or smartphones are not only a personal mobile device used to stay connected with family and friends, but also an extension of consumers' individuality and personality (Grant and O'Donohe, 2007), who adopt smartphones in order to enhance their private and social lives (Persaud and Azhar, 2012). Nowadays smartphones have become communication devices integrated into everyone's daily life (Kuo et al., 2009).

In this increasingly competitive market, the ability to provide a high level of customer satisfaction services is a key issue to providers in order to differentiate themselves from competitors (Deng et al., 2010). So, building strong and long-term relationships with customers and developing customers' loyalty is crucial for companies in gaining a sustainable competitive advantage (Nasir, 2005), since attracting new customers is considered more expensive than retaining current customers (Deng et al., 2010). Therefore, with smartphone penetration forecasted to increase substantially over the next years, managers need to understand smartphone consumers' behavior, in order to become more customer-oriented.

Despite the popularization of the smartphones, prior research has focused on mobile phones, and more specifically on their consumption, usage and motivations (Andrews et al., 2005; Hanley and Becker, 2008), experience and trust (Basheer and Ibrahim, 2010), or the cultural influence on mobile adoption (De Marez et al., 2007; Muk, 2007). Furthermore, previous literature on mobile services is based on consumers of the United States of America and Canada (Muk, 2007; Roach, 2009; Persaud and Azhar, 2012); whereas there is a lack of research focusing in the Southern European markets.

The purpose of this research is to provide and empirically test a conceptual model in order to deepen the understanding of the variables that motivate consumers' satisfaction, loyalty and switching intention of their smartphone services' companies, along with the examination of the their switching costs in a Southern European country. Considering the previous literature on the topic we develop a model of customer satisfaction in smartphone services including the following variables: perceived value, corporate image and switching costs –which include the attractiveness of alternatives, the search effort and service knowledge-. Additionally, our research analyzes the mediating role of customer loyalty. That is, customers' satisfaction and switching intention may depend on the mediating effects of customer loyalty. This article is structured as follows. The next section presents a brief review of the literature on smartphones and the mobile services market, followed by the conceptual framework and the research hypotheses development. We then describe the methodology, present the results and discuss the implications of our findings for managerial practice. Finally, we conclude by highlighting some research limitations and future research guidance.

## **2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1. The Spanish smartphone services' market**

Classic mobile phones offer voice and text-messaging capabilities, with some other features, such as camera and calendar; while smartphones offer larger and higher resolution screens, a wide array of applications –apps-, web browsing, e-mail, picture messaging, GPS, popular networking sites, video camera, games or video and picture editing (Barnes, 2002; Persaud and Azhar, 2012). Additionally, smartphones comprise many technological capabilities over the traditional mobile phones (Persaud and Azhar, 2012), attracting customers for their many practical and entertainment applications, and because they can personalize devices, add features and applications specific to their needs. For these reasons, smartphones have gained global acceptance within a relatively short period of time (Barnes and Scornavacca, 2004), being central to most consumers, since they have the smartphone on and check it almost everywhere they go (Persaud and Azhar, 2012).

With the rapid development of the mobile communications and the large usage of the Internet, smartphone communication services have been widely adopted and popular in Spain. In fact, nowadays, with a large number of mobile device users –35 million-, and a smartphone penetration

rate of the 66% in year 2012 (Comscore, 2013), Spain has gained great opportunity for mobile services' companies. The UE regulation released mobile numbers' portability in year 2003, enforcing phone numbers' portability between operators. Consequently, the number portability between mobile companies does not longer act as a switching cost; and thus not preventing customers from terminating their contracts with service providers. Since the introduction of mobile number portability, the Spanish market has gone through a significant transformation, driving mobile companies to compete fiercely in a highly competitive market.

Additionally, in the Spanish mobile services market, it was a common practice to subsidize the purchase of smartphones and mobile devices; that is, give customers smartphones and other mobile devices for free or with a low price –a lower price than the one to be paid when no subscription contract is involved-, when they sign a contract with a mobile services company. In return, the companies required customers to sign long-term contracts to make up the loss on the smartphone or mobile device through the revenues obtained (Gerpott et al., 2001). By this practice, the companies clearly tried to lower the switching costs for new customers. As a result, after the required contractual period, a great number of customers terminated their contract, so they could obtain a new subsidized smartphone again. However, the discontinuing of subsidies for smartphones and mobile devices from year 2012, caused a reduction in the increase rate of new customers, and some companies experienced a drop in their customers, revealing that the market may have reached maturity. Once the number of mobile services' subscribers has reached a saturation point, obtaining new customers is rather difficult. So nowadays, the Spanish mobile communication industry is developing a new core marketing strategy, trying to retain the existing customers by improving customer perceived value and loyalty.

## **2.2. Smartphone services companies intangible attributes**

### *2.2.1. Perceived value*

Following Zeithaml (1988), perceived value could be conceptualized as the consumers' overall assessment of the benefits of a product or service, based on perceptions about what is being received. Moreover, perceived value is related to customer satisfaction (Sweeny and Soutar, 2001). In the mobile communications sector, perceived value could be defined as the evaluation of the benefits of a product or service by customers, based on their advance sacrifices and ex-post perceived performance when they use mobile services (Kuo et al., 2009). So, customers integrate their perceptions of what they get and what they give up in order to obtain mobile communication services. Previous researches have pointed out that the key factors of mobile companies' success are the enhancement of perceived value and customer satisfaction (Wang et al., 2004; Yang and Peterson, 2004); highlighting three variables as the main drivers of customers' perceived value – network quality, good value for money and customer service- (Gerpott et al., 2001). Empirical studies in the mobile communication industry have demonstrated that perceived value positively influences customer satisfaction (Lin and Wang, 2006; Turel and Serenko, 2006). Additionally, when consumers perceive that the value obtained from a smartphone services' company is high, they will be more willing to engage with this company (Deng et al., 2010). So, we propose that when customers perceive a higher value service, they will have an increased satisfaction, which in turn lead to a greater customer loyalty. Thus, the following research hypothesis is posed:

*H<sub>0</sub>: Perceived value is positively related to customer satisfaction*

### *2.2.2. Corporate image*

In the mobile services market, customers cannot fully regulate the business contract, so it is necessary for them to rely on the service providers not to engage unfair behavior (Gefen, 2002).

Thus, consumers' perceptions of attributes of the service company, such as integrity, ability or experience are crucial. When customers perceive that a mobile services company is reliable, trustworthy and with a wide experience, they will be more satisfied (Deng et al., 2010). Furthermore, better opportunities in searching for information about companies in the mobile communications' sector makes it easier for customers to evaluate corporate attributes before they purchase or subscribe (Methlie and Nysveen, 1999). Hence, corporate image should be considered as a critical factor for companies to build and maintain relationships with customers. Finally, following Martensen et al., (2000), the corporate image is an important driver of customer satisfaction and loyalty, whereas perceived quality has a relatively lower impact. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

*H<sub>1</sub>: The corporate image is positively related to customer satisfaction*

### **2.3. Smartphone services' switching costs**

Switching costs could be defined as the costs of switching from one supplier's product to another one (Stewart, 1998); or the costs that the consumer incurs by changing one service provider to another (Lee et al., 2001); including costs which can be measured in monetary terms, the psychological costs of facing a new company and the time and effort involved in using a new provider, service or product (Kim et al., 2003). Since switching costs face the uncertainty of dealing with a new service provider, switching costs make it costly for the customer to switch (Fornell, 1992), meaning a barrier to changing service providers (Deng et al., 2010). So, increasing the customers' perception of the risk in switching to other providers -such as the trouble in a new contract relationship or the difficulty in using new alternative services-, will increase the likelihood that the customer will keep the contract with the current service provider.

Regarding the mobile communications sector, the switching costs refer to the difficulty in switching to another mobile communication provider, which is encountered by customers who are not satisfied with the current service (Kim et al., 2004). Even though some customers may not feel any satisfaction toward their mobile companies, they do not wish to terminate the contractual relationship due to the switching costs, becoming captive customers (Gerpott et al., 2001). The contract or subscription with a mobile services company may be maintained involuntarily because a customer is prevented by switching costs from changing the service company (Gerpott et al., 2001). So, the higher the switching costs, the more customers are forced to remain with their current mobile services' providers. On the contrary, satisfied customers may switch to another mobile company for the low switching costs (Lam et al., 2004), such as low search costs, the service knowledge or the wide array of attractive alternatives. Finally, high switching costs may influence customer satisfaction, since they will perceive high switching cost as something negative which reduces their flexibility to switch service providers (Methlie and Nysveen, 1999; Bigné et al., 2011).

#### *2.3.1. Attractiveness of alternatives*

The attractiveness of alternatives means the image, reputation and service quality of the replacing services' companies, which are expected to more suitable services or superior o services than those of the current company (Kim et al., 2004). This variable is clearly linked to service differentiation and if few alternative competitors are available in the marketplace, then customers tend to remain with their current company (Bendapudi and Berry, 1997). The customers' perception of the risk in switching to other providers, such as the difficulty in finding an alternative service or the lack of attractive alternatives, will increase the likelihood that the customer will continue with the current provider (Lam et al., 2004); perceiving this switching costs as a negative since they reduce their availability to switch provider (Deng et al., 2010). Therefore, we predict a negative relationship

between the presence of attractive alternatives in the marketplace and customer satisfaction. So, the following research hypothesis is posed:

*H<sub>2</sub>: The attractiveness of alternatives is inversely related to customer satisfaction*

### 2.3.2. Search effort

Search effort is an important aspect of the switching costs (Fornell, 1992) and a key concept in consumer behaviour (Methlie and Nysveen, 1999). A major impact of electronic markets is that they reduce the search effort and costs related to searching for information about services. That is, the search effort is reduced when customers move from the traditional marketplace to electronic markets (Bakos, 1991; Methlie and Nysveen, 1999). As a result, it is less costly for customers to find alternative service providers (Methlie and Nysveen, 1999). However, customers are probably not satisfied when it is difficult to find alternatives and, thus, having limited flexibility imposed on them. In fact, many smartphone consumers found significant cost in switching from one service provider to another one, because doing so would mean a great search effort and a loss of time getting informed about other companies' services, prices or promotions (Bigné et al., 2011). This implies that high search effort leads to a poor customer satisfaction and to high customer loyalty. Therefore, it is assumed that the relationship between search effort and customer satisfaction is negative, as for switching costs. Consequently, these set of considerations leads us to the following hypothesis:

*H<sub>3</sub>: Search effort is inversely related to customer satisfaction*

### 2.3.3. Service knowledge

Consumers who have a high level of knowledge on the product category or service, have a greater ability to evaluate information on alternatives, acquire and process information and make purchasing decisions better suited to their needs, leading them to take better decisions (Bell et al., 2005). Therefore, the degree of knowledge about a product or service influences customer satisfaction (Bigné et al., 2011). However, consumers with a high level of product knowledge, are usually better informed about competitors; and thus, they may think that other purchasing alternatives would have been better. Consequently, the level of product knowledge acts as a switching cost when consumers have a low level of knowledge (Creyer and Ross, 1999). Thus, the following research hypothesis is posed:

*H<sub>4</sub>: The service knowledge is positively related to customer satisfaction*

## 2.4. Customer satisfaction and loyalty

Customer satisfaction could be conceptualized as an experience-based overall evaluation made by the customer based on whether his overall expectations on the services obtained from a provider have been fulfilled (Parasuraman et al., 1998). Thus, customer satisfaction is higher or lower compared to the extent to which the service provided exceeded or not what was expected (Parasuraman et al., 1998). So, customer satisfaction can be defined as a qualitative perception based on the assessments made by the customer regarding different value drivers referring to their purchase and consumption experiences (Johnson and Fornell, 1991; Eshghi et al., 2007), and is effective in predicting consumers' post-purchase behavior (Wang et al., 2004). In the mobile services context, customer satisfaction reflects the degree of a customer's positive feeling for a service provider of mobile services (Deng et al., 2010). So, if the customer has a good experience for using a mobile service provider, he will develop customer satisfaction (Dent et al., 2010). The customer satisfaction with mobile communication services has been related with the call quality, the good value for money, customer services and convenient procedures (Gerpott et al., 2001; Lee et al., 2001). The overall satisfaction is also influenced by how customers perceive that the mobile services benefit them personally, meeting their personal needs, along with a positive evaluation of the mobile

company (Gerpott et al., 2001). Consequently, we will define customer satisfaction as the total consumption perception of customers when using smartphone services.

On the other hand, customer satisfaction is considered as an important determinant of customer loyalty (Eggert and Ulaga, 2002), since customer satisfaction positively influences customer loyalty (Mittal et al., 1998; Choi et al., 2008), while negatively affects customer switching intention (Walsh et al., 2006). Moreover, customer satisfaction strengthens customer loyalty, lowers consumers' price sensitivity and enhances company reputation (Fornell, 1992). Previous research demonstrates that customers who experience a high level of satisfaction are more likely to remain with their current mobile service companies, maintaining their subscription. However, customer satisfaction is not always a sufficient condition for customer loyalty (Lee and Cunningham, 2001, Kim et al., 2004); and thus it is necessary to analyze other influencing factors, such as the switching costs (Jones et al., 2000). So, the following research hypothesis is proposed:

*H<sub>5</sub>: Customer satisfaction is positively related to customer loyalty*

## **2.5. Customer satisfaction and switching intention**

Customer switching intention could be defined as the exit or the customer decision to terminate the contract with a particular service company (Stewart, 1998). For mobile services companies customer retention is a crucial issue (Deng et al., 2010), since once customers' long-term links are of great importance to the success of the company (Gerpott et al., 2001). The reason is that the mobile services' contract represents a continuous contractual transaction carried out over a long period of time, while customers cannot be certain that the mobile services will we always provided with the promised quality (Gerpott et al., 2001). The contractual transaction is structured so that customers pay a monthly fee for the usage of the mobile communication network, and afterwards they pay their services and data charges in accordance with their use.

So, customer retention is concerned with maintaining the contractual relationship established between the mobile company and the customer, or by extending the customer's contract over a long period of time; and is positively related to customer satisfaction (Wang et al., 2004; Turel and Serenko, 2006). Moreover, satisfaction and loyalty have emerged as variables with a strong influence on customer retention, that is, whether a customer continues to a contract with a service provider (Eshghi et al., 2007). Following Deng et al. (2010), customer satisfaction is a direct determining factor in customer retention and switching intention. More specifically, customer satisfaction negatively influences customer switching intention (Walsh et al., 2006). So, once a customer is dissatisfied with a service provider, he will be much more likely to change to another one (Deng et al., 2010). Therefore, we propose the following research hypotheses:

*H<sub>6</sub>: Customer loyalty is inversely related to switching intention*

*H<sub>7</sub>: Customer satisfaction is inversely related to switching intention*

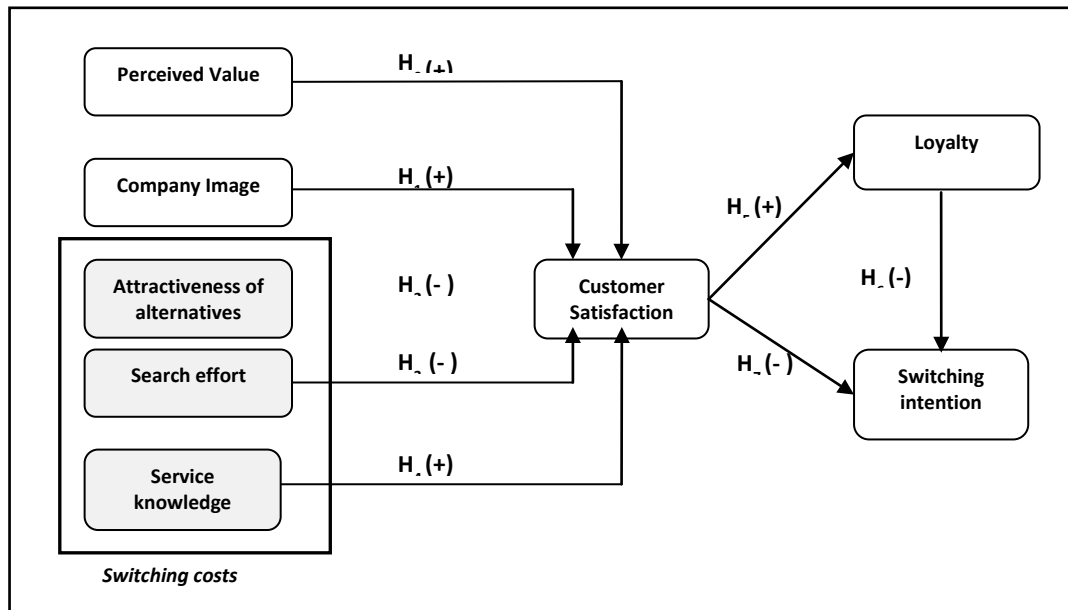
## **2.6. The mediating role of customer loyalty**

Following Oliver (1999), loyalty could be conceptualized as a deep commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future, thus causing repetitive purchasing. In our study, we define customer loyalty as the customers' behavioral intention to continuously use smartphone communication services with their present service providers. Considering previous research we expect a more favorable customer loyalty for highly satisfied customers, than for these customers with a low degree of satisfaction; and additionally, a lower switching intention is expected for these customers with a high degree of loyalty (Kime et al., 2004). In our research, we propose that customer satisfaction is an important factor influencing customer switching intention, trough customer loyalty. So, the following hypothesis is posed, relative to the mediating role of customer loyalty:

*H<sub>8</sub>: Customer loyalty mediates the influence of customer satisfaction on customer switching intention.*

FIGURE 1.

Conceptual model of customer satisfaction and switching intention of smartphone services



### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Data collection

The data were collected by a self-administered structured on-line questionnaire in March 2013 among consumers residing in Spain. Potential respondents were contacted by e-mail to participate in the study. We first pre-tested the questionnaire on a small sample of 10 smartphone users. Then, we proceeded with a random sampling among consumers, inviting them to complete the on-line questionnaire, and asking them about their smartphone services' companies, in order to gather information regarding the specific company they have knowledge or consumer experience. Thus, each one of the participants evaluated their current smartphone services company. This procedure yielded a total of 411 completed questionnaires, obtaining a total amount of 370 valid responses comprising several smartphone mobile companies such as Movistar, Vodafone; Orange, R, Yoigo, Pepephone, Simyo, Masmovil and Yazztel. The sampling error was 5.19%, with a confidence level of 95% under the hypothesis  $p=q=0.50$ . The last part of the questionnaire contained several socio-demographic questions.

#### 3.2. Variables and measurement scales

All measures are adapted from or developed based on prior research, and were measured using the classic Likert-type 1-5 scale, asking respondents to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements (Table 1). The *services perceived value* is measured by three items adopted from Kuo al. (2009) and Bigné et al. (2011), in order to assess customers' perception the company vale. Secondly, we used three items to measure the *corporate image*, adopted from previous studies (Nguyen and LeBlanc, 2001; Bigné et al. 2011), based on the research line about the image and associations in consumers' perceptions. The *attractiveness of alternatives* is measured on a 3-item scale, comprising items proposed by Jones et al. (2000) and Bigné et al. (2011). The customers' *search*

*effort* are measured on the scale proposed by Srinivasan and Ratchford (1991) and Bigné et al. (2011), which evaluates the customer's overall searching effort when looking for a smartphone services company. For measuring *service knowledge*, we used three items proposed by Sharma and Patterson (2000) and Bigné et al. (2011) regarding whether the consumer has an overall knowledge on the mobile service companies. Regarding the variable consumer *satisfaction*, we considered four items proposed by Burnham et al. (2003) and Kuo et al. (2009). Moreover, in order to measure customers' *loyalty*, we adopted three items from previous research (Yoo et al., 2000). Finally, *switching intention* is measured on a 2-item scale, including items adopted from Jones et al. (2000) and Bansal et al. (2005).

**4. RESULTS**

**4.1. Analysis of the measurement model**

Structural equation modeling was carried out in order to analyze the proposed model with Amos 18.0, providing a confirmatory factor analysis and showing a clear factorial structure. In relation with the internal consistency and reliability, cronbach Alpha, composite reliability coefficients and analysis of the extracted variance extracted were calculated (Table 1). In first place, we obtained cronbach alpha values from 0.722 to 0.927, thus being acceptable, as suggested Anderson and Gerbing (1988) and Hair et al. (1998). The composite reliability (CR) of the latent variables was higher than 0.60, indicating that all measures had good reliability (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Hair et al., 1998). Additionally, the average variance extracted (AVE) varied from 0.506 to 0.789; thus reaching the threshold of 0.50; meaning that a good convergent validity was obtained (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Steenkamp and Trijp, 1991). Confirmatory factor analyses were employed to address the issues of dimensionality, convergent and discriminant validity (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Our confirmatory factorial analysis shows that all standardized factor loadings are significant, with a reliability level of 95% and reaching the commonly used threshold of 0.60 (Nunnally, 1978), with the exception of ATR3, thus being subject for further research.

**TABLE 1.**

Factor loadings of latent variables and indicators of internal consistency and reliability

Construct	Indicators	Cronbach Alpha	Lambda	CR	AVE
<b>Perceived Value</b> Kuo et al. (2009), Bigné et al. (2011)	PV1: My company offers services with good value for money	0.897	0.841	0.898	0.746
	PV2: Compared to other companies, It was a wise decision to choose this smartphone services' company		0.908		
	PV3: This smartphone services' company provides value-added services which are worth for me		0.840		
<b>Corporate image</b> Nguyen and LeBlanc (2001), Bigné et al. (2011)	IM1: This company has a good image among consumers	0.862	0.700	0.865	0.685
	IM2: I have a good image about my company		0.842		
	IM3: This company has a good image, compared to other smartphone services companies		0.925		
<b>Attractiveness of alternatives</b> Jones et al. (2000), Bigné et al. (2011)	ATR1: Probably, I would be also satisfied with another company	0.734	0.874	0.742	0.506
	ATR2: There are other good competing companies which I could have selected		0.695		
	ATR3: If I had contracted the service with another company, I would be equally satisfied		0.507		
<b>Search effort</b>	SE1: I used several information sources to	0.847		0.849	0.654

Srinivasan and Ratchford (1991), Bigné et al. (2011)	collect information before I selected this smartphone services company SE2: I used to visit numerous companies before I selected my company SE3: I used a lot of time searching for information about other smartphone services' companies before I selected my company.		0.775  0.755  0.889		
<b>Service knowledge</b> Sharma & Patterson (2000), Bigné et al. (2011)	KN1: I have a vast knowledge about the smartphone services' providers KN2: I am informed and keep updated about the price deals and promotions offered by these companies	0.730	0.898 0.645	0.754	0.612
<b>Customer Satisfaction</b> Burnham et al. (2003), Kuo et al. (2009)	SAT1: I am satisfied with the services provided by this smartphone services' company SAT2: I think this smartphone services' company has successfully provided value-added services SAT3: My company gives me what I expect from a smartphone services company SAT4: So far, my smartphone company has satisfied my expectations	0.927	0.907 0.831 0.857 0.892	0.927	0.761
<b>Loyalty</b> Yoo et al. (2000)	LOY1: I will continue my subscription to my company LOY2: If I had to contract again, I would chose the same company. LOY3: I consider myself loyal to my smartphone services' company	0.920	0.865 0.885 0.914	0.918	0.789
<b>Switching intention</b> Jones et al. (2000), Bansal et al. (2005)	SW1: I have the intention of switching my smartphone services' company SW2: I regret to have subscribed contract with this company	0.722	0.782 0.723	0.723	0.567

#### 4.2. Analysis of the structural model

Structural equation modeling was developed to assess the statistical significance of the research hypotheses. All the model fit indices exceeded the respective common acceptance levels (Hair et al., 1998), indicating that the measurement model of customers' satisfaction, exhibited a good fit of the collected data. Model fit criteria suggested by Hu and Bentler (1996) were used for both the measurement and the structural model:  $\chi^2 / df$ , goodness of fit (GFI), adjusted goodness of fit (AGFI), comparative fit index (CFI), root mean square residual (RMR) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Acceptable models should have  $\chi^2 / df \leq 3$ , AGFI  $\geq 0.80$ , RMR  $\leq .1$ , RMSEA  $\leq 1.0$  and GFI and CFI higher than 0.90. All of the obtained fit measures indicated that the structural model was acceptable ( $\chi^2 / df = 1.905$ ;  $p < .000$ ): RMSEA= 0.050; RMR= 0.055; GFI= 0.914; AGFI= 0.889; CFI= 0.969).

#### 4.3. Discussion

The results obtained report that perceived value is the dimension with higher loading on customer satisfaction ( $\beta_{16} = 0.623^{**}$ ), followed by corporate image ( $\beta_{26} = 0.262^{**}$ ) and the attractiveness of alternatives ( $\beta_{36} = -0.107^{**}$ ). Thus, in terms of the effect size, the perceived value seems to contribute the most to customer satisfaction (Table 2). Additionally, we found empirical evidence to propose a



significant positive relationship between corporate image and customer satisfaction, along with a significant negative relationship between the attractiveness of alternatives in the smartphone services companies and customer satisfaction. These relationships were in the expected direction. So, it can be stated that the better and more favorable perceived value of the smartphone services provide or the corporate image, the higher customer satisfaction.

On one hand, regarding the switching costs, it should be highlighted that only one of the proposed relationships is significantly positive, regarding the influence of the attractiveness of alternatives and customer satisfaction ( $\beta_{36}=-0.107^{**}$ ). However, the other switching costs, namely the search effort ( $\beta_{46}=0.026^{ns}$ ) and the service knowledge ( $\beta_{56}=0.024^{ns}$ ) showed not statistical significance on customer satisfaction, since the relationships were in the expected direction, but failed to reach statistical significance for both variables. The reason may be either the switching costs are regarded as insignificant or customers do not have the feeling of being retained by the smartphone services companies. This can be explained by the nature of the smartphone services, commonly available today, along with consumers perceiving the shift of the service provider as easy. Moreover, the no significant influence of the search costs may be explained by the fact that searching for alternative services does not lead to significantly better offers. On the other hand, our results highlight a significant positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty ( $\beta_{67}= 0.959^{**}$ ), along with a significant inverse relationship between customer satisfaction and switching intention ( $\beta_{68}=-0.846^{**}$ ), as initially expected. Finally, and contrary to our proposed relationships, our findings do not find support for the negative relationship between loyalty and switching intention ( $\beta_{78}=-0.082^{ns}$ ).

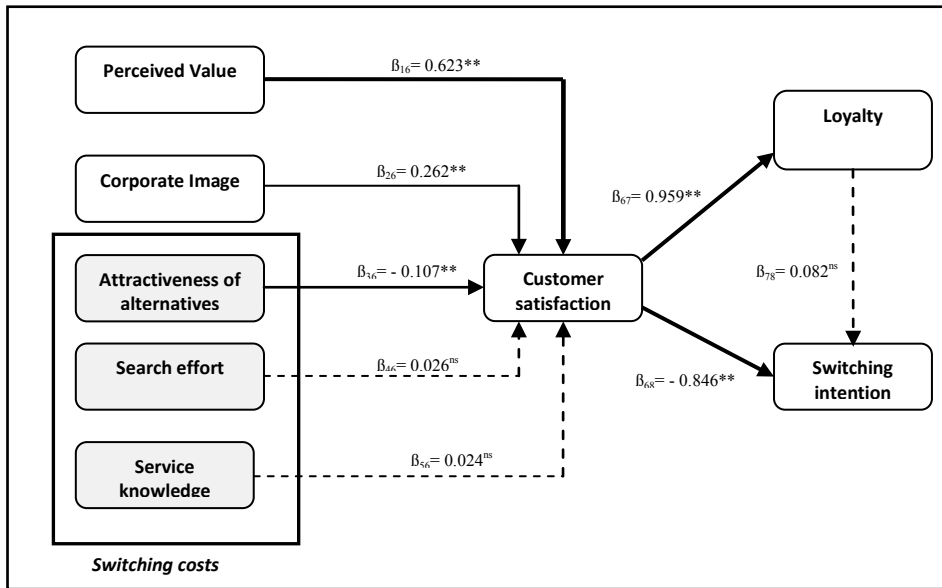
**TABLE 2.**  
Results of the structural model

<i>Causal relationships</i>	<b>Standardized Coefficients</b>	<b>t value</b>	<b>Hypotheses test</b>
Perceived Value → Customer Satisfaction	$\beta_{16} = 0.623^{**}$	7.047	H <sub>0</sub> : Supported
Corporate image → Customer Satisfaction	$\beta_{26} = 0.262^{**}$	3.272	H <sub>1</sub> : Supported
Alternatives' attractiveness → Customer Satisfaction	$\beta_{36} = -0.107^{**}$	-2.728	H <sub>2</sub> : Supported
Search effort → Customer Satisfaction	$\beta_{46} = 0.026^{ns}$	0.734	H <sub>3</sub> : No Supported
Service Knowledge → Customer Satisfaction	$\beta_{56} = 0.024^{ns}$	0.657	H <sub>4</sub> : No Supported
Customer satisfaction → Loyalty	$\beta_{67} = 0.959^{**}$	22.746	H <sub>5</sub> : Supported
Loyalty → Customer switching intention	$\beta_{78} = -0.082^{ns}$	0.354	H <sub>6</sub> : No Supported
Customer satisfaction → Customer switching intention	$\beta_{68} = -0.846^{**}$	-3.632	H <sub>7</sub> : Supported
<i>ns=no significative</i> <i>** significative (p&lt;0.01)</i>	$R^2_{\text{Satisfaction}} = 0.857$ $R^2_{\text{Post-purchase attitude}} = 0.919$ $R^2_{\text{Switch intention}} = 0.855$		

Our results provide strong support for all research hypotheses, except from H<sub>3</sub>, H<sub>4</sub>, and H<sub>6</sub>, thus not supporting a significant relationship between two of the switching costs and customer satisfaction, along with the relationship between loyalty and switching intention. On the other hand, our findings show that five of the eight initial research hypotheses are supported - H<sub>0</sub>, H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>5</sub> and H<sub>7</sub>-. Thus, customer satisfaction with smartphone services was found to be significantly influenced by perceived value and the corporate image, along with a slight inverse influence of the attractiveness of alternatives. Moreover, it was found that customer satisfaction exerts a relevant positive effect on loyalty, whereas it inversely affects the switching intention. Finally, there was not support for H<sub>6</sub>, since our results did not confirm a significant relationship between loyalty and switching intention.

FIGURE 2.

Final causal relationships



4.4. The mediating role of customer loyalty

For analyzing the mediating role of customer loyalty, we estimate both a direct and indirect effects (Table 3). Our research hypothesis H<sub>8</sub> predicted that customer loyalty would mediate the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer switching intention. As related to the direct effects, we found a positive and significant direct inverse effect of customer satisfaction and switching intention ( $\beta_{68}=-0.846^{**}$ ). With regard to the mediating indirect effects, we observed a significant positive effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty ( $\beta_{67}=0.959^{**}$ ), but the indirect mediating effect of customer loyalty on switching intention was not significant ( $\beta_{78}=-0.082^{ns}$ ). So, contrary to our expectations this relationship was not found significant, thus not supporting H<sub>8</sub>. A comparison between the indirect and the direct models shows that the direct mediating model had a significant decrease in Chi-square ( $\nabla\chi^2=12.148$ ;  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), along with a substantive improvement of the model fit ( $CFI=0.969$ ) and a significant estimate for the relationship between customer satisfaction and the switching intention. Therefore, these results suggest that there is not a complete mediation. Additionally, we analyzed the partial mediation, identifying indirect effects from customer satisfaction to switching intention through the proposed mediating variable –loyalty-. Our results showed a significant positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty ( $\beta_{67}=0.959^{**}$ ), the other indirect mediating effect of customer loyalty to switching intention showed a no significant relationship ( $\beta_{78}=-0.082^{ns}$ ). Thus, the model proposed does not support that customer loyalty provides partial mediation on the relationship between customer satisfaction and switching intention.

TABLE 3.  
Testing of the mediating effect of customer loyalty

Model fit	Chi-square	X <sup>2</sup>	df	p	RMSEA	CFI
Indirect mediating effects	415.994	1.953	213	0.001	0.052	0.967
Direct mediating effects	403.846	1.905	212	0.001	0.050	0.969
Paths	Indirect effects			Direct effects		
	$\beta$	t		$\beta$	t	

Customer satisfaction → Switching intention	-	-	$B_{68} = -0.846^{**}$	-3.632
Customer satisfaction → Loyalty	$\beta_{67} = 0.967^{**}$	22.901	$B_{67} = 0.959^{**}$	22.746
Loyalty → Switching intention	$\beta_{78} = -0.916^{**}$	-17.267	$B_{78} = -0.082^{ns}$	-0.354
** <i>significant</i> ( $p < 0.05$ ) <i>ns</i> = <i>no significant</i>				

## 5. CONCLUSION

The present study aims to contribute to the existing literature by analyzing the variables influencing customer satisfaction, loyalty and the switching intention in the smartphone services marketplace. The conceptual proposed model was strongly supported by the data collected in the Spanish market, describing some empirical findings of what determines customer satisfaction and loyalty for smartphone users. Our findings show that perceived value, is found to have the greatest impact, followed by corporate image; while switching costs and the attractiveness of other alternatives have less explanatory power of customer satisfaction and loyalty.

One major finding is that perceived value is the most important driver of customer satisfaction, being the largest effect followed by corporate image. When smartphone services companies reinforce their perceived value, customer satisfaction and loyalty are directly improved and the switching intention can be negatively influenced. So, smartphone services' perceived value is critical to service providers' success in today's increasingly competitive marketplace, being the variable with higher influence on customers' satisfaction. This result is in line with previous research (Kuo et al., 2009), and implies that if smartphone services' providers aim to induce higher customer satisfaction, the enhancement of perceived value should be prioritized. Additionally, the corporate image influences customer satisfaction, but with a lower influence, being in line with Martensen et al. (2000), who highlighted image as one main driver for customers' satisfaction in the mobile sector. Therefore, since perceived value and corporate image are the main determinants of customer satisfaction, smartphone services companies should struggle to satisfy their customers and build high quality services, along with strong corporate image.

Other major finding is the low or poor influence of the switching costs on customer satisfaction. In fact, our results indicate stronger support for services' perceived value and corporate image than for switching costs as determinants of customer satisfaction and loyalty, being in line with previous research (Methlie and Nysveen, 1999). Only the attractiveness of other smartphone services alternatives showed a directly negative influence on customers' satisfaction, since our results do not provide empirical support of the effects of search costs and service knowledge on customer satisfaction. On one hand, our findings show that only the attractiveness of alternatives is a significant switching cost. So that the higher the attractiveness of alternatives, the lower customer satisfaction, and the greater likelihood it will drive consumers to stay with their current service providers. In this sense, the release of smartphones' number portability has removed the constraints set up by mobile services providers, allowing customers to have more options available (Kuo et al., 2009), and thus increasing the attractiveness of other alternatives. On the other hand, our results do not provide empirical support for service knowledge and the search effort as exerting a significant influence as switching costs. The reason may be that the vast majority of smartphone users are familiar to some extent to mobile devices available and the services provided by companies. Moreover, regarding the no significant influence of the search effort, the probable reason lies in that the cost of searching and learning about other providers is low, and that customers find smartphone service providers' information available easily and in great amount. Other reason may be that the services offered by smartphone companies are very similar; so searching for alternative services does not lead to significantly better offers. Additionally, the poor influence of switching costs may also be explained by the fact customers do not have the feeling of being retained by the smartphone services companies.

Furthermore, our results highlight a positive significant relationship between customers' satisfaction and their loyalty, along with a strong negative relationship between customers' satisfaction and their switching intention. The relevant influence of customer satisfaction on loyalty confirms previous findings that satisfied customers tend to be loyal (Methlie and Nysveen, 1999), and are in line with recent studies highlighting the strong relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty (Eshghi et al., 2007). Our results showed that customer satisfaction has the most significant impact in customer loyalty, whereas the switching costs –and more specifically the attractiveness of alternatives- had a significant but minor explanatory power. Finally, other major finding is that our results do not support the mediating role of customers' loyalty. Our model supports the finding that customer loyalty does not provide complete nor partial mediation of the relationship between customer satisfaction and switching intention. We hypothesized that customer loyalty would mediate on the formation of customer switching intention, but this was not the case.

Derived from our findings, we propose some useful insights for company managers. Considering that our findings highlight low switching costs, smartphone services providers should focus their marketing efforts towards attracting new customers and increasing the primary demand, rather than retaining their existing customers. We suggest that since customer switching costs exert a slight influence, smartphone service providers are better off improving and enhancing customer satisfaction to minimize customer defection. That is, managers should direct their efforts to building and improving services' perceived value in order to retain loyal customers and gain new ones. More specifically, companies should evaluate the core services they currently offer and whether the release of new value-added services could make customers feel the services to be more valuable than costs. In order to improve the customer perceived value, the smartphone services companies could provide personal functional benefits, develop service innovations or enhance the key functionalities of smartphone services. Finally, the improvement of the corporate image is also required, since it showed a relevant influence on customer satisfaction. This research has several limitations. Although this study reports interesting results and contributes to the understanding of consumer behavior, caution must be exercised since this research was focused in one specific European market. As for the main limitation of this study, first we should notice that this empirical research was carried out in one market; and thus, the present study provides a limited empirical application. In second place, our study has analyzed a number of dimensions proposed in prior literature, which only represent a small part of all dimensions affecting customer satisfaction with smartphone services, such as trust in the company, the service quality or the price level. Accordingly, market scholars and practitioners should analyze variables other than those mentioned in our research.

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# S-O-R MODEL PROPOSAL FOR ONLINE TRAVEL PURCHASING

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## ABSTRACT

*In a situation of purchasing a travel over Internet, consumers are influenced by website characteristics such as the security, privacy, quality service and entertainment, which can affect their attachment to the website and furthermore, their buying decision. Therefore, we are proposing an implementation of the S-O-R model for the online travel purchase, where the store attachment is treated as the organism, in order to explore the effect that the website high-task relevant and low-task relevant atmospheric cues (stimuli) have on the store attachment and the decision to repeat the purchase at the website where they bought their last travel arrangement (result). The collection of information is in process and we expect to have the results by the end of July 2014. As far as we know, this is the first case of integration of S-O-R model with the store attachment scale for the case of online travel purchase.*

## KEYWORDS:

*Online purchase; S-O-R model; store attachment; website characteristics; intention to buy;*

## 1. Introduction and conceptual framework

Over the years there has been a great interest to explain the trends of the traditional (offline) purchase and customer behavior during the whole of the process, as well as the factors influencing it. One of the models used, especially in the offline purchase atmosphere, is the S-O-R model (Buckley, 1991; Brown et al., 2007). However, with the development of the Internet and electronic commerce, there is an increasing interest in online purchase research and literature is constantly increasing treating issues related to buyers' behavior and their attitude to new technologies. In this way, the S-O-R model has also been applied widely to examine the online shopping drifts and customer responses towards online website stimuli (Eroglu et al., 2001; Richard, 2005; Yoon, 2012; Wu et al., 2014). One example for that is Eroglu et al. (2003) research, which shows significant effects of website atmospherics on consumers' perceptions, attitudes, satisfaction, and various behavioral responses such as approach or avoidance behaviors.

The S-O-R model proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) originated in psychology, encompasses the stimuli (S) and the organism (O) related to the purchasing environment and customer behavior, and the customer response (R) to those stimuli and organism function. Yoon (2012) explains the S-O-R model with a customer meeting the environmental stimuli, those stimuli influence the customer's organismic states, which determine his or her behavioral responses such as approach or avoidance behaviors. The stimuli have been conceptualized as "something that rouses or incites to action or increased action" (Sherman et al., 1997: p.365), while the organism is defined as "cognitive and affective intermediary states and processes that mediate the relationships between the stimulus and the individual's responses" (Chang and Chen, 2008, p. 820). Therefore, if we see the marketplace as a whole, the stimuli are factors that are controlled by the marketers, while the organism and the response are controlled by the customer.

Grounded on that literature, we are proposing an application of the S-O-R model to online travel purchasing. The stimuli that individuals perceive and process during shopping, such as store environmental elements, would impact their purchasing behaviors, like browsing and purchase behaviors (Lewis et al., 2008). In other words, the stimuli that the customer perceives influence his/her identity, dependency and/or social bond with the store (the store attachment), which develops into a response, in this case the customer's intention to repeat purchase. Store attachment includes three dimensions: identity, dependence and social bond with the store (Kyle et al. 2005; Williams and Vaske 2003; Galvagno, 2011). Therefore, the objective of this study is to apply the S-O-R model to the online travel purchasing considering website characteristics as stimuli, store/site attachment as organism and repeat purchase as a result.

## 2. Hypotheses and model proposal applying S-O-R model to online travel purchase

In their study, Eroglu et al. (2001) classify the environmental characteristics of a website into two general dimensions, those regarding the high task-relevant environmental characteristics and those referring to the low task-relevant environmental characteristics. The high task-relevant environment includes website features that are relevant to the customers' aim completion, letting them an easy way of executing the task, such as description of the product/service, its price and sale's terms, its delivery and return policies, product reviews and other type of verbal content or text-only content relevant to the product and customer's shopping goals. The low task-relevant environment indicates atmospheric cues that are not directly related to the goal of the purchase and are not significant for the task to be concluded, although they can make the environment more pleasant, interesting and pleasurable. Examples for those are website graphic design characteristics, entertainment indicators, music, animation and some information such as awards, affiliations etc.

Eroglu et al. (2001) defined stimuli in their investigation as "the sum total of all the cues that are visible and audible to the online shopper" (p. 179). Several studies implement indicators of the two groups of environmental cues such as stimuli that affect the organism and furthermore the response in the S-O-R model. For example, the website environmental cues treated as stimuli, both high task-



relevant and low task-relevant, are the website design, the image interactivity technology, the e-trust and the customization (Yoon, 2012), the informativeness and the effectiveness of the information content and the entertainment (Mazaheri et al., 2011; Richard, 2005), the enjoyment of Internet shopping, the concerns about privacy and security issues, and the experience and comfort with IT (Brown et al., 2007). Based on those researches and a pretest, we chose to study the influence that privacy and security issues and service quality -as high task-relevant variables- and entertainment -as a low task-relevant environmental cue- have on the store attachment in the online travel purchase.

### 2.1. Stimuli. Service quality, privacy and security issues, and perceived entertainment

There are several characteristics of a website/store related to the final assessment of the quality of the product/service offered that influence a customer's cognition-based behavior and are shown to be important for the customers as they shop online. Among them are the service quality and the perceived privacy and security of the website. We recall on a statement that describes the service quality in an electronic context as a firm's effort to provide better service through a wide assortment of products, a good quality-price relation, a good delivery service, and broad, detailed information on the product and services or a greater customization of them (Trocchia and Janda, 2003). Part of the service quality is the information quality which is related to the information that is found on the website regarding the product/service. The information on Internet varies in quality, accuracy, reliability and even update. Therefore, since the information and the details would help a potential customer to make a decision for buying or not the travel he is looking for, it is of great importance to pay a special attention on this characteristic. When customers perceive quality in the information presented by the website, they will perceive the seller as interested in maintaining the accuracy and currency of information (Kim et al., 2008), and will find themselves in a favorable position for making a decision.

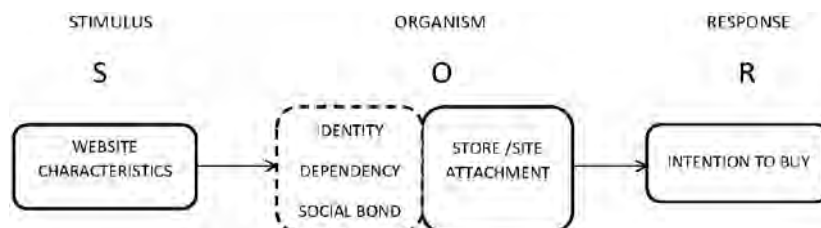
The privacy and security policies are probably the attribute that most influences online buyer's decisions. The consumers usually have serious and legitimate concerns about the privacy of the information they provide to a seller, while that security is a determinant of overall quality of a website, representing an element affecting customer choice online (Ha, 2004). On the other hand, customers with a greater awareness of security and data privacy are more likely to use e-commerce (Wang et al., 2006). Thus, the importance of the privacy and security issues, especially when it comes to online intangible buying of travel, where customers also normally pay by a card, can be deduced.

Entertainment has been identified as a driving motive for consumers' Internet and websites usage (Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000). In the case of the online travel purchase, travelers look for information, not only for their functional needs, but also other social, visual, entertainment, and creativity needs and Internet is seen as a good place to find that information at, with entertainment (Kim et al., 2007). When it comes to the online purchase, the seller's site probably is the only way of communicating with the clients, hence to provide an entertaining experience is of key importance. In a situation like this, having in mind that the perceived level of entertainment influences the customer's response to and the perceptions of the website (Chen and Wells, 1999), we can suppose that entertainment elements of a website will stimulate attitudes toward staying, which in our case is the store attachment aspect.

### 2.2. Organism. Store attachment and its application to electronic commerce - Site attachment

FIGURE 1.

#### Proposed concept for interrelation between S-O-R and Store Attachment



Source: Authors' adaptation

To understand better how the site atmosphere and attributes can influence the customer, we will observe the store attachment concept (Williams and Roggenbuck, 1989), mostly applied for the offline context and presented as a strong tie between the customer and the store. It's described as the phenomena of human-place bonding (Kyle et al., 2005). The model includes an affective point, defined by the customers' affect, emotions and feelings, a cognitive point, explained by the thought, the knowledge and the belief of the customer, and finally the practice, the activity that takes the customer into action and the behavior of the customer involved (Low and Altman, 1992; Kyle et al., 2005), integrating these aspects into an interaction between people and place, consisted of different items that are divided into three principal dimensions (Figure 1): store identity, store dependence and the social bonding (Galvagno, M., 2011; Kyle et al., 2005). The store identity describes the affective point of the store-person connection, elements of customer's identity and personality in relation to the physical environment, that gives a considerable importance to the store that functions as a source and drive for emotions and relationships that give meaning to the person involved (Williams and Roggenbuck, 1989; Williams and Vaske, 2003; Kyle et al., 2005). The store dependence refers to the cognitive point of the store attachment model and it reflects the functional value that the implicated customer gives to the store's features and conditions that support person's goals or desired activities (Williams and Roggenbuck, 1989; Williams and Vaske, 2003; Kyle et al., 2005). The social bonding dimension supposes that the attachment the customer has to the store, is grounded on the incorporation of other groups of people, such as the family and friends, the community and even the culture (Low and Altman, 1992; Milligan, 1998; Kyle et al., 2005).

### **2.3. Response. Intention to repeat purchase**

If we consider the site attachment as the organism dimension in the S-O-R model, with its cognitive, affective and social factors, the stimuli will be the characteristics of the website and the result would be the intention to buy or to repeat the purchase (Figure 1). Thus, the intention to repeat the purchase online is directly conditioned by the customer's attachment to the website. Yen and Gwinner (2003) expose that the general consumer's satisfaction with Internet technologies has a positive impact on his/her willingness to continue purchasing from the same service provider. The purchase intention is the final objective of any company, either a physical store or a virtual one. The repetition of a purchase means a loyal customer and a bigger number of sure clients is the most important aim of a business in order to constantly develop and increase. Hence, if the mentioned characteristics have influence on the purchasing action, they will also have an influencing role in the customer site attachment, which will further lead to the purchase. A positive shopping experience, along with appropriate incentives (website stimuli), may encourage a positive attitude toward the repetition of the purchase.

Having in mind all the relations that we have elaborated, we propose the following hypotheses:

*H1. The website quality service positively affects the consumer's attachment to the site.*

*H2. The website privacy and security positively affects the consumer's attachment to the site.*

*H3. The perceived entertainment of the website positively affects the consumer's attachment to the site.*

*H4. The consumer's attachment to the site positively affects the intention to repeat the purchase.*

## **3. Empirical study**

For the purpose of this study, we are collecting information from randomly selected online travel buyers by questionnaires, constructed after a pre-test executed with professionals from the area and with 20 online travel buyers. The adapted scales have their base in the works by Kyle et al. (2005), Williams and Vaske (2003) and Galvagno (2011) for store attachment, Burke (2002), Montoya-Weiss et al. (2003), Harris and Goode (2004), Ramus and Nielsen (2005), Ranaweera et al. (2005) and Yadav and Varadarajan (2005) for quality service and website privacy and security, Goldsmith and Hofacker (1991) for entertainment, and finally, Shimp and Kavas (1984) and Bauer et al. (2005) for intention to repeat purchase. We expect to have the questionnaires concluded and the results analyzed by the end of July 2014. In order to estimate the model, we will consider site attachment as a second-order

construct comprising the three commented dimensions and structural equation modeling will be used to estimate the global model of stimuli-site attachment-repeat purchase.

#### 4. Contributions

The objective of this research is to study the influence that the website stimuli has on store attachment and the store attachment effect on the repetition of purchase when it comes to online travel purchase. The contributions of this study are as follows. We are implementing the S-O-R model, originally a psychological approach, for an online travel purchasing, an area where, up till now, we haven't found any researches treating this issue, allowing to study the electronic environment characteristics as stimuli. Besides, our model proposal includes the store attachment, a variable and scale that, to the extent of our knowledge, hasn't been studied in an electronic context. Finally, implications will be useful for practitioners to design the most appropriate strategy to get customers who are attached to the store and receive repeat buying.

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# WHAT ARE GENERATIVE CONSUMERS LOOKING FOR?

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## ABSTRACT

*Generativity is the human commitment with the well-being of future generations by the means of actions aimed at passing a positive legacy of the self. Generative consumers present two ways of expressing the generativity acts; agentic (I do it to be remembered by future generations) and communal (I cooperate altruistically with future generations). We will develop the concept of product transcendence to analyzes the preferences of generative consumers (agentic and communal). We expect that agentic generative consumers will have preference for ego-transcendent products while communal will prefer socio-transcendent products.*

Keywords: generativity, consumer behavior, product transcendence.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

We see in everyday life that when they buy products and services, people consider the well-being of future generations. Many goods and services serve, totally or partially, the purpose of leaving some kind of legacy. Goods such as houses, works of art, jewelry, family pictures or organic products have an impact on future generations; services such as children's education, legacy websites, and life insurance do as well. Some companies have taken this consumer concern with future generations into consideration in their marketing activities. For example, the watchmaker Patek Philippe's slogan is "You never actually own a Patek Philippe. You merely look after it for the next generation," and Johnson and Johnson's mission statement is "We have a responsibility to take care of our planet and preserve its beauty, resources and strength for future generations."

Erikson (1950) named the commitment to future generations' generativity. Antecedents (e.g., altruism) and consequences (e.g., individual well-being) of this concept have been well studied in psychology (Ackerman et al. 2000). Generative individuals are concerned about leaving a positive legacy. This legacy can be built by acquiring goods that have meaning in the future and can improve future generations' well-being. Legacy is a broad concept. Durables can be passed on as a legacy, but transmitting values can be even more important (Hunter and Rowles 2005). Therefore, some products—whether they are goods or services, durable or ephemeral, cheap or expensive—can be meaningful in the future and, therefore, better suited for creating a legacy than others. Supporting certain companies can also be seen by generative individuals as contributing to a legacy of values. In summary, marketing decisions can be more efficient if managers know how generativity influences consumer behavior. However, despite the important effects that generativity may have on consumer behavior, there is a gap in the literature concerning the relationship between the two.

The goal of this research is to contribute to greater understanding of how individual generativity influences purchase intention and how this effect is moderated by product attributes and company actions. We will conduct one study to show how generativity influences purchase intention and then examine the influence of two types of generativity, agentic generativity and communal generativity.

## **2. CONSUMER GENERATIVITY**

After Erikson (1950) defined generativity as the concern for establishing and guiding future generations, Kotre (1984) described generativity as the desire to outlive the self by "generating an enduring personal legacy" (p. 10). In the integrative model developed by McAdams and de St. Aubin (1998), generativity is defined as the concern for and commitment to the well-being of future generations, to be achieved through actions aimed at passing a positive personal legacy on to those generations.

The relationship between consumer generativity and preferences for products remains underexplored. If generative consumers are committed to future generations and, therefore, aspire to leave a positive legacy, they must be more interested in products that help them build that legacy. Goods, services, and behaviors—whether material or intangible, durable or ephemeral—that can be transmitted to future generations have something in common: a long-lasting or transcendent meaning. Belk et al. (1989) approach the concept of transcendence when they describe how certain products can acquire special significance to a consumer. Williams and Harvey (2001) identify some transcendent experiences and characteristics as feelings of

overcoming the limits of everyday life and creating a sense of timelessness. Belk (1988) summarizes transcendence as “going beyond the limits” (p. 198). Transcendent products are accordingly those whose significance goes beyond the temporal limits of their mere functional nature or the user’s own existence. Those products are more suitable for creating a legacy. Consumers perceive some products and behaviors (e.g., environmentally friendly products, collector’s items, jewelry, works of art, and photos) as more transcendent than others. Generative consumers, concerned about the well-being of future generations, will thus be more interested in such products than non-generative consumers. We therefore propose:

H1: Generative consumers will show a higher purchase intention than non-generative consumers for transcendent products.

### **3. AGENTIC VS. COMMUNAL GENERATIVITY**

Leaving a legacy can satisfy both a need to keep living on in someone else’s mind (an egoistic need) and a need to improve someone else’s well-being (an altruistic need). McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992) suggest that the fullest expressions of generativity are both agentic and communal. The fundamental dimensions of human existence are agency and communion (Bakan 1966). Agency represents the pursuit of social dominance. Communion represents efforts to cooperate and preserve social bonds. Agency is about focusing on oneself and forming separations; communion is about focusing on others and forming connections. Following these ideas, McAdams and de St. Aubin (1998) accordingly propose two dimensions of generativity: one related to a positive legacy of the self (agency) and other related to the well-being of future generations (communion).

Agentic generativity is the expression of the desire to leave a legacy by the means of achievement and dominance, seeking some kind of immortality or outliving the self. The need to live on after death has been presented as a specific motivation of legacy transmission (Sargeant and Hilton 2005). Stevenson and Kates (1999) share this view; in their study on last gifts, they affirm that givers may immortalize their memory by finding the right home for their cherished possessions. Similarly, Price et al. (2000) argue that elderly consumers seek to achieve symbolic immortality through the disposal of such possessions (Price et al. 2000). Furthermore, Belk (1988) states that product should be considered extensions of the self and breeders of identity. Leaving a possession to later generations can therefore be seen as extending one’s existence beyond one’s death. In summary, consumer behavior may change depending on which consumer trait—agency or communion—is dominant.

Bagozzy and Dabholkar (1994) showed that pro-environmental consumer behaviors are driven by both egoistic (agentic) and altruistic (communal) goals. Based on this distinction, we posit that agentic-generative consumers (who want to be remembered) and communal-generative consumers (who want to contribute to future generations’ well-being) have different preferences in their purchase decisions. Personal-transcendent products, whose attributes have personal meaning and whose benefits endure over time (e.g., wedding rings and family pictures) will match more the goal of agentic-generative consumers than that of communal-generative consumers. On the other hand, socio-transcendent products, whose attributes have lasting social value (e.g., eco-friendly products, donating blood, and planting trees), will match more the goal of communal-generative consumers than that of agentic-generative consumers:

H2a: Agentic-generative consumers will show higher purchase intention than communal-generative consumers for personal-transcendent products.

H2b: Communal-generative consumers will show higher purchase intention than agentic-generative consumers for socio-transcendent products.

#### **4.- METHOD**

While generativity is a well-defined concept in psychology, transcendence has only been briefly mentioned in marketing literature (Belk et al. 1989). For that reason, we will run an exploratory study to check whether consumers perceive some products as more transcendent than others. This pretest will carry out in two stages. Stage one consists of a meeting with five marketing experts. They were told to use the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2009) definition of transcendence—“extending beyond the limits of ordinary experience”—during the study. In the questionnaire we will ask for them to list ten products or behaviors, five high in transcendence and five low in transcendence. In a second round, the 50 products will be presented to each expert. We will ask them to evaluate each product according to the statement “this product is very transcendent,” using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (“I totally disagree”) to 7 (“I totally agree”). The 16 products with the highest standard deviation were discarded, leaving a total of 34 products and behaviors.

Stage two will consist of a self-administered questionnaire distributed to a sample of students recruited from a large European university. The 34 products found during stage one will be shown to the respondents in random order. We asked the subjects to accomplish four tasks. First, they rated the transcendence of the products according to the statement “This product is very transcendent” (1 = “I totally disagree”; 7 = “I totally agree”). Next, they will rate the type of transcendence of the products according to the statement “this product is transcendent ...” (1 = “in a personal way”; 7 = “in a social way”). Then, we will ask them to write down which characteristics they thought defined products whose transcendence is high and which they thought defined products whose transcendence is low. Finally, we will ask them to write down which characteristics they thought defined personally transcendent products and which they think better defines socially transcendent products.

The independent variables—generativity, agency, and communion—will be measured afterward. For generativity, we will use McAdams and de St. Aubin’s 20-item scale (1992) Agency and communion will be measured using Dohi and Hirokawa’s (2004) 5-item scale for agency and their 5-item scale for communion respectively. The items on all the scales will rate on a 7-point scale (1 = “strongly disagree”; 7 = “strongly agree”).

#### **5. EXPECTED RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS**

We expect that generative consumers will show a higher purchase intention than non-generative consumers for transcendent products. Consumers highly concerned with the well-being of future generations are more interested in transcendent products than those less concerned with it. Moreover, we predict that agentic-generative consumers will show higher levels of purchase intention for personal-transcendent products. Communal-generative consumers will show, as well, a higher purchase intention than agentic-generative consumers for socially transcendent products.

In summary, consumers differ in their concern about leaving a positive legacy to future generations, and the level of their concern affects their purchase intention. Leaving a personal legacy through purchasing personally transcendent products (e.g., family pictures) will be important for agentic-generative consumers. Socially transcendent products (e.g., recycled paper) will be more attractive to communal-generative consumers.



This research stems from the idea that individuals often think about the well-being of future generations, and that this has consequences for their behavior. More specifically, we addressed the question of how consumer generativity influences purchase intention and how this effect is moderated by product attributes. Our research increases the scant literature on generativity in the domain of marketing and consumer behavior.

We introduce a new criterion for product-classification schemas and find that consumers perceive different levels of transcendence in products. This new taxonomy of products and its relation with the characteristics of individuals contributes to the literature on the extended self and possessions (Belk 1988). Our findings will show that some consumers (generative) prefer transcendent products while others (non-generative) are indifferent to this attribute. Moreover, we find different behavior among generative consumers. Agentic-generative consumers pursue social dominance, while communal-generative consumers seek to form social bonds. Both groups show the same purchase intention for personal-transcendent products (e.g., family pictures) that benefit an in-group that is important to the consumers' identity.

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# WHAT IF WE SHARE SENSATIONS AFTER TASTING NEW PRODUCTS?

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## ABSTRACT

*People show a strong tendency to create a shared reality with others in terms of beliefs, emotions, or inner states; that is to say, they need others to be part of their reality. This desire is related to the so-called “saying-is-believing” effect, which occurs when individuals tailor their messages to particular audiences in order to achieve a shared reality. In this working paper, we demonstrate that the saying-is-believing effect plays a role in product evaluation, as consumers tailor their product attitude in the direction of other consumers’ opinion, with this effect being stronger for less preferred products. These findings provide important implications for marketing new products in today’s dynamic markets where category ambiguity is very frequent.*

## Keywords:

saying-is-believing effect, sharing sensations, product preference

## 1. Introduction

Humans, within their role of consumers and as social beings, show a strong motivation to share their understanding, emotions, beliefs, attitudes, goals and inner states with others (Hardin & Higgins, 1996; Higgins & Pittman, 2008; Rimé et al. 1999). This tendency is related to the idea of shared reality (Higgins, 2005), meaning that people who are motivated to create a shared reality with others frequently communicate to these others about a referent. Based on that premise, when people face new stimuli, they feel more confident about their evaluations when others agree, as part of their shared reality. Indeed, an interpersonal relationship is not even necessary. On the contrary, simply being aware of what others think can be enough for shared reality to emerge (Echterhoff et al. 2009). In that regard, the saying-is-believing effect occurs “when a message tailored to a particular audience influences a communicator’s subsequent memory and impression of the message topic” (Hausmann et al. 2008). Such audience tuning (Higgins, 1992) implies that communicators consider their audience’s point of view when sending messages (Schlosser, 2005).

As noted by Hirst and Echterhoff (2008), in addition to satisfy the need to affiliate and feel connected with others (relational need), the saying-is-believing effect is also a consequence of the need to know and to achieve a reliable understanding of the world and oneself (epistemic need). Thus, the creation of a shared reality is a process by which individuals achieve subjectively reliable and valid representations of their world as well as relationships with other people. The effect specially shows up when the subject perceives ambiguity in the available information about the target. That ambiguity elicits epistemic needs, which can be satisfied by creating shared reality through communication in order to (a) construct an audience-congruent representation of the target, and (b) attain a greater sense of certainty about what the target is actually like (Kopietz et al., 2010).

Product evaluation is a situation where ambiguities may play a significant role, as many new products that are launched in modern marketplaces are ambiguous with respect to the product categories that they belong to and possess features of multiple categories (Moreau, Markman and Lehmann, 2001). In this research, we demonstrate that the saying-is-believing effect plays a role in product evaluation, with the audience’s opinion leading to consumers’ evaluations being tuned with the expressed or perceived opinion. From a theoretical perspective, we extend previous results to consumer decision outcomes and show the relevance of this effect in consumer research. From a managerial perspective, our results are of high interest for marketers, offering additional ways to increase product evaluation.

The remaining of the paper is as follows. First, we present study 1, which serves as a first approach to the phenomenon in the context of product evaluation. Then, we report the main findings. Next, we design a follow-up study where we hypothesize the differential influence of the saying-is-believing depending on how preferable the product is. We then discuss the main results and draw implications for both theory and practice.

## 2. Study1

Based on the “saying-is-believing” effect, our prediction is that consumers would tailor their evaluation to the audience’s, i.e., opinions would be more favorable when information about the audience is available compared to the situation where no information is provided. Additionally, the moment the information is made available for the consumer may also play a role. Therefore, we expect the influence of audience to be stronger when consumers share their sensations while they taste the product. The rationale for this expected result relies on the fact that the consumer tastes the product and is informed about the audience opinion at the same time; consequently, she tries to accommodate her sensations to make it more likeable, trying to keep the positive sensations and disregard the negative ones. However, when sharing after tasting, the time elapsed between the tasting and the information received about the audience could interfere with the “tuning”, giving more weight to the consumer’s real sensations, and making the audience opinion less salient, which leads to a lower attitude. In other words, the “contamination” effect only occurs if the consumer does not have the opportunity to form an opinion previously and the chance only comes via tasting but also via external information about others’ opinion.

To test our hypothesis, we used a 2x2 experimental design where we manipulated the moment the experience was shared (during tasting vs. after tasting) and the availability of information about the audience opinion (no information, 95% of the audience likes the product).

We recruited a sample of 120 participants. Eight of them failed in the manipulation check so they were dropped from the database, leaving a total of 112 valid questionnaires. Results showed that the main effect of audience (no audience/audience) was significant ( $M_{na}=4.22$ ;  $M_a=5.09$ ;  $F(1, 108)=9.08$ ;  $p<.01$ ), whereas the main effect of moment of sharing (during/after) was not ( $F(1, 108)=0.828$ ;  $p>.10$ ). The interaction turned out to be non-significant as well ( $F(1, 108)=0.174$ ;  $p>.10$ ).

With regard to the influence of audience, as predicted, the exposure to other consumers' opinion makes the participant tune her opinion, leading to a more favorable attitude and confirming the saying-is-believing effect. A similar pattern was found for repurchase intention and positive emotions, whereas no effect was found for negative emotions, although the means followed the expected direction (see table 1). Thus, being exposed to others opinions leads consumers to adapt or tune their own opinion so that their attitude is more favorable, their intention to purchase the product is higher and the positive emotions related to the product are more intense. Consequently, we can assume that consumers show a tendency to adapt their opinion and about a product to that of others who have previously examined it. Audience is, then, an external factor that influences product evaluation.

Table 1. Means for experimental conditions

		During	After	Marginal means
Repurchase intention	No information	3.47	3.63	3.55
	95% likes	4.04	4.04	4.04
Positive emotions	No information	3.94	4.00	3.97
	95% likes	4.53	4.37	4.45
Negative emotions	No information	2.21	2.25	2.23
	95% likes	1.90	1.93	1.92

### 3. Study 2

The first experiment revealed that the “saying is believing” effect influences the evaluation of new products. However, so far we have not taken into account how likeable the product is. In other words, the tuning effect would be especially appealing if that implies that products whose flavor is not especially liked by consumers could turn into more preferred products merely because other people say they like it. To test that extent, we conduct a follow-up study, where we proposed that the presence of positive audience information can lead the consumer to like the product more.

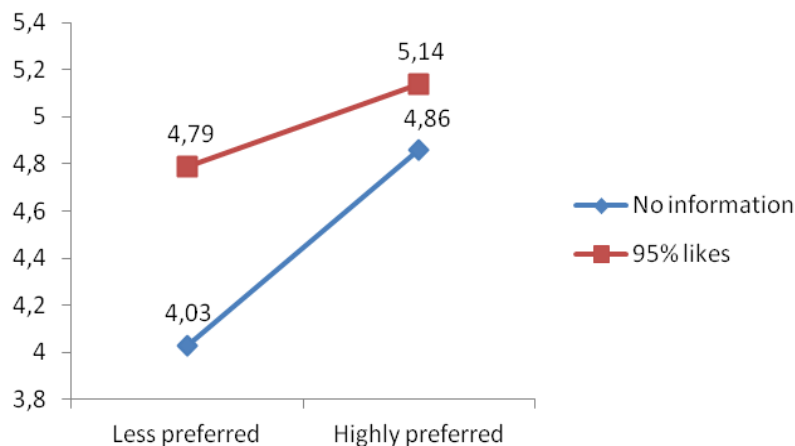
The relevance of disliked or not really liked products for saying-is-believing effect is related to ambiguity. Following Gershoff et al. (2007), we can affirm that a liked product's attributes are likely to be lower in ambiguity than those of a disliked product, where attribute ambiguity is the extent to which the individual is uncertain about the product's underlying attribute ratings. For example, if a subject likes a restaurant, she is certain that she likes everything, but if she does not like that restaurant, she will associate greater attribute ambiguity because the underlying attribute ratings of hated alternatives may not be uniformly negative. Therefore, the effects of shared reality to satisfy needs of interpretation will be stronger when the consumer does not especially like new products but share her experience with others.

We used a 2x2 experimental design where we manipulated the availability of information about the audience opinion (no information, 95% of the audience likes the product) and the preference for the jelly bean flavor (less preferred flavor vs. highly preferred flavor). To identify the level of preference of the different flavors, we carried out a pretest where popcorn jelly beans were identified as a less preferred flavor and cantaloupe jellybeans as a highly preferred flavor. We controlled for participants' ability to correctly identify the jellybean flavor. For both popcorn and cantaloupe the participants had

difficulty to do it, that is to say, they could say whether they liked the flavor or not but they could not say what flavor it was.

At the moment of submission, we have recruited 101 valid questionnaires. We found a main effect of audience ( $F(1, 97)=4.04$ ;  $p<.05$ ) and preference ( $F(1, 97)=5.15$ ;  $p<.05$ ). Analysis of simple effects revealed that audience only had a significant influence for less preferred products (Figure 1). Thus, while there are no differences in attitude between information and no information about the audience for the highly preferred product ( $F(1,97)=0.58$ ;  $p>.10$ ), attitude was higher when information about the audience's opinion for the less preferred product was available ( $F(1, 97)=4.43$ ;  $p<.05$ ). Consequently, merely being exposed to positive opinions of other consumers can turn a low-preference product into a more likeable one.

**FIGURE 1**  
ANOVA results for attitude



#### 4. Study 3

At the time of submission, we are setting a follow-up experiment where we introduce the role of product attributes. The hypothesis we aim to test is that providing the consumer with the reason that leads the audience to like the product, i.e., a product attribute, alters the perception of such attribute, with subjects increasing their positive evaluation of it. The participants will be assigned to one of three conditions: no information about the audience opinion, 95% of the audience likes the product, 95% of the audience likes the product because it is sugar-free.

#### 5. Discussion

Consumers' need to share their reality with other people makes them susceptible to be influenced by others' opinions. Especially when consumers are asked to defend their opinion in the presence of others, they show a tendency to agree with the majority so that their evaluation is more easily understood. The consequences of this phenomenon are plain to see both from a theoretical perspective and from a managerial point of view.

Thus, as a first approach to the saying-is believing effect, study 1 confirmed that consumers tune their product evaluations to the opinion of others, regardless of the moment of sharing (during or after tasting). Study 2 clarified the initial results and showed that audience only plays a role for less preferred products. Thus, mere exposure to the favorable opinion of other customers turns a low-preference product into a highly preferred product. When the product is highly preferred, the tuning process does not occur because the consumer's real evaluation is close to the evaluation of other users so that no adjustment is needed to defend their opinion in front of others lately.

The implications for marketers are straightforward: highlighting that others like a product leads the focal consumer to be more attracted to it, even if she did not like it in advance. For sectors such as the food industry (e.g. healthy products that are not very tasty) or the pharmaceutical industry (e.g. an effective mouthwash whose flavor is not nice), our findings could help to build a positive attitude and

high purchase intention by making prospective consumers tune their opinion to match others' preferences.

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# GESTIÓN DEL CONOCIMIENTO SOBRE EL CLIENTE Y CO-INNOVACIÓN: EFECTOS SOBRE LOS RESULTADOS DE MARKETING<sup>1</sup>

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## RESUMEN

*La gestión del conocimiento sobre el cliente (GCC) y la colaboración del cliente en los procesos de innovación han sido reconocidas como recursos estratégicos que proporcionan múltiples beneficios a las empresas, entre ellos resultados en su desempeño. En este sentido, este trabajo tiene como objetivo determinar la influencia de la colaboración del cliente -específicamente en el proceso de innovación-, sobre la GCC, así como el efecto que esta colaboración puede tener en los resultados de marketing, considerando el rol mediador de la GCC. Para ello se realizó un estudio con una muestra aleatoria de 210 empresas mediante entrevistas personales a sus directivos. Los resultados del estudio demuestran que la colaboración del cliente en el proceso de innovación es un antecedente de la GCC y que además ambos tienen efectos directos y positivos sobre los resultados de marketing. Los resultados obtenidos tienen implicaciones académicas y de gestión.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE:

*Gestión del conocimiento sobre el cliente; colaboración del cliente, resultados de marketing, innovación*

## 1. Introducción

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La complejidad del entorno en el que actualmente actúan las empresas acelera la obsolescencia de sus competencias y al mismo tiempo exige la creación de nuevas fuentes de creación de valor (Spender, 1996). En un contexto de crisis económica, turbulencias del mercado y dificultades financieras, la gestión del conocimiento y la innovación se configuran como aliados para poder sobrevivir y mejorar el desempeño empresarial, manteniendo así la ventaja competitiva (Nonaka y Takeuchi, 1995; Pil y Holwelg, 2003; Ribeiro, 2003). En este contexto, las empresas innovadoras estarán más preparadas para operar en un entorno inestable, responder rápidamente a los cambios, encontrar nuevos productos y servicios y detectar las oportunidades que surjan en el mercado (Jiménez y Sanz, 2006).

La literatura señala como fuente de ventaja competitiva y recurso estratégico para la empresa la Gestión del Conocimiento (Teece et al., 1997; Vargo y Lusch, 2004). Este planteamiento está en línea con las últimas aportaciones desde el enfoque de Lógica Dominante del Servicio (LDS), y de forma particular, con las premisas fundamentales propuestas por Vargo y Lusch (2004) quienes afirman que el conocimiento es la fuente fundamental de la ventaja competitiva, representando la única base verdadera para el desarrollo de la misma, ya que es un recurso operante que potencia el servicio según Lusch, et al. (2007).

En base a la importancia que tiene la gestión del conocimiento y la creación del mismo a través de la colaboración con los *stakeholders* de la empresa como vía para generar ventajas competitivas sostenibles, el presente estudio tiene como objetivo general aportar comprensión sobre el comportamiento de la GCC en los resultados de marketing en el marco de los procesos de co-creación de innovación.

Si bien es cierto que en la revisión de la literatura se encuentran estudios sobre innovación y gestión del conocimiento, en realidad son pocos los que las han analizado de manera conjunta desde el marco teórico proporcionado por tres teorías: la teoría de recursos y capacidades (Wenerfelt, 1984; Barney, 1991), la LDS (Vargo y Lusch, 2004) y la teoría del aprendizaje organizacional (Senge, 1992). Otra contribución de este trabajo es el análisis de la variable gestión del conocimiento abordada de manera específica como gestión del conocimiento sobre el cliente. Si bien en la literatura existen numerosos trabajos sobre la gestión del conocimiento a nivel general (Bhatt, 2001; Alegre y Lapiedra, 2005; Lundwall y Nielsen, 2007; Esper, et al., 2010; Alegre et al., 2011; Tarí y García-Fernández, 2013; entre otros), son escasos los trabajos que abordan la gestión del conocimiento del cliente (Gibbert et al., 2002; Rowley, 2002; Gebert et al., 2003; Salomann et al., 2005; Sanayei y Sadidi, 2011). Desde el enfoque de la LDS, este conocimiento permite convertir al cliente en recurso operante en los procesos de co-creación de valor (Vargo y Lusch, 2004) y de innovación (Blazevic y Lievens, 2008), colaborando en la mejora de procesos y el desarrollo de nuevos productos.

Este trabajo se estructura de la siguiente forma. Primeramente, se examinan los conceptos de gestión del conocimiento y colaboración del cliente en la innovación, planteándose a continuación las hipótesis relativas a sus relaciones y de éstas con los resultados de marketing. Posteriormente, se presenta la metodología de la investigación y el contraste de hipótesis realizado a partir de un estudio empírico de naturaleza cuantitativa, con una muestra de 210 empresas de Valencia y su área metropolitana (España), utilizando como método de análisis la técnica de regresión por mínimos cuadrados parciales (PLS), para, finalmente, presentar resultados, conclusiones y futuras líneas de investigación.

## **2. Revisión de la literatura y planteamiento del modelo**

### ***2.1 Gestión del Conocimiento sobre el cliente***

Siguiendo la literatura y revisando las aproximaciones al concepto de conocimiento desde la teoría de recursos y capacidades, para Prahalad y Hamel (1990) éste representa un recurso valioso ya que la base de conocimientos de una empresa conforma sus competencias básicas y por tanto la creación de valor (Grant, 1996). Siguiendo con esta perspectiva, el conocimiento es un factor clave en la creación de valor de la empresa, lo que lleva a la misma a la necesidad de identificar cuál es su conocimiento disponible, y entender cómo adquirirlo, aplicarlo, almacenarlo y clasificarlo (Spender, 1996; Tsoukas,



1996). Desde la perspectiva de la LDS, Lusch et al. (2007) aportan que el conocimiento representa la única base verdadera para el desarrollo sostenible de la ventaja competitiva, ya que es un recurso operante que potencia la co-creación de valor.

El conocimiento, se encuentra dentro de las personas y se desarrolla por aprendizaje según Drucker (1993) y la teoría del aprendizaje organizacional. Una eficaz gestión del conocimiento implica que el mismo pase de ser un activo humano a ser un activo empresarial. Es por ello que se hace evidente la importancia de un compromiso expreso de todos los miembros de la organización, una correcta difusión del conocimiento en la empresa y, sobre todo, que se incorpore con éxito a los procesos o sistemas, productos y servicios, es decir, que quede institucionalizado en la empresa y perdure a sus miembros (Lloria, 2004).

Y puesto que el propósito de la gestión de conocimiento es mejorar el output para el cliente (Darling, 1996) la variable gestión GCC se configura como un constructo clave de estudio consecuencia del papel fundamental del cliente como co-creador de valor según la LDS (Vargo y Lusch, 2004). Dicha GCC se conceptualizaría como la aplicación de los conocimientos a través de la puesta en marcha de prácticas de organización para almacenar y difundir el conocimiento (Alavi y Leidner, 2001) y siguiendo a Alegre et al. (2011) la gestión del conocimiento en general, se considerará integrada por el conjunto de prácticas de gestión del conocimiento y por las capacidades dinámicas de la gestión del conocimiento. El conjunto de prácticas se refiere al resultado de la aplicación del conocimiento y consiste en los sistemas de gestión del conocimiento, las capacidades locales y conocimientos técnicos que se han implementado de manera específica en la empresa a fin de permitir la realización de actividades distintivas y las capacidades dinámicas son aquellas que se centran principalmente en la creación de conocimiento.

## ***2.2 Colaboración del Cliente en la innovación***

La investigación sobre la colaboración del cliente en la empresa como co-productor de servicios y co-creador de valor, constituye un área de investigación relativamente novedosa y por lo tanto, plantea una oportunidad de investigación (Blazevic y Lievens, 2008) dada la necesidad de operacionalizar y validar los modelos teóricos propuestos. Si bien es cierto que existen estudios previos que abordan la participación del cliente durante el encuentro del servicio (Bettencourt, 1997; Meuter et al., 2000; Bendapudi y Leona, 2003), aportaciones como la LDS reconocen la necesidad de abordar de forma más específica la colaboración del cliente para la provisión del servicio y la innovación (Blazevic y Lievens, 2008; Vargo y Lusch, 2004) pues a través de la colaboración de los clientes, las organizaciones aprenden, conocen mejor las necesidades del cliente, adaptan mejor sus productos y servicios y mejoran su rendimiento (Prahalad y Ramaswam, 2004).

Desde este enfoque, Ordanini y Parasuraman (2011) en las proposiciones de la LDS apuntan que un proveedor de servicios sin sus clientes no puede producir valor, esto es, que el cliente siempre juega un papel activo en la oferta de servicios por la integración de su propio conjunto de recursos y competencias en cualquier actividad de servicio (Zeithaml et al., 2009) y particularmente en la innovación a través de la competencia que denominan colaboración (Lusch et al., 2007). Así, la LDS define la capacidad para introducir a los clientes en el proceso y los utiliza como mecanismos para fomentar el cambio a través de la competencia de colaboración.

En el presente estudio se enfoca el concepto de colaboración del cliente en el proceso de innovación desde la perspectiva de la LDS y según la definición de Vargo y Lusch (2008), se entenderá dicha colaboración como un proceso donde la empresa interactúa y negocia con sus clientes para desarrollar una propuesta de valor y donde el cliente posee un papel activo como co-creador de innovación.

## ***2.3 La GCC, la colaboración del cliente en la innovación y los resultados de marketing***

Son escasos los estudios de carácter empírico que tratan la relación entre la colaboración del cliente en la innovación y la gestión del conocimiento -en general- en el ámbito de la innovación (Fang et al., 2008), encontrándose algunos de carácter conceptual (Lusch et al., 2007; Blazevic y Lievens, 2008). Fang et al. (2008) contrastan empíricamente que la participación del cliente en el desarrollo de nuevos productos afecta positivamente al intercambio de información y a la coordinación de la eficacia obteniendo resultados positivos. Blazevic y Lievens (2008) muestran cómo desde la perspectiva de la

LDS se puede ayudar a las empresas a gestionar la colaboración con el cliente y cómo las empresas pueden establecer a los clientes como socios de intercambio para la creación conjunta del conocimiento. En base a todo lo anterior y a la importancia del papel que desempeña el cliente en el proceso de innovación, se plantea la siguiente hipótesis:

**H1:** *La colaboración del cliente en el proceso de innovación afecta positivamente a la gestión del conocimiento sobre el cliente.*

Los directores de marketing sienten cada vez una mayor presión por medir el impacto y el valor del marketing en sus empresas (Clark, 1999; Kokkinaki y Ambler, 1999; Marketing Week, 2001) debido entre otros aspectos a la alta competencia y la escasez de recursos en las empresas. Estos son indicadores que valoran los resultados de cara al mercado y proporcionan una visión diferente y más estratégica de los resultados empresariales, ya que muchas veces se comete el error de evaluar la empresa únicamente teniendo en cuenta indicadores financieros que no proporcionan una visión externa, una visión de los resultados basada en el mercado. Los resultados de marketing permiten comprender, hacer seguimiento y gestionar las consecuencias de la aplicación de una u otra estrategia de marketing de cara a los mercados, a los clientes y a la competencia. Los resultados de marketing es un concepto que siguiendo a Vorhies y Morgan (2005) se utiliza para medir el grado en el que las empresas han alcanzado los objetivos comerciales (cuota de mercado, ingresos por ventas, adquisición de nuevos clientes y retención de los ya existentes).

Según Tarí y García-Fernández (2013) existen estudios teóricos que afirman cómo las prácticas de gestión del conocimiento influyen de manera positiva en los resultados operativos de las empresas (Davenport y Prusack, 1998; Massey et al., 2002) y ello ha sido validado empíricamente (Schulz y Jobe, 2001; Darroch y McNaughton, 2003; Tanriverdi, 2005; Lloch et al., 2007; Zack et al., 2009). Además existe una influencia positiva de la gestión del conocimiento sobre los resultados -como las ventas, la cuota de mercado y la rentabilidad- (Darroch y McNaughton, 2003; Tanriverdi, 2005; Huang y Shih, 2009). En base a lo anterior se plantea la siguiente hipótesis:

**H2:** *La gestión del conocimiento del cliente en el proceso de innovación tendrá efectos positivos en los resultados de marketing.*

Los trabajos de Matthing et al. (2004), Alam (2006) y Carbonell et al. (2009) concluyen que la interacción empresa-consumidor es favorable, entre otros, por los siguientes motivos: proporciona una idea más completa de lo que los consumidores quieren, desean o necesitan, reduce el tiempo de desarrollo de un nuevo servicio y se produce una mejora en el rendimiento económico-financiero del nuevo servicio. García et al. (2010) contrastan empíricamente que la participación de los clientes repercute favorablemente en los resultados de los clientes (como en la lealtad, la satisfacción del cliente y el valor añadido) y a su vez en los resultados empresariales como las ventas y la cuota de mercado.

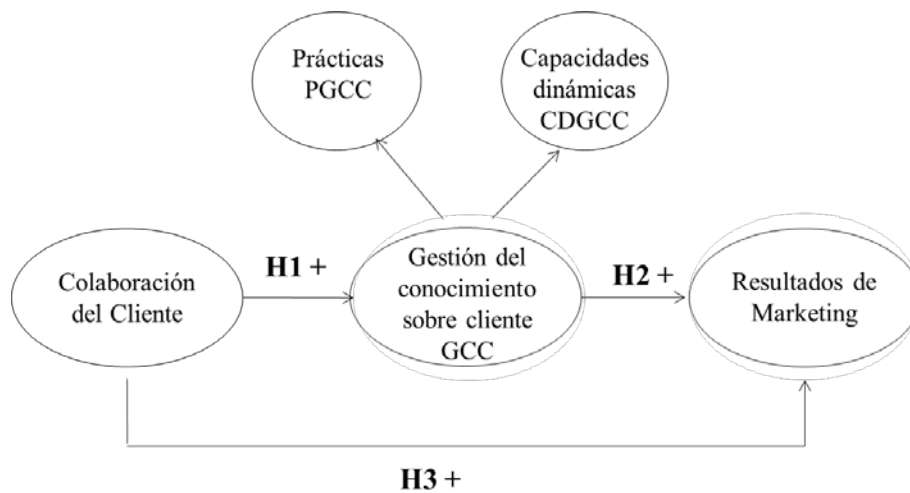
Además cuando el cliente colabora en el proceso de innovación se está llevando a cabo la co-creación del producto/servicio y ésta es la que provocará efectos positivos en los resultados empresariales (Vargo y Lusch, 2004; Ballantyne et al., 2008). Esto lleva a plantear la última hipótesis de investigación:

**H3:** *La colaboración de los clientes en el proceso de innovación tendrá efectos positivos en los resultados de marketing.*

En base a la discusión previa, se plantea en la Figura 1 el modelo de relaciones que incluye las tres variables analizadas así como las hipótesis propuestas

FIGURA 1

## Modelo de relaciones



Fuente: elaboración propia

### 3. Metodología de la investigación

Previamente a la recogida de información cuantitativa, se llevó a cabo una dinámica de grupo con representantes de las principales asociaciones empresariales de Valencia y su área metropolitana (8 asociaciones) con el objetivo de tener una mejor aproximación al concepto de innovación y mejorar el diseño del cuestionario utilizado. En este sentido, se les pasó un cuestionario sobre diversos aspectos relativos a su concepto de innovación, las barreras a la misma y ejes de oportunidades, tanto externas como internas.

Posteriormente, la obtención de los datos se realizó mediante encuesta personal estructurada a directores/gerentes de empresas, a una muestra de 210 empresas de Valencia y su área metropolitana, que fueron elegidas siguiendo un procedimiento de muestreo probabilístico por estratificación con afijación proporcional a todos los sectores de actividad de las empresas valencianas (agricultura-ganadería, industria, construcción y servicios). La mayoría de las empresas incluidas en la muestra tienen menos de 20 empleados (96%), el 60% son empresas con antigüedad de más de 6 años y los gestores/empresarios tiene más de 35 años de edad (81,5%), con estudios entre nivel básico e intermedio (69,5%). Se trabajó con un nivel de confianza del 95,45% y un error de estimación del +/- 7%. Considerando las características del universo de estudio, la muestra obtenida representa dicho universo y tal y como se observa corresponde un perfil de pyme. El trabajo de campo se realizó durante el mes de julio de 2013.

Los instrumentos empleados para la medición de las variables fueron adaptados de la literatura existente y se emplearon escalas Likert de 5 puntos. La colaboración del cliente en la innovación se midió mediante la escala de Ordanini y Parasuraman (2011) de 4 ítems. La GCC se midió adaptando la escala de Alegre et al. (2011), planteándose como un constructo de segundo orden con dos dimensiones: *prácticas de gestión del conocimiento sobre los clientes* (almacenaje del conocimiento y difusión del conocimiento) y *capacidades dinámicas de la gestión del conocimiento* (compuestas por las competencias de aprendizaje internas y externas) y para la medición de los resultados de marketing se empleó la escala de Vorhies y Morgan (2005) de 4 ítems la cual mide los resultados en relación a la competencia en los últimos 3 años (las escalas se encuentran recogidas en la tabla 1).

#### 4. Resultados

Los datos recogidos fueron analizados en dos etapas siguiendo a Barclay et al. (1995), en primer lugar se realizó la validación del instrumento de medida y en segundo lugar se continuó con la estimación del modelo estructural. Para estos análisis se utilizó la técnica de regresión por mínimos cuadrados parciales (PLS), mediante el software Smart PLS versión 2.0 (Ringle et al., 2005)

##### 4.1 Validación del Instrumento de Medida

La evaluación del modelo de medida implica el análisis de la fiabilidad individual del ítem, la consistencia interna o fiabilidad de una escala, la validez convergente y la validez discriminante (Barclay et al., 1995; Cepeda y Roldán, 2004).

La fiabilidad de los constructos se analizó en base a los criterios del  $\alpha$  de Cronbach y el índice de fiabilidad compuesta (IFC), obteniendo valores superiores a 0,7 en todos los casos, que es el valor recomendado (Churchill, 1979). Los valores del AVE fueron superiores a 0,5 en todos los casos, lo que refleja que más del 50% de la varianza de cada constructo es debida a sus indicadores (Cepeda y Roldán, 2004). Los resultados de estos análisis se resumen en la tabla 1.

**TABLA 1.**  
**Fiabilidad y validez convergente de las escalas de medida**

Factor	Ítem	Medias	Carga	$\alpha$ de Cronbach	IFC <sup>1</sup>	IVE <sup>1</sup>	
F1.Colaboración del Cliente (CC)	CC1	Interactuamos con los clientes para obtener información útil para el proceso	3,91	0,915*	0,97	0,98	0,91
	CC2	La intensidad con la que interactuamos con los clientes es elevada	3,83	0,966*			
	CC3	La frecuencia de encuentros con los clientes es alta	3,80	0,960*			
	CC4	El número de clientes con los cuales interactuamos es elevado	3,81	0,967*			
F2.Capacidades dinámicas de la gestión conocimiento sobre cliente (CDGCC)	CDGCC 1	(Soy mejor que mis competidores) en mi capacidad de obtener información sobre los clientes y sus necesidades (en ferias, eventos, noticias del sector, opiniones de expertos, boletines..) o de clientes con los cuales interactuamos es elevado	3,28	0,745*	0,86	0,89	0,58
	CDGCC 2	(Soy mejor ....) en mi eficaz y actualizada recopilación de información sobre los clientes	3,36	0,812*			
	CDGCC 3	(Soy mejor ....) en mi capacidad de obtener información sobre el cliente a través de la cooperación con las asociaciones de mi sector	3,20	0,719*			
	CDGCC 4	(Soy mejor ....) en mi capacidad de obtener información sobre el cliente a través de instituciones como universidades, institutos de investigación, escuelas de negocio	3,07	0,765*			
	CDGCC 5	(Soy mejor ....) en el grado de titulación académica de mis empleados, concretamente los que realizan las tareas de innovación y/o investigación	3,18	0,720*			
	CDGCC 6	(Soy mejor ....) en mi capacidad de situarme en primera línea de innovación (como capacidad de generar nuevos procesos, nuevos productos, nuevos mercados,..)	3,32	0,783*			
F3.Prácticas de la gestión del	PGCC1	Utilizamos sistemas de codificación del conocimiento o la información que tenemos sobre los clientes (en bases de	3,28	0,763*	0,92	0,93	0,66

conocimiento sobre cliente (PGCC)		datos, programas informáticos..)					
	PGCC2	Utilizamos mecanismos para fomentar el intercambio interno de información sobre los clientes	3,36	0,810*			
	PGCC3	Utilizamos técnicas de participación de nuestros empleados con los clientes (como reuniones con clientes, entrevistas con clientes para mejoras, etc.).	3,20	0,764*			
	PGCC4	Utilizamos herramientas para que la información de los clientes llegue a todos en la empresa	3,07	0,781*			
	PGCC5	Tenemos sistemas de procesamiento de información sobre los clientes	3,18	0,854*			
	PGCC6	Utilizamos sistemas de control y revisión de la información existente en la empresa sobre los clientes	3,32	0,847*			
	PGCC7	Empleamos sistemas que permiten que la información sobre el cliente que fue utilizada en tareas de innovación previas sea utilizada en nuevas tareas de innovación	3,41	0,865*			
F4.Resultados de Marketing (RM)	RMK1	El crecimiento de nuestra cuota de mercado es superior al de mi principal competidor	3,37	0,878*	0,92	0,94	0,81
	RMK2	El crecimiento de nuestros ingresos por ventas es superior al de mi principal competidor	3,28	0,915*			
	RMK3	La adquisición de nuevos clientes es superior a mi principal competidor	3,30	0,896*			
	RMK4	El incremento de las ventas a los clientes ya existentes es superior al de mi principal competidor	3,30	0,899*			

\* Todas las cargas son significativas  $p < 0,001$

<sup>1</sup> IFC: Índice de Fiabilidad Compuesta

IVE: Índice de Varianza Extraída

La validez discriminante se evaluó comparando la raíz cuadrada de los IVE con las correlaciones entre los factores. Se comprobó que las correlaciones eran inferiores a todas las raíces cuadradas del IVE (tabla 2).

**TABLA 2.**

**Instrumento de medida: validez discriminante**

	CC	CDGCC	PGCC	RM
CC	<b>0,9528</b>	0	0	0
CDGCC	0,3252	<b>0,7584</b>	0	0
PGCC	0,3285	0,4308	<b>0,8133</b>	0
RM	0,2538	0,4488	0,2896	<b>0,8974</b>

Los valores de la diagonal: son la raíz cuadrada de la varianza extraída

Los valores bajo la diagonal : son la correlación estimada entre los factores

De forma general y de manera descriptiva las medias de los indicadores que conforman las variables en una escala del 1 al 5 recogidos en la Tabla 1, indican con respecto a la colaboración activa de los clientes en la innovación que presentan una media superior a 3,8. En este sentido, esto indica que las empresas valencianas consideran clave, el papel del cliente en los procesos de innovación, interactuando con ellos para obtener información útil para dicho proceso, con una intensidad y

frecuencia adecuada. En relación a la variable GCC, en sus dos dimensiones (CDGCC y PGCC) se observa que la puntuación media de ambas es de 3,3. El ítem más valorado es aquel que se considera mejor que los competidores gestionando aspectos como búsqueda de información, recursos monetarios y formación, así como obteniendo información de los clientes en ferias, eventos, boletines y opiniones de expertos. Los dos ítems menos valorados han sido la gestión de información a través de instituciones de educación superior e institutos de investigación y la utilización de herramientas para que llegue la información a todos en la empresa. Los resultados de marketing con respecto al competidor señalan una media de 3,31. A nivel general esto señala un nivel medio en las capacidades para gestionar el conocimiento valorado por las empresas y los resultados de marketing de la muestra.

#### 4.2 Estimación del modelo estructural

Una vez evaluadas las propiedades psicométricas del instrumento de medida, se procedió a realizar el análisis del modelo estructural mediante PLS (*Partial Least Squares*). Para valorar la capacidad predictiva del modelo estructural se comenzó por evaluar los  $R^2$  que según Falk y Miller (1992) deben superar el valor de 0,1 y valores inferiores, aun siendo significativos, no serían aceptables. La Tabla 3, muestra que los  $R^2$  de todos los factores dependientes son superiores a 0,1 (el nivel crítico mencionado).

Se continuó evaluando la predictibilidad del modelo aplicando el *Test de Stone-Geisser* ( $Q^2$ ) para cada constructo dependiente a través del procedimiento *blindfolding*. Se comprobó que los  $Q^2$  revelaban una capacidad predictiva del modelo suficiente, ya que los valores superaban el 0 en todos los casos (tabla 3).

**TABLA 3.**  
**Contaste de las hipótesis**

Relación causal	Hipótesis	$\beta$ estandarizados	Valor T bootstrap
H1: Colaboración del cliente → GCC	Aceptada	0,385*	8,479
H2: GCC → Resultados de marketing	Aceptada	0,410*	7,878
H3: Colaboración del cliente → Resultados de marketing	Aceptada	0,096**	1,991
* $p < 0,001$ ; ** $p < 0,05$			
$R^2$ (gestión del conocimiento sobre cliente)= 0,1483 ; $R^2$ (resultados de marketing)= 0,2076			
$Q^2$ (gestión del conocimiento sobre cliente)= 0,0998 ; $Q^2$ (resultados de marketing)= 0,0217			

Los resultados obtenidos en la tabla 3 permiten aceptar las tres hipótesis propuestas, lo que significa que tanto la colaboración del cliente en la innovación como la GCC tienen efectos en los resultados de marketing, siendo la GCC quien tiene un mayor peso. Por lo tanto el efecto de la colaboración con el cliente en la innovación es mayor en los resultados, cuando éste es mediado por la GCC.

## 5. Conclusiones

Este trabajo plantea la importancia crítica de los recursos como base para la construcción de las capacidades organizacionales que sustenten la competitividad de las empresas (Wernerfelt, B. 1984; Grant, 1991; Amit y Shoemaker, 1993). Como afirma Grant (1996), cuanto más dinámico sea el entorno de la empresa, más sentido tiene basar su estrategia en los recursos y capacidades internos, a hacerlo frente a consideraciones de tipo externo. En este sentido, la gestión del conocimiento del cliente se configura como una variable estratégica clave, así como la colaboración del cliente en los procesos de innovación.

Detectado un hueco de investigación en torno a la variable GCC, este trabajo aporta un instrumento de medida así como antecedentes y consecuencias de esta variable que permiten comprender mejor su comportamiento.

Los resultados del contraste del modelo de relaciones analizado, confirman la importancia de la relación entre la colaboración con los clientes en la innovación, la GCC y los resultados de marketing.

Estos resultados son consistentes con la literatura, lo que demuestra que la gestión del conocimiento y la colaboración del cliente en los procesos de innovación de la empresa es un importante recurso estratégico para las mismas que contribuyen de manera positiva a la mejora en los resultados de marketing (Darroch y McNaughton, 2003; Chatham y Pastuzak, 2005; Huang y Shih, 2009).

Así mismo, se confirma la relación directa entre la colaboración de los clientes en el proceso de innovación y los resultados de marketing para la empresa

Los resultados obtenidos llevan a plantear diversas implicaciones para la gestión de las empresas. En primer lugar, debería ser una llamada de atención a los directivos sobre los beneficios que conlleva la gestión del conocimiento sobre el cliente en el proceso de innovación y en los resultados para sus empresas (Tari y García-Fernández, 2013), así como la necesaria orientación de la empresa hacia procesos que promuevan la colaboración del cliente en los diversos procesos de co-creación de innovación. Asimismo, los resultados ponen en evidencia la importancia que las empresas gestionen de manera sistemática sistemas de inteligencia de mercado, es decir, herramientas para el conocimiento real del mercado y sus tendencias, el conocimiento de los clientes y sus necesidades, más allá de percepciones sesgadas. En esta línea, recursos disponibles en instituciones como las universidades, los institutos de investigación o las asociaciones del sector son desconocidos como oportunidades para tal fin, como lo revelaron las medias de los indicadores obtenidos para diversos ítems de esa variable.

A continuación, se presentan las limitaciones del estudio así como nuevas líneas de investigación, muchas de ellas derivadas de las mismas. En primer lugar, señalar que se ha empleado una misma fuente de información (el director/gerente) para medir todas las variables del modelo (antecedente y consecuencia) y recoger la información en un mismo momento del tiempo, lo que podría generar un sesgo de la varianza común. Aunque esto es una práctica común, sería apropiado realizar la encuesta a diferentes informantes clave de la empresa y en momentos diferentes del tiempo. Un segundo aspecto a considerar se basa en que el estudio se ha realizado únicamente en Valencia y su área metropolitana, siendo interesante evaluar en un futuro el modelo con una muestra de empresas de diferentes áreas geográficas y / o países.

Finalmente, resultará de interés en estudios futuros introducir en el modelo otras variables que puedan actuar como consecuencias de la gestión del conocimiento sobre el cliente, tales como resultados financieros (rentabilidad, ROI) resultados para los clientes (satisfacción de clientes, retención de clientes) o la capacidad de innovación. Así mismo, resultaría de interés introducir nuevas variables antecedentes a la gestión del conocimiento sobre el cliente en las empresas como la cultura de innovación o la confianza y compromiso de los equipos de trabajo, (Davenport et al., 1998; Lloria, 2004). Por último, incluir como línea de investigación futura la colaboración de los trabajadores en el proceso de innovación tras las recientes evidencias de la importancia de dicha variable en proceso (Santos et al., 2013; Schlesinger y Andreu, 2013).

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# LA TRANSFERENCIA ENTRE UN GRAN EVENTO DEPORTIVO Y LA MARCA PATROCINADORA: LA VISIÓN DEL VISITANTE DEPORTIVO

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## RESUMEN

*El objetivo del estudio es analizar el modo en que los visitantes deportivos transfieren valor percibido y experiencia del evento a la marca patrocinadora. Así, en base a los modelos del comportamiento del turista y las teorías de patrocinio deportivo, se plantea un modelo global de patrocinio en un gran evento deportivo cuyo eje central se basa en los Modelos de Transferencia aplicados al valor y a la experiencia. Además, el modelo abarca tanto antecedentes que condicionan el comportamiento del visitante al evento deportivo como efectos derivados de la asistencia y la acción de patrocinio deportivo.*

*Los resultados permiten concluir que no se transfiere el valor percibido, pero sí la experiencia del evento a la marca patrocinadora. Asimismo, se observa el efecto de la experiencia sobre el valor percibido y se pueden confirmar la motivación, la identificación y la implicación como antecedentes del modelo, junto con todos los efectos propuestos.*

## Palabras clave

Patrocinio deportivo, transferencia, gran evento deportivo, turismo deportivo

## 1. Introducción

El turismo es una de las industrias con mayor importancia a nivel mundial y más en el contexto de la actual crisis e incertidumbre económica. Recientemente, los líderes mundiales del G20 han reconocido la importancia de los viajes y el turismo como motor impulsor del empleo, del crecimiento y de la recuperación económica (UNWTO, 2012; WTTC, 2013).

En el último informe Familitur publicado, el turismo de eventos deportivos es una de las razones que surgen entre las declaradas por los turistas para efectuar un viaje (IET, 2012). Este tipo de turismo puede elevar a nivel mundial la importancia del país o ciudad anfitriona y reposicionar su imagen (Smith, 2004; Walker, Kaplanidou, Gibson, Thapa, Geldenhuys y Coetzee, 2013). Asimismo, las empresas desembolsan grandes cantidades de dinero para patrocinar eventos deportivos (Chen y Zhang, 2011).

Sin embargo, hemos detectado un vacío en la literatura relativa al comportamiento del turista deportivo y al patrocinio deportivo y, en concreto, al estudio de la transferencia evento-marca patrocinadora (Smith y Stewart, 2007; Weed, 2009; Chang y McAleer, 2012; Reyes, 2013). Por ello, desde el presente trabajo se postula la necesidad de continuar investigando en este ámbito, que ha recibido poca atención (Wann et al., 2001) pero presenta un interés creciente (Preuss, et al., 2007; Weed y Bull, 2012), a fin de poder proporcionar a las empresas recomendaciones para optimizar su gestión.

La revisión de los modelos del comportamiento del turista deportivo y las teorías de patrocinio deportivo, permite el planteamiento de un modelo de patrocinio deportivo que recoja las principales aportaciones de la literatura. De manera más específica, el modelo se basa en los Modelos de Transferencia (Gwinner, 1997; Pracejus, 2004) aplicados a la transferencia del valor percibido y la experiencia.

Estos dos conceptos, estrechamente ligados al comportamiento del turista de este tipo de eventos, cobran cada vez más peso en la disciplina de marketing debido a la sofisticación del consumidor y el aumento de la competencia, entre otros. De hecho, en el ámbito del turismo, el estudio del comportamiento del turista ha mostrado la relevancia del valor percibido y la experiencia en el proceso de toma de decisiones.

Por tanto, en el presente trabajo se establece como hipótesis teórica la que a continuación se enuncia: Existe una transferencia evento-marca patrocinadora en términos de valor percibido y experiencia.

Con la intención de contribuir teórica y empíricamente al conocimiento en marketing, se propone como objetivo general del presente trabajo: plantear un modelo que aúne las teorías del comportamiento del consumidor y las teorías del patrocinio deportivo, en el marco de un gran evento.

Lo expuesto previamente, nos permite establecer un conjunto de objetivos y subobjetivos específicos de posible interés científico, tal y como se muestran a continuación:

El primer objetivo, es el análisis y evaluación del valor-experiencia percibidos por el visitante deportivo hacia un evento- marca patrocinadora. Este objetivo, que supone el eje central del modelo, se divide en cuatro subobjetivos, uno por cada una de las relaciones planteadas, y todas ellas referidas al visitante deportivo. Así, se realiza un análisis de la transferencia evento-marca patrocinadora, tanto de valor percibido como de experiencia. Y se analiza el efecto de la experiencia sobre el valor percibido, tanto del evento como de la marca patrocinadora.

El segundo objetivo, es el análisis y evaluación de las variables antecedentes del eje. Este objetivo se separa en cinco subobjetivos, uno por cada una de las variables antecedentes analizadas. Fruto del análisis de la literatura y de la revisión de los modelos del comportamiento del turista y de las teorías de patrocinio, estas son: la motivación del turista deportivo, la implicación con el evento, la exposición al evento, la identificación con el equipo o piloto y la familiaridad con la marca patrocinadora.

El tercer objetivo, es el análisis y evaluación de los efectos del eje. De igual modo que el objetivo previo, este tercer objetivo se divide en cinco subobjetivos en función de los siguientes efectos detectados en estudios previos: el conocimiento de la marca patrocinadora, la satisfacción con el evento, la satisfacción

con la marca patrocinadora, el comportamiento futuro con el evento y el efecto del patrocinio en la marca patrocinadora.

Para alcanzar los objetivos expuestos, se planteó la siguiente estructura: primero se establece el marco conceptual general. Seguidamente se presenta el modelo teórico propuesto y el desarrollo de las hipótesis. A continuación, se recoge la metodología de la investigación y, finalmente, se presentan, analizan y discuten los resultados de la investigación y se establecen las conclusiones generales.

## **2. Marco teórico**

Para el planteamiento de un modelo teórico es importante el uso de teorías que respalden y den consistencia a las relaciones que en el mismo se plantean. Es por ello que consideramos importante abordar las diferentes teorías del comportamiento del turista en primer lugar y del patrocinio deportivo en segundo lugar, en el marco del turismo deportivo para adoptar la visión del visitante deportivo. Así, a continuación se ahonda en el concepto de turismo deportivo, se detallan los modelos del comportamiento del consumidor y finalmente las principales teorías del patrocinio deportivo.

### ***2.1 Turismo deportivo***

En la literatura relativa al turismo deportivo, es posible encontrar tres tendencias diferenciadas para aportar una conceptualización del término, basadas en la propuesta de Latiesa y Paniza (2006). Así, los autores establecen un marco teórico sobre turismo deportivo, analizando tres concepciones distintas: modelo amplio, modelo intermedio y modelo restrictivo.

La mayoría de los autores mantienen un marco conceptual amplio que entiende el turismo deportivo como aquellas actividades que se realizan fuera del lugar habitual de residencia, tanto por motivos competitivos como recreacionales (Esteve Secall, 1991; Standeven y De Knop, 1999; Weed y Bull, 2009).

Las críticas que recibe este modelo amplio están relacionadas con su extensión, ya que, numerosas actividades pueden ser consideradas como deportivas y, por tanto, son susceptibles de clasificarse como turismo deportivo.

Con la intención de contrarrestar estas críticas, se encuentra el modelo intermedio, en el que el turista deportivo está motivado a priori por una actividad o evento deportivo para realizar sus desplazamientos recreacionales o competitivos (Hall, 1992; Gammon y Robinson, 1997; Gibson, Attle y Yiannakis, 1998; Gibson, Willming y Holdnak, 2002; Latiesa y Paniza, 2006; Hinch y Higham, 2001, 2011).

Finalmente, la conceptualización restrictiva se centra únicamente en aquel turista deportivo que participa activa o pasivamente en eventos deportivos competitivos (Nogawa et al., 1996; Weed y Bull, 1997; Deery et al., 2004; Weed y Bull, 2012). En este marco, el turismo deportivo es esencialmente turismo de eventos. Así, se considera que para que pueda identificarse a una persona en la categoría de turista deportivo, su motivación clave para realizar el viaje tiene que ser la práctica deportiva competitiva, ya sea como participante activo en el evento, o para visionar un evento deportivo (por ejemplo, la Fórmula 1).

El presente trabajo se centra exclusivamente en este modelo restrictivo del turismo deportivo. En concreto, se entiende la actividad deportiva como espectáculo, aunque se acepta el modelo amplio. La revisión de la literatura realizada respecto al concepto del turismo deportivo, permite afirmar que la mayoría de las definiciones comparten las motivaciones del viaje, capaces de clasificar a un turista como turista deportivo. De ahí la relevancia de ver las principales motivaciones del viaje y clasificar al turista en base a ellas. En todo momento, se observa como la motivación es una herramienta fundamental para explicar el comportamiento del turista deportivo y que juega un papel relevante el desarrollo de la comercialización turística y el marketing.

## ***2.2 Modelos del comportamiento del turista***

A lo largo de los años son muchos los autores que se han preocupado por explicar el comportamiento del turista a través de diferentes modelos, en concreto, desde la presente investigación proponemos una clasificación de cinco categorías entre los modelos desarrollados por la literatura.

En primer lugar, los modelos ampliados (Wahab, Crampon y Rothfield, 1976; Schmoll, 1977; Mayo y Jarvis, 1981; Van Raaij y Francken, 1984; Gilbert, 1991), son aquellos desarrollados a partir de los modelos clásicos del comportamiento del consumidor (Nicosia, 1966; Engel, Kollat y Blackwell, 1968; Howard y Sheth, 1969). En este grupo, destaca la importancia de ahondar con más detalle en los modelos previos comúnmente aceptados.

En segundo lugar, agrupamos los modelos que consideran el conjunto relativo de alternativas disponibles. En este campo han sido tres las aportaciones más destacadas (Woodside y Lysonski, 1989; Um y Crompton, 1990; Woodside y MacDonald, 1994), las cuales barajan las diferentes posibilidades de elección para explicar el comportamiento de compra del turista.

En tercer lugar, detectamos modelos ampliados y basados en el conjunto de elección (Moutinho, 1987; Crompton, 1992). Este tipo de modelos, comparten características de los dos grupos de modelos de comportamiento del turista previamente analizados, lo que implica una mayor complejidad que puede dificultar su operatividad.

En cuarto lugar, es posible clasificar un grupo de modelos dinámicos. En este grupo hemos incluido los modelos que reconocen la importancia del dinamismo de algún constructo que forma parte del proceso (Mathieson y Wall, 1982; Middleton, 1988; Valdez y Chebat, 1997). Así, por ejemplo Valdez y Chebat (1997) diseñan un modelo donde el dinamismo en la percepción del turista acerca de los atributos del producto turístico es el eje central, de forma que supera el problema de la visión estática de los destinos de otros autores.

En quinto y último lugar, se agrupan los modelos funcionales atendiendo a la facilidad, utilidad y comodidad de su empleo (Clawson y Knetsch, 1966, 2011; Teare, 1994; Eugenio-Martín, 2003; Hyde y Laesser, 2009). Comparten la idea de que el proceso de toma de decisiones del turista es una actividad de carácter funcional influida por variables psicológicas y no psicológicas.

En concreto, la presente investigación defiende los modelos funcionales, además de por su comodidad de empleo, porque destacan principalmente la importancia de la experiencia turística en el proceso de toma de decisiones del turista.

## ***2.3 Teorías de patrocinio deportivo***

Las principales teorías revisadas sobre patrocinio deportivo revisadas, a partir de las contribuciones de diversos autores (McDaniel, 1999; Madrigal, 2000; Meenaghan, 2001; Pracejus, 2004; Kim, 2006; Alonso, 2013), han sido especialmente relevantes para la proposición del modelo teórico de la presente investigación. A continuación se lista una escueta descripción de las mismas.

Teoría del Equilibrio (Heider, 1958): Frente a asociaciones nuevas o inesperadas para el consumidor éste tiende a alterar sus percepciones con el fin de armonizarlas.

Teoría de la Mera Exposición (Zajonc, 1968; 1980): La exposición repetida a un estímulo de aquellos que se identifican con él puede, sin que intervengan las actitudes, desencadenar por sí misma el conocimiento del objeto al que se está expuesto.

Teoría de la Identidad Social (Tajfel y Turner, 1979): Los individuos establecen auto-conceptos y definiciones a través de su afiliación o conexiones con ciertos grupos sociales a los que pertenecen (identificación con el equipo, deportistas, etc.).

Modelo de la Transferencia Afectiva (Pracejus, 2004): Considera la transmisión de sentimientos positivos desde un evento hasta una marca patrocinadora por asociación.

Modelo de la Transferencia de Imagen (Gwinner, 1997): La transferencia de asociaciones relacionadas con una marca o empresa desde el patrocinado al patrocinador.

Teoría de la Señal (Spence, 1973; Ross, 1977): Las actividades de patrocinio por parte de las organizaciones pueden deberse a importantes esfuerzos de marketing. Las señales de marketing influyen en la codificación de la información del consumidor.

Teoría de la Atribución (Heider 1958; Jones y Davis, 1965; Kelley, 1973): Los individuos asignan causas o explicaciones a un hecho observado a través de un proceso cognitivo. Existe una relación directa entre las motivaciones y sus actitudes y comportamientos.

### **3. Planteamiento de un modelo de patrocinio deportivo**

Sobre la base de la revisión de la literatura en materia de comportamiento del turista y patrocinio deportivo, se desarrollan y formulan las hipótesis de trabajo que nos han permitido plantear un modelo teórico de relaciones estructurales susceptible de ser contrastado empíricamente y capaz de satisfacer los objetivos de investigación. El modelo consta de tres partes fundamentales en las que se basa este apartado: eje central, antecedentes y efectos.

#### ***3.1 Eje central: valor percibido y experiencia, transferencia del evento a la marca.***

En relación con el eje central del modelo propuesto, es importante la transmisión de las percepciones que poseen de la actividad patrocinada hacia las percepciones de la marca o empresa patrocinadora, de manera que la asociación entre evento y marca conducen al visitante al evento a trasladar las percepciones hacia el evento hacia la marca que lo patrocina (Meenaghan, 2001; Smith, 2004; Grohs y Reisinger, 2005; Küster, Vila, Aldás y Rodríguez, 2009). En concreto, se ha considerado para dicha transmisión, los constructos valor percibido y experiencia. El valor percibido entendido como la evaluación global del consumidor de la utilidad del evento y la utilidad de la marca, basada en la percepción de lo que se recibe y de lo que se entrega (Zeithaml, 1988). La experiencia, considerada como un paso más allá de los servicios (Pine y Gilmore, 1999) generando emociones, de mayor o menor intensidad, que influyen tanto en el actitud del turista durante el evento como en su comportamiento futuro (Bigné, 2004). A partir de esta idea y en base a la clasificación de tipos de experiencias propuesta por Schmitt (1999), la presente investigación se ha basado en las emociones para aproximarse a la experiencia hacia el evento patrocinado, y en las actitudes para conocer la experiencia hacia la marca patrocinadora. Se asume así, que los asistentes al evento deportivo, por su relación con el mismo y por el ambiente físico, pueden generar diversas emociones (Bitner, 1992). Mientras que, como consecuencia del patrocinio, dichos asistentes al evento realizan asociaciones mentales, que se traducirá en una determinada actitud y comportamiento hacia la marca patrocinadora (Meenaghan, 2001).

Así, respecto al objetivo principal, y en base a los Modelos de Transferencia, postulamos la transferencia del evento a la marca, tanto del valor percibido como de la experiencia. Del mismo modo, según lo argumentado en la Teoría de la Atribución y en los modelos del comportamiento del turista, planteamos el efecto de la experiencia sobre el valor percibido.

#### ***3.2 Antecedentes del valor percibido y experiencia***

En segundo lugar, y atendiendo al segundo objetivo de la investigación, se recogen a continuación los cinco antecedentes del eje del modelo: motivaciones, implicación con el evento, exposición al evento, identificación con el equipo o piloto, familiaridad con la marca.

Respecto a las motivaciones, excepto en los viajes por motivos de trabajo, raramente las motivaciones del turista están influidas por un sólo motivo, la decisión de emprender un viaje y la elección de un destino, dándose varias motivaciones combinadas (Trail y James, 2001; Trail y James, 2011). De ahí la necesidad de tener en cuenta aspectos racionales e irracionales, conscientes e inconscientes, externos e internos, etc. Así, la elección del tipo de vacaciones y del destino viene representada por un compromiso entre las múltiples motivaciones que se interrelacionan entre sí y las posibilidades que el destino ofrece, pero en algunas ocasiones es posible encontrar un motivo predominante, como por ejemplo la asistencia a un evento deportivo (como es el caso de la presente investigación). Por lo que respecta a la motivación para realizar turismo de eventos deportivos, la revisión de la literatura muestra diversas motivaciones pertenecientes a dimensiones: psicológicas (estética / placer estético, drama / eustress, escapar, atracción física, entretenimiento, excitación, suspense); socio-culturales (interacción familiar y social, interacción social / grupo de afiliación, conexiones culturales, adquisición de conocimiento, habilidades físicas, factores económicos, modelos de rol, ambiente saludable, apoyo a las oportunidades de las mujeres, aspectos técnicos); y de pertenencia social (logro indirecto / autoestima, interés en el deporte, interés en el equipo, interés en el jugador, orgullo nacional, conexiones tribales).

De este modo, a partir de los estudios previos, y tomando como línea argumental lo postulado en la Teoría de la Atribución, planteamos que a más motivación más identificación con el equipo o piloto, y para el evento, más valor percibido, satisfacción y comportamiento futuro.

Por otro lado, se ha propuesto la implicación con el evento como un antecedente al considerarlo un factor clave en el proceso de persuasión del patrocinio, analizado en diversas investigaciones de espectadores deportivos (Wann, 1995; Iwasaki y Havitz, 1998; Trail y James, 2001; Fink, Trail y Anderson, 2002; Kyle y Mowen, 2005; Bouchet, Bodet, Bernache-Assollant y Kada, 2011). Además de representar un aspecto determinante para que el consumidor se vea expuesto al evento, también posee un efecto significativo en la identificación con el equipo (o piloto/deportista) y el conocimiento de la marca patrocinadora. Por todo ello, se postula que la implicación con el evento se asocia positivamente con la exposición, la identificación y el conocimiento de marca, tomando, para ello, como premisa la Teoría de la Identidad Social.

Otro antecedente considerado en esta investigación es la exposición al evento, importante para que el patrocinio se convierta en una herramienta de comunicación efectiva. El visitante al evento deportivo está disfrutando de un espectáculo que encaja con sus patrones de ocio, por lo que podemos afirmar que el patrocinio se convierte en una herramienta de comunicación más efectiva que otras. Así, y en base a la argumentación defendida por la Teoría de la Mera Exposición, nos centramos en la exposición al evento y su influencia tanto en el valor percibido del evento como en la experiencia con el evento.

La identificación con el equipo o piloto también se asume como antecedente a la transferencia entre evento y marca patrocinadora, por entenderse como la percepción de la conectividad de los espectadores a un equipo y la experiencia de los fallos y logros del equipo como si fueran propios (Ashforth y Mael, 1989). En este contexto, y en relación con los resultados alcanzados en estudios previos, basados en la Teoría de la Identidad Social, es posible plantear que conforme más identificación más experiencia con el evento y la marca, y más conocimiento y satisfacción con la marca.

Adicionalmente, podemos asumir que la familiaridad con la marca en términos de patrocinio, entendida como la cantidad de asociaciones que se encuentran en la mente de los consumidores sobre el evento patrocinado y el patrocinador, es un antecedente y punto de partida importante para explicar la identificación del patrocinio y transferencia de percepciones hacia la marca. Por ello, a partir de las premisas recogidas en la Teoría de la Señal y la Teoría del Equilibrio, es posible plantear que la familiaridad con la marca supone un mayor valor de marca.

### ***3.3 Efectos del valor percibido y experiencia***



En último lugar, coincidiendo con el objetivo tercero de la investigación, en relación a los resultados o efectos del patrocinio, la revisión de la literatura (Meenaghan, 1991; Rajaretnam, 1995; Crimmins y Horn, 1996; Hoek, Gendall, Jeffcoat y Orsman, 1997; Pope, 1998; Bennett, 1999; Meenaghan, 2001a; Meenaghan, 2001b; Harvey 2001; Calderón, Nicolau y Mas, 2002; Hickman, Lawrence y Ward, 2005; Alexandris, Tsaousi y James, 2007; Dees, Bennett y Villegas, 2008; Nickell, Cornwell y Johnston, 2011) nos permite plantear que los principales resultados del patrocinio son: la rentabilidad, la imagen del patrocinador, la transmisión de la imagen, la mejor disposición hacia el patrocinio que hacia la publicidad, el efecto halo, la respuesta del consumidor, generar niveles de conciencia, generar percepción de uso generalizado, generar gratitud o agradecimiento, la buena voluntad, aumentar la moral de los empleados y la implicación de los fans.

En concreto, el modelo teórico propuesto recoge dos efectos directos y dos efectos indirectos. Por un lado, observamos como efectos directos la satisfacción con el evento y con la marca patrocinadora que toman como base los principios postulados en los modelos de comportamiento del turista, y se propone que a más valor y experiencia más satisfacción. Por otro, y en base a la argumentación defendida por las teorías del Equilibrio, la Atribución y la Señal, observamos como efectos indirectos los comportamientos futuros hacia el evento y la marca provocados por la satisfacción. Con objeto de facilitar la lectura y la interpretación de todas las hipótesis de investigación, se construye la Tabla 1

**TABLA 1**  
**Resumen de las hipótesis y objetivos y subobjetivos de investigación**

**OBJ 1:** Análisis y evaluación del vínculo valor-experiencia percibidos por el visitante deportivo hacia un evento patrocinado- marca patrocinadora.

- 1.1 Transferencia del valor percibido del evento hacia el valor percibido de la marca que lo patrocina.
- 1.2 Transferencia de la experiencia con el evento hacia la experiencia con la marca que lo patrocina.
- 1.3 Efecto de la experiencia con el evento sobre el valor percibido del evento.
- 1.4 Efecto de la experiencia con la marca patrocinadora sobre el valor percibido de la marca.

**Hipótesis relativas al eje central del modelo**

- H1: El valor percibido del evento afectará al valor percibido de la marca.  
H2: La experiencia que se tenga con un evento afectará a la experiencia que se tenga con una marca.  
H3: La experiencia tendrá un efecto sobre el valor percibido.

- H3.1: La experiencia con el evento tendrá un efecto sobre el valor percibido del evento.
- H3.2: La experiencia con la marca tendrá un efecto sobre el valor percibido de la marca.

**OBJ 2:** Análisis y evaluación de las variables antecedentes de la transferencia valor percibido-experiencia.

- 2.1 Análisis y evaluación de la motivación del turista deportivo.
- 2.2 Análisis y evaluación de la identificación con el equipo o piloto.
- 2.3 Análisis y evaluación de la implicación con el evento.
- 2.4 Análisis y evaluación de la exposición al evento.
- 2.5 Análisis y evaluación de la familiaridad con la marca patrocinadora.

**Hipótesis relativas a las variables antecedentes**

- H4: A más motivaciones del turista deportivo:  
H4.1: Mayor será la identificación con el equipo (escudería) o piloto.  
H4.2: Mayor será el valor percibido del evento.  
H4.3: Mayor será la satisfacción del evento.  
H4.4: Mayor influencia en el comportamiento futuro del evento.  
H5: La implicación con el evento está positivamente asociada con:  
H5.1: Una mayor exposición al evento.  
H5.2: La identificación con el equipo o piloto.  
H5.3: La marca patrocinadora.  
H6: La exposición al evento patrocinado se asocia positivamente con:  
H6.1: El valor percibido del evento.  
H6.2: La experiencia del espectador con el evento.  
H7: La identificación con el equipo o piloto se asocia positivamente con:  
H7.1: La experiencia con el evento.  
H7.2: La experiencia con la marca.  
H7.3: El conocimiento de la marca patrocinadora.  
H7.4: La satisfacción con la marca patrocinadora.  
H8: La familiaridad con la marca se asocia positivamente con el valor percibido de marca.

**OBJ 3:** Análisis y evaluación de los efectos derivados de la transferencia valor percibido-experiencia.

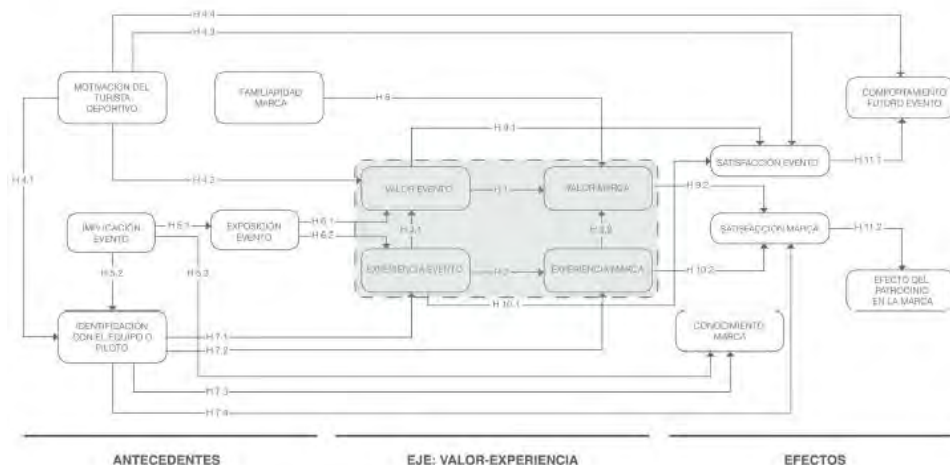
- 3.1 Análisis y evaluación del conocimiento de la marca patrocinadora.
- 3.2 Análisis y evaluación de la satisfacción con el evento.
- 3.3 Análisis y evaluación de la satisfacción con la marca patrocinadora.
- 3.4 Análisis y evaluación del comportamiento futuro con el evento.
- 3.5 Análisis y evaluación del efecto del patrocinio en la marca patrocinadora.

**Hipótesis relativas a los efectos**

- H9: Cuanto mayor sea el valor percibido por el individuo mayor será:  
H9.1: Su satisfacción con el evento.  
H9.2: Su satisfacción con el patrocinador.  
H10: La experiencia influye en:  
H10.1: La satisfacción del individuo con el evento.  
H10.2: La satisfacción del individuo con la marca.  
H11: Cuanto mayor sea la satisfacción del individuo con:  
H11.1: El evento mayor será su comportamiento futuro hacia el evento.  
H11.2: La marca patrocinadora mayor será el efecto del patrocinio en la marca patrocinadora.

Llegados a este punto, la suma de objetivos e hipótesis expuestos previamente, da como resultado el modelo global de patrocinio deportivo que se muestra en la Figura 1. Los diferentes conceptos del modelo se midieron con escalas validadas en estudios previos.

FIGURA 1.  
Modelo teórico propuesto



#### 4. Metodología

En relación a la metodología de la investigación, basamos la justificación del sector objeto de estudio, tratando de dar respuesta sobre el ¿dónde?, el ¿qué?, el ¿por qué? y el ¿cuándo?

Respecto al ¿dónde?, se ha barajado como mejor opción la ciudad de Valencia. La misma ha apostado decididamente por el deporte y los grandes eventos deportivos, y el turismo de eventos deportivos ha adquirido una importancia destacada dentro del panorama turístico de la ciudad. Adicionalmente, en los últimos años ha recibido importantes galardones, como reconocimiento a su trabajo en el ámbito tanto turístico como deportivo.

Respondiendo al ¿qué?, se ha seleccionado el Gran Premio de Europa de Fórmula 1, evento deportivo mundial de periodicidad anual hasta el año 2012. El principal motivo ha sido que esta competición está considerada como uno de los eventos deportivos más prestigiosos del mundo. En relación con los objetivos de la presente investigación, la selección de este evento es idónea tanto por lo que respecta a su notoriedad y afluencia de visitantes, como por lo que respecta al patrocinio deportivo.

Por otro lado, el ¿por qué? de la elección de la marca Telefónica para aplicar el análisis del patrocinio deportivo, es, principalmente, que se trata del patrocinador oficial del evento.

Finalmente, para justificar la elección tomada de ¿cuándo?, se ha optado por realizar el trabajo de campo durante el evento del año 2010 por la importancia detectada a priori en las primeras carreras disputadas del mundial de Fórmula 1 de ese año, y por las primeras noticias publicadas sobre la posible cancelación del contrato.

Para el diseño de la investigación empírica se plantea una investigación cualitativa y cuantitativa de manera complementaria, sin ser mutuamente excluyentes.

La investigación cualitativa pretende corroborar la inclusión de determinados elementos tanto en el desarrollo teórico, como en el modelo propuesto. En este sentido, se recurre a la dinámica y al pretest.

Adicionalmente se lleva a cabo una investigación de naturaleza cuantitativa a fin de poder contrastar la validez de las hipótesis y modelo propuestos en el evento objeto de estudio seleccionado a priori. Para ello se ha utilizado como método de recogida de información el cuestionario personal.

Cabe destacar de la ficha técnica del estudio (Tabla 2), que se han encuestado a 364 visitantes deportivos de los cuales 163 son excursionistas (que no pernoctan) y 201 turistas. De los turistas encuestados 96 son internacionales, a los que se les realizó el cuestionario en inglés.

TABLA 2.  
**Ficha técnica**

<b>Periodo del trabajo de campo:</b> del 25 al 27 de junio de 2010		
<b>Recogida de información:</b> mediante encuesta personal en los accesos al circuito		
<b>Población a analizar:</b> Asistentes al 3er GP de Europa Fórmula 1 2010		
<b>Error muestral</b> (si hubiera sido muestreo probabilístico): $\pm 5,2\%$ , aplicando el tipo de muestreo por cuotas, y bajo el supuesto de la situación más desfavorable ( $p=q=0,5$ )		
<b>Nivel de confianza:</b> 95%.		
<b>Muestra:</b> 364 asistentes:	163 excursionistas	
	201 turistas:	105 nacionales 96 internacionales
<b>Idioma del cuestionario:</b> inglés y castellano		

El perfil tipo de la muestra se trata de un hombre joven con estudios universitarios, y trabajador en activo de clase social media, que se declara fan del evento, o de una escudería o de un piloto. Respecto a la procedencia de los visitantes nacionales, la mayoría son de Valencia, Madrid, Alicante y las Islas Baleares. Respecto a los turistas extranjeros, puede destacarse que el Reino Unido es el principal país emisor, seguido de otros países, como Alemania e Italia.

## 5. Resultados

Para el contraste del modelo teórico propuesto y sus hipótesis derivadas, se han aplicado técnicas de Análisis de Ecuaciones Estructurales (SEM), mediante los programas EQS 6.1 y SmartPLS 2.0.

Llegados a este punto, para recoger los resultados de la investigación nos centramos en detallar exclusivamente el análisis del modelo estructural para contrastar las relaciones establecidas en las hipótesis. Sin embargo, no es posible llevar a cabo dicho análisis sin realizar previamente un proceso basado en las tres partes que a continuación se resumen.

En la primera parte, se hizo un análisis descriptivo para comparar visitantes nacionales e internacionales utilizando la *t* de *student*, contraste paramétrico de las medias para dos muestras independientes, que refleja, para un determinado nivel de confianza, si las diferencias son estadísticamente significativas o no (Bello, Vázquez y Trespalacios, 1996; Hair, et al., 2009). Tras ello, concluiríamos dos puntos: (i) que ambos grupos difieren significativamente en algunas variables, como por ejemplo motivación, exposición e identificación; y (ii) que por parte del visitante deportivo, tras la celebración del evento, se percibe de manera mucho más favorable el evento que la marca patrocinadora, con independencia de cuál sea su nacionalidad de origen.

En la segunda parte, se pasaron de segundo a primer orden las escalas multidimensionales, el valor del evento, el valor de la marca, mediante el siguiente proceso: (i) se procedió a analizar las características psicométricas de las cuatro escalas, y (ii) se calcularon las puntuaciones factoriales necesarias para transformar el modelo de segundo orden a primer orden.

En la tercera parte, Se validó el modelo. Para ello atendemos a la fiabilidad de los constructos; la validez discriminante; el tamaño y significación de los coeficientes *path*; y la habilidad predictiva del modelo (Hulland, 1999). Finalmente, se analiza el modelo estructural para contrastar las relaciones establecidas en las hipótesis.

En la Tabla 3, se observan los resultados del análisis estructural a través de PLS, mostrando los coeficientes *path*, que indican las relaciones entre los constructos, así como la significación de las

relaciones. Para el análisis de la estabilidad y significación de los parámetros estimados, se ha utilizado la técnica de *bootstrapping*, que permite generar los estadísticos *t de Student* y los errores estándar (Chin, 1998; Aldás, 2012).

El análisis de la significación permite indicar la existencia de relaciones estables en todas las relaciones estructurales planteadas, puesto que el valor del estadístico *t de Student* es significativo en la mayoría de los casos.

TABLA 3.  
Contraste de hipótesis

Hipótesis	Relación	$\beta$ estandarizado	Valor t
H1	valor evento $\rightarrow$ valor marca	-0,02	0,97
H2	experiencia evento $\rightarrow$ experiencia marca	0,10*	1,96
H3.1	experiencia evento $\rightarrow$ valor evento	0,15**	2,9
H3.2	experiencia marca $\rightarrow$ valor marca	0,89**	55,93
H4.1	motivación $\rightarrow$ identificación	0,43**	9,97
H4.2	motivación $\rightarrow$ valor evento	0,62**	11,25
H4.3	motivación $\rightarrow$ satisfacción evento	0,22**	4,28
H4.4	motivación $\rightarrow$ comportamiento futuro evento	0,23**	5,27
H5.1	implicación evento $\rightarrow$ exposición evento	0,16**	3,56
H5.2	implicación evento $\rightarrow$ identificación	0,21**	5,14
H5.3	implicación evento $\rightarrow$ conocimiento marca	-0,09	1,76
H6.1	exposición evento $\rightarrow$ valor evento	0,07	1,36
H6.2	exposición evento $\rightarrow$ experiencia evento	-0,04	1,04
H7.1	identificación $\rightarrow$ experiencia evento	-0,09	1,69
H7.2	identificación $\rightarrow$ experiencia marca	0,18**	3,44
H7.3	identificación $\rightarrow$ conocimiento marca	0,10*	1,97
H7.4	identificación $\rightarrow$ satisfacción marca	0,06	1,47
H8	familiaridad marca $\rightarrow$ valor marca	0,04	1,58
H9.1	valor evento $\rightarrow$ satisfacción evento	0,53**	8,47
H9.2	valor marca $\rightarrow$ satisfacción marca	0,16	1,72
H10.1	experiencia evento $\rightarrow$ satisfacción evento	0,24**	4,44
H10.2	experiencia marca $\rightarrow$ satisfacción marca	0,27*	2,27
H11.1	satisfacción evento $\rightarrow$ comp. futuro evento	0,66**	15,26
H11.2	satisfacción marca $\rightarrow$ efecto del patrocinio	0,25**	5,22
R <sup>2</sup> (F4) = 0,01; R <sup>2</sup> (F5) = 0,01; R <sup>2</sup> (F6) = 0,02; R <sup>2</sup> (F7) = 0,28; R <sup>2</sup> (F8) = 0,44; R <sup>2</sup> (F9) = 0,81; R <sup>2</sup> (F10) = 0,04; R <sup>2</sup> (F11) = 0,55; R <sup>2</sup> (F12) = 0,20; R <sup>2</sup> (F13) = 0,66; R <sup>2</sup> (F14) = 0,06;			
Q <sup>2</sup> (F4) = 0,01; Q <sup>2</sup> (F5) = 0,00; Q <sup>2</sup> (F6) = 0,02; Q <sup>2</sup> (F7) = 0,21; Q <sup>2</sup> (F8) = 0,33; Q <sup>2</sup> (F9) = 0,61; Q <sup>2</sup> (F10) = 0,03; Q <sup>2</sup> (F11) = 0,47; Q <sup>2</sup> (F12) = 0,17; Q <sup>2</sup> (F13) = 0,56; Q <sup>2</sup> (F14) = 0,05;			

\*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05

A partir de los coeficientes obtenidos y la significación de cada uno de ellos es posible establecer el contraste de las hipótesis. Así, el último paso es analizar la significatividad de la estimación del modelo *inner* que permitirá aceptar o rechazar las hipótesis del modelo (Aldás, 2012).

Como se ha comentado en líneas previas, la presente investigación plantea un eje central para el modelo global propuesto de patrocinio deportivo, en el marco del comportamiento del turista de eventos deportivos. La principal teoría de patrocinio deportivo en la que se apoya el eje central del modelo son los Modelos de Transferencia (de Imagen y Afectiva).

Los resultados muestran un efecto negativo pero no significativo del valor percibido del evento sobre el valor percibido de la marca (H1). Esto conduce a pensar que podría ser el valor percibido de la marca por parte del turista deportivo el que afectara al valor que percibe dicho visitante del evento, pero no queda

validada la primera hipótesis, con lo que no es posible aceptarla (H1:  $\beta = -0,02$ , NS). Por todo ello, para el valor percibido, no se confirma la transferencia de asociaciones relacionadas con una marca desde el evento patrocinado al patrocinador (Gwinner, 1997).

Siguiendo con el contraste de las siguientes hipótesis relativas al eje central del modelo, se observa que éstas sí se confirman debidamente. Así, respecto a la H2, se acepta que la experiencia con un evento afectará a la experiencia que se tenga con una marca, puesto que los datos muestran un efecto positivo y significativo (H2:  $\beta = 0,10$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). En consonancia con lo postulado por la Teoría de Transferencia de Imagen, con la experiencia se consigue evocar sentimientos y actitudes positivas hacia la marca patrocinadora, vinculada a un evento que el individuo valora de forma elevada (Grohs y Reisinger, 2005).

Del mismo modo, se confirma que la experiencia tendrá un efecto sobre el valor, tanto para el evento (H3.1) como para la marca (H3.2). En concreto, queda validado tanto que la experiencia hacia el evento tendrá un efecto sobre el valor del evento (H3.1:  $\beta = 0,15$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ); como que la experiencia hacia la marca tendrá un efecto sobre el valor de la marca (H3.2:  $\beta = 0,89$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). De manera que la influencia en ambos casos es positiva y significativa. Por tanto es importante tener en cuenta la experiencia que percibe el turista deportivo asistente al evento, respecto al evento y a la marca, para que asocie un mayor valor percibido en relación con ambos.

Por lo que respecta a las variables antecedentes del modelo, con el análisis realizado se demuestra que las motivaciones del turista deportivo influyen positivamente en diferentes conceptos (H4). En concreto, las motivaciones del turista deportivo influyen positivamente y de manera significativa en: (i) la identificación con el equipo (escudería) o piloto (H4.1:  $\beta = 0,43$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ); (ii) el valor del evento (H4.2  $\beta = 0,62$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ); (iii) la satisfacción del evento (H4.3  $\beta = 0,22$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ); y (iv) el comportamiento futuro del evento (H4.4  $\beta = 0,23$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). Por todo ello es posible afirmar que las motivaciones del turista deportivo son un antecedente de nuestro modelo propuesto de patrocinio deportivo. De manera que a más motivaciones del turista deportivo, esté muestra: más identificación con el equipo o piloto, más valor percibido del evento, más satisfacción con el evento y más lealtad con el evento. Este resultado coincide con la Teoría de la Atribución, ya que plantea una relación directa entre las motivaciones percibidas por el cliente y sus actitudes y comportamiento (Walliser, 2003; Rifon, Choi, Trimble y Li, 2004).

Siguiendo con los antecedentes y tomando como premisa la Teoría de la Identidad Social, la implicación con el evento se confirma que está positivamente y significativamente asociada con una mayor exposición al evento (H5.1  $\beta = 0,16$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ), y con la identificación de turista deportivo con el equipo o piloto (H5.2  $\beta = 0,21$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). Pero no sucede lo mismo con la relación entre la implicación con el evento y el conocimiento de la marca patrocinadora (H5.3); hipótesis no confirmada. Así, aunque se muestra una relación negativa entre la implicación con el evento y el conocimiento de la marca, esta no es significativa. Por tanto, no es posible afirmar que una mayor implicación con el evento por parte del espectador, vaya a suponer un mayor conocimiento de la marca patrocinadora.

Por lo que respecta a la H6, no es posible aceptar que la exposición al evento patrocinado se asocia positivamente con los diferentes conceptos analizados en el presente estudio. En concreto, no se confirma que la exposición al evento patrocinado se asocie positivamente con el valor del evento (H6.1), ni con la experiencia del espectador con el evento (H6.2). Por ello, a diferencia de los que propone la Teoría de la Mera Exposición, en este caso no aumenta el valor percibido con el evento, ni la experiencia con el evento conforme se incrementa exposición (Tom, Nelson, Srzentic y King, 2007).

En lo referente a la H7, y en base a la Teoría de la Identidad Social, es posible afirmar que la identificación con el equipo o piloto se asocia positivamente con algunos de los conceptos propuestos en la presente investigación. En concreto, se aceptan las hipótesis que asocian positivamente la identificación con el equipo o piloto con la experiencia hacia la marca (H7.2  $\beta = 0,18$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ) y con el conocimiento de la marca patrocinadora (H7.3  $\beta = 0,10$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). Así, se puede decir aquellos visitantes que muestran una mayor identificación con el equipo o piloto del que son seguidores, percibirán una experiencia positiva hacia la marca y mostrarán un mayor conocimiento de la marca patrocinadora que los visitantes con una

baja identificación con el equipo o piloto. Sin embargo, no es posible aceptar que la identificación con el equipo o piloto se asocie positivamente con la experiencia hacia el evento (H7.1), ni con la satisfacción que se tenga con la marca patrocinadora (H7.4). Así, un turista deportivo muy identificado con el equipo o piloto, puede no tener una experiencia positiva con el evento y puede no estar satisfecho con la marca patrocinadora de dicho evento.

Finalmente, dentro de los antecedentes propuestos al modelo, no se puede confirmar la H8 referente a que la familiaridad con la marca se asocia positivamente con el valor percibido de marca (H8  $\beta = 0,04$ ; NS). Por lo que, a pesar de que el turista presente una alta familiaridad con la marca patrocinadora, no tiene porque percibir un alto valor de la misma, a diferencia de lo que cabría esperar atendiendo a las premisas recogidas en la Teoría de la Señal y a la Teoría del Equilibrio.

Pasando al contraste de los efectos del patrocinio deportivo planteados en el modelo propuesto de la presente investigación, se acepta que cuanto mayor sea el valor percibido por el individuo mayor será su satisfacción (H9). Este resultado coincide con los principios postulados por los modelos del comportamiento del turista, pero sólo para el caso del evento (H9.1  $\beta = 0,53$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ), ya que no se ha podido confirmar la hipótesis con su contraste para la marca (H9.2), de manera que no se acepta que cuanto mayor sea el valor percibido por el individuo con la marca mayor será su satisfacción con dicha marca.

Siguiendo con el contraste de las H10 y H11, referentes también a los efectos del modelo, ambas quedan sólidamente confirmadas, indicando la existencia de una estrecha relación entre los constructos estudiados. Así, se puede comprobar como la experiencia influye en la satisfacción del individuo (H10), acorde con las premisas recogidas con los modelos de comportamiento del turista. De hecho, la experiencia con el evento influye en la satisfacción del individuo con el evento (H10.1  $\beta = 0,24$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ) del mismo modo que la experiencia con la marca influye en la satisfacción del individuo con la marca (H10.2  $\beta = 0,27$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). Asimismo, se confirma que la satisfacción del individuo influye sobre su comportamiento futuro hacia el evento y sobre el efecto del patrocinio en la marca (H11). De manera que, cuanto mayor sea la satisfacción del individuo con el evento mayor será su comportamiento futuro hacia el evento (H11.1  $\beta = 0,66$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ), es decir su intención de recomendar el evento a conocidos y su intención de volver al evento en futuras ediciones. Mientras que cuanto mayor sea la satisfacción del individuo con la marca patrocinadora mayor será el efecto del patrocinio en la marca patrocinadora (H11.2  $\beta = 0,25$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). Este resultado coincide con los principios postulados por la Teoría de la Atribución, al mostrar una relación directa entre la satisfacción del individuo y sus actitudes y comportamientos.

La Tabla 3 también muestra los valores de R2 para cada una de las variables endógenas. Para determinar la capacidad predictiva del modelo estructural se considera el criterio establecido por Falk y Miller (1992), donde los valores de R2 para cada constructo dependiente deben ser iguales o superiores a 0,1, puesto que valores por debajo de dicho nivel, a pesar de ser estadísticamente significativos, proporcionan muy poca información. En la presente investigación los valores de R2 en la mayoría de los factores superan el valor mínimo recomendado, evidenciando la adecuada habilidad predictiva del modelo. La mayor cantidad de varianza explicada por el constructo sobre sus variables independientes se corresponde con el valor de la marca (F9), que explica el 0,81; el comportamiento futuro con el evento (F13) explica el 0,66 del total de la varianza; y la satisfacción del evento (F11) y el valor del evento (F8), explican el 0,55 y 0,44 respectivamente.

Asimismo, para cada variable endógena, se realiza el test de Stone-Geisser (Q2) de relevancia predictiva, para valorar el ajuste del modelo en el análisis PLS (Chin, 1998b). El estadístico Q2 representa una medida de lo bien que los valores observados son reconstruidos por los parámetros estimados. De esta forma, valores positivos indican que el modelo tiene relevancia predictiva, mientras que los valores negativos sugieren que el modelo carece de predicción (Wold, 1985; Fornell y Cha, 1994; Aldás, 2012). La Tabla 3 incluye los valores de Q2 para cada constructo. Como puede observarse, en todos los casos los valores son positivos, mostrando así que el modelo posee capacidad predictiva en la estimación de los valores.

## 6. Conclusiones

El propósito de este trabajo era plantear un modelo global de patrocinio deportivo que probara la transferencia evento-marca patrocinadora en términos de valor percibido y experiencia, incluyendo tanto antecedentes como efectos.

En primer lugar, atendiendo al eje del modelo, no se transfiere el valor percibido desde el patrocinado al patrocinador. Lo que muestra que el asistente a un gran evento deportivo puede tener una actitud favorable hacia el evento y desfavorable hacia el patrocinador. Este hecho puede deberse a que el visitante deportivo no ha transferido las percepciones de valor que posee de la actividad patrocinada hacia las percepciones de valor de la marca o empresa patrocinadora, a diferencia de lo que cabría esperar atendiendo a lo postulado por la Teoría del Equilibrio. De manera que esta acción de patrocinio concreta no ha mejorado el valor percibido de la marca por parte del espectador.

Por otro lado, la experiencia que se tenga hacia el evento sí afectará a la experiencia que se tenga hacia la marca. Por lo que es posible confirmar la transferencia de experiencia del evento a la marca patrocinadora. Del mismo modo, se confirma que la experiencia tendrá un efecto sobre el valor, para el evento y para la marca. Por tanto es importante tener en cuenta la experiencia que viva el turista deportivo asistente al evento (respecto al evento y a la marca) para que asocie un mayor valor percibido en relación con ambos conceptos.

En segundo lugar, por lo que respecta a las variables antecedentes del modelo, las motivaciones del turista deportivo influyen positivamente en las actitudes del visitante y su comportamiento, de acuerdo con lo postulado por la Teoría de la Atribución, es decir, existe una relación directa entre las motivaciones del visitante deportivo y sus actitudes y comportamientos. En concreto, a más motivación más presencia en el individuo de: (i) la identificación con el equipo (escudería) o piloto; (ii) el valor del evento; (iii) la satisfacción del evento; y (iv) el comportamiento futuro del evento. Por todo ello ha sido posible afirmar que las motivaciones del turista deportivo son un antecedente de nuestro modelo propuesto de patrocinio deportivo.

Siguiendo con los antecedentes, la implicación con el evento está asociada con una mayor exposición al evento y con la identificación del turista deportivo con el equipo o piloto. Pero no sucede lo mismo con la relación entre la implicación con el evento y el conocimiento de la marca patrocinadora. Este resultado podría deberse a que el seguidor deportivo en este tipo de gran evento, en el que se dan múltiples tipos de patrocinio (patrocinio de los pilotos, patrocinio de las escuderías, patrocinio de una curva del circuito, etcétera), recibe una elevada cantidad de estímulos. De ahí que, sea muy probable que por su alta implicación con el evento, y por ende su asociación con una determinada escudería y/o piloto, le lleve a tener un mayor conocimiento de alguna de las marcas patrocinadoras de la escudería y/o piloto de los cuales es seguidor, posiblemente antes que de la marca oficial patrocinadora del evento.

Por lo que respecta a la exposición al evento patrocinado, ésta no se asocia positivamente con los diferentes conceptos analizados en el presente estudio; a diferencia de lo que cabría esperar según la Teoría de la Mera Exposición. Esta situación podría deberse a que hay otros antecedentes más fuertes que anulan el efecto de la exposición, como por ejemplo lo sería la motivación. Otra razón posible es la influencia de la congruencia percibida entre marca y acontecimiento. En un contexto de alta congruencia, la mera exposición al acontecimiento mejora directamente el recuerdo, mientras que en contextos de baja congruencia, es necesaria la generación de una actitud favorable ante dicho acontecimiento. Este resultado derivado de que la ruta de procesamiento es más larga en contextos de baja implicación, refuerza la efectividad de las estrategias de *ambush* marketing y abona las iniciativas legislativas de algunos países que abogan por una prohibición expresa de esta táctica (Aldás, Küster, Rodríguez y Vila, 2009).

Asimismo, se puede concluir que los visitantes que muestran una mayor identificación con el equipo o piloto del que son seguidores percibirán una experiencia positiva hacia la marca y mostrarán un mayor conocimiento de la marca patrocinadora que los visitantes con una baja identificación con el equipo o

piloto. Sin embargo, un turista deportivo muy identificado con el equipo o piloto, puede no tener una experiencia positiva con el evento y puede no estar satisfecho con la marca patrocinadora de dicho evento. Este resultado puede explicarse atendiendo a las tres características de las experiencias en turismo, apuntadas por Olivero y León (2011). (i) Las experiencias surgen de los orígenes sociales y culturales de las personas. Dado que los diferentes orígenes dan lugar a interpretaciones diversas para un solo producto turístico, ¿cómo puede un único evento interesar y emocionar a todos los asistentes? (ii) Las experiencias tienen múltiples facetas. Surgen de las actividades y el entorno físico, así como del significado social integrado en las actividades. Los espectadores tienen experiencias diferentes, incluso si están haciendo lo mismo en el mismo lugar. (iii) Las experiencias son existenciales, es decir, personales y únicas.

Finalmente, dentro de los antecedentes propuestos al modelo, podemos concluir que a pesar de que el turista presente una alta familiaridad con la marca patrocinadora, no tiene porque percibir un alto valor de la misma. Este resultado puede deberse a que el turista tenga una mala imagen de la marca patrocinadora, quizás motivada por una mala experiencia anterior vivida con dicha marca (por ejemplo cuando ésta disfrutaba de una situación de monopolio en el mercado de la telefonía o por su gestión realizada de la atención al cliente).

En tercer lugar, en lo relativo a los efectos del patrocinio deportivo planteados en el modelo propuesto de la presente investigación, se acepta que cuanto mayor sea el valor percibido por el individuo mayor será su satisfacción para el caso del evento. De la misma manera, sin embargo, no se puede concluir que cuanto mayor sea el valor percibido por el individuo con la marca mayor será su satisfacción con dicha marca. Esto podría deberse, de nuevo, a las bajas percepciones asociadas con la marca patrocinadora.

Por su parte, la experiencia con el evento influye en la satisfacción del individuo con el evento del mismo modo que la experiencia con la marca influye en la satisfacción del individuo con la marca. Asimismo, se concluye que la satisfacción del individuo influye sobre su comportamiento futuro hacia el evento y sobre el efecto del patrocinio en la marca. De manera que, cuanto mayor sea la satisfacción del individuo con el evento mayor será su comportamiento futuro hacia el evento, es decir su intención de recomendar el evento y su intención de volver al evento en futuras ediciones. Mientras que cuanto mayor sea la satisfacción del individuo con la marca patrocinadora mayor será el efecto del patrocinio en la marca patrocinadora.

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PARA DISPONER DEL RESTO DE REFERENCIAS CONSULTAR A LOS AUTORES

# POSSIBLE SUCCESS FACTORS IN A CRM STRATEGY: A STUDY IN THE SPANISH BANKING SECTOR

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## ABSTRACT

*Organisations today including the much affected banking sector need to create, maintain and reinforce relationships with clients. CRM seems to have helped firms to better understand their relationships. However, past studies have looked at technology and customer orientations as key factors. This paper aims to investigate a proposed model by analysing the simultaneous effect of market orientation, knowledge management and other organisational factors in order to explain how to implement a successful CRM.*

## Keywords

*CRM, resources, banking sector*

## 1. Introduction

Increasing economic globalisation and the development of new information technologies are changing the rules of the market and require tailored strategies and business practices (Wang et al., 2004). Consumers demand more individualised treatment; in many cases they want to be involved in the process of product creation and are increasingly prone to exchanging views via the Internet and social networks (Bonnemaizon et al., 2007; Cambra et al., 2013). The effect of these new technologies, coupled with volatile consumer preferences, has meant that companies are obliged to collect information about consumer characteristics, tastes and previous purchases to predict future buying patterns and tailor their offers to each individual. Thus, companies can gain competitive advantages that not only allow them to maintain and strengthen relationships with their customers, but also increase their market share (Colgate and Danaher, 2000). Consequently, the marriage of the marketing philosophy with information technology has resulted in the concept of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) (Boulding et al., 2005; Jayachandran et al., 2005).

CRM first emerged in the 80s and since then has sparked a great of interest from both academics and business practitioners. As a case in point, the Journal of Marketing launched a special issue on CRM in 2005. From a business management perspective, CRM reflects the great interest in managing successful and profitable customer relationships (Ambler, 2005). Conceptually it is based on relationship marketing, whose primary purpose is the pursuit of profitability through customer satisfaction and loyalty whilst trying to maximise long-term customer profitability (Zikmund et al., 2003).

From a practical point of view, managing successful customer relationships begins with identifying and acquiring the right customers. Therefore, companies must strive to discover who are their best customers and gain their loyalty whilst simultaneously allocating fewer resources to manage relationships with unprofitable customers (Kracklauer et al., 2001; Tan et al., 2002). This requires analysing each client individually, which is possible by managing customer databases. However, many other factors, such as organisational leadership, human resources management or the allocation of other resources influence the success of CRM.

CRM has been researched from different perspectives: as a process (Grönroos, 2000; Reinartz et al., 2003), as a strategy (Kracklauer et al., 2001; Adenbajo, 2003), as a philosophy (Fairhurst, 2001; Piccoli et al., 2003) as a capacity (Peppers et al., 1999) and as a technological tool (Shoemaker, 2001; Gefen and Ridings, 2002). This latter perspective, as a technology, seems to carry more weight in the generic field of business management, which is why technology often becomes more important than the strategy itself. Therefore, companies often fail to make their CRM systems profitable. In addition, only a few studies have considered the influence of several resources simultaneously (eg, human factors, infrastructure, financial resources, knowledge) in the success of CRM.

For instance, Garrido and Padilla (2011) show that by having the proper leadership management, human resources, technology or interfunctional coordination positively influence the successful management of CRM. This is because these factors facilitate a correct knowledge management, which in turn allows the company to meet the demands of consumers. The authors also conclude that customer orientation is the right marketing approach to use when implementing a CRM philosophy. However, from the point of view of marketing, Market Orientation has proven to be superior to the Customer Orientation approach, because it also considers Competitor Orientation and Interfunctional Coordination (Slater and Narver, 1998).

To fill this gap identified in the literature our aim is to study the relationship between Market Orientation and Knowledge Management, from a marketing standpoint, as antecedents of a set of organisational factors that can determine the success of CRM. Thus, the two main contributions to the literature are, first, the adoption of a comprehensive approach to Market Orientation and, second, to analyse the influence of each factor in the success of CRM.

With the aforementioned in mind, the next section presents the concept of Customer Relationship Management and its different perspectives. Possible interactions with the Market Orientation and Internal Marketing are also proposed. The third section presents the model and the hypotheses which form the basis of the empirical study. The results are discussed in the fourth section. Finally, the article concludes with a set of managerial and research implications, as well as its limitations and suggestions for further research.

## **2. Theoretical background of CRM**

The specialised literature considers that the cornerstone of CRM is the Relationship Marketing paradigm (eg, Ryals and Knox, 2001; Reinares and Ponzoa, 2002; Gummesson, 2004; Zablah et al., 2004; Payne and Frow, 2005). This paradigm is based, among others, on the pioneering work of Berry (1983), that links it to the management of long-term relationships with customers. This approach to marketing is defined as a process to attract, retain and strengthen customer relationships (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Grönroos, 2000). The main objective is the pursuit of profitability through customer loyalty, leaving the transactional goal of attracting new customers as a secondary matter (Grönroos, 1994; Seiders et al., 2005). From the point of view of marketing, CRM has developed as a firm commitment to maintaining positive relationships with customers, building loyalty and increasing their Customer Lifetime Value (CLV), that is, the value of the life cycle of the customer (Brassington and Pettit, 2000; Ahn et al., 2003; Verhoef and Lemon, 2013). However, there is no single definition of CRM as there are different perspectives from which this term can be addressed.

### **2.1. CRM Perspectives**

As Zablah et al. (2004) indicate, the concept of CRM can be approached from several perspectives: as a philosophy, a process, a capacity, a technology tool and as a strategy. However the common underlying basis is the pursuit of a competitive advantage based on managing profitable customer relationships (see Table 1).

The philosophical perspective requires that customers are the focal point for the entire company and the primary goal is creating value for them. So, the best way to achieve customer retention and profitability is ensuring that all members of the organisation are constantly focused on customer satisfaction (Piccoli et al., 2003; Zablah et al., 2004).

A second perspective views CRM as a process. This perspective considers that the customer-company relationship develops over time, can be characterised by a life cycle and must evolve to endure (Parvatiyar and Sheth, 2000; Zablah et al., 2004). Issues such as information sharing, trust, the compliance of mutual expectations or cooperation determine this evolution, success and profitability (Dwyer et al., 1987; Grönroos, 2000; Gustafsson et al., 2005) .

Both perspectives, philosophical and process, can be related to Market Orientation, which focuses on satisfying the needs of customers in a more superior way than the competitors. In order to manage successful relationships it is necessary to collect information about the real needs and expectations of customers, supply and competitive capabilities, internal resources and skills. Additionally, it is necessary to understand that the environment changes and that buying behaviour patterns are not stable. Two approaches have dominated the conceptualisation of Market Orientation: the perspective of culture and behaviour or operational perspective. On the one hand, the Market Orientation is described as a form of organisational culture with three key components: Customer Orientation, Competitor Orientation and Interfunctional Coordination (Narver and Slater, 1990). We can intuitively relate this to the perspective of CRM as a philosophy. On the other hand, Kohli and Jaworski (1990) define Market Orientation as the generation of market intelligence at all levels of the organisation, the dissemination of this information among all departments and the development of an appropriate organisational response, indicating which key tasks need to be performed. It is possible to relate this approach with the CRM perspective as a process. However, authors such as Cadogan and Diamontopoulos (1995), Avlonitis and Gounaris (1997), Homburg and Pflesser (2000), Helfert et al., (2002) and Gao and Bradley (2007) consider them as complementary approaches rather than rivals, which is why we propose that both philosophical and process CRM perspectives are also complementary.

In turn, the two previous perspectives are related to the CRM perspective as a capability. According to this perspective, maintaining lasting relationships with customers is only possible if the company has a set of adequate resources and is flexible enough to constantly adapt and readapt their behaviour towards their customers (Peppers et al., 1999; Zablah et al., 2004). In other words, the management of a long-term relationship with clients is based on the ability to know and understand their changing needs that may require new adaptations (Zablah et al., 2004; Mithas et al., 2005). This perspective is in line with the Resource View that defines a company as a set of productive resources that help determine their competitive position, depending on the way in which it makes use of them. Obtaining competitive advantages involves developing strategies that exploit the unique features of a set of resources and capabilities (Grant, 1991). Therefore, the key of profitability lies not in doing the same as competitors but in exploiting the differences.

CRM as a technology tool is a perspective that contemplates CRM as an important resource because it not only facilitates the collection and storing of customer data, but also building knowledge from it and disseminating it through the organisation (Crosby and Johnson, 2001; Greenberg, 2001; Bose, 2002; Zablah et al., 2004). Thus, CRM tools enable the proper management of customer relationships which in turn means that these are lasting and profitable (Chen and Popovich, 2003; Zablah et al., 2004). Therefore, in a strict sense, we may consider this perspective as a particular case of the capability perspective.

Finally, the CRM approach as a strategy emphasises the idea of Customer Lifetime Value (CLV), that is, the value that customer represent over the lifetime of this relationship with the company. In this respect, if we consider all the perspectives it is possible to define strategies and actions that not only maintain positive relationships with customers and increase their loyalty, but also maximise the CLV through cross-selling or up-selling, amongst others (Venkatesan and Kumar, 2004).

Table 1 provides a summary of the general description of each of the CRM perspectives and highlights that the common theme is the importance of managing lasting and profitable relationships.

**TABLE 1**  
**CRM perspectives**

<i>PERSPECTIVES</i>	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>
<i>PHILOSOPHY</i>	CRM focuses on building and maintaining long-term relationships with customers. The entire organisation must have the customer as the main reference.
<i>PROCESS</i>	CRM focuses on the dynamic and evolving nature of customer relationships.
<i>MARKET ORIENTATION</i>	CRM, considering its philosophical and behavioural aspect, can additionally provide competitive advantage.
<i>CAPACITY</i>	The resources and capabilities of the organisation and their exploitation are essential to achieve competitive advantages.
<i>TECHNOLOGY TOOL</i>	CRM is an essential resource as it allows the collection and storing of data to build and disseminate knowledge throughout the organisation.
<i>STRATEGY</i>	It consider in an aggregate form of the other perspectives and additionally focuses on Customer Lifetime Value (CLV)

Source: Adaptation of Zablah et al. (2004).

## ***2.2. Contributions of Market Orientation and Internal Marketing***

As technology has developed and the market has become more competitive, companies have been forced to change their management approach. Currently, customers determine the commercial action, so companies need to adapt their offer to the specific customer requirements (McKenna, 1991). As

Levitt (1960) predicted, companies should focus on meeting the needs of customers instead of selling their products.

However, focusing only on the needs of customers may not be enough. Customers are an essential part of business success, but they form part of a larger picture. Companies interact with their environment, in which there are other companies competing to satisfy these same customers. Therefore, delivering superior value proves decisive. (Slater and Narver, 1998; Boulding et al., 2005).

For this reason it is necessary to differentiate between Customer Orientation and Market Orientation as the two concepts that are often used interchangeably and have generated misunderstandings. In the work of Slater and Narver (1998) and Perez and Cambra (2013) a clear distinction is made, noting that while Customer Orientation has a more reactive and adaptive nature (focusing on understanding the wishes of customers and developing products and services to satisfy them), Market Orientation has a more proactive and long term character (in addition to focusing on the expressed and latent needs and wishes of customers, it also focuses on the skills and strategies of the competitors through the process of acquiring and evaluating market information in a systematic and proactive way).

Therefore, companies should not only be oriented to customer or competition, but must also adopt an integrated management approach (Boulding et al., 2005). Customers, competitors and the organisation itself become the point of reference (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990). In addition, Market Orientation involves implementing the marketing concept throughout the organisation and not just the marketing department, acquiring a strategic dimension (Bello et al., 1999).

In this sense, there have been many authors who have analysed the role of Market Orientation in the firm (eg, Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Chang and Chen, 1998; Vorhies et al., 1999; Lings and Greenley, 2009). Indeed, these studies have shown positive effects, such as improvements in the short and long term sales, profit growth, increased market share, successful launch of new products, higher customer satisfaction or better performance assets compared with other organisations that are less market-oriented (eg, Deshpandé et al., 1993; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Slater and Narver, 1994; Kirca et al., 2005; Jimenez and Cegarra, 2007; Grinstein, 2008; Kumar et al., 2011).

Based on these arguments we consider that the success of a CRM strategy must be considered under a Market Orientation approach as it is much more complete than the Customer Orientation.

However, to ensure that the Market Orientation is successful, as a first step, the company has to develop a proper Internal Marketing Orientation. Lings and Greenley (2009) provided the first quantitative evidence for the significant relationship between Internal Marketing Orientation, motivation and success in the foreign market. That is, Market orientation, financial performance and customer satisfaction.

Berry et al. (1976) were the first to use the concept of Internal Marketing, defining it as the effort made by the company to understand the needs of their employees and all departments, and thus increase the level of job satisfaction and efficiency in management. It is postulated that employees are more likely to excel and produce a product that better meets customer expectations. Obviously, this increases the probability of customer satisfaction. According to these authors, an adequately developed Internal Marketing is important to meet the needs of the employees of a company before meeting those of customers. In a similar way, Berry (1981) and Grönroos (1981) consider employees as internal customers, contemplating their work as internal products that satisfy the needs and wants of these internal customers, which in turn provides sufficient performance to satisfy the external customers. Similar ideas can be found in the works of Ahmed and Rafiq (2003), Ballantyne (2003) and Brady (2004).

Thus, the importance of properly managing the workforce to improve the efficiency of the organisation in general and other specific aspects, such as CRM in particular, is understood.

### **3. Conceptual framework and hypotheses development**

Given the complementarity between the perspectives of CRM as a philosophy, process and capability, this study aims to analyse the specific factors that contribute to the success of CRM. The proposed model starts from a Market Orientation approach and relies on Knowledge Management as a

fundamental pillar of CRM. This model introduces a significant change by adopting the Market Orientation as reference, instead of Customer Orientation, which was the reference used in previous studies, such as that of Garrido and Padilla (2011). We propose that certain organisational factors, such as the leadership of senior management, the employees and the endowment of resources (economic, technological and know-how of CRM) may be key factors in determining the success of CRM, and that they also act as mediators of the other factors analysed (the Market Orientation and the Knowledge Management).

Figure 1 shows the reference model that forms the basis for developing the hypotheses. We take as a base the idea proposed by Boulding et al. (2005), who understand CRM as a strategic tool for managing the dual value creation, the intelligent use of data and technology, the customer knowledge acquisition and the dissemination thereof to the relevant parties, the development of appropriate relationships (long-term) to specific customers and/or customer groups, and integration of processes across various business areas that collaborate to generate customer value. However, we additionally consider that in such a competitive environment, in which the same needs can be met in many ways and by many companies, companies need to not only create value but create a higher value than the competitors. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt a holistic approach of Market Orientation.

### ***3.1. Market Orientation, Knowledge Management and CRM Success***

The Resource Based View considers the firm as a set of resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991; Grant, 1991). Competitive advantages of firms are achieved by controlling a range of resources and capabilities that are valuable, rare, difficult to imitate and non-substitutable. These resources may be tangible or intangible, including management capabilities of a company, its processes and organisational routines, and the information and knowledge it controls. In this sense, Market Orientation can become a valuable intangible resource that promotes a management based on meeting the needs of customers with greater excellence than the competition, that is, as a source of competitive advantage.

Market Orientation can be defined from two perspectives: cultural (Narver and Slater, 1990) and behavioural (Jaworski and Kohli, 1993). The cultural approach includes customer orientation, competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination. This approach has possibly received greater dissemination as it considers factors that are external to the company (Sittimalakorn and Hart, 2004; Verhees and Meulenbergh, 2004) and for its psychometric characteristics. Through numerous studies, the aforementioned factors have proven to be superior than the behavioural approach (Siguaw et al., 1994). However, in the previous sections we defended the complementarity between the two major approaches. Kohli and Jaworski (1990) highlight the importance of generating market intelligence on the current and future needs of the customers, disseminate the information internally, and the ability to respond to those needs. This approach is similar to the concept of knowledge management, proposed by authors such as Darroch (2003), who highlight the importance of acquiring knowledge, its dissemination and use, or the ability to respond to the acquired knowledge. Thus, from a commercial standpoint, we could use both terms interchangeably and defend the complementarity of the two main Market Orientations.

Reviewing the literature we found consensus on the relationship between Market Orientation and value creation (eg, Narver and Slater, 1990; Lambin, 1995; Kaur and Gupta, 2010). Also, investigations about the relationship between Knowledge Management and value creation confirmed positive results (eg, Gebert et al., 2003; Kaplan and Norton, 2004; Rezegui, 2007; Martelo et al., 2011).

Thus, the study of Martelo et al. (2013) considers Market Orientation and Knowledge Management as two organisational capabilities which, when combined properly, contribute to generate a higher level of value. While Market Orientation is considered a strategic capability that systematically gathers, interprets and uses information about the market, the customers, the competition, the environment and the same organisation; Knowledge Management is an operational capability or tool which may assist in reaching satisfactory results by managing knowledge and articulating appropriate processes.

It is necessary to highlight that the cultural or attitudinal approach of Market Orientation proposed by Narver and Slater (1990) was chosen for the purpose of this study. We believe, that from a practical standpoint, it is essential to have a vision of the final outcome before you determine the procedures to

successfully implement CRM. So, based on all the above arguments we can establish the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1.** *Market Orientation positively influences Knowledge Management.*

**Hypothesis 2.** *Knowledge Management positively influences CRM success.*

Similarly, there are numerous studies that directly relate Market Orientation with the outcomes. Authors such as Narver and Slater (1990), Jaworski and Kohli (1993) and Chang and Chen (1998) were pioneers in demonstrating that the Market Orientation is relevant in any market environment. This idea is also highlighted in the work of Lash (1990) and Gray et al. (1998), who conclude that Market Orientation has a positive effect on the management of customer relationships. Therefore, if we consider CRM as a proper form of managing these customer relationships, we can establish that:

**Hypothesis 3.** *Market Orientation positively influences CRM success.*

### **3.2. Organisational factors, Market Orientation, Knowledge Management and CRM success**

The purpose of CRM is to increase the efficient and effective acquisition and retention of profitable customers. This is achieved by building and maintaining appropriate relationships with selective customers. It is therefore necessary to have adequate sufficient allocation of resources such as employees, capital, technological tools and know-how. For authors such as Dans (2001) the development of CRM has been made possible because of the technological evolution, which has enabled businesses to organise themselves around customer needs. Thus, information technologies play a fundamental role (Payne, 2006). However, it is not enough to just obtain market information but that information must become knowledge through human activity (Salojärvi et al., 2010). Though systems and technological processes are important for CRM activities without a proper human interaction, or sufficient investment in this area, CRM may be inefficiently and unsuccessfully managed (Boulding et al., 2005).

In this regard, Slater and Narver (1995) suggest that the value of Market Orientation is twofold: first, it forces companies to focus on gathering information about customer needs and competitors capabilities and; second, it uses that information to continuously create superior value. However, in order to spread this knowledge it is necessary to make the right changes in the organisational structure (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Becker et al., 2009). Often, these changes include the training, motivation and the appropriate rewards for employees who are involved in activities related with CRM (Reinartz et al., 2004; Becker et al., 2009). Specifically, Payne and Frow (2005) conclude that a successful CRM implementation requires processes, people, operations and marketing capabilities that are interfunctionally integrated and enabled through the use of information technology and its applications.

To Mendoza et al. (2007), when this transition takes place it is necessary to develop certain skills, acquire the right resources and tools, and the proper knowledge to meet customer needs with the right products and services, exceeding the performance of possible competitors. Senior management plays a very important role because, on the one hand, they should help employees assimilate and understand the changes and, on the other they should ensure that employees have the skills needed to overcome new challenges. Thus, training becomes one of the most important aspects for both the organisation and employees themselves (Tetenbaum, 1998).

Furthermore, as Parsons et al. (1996) or Ryals and Knox (2001) indicate, the successful implementation of CRM requires a more effective management of functional interdependencies and a review of the ways in which the employee's performance is measured and how it is rewarded. Thus, to achieve a suitable change in expectations and behaviour towards the CRM the commitment and support of top management is vital (Fletcher and Wright, 1996).

Other authors, such as Reinartz et al. (2004), Sin et al. (2005), Greve and Albers (2006) or Keramati et al. (2010), among others, conclude that infrastructure resources (human and organisational resources) and technology allow the creation of value through CRM, as these infrastructures are the most influential. Finally, as noted by Rigby et al. (2002), the success of CRM also depends on the financial resources allocated, although the strategy is more relevant. The strategy refers to the proper allocation of resources to achieve superior performance. Therefore, we consider that one of the main ways to



achieve success in CRM is to align the organisational structure with business processes prior to implementing the specific technology. Second, it uses that information to continuously create superior value. In this regard, the role of senior management is crucial and will require a proper allocation of resources. Thus, based on the previous ideas and arguments we suggest the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 4.** *Market Orientation influences the profile of organisational factors a) employees, b) leadership, c) economic resources, d) technological resources, e) specific know-how about CRM.*

**Hypothesis 5.** *Knowledge management influences the profile of organisational factors a) employees, b) leadership, c) economic resources, d) technological resources, e) specific know-how about CRM.*

**Hypothesis 6.** *Organisational factors employees, b) leadership, c) economic resources, d) technological resources, e) specific know-how about CRM positively influence CRM success.*

Thus, from the point of view of the company, the success of CRM is measured in terms of customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and maximising the value of this relationship over time (interest in other goods offered by the company which are not yet consumed by them, their share-of-wallet, the cross-selling and up-selling, or the effect of word of mouth with other customers). This should improve the competitive position of the company, its profitability and its market value. Based on the aforementioned, we understand why many authors (eg, Reinartz et al., 2005; Krasnikov et al., 2009) argue that firms with stronger relationships with the right customers enjoy greater profitability for longer periods of time. Companies try to identify the most valuable customers, build lasting relationships with them and maximise the profitability of their customer base. Managing CRM properly allows companies to maintain better communication with customers and enables them to better meet their needs through actions such as customising the products and services (Venkatesan and Kumar, 2004). Meanwhile, as customers see their needs met they tend to have a longer-lasting relationship with the company, buy more frequently and are less likely to maintain relations with the competition (Johnson and Selnes, 2004; Krasnikov et al., 2009). This is the dual creation of value of CRM, for both company and customers.

#### 4. Research Methodology

To test the proposed hypotheses a pilot study was carried out in the Spanish banking sector. In general, the financial sector can be considered as one of the main economic drivers, as it enables the financing of economic growth of a country and plays a decisive role in the process of channeling savings into investment. In the Spanish economy, the banking sector is very important due to its structure -in 2007 Spain had 151 banks, 46 savings banks and 85 credit unions-. However, the 2008 crisis has led to a remodeling of the sector resulting in numerous mergers and acquisitions. This has significantly reduced the total number of banks, particularly savings banks (now 72 and 20 respectively) (Bank of Spain, 2013).

This sector has been chosen for the empirical study because CRM is widely used. The complicated situation of the financial sector in recent years - characterised by increased competition, the development of technological innovations or customers with more financial knowledge (Momparler, 2008) - has forced financial institutions to use IT tools to collect and process customer information to achieve greater involvement and profitability of each of them (Lara et al., 2013). On the other hand, emotional aspects such as trust influence the customer loyalty. According to a study of the Emo Insights Company, 62% of customers choose to break up with their bank because of a poor emotional relationship with the entity (Gutiérrez, 2012). Thus, the management of company-client relationships is a valuable source of competitive advantage. We interviewed the directors of bank branches because, as middle managers, they are responsible for contacting customers and manage commercial relationships. Also, they know the organisational structure of the entity and they are in contact with the highest levels of the company. So, we identified them as the key informants for this study. Table 2 shows the technical data of the study.

**TABLE 2**  
**Technical data of fieldwork**

<b>Universe</b>	Directors of bank branches
<b>Sample size</b>	81 items
<b>Geographical scope</b>	National (Spain)
<b>Sampling</b>	Intentional non-probability
<b>Type of questionnaire</b>	Closed response
<b>Fieldwork</b>	April-July 2013
<b>Analysis of information</b>	PLS

To measure each of the constructs we used a questionnaire, which was completed by directors of banks, whose content and structure was adapted from previously validated and contrasted scales. Before finalising the questionnaire a focus group was held with three directors, followed by a pretest given to ten individuals. This process allowed us to adjust the length of the questionnaire and clarify possible interpretations of terms. The scales finally used and its bibliographic reference sources are shown in Appendix 1. To analyse the proposed model a structural equation modeling technique was employed using Partial Least Squares (PLS) (SmartPLS v. 2.0). This methodology has recently been advocated and used in the marketing literature (Chung, 2009; Jayawardhena et al., 2009; Reinartz et al., 2009; Cambra et al., 2011).

Regarding the measurement model, we note that the Market Orientation construct is considered a second-order construct composed of three factors: Customer Orientation, Competition Orientation and Interfunctional Coordination, taking as a reference the proposal of Narver and Slater (1990). Knowledge Management is also considered a second-order construct formed by two factors: the acquisition and application of knowledge and the dissemination of knowledge, taking as base the scale of Sin et al. (2005). Each of the organisational variables and CRM success are first-order constructs. Sources used for reference are also included in Appendix 1.

With the objective of evaluating the quality of the data obtained, an individual reliability analysis of each item relative to its construct was carried out. The results show that all the values exceed the threshold of 0.707 required by Carmines and Zeller (1979). The same applies when assessing the reliability of the variables using Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability. Appendix 1 shows that all constructs are reliable as they exceed the reference value of 0,8 for each index (Nunnally, 1978).

In order to analyse the convergent validity we used the average variance extracted (AVE), which according to Fornell and Larcker (1981), must exceed 0.5. As such, over 50% of the variance of the construct is due to recommended indicators. Appendix 1 shows these results and we may observe that in all cases the reference value is exceeded.

The presence of discriminant validity was confirmed using AVE (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), comparing the square root of this measurement with the correlations among constructs.

## 5. Findings

In relation to the structural model, to assess the statistical significance of the loadings and of the path coefficients, a *Bootstrap* analysis was performed. We created 500 subsamples, employing t-Student distribution with 499 degrees of freedom (N-1, with N: number of subsamples), obtaining the values:  $t_{(0.05; 499)} = 1.964726835$ ;  $t_{(0.01; 499)} = 2.585711627$ ;  $t_{(0.001; 499)} = 3.310124157$ . From these values, we determined the acceptance or rejection of our hypotheses (Table 3, Figure 1).

A measure of the predictive power of a model is the  $R^2$  value for the endogenous constructs. The results indicate that our model has an adequate predictive power (see figure 2), because it explains 39% of the variance in active loyalty, 33.5% in passive loyalty and almost 12% in satisfaction, these levels being over the established level of acceptance of 0.1 (Falk and Miller, 1992).

**TABLE 3**  
**Structural model results**

Hypothesis		Standardized path coefficients ( $\beta$ )	T value ( <i>Bootstrap</i> ) <sup>note</sup>	Results of contrast
H <sub>1</sub>	OM - KM	0,851 <sup>***</sup>	29,111	ACCEPTED
H <sub>2</sub>	KM- Success	0,436 <sup>*</sup>	2,547	ACCEPTED
H <sub>3</sub>	OM - Success	0,068 <sup>NS</sup>	0,577	NOT ACCEPTED
H <sub>4a</sub>	OM - Employ	0,424 <sup>***</sup>	5,656	ACCEPTED
H <sub>4b</sub>	OM - Leader	0,539 <sup>***</sup>	4,617	ACCEPTED
H <sub>4c</sub>	OM - Econ. R.	0,233 <sup>*</sup>	2,359	ACCEPTED
H <sub>4d</sub>	OM - Techn. R.	0,074 <sup>NS</sup>	0,698	NOT ACCEPTED
H <sub>4e</sub>	OM - Know How	0,242 <sup>**</sup>	2,634	ACCEPTED
H <sub>5a</sub>	KM - Employ	0,499 <sup>***</sup>	5,567	ACCEPTED
H <sub>5b</sub>	KM - Leader	0,329 <sup>*</sup>	2,538	ACCEPTED
H <sub>5c</sub>	KM - R. Econ	0,637 <sup>***</sup>	5,721	ACCEPTED
H <sub>5d</sub>	KM - R. Tecn	0,771 <sup>***</sup>	7,420	ACCEPTED
H <sub>5e</sub>	KM - Know How	0,658 <sup>***</sup>	6,745	ACCEPTED
H <sub>6a</sub>	Employ - Success	0,334 <sup>**</sup>	3,143	ACCEPTED
H <sub>6b</sub>	Leader - Success	0,219 <sup>*</sup>	1,977	ACCEPTED
H <sub>6c</sub>	Econ. R. - Success	0,030 <sup>NS</sup>	0,042	NOT ACCEPTED
H <sub>6d</sub>	Techn. R. - Success	0,106 <sup>NS</sup>	0,587	NOT ACCEPTED
H <sub>6e</sub>	Know How - Success	0,449 <sup>***</sup>	3,432	ACCEPTED

\* When the t value obtained by the Bootstrap technique over comes the T Student value  $t(0.05, 499) = 1.964726835$ , the hypothesis is accepted at 95% significance.  
\*\* When the t value obtained by the Bootstrap technique over comes the T Student value  $t(0.01, 499) = 2.585711627$ , the hypothesis is accepted at 99% significance.  
\*\*\* When the t value obtained by the Bootstrap technique over comes T Student value  $t(0.001, 499) = 3.310124157$ , the hypothesis is accepted with 99.9% significance.  
NS: Not significant.

The data does not show a significant relationship between Market Orientation and success of CRM, hence we are not able to initially accept the hypothesis H3. However, we can confirm the first hypothesis (H1) that proposed a direct relationship between OM and Knowledge Management. Furthermore, the results highlight that Knowledge Management has a direct and significant relationship with the success of CRM (H2). Therefore, through this indirect path we are able to defend, at least partially, the influence of Market Orientation on the success of CRM.

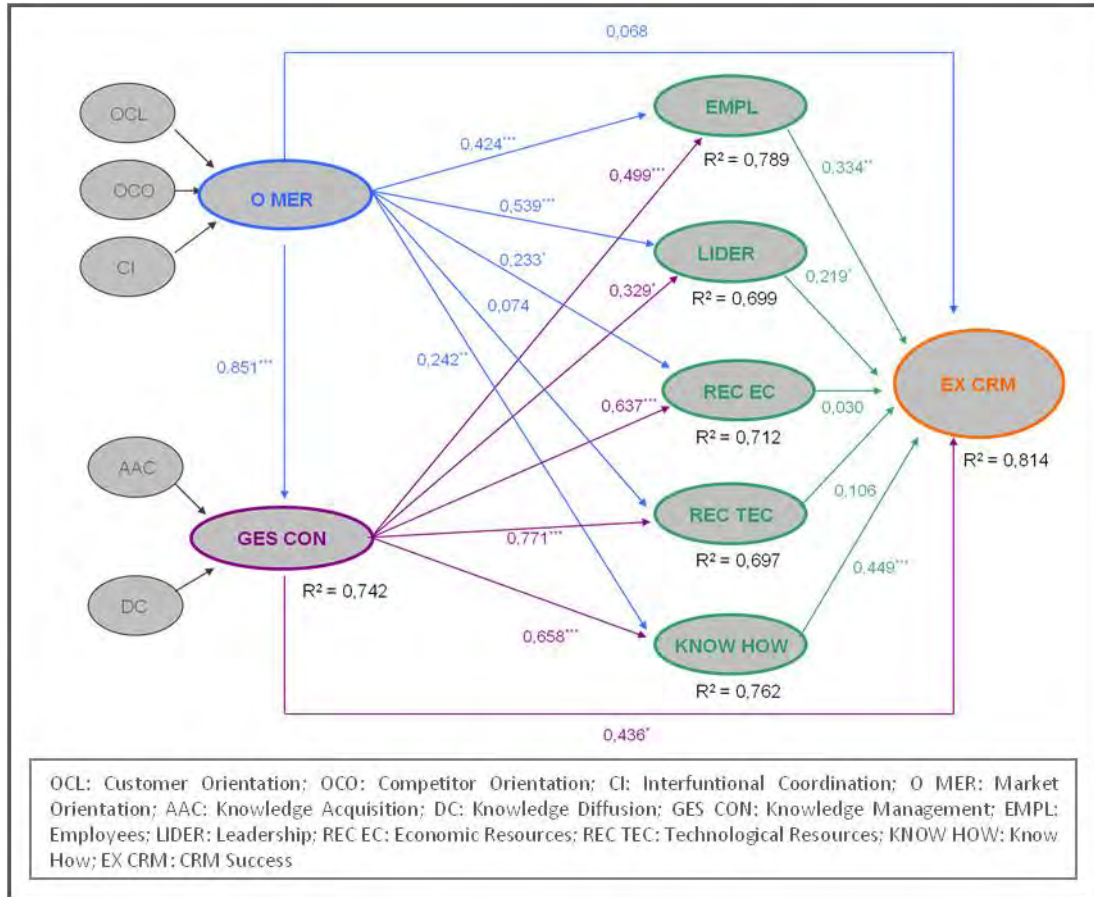
The hypotheses that establish a direct relationship between Market Orientation-Management of human resources (H4a) and Knowledge Management-Management of human resources (H5a) are accepted with the highest level of significance (99.9%). The hypotheses directly relating leadership (H4b), economic resources (H4c) and the specific know-how of CRM (H4e) with Market Orientation are also accepted. However, the hypothesis that established a link between Market Orientation and technological resources (H4d) cannot be confirmed.

Furthermore, Knowledge Management exerts a direct influence on all organisational factors which enables us to accept H5a, H5b, H5c, H5d and H5e. We can also accept the proposed relationship between employees and CRM success, leadership-CRM success and know-how-success of CRM (H6a,

H6b and H6e, respectively), whereas there is no significant relationship between economic resources (H6c) and technological resources (H6d) with the success of CRM.

Data for R<sup>2</sup> are included in Figure 1 and allow us to corroborate the explanatory power of the model.

**FIGURE 1**  
**Causal model and results**



## 6. Discussion

The aim of this study was to further the analysis of factors that have been postulated as generators of a successful CRM strategy. Specifically, our objective was to study the simultaneous effect of Market Orientation, knowledge Management and a number of organisational variables that might explain this success. This is important because numerous extant studies have addressed this phenomenon from a purely technological perspective and have forgotten the true essence of the concept of CRM, or they have focused on very specific factors.

For instance, Gefen and Ridings (2002) analyse the success of CRM from a purely technological perspective, while others such as Fairhurst (2001) do so from a purely philosophical approach. On the other hand, there are works that adopt a Customer Orientation approach in interaction with the management of human and technological resources (eg, Garrido and Padilla, 2011), but they forget that Market Orientation is a superior approach to the Customer Orientation. Also, there are other factors such as economic issues, or the specific knowledge about CRM, that can also affect the success of a CRM strategy.

To fill these gaps, we considered the different approaches from which the CRM concept can be addressed, such as complementary proposals (philosophy, process, capacity, technology and strategy)

and, thus, one of the main contributions of this work has been to consider their complementarity. Moreover, the adoption of the Market Orientation rather than the Customer Orientation approach, which is more limited, also makes an important contribution.

From the point of view of business management, the importance of CRM lies in the ability to exploit competitive advantages, starting with the management of profitable relationships with customers. Moreover, in order to increase efficiency in the management of limited resources it is important to identify the most important factors. In this sense, our study suggests that the first step is to adopt a philosophy based on Market Orientation. This is a comprehensive approach that considers not only the customer but also the competition and the structure of the company. This approach, as suggested by authors such as Boulding et al. (2005), allows the company to monitor the complete environment, both internally and externally, not only to create customer value, but to ensure that this value is higher than that of competitors (Boulding et al., 2005). This approach allows companies to develop the right mindset to manage positively and profitably relationships with customers.

However, the survey data also indicate that simply adopting this approach does not guarantee success in a CRM strategy. For this to happen we must consider Market Orientation as precursor of Knowledge Management. This last factor allows the attitudinal component to be translated into suitable behaviour (process perspective). Knowledge Management enables the generation of market intelligence about the needs and expectations of customers, how they are being met and how they might be met, and to disseminate this information among the organisation. Thus, understanding CRM as a philosophy combined with a proper Knowledge Management, guarantees success in managing business relationships.

Regarding organisational factors (employees, leadership, economic resources, technology and know-how) we see that, in some cases, their inclusion intensifies the relationship between Market Orientation, knowledge Management and CRM success. We can assert that Market Orientation positively influences all factors analysed, except the technological resources. This may be due to the fact that developing the correct attitude to maintain appropriate relationships with customers is primarily related to people management. These people are the link between the company and its top management and the customers, and are those that actually develop the daily work of contacting and interacting with customers. Moreover, the role of leadership is key as employees tend to imitate the behaviour of their superiors. It is noteworthy that, from an attitudinal point of view, technological resources are not relevant. This is may be owing to the human factor, in so much as without the willingness of employees to provide feedback and use the information properly, technology is not very useful.

However, from the point of view of CRM as a process, Knowledge Management affects all organisational factors (hypotheses H5a, H5b, H5c, H5d and H5e were confirmed). In order to generate intelligence and disseminate it throughout the organisation, a company must have the right staff, economic resources and specific know-how, as well as the appropriate technological tools. It is clear that in relatively large organisations, as it happens in the sector, the technological tools provide the ability to capture, process and use the information obtained from clients. Without these tools this would be virtually impossible due the sheer volume of customers and the different situations of each one of them. it may be posit that due to information technology, firms may deepen the relationship with some customers who notice favourably when the firm knows their name, purchase history, the last visit or any other circumstance. This information may help improve not only their frequency of purchase, but also their loyalty.

Finally, when analysing which organisational factors contributed to the success of CRM, we observed that only employees, leadership and the specific know-how were the key determinants (the hypotheses H6a, H6b and H6e are true, but not the H6c and H6d). Given that CRM is based on the paradigm of Relationship Marketing, which is concerned with maintaining long-term relationships with customers, it is not surprising that we have obtained these results. In the analysed sector, the employees are the visible face of the company as they deal directly with customers. If the success of CRM is measured, among others, in terms of satisfaction, it is logical that the way employees are treated, their level of motivation and their know-how in terms of CRM will directly affect the satisfaction of customers,

their loyalty, interest in other products of the bank and its share of wallet. Therefore, the organisational factors that are directly linked to people have a significant impact on the success of CRM. Our data suggest that technology can be a useful tool to efficiently manage business relationships but the impact is not decisive. Above all, the business model and the employees are the real engine of the companies.

Therefore, from the point of view of the efficient management of resources, companies must focus on programmes for selection, training and motivation of employees that are appropriate to achieve the objectives of CRM. These objectives must stem from the business model of the organisation and managers must take a leading role. Furthermore, for the CRM system to function properly an adequate Knowledge Management must be in place and investment in specific knowledge about CRM should be undertaken. Economic and technological resources are therefore of secondary importance, since they have not been shown to be critical factors.

The ideas and suggestions outlined above are in line with the opinion of experts in business practice. As noted by Liz Shahnham (2003), analyst at META Group. *"CRM is a term that is not really new. What is new is all the technology that allows to do what used to be done in the corner shops. The owner had few customers and enough memory to keep track of the preferences of every single client. Technology allows us to return to that kind of business models"*.

## 7. Conclusions

This work shows a review of the different perspectives from which the concept of CRM can be addressed and defends the superiority of adopting an approach based on Market Orientation rather than a Customer Orientation approach. In addition, we have simultaneously analysed several organisational factors as possible antecedents of a successful CRM strategy.

The results for the analysed sector allow us to defend the relevance of a business model based on Market Orientation that also promotes Knowledge Management. Employees, leadership and know-how about CRM are also specific factors that are relevant to the success of CRM. The economic and technological resources are not significant factors, although they weakly exert influence in the expected direction.

Despite the important contributions of this study there are a number of limitations. First, it is a cross-sectional study focused on the Spanish banking sector. However, it is noteworthy that, as justified in the methodology section, the sector is appropriate to study the phenomenon in question. However, from our point of view, before extrapolating the results to other sectors it would be necessary to do both a structural and conjunctural comparative study. Also, given that this study is based on opinions, there is a chance that the results are biased as respondents sometimes answer without absolute sincerity. However, to try to eliminate or minimize this limitation, we have taken a number of actions a priori as recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003) and Baumgartner and Steenkamp (2006). These measures, called process measures, suggest i) ensure the anonymity of participants, ii) clarify that there are no right or wrong answers, iii) use scales previously validated in the literature and adapted to the situation under study, and iv) eliminate possible ambiguities through pre-tests by checking the wording of each item, ensuring its simplicity, specificity and conciseness.

To conclude, as possible lines of future research it would be interesting to include other sectors which may expand the size of the study to i) establish intersectorial patterns and ii) increase the robustness of the conclusions. Another interesting aspect would be to replicate the study as a longitudinal investigation to assess prior and post important structural adjustment processes of the industry. Finally, it would also be interesting to study the possible relationships that may exist between each of the organisational factors considered.

## APPENDIX 1

MEASUREMENT SCALES (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ , FCI, AVE)

<b>Market Orientation (O MER) (Narver y Slater, 1990) (0,858; 0,914; 0,779)</b>
<b>Customer Orientation (OCL)</b>
OCL1 The business objectives of the company are focused on customer satisfaction.
OCL2 The Company continually monitors its level of commitment to meeting the needs of customers.
OCL3 The strategy of the company to gain a competitive advantage is based on understanding the needs of customers.
OCL4 Business strategies of the company are aimed at creating value for customers.
OCL5 The company frequently measured customer satisfaction.
OCL6 The company pays great attention to after-sales service.
OCL7 The company offers customized products and services to key customers.
<b>Competitor Orientation (OCO)</b>
OCO1 The sales team of the company regularly shares information about the strategy of competitors.
OCO2 The corporation regularly discusses the strengths and weaknesses of competition
OCO3 The company responds quickly to competitor actions.
OCO4 The company sets objectives to capture customers in the markets where it has competitive advantages.
<b>Interfunctional Coordination (CI)</b>
CI1 Employers in all functional areas contact regularly with current and potential customers.
CI2 The information regarding customers is fluidly communicated through the company.
CI3 All functional areas are integrated and coordinated to serve the needs of the target markets.
CI4 All managers understand how each functional area of the company can contribute to creating customer value.
CI5 The various functional areas share resources with each other.
<b>Employees (EMP) (Sin et al., 2005; Greve y Albers, 2006) (0,937; 0,950; 0,760)</b>
E1 The company has qualified staff for the success of the CRM strategy .
E2 Training programs are designed to help employees develop the skills necessary to properly manage customer relationships.
E3 The employee performance is measured based on the detection of customer needs and customer satisfaction with the service received.
E4 The company encourages employees to meet the objectives of CRM.
E5 The company offers compensation systems in case of meeting the objectives of CRM.
E6 I think the employees are committed to the CRM strategy.
<b>Lidership (LIDER) (Sin et al., 2005; Greve y Albers, 2006) (0,869; 0,921; 0,795)</b>
L11 The company has established clear business goals with respect to the acquisition and retention of customers, and communicated these
L12 Managers consider a priority the CRM strategy.
L13 Managers are highly involved in implementing CRM strategy
Estructura de la organización (ESTRUCT)
EO1 La estructura organizativa está diseñada siguiendo el enfoque centrado en el cliente.
EO2 Existe comunicación abierta y recíproca entre los diferentes departamentos.
EO3 Los diferentes departamentos trabajan juntos para alcanzar los objetivos del CRM.
<b>Resourcing (DOT REC) (New proposal)</b>
<b>Endowment of economic resources (REC EC)</b>
RECE1 The Company devotes sufficient economic resources to carry out CRM strategy.
<b>Endowment of technological resources (REC TEC)</b>
RECT1 The company has sufficient technological resources to implement CRM strategy.
<b>Endowment of Know-How (KNOW HOW)</b>
RECKH1 The company has enough know-how to carry out CRM strategy
<b>Knowledge Management (GES CON) (Sin et al., 2005) (0,875; 0,941; 0,889)</b>
<b>Knowledge Adquisition</b>
AAC1 The company provides channels to allow a continuous two-way communication with key customers.
AAC2 The company has established processes for acquiring knowledge about customers.
AAC3 The company has established processes for acquiring knowledge for the development of new products and services.
AAC4 The company has established processes to acquire knowledge about their competitors.
AAC5 The company understands the needs of its core customers through its orientation of the knowledge .
AAC6 The company can make decisions quickly thanks to the availability of knowledge about customers.
AAC7 The company can provide real information about customers that enable rapid and accurate interaction with them.
AAC8 The company has established processes to apply knowledge to solve new problems.
<b>Knowledge Diffusion</b>
DC1 The company encourages employees to share knowledge.
DC2 The organizational culture of the company encourages the acquisition of knowledge and its transmission among employees.
DC3 The company has developed processes to facilitate the knowledge transfer between different functional areas.
<b>CRM Success (EX CRM) (Sin et al., 2005) (0,895; 0,927; 0,760)</b>
RT1 In your opinion, the customer satisfaction is high.
RT2 In your opinion, the loyalty of its customers regarding the same product is high.
RT3 Customers are interested in other products offered by your organization.
RT4 In your opinion, your organization has a high proportion of the total financial consumption of customers.

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# REACCIÓN PUBLICITARIA DE LAS EMPRESAS ESTABLECIDAS ANTE LA ENTRADA AL MERCADO: ANÁLISIS DE LOS COSTES DE CAMBIO EN EL SECTOR AÉREO ESPAÑOL

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## RESUMEN

*El aumento de la competencia, derivado de los cambios regulatorios y estructurales, ha favorecido el estudio de la reacción de las empresas establecidas ante las entradas a su mercado. Recientemente, el aumento de las entradas de las empresas de bajo coste al mercado de cualquier sector, ha generalizado la competencia en publicidad por parte de las empresas establecidas. Nuestro trabajo analiza el papel de los costes de cambio sobre la reacción competitiva en publicidad de la empresa establecida en el sector aéreo, así como la respuesta asimétrica ante los diferentes entrantes. La metodología efectúa una estimación instrumental, sobre una muestra de reacciones ante la entrada durante el decenio 2000-2009, evidenciando un efecto moderador de los costes de cambio sobre la respuesta competitiva asimétrica del implicado según el tipo de entrante, así como la importancia de la dominación del mercado por parte de la empresa establecida.*

## Palabras clave:

Reacción publicitaria, Entrada al mercado, Costes de cambio, Sector aéreo

## 1. Introducción

La importancia de la competencia entre las empresas ha llamado la atención de los investigadores, los cuales han tratado de examinar la reacción de las empresas establecidas ante las entradas en su mercado (ver Robinson, 1988; Shankar, 1999). En este contexto competitivo, algunos instrumentos de marketing, como la inversión publicitaria, se han convertido en un elemento clave para las empresas establecidas de cara a proteger sus mercados de los nuevos entrantes.

Básicamente, la literatura distingue tres corrientes de investigación sobre la reacción publicitaria del implicado ante la entrada. La primera perspectiva considera que la inversión publicitaria tiene un efecto restrictivo o “persuasivo” sobre la competencia (Kessides, 1986), de forma que la inversión publicitaria del implicado reduce la probabilidad de que los clientes actuales migren de una empresa establecida a un nuevo entrante, porque actúa como una barrera a la entrada de nuevos competidores (Bain, 1956). Ello obedece, por un lado, a su capacidad para crear lealtad de marca y para generar ventajas de la diferenciación del producto y de las economías de escala en publicidad para la empresa establecida (Comanor y Wilson, 1979). Por otro lado, la inversión publicitaria del implicado fuerza a los nuevos entrantes a incrementar sus gastos promocionales, los cuales pueden llegar a convertirse en *costes hundidos* si deciden salir del mercado (Baumol y Willig, 1981). Una segunda corriente considera que la inversión publicitaria puede estimular la competencia porque tiene un efecto “informativo”, de forma que un aumento de la inversión publicitaria del implicado atrae a nuevos clientes al mercado, lo cual es una señal para los nuevos entrantes del atractivo del mercado y favorece la competencia (Kessides, 1986). En este sentido, una empresa establecida debería reducir su inversión publicitaria para reducir su efecto informativo y, de este modo, disuadir o acomodar la entrada de los nuevos competidores (Fudenberg y Tirole, 1984). Una tercera vía analiza ambos efectos opuestos de la publicidad ante la entrada al mercado (Ej.: Kessides, 1986), mostrando la predominancia del efecto informativo sobre el persuasivo, dado que la inversión publicitaria del implicado aumenta el tamaño global del mercado y estimula más la entrada de potenciales competidores que la atracción o retención de clientes en favor de la empresa establecida.

Alternativamente, otro grupo de autores no presta tanta atención al instrumento estratégico de la publicidad en la reacción, sino que sugiere que la reacción del implicado, en general, depende de las características de la industria, de las características del entrante e implicado, así como de la relación previa entre entrante e implicado (Ej.: Robinson, 1988; Gatignon, Anderson y Helsen, 1989; Shankar, 1999). Así, los análisis empíricos realizados en el sector aéreo revelan que las reacciones del implicado ante la entrada cambian de acuerdo con las características de la industria y del entrante (Call y Keeler, 1985). Por ejemplo, los patrones de reacción se modifican tras la desregulación del sector aéreo en EE.UU. en 1978, en Europa desde 1987 a 1997, y en España a principios de 2000 (Rey, 2003), porque se produce un cambio radical en el perfil del entrante. En España, el entrante pasa de ser una compañía tradicional “hub and spoke” (Air Europa y Spanair) a una compañía de bajo coste (Ryanair, Easyjet, AirBerlin, Vueling, Clickair). Las características de las empresas establecidas originariamente en el mercado (Ej.: Iberia) también influyen en la reacción porque tienen una posición dominante, la cual es erosionada gradualmente conforme aumenta la competencia. A pesar de ello, los estudios realizados no han considerado los costes de cambio como un elemento a estudiar en la relación entre implicado y entrante.

El objetivo principal de este trabajo es analizar el efecto de los costes de cambio sobre la reacción en inversión publicitaria de las compañías aéreas establecidas, ante la entrada de nuevos competidores al mercado doméstico español desde 2000 hasta 2009. Este objetivo se puede concretar en los siguientes sub-objetivos: i) definir un modelo de reacción en inversión publicitaria ante la entrada, que permita analizar el efecto de los costes de cambio sobre la respuesta del implicado; ii) analizar la respuesta asimétrica de las empresas establecidas en relación al tipo de compañía aérea entrante (tradicional, regional y de bajo coste); y iii) evaluar los patrones temporales que definen la reacción del implicado ante la entrada.

## 2. Revisión de la literatura e hipótesis

Uno de los factores que describen la relación entre el implicado en un mercado y el entrante, son los costes de cambio, que pueden definirse como los costes en que incurre un cliente cuando cambia desde la empresa actual a alguna de las competidoras (Shy, 2002). Un tipo específico de costes de cambio, los costes de cambio “pecuniarios”, los cuales son creados artificialmente por las empresas, constituyen una forma de descuento en cantidades (Klemperer, 1987) y prevalecen en industrias de servicios, como el sector aéreo, donde las compañías aéreas inscriben a los pasajeros en “programas de vuelos frecuentes” que les recompensan por los viajes repetidos en la misma compañía (Klemperer, 1987). Estos costes de cambio crean lealtad de marca en los viajeros una vez que han comprado los servicios de una compañía en particular, mientras que los viajeros que cambian de compañía pierden la oportunidad de ganar puntos que luego generan ganancias, a través de vuelos gratuitos o de coste reducido.

Unos elevados costes de cambio tienden a reducir la competencia entre las empresas porque crean clientes cautivos. Además, la estructura institucional y de regulación puede reforzar esta situación anticompetitiva porque incrementa el poder de mercado derivado de los costes de cambio. Por ejemplo, la estructura institucional y de regulación puede facilitar la obtención de ventajas del “pionero”: las compañías originariamente reguladas tienen un acceso privilegiado a recursos escasos, como los derechos de vuelo y el control del aeropuerto (Borenstein, 1989, 1991; Evans y Kessides, 1993); y por tanto, sus programas de vuelos frecuentes pueden aprovechar las ventajas de la amplia red de rutas que disponen. En este contexto, si una empresa establecida disfruta de unos elevados costes de cambio en relación a sus competidores, tendrá menos predisposición a reaccionar en precios y publicidad cuando se enfrenta a una entrada competitiva; actuando estos costes de cambio como una barrera de entrada real (Bowman y Gatignon, 1995; Kuester et al, 1999). Siguiendo la tipología animal de Fudenberg y Tirole (1984), una empresa establecida decidirá permitir la entrada (y ello con independencia del perfil estratégico de la empresa entrante: tradicional, regional y de bajo coste) actuando como un “fat-cat” para explotar su base de clientes con elevados precios.

En general, las estrategias anteriores asumen que los mercados con costes de cambio son estables. Sin embargo, los costes de cambio también pueden tener importantes efectos dinámicos. Farrell y Klemperer (2007) argumentan que el escenario contrario es también posible: las empresas establecidas podrían actuar agresivamente en períodos de transición a un entorno aéreo desregulado, donde la estrategia “fat-cat” dejará de aplicarse, porque conforme el entrante de bajo coste llegue a estar mejor establecido en el mercado, será capaz de construir su red y llegará a estar más comprometido incluso con el viajero de negocios (Call y Keeler, 1985). Es decir, en un contexto desregulado, si un entrante de bajo coste sigue una estrategia de entrada agresiva (Ej: precios bajos) que le confiere una ventaja sobre las previamente establecidas en el mercado, dicha entrada será percibida como una amenaza (Gatignon, Weith y Bansal, 1990) y, de acuerdo con Fudenberg y Tirole (1984), presionaría a las implicadas a aumentar su nivel de inversión publicitaria para dirigir su comportamiento agresivo en contra del entrante. En cualquier caso, esta presión será diferente cuando se reaccione ante otros entrantes con diferentes estrategias competitivas, como por ejemplo, los entrantes tradicionales y regionales, que poseen una similar estructura de costes que el implicado. En base a lo anterior, se propone la siguiente hipótesis:

H1: El efecto de los costes de cambio del implicado sobre su reacción en inversión publicitaria ante la entrada, está condicionado por el tipo de entrante.

La reacción publicitaria de los implicados está también condicionada por las características de las empresas establecidas. En general, los autores sugieren que la dominación en el mercado está directamente relacionada con la cuota de mercado que una empresa defiende y, por tanto, con los beneficios que la empresa establecida puede obtener al disuadir dicha entrada competitiva (Gatignon et al, 1989; Gruca, Kumar y Sudharshan, 1992). En el sector aéreo, la dominación en el mercado genera ventajas competitivas, debido a la explotación de economías de escala y de densidad derivadas de la creación de valor de marca, y reduce los costes

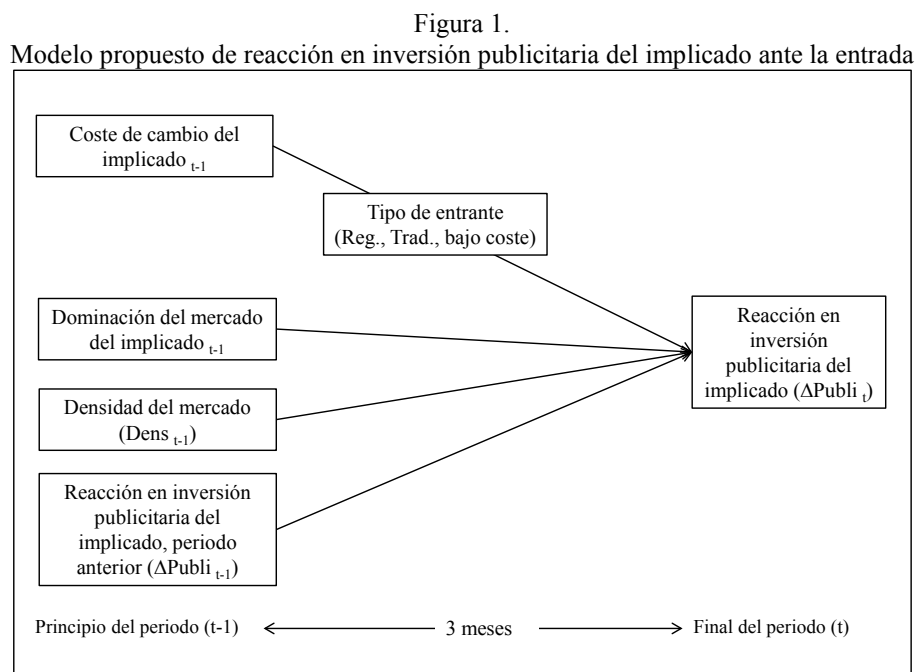
marginales de comunicación de las empresas establecidas. Esta mayor rentabilidad de la inversión publicitaria (menores costes unitarios de comunicación) emana de la naturaleza acumulativa de los contactos entre la empresa y los clientes (las establecidas están presentes en el mercado con anterioridad) y de la explotación de economías de escala en términos de comunicación que disfrutaban las implicadas en sus centros de conexión (Hubs), al transmitir tanto la información global sobre la marca (Ej.: imagen de marca de la compañía aérea) como la información específica de los servicios (Ej.: información sobre tarifas y rutas) (Levine, 1987). Por tanto, se espera que un elevado nivel de dominación del implicado en un mercado actúe como barrera de entrada ante los nuevos competidores, que no pueden explotar dichas economías de escala y de densidad, lo que reducirá el incentivo entre las empresas establecidas a incrementar su nivel de inversión publicitaria ante la entrada. Ello permite proponer la siguiente hipótesis:

H2: El nivel de dominación del implicado en un mercado tiene un efecto directo y negativo sobre la reacción en inversión publicitaria del implicado ante la entrada.

El último factor analizado es el nivel de competencia global del mercado (o densidad del mercado), definido por el número de empresas que ofrecen de forma simultánea sus productos en el mercado (aparte de la entrada), el cual afecta a la reacción publicitaria del implicado ante la entrada dado que refleja el nivel de poder de las empresas que compiten en el mercado. Es decir, a medida que el número de competidores aumenta, se reduce de forma sustancial el poder de mercado de cada uno de ellos (Ej.: en el extremo se llegaría a mercados disputables y a mercados en competencia perfecta), por lo que cabe esperar que una atmósfera de mayor competencia incentive a las empresas establecidas a aumentar su nivel de inversión publicitaria como respuesta a una nueva entrada. Ello permite plantear la siguiente hipótesis:

H3: La densidad del mercado en el que se produce una entrada, tiene un efecto directo y positivo sobre la reacción publicitaria de la empresa establecida.

La figura 1 resume las hipótesis previas, presentando los principales factores que determinan la reacción en inversión publicitaria del implicado ante la entrada.



### 3. Metodología y datos

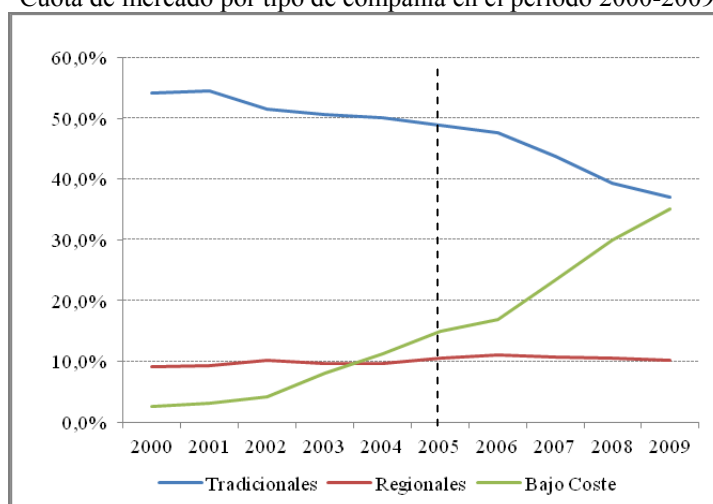
A partir de los datos sobre tráfico y pasajeros, recogidos por AENA (Regulador Español de Aeropuertos y Espacio Aéreo), nuestro trabajo analiza las reacciones de las compañías aéreas cuando se produce la entrada de un nuevo competidor, lo que implica seleccionar 193 rutas que



presentan dichas reacciones en el mercado doméstico español desde 2000 hasta 2009 (de un total de 1400 rutas). Este estudio sólo considera las 11 compañías aéreas<sup>1</sup> que presentan operaciones regulares domésticas. Un análisis descriptivo preliminar de la información permite evidenciar lo siguiente:

El gráfico 1 presenta la evolución de la cuota de mercado de las compañías aéreas, agrupándolas en tres tipos: tradicional, regional y de bajo coste. Se observa una paulatina disminución de la cuota de las compañías tradicionales paralela a un aumento continuado de cuota de las compañías aéreas de bajo coste (mayor en la segunda mitad de la década).

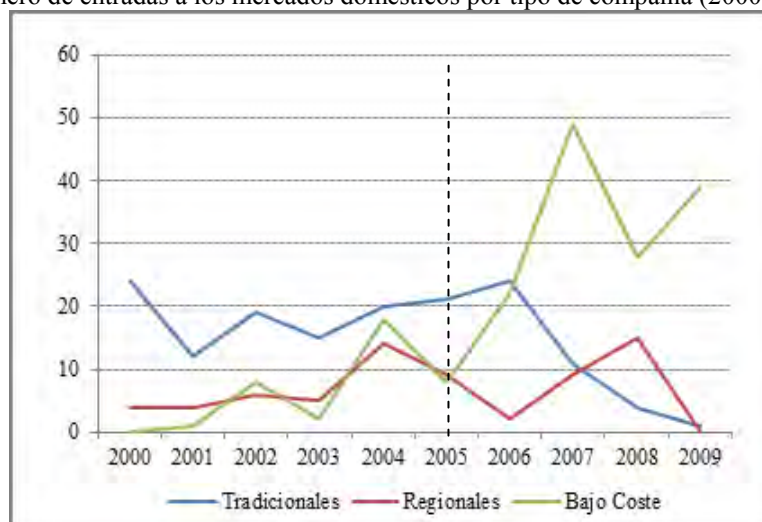
Gráfico 1.  
Cuota de mercado por tipo de compañía en el periodo 2000-2009



Fuente: elaboración propia a partir de la base de datos de AENA

El gráfico 2 muestra la evolución del número de entradas al mercado por tipo de compañía aérea. En el conjunto de rutas que cumplen los criterios de inclusión en el análisis, se observa 394 entradas competitivas. Además, se evidencia un cambio en el perfil de los entrantes entre los dos quinquenios que componen la década, de forma que en 2000-2005 prevalecen las entradas de compañías tradicionales, mientras que en 2006-2009 aumentan exponencialmente las entradas de las compañías de bajo coste.

Gráfico 2.  
Número de entradas a los mercados domésticos por tipo de compañía (2000-2009)



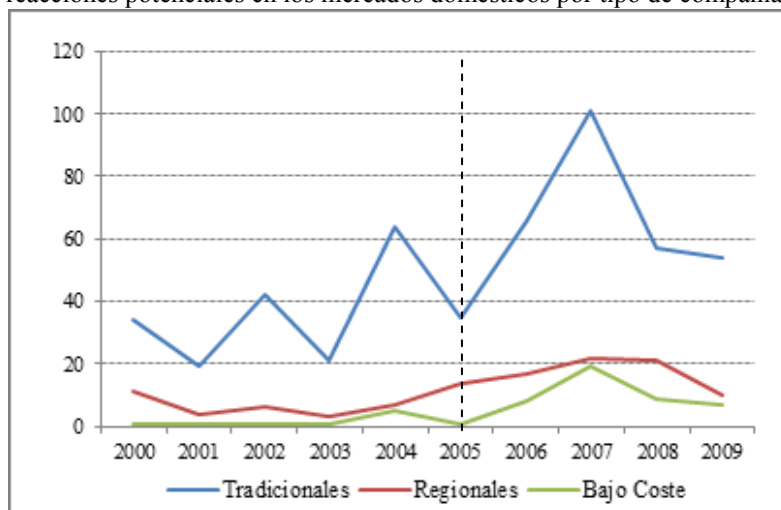
Fuente: elaboración propia a partir de los datos de AENA.

<sup>1</sup> Las compañías aéreas con vuelos domésticos regulares son: i) las tradicionales: Iberia, Air Europa y Spanair; ii) las regionales: Air Nostrum, Binter y Naysa; y iii) las de bajo coste: Vueling, Clickair, Ryanair, Air Berlin e Easyjet.

El gráfico 3 presenta las reacciones potenciales por tipo de compañía para el decenio 2000-09, medidas por el número de rutas que presentan una entrada competitiva donde operaba una compañía aérea establecida previamente. Se observa que las compañías aéreas tradicionales presentan el mayor número de reacciones potenciales (75%) y que esta diferencia se incrementa a partir de la segunda mitad de la década. Por otro lado, tanto las compañías regionales como las de bajo coste implicadas reaccionan ante la entrada, sin embargo lo hacen en menor medida, aumentando desde el año 2004 (21%). En suma, para el conjunto de rutas que cumplen los criterios de inclusión en el análisis, se observa 661 reacciones potenciales de las compañías aéreas establecidas ante 394 entradas competitivas.

Gráfico 3.

Número de reacciones potenciales en los mercados domésticos por tipo de compañía (2000-2009)



Fuente: elaboración propia a partir de los datos de AENA.

En cuanto a la metodología aplicada, el modelo propuesto de reacción publicitaria del implicado relaciona el comportamiento de la compañía aérea establecida con una determinada entrada competitiva, y con los factores que condicionan dicho comportamiento; por lo que se utiliza un modelo dinámico con variable dependiente en diferencias. Es decir, para cada reacción “k” del implicado “i” en la ruta “m”, dado el entrante “j” y durante el periodo “t”, la respuesta de la empresa establecida se mide mediante la diferencia entre el nivel medio de inversión publicitaria en el periodo corriente (t) y el nivel medio de inversión publicitaria en el periodo anterior (t-1). El modelo intenta analizar la decisión tomada por la empresa establecida en el periodo “t” (variación en la inversión publicitaria  $\Delta y_{kt}$ ), dada la nueva entrada, mediante otras variables relevantes al principio del periodo ( $X_{k,t-1}$ ) y a través de la decisión en el periodo anterior “t-1” (variación en la inversión publicitaria,  $\Delta y_{kt-1}$ ). Finalmente, para cada una de las reacciones se utiliza información sobre los siete trimestres que circundan la entrada, con el propósito de tener una medida de la reacción anticipada y otra medida tanto de la reacción a corto como a medio plazo posteriormente a la entrada. De este modo, se incluye el trimestre anterior a la entrada (-1) y los seis siguientes trimestres posteriores a la misma (0, +1, ..., +6). En virtud de lo anterior, el modelo propuesto sería el siguiente:

$$\Delta y_{kt} = X' \beta_{k,t-1} + \gamma \Delta y_{kt-1} + \epsilon_{kt} \quad \text{para } k = 1, 2, \dots, K \text{ (reacciones) y } t = -1, 0, +1, \dots, +6 \text{ (trimestres)}$$

Este modelo general de reacción se puede concretar en el siguiente modelo de reacción en inversión publicitaria ante la entrada:

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta \text{Publi}_{k,t} = & \alpha_{k,t} + \beta_1 [D(\text{implicado pequeño})_{k,t-1}] + \beta_2 [D(\text{implicado grande})_{k,t-1}] \\ & + \beta_3 [ \text{Coste cambio implicado} \times (D \text{ entrante} - \text{bajo coste}) ]_{k,t-1} \\ & + \beta_4 [ \text{Coste Cambio implicado} \times (D \text{ entrante} - \text{regional}) ]_{k,t-1} \\ & + \beta_5 [ \text{Coste Cambio implicado} \times (D \text{ entrante} - \text{tradicional}) ]_{k,t-1} \\ & + \beta_6 [ \text{Densidad mercado} ]_{k,t-1} + \beta_7 [ \Delta \text{Publi}_{k,t-1} ] + \epsilon_{k,t} \end{aligned}$$

La variable dependiente ( $\Delta\text{Publi}_{i,t}$ ) recoge la variación en la inversión publicitaria de la empresa establecida en una determinada ruta, y se mide con datos procedentes de INFOADEX. Las dos variables categóricas de tamaño (pequeño y gran implicado<sup>2</sup>) miden el grado de dominación del implicado en una determinada ruta (en términos de la importancia de su cuota de mercado), cuando decide su reacción ante la entrada. La variable coste de cambio del implicado, mide el coste de cambio “pecuniarios” observado por los clientes de la compañía establecida en relación al entrante en términos de precios medios (Shy, 2002) y se mide con datos procedentes de AENA y SABI. El efecto de interacción entre los costes de cambio de la compañía aérea establecida y el tipo de entrante (tradicional, regional y de bajo coste) evalúa el efecto asimétrico de los costes de cambio dependiendo del perfil del nuevo competidor. La densidad del mercado, o presión competitiva global en una ruta (aparte de la nueva entrada), se mide por el número de empresas que ofrecen simultáneamente sus productos en el mercado. Finalmente, se incluye el comportamiento publicitario en el periodo anterior ( $\Delta\text{Publi}_{i,t-1}$ ) para captar el posible carácter inercial (estratégico) del comportamiento publicitario de la empresa establecida.

Las ocho estimaciones independientes, una para cada trimestre relativo a la entrada, están relacionadas por el lado de los regresores ya que se incluye la variable dependiente retardada como variable explicativa; lo que permite evaluar la relación dinámica entre periodos consecutivos, pero también supone una potencial fuente de endogeneidad. Con el objeto de superar esta limitación, se utilizan estimaciones por variables instrumentales, como los Mínimos Cuadrados en dos etapas (MC2E) y el Método Generalizado de los Momentos (MGM) (Greene, 2008; Pérez, 2007). Por otro lado, la potencial heterocedasticidad, causada por la estructura de los datos de sección cruzada, se solventa mediante la estimación de la matriz de varianzas-covarianzas de White. Asimismo, se emplea la corrección de Windmeijer para corregir la reducción en eficiencia del estimador MGM derivada del reducido número de observaciones empleado en la estimación (Windmeijer, 2005). Finalmente, dado el cambio estructural acaecido en el sector aéreo doméstico español, como resultado de la desregulación y la consecuente entrada masiva de las compañías aéreas de bajo coste durante la segunda mitad de la década de 2000, se divide la muestra de reacciones en dos grupos (2000-2005 y 2006-2009), efectuando una estimación en cada grupo.

#### 4. Resultados

Las tablas 1 y 2 presentan las estimaciones detalladas del modelo de reacción de las compañías aéreas establecidas ante la entrada de nuevos competidores, para ambos periodos (ver anexo). Los resultados obtenidos muestran, en primer lugar, que el efecto de los costes de cambio del implicado (CC) sobre su reacción en inversión publicitaria ante la entrada, está moderado por el tipo de compañía aérea entrante y condicionado por el contexto competitivo general en el momento de la entrada. Así, durante el periodo 2000-2005 el efecto de los CC del implicado es positivo, y mayor cuando el entrante es tradicional ( $\beta_{\text{trad},2000-05}=+7,994^3$ ), seguido por el caso del entrante regional ( $\beta_{\text{reg},2000-05}=+7,183$ ); mientras que no es significativo cuando el entrante es de bajo coste. Sin embargo, durante el periodo 2006-2009 estas magnitudes cambian sustancialmente, de modo que el efecto de los CC del implicado pasa a ser negativo en el caso de los entrantes de bajo coste ( $\beta_{\text{lcc},2006-09}=-5,804$ ), y positivo para los entrantes tradicionales ( $\beta_{\text{trad},2006-09}=+13,276$ ) y los regionales ( $\beta_{\text{reg},2006-09}=+5,614$ ). Esta evidencia impide rechazar la hipótesis 1, por lo que se confirma el efecto moderador del tipo de compañía aérea entrante (tradicional, regional y de bajo coste) entre el coste de cambio del implicado y su reacción en inversión publicitaria.

<sup>2</sup> Los pequeños implicados poseen una cuota de mercado menor del 33%, mientras que los grandes implicados tienen una cuota de mercado mayor del 66% (el grupo omitido son los implicados intermedios, con una cuota entre el 33 y el 66 %).

<sup>3</sup>  $\beta_{\text{trad},2000-05}=+7,994$  significa que una disminución de 1 euro en los costes de cambio del implicado (cuando el entrante es tradicional), generará una disminución en la diferencia de inversión publicitaria de 7994 euros, lo que implica que la inversión publicitaria en “t” caerá en 7 994 euros respecto al periodo “t-1”.

En segundo lugar, el análisis de la influencia de la dominación en el mercado sobre el comportamiento publicitario del implicado revela resultados contradictorios. Se observa un efecto negativo de los implicados dominantes sobre su comportamiento publicitario (es decir, los grandes implicados reaccionan con una menor inversión publicitaria) durante el periodo (2000-05); mientras que durante el segundo periodo (2006-09) se detecta tanto un efecto negativo como uno positivo del nivel de dominación del implicado sobre su inversión publicitaria. Ello permite rechazar parcialmente la hipótesis 2, dado que no siempre que aumenta el grado de dominación de la empresa establecida se produce una disminución en la reacción publicitaria del implicado.

En tercer lugar, la densidad del mercado tiene un efecto significativo sobre la respuesta en inversión publicitaria del implicado. Desde el punto de vista temporal, un aumento en el número de competidores provoca un descenso en la inversión publicitaria del implicado de forma anticipada a la entrada en ambos periodos ( $\beta_{2000-05,-1} = -1,659$  y  $\beta_{2006-09,-1} = -7,130$ ). En contraste, un incremento en la densidad del mercado genera un aumento en la inversión publicitaria del implicado con posterioridad a la entrada durante ambos periodos ( $\beta_{2000-05} = +3,346$  y  $\beta_{2006-09} = +7,366$ ). Es decir, estos resultados muestran que un aumento en la inversión publicitaria del implicado, derivado del aumento del número de operadores, sólo se produce con posterioridad a la entrada, lo que parcialmente apoya la hipótesis 3. Finalmente, la inversión publicitaria del implicado en el periodo anterior ( $\Delta\text{Publi } t-1$ ) es un factor relevante a la hora de explicar el comportamiento publicitario actual de reacción ante la entrada ( $\Delta\text{Publi } t$ ).

## 5. Discusión

Los resultados descritos en la sección anterior del papel moderador del tipo de compañía aérea entrante (y del contexto regulatorio) en la relación existente entre los costes de cambio del implicado y su reacción en inversión publicitaria ante la entrada, pueden ser argumentados del siguiente modo: El efecto positivo y de mayor magnitud de los costes de cambio sobre la reacción publicitaria del implicado (es decir, su menor inversión publicitaria) cuando el entrante es una compañía aérea tradicional, podría explicarse en el primer periodo (2000-2005), no sólo por el hecho de que las compañías establecidas venían disfrutando de elevados costes de cambio pecuniarios derivados de sus programas de vuelos frecuentes, sino porque además dichos costes de cambio vienen reforzados por un contexto de elevada regulación (la cual facilita el control de los aeropuertos y los derechos de vuelo por parte de las compañías establecidas). Ellas optaron por no competir en precios (de hecho, llegaron a un acuerdo de paz; ver Rey, 2003), ni en publicidad. Estas compañías aéreas establecidas (originariamente reguladas) estaban disfrutando de las ventajas del “pionero”, que favorecían su poder de mercado derivado de los elevados costes de cambio de sus clientes: sus programas de vuelos frecuentes podían aprovechar las ventajas de sus sistemas de red de destinos (Hub & Spoke networks) (Levine, 1987; Borenstein 1989; 1991; Carlsson y Löfgren, 2006). Del mismo modo, durante el primer periodo (2000-2005), las compañías aéreas tradicionales establecidas no consideraban a los entrantes de bajo coste como competidores principales. Por lo que se comportaban como “fat-cats” (Fudenberg y Tirole, 1984) y no reaccionaban ni en precios y ni en publicidad ante las primeras entradas a sus mercados. Sin embargo, durante el segundo periodo (2006-2009), el signo negativo del efecto de los costes de cambio sobre la reacción publicitaria, cuando el entrante es una compañía de bajo coste, sugiere que las compañías de bajo coste se convierten en duros competidores (el entrante de bajo coste está mejor establecido en el mercado –en otras rutas- y es capaz de construir su red para estar más comprometido incluso con el viajero de negocios), que motivan a las compañías establecidas al aumento de su nivel de inversión publicitaria tras la entrada. De este modo, una empresa establecida tradicional endurece su reacción contra los entrantes de bajo coste, aumentando su inversión publicitaria. En suma, los costes de cambio muestran importantes efectos dinámicos en los periodos analizados.

En relación al nivel de dominación del implicado en un mercado y su efecto sobre la reacción publicitaria ante la entrada, y contrario a lo asumido en la literatura clásica (ver Fudenberg y Tirole, 1984; Borenstein, 1989; Evans y Kessides, 1993), los resultados no revelan una relación

monótona entre el nivel de dominación del implicado y su comportamiento de respuesta ante la entrada. Estas diferencias pueden derivar de que, durante el periodo 2000-2005, las empresas establecidas (principalmente grandes compañías tradicionales) disfrutaban de economías de escala y de densidad y, por tanto, tenían menor incentivo a aumentar su inversión publicitaria en respuesta a las nuevas entradas. Sin embargo, durante el segundo periodo (2006-2009) las empresas establecidas tienen mayor incentivo a aumentar su inversión publicitaria ante la entrada debido a que las importantes inversiones realizadas en los aeropuertos españoles desde 2005 por AENA permiten eliminar las restricciones de capacidad de los entrantes.

En relación a la densidad de competidores a nivel de ruta, los resultados muestran un efecto diferente antes y después de que la entrada se haya producido. Con anterioridad a la entrada, un aumento en el número de competidores genera una reducción en la inversión publicitaria de las compañías aéreas establecidas; pero, una vez la entrada se ha producido, un aumento en el número de competidores genera un aumento en la inversión publicitaria de las compañías establecidas. El efecto post-entrada de aumento de la inversión publicitaria es el asumido en nuestro trabajo, dado que un incremento en el número de competidores disminuye la cuota de mercado de las empresas establecidas, disminuye la concentración de la oferta e incentiva a las compañías establecidas a aumentar su inversión publicitaria con el objetivo de recuperar cuota de mercado (Baum y Korn, 1996; Ito y Lee, 2003). Sin embargo, este efecto post-entrada difiere del efecto pre-entrada, de reducción de la inversión publicitaria, y ello puede ser explicado porque el implicado, ante una posible entrada, intenta evitar el efecto informativo de la publicidad.

## **6. Conclusiones, implicaciones, limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación**

El estudio de los determinantes de la reacción en inversión publicitaria ante la entrada de competidores en el mercado aéreo doméstico español en el periodo 2000-2009, permite inferir diversas conclusiones. En primer lugar, el entorno institucional y de regulación incide en la reacción de las empresas establecidas, distinguiendo dos sub periodos de tiempo en el sector aéreo (2000-2005 y 2006-2009). En segundo lugar, los costes de cambio del implicado determinan su respuesta en inversión publicitaria ante la entrada, siendo este efecto moderado por el tipo de compañía aérea entrante. Tercero, la dominación de los implicados, a nivel de ruta, influye de forma diferente en su reacción en inversión publicitaria en los periodos de baja y alta presión competitiva. Finalmente, el nivel general de competencia en un mercado (ruta) determina una menor reacción en publicidad de las empresas establecidas antes de la entrada, pero esta reacción será mayor con posterioridad a la entrada.

Las implicaciones de gestión de estos resultados son las siguientes: En primer lugar, una interesante implicación para los gestores públicos es que los resultados proporcionados por el modelo de reacción competitiva ante la entrada les permite conocer la interacción competitiva en inversión publicitaria y sus principales determinantes. En el caso que nos ocupa del sector aéreo doméstico español, el conocimiento de estos factores puede permitir a los diferentes Organismos reguladores (Ej. AENA) desarrollar políticas para el fomento de la competencia y de la entrada de nuevas compañías (Ej. facilitar la entrada de nuevos operadores en los aeropuertos). Estas políticas deben tener en consideración que la posición dominante, en términos de la imagen de marca y notoriedad de las empresas establecidas y del efecto acumulativo de la publicidad (Erickson, 1985), pueden suponer una verdadera barrera de entrada para los nuevos competidores que acceden al mercado.

En segundo lugar, desde el punto de vista de los gestores de las empresas, los resultados obtenidos permiten comprender los factores que determinan la reacción en publicidad del implicado cuando se enfrenta a la entrada de un nuevo competidor. El conocimiento de la influencia de estos factores, como por ejemplo, el efecto asimétrico de los costes de cambio sobre la reacción en publicidad del implicado, y su evolución temporal, permite a los gestores la toma de decisiones sobre la inversión publicitaria más adecuada al contexto económico y al tipo de nuevo competidor que acceda a su mercado. Del mismo modo, la influencia detectada del nivel de dominación de la compañía aérea establecida sobre su reacción en inversión

publicitaria, refleja la necesidad de explotar las economías de escala y de densidad publicitarias a nivel de centro de conexión (Hub). Es decir, la estructura de destinos de una aerolínea condiciona el efecto de la reacción competitiva en publicidad, ya que permite reducir el coste marginal de comunicación por cliente.

Finalmente, como limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación destacan las siguientes: En primer lugar, y derivado de la tendencia actual a la consolidación en el sector en forma de fusiones (Ej. Iberia y British Airways en AIG en 2008) y absorciones (Vueling por Clickair – filial de Iberia- en 2009), sería interesante analizar el posible efecto moderador del grupo empresarial de pertenencia de la compañía aérea en el análisis de la reacción en inversión publicitaria ante la entrada. Ello podría revelar posibles limitaciones de la competencia. En segundo lugar, el estudio de la reacción en inversión publicitaria del implicado, distinguiendo los grupos estratégicos de entrantes en el sector aéreo, puede permitir evaluar la respuesta asimétrica en comunicación en relación al perfil estratégico de la aerolínea entrante y la establecida. Finalmente, y dado el componente agregado de la variable de reacción considerada en el estudio (inversión publicitaria a nivel de ruta), sería interesante aprovechar la riqueza de las fuentes de datos en inversión publicitaria disponibles (INFOADDEX) para analizar los componentes de dicha inversión publicitaria (Ej. inversión institucional a nivel de compañía, campañas específicas de promoción de un servicio, entre otras), lo que permitiría comprender en mejor medida la reacción competitiva en publicidad de la compañía aérea establecida.

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**Reacción publicitaria de las empresas establecidas ante la entrada al mercado: análisis de los costes de...**

**Anexo. Estimaciones finales**

Tabla 1. Estimación del modelo de reacción en inversión publicitaria<sup>1</sup> en el mercado aéreo doméstico español 2000-05 (primer periodo)

Variables independientes	Periodo relativo a la entrada																							
	t= -1			t= 0			t= +1			t= +2			t= +3			t= +4			t= +5			t= +6		
	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2
Constante <sup>2</sup>	-23969 (0,04)	-18083 (0,07)	-18083 (0,14)	20370 (0,33)	20370 (0,33)	20370 (0,33)	-368 (0,99)	10358 (0,61)	10358 (0,59)	23693 (0,33)	20833 (0,37)	20833 (0,38)	-7940 (0,51)	-10227 (0,34)	-10227 (0,38)	9702 (0,32)	10184 (0,27)	10184 (0,28)	-8171 (0,56)	-7390 (0,60)	-7390 (0,61)	17320 (0,09)	16628 (0,09)	16628 (0,13)
Coste Cambio x D1 (entrante CBC)	4199 (0,15)	2956 (0,25)	2956 (0,30)	-4916 (0,61)	-4916 (0,61)	-4916 (0,61)	-714 (0,80)	-1473 (0,61)	-1473 (0,57)	-4487 (0,32)	-5046 (0,22)	-5046 (0,26)	1451 (0,57)	1594 (0,51)	1594 (0,52)	-963 (0,71)	-988 (0,70)	-988 (0,70)	3323 (0,21)	2744 (0,29)	2744 (0,31)	-1031 (0,64)	-661 (0,75)	-661 (0,77)
Coste Cambio x D2 (entrante Reg.)	7183 (0,02)	5108 (0,07)	5108 (0,13)	-7633 (0,36)	-7633 (0,36)	-7633 (0,36)	77 (0,98)	-1540 (0,71)	-1540 (0,67)	-6696 (0,21)	-6643 (0,19)	-6643 (0,23)	-1231 (0,68)	-955 (0,72)	-955 (0,74)	-3225 (0,19)	-3312 (0,17)	-3312 (0,17)	-394 (0,88)	-578 (0,82)	-578 (0,83)	-1034 (0,97)	-413 (0,86)	-413 (0,88)
Coste Cambio x D3 (entrante Trad.)	7994 (0,03)	5366 (0,11)	5366 (0,19)	-8999 (0,20)	-8999 (0,20)	-8999 (0,20)	-4657 (0,32)	-4230 (0,39)	-4230 (0,33)	-5411 (0,29)	-5625 (0,25)	-5625 (0,28)	4986 (0,12)	4573 (0,12)	4573 (0,15)	-2781 (0,38)	-2875 (0,36)	-2875 (0,37)	-4359 (0,10)	-4420 (0,10)	-4420 (0,10)	119 (0,97)	-198 (0,94)	-198 (0,94)
D, Tamaño relativo implicado (pequeño)	19801 (0,05)	15760 (0,06)	15760 (0,12)	8279 (0,46)	8279 (0,46)	8279 (0,46)	-2389 (0,76)	-6618 (0,41)	-6618 (0,40)	624 (0,96)	-125 (0,99)	-125 (0,99)	8656 (0,41)	10924 (0,24)	10924 (0,28)	-15985 (0,04)	-15999 (0,04)	-15999 (0,04)	-6828 (0,51)	-4719 (0,65)	-4719 (0,67)	-10980 (0,30)	-12225 (0,23)	-12225 (0,30)
D, Tamaño relativo implicado (grande)	4685 (0,71)	3354 (0,78)	3354 (0,78)	14380 (0,54)	14380 (0,54)	14380 (0,54)	-12753 (0,19)	-18297 (0,07)	-18297 (0,07)	6700 (0,75)	9552 (0,62)	9552 (0,65)	10673 (0,29)	11469 (0,21)	11469 (0,22)	-2837 (0,77)	-2760 (0,78)	-2760 (0,78)	5637 (0,54)	6524 (0,48)	6524 (0,47)	-14407 (0,11)	-13306 (0,12)	-13306 (0,13)
Densidad Mercado	-4978 (0,05)	-3175 (0,13)	-3175 (0,20)	306 (0,97)	306 (0,97)	306 (0,97)	2746 (0,56)	1805 (0,72)	1805 (0,73)	-2138 (0,79)	-623 (0,93)	-623 (0,93)	-1930 (0,33)	-1680 (0,37)	-1680 (0,41)	3445 (0,09)	3296 (0,08)	3296 (0,08)	2123 (0,43)	1594 (0,54)	1594 (0,54)	-3821 (0,18)	-3088 (0,26)	-3088 (0,30)
ΔPUBLIt-1 (retardo dependiente)	-0,626 (0,00)	-0,441 (0,01)	-0,441 (0,04)	0,716 (0,50)	0,716 (0,50)	0,716 (0,50)	-1,207 (0,00)	-1,295 (0,00)	-1,295 (0,00)	0,643 (0,07)	0,547 (0,08)	0,547 (0,09)	-0,846 (0,01)	-0,715 (0,01)	-0,715 (0,01)	-0,266 (0,57)	-0,277 (0,55)	-0,277 (0,55)	-0,633 (0,07)	-0,657 (0,06)	-0,657 (0,06)	0,109 (0,66)	0,013 (0,96)	0,013 (0,96)

Tabla 2. Estimación del modelo de reacción en inversión publicitaria<sup>1</sup> en el mercado aéreo doméstico español 2006-09 (segundo periodo)

Variables independientes	Periodo relativo a la entrada																							
	t= -1			t= 0			t= +1			t= +2			t= +3			t= +4			t= +5			t= +6		
	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2	MC2E	MGM1	MGM2
Constante <sup>2</sup>	36000 (0,03)	37153 (0,02)	37153 (0,04)	52262 (0,18)	43387 (0,27)	43387 (0,23)	-26465 (0,19)	-27585 (0,16)	-27585 (0,18)	-6702 (0,87)	-6702 (0,87)	-6702 (0,87)	-4092 (0,62)	-869 (0,91)	-869 (0,94)	-5370 (0,45)	-1653 (0,78)	-1653 (0,83)	-17472 (0,00)	-16354 (0,01)	-16354 (0,01)	-27953 (0,12)	-20137 (0,23)	-20137 (0,42)
Coste Cambio x D1 (entrante CBC)	-1763 (0,35)	-2515 (0,16)	-2515 (0,20)	8423 (0,08)	9128 (0,07)	9128 (0,07)	-5804 (0,03)	-5290 (0,04)	-5290 (0,05)	1745 (0,83)	1745 (0,83)	1745 (0,83)	-1589 (0,21)	-2044 (0,09)	-2044 (0,14)	588 (0,66)	337 (0,77)	337 (0,81)	890 (0,40)	973 (0,35)	973 (0,35)	4309 (0,13)	3758 (0,16)	3758 (0,29)
Coste Cambio x D2 (entrante Reg.)	266 (0,93)	-1375 (0,61)	-1375 (0,64)	10483 (0,11)	11110 (0,11)	11110 (0,10)	-1816 (0,44)	-1504 (0,51)	-1504 (0,53)	1837 (0,55)	1837 (0,55)	1837 (0,55)	-1694 (0,23)	-2277 (0,08)	-2277 (0,16)	-2380 (0,23)	-1368 (0,40)	-1368 (0,51)	1784 (0,13)	1764 (0,13)	1764 (0,13)	5614 (0,09)	4638 (0,13)	4638 (0,29)
Coste Cambio x D3 (entrante Trad.)	602 (0,81)	-223 (0,92)	-223 (0,93)	13181 (0,08)	13270 (0,09)	13270 (0,07)	1272 (0,64)	1555 (0,56)	1555 (0,58)	601 (0,85)	601 (0,85)	601 (0,85)	107 (0,96)	-589 (0,75)	-589 (0,79)	-1297 (0,40)	-967 (0,50)	-967 (0,55)	1333 (0,41)	1685 (0,29)	1685 (0,29)	3247 (0,25)	1452 (0,56)	1452 (0,69)
D, Tamaño relativo implicado (pequeño)	-11637 (0,04)	-10215 (0,07)	-10215 (0,09)	-28667 (0,21)	-27190 (0,25)	-27190 (0,22)	11816 (0,20)	11988 (0,18)	11988 (0,19)	8493 (0,37)	8493 (0,37)	8493 (0,37)	-10407 (0,05)	-11415 (0,03)	-11415 (0,03)	-7174 (0,36)	-2484 (0,71)	-2484 (0,77)	12958 (0,03)	12062 (0,04)	12062 (0,04)	17728 (0,24)	11411 (0,42)	11411 (0,57)
D, Tamaño relativo implicado (grande)	-18406 (0,07)	-13797 (0,12)	-13797 (0,13)	-65603 (0,04)	-61693 (0,06)	-61693 (0,04)	43136 (0,00)	42558 (0,00)	42558 (0,00)	-13255 (0,75)	-13255 (0,75)	-13255 (0,75)	601 (0,95)	2315 (0,81)	2315 (0,82)	30420 (0,01)	25357 (0,02)	25357 (0,02)	13565 (0,22)	10293 (0,34)	10293 (0,34)	-18597 (0,18)	-15982 (0,22)	-15982 (0,29)
Densidad Mercado	-7256 (0,04)	-7067 (0,02)	-7067 (0,04)	-25868 (0,01)	-25004 (0,02)	-25004 (0,01)	11132 (0,00)	10898 (0,00)	10898 (0,01)	-5150 (0,76)	-5150 (0,76)	-5150 (0,76)	3747 (0,01)	3760 (0,01)	3760 (0,02)	-375 (0,87)	-1796 (0,36)	-1796 (0,45)	-268 (0,83)	-477 (0,71)	-477 (0,71)	-2127 (0,48)	-1731 (0,54)	-1731 (0,63)
ΔPUBLIt-1 (retardo dependiente)	-0,153 (0,34)	-0,253 (0,10)	-0,253 (0,36)	-3,202 (0,01)	-3,370 (0,01)	-3,370 (0,01)	-0,004 (0,98)	-0,034 (0,81)	-0,034 (0,84)	0,399 (0,73)	0,399 (0,73)	0,399 (0,73)	-0,436 (0,00)	-0,370 (0,01)	-0,370 (0,12)	-0,853 (0,00)	-0,487 (0,01)	-0,487 (0,15)	-0,269 (0,02)	-0,275 (0,01)	-0,275 (0,01)	-1,915 (0,01)	-1,767 (0,01)	-1,767 (0,07)

<sup>1</sup> MC2E: Mínimo Cuadrado en dos etapas, corrección White. MGM1: Método Generalizado de momentos, corrección White. MGM2: Método Generalizado de momentos, corrección Windmeijer.

<sup>2</sup> Grupo omitido: Dummy tamaño relativo implicado (intermedio).

P valores presentados entre paréntesis: \*significativo 10%; \*\* Significativo 5%.



# EFECTOS DE LA NORMALIZACIÓN DEL SISTEMA DE RECLAMACIONES Y QUEJAS

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## RESUMEN:

*Un sistema de dirección de reclamaciones y quejas eficaz puede ser un instrumento estratégico clave para mejorar los resultados de la empresa. Sin embargo, a pesar de los beneficios esperados es relativamente fácil encontrar organizaciones con procesos de gestión de reclamaciones incapaces de satisfacer las expectativas de los consumidores. En buena medida, este problema puede explicarse mediante la teoría de los mecanismos de defensa del personal de la empresa, que les lleva a concebir las quejas como una complicación incómoda y no como una oportunidad. Fundamentándonos en el enfoque mecanicista, en este trabajo en curso planteamos que uno de los mecanismos para superar los comportamientos defensivos es normalizar el sistema de reclamaciones y quejas. De forma más específica, tratamos de determinar la influencia que ejercen tres tipos de normas –de procedimiento, de comportamiento y de resolución– en el logro de soluciones más justas para los clientes y, por consiguiente, de una mayor satisfacción con el sistema de reclamaciones y quejas. El modelo propuesto será contrastado sobre una muestra de empresas de fabricación españolas con 50 o más empleados. Los hallazgos de este estudio servirán para recomendar a las empresas sobre qué tipo de normas han de hacer recaer el énfasis en el establecimiento de un sistema de gestión de reclamaciones y quejas para evitar situaciones de ineficiencia.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE:

*Normas de procedimiento, normas de comportamiento, normas de solución, justicia en la solución, satisfacción del cliente*

## 1. Introducción

La gestión de las reclamaciones y quejas, hasta décadas recientes, no ha sido un área de la organización que haya gozado de especial interés, ni en el ámbito académico ni en el profesional. Sin embargo, a medida que las empresas desarrollan sus actividades en mercados cada vez más maduros y competitivos, los objetivos tradicionales del marketing ofensivo, como captar nuevos clientes, promover el cambio de marca y aumentar la frecuencia de compra, son cada vez más difíciles de conseguir, por lo que es necesario compensar tales situaciones con la adopción consciente de una estrategia comercial defensiva para maximizar la retención de clientes.

En este sentido, destaca la creciente preocupación de las empresas por conocer el impacto sobre sus resultados de las estrategias de recuperación de clientes tras cometer un fallo ante el consumidor. La falta de cumplimiento de las condiciones pactadas, el pobre rendimiento del producto o un deficiente servicio postventa pueden dar lugar a una reclamación del cliente y éste dejar de serlo si percibe que

tal reclamación no ha merecido una respuesta justa por parte de los responsables de la organización. Un sistema de dirección de reclamaciones y quejas eficaz, que no sólo permita solucionar de una forma satisfactoria el descontento del consumidor sino que, tal y como prescribe el enfoque de marketing de la orientación al mercado, facilite también un mejor conocimiento de sus necesidades y el descubrimiento de nuevas oportunidades de negocio, puede ser un instrumento estratégico clave para mejorar los resultados de la empresa.

Sin embargo, a pesar de los beneficios esperados, tanto económicos como de mantenimiento de relaciones a largo plazo con el cliente, derivados de una buena gestión del sistema de reclamaciones y quejas (Goodwin y Ross, 1992; Tax et al., 1998; Smith et al., 1999), es relativamente fácil encontrar organizaciones con procesos de gestión de reclamaciones incapaces de satisfacer convenientemente las expectativas de los consumidores (Grainer et al., 2014). Homburg y Fürst (2007) trataron de dar una explicación teórica a la persistencia de este problema aludiendo a la teoría de los mecanismos de defensa del personal de la empresa, que les impide establecer un correcto contacto con los clientes insatisfechos y difundir la información procedente de ellos dentro de la propia organización debido a sus deseos de mantenerse psicológicamente alejados de las cuestiones desagradables. Así, no es extraño encontrar empresas en las que las quejas se conciben como un problema embarazoso, lo que lleva a que no se informe adecuadamente sobre dónde, cómo y ante quién pueden quejarse los clientes, se eludan responsabilidades o no se muestre una verdadera preocupación por identificar las razones de las quejas y analizar los datos de reclamaciones para identificar oportunidades de mejora. Este tipo de comportamientos defensivos de los empleados y directivos se traducen en barreras a la gestión eficiente de las reclamaciones y quejas. Aún realizando inversiones razonables en este área, las empresas pueden fracasar si no consiguen superar tales barreras (Grainer et al., 2014).

En este trabajo en curso planteamos que uno de los mecanismos para superar los comportamientos defensivos es normalizar o sistematizar el sistema de reclamaciones y quejas. Los fundamentos teóricos del estudio quedan circunscritos, por tanto, a la teoría del comportamiento organizacional que se conoce como enfoque mecanicista<sup>1</sup>. Desde tal enfoque se indica que la empresa puede mejorar el comportamiento de sus miembros mediante la implantación de normas y procedimientos operativos estandarizados que guíen sus decisiones y acciones en sintonía con los objetivos de la organización (March y Simon, 1993). Esta concepción de la empresa está basada en la idea de que es un sistema racional y, por tanto, la conducta de su personal viene determinada por elementos intencionales y coordinados desde la alta dirección (Simon, 1947). El hecho de establecer normas, estructurando y ordenando las tareas, puede ayudar a los empleados a actuar de manera más disciplinada y mejorar su atención hacia las actividades que deben desarrollar en el día a día.

Aplicado a nuestro estudio, y tomando como punto de partida el artículo de Homburg y Fürst (2005), pretendemos avanzar en el conocimiento del sistema de reclamaciones y quejas desde la perspectiva de la empresa. En general, con escasas salvedades –como Homburg y Fürst (2005) o Santos-Vijante et al. (2010)–, las investigaciones sobre tramitación de quejas se han realizado desde la perspectiva del consumidor (por ejemplo, Blodgett et al., 1993; Tax et al., 1998; Smith et al., 1999; Saxby et al., 2000; Del Río-Lanza et al., 2009). En estos trabajos, las evaluaciones de percepción de justicia del cliente se han basado en su categorización en tres dimensiones: la justicia procedimental, comportamental y distributiva. Pero, con la excepción de trabajos como los de Homburg y Fürst (2005) o Homburg et al. (2010), no se había planteado que estos tres tipos de justicia pueden tener su contraparte en el establecimiento de unas normas de procedimiento, de comportamiento y de resolución dentro del sistema de dirección de reclamaciones y quejas de la empresa. Por lo tanto, la primera aportación del trabajo es tratar de contribuir a la literatura sobre la gestión de reclamaciones y quejas estudiando el efecto específico que el establecimiento de estos tres tipos de normas –de procedimiento, de

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<sup>1</sup> Con carácter adicional a la fijación de normas o enfoque mecanicista, reconocemos la existencia de otro tipo de mecanismos para mejorar la gestión de las reclamaciones y quejas. Concretamente, la literatura considera relevante el denominado enfoque orgánico. Tal enfoque postula la importancia de crear un ambiente interno favorable al tratamiento de quejas entre los recursos humanos de la empresa y se concreta en variables como la cultura de orientación a los empleados (capacidad de decisión, formación, satisfacción) o su comportamiento extra-rol (lealtad, iniciativa propia, respuesta emocional positiva). Esta perspectiva de estudio, y sus correspondientes variables, está siendo considerada en el proyecto de investigación en el que se enmarca el presente trabajo en curso, sin embargo, con objeto de profundizar en el enfoque mecanicista, aquí únicamente se plantea la influencia de la perspectiva orgánica a efectos de control.

comportamiento y de solución de la queja– tienen en el logro de soluciones justas para los consumidores.

Por otra parte, la mayoría de la investigación empírica realizada hasta el momento sobre este tema se ha centrado en el estudio de empresas de servicios. Dos características distintivas de los servicios han podido decantar la investigación en tal sentido. La primera de ellas, la inseparabilidad entre producción y consumo, conduce a un alto grado de interacción entre cliente y empleado, lo que requiere que este último tenga que estar más preparado para responder rápida y eficientemente cuando se presenta un problema. La segunda característica, la mayor probabilidad de heterogeneidad en el servicio, hace que la percepción de riesgo de fallo aumente. Ambas circunstancias han podido contribuir a que la investigación se escorde hacia el ámbito de servicios, ya que es para este tipo de empresas para las que cabe esperar un mayor impacto del establecimiento de la fijación de normas sobre la resolución de los problemas generados en las quejas (Homburg y Fürst, 2005). Nuestro estudio, sin embargo, da un giro a lo mayoritariamente realizado hasta ahora y se propone, como segunda aportación, el análisis de los sistemas de reclamaciones de empresas fabricantes. A la vez que cubre esta laguna de investigación, testa las relaciones que se plantean en un contexto más desfavorable, lo que a la postre reforzará el valor de los efectos significativos encontrados.

Los hallazgos de este trabajo servirán para recomendar a las empresas qué tipo de normas deben enfatizar en el establecimiento de un sistema de gestión de reclamaciones y quejas. La falta de conocimiento sobre cuales son las más adecuadas para que, a través de la interacción entre el empleado y el consumidor, se consiga restaurar el daño causado al cliente y no se desaprovechen ocasiones de aprender cómo mejorar los productos, puede estar generando situaciones de ineficiencia, incluso en empresas que están haciendo fuertes inversiones y esfuerzos para mejorar su sistema de reclamaciones.

## **2. Impacto en los resultados del sistema de reclamaciones y quejas de las normas de procedimiento, comportamiento y resolución**

Como antes hemos señalado, la teoría del comportamiento que se conoce como enfoque mecanicista, prescribe la fijación de normas como vía para lograr un comportamiento eficiente. En el caso particular del diseño de un sistema de reclamaciones y quejas, y de acuerdo con Homburg y Fürst (2005), tales normas se pueden sistematizar en tres grupos: normas de procedimiento, normas de comportamiento y normas de resolución.

Homburg y Fürst (2005) definen las **normas de procedimiento** para la gestión de quejas como la existencia de una estructura organizacional formal para el registro y procesamiento de las quejas consistente con las necesidades de los clientes. Entendemos que estas normas abarcan desde la puesta a disposición del cliente de los distintos canales de recepción de la queja hasta el protocolo de tramitación y la posible intervención del cliente en el proceso y solución de la queja. Concretamente, nuestra propuesta es considerar cuatro dimensiones del constructo: la *iniciación*, la *tramitación*, la *participación del cliente en el proceso* y la *participación en la solución*.

La *iniciación* alude a los distintos mecanismos o canales de comunicación que la empresa pone a disposición del cliente para permitir que se oiga su “voz”. Estudios como los de Goodwin y Ross (1992) y Davidow y Leigh (1998) confirman el efecto positivo que ejerce la facilitación al cliente en su nivel de satisfacción. La *tramitación* implica la existencia de un protocolo de actuación rápido en materia de registro de las quejas, la clasificación en función de su origen y gravedad y la asignación de un responsable de su gestión, de tal forma que el cliente perciba el esfuerzo de la empresa por resolver el problema ocasionado. La *participación del cliente en el proceso* hace referencia a la oportunidad que se le ofrece para exponer y explicar su queja, en definitiva, a las facilidades para transmitir a la empresa su punto de vista. La oportunidad de explicar el problema incrementa las percepciones del cliente sobre el control del proceso, así lo indican algunos resultados empíricos (Goodwin y Ross, 1992). Los individuos aceptamos mejor las decisiones cuando sentimos, en cierto modo, que controlamos los procesos (Saxby et al., 2000). Finalmente, la *participación en la solución* es una oportunidad que la empresa brinda al cliente para trabajar conjuntamente en la búsqueda de una solución, teniendo en cuenta sus necesidades y deseos.

En cuanto a las **normas de comportamiento**, éstas permiten guiar las conductas de los empleados en el proceso de interacción con el cliente mediante un trato interpersonal adecuado y aportando información relevante sobre el problema objeto de la queja. Algunos estudios empíricos señalan que un estilo de interacción orientado al consumidor ayuda a incrementar la percepción de justicia del cliente (Maxham y Netemeyer, 2003) y su satisfacción (por ejemplo, Smith y Bolton, 1998; McCollough et al., 2000). Tomando como base su definición, componemos este constructo a partir dos dimensiones: el *trato interpersonal* y el *nivel de explicación* que da la empresa al cliente.

El *trato interpersonal* es un elemento esencial en la interacción con el cliente en la medida en que los empleados muestran una atención personal, cortesía y empatía con el problema. La inclusión de los factores de interacción puede explicar por qué algunas personas pueden sentir injustamente tratados a pesar de que el resultado para el consumidor pueda ser justo (Bies y Shapiro, 1987). El *nivel de explicación* indica el esfuerzo que realiza la organización para proporcionar información de interés para el consumidor sobre por qué se ha producido el fallo (Greenberg, 1993). Cuando las explicaciones recibidas permiten al cliente entender que el problema no es algo que normalmente ocurre, entonces hay una mayor probabilidad de recuperación del fallo cometido (Blodgett et al., 1997).

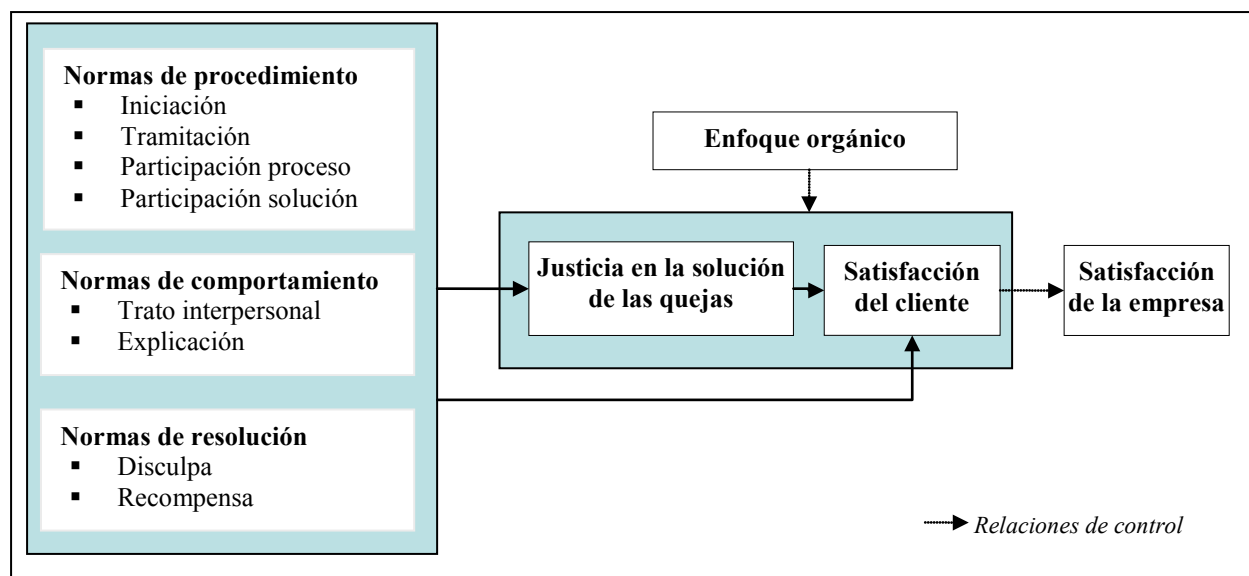
El tercer bloque de normas se refiere a las **normas de resolución**, es decir, al conjunto de compensaciones tangibles y psicológicas que la empresa otorgará al cliente por el daño ocasionado. La explicación proporcionada al cliente –que se prescribe como una norma adecuada de comportamiento–, puede ser un medio insuficiente para mantener o recuperar su favor. Recompensas como la reparación, el cambio, el descuento o el reembolso (Kelley et al., 1993) o, al menos, una disculpa, pueden ser necesarias para percibir que la solución es justa. Dos son, por tanto, las dimensiones que contemplamos en este constructo: la *disculpa* y la *recompensa*.

Según Davidow (2000), la *disculpa* es un tipo de compensación psicológica. A diferencia de las excusas y las justificaciones, la disculpa tiene por finalidad informar al cliente de que la organización acepta la responsabilidad del evento ocurrido y, además, expresa su pesar sincero por ello (Conlon y Murray, 1996). Su importancia es tal que hay investigaciones centradas en la disculpa como única compensación (Hoffman et al., 1995; Boshoff, 1997; Webster y Sundaram, 1998). La *recompensa* la definimos como una compensación adicional más allá de la solución aportada al cliente. Es una manera de indemnizarle económicamente –bien de forma directa (rebajas en el precio o pago de una indemnización) bien de forma indirecta (vales de descuento, puntos canjeables...)– por los perjuicios ocasionados.

A partir de estas variables, se propone un modelo que, desde una perspectiva de empresa y con un enfoque mecanicista, tiene como primer objetivo explicar si la normalización del sistema de dirección de reclamaciones y quejas influye, en primer lugar, en la percepción de justicia en las soluciones aportadas a los clientes y, en segundo lugar y como consecuencia de ello, en su satisfacción con el sistema. Además, como segundo objetivo, nos proponemos establecer la importancia relativa de cada tipo de norma en la explicación de la justicia de las soluciones. Algunas de estas normas, a pesar de ser necesarias a efectos organizativos, podrían no ser fuente de satisfacción en el consumidor, o no ser tan importantes como otras. Finalmente, y como tercer objetivo, trataremos de conocer en qué medida la justicia en la solución aportada media total o parcialmente la relación entre las normas –de procedimiento, comportamiento y resolución– y la satisfacción del consumidor. Es decir, trataremos de determinar qué tipos de normas pueden ser motivo de satisfacción más allá de que se consiga o no una solución justa para el consumidor.

Junto a las relaciones principales mostradas en la Figura 1, a modo de control, en el trabajo se plantea que la satisfacción del cliente ha de traducirse en una mayor satisfacción de la empresa. Adicionalmente y como indicábamos en la introducción, también se incluyen como variables de control aquellas propuestas desde el enfoque orgánico con objeto de determinar en qué medida la explicación mecanicista mantiene su relevancia en presencia de tales variables.

FIGURA 1  
Modelo propuesto



Fuente: Elaboración a partir de Tax et al. (1998), Davidow (2003), Maxham y Netemeyer (2003), Homburg y Fürst (2005) y Homburg et al. (2010).

### 3. Metodología

Tal y como se indicó en la introducción, la investigación sobre la gestión de reclamaciones y quejas se ha centrado más en el ámbito de los servicios, por lo que, ante la escasez de estudios en el ámbito de las empresas manufactureras, el modelo propuesto se contrastará en una muestra de empresas de fabricación de productos de consumo e industriales que asuman todas o la mayor parte de las tareas asociadas a la gestión de reclamaciones. A partir de la base Amadeus (actualizada el 28 de octubre de 2013), se ha seleccionado como universo de población un conjunto de empresas fabricantes españolas con 50 o más empleados pertenecientes a los siguientes sectores (con su correspondiente código NACE entre paréntesis): alimentación (10), bebida (11), tabaco (12), textil (13), prendas de vestir (14), cuero y calzado (15), industria del papel (17), artes gráficas (18), industria química (20), productos farmacéuticos (21), productos de caucho y plásticos (22), productos informáticos, electrónicos y ópticos (26), material y equipo eléctrico (27), equipos de transporte (29), muebles (21) y otras industrias manufactureras (32). La selección de un amplio y variado número de sectores tiene la ventaja de hacer posible la generalización de los resultados más allá de la idiosincrasia que se pudiera atribuir a alguno de ellos. De acuerdo con los datos de Amadeus, el universo de población considerado para este trabajo está constituido por 2.536 empresas.

Para la obtención de los datos necesarios para la investigación empírica se ha elaborado un cuestionario para cuya distribución se están utilizando simultáneamente varios canales. En primer lugar, se envió a todas las empresas del universo de población el cuestionario vía postal, junto con una carta de presentación del estudio y una dirección web a la que podían acceder aquellos destinatarios que preferían cumplimentar el cuestionario online. La carta iba dirigida al director de marketing, si bien se indicaba que el cuestionario y la información de la investigación debían cumplimentarla en cada empresa el máximo responsable de las cuestiones relacionadas con la gestión de las reclamaciones y quejas. Posteriormente, se inició una ronda de llamadas a una selección aleatoria de empresas que aún no habían respondido. A aquellas que acceden a colaborar se les envía por correo electrónico la presentación de la investigación y el cuestionario en formato Word que pueden cumplimentar y devolver online o por correo electrónico.

La recogida de información se inició en el mes de noviembre y continuará hasta que se reúna una muestra suficientemente amplia. A fecha 25 de abril de 2014 se han conseguido 123 respuestas válidas. Puesto que el cuestionario contiene una pregunta filtro en la que se pide al responsable de marketing que conteste sólo si en su empresa la gestión de las reclamaciones y quejas no está

subcontratada en su mayor parte, desconocemos qué número de las 2.536 empresas integran realmente nuestro universo de población (es decir, superan esta pregunta filtro porque asumen la gestión de las reclamaciones y quejas que recibe su empresa). Además, se ha observado que en la base Amadeus aparecen registros que corresponden a distintas empresas filiales que pertenecen a un mismo grupo o corporación y que muy posiblemente tienen centralizada la gestión de reclamaciones. Por todo ello, resulta difícil determinar la tasa de respuestas efectiva.

Como hemos señalado en la presentación de este estudio, a pesar de la abundante cantidad de investigaciones sobre el tratamiento de reclamaciones y quejas, son escasos los trabajos realizados desde la perspectiva de la organización. Por tanto, el proceso de adaptación de las escalas –en una buena parte tomadas de estudios realizados desde la óptica del consumidor– ha sido profundo. En la Tabla 1 se pueden ver los ítems concretos utilizados para la medición de los constructos de nuestro modelo. Los principales trabajos en los que nos hemos basado para desarrollar los instrumentos de medida utilizados son los de Tax et al. (1998), Smith et al. (1999) y Homburg y Fürst (2005).

TABLA 1  
Medición de los constructos<sup>1</sup>

VARIABLES	ÍTEMS
<b>Normas de procedimiento</b>	
Iniciación	Ponemos a disposición del cliente varios canales de recepción de quejas. Algunos canales de recepción están disponibles 24 horas. Informamos al cliente sobre dónde, cómo y a quién hay que presentar la queja.
Tramitación	Confirmamos rápidamente al cliente que nos ha llegado su queja. Todas las quejas, tanto por escrito como verbales, quedan registradas en un sistema informático. Todas las quejas se ordenan y clasifican en función del origen y la gravedad del problema. En cuanto se recibe una queja asignamos un responsable de su gestión. Las quejas son transmitidas rápidamente a sus responsables cuando el personal de contacto con el cliente no las puede resolver.
Participación del cliente en el proceso	Permitimos que el cliente se explique sobre la queja. Le damos la oportunidad de exponer todos los detalles. Escuchamos su punto de vista sobre el problema ocasionado.
Participación del cliente en la solución	A la hora de establecer la solución tenemos en cuenta las necesidades del cliente. Consultamos al cliente sobre las posibles soluciones. Empresa y cliente trabajamos conjuntamente en la búsqueda de una solución a la reclamación presentada.
<b>Normas de comportamiento</b>	
Trato interpersonal	El personal de atención al cliente dispensa un trato amable al cliente cuando formula la queja. El personal se preocupa por el problema del cliente. Los encargados de la gestión de la queja tienen capacidades de empatía con el cliente.
Nivel Explicación	Proporcionamos al cliente una explicación razonada sobre las causas del problema que originó la queja. Damos respuesta precisa a todas aquellas cuestiones planteadas en la queja del cliente.
<b>Normas de resolución</b>	
Disculpa	Siempre reconocemos nuestra culpa frente al cliente cuando estimamos que su queja es razonable. Cuando ocurre un fallo, aceptamos nuestra responsabilidad y se lo hacemos saber al cliente. Además de solucionar el problema que originó la queja, siempre nos disculpamos ante el cliente.
Recompensa	Más allá de la solución, ofrecemos al cliente una recompensa económica directa (rebajas en el precio, indemnización...).
	Más allá de la solución, ofrecemos al cliente una recompensa económica indirecta (vales descuento, puntos canjeables...).
<b>Justicia en la solución de la queja</b>	
Justicia en la solución de las quejas	Proporcionamos una solución a la queja acorde con las necesidades del cliente. Las soluciones dadas al cliente son justas. Nos esforzamos para ofrecer una solución satisfactoria.
<b>Satisfacción del cliente con el sistema de reclamaciones y quejas</b>	
Satisfacción del cliente	Satisfacción con el procedimiento de presentación de la queja. Satisfacción con el trato recibido. Satisfacción con la solución aportada por la empresa. Satisfacción con el sistema general que se utiliza para resolver las reclamaciones y quejas.
<b>Satisfacción de la empresa con el sistema de reclamaciones y quejas</b>	
Satisfacción de la empresa	Grado de satisfacción global de la empresa con el sistema de reclamaciones y quejas

<sup>1</sup> Para la medición de todas las escalas se ha utilizado una escala Likert de 1 a 7, en la 1 significa “desacuerdo” y 7 “acuerdo”, excepto para el ítem “satisfacción global de la empresa con el sistema de reclamaciones y quejas”, para el que 1 denota “muy bajo” y 7 “muy alto”.

#### 4. Resultados preliminares

Aunque no ha finalizado la fase de recogida de datos, se han ejecutado algunos análisis preliminares con las respuestas recibidas. Concretamente, se ha llevado a cabo un análisis factorial exploratorio que ha permitido comprobar que los indicadores de medida se estructuran en una serie de factores que se corresponden bastante bien con los constructos teóricos considerados en nuestro modelo.

Asimismo, se ha realizado una primera tentativa de estimación del modelo propuesto mediante la técnica de Partial Least Squares (PLS) y los resultados indican que los tres tipos de normas contribuyen a explicar la justicia en la solución de las quejas y, por esa vía, la satisfacción de los clientes con el sistema de reclamaciones y quejas. Ahora bien, se observan diferencias en la importancia que tienen los distintos tipos de normas y sus correspondientes dimensiones.

En cuanto a las normas de procedimiento, la participación de los clientes en el proceso de planteamiento de la queja y en la búsqueda de una solución parece influir positivamente, mientras que la iniciación y las normas de tramitación no tienen incidencia en los resultados del sistema. Por su parte, las normas de comportamiento tienen un efecto notable sobre la percepción de justicia de los clientes. Respecto a las normas de solución, parece que es la disculpa la que más influye sobre las variables dependientes, mientras que la recompensa económica de las reclamaciones recibidas, con carácter general, no tiene un impacto significativo e incluso los resultados apuntan a que pueden tener un efecto negativo en la justicia de la solución de las quejas.

Aunque, obviamente, aún no podemos ser muy concluyentes en la interpretación de estos primeros resultados empíricos, también se aprecian algunas relaciones directas significativas sobre la satisfacción del cliente con el sistema, lo que apunta a la existencia de efectos de mediación parcial e incluso efectos de supresión (efectos directos e indirectos de signo contrario) que conllevarían implicaciones para la gestión muy interesantes. Un análisis de ecuaciones estructurales más riguroso nos permitirá comprender mejor qué tipo de relaciones se dan entre los distintos tipos de normas y la justicia de las soluciones aportadas a las quejas y la satisfacción de los clientes con el sistema de reclamaciones. Habrá que determinar qué tipo de técnica –análisis basado en las covarianzas, CBSEM, o en la varianza, PLS– es más adecuada a tenor de la muestra final con la que se realice el análisis empírico.

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# MANAGING CUSTOMER INITIATED CONTACTS: THE IMPACT ON CUSTOMER PROFITABILITY

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## ABSTRACT

*Nowadays, customers frequently initiate contacts with the company because they become more involved in activities that previously were exclusively reserved for the firm: promoting the brand, suggesting ideas for new products, deciding on logos, etc. Thus, the growing importance of customers inside the domain of value creation changes the rules of the game in customer-firm interactions. Companies are now looking for ways to manage this new stage in customer-firm interactions and they are trying to take more control over customer behaviors with the aim at improving customer profitability. Therefore, our study aims at analyzing whether the proactivity of customers that frequently initiate the contact may be profitable for the firm. In addition, according to social exchange theory, we analyze the moderating role of customer trust in the relationship between customer initiated contacts (CICs) and customer profitability. The framework will be empirically tested applying linear regression techniques to longitudinal data for a sample of 1998 customers in the financial services industry.*

## Keywords:

Customer initiated contacts, customer interactions, transactional behaviors, customer profitability, customer trust.

## 1. Introduction

Traditionally, marketing communication activities mainly focused on pushing messages on to customers (Shankar and Malhotra, 2007; Wiesel, Pauwels and Arts, 2011). However, these firm-initiated contacts (FICs) understood as those interactions or contacts that the company initiates in order to communicate with their customers, are increasingly unwanted by customers and less effective at improving profitability (Blattberg et al., 2008; Wiesel, Pauwels and Arts, 2011).

In contrast to FICs, customer-initiated contacts (CICs) understood as any communication with a company that is initiated by a customer (Bowman and Narayandas, 2001), are an important source of information about customers' concerns, preferences, tastes and questions (Ramani and Kumar, 2008). These customers' contacts are really valuable for firms and companies view CICs as an opportunity to increase customer profitability (Bowman and Narayandas, 2001).

This is because nowadays customers frequently initiate the contact with the company. They become more involved in activities that previously were exclusively reserved for the firm (Beckers et al., 2013). Customers are involved "promoting the brand, suggesting ideas for new products, choosing advertising copy, deciding on logos, and even reacting to competitive actions" (Libai, 2011: p. 275) and the most proactive customers adopt the role of being co-creators of value for companies (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). This new reality means that "firms no longer control marketing, but rather customers define what a company is (and is not)" (Leeflang 2011, p.78). Thus, the growing importance of customers inside the domain of value creation changes the rules of the game in customer-firm interactions.

Companies are now looking for ways to manage this new stage in customer-firm interactions. Godes et al. (2005), for instance, identify some approaches that companies can take when dealing with social interactions ranging from re-active to pro-active. These approaches are observing the occurring interactions, moderating the interactions by fostering them, mediating the interactions by controlling the information flow to customers, and actively participating and even creating these interactions themselves (Godes and Mayzlin, 2009). In practice, it is observed that many companies try to take more control over customer behaviors with the aim at improving customer profitability.

Regarding CICs, prior research has focused primarily on customer complaints demonstrating the importance of encouraging and managing them (Fornell and Wernerfelt, 1988). However, the limited research on CICs other than complaints also emphasizes the overall importance of CICs. Smith, Bolton, and Wagner (1999) are among the researchers who have discussed the need to generalize knowledge of customer-firm contact beyond the domain of complaints, which represent a modest percentage of CICs. Therefore, in this study we focus on CICs beyond the domain of complaints and we mainly aim at measuring whether these CICs may be profitable for firms. Are the more proactive customers more profitable? Is determinant the company's management of these CICs? To what extent companies can manage CICs to improve customer profitability? In this study, we attempt to answer these questions. To do so, we aim (1) to deepen the influence of CICs on customer profitability distinguishing between economic and non-economic CICs and, (2) to analyze the role of trust in the relationship between CICs and transactional customer behaviors, according to social exchange theory.

The remainder of this manuscript is organized as follows. In the next section, we describe the literature review about CICs. Subsequently, we show the conceptual model and present the research hypotheses that relate different types of CICs to customer profitability, taking into account the moderating role of customer trust. Finally, we discuss the research methodology and describe the data that we will use to empirically test and validate our model.

## **2. Literature review of customer contacts**

Interactions are the starting point of the relationship (Dwyer, Schurr and Oh, 1987). Depending on the customer's perception about the company's investment in the relationship, the customer's evaluation about the company can be reinforced. Some of these interactions may become critical incidents -or trigger events-. They are defined as "interaction incidents, which the customer perceives or remembers as unusually positive or negative when asked about them" (Roos, 2002; p.194). Literature evidences that trigger events lead to five specific responses: a reevaluation, a change in standards level, an emotional response, a change in values, and a behavioral change – product/service use- (Fisher et al., 1996). Therefore, interactions are critical for the company because they may affect customer emotions and customer behaviors among others. So, as contacts are extremely important in a relationship marketing context, and may generate different reactions in customers, we want to consider these interactions as the starting point of our framework.

Although companies have traditionally tried to establish frequent contacts with their customers (FICs) with the aim at building solid and profitable relationships with them, currently, companies have to accurately manage CICs (Wiesel, Pauwels and Arts, 2011). In our research we propose to focus on CICs as a key driver of transactional customer behavior because of different reasons. Firstly, FICs are not always well perceived. De Wulf et al. (2001) find that companies' efforts to enhance relationships are not always positively perceived by customers due to some customers do not value the feeling of distinctiveness (Butori and De Bruyn, 2013). Secondly, CICs are more important than FICs for companies because the customer indicates some interest in the firm by this act and customer effort reduces the marketing costs of the firm (Berger et al., 2002). Thirdly, empirical studies report a much higher sales elasticity for CICs than FICs (Sarner and Herschel, 2008; Wiesel, Pauwels and Arts, 2011). This is because existing or prospective customers are more attentive to information that is directly relevant to what they are searching for, while FICs often reaches them at the wrong time and with a suboptimal message (Wiesel, Pauwels and Arts, 2011). Therefore, CICs are critical for the company because they may increase the efficiency and profitability of the company.

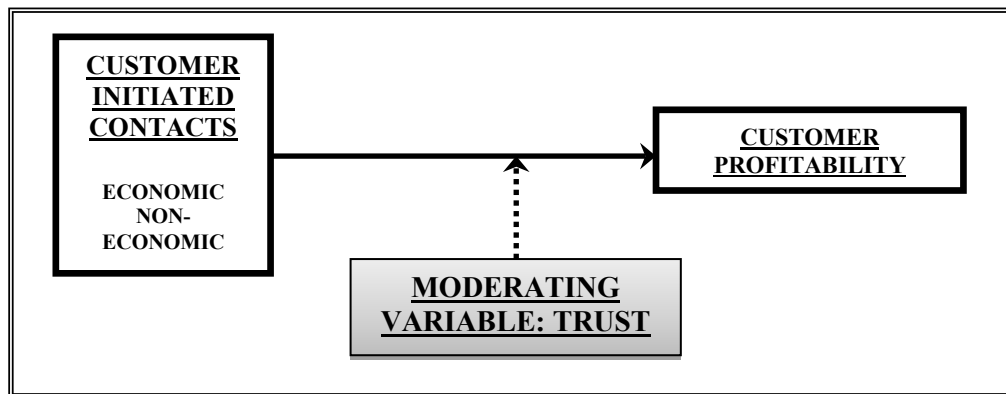
In addition, although much prior research has focused solely on complaints, Bowman and Narayandas (2001) and Bolton (1998) show how the fraction of non-complaints in a sample of CICs was higher than the percentage of complaints (approximately a 60% were classified as inquiries). Goodman, Fichman, Lerch and Snyder (1995) for example, found that responsiveness to customer inquiries influences not only their overall satisfaction, but also their evaluation of a firm's core product. Hence, empirical research suggests analyzing the differential processing of CICs. Thus, we examine a broader set of CICs than just complaints and we categorize them into economic vs. non-economic CICs in line with Gelbrich and Roschk (2011).

## **3. Conceptual framework**

Theoretical support for a link between interactions and customer transactional behaviors is provided by social exchange theory (SET). This theory is based on the reciprocity principle (Palmatier et al., 2009; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; DeWulf et al., 2001) and identifies conditions under which people feel obligated to reciprocate behaviors or actions when they receive some benefit from others (Groth, 2005; Mahn and Jaebeom, 2003). An exchange requires a bidirectional transaction –something has to be given and something returned-. This is precisely what Bagozzi (1995) postulated: that investments made by one party in a relationship generate the desire to reciprocate in the other party which, in turn, motivates investment in the relationship in order to avoid the guiltiness for not having corresponded to the initial investment action.

Applying SET is also interesting because it reflects a customer-firm process (Schiele et al., 2012). SET considers the relationship initiation and the evolvement of this start. In this sense, as we use longitudinal data over a two-year period, SET enables us to understand the consequences in terms of reciprocity and trust of these initial interactions. Thus, the conceptual framework intends to provide new insights into the measurements of different kinds of CICs (economic vs. non-economic customer contacts) and their consequences for firms in terms of customer profitability. In addition, according to social exchange theory, we identify one key relational characteristic (trust) as a moderating variable in the relationship between CICs and transactional behaviors (FIGURE 1).

FIGURE 1  
Conceptual framework



CICs especially differ depending on the type of contact (Bowman and Narayandas, 2001). In line with the work of Gelbrich and Roschk (2011), we identify two main types of CICs: economic and non-economic. Economic CICs refer to interactions that have financial implications and non-economic CICs refer to service contacts or just informational contacts regarding the company's products and services which have no financial implications. The proactivity of these customers can lead to transactional customer behaviors after these CICs. Thus, we expect a positive influence of both types of CICs on customer profitability.

However, the different type of contact that the customer initiates (economic vs. non-economic), may lead to significant differences in outcome levels (i.e. customer profitability). The perceived risk, understood as a consumer's belief about the potential uncertain negative outcomes from the transaction, has been found to influence customer decisions (Kim et al., 2008). Economic CICs have more risk because they lead to financial implications. Hence, the positive customer response -in terms of profitability- after an economic interaction can be greater than in other case. Specifically, we propose:

**H1:** *Economic CICs will have a positive influence on customer profitability.*

**H2:** *Non-economic CICs will have a positive influence on customer profitability.*

**H3:** *Economic CICs will have a higher positive influence on customer profitability than non-economic CICs.*

According to social exchange theory, the level of trust between the customer and the company is essential to develop a certain feeling of reciprocity. Trust has been defined as "the willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence" (Moorman et al., 1992; p. 315). When customers have trust in the company, interactions become easier because customers feel greater security to the transaction and it reduces customer uncertainty and vulnerability (Berry, 1995). Trust creates benefit for the customer in terms of relationship efficiency through decreased transaction costs (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). If these interactions achieve to develop trust, customers will have good reasons to remain in the relationship, because relationships based on trust and reciprocity will often develop (Groth, 2005). Thus, we propose that the

higher the level of trust, the greater the positive influence of CICs on customer profitability. However, for economic CICs, we expect that trust has a higher positive impact in the relationship between these CICs and customer profitability than for non-economic CICs. As this type of contacts has more risk, the level of trust will make the customer feel greater security and peace during the interaction and that can lead to future transactional customer behaviors more often than for non-economic CICs. In addition, Bowman and Narayandas (2001) show how relevant are customer characteristics as moderating variables inside of the specific factors of CICs. Therefore, we test in our conceptual framework trust as a key moderating variable in the relationship between economic and non-economic CICs and transactional behaviors. Specifically, we propose:

*H1a: The higher the level of trust toward the firm, the greater the positive impact of economic CICs on customer profitability.*

*H2a: The higher the level of trust toward the firm, the greater the positive impact of non-economic CICs on customer profitability.*

*H3a: The level of trust will have a higher positive impact in the relationships between economic CICs and customer profitability than in the relationships between non-economic CICs and customer profitability.*

#### **4. Methodology**

In this study, we test our conceptual framework on the financial services industry. The international financial system currently faces a great uncertainty resulting from both zero economic growth prospects in the short term and the problems of European banks to obtain funding. Thus, resources invested by companies in managing CICs should be optimally allocated to generate growth and a good return on this investment. It is important for firms to develop a strategy to effectively manage them in order to increase customer profitability.

To carry out this research, we use data from a major bank in a European country. The bank sells financial products in different categories (e.g. certificates of deposit, savings accounts, mortgages) to individual customers (B2C). The financial services company provided a sample of customers who had operated with the company between March 2011 and March 2013. After removing customers with incomplete information or missing values in some of our key variables, we have an effective sample size of 1998 customers with monthly information. For these customers, we have access to two sets of information: (1) interactions-related data, which offers information about the number and type of CICs (economic vs. non-economic); and (2) transactional data, which includes customer margin, service usage, and additional customer-level information (including demographics). With this information, we will develop an econometric model (linear regression with panel data) to empirically test the proposed conceptual framework and its associated hypotheses. To estimate our proposed model we will employ the software Stata 10.

#### **5. Conclusions**

In this research, we try to provide a comprehensive conceptual framework for managing CICs to increase profitability. In the proposed framework, we describe two different types of CICs and analyze to what extent they affect customer profitability. The study findings will enable us to contribute to existing marketing literature in several critical ways. Firstly, we focus on analyzing CICs -instead of FICs- which are more effective and profitable for companies. Secondly, we identify two different types of CICs (economics and non-economics) beyond complaints. And, thirdly, we analyze their impact on customer profitability taking into account the moderating role of trust according to social exchange theory.

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# MULTIMARKET RIVALRY: HOW STRATEGIC GROUPS ACT WITHIN AND ACROSS MARKETS?

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## RESUMEN

*Our study examines multimarket rivalry of strategic groups defined according to the size of their member firms in banking. We hypothesize that, owing to group-level effects, including efficiency, standardization and funding, groups comprising large firms expect no retaliation from firms within their group in any market, while the rivalry will be of a dominant-fringe type between groups when the actions take place in the loan market and of a leader-follower type when competition is measured in the deposit market. We will carry out an estimation of the effect of group interactions (rivalry) in markets on firm performance.*

**Palabras clave:** *multimarket rivalry, strategic groups, firm size.*



## **INTRODUCCIÓN**

Strategic groups are relevant to explain the persistence of profits or of competitive interactions between firms of an industry (Peteraf, 1993). Research has evolved since the original analysis of whether rivalry is greater between members of different groups than between members of the same group (Porter, 1979; Hatten and Hatten, 1987), until studies that analyze how groups act competitively (Smith, Grimm, and Wally, 1997). In any case, these studies do not incorporate multimarket contact on firm behavior, thereby impeding a better understanding of firms' competitive behavior.

We study the presence of asymmetric rivalry within and between size-defined strategic groups across markets by estimating the effect of group-level strategic interactions on firm performance through a model based on the New Empirical Industrial Organization (NEIO) framework. We analyze the Spanish bank loans and deposits markets between 1992 and 2004, using the approach of Dranove et al. (1998) as well as the history of the industry (Peteraf, 1993) to identify strategic groups according to firm size (see in Mas-Ruiz et al. (2014) the strategic groups in Spanish banking).

## **THEORY AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

From a point of view of multimarket rivalry, most of the previous research defines a strategic group of an industry according to strategic similarity between firms, and analyzes mutual forbearance hypothesis (Edwards, 1955), which predicts that as the number of multimarket contacts between a pair of firms increases, the rivalry between them across markets decreases. However, these studies do not examine “spoiling” conduct (Areeda and Turner, 1979), which suggests collusion in some markets but rivalry in others as a result of multimarket contact. In addition, the empirical support to mutual forbearance hypothesis has been inconsistent (Guedri and McGuire, 2011), which has been explained because strategic similarity and multimarket contact are two substitutive mechanisms fostering mutual forbearance (Young, Smith, Grimm and Simon, 2000). These two mechanisms rest on two different processes, resources versus markets respectively, and could have opposite effects on the intensity of rivalry (Gimeno and Woo, 1996): multimarket contact will reduce the number of moves that a firm will take (Edwards, 1955), while that resource dissimilarity will increase the number of moves that a firm will take (Caves and Porter, 1977). In brief, researchers suggest that the main question relates to the way of identification of strategic group and to how work the linkages across specific markets.

Accordingly, we analyze how size-defined strategic groups act competitively in two different markets, loan and deposit, but related for the whole banking industry, in order to see how firm size affects group behavior not only in a single market, but across markets as well. We argue that firm size serves as a determinant of that group's behavior within and across markets through the effects of efficiency, standardization and access to sources of funding. Funding and operating cost advantages of large banks intensify their competition for loans in comparison to the smaller banks while the advantage of wholesale funding of large banks allows them to not compete aggressively for deposits, which are a more expensive funding source (Park and Pennacchi, 2009). It would show a “spoiling” conduct. But, major competition in the loans market could lead a large bank to “forbear” as a way to avoid a retaliation from its own group in the deposit market; retaliation that would entail a high cost for large firms disposing a cheaper source of wholesale funding.

According to Park and Pennacchi (2009), and at the level of size-defined strategic groups, the efficiency, the standardization and the access to sources of funding, support a stronger reaction of large firms for loans and a lower reaction of large firms for deposits. But, we

expect to find that the multimarket rivalry is of the “mutual forbearance” type within the group of large firms in any market, and of the “spoiling” type where the asymmetric rivalry will be of a “dominant-fringe” type between size-defined strategic groups in the loans market as well as of a “leader-follower” type in the deposits market. On this basis, group-level effects (efficiency, standardization and access to sources of funding) may explain the asymmetrical rivalry within and between size-defined groups across the loans and deposits markets. Thus, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1a: The members of the group comprising large firms in the loans market expect to experience no reaction from other members of their group and accommodation from the members of strategic groups comprising smaller firms in any market.

H1b: The members of the group comprising smaller firms in the loans market expect to experience a strong retaliation from the members of the strategic group comprising large firms and accommodation from the other members of their own group in any market.

H2a: The members of the group comprising large firms in the deposit market expect to experience no reaction from other members of their group and a small amount of retaliation from the members of strategic groups comprising smaller firms in any market.

H2b: The members of the group comprising smaller firms in the deposit market expect to experience accommodation from the members of the strategic group comprising large firms and a large amount of retaliation from the other members of their own group in any market.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study attempts to analyze the oligopolistic behavior of banks selling their products in two different markets (loans and deposits), but common to the whole banking industry. The most appropriate models to characterize this situation are those assuming imperfect competition with product differentiation. These models introduce the possibility that firm’s quantity decisions depend on the actions of their rivals, as well as the existence of product differentiation derived from the market that supplies each entity has different characteristics from the rest.

We apply the theory-based empirical approach of Dranove et al. (1998) to identify distinct group-level effects across markets. It considers that a strategic group exists if the performance of a firm in the group is a function of group characteristics, controlling for firm and industry characteristics. In this way, the approach must allow us to distinguish between “true” (group-level) effects and “spurious” (firm or industry-level) effects. Specifically, considering a set of multiproduct firms and taking in mind the underlying idea that group-level interactions (derived from the size of their members) affect firm performance, we implement a model based on the NEIO framework to determining whether a strategic group exists in the real. Through estimating conjectural variations (see Amit et al., 1988) based on strategic interactions, this model lets us to test for the existence of multimarket and asymmetric rivalry within and between strategic groups defined according to the size of their members. Basically, conjectural variations reflect agents’ adaptation of their expectations about a firm’s strategic behaviors as a function of past experience.

To estimate our proposal, we take the work of Carbó et al. (2009) as the starting point. We develop a model which simultaneously considers the specifications of cost, demand, and rivals’ reactions. We consider a set of firms,  $i=1, \dots, n$ ; two different markets, deposits and loans, where these  $n$  firms are interacting, and also a purchased funds or money market (M) where banks are price-takers. To better illustrate the econometric method underlying this paper, we expose the three main specifications separately.

Cost specification: As the implementation of our model requires the description of the cost structure for each bank, we assume a cost function ( $c_{it}$ ) affected by quantity of loan and deposit outputs of bank  $i$ , as well as the price of their input factors  $w_{it}$ :

$$c_{it} = c(l_{it}, d_{it}, w_{it}) \quad (1)$$

Where  $l_{it}$  is the demand for loans, and  $d_{it}$  is the supply of deposits at time  $t$ . As the marginal cost of the firm is part of this analysis, this study considers a translog function, since it deals with both scale and scope economies in multiproduct firms.

Demand specification: With product differentiation and multimarket competition, the inverse demand for loans ( $r_{it}^l$ ) and for deposits ( $r_{it}^d$ ) at time  $t$  is a function of the bank's own ( $l_{it}$ ,  $d_{it}$ , respectively) and its rivals' ( $l_{jt}$ ,  $d_{jt}$ ;  $j=1, \dots, n$ ,  $j \neq i$ ) demands on these interest rates, and a vector of exogenous factors influencing the overall demand for loans and deposits ( $z_{it}^l$ ,  $z_{it}^d$ ):

$$r_{it}^l = r^l(l_{it}, l_{jt}, d_{jt}, z_{it}^l); j = 1, \dots, n, j \neq i \quad (2)$$

$$r_{it}^d = r^d(d_{it}, d_{jt}, l_{jt}, z_{it}^d); j = 1, \dots, n, j \neq i \quad (3)$$

The estimation of the equations (2) and (3) becomes affected by the availability of degrees of freedom given the high number of banks in our sample. Strategic groups overcome this complication, assuming that the loans and deposits markets are composed by  $n$  financial firms, which can be ranked by output size and formed into two mutually exclusive strategic groups.

In order to operationalize these groups, we replace the  $(n-1)$  individual rivals' loans and deposits demands terms with two (one per strategic group) condensed measures. These condensed measures can be computed, following Carbó et al. (2009), as two weighted averages of the rivals' quantity outputs, taking into account the regional context of competition. In other words, the average values of loans quantities for strategic groups I and II ( $l_I$  and  $l_{II}$ ) and of deposits quantities for strategic groups I and II ( $d_I$  and  $d_{II}$ ) are calculated for each one of the banks in order to express the output of all of the other banks competing in the same geographical area in each one of the strategic groups. In this way, and for each one of the markets, loans and deposits, each bank faces two different weighted rivals whose dimension are the average dimension of the banks compelling each strategic group. We justify our use of these measures by the fact that the intensity of competition (and of the consequent rivals' response) may be stronger and better locally identified within regional markets (Carbó et al. 2009).

Rivals' reactions specification: Finally, each firm will try to maximize its profits ( $\pi_{it}$ ):

$$\pi_{it} = \left( r_{it}^l(l_{it}, d_{jt}, l_{jt}, z_{it}^l) - \bar{r}_t \right) l_{it} + \left( \bar{r}_t - r_{it}^d(d_{it}, l_{jt}, d_{jt}, z_{it}^d) \right) d_{it} - c_{it}(l_{it}, d_{it}, w_{it}) \quad (4)$$

The results of maximizing this profit function will let us to estimate the conjectural variation

$$CV_{I,I}^{LL} = \frac{\partial l_{it}}{\partial l_{it}}, \forall i \in h = I$$

parameters. Regarding these parameters, is the reaction in the loans quantity of firms belonging to the strategic group I to an initial loans quantity move of firm  $i$ . That is, this parameter is measuring the competitive interaction within strategic group I in the loans market. The same interpretation can be made in the rest of conjectural variation parameters.

We empirically implement our model by estimating it in two stages. In the first stage, we estimate the operating cost function for full information maximum likelihood. We then use the estimated parameters to express the marginal cost for each bank  $i$ . In the second stage, we use these estimates of marginal costs as input for estimating the profits (rivalry) and the

demand functions. We estimate this equation system simultaneously by applying 3-stage least squares.

We focus on the effects of competition in both loans and deposits markets, simultaneously (rather than in isolation), during 1992-2004 period in Spain. In 2004, our sample of financial firms (25 savings banks and 13 banks) constituted almost 70% and 86% of the Spanish private deposits and loans markets, respectively, and contains 494 observations over a 13-year period. In 2004, the first group (GI) comprises the six largest firms and constitutes 55.5% of the loans market and 56.2% of deposits market. The second group (GII) comprises 32 medium firms and constitutes 44.5% of loans market and 43.4% of deposits market.

## PREVIOUS RESULTS

To determine the marginal operating costs, we estimate the cost function (Equation 1). We find a high adjusted R<sup>2</sup> of 94 percent. The model also detects a cost difference across groups in each one of the markets during the period analyzed. On the one hand, the loans market shows significant differences ( $F=227$ ,  $p<0.0001$ ) in the marginal operating cost of loans for GI (0.010) and for GII (0.032). On the other hand, the deposits market also shows significant differences ( $F=445$ ,  $p<0.0001$ ) in the marginal operating cost of deposits for GI (0.027) and for GII (0.006).

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# ¿CÓMO CONSTRUIR UNA ENSEÑA CON PERSONALIDAD AUTÉNTICA A TRAVÉS DEL MARKETING EXPERIENCIAL?

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## RESUMEN

*Los consumidores buscan establecimientos con mayor personalidad, que apuestan por lo auténtico (honestidad, transparencia y sinceridad). En este marco, el presente trabajo, pretende conocer cómo construir una personalidad del punto de venta que goce de autenticidad, analizando para ello el rol que juegan las experiencias externas (ambiente, diseño, layout, personal de contacto), las experiencias de marca así como, la identificación en su construcción, midiendo el impacto final en términos de intención de compra del consumidor. Para ello, se ha encuestado a 300 clientes a la salida de un determinado punto de venta identificando que todos los elementos postulados afectan la configuración de su personalidad auténtica, impactando positivamente sobre la intención de compra. Solo uno de los factores no ha podido ser confirmando, debiendo rechazar la influencia significativa del diseño/estética en la construcción de la personalidad auténtica de un punto de venta.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE

*Experiencias externas, experiencias de marca, personalidad del punto de venta, autenticidad e intención de compra.*

## 1. Introducción.

En entornos competitivos como el actual, caracterizados por la creciente competencia y recesión económica (Villafañe, 2004) los puntos de venta necesitan de un posicionamiento claramente definido en la mente de los consumidores que les permita ser vistos como algo “diferente” y “mejor”. De manera más específica, como algo “auténtico”. De tal forma, la ventaja competitiva de una enseña posicionada en base a la autenticidad de su personalidad se concretará en que el consumidor terminará visitando y comprando en este tipo de enseñas (Zorrilla, 2002). En este sentido, cada vez es mayor el interés por construir puntos de venta con personalidades auténticas, identificando esta autenticidad en la esencia de los establecimientos (Cook, 2007). En efecto, es precisamente la autenticidad de una personalidad lo que se convierte en una fuente de ventaja competitiva que permite a los establecimientos comerciales diferenciarse y posicionarse en el mercado, influyendo en la intención de compra del consumidor. Así lo demuestran las numerosas investigaciones al respecto (Véase, Alier y Falces, 2000; Zorrilla, 2002; Díez De Castro y Navarro, 2003; Baker et al., 2002).

La autenticidad viene conceptualizada por el diccionario de la Real Academia Española como la cualidad de auténtico, que viene definido como honrado, fiel a sus orígenes y convicciones. Son los autores Gilmore y Pine (2007) los que, en su tarea de articular el constructo de autenticidad, identifican cinco géneros de autenticidad percibida, articulando además cinco axiomas relacionados a estos géneros: (i) si eres auténtico, entonces no tienes que decir que eres auténtico, (ii) si eres auténtico, entonces es mejor que seas auténtico, (iii) es más fácil ser auténtico si uno no dice que es auténtico, (iv) es más fácil prestar servicios auténticos cuando reconoces que son auténticos, (v) no tienes que decir que tus ofertas son auténticas si tú las ofreces como auténticas. En la misma línea, se han desarrollado estudios experimentales para profundizar en la creación de autenticidad (Molleda y Roberts, 2008).

En la tarea de construir personalidades auténticas cobra cada vez mayor importancia el marketing experiencial (Schmitt, 1999). Así, para este autor, el marketing experiencial consigue que las marcas se carguen de experiencias apelando a los cinco sentidos, al corazón y a la mente de los consumidores, otorgando de esta manera a la enseña una personalidad que refleja algo importante para el consumidor. En el ámbito de la distribución comercial, Zeithaml y Bitner (2003) exponen como la combinación de los estímulos presentes en la atmósfera de un establecimiento conducen a diferentes emociones consiguiendo que los consumidores tengan diferentes experiencias de compra. Esto explicaría el auge de negocios como Starbucks, IKEA o Abercrombie entre otros (Alfaro, 2012).

En el contexto descrito, deviene una prioridad identificar como lograr una enseña con personalidad auténtica, que aporten al consumidor algo distinto y superior (Cook, 2007). Ello se debe a que los consumidores son sensibles tanto al valor recibido (beneficio recibido por el precio pagado en el proceso de compra), como a la orientación a los valores de la enseña (reflejo de los valores personales en la experiencia de compra). Es decir, los patrones de consumo no vienen marcados exclusivamente por el precio, sino que se observa un cambio de los valores, detectándose como tendencia la preferencia por la autenticidad marcada por atributos tales como el respeto a la naturaleza, la sostenibilidad, el respeto al medio ambiente, la honestidad y la transparencia (Molleda, 2009).

Es por ello que, a través del presente trabajo se pretende analizar cómo construir una personalidad auténtica para un punto de venta a partir de las experiencias externas vividas en el punto de venta (ambiente, el layout, la estética y el personal de contacto), de las experiencias de marca y de la identificación con el punto de venta. Todo ello para abordar, en último término, su impacto en términos de intención de compra del consumidor. Para tal fin, se ha contado con la opinión de 300 individuos que han valorado los aspectos indicados a la salida de un determinado punto de venta escogido para el estudio: Ikea.

Con esta investigación se trata de acotar la brecha existente en el estudio del rol conjunto pueden jugar distintos elementos a la hora de configurar la personalidad auténtica de una marca (Cook, 2007). En el caso que nos ocupa, de un punto de venta. Justifican el estudio las escasas investigaciones que abordan esta incidencia compartida de una diversidad de elementos enmarcados en el marketing experiencial en la determinación de la personalidad auténtica (Baker, 2002). En efecto, aunque algunos antecedentes de la personalidad auténtica han sido abordados de manera separada (Zorrilla, 2012), son limitados los trabajos que abordan de manera integrada la incidencia de factores dispares, relativos

tanto a la experimentación del propio punto de venta, como a la experimentación de la marca. (Babin et al, 1994).

En suma, la premisa de partida es que los detallistas deben desarrollar su labor comercial como un compendio de diversos elementos (Gorospe, 2000). De tal modo, la aportación del presente trabajo radica, en aglutinar los factores generadores de experiencia de compra bajo el prisma de la personalidad del punto de venta, dando mayor valor (autenticidad) y un poder de actuación conjunto y real. Es decir, se trata de añadir valor a los gerentes de los establecimientos, empresarios, profesionales del marketing e investigadores al desarrollar un enfoque que pretende contrastar qué elementos, se deben de combinar para configurar la autenticidad de la enseña. Para, de esta manera, traducir estos esfuerzos en incremento de compra y a la larga, en mejores resultados empresariales.

El trabajo se estructura de la siguiente manera: en primer lugar, se realiza una revisión exhaustiva de la literatura existente con el propósito de analizar los constructos que se presentan y lanzar las hipótesis de estudio; en segundo lugar, se propone un modelo de las relaciones existentes y, a través de un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales, se estudia si las hipótesis planteadas se cumplen o no. Finalmente, se presentan las conclusiones, las implicaciones organizacionales y las futuras líneas de investigación.

## **2. Marco Conceptual.**

La cuestión a investigar sería del presente estudio sería ¿cómo se puede lograr construir para un punto de venta una personalidad auténtica, que añade valor a lo que ya existe en el mercado? Mediante la combinación de tres grandes ejes de actuación: (i) las experiencias con elementos externos (como el ambiente, la estética interior y exterior, el layout y el personal de contacto), (ii) las experiencias de marca y (iii) la identificación con el punto de venta. Es por ello que el presente estudio ha considerado de interés la creación de un modelo que explique claramente las relaciones entre estos tres ejes. Para, de esta manera, avanzar en la explicación del comportamiento del consumidor en un punto de venta.

***2.1.Experiencias externas: ambiente del punto de venta (H1), estética interior y exterior (H2), layout (H3), personal de contacto (H4).***

### **2.2.1. El ambiente del punto de venta. (H1).**

El ambiente de la tienda o atmósfera, es la percepción global que el consumidor elabora en su mente de un punto de venta a partir de una percepción holística de las características físicas del mismo. (Kotler 1973). En la literatura se ha investigado ampliamente la multidimensionalidad del ambiente en los puntos de venta, haciendo referencia en diversos estudios a la música, el orden y la limpieza, la iluminación, la aglomeración y otros. Sin embargo, no existen apenas estudios que analicen las interrelaciones entre estos estímulos (Mattila y Wirtz 2001).

Existe un número importante de investigaciones que han realizado un análisis exhaustivo de los efectos sobre las respuestas del comprador ante estímulos ambientales experimentados en un punto de venta, basando sus estudios en elementos ambientales concretos como puede ser la música (Milliman,1982), la aglomeración (Hui y Bateson, 1991),el olor (Spangenberg, Crowley y Henderson,1996 ), la iluminación (Golden y Zimmerman, 1986), el color (Bellizzi, Crowley y Hasty, 1983 ), la limpieza (Bitner 1990; Gardner y Siomkos 1985) entre otros. Todos estos elementos ambientales, generan una experiencia que influye en la percepción que el consumidor tiene del establecimiento, desencadenando en su mente una idea de la personalidad que pueda tener el mismo (Sharma y Stafford, 2000). En la misma línea, Donovan et al. (1994) explican como el placer que transmite el ambiente del establecimiento, es un motivo importante para que los consumidores pasen más tiempo en ella y valoren mejor el punto de venta. En línea con los argumentos esgrimidos, cabría proponer la primera hipótesis:

**H1: Las experiencias positivas de compra producidas por el ambiente en el punto de venta influyen positiva y significativamente sobre la autenticidad de su personalidad.**

### **2.2.2. La estética interior y exterior del punto de venta. (H2).**

En el punto de venta la estética se puede encontrar tanto en el interior como en el exterior. En lo relativo a la estética interior, los elementos que lo definen son los siguiente (i) tipo de mobiliario, (ii) decoración, (iii) señalética, (iv) material promocional, de animación, informativo y plv, (Andrés, 1983). Este diseño del interior del establecimiento contribuye a formar sentimientos positivos en los consumidores conduciendo a percepciones favorables (Kumar y Karande, 2000; Gilboa y Rafaeli, 2003) sobre la personalidad que ostenta el establecimiento en cuestión. Es por ello, que los minoristas recurren con frecuencia a cuestiones estéticas para configurar su personalidad. En lo relativo a la estética exterior del establecimiento, éste hace referencia a la estética de la fachada, al escaparate y a la aplicación de la imagen corporativa del establecimiento, etc, (Wagner, 1999). Todos estos elementos externos, condicionan también, la percepción que se forma el consumidor acerca de la personalidad del punto de venta que se tiene delante.

Berman y Evans (1995) argumentan que el diseño exterior supone un importante elemento de atracción a los consumidores, en tanto en cuanto, diseños atractivos derivan en la creencia de que el establecimiento goza de mayor personalidad. De la misma forma, en el estudio de Alfaro (2012) se constata la auténtica personalidad lograda por establecimientos como Abercrombie, Apple, Armani, Starbucks, lograda gracias a las experiencias vividas en el punto de venta en virtud de los elementos proporcionados por la estética interior y exterior. Esto es, la percepción de la estética se concreta en valores emocionales (Babin et al. 1994; Holbrook 1999). Es por ello que, una adecuada gestión de la estética en el punto de venta, mejora las percepciones asociadas al mismo (Newman y Patel 2004), optimizando la consolidación de su personalidad. En línea con los argumentos esgrimidos, cabría proponer la segunda hipótesis:

**H2: Las experiencias positivas producidas por la estética tanto interior como exterior del punto de venta, influyen positiva y significativamente sobre la autenticidad de su personalidad.**

### **2.2.3. Layout. (H3).**

Se entiende por layout la representación de la distribución estratégica del mobiliario en una planta de distribución, consiguiendo optimizar la circulación de los clientes, evitar aglomeraciones y especificar la ubicación exacta de los productos. Según Mills y Paul (1988) el merchandising visual es la presentación de la tienda y su mercancía para vender los bienes y servicios ofrecidos, lo que permite conformar una óptima percepción de la dimensión de autenticidad de la personalidad del punto de venta. Una correcta política de merchandising va a dirigir la clientela, evitar cuellos de botella y orientar a los clientes dentro del recinto de venta, controlando al tiempo tanto la aglomeración como la afluencia de público al establecimiento. Un punto de venta sin público, se traduce en un factor negativo para su actividad comercial, por lo que el minorista debe animar su establecimiento para conseguir la afluencia de público sin llegar a la aglomeración. Como técnicas para atraer a la clientela el minorista cuenta con la disposición y colocación de los productos, la distribución del espacio de ventas o layout.

En esta línea, Buttle (1984) investigó como afectaba la disposición del interior del punto de venta sobre el volumen de ventas del establecimiento, incrementando la frecuencia de visitas a las zonas menos visitadas o puntos fríos del punto de venta, mejorando además la rotación de stocks. En la misma línea, Newman, Yu y Oulton (2002) analizan el flujo de tráfico según la disposición interna del punto de venta y como consecuencia, la provocación de estrés (emociones negativas) o bienestar en el cliente (emociones positivas), lo que determina en último termino la personalidad (negativa/positiva) que se asocia al punto de venta.

En suma, según ha quedado reflejado en líneas previas, el layout del establecimiento constituye un elemento esencial para informar, orientar y emocionar a los consumidores en la tienda, actuando como valor añadido a la enseña (Burns, 1996) que, gracias al layout, se podrá diferenciar de sus competidores a través de la autenticidad. En línea con los argumentos esgrimidos, cabría proponer la tercera hipótesis:



**H3: Las emociones positivas producidas por el layout del punto de venta, influyen positiva y significativamente sobre la autenticidad de su personalidad.**

#### **2.2.4. Personal de contacto. (H4).**

Según Baker (1986) el personal de contacto y los clientes, forman parte de la dimensión social de la personalidad del punto de venta. Esta dimensión incluye aspectos relativos al trato prestado por el personal de contacto, que determina también la forma en que se experimentan el establecimiento (Doria y Rico, 2003). De esta manera, el éxito de la estrategia relacional de la empresa con el cliente depende en gran medida de su personal de ventas en tanto en cuanto éstos son los que tienen una influencia determinante en los clientes (Harris, Mowen y Brown, 2005). En esta línea Webster (1992) sostiene que “las funciones tradicionales de la venta personal están evolucionando hacia una definición más amplia de responsabilidades, hacia la gestión de las relaciones”.

De lo dicho, podemos deducir que el vendedor influirá de manera notable en cómo perciban los clientes la autenticidad de la personalidad del punto de venta, puesto que él es el verdadero gestor de relaciones. Cuando los clientes confían en el punto de venta, porque su personalidad les convence, se desarrolla una relación más sólida que ni el producto ni el precio, podrían darle (Thompson, 2004). De este modo, la venta personal se ha convertido en los últimos años en uno de los pilares fundamentales que tienen los puntos de venta, para proporcionar un servicio de mayor valor añadido a los clientes que asegure el éxito empresarial y competitivo (Farrell y Hakstian 2001). En el nuevo entorno de venta relacional, la fuerza de ventas configura la imagen de la organización, representando la cultura de relaciones que la empresa desea transmitir siendo ésta el principal vehículo de comunicación y pilar fundamental en el trato directo con el cliente, principal activo de la empresa. Así, Doria Y Rico (2003) consideran que el establecimiento requiere de una atención personalizada, en cuanto a predisposición, actitud y trato a los clientes, factores que afectan favorablemente en la creación de su propia personalidad. En línea con los argumentos esgrimidos, cabría proponer la cuarta hipótesis:

**H4: El trato del personal de contacto en el punto de venta, influyen positiva y significativamente sobre la autenticidad de su personalidad.**

#### **2.2. Experiencia de marca. (H5).**

En su investigación, Brakus, Schmitt y Zarantonello (2009), diferencian claramente el constructo de la experiencia de marca de otros conceptos relacionados con la marca, como son las asociaciones de marca, la imagen de marca y la personalidad de marca. Confirman en su investigación que la experiencia de marca es un antecedente de la personalidad de marca o, en otras palabras, cuanto mayor sea la puntuación general en la escala de experiencia de marca existirán más posibilidades de que el consumidor dote la marca con mayores rasgos de personalidad.

Brakus et al. (2008) desarrollan uno de los trabajos más importantes sobre el citado tema, conceptualizando, delimitando y proponiendo una escala de medida para el mismo. Según estos autores cuando un consumidor busca, compra, usa o consume marcas no solo está expuesto a sus atributos funcionales sino también a sus atributos experienciales. Así, como planteamiento de partida, definen la experiencia de marca como un conjunto de respuestas internas, subjetivas y de comportamientos, suscitadas o provocada por los estímulos vinculados a la marca (tales como su diseño, identidad, presentación, comunicación y entorno de venta), lo que determina en último término la personalidad asociada a dicha marca. En línea con los argumentos esgrimidos, cabría proponer la quinta hipótesis:

**H5: La experiencia positiva de marca en el punto de venta, influye positiva y significativamente sobre la autenticidad de su personalidad.**

#### **2.3. Identificación. (H6).**

Un consumidor se identificará con una marca/punto de venta en tanto en cuanto: (i) existan valores compartidos entre ambos (Hunt, Wood y Chonko, 1989) (ii) se solapen los rasgos y características de la personalidad de la organización con las del sujeto (Ashforth y Mael, 1989); (iii) operen ambos movidos por objetivos comunes (Bhattacharya y Sen, 2003). En este escenario, los distribuidores aspiran a que su establecimiento goce de una personalidad que refleje aspectos que desea poseer su

clientela, por ejemplo, la búsqueda de la autenticidad. Identificándose con estos atributos, se genera un vínculo entre comprador y punto de venta percibiendo que comparten determinadas características. (Bhattacharya y Sen, 2003). Cuando se produce esta identificación, se desencadenan respuestas, tanto en los estados afectivos del consumidor hacia la empresa, como en su posterior comportamiento hacia la misma (Marin y Ruiz, 2007). En línea con los argumentos esgrimidos, cabría proponer la sexta hipótesis:

**H6: La identificación del consumidor con el punto de venta influyen positiva y significativamente sobre la autenticidad de su personalidad.**

#### **2.4. Efectos de la personalidad del punto de venta.**

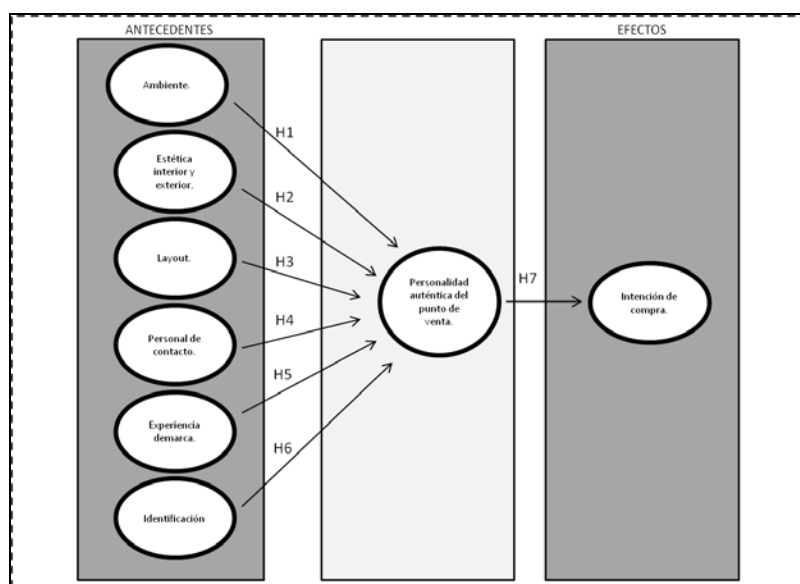
Según Baker (2002), son escasas las investigaciones que relacionan el efecto conjunto de las diferentes dimensiones que configuran y definen la personalidad de un establecimiento comercial con otras variables y constructos que explican el comportamiento del consumidor ante decisiones de intención de compra. Es por ello, que en el presente trabajo, plantea como eje el efecto que la personalidad del punto de venta ejerce sobre la intención de compra del consumidor.

En el presente estudio y en base a la proposición de Zorrilla (2002), se asimila el concepto de personalidad del punto de venta a lo que la autora denomina “ambiente global” siendo un nexo de unión entre sus distintos antecedentes. Todo ello con el fin de demostrar la configuración de la personalidad del punto de venta sobre la intención de compra. De hecho, investigaciones en el área de psicología de muestran que las experiencias percibidas por el consumidor en un punto de venta son, en efecto, motivadoras de la intención de compra. (Donovan y Rossiter, 1982). En línea con los argumentos esgrimidos, cabría proponer la séptima hipótesis:

**H7: Es la configuración de la personalidad del punto de venta como auténtica, la que influye positiva y significativamente sobre la intención de compra.**

Habiendo realizado una revisión de la literatura pertinente resulta factible el establecimiento de un modelo teórico donde resumir las hipótesis planteadas en los apartados anteriores, tal y como muestra la figura 1.

**FIGURA 1**  
**Modelo teórico propuesto.**



### **3. Diseño Metodológico.**

En este apartado se describen las bases metodológicas del trabajo empírico realizado.

### ***3.1. Justificación e importancia del estudio***

Con el fin de contrastar el modelo propuesto, se decidió recopilar la información a la salida de los puntos de venta de la enseña que un grupo de colaboradores sugirió en la realización del pretest (integrado por 22 personas como se detalla en líneas sucesivas). Así, cuando se les preguntó que propusieran un punto de venta en España que, desde su punto de vista, tuviera una personalidad auténtica, solicitándoles adicionalmente que justificaran su respuesta, para saber también como habían percibido esta autenticidad, propusieron mayoritariamente IKEA. En efecto, el 75% del grupo se refirió a la enseña IKEA como referente de los atributos de la personalidad auténtica, percibiendo el 65% de los mismos estos atributos a través de la visita a la propia tienda.

Adicionalmente, fuentes secundarias presentan IKEA como una de las compañías que la población identifica con diversidad, creatividad y dinamismo. Esta imagen es producto de un estilo de gestión responsable, de un modelo de negocio inclusivo y cercano a las personas. Así, la responsabilidad con las personas con discapacidad es uno de los ejes de atención de IKEA, como también lo es la gestión de la diversidad y las compras responsables [www.grupofundosa.es](http://www.grupofundosa.es). Además, según el informe de Sostenibilidad 2011 de IKEA, el grupo considera que se trata de una enseña responsable con las personas y el medio ambiente, considerando esto como un requisito indispensable para hacer buenos negocios. Todo ello le ha llevado a ser el mayor minorista mundial del sector del mueble con un valor de marca cifrado en 9.000 millones de euros, según los datos financieros que figuran en el informe anual de 2011 emitido por Inter Ikea Group. Además, en 2011 generó alrededor de unos 26.000 millones de euros en ventas en todo el mundo, recibiendo alrededor de 14.000 solicitudes de licencias de franquicias. (El economista, 10/08/2012).

En suma, los resultados del pretest y de la información secundaria analizada constatan que IKEA es reconocida tanto a nivel nacional como internacional como una empresa comprometida, transparente y que cree en los valores que comunica. Además y siguiendo Vallet y Mollá (2006) firmas como IKEA con una atractiva imagen de marca, han entrado con fuerza en España. Por lo que este comercio especializado, ha sido elegido como eje de la investigación desarrollada para el contraste de las hipótesis planteadas.

### ***3.2. Recogida de información y perfil de la muestra.***

Con carácter previo a la administración del cuestionario definitivo, fue realizado un pretest con 22 participantes: 2 profesionales del marketing, 3 investigadores en marketing, 2 expertos en investigación de mercados, así como con 15 clientes del punto de venta estudiado. Estos participantes, pretestaron el cuestionario aportando sus conocimientos a la hora de subsanar errores y deficiencias del mismo. De manera más específica, su colaboración resultó decisiva para la determinación de la enseña objeto de estudio, y para garantizar la correcta interpretación y funcionamiento del cuestionario. Tras el pretest, los datos cuantitativos del estudio, fueron recogidos a través de un cuestionario autoadministrado a pie de calle, a la salida de las tiendas IKEA de Zaragoza, Bilbao, Madrid Alcorcón y Murcia. La ficha técnica del estudio es la que se muestra en la tabla 1. Se obtuvieron un total de 300 encuestas válidas.

El instrumento de medida se basó en escalas previamente utilizadas por la literatura (tabla 3), que fueron perfiladas en el pretest. Se quiere señalar que estudios preliminares al de Alain D'Atous y Le'vesque (2003) demuestran que la personalidad del punto de venta está compuesta por cinco dimensiones: (i) sofisticación,(ii) firmeza,(iii) autenticidad, (Iv) entusiasmo y (v) molestia. Sin embargo, para el presente trabajo de investigación, se ha abordado la dimensión de autenticidad para aproximar el constructo personalidad. Ello obedece a que cómo se recoge en investigaciones previas (D'Atous et al. 2002) la medición de la personalidad debe de realizarse considerando la dimensión/enfoque más apropiado en cada situación, siendo la "autenticidad" en este caso el factor que mejor refleja el constructo personalidad. En efecto, como se advierte en otros estudios (Fine, 2003; Gilmore y Pine, 2007; Cook, 2009) la autenticidad de la personalidad es un constructo de especial relevancia en los tiempos actuales, resultado de gran ayuda el estudio de sus antecedentes y consecuencias.

TABLA 1  
**Ficha técnica del estudio.**

<b>Ámbito Geográfico</b>	Tiendas de IKEA de las ciudades, Zaragoza, Bilbao, Madrid- Alcorcón y Murcia.
<b>Universo</b>	Individuos clientes de IKEA.
<b>Metodología</b>	Cuestionario autoadministrado on line y a pie de calle.
<b>Procedimiento de Muestreo</b>	No probabilístico de conveniencia.
<b>Tamaño Muestral</b>	302 encuestas. 2 encuestas no válidas.
<b>Fecha del trabajo de Campo</b>	Del 1 de agosto al 9 de septiembre

La selección de la muestra fue aleatoria, siendo el perfil de la misma el que figura en la tabla 2.

TABLA 2  
Perfil de la muestra.

Variable	Respuestas	Porcentaje
Género	Hombres	49,7
	Mujeres	49,3
Edad	Menos de 18 años	1,3
	De 19 a 30 años	8,7
	De 31 a 40 años	22
	De 41 a 50 años	35,7
	De 51 a 60 años	26,3
	Más de 61 años	7,3
Estudios	Sin estudios	6,7
	Estudios primarios (graduado escolar)	10,3
	Estudios secundarios (BUP)	23,7
	Universitario de grado medio (Diplomatura o Ingeniería técnica)	19
	Universitario de grado superior ( Licenciaturas o Ingeniería superior)	18,3
	Postgrado	13
Nivel de renta anual	Doctorado	9
	Menos de 15.000	10
	Entre 15.000- 19.000	12
	Entre 20.000-29.000	11,3
	Entre 30.000-39.000	18,3
	Entre 40.000- 50.000	15,7
	Más de 50.000	9
No contesta	22,3	

TABLA 3  
Medición del ambiente del punto de venta.

P1	AMBIENTE.	Referencias
AMB1	Me gusta ir a IKEA aunque no tenga nada que comprar porque es agradable.	Babin y Attaway (2000) Sherman, Mathur y Smith (1997)
AMB2	Comprar en IKEA me hace olvidarme de mis problemas, me da alegría.	
AMB3	El ambiente de IKEA (música, olor, temperatura, iluminación, limpieza) es placentero	
AMB4	El ambiente de IKEA (música, olor, temperatura, iluminación, limpieza)es relajante.	
AMB5	El ambiente de IKEA (música, olor, temperatura, iluminación, limpieza) es vivo.	
P2	ESTETICA INTERIOR Y EXTERIOR	Referencias
EST1	El diseño y la decoración interior (decoración, estilo, materiales, colores, señalización) y exterior de IKEA (rótulos, escaparates, fachada, entrada) me resultan atractivos.	Baker et ál.(2002) Bloch et ál.( 2003) Lee y Overby,(2004) Sirohi et ál.(1998).
EST2	En mi opinión la estética de IKEA es la adecuada.	
P3	LAYOUT	Referencias
LAY1	La distribución de IKEA hace que sea fácil para los clientes la libertad de movimientos.	Hui y Bateson (1991)
LAY2	La distribución de IKEA evita aglomeraciones y cuellos de botella y no me siento apretado.	
LAY3	La distribución de IKEA hace que sea fácil para los clientes encontrar lo que necesitan.	
LAY4	La distribución de IKEA hace que sea fácil para los clientes orientarse en la tienda.	
P4	PERSONAL DE CONTACTO	Referencias
VEN1	El comportamiento de los vendedores de IKEA da confianza a los clientes.	Dabholkar, Thorpe y

VEN2	Los vendedores de IKEA nunca están demasiado ocupados para responder las peticiones de los clientes.	Rent (1996).
VEN3	Los vendedores de IKEA ofrecen a sus clientes una atención personalizada.	
VEN4	Los vendedores de IKEA son muy amables.	
VEN5	Los vendedores de IKEA tienen un aspecto estéticamente atractivo.	
P5	EXPERIENCIA DE MARCA	
EXPM1	La marca IKEA apela a los sentidos.	Brakus, Schmitt y Zarantonello (2009).
EXPM2	La marca IKEA es una marca emocional.	
EXPM3	Cuando acudo a IKEA me siento comprometido con sus ideas, me hace pensar y estimula mi curiosidad.	
EXPM4	Cuando acudo a IKEA tengo experiencias físicas y me orienta a la acción.	
P7	IDENTIFICACIÓN	Referencias
ID1	La personalidad de IKEA encaja con mi personalidad.	Bhattacharya y Sen (2003)
ID2	La imagen que tengo de IKEA encaja con la imagen que tengo de mi mismo.	
ID3	Mi forma de ser encaja con lo que percibo de IKEA.	
P6	PERSONALIDAD DEL PUNTO DE VENTA	Referencias
PE1	Considero que IKEA es de confianza.	D'Atous A. Lévesque (2003)
PE2	Considero que IKEA está concienciada.	
PE3	Considero que IKEA es auténtica.	
PE4	Considero que IKEA es sincera.	
PE5	Considero que IKEA es fiel.	
P8	INTENCION DE COMPRA	Referencias
IC1	Es muy probable que en el futuro compre en IKEA.	Putrevu y Lord (1994) Javalgi et al (2005) Dodds et al (1991) Agarval y Teas(2002)
IC2	Definitivamente, compraré en IKEA.	

### 3.3. Técnicas de análisis de datos aplicadas y validación del instrumento de medida

Las hipótesis planteadas se comprobaron utilizando la información recogida mediante modelización estructural, aplicando el método de máxima verosimilitud a partir del software EQS 6.1. No obstante, antes de contrastar el modelo, se evaluaron las escalas empleadas para aproximar los constructos mediante un Análisis Factorial Confirmatorio.

Las escalas y el instrumento de medida fueron sometidos a un Análisis Factorial Confirmatorio. Los datos recogidos la tabla 4 permiten corroborar la *fiabilidad o consistencia interna*. En la misma tabla se puede verificar la *validez convergente*. Posteriormente se procedió a analizar la *validez discriminante* del instrumento de medida; utilizando, para ello, las pruebas de intervalos de confianza y los valores del AVE (tabla 5). **TABLA 4**

### Resultados del AFC. (I).

Variable	Indicador	Carga factorial	Valor t	$\alpha$	IFC	IVE
Ambiente del punto de venta	AMB1	0,708	13,49	0,83	0,82	0,62
	AMB3	0,969	20,78			
	AMB4	0,643	11,96			
Estética interior y exterior	EST1	0,917	19,37	0,94	0,93	0,87
	EST2	0,947	20,35			
Layout	LAY3	1	19,04	0,85	0,87	0,70
	LAY4	0,732	13,28			
Personal de contacto	VEN1	0,746	14,31	0,80	0,81	0,48
	VEN2	0,667	12,31			
	VEN3	0,768	14,89			
	VEN4	0,859	17,50			
	VEN5	0,742	11,50			
Experiencia de marca	EXP1	0,761	15,02	0,88	0,88	0,65
	EXP2	0,909	19,65			
	EXP3	0,833	17,137			
	EXP4	0,703	13,455			
Personalidad del punto de venta	PE3	0,831	17,073	0,81	0,83	0,62
	PE4	0,872	18,372			
	PE5	0,633	11,713			
Identificación	ID1	0,884	18,233	0,814	0,85	0,66
	ID2	0,848	17,146			
	ID3	0,685	12,815			
Intención de compra	IC1	0,903	18,793	0,872	0,89	0,81
	IC2	0,893	18,455			

NFI = 0,91; NNFI = 0,907; CFI = 0,910; IFI = 0,917; RMSEA = 0,118 ; (0.111-0,124)

L = Factor loading;  $\alpha$  = Alfa de Conbrach FC = Fiabilidad compuesta; IVE = Índice de varianza extraída;

TABLA 5  
Resultados del AFC. (II).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.Ambiente del punto de venta	0,62	0,18	0,06	0,06	0,23	0,51	0,23	0,19
2.Estética interior y exterior	[0,32;0,528]	0,87	0,17	0,24	0,30	0,12	0,07	0,08
3.Layout	[0,132;0,36]	[0,311;0,519]	0,70	0,31	0,15	0,25	0,17	0,09
4.Personal de contacto	[0,259;0,487]	[0,392;0,596]	[0,464;0,656]	0,48	0,19	0,27	0,10	0,10
5.Experiencia de marca	[0,377;0,577]	[0,453;0,637]	[0,282;0,498]	[0,322;0,542]	0,65	0,43	0,20	0,28
6.Personalidad del punto de venta	[0,6413;0,789]	[0,225;0,457]	[0,399;0,603]	[0,422;0,622]	[0,575;0,739]	0,62	0,43	0,51
7.Identificación	[0,377;0,581]	[0,151;0,391]	[0,299;0,515]	[0,189;0,433]	[0,339;0,555]	[0,568;0,74]	0,66	0,81
8. Intención de compra	[0,33;0,542]	[0,164;0,4]	[0,185;0,413]	[0,193;0,433]	[0,435;0,627]	[0,642;0,79]	[0,545;0,717]	0,81

Table AII.  
Validation of the  
final  
measurement

## 4. Resultados y conclusiones del contraste de hipótesis.

Una vez efectuadas las comprobaciones pertinentes con respecto a la fiabilidad y validez de las escalas que conforman el modelo propuesto, se ha procedido a realizar las estimaciones del modelo en un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales mediante el método de máxima verosimilitud utilizando para ello el software EQS 6.1 cuyos resultados se exponen en la tabla 6. Los estadísticos de bondad del ajuste sugieren que el modelo estructural encaja bien con la estructura de datos y que modelo planteado resulta satisfactorio para explicar 6 de las 7 hipótesis enunciadas.

TABLA 6  
Contraste de hipótesis

Resultados de la estimación del modelo planteado.				
Hipótesis		Beta estandarizada	t value	Contraste
H1	Ambiente del punto de venta-personalidad	0,402**	7,014	Aceptada
H2	Estética-personalidad	0,24	-4,527	Rechazada
H3	Layout-personalidad	0,132	2,56	Aceptada
H4	Personal de contacto-personalidad	0,197**	3,482	Aceptada
H5	Experiencia de marca-personalidad	0,345**	5,993	Aceptada
H6	Identificación-personalidad	0,281**	5,242	Aceptada
H7	Personalidad –Intención de compra	0,716**	11,743	Aceptada
RMSEA (90%CI)=0,118(0,111,0,125);CFI=0,910;TLI=0,973				

Primero, por lo que respecta a H1, los resultados confirman que las experiencias vinculadas al ambiente de la tienda (aromas, música, iluminación, temperatura, limpieza etc.) influyen significativamente en la consolidación de una personalidad auténtica ( $\beta=0,4$ ,  $p<0,05$ ). No en vano, este el antecedente más relevante identificado en el presente estudio. Este resultado está en consonancia con la propuesta de Baker (1986), que establece que el ambiente puede llegar a ser incluso más relevante que otro tipo de señales. Estudios como el de Hirsch (1995) demuestran también que, ante entornos agradables como podría ser el olor en un casino, el cliente tiende a acumular una experiencia positiva, experiencias que le llevan a percibir la verdadera personalidad del punto de venta. En la misma línea, otras investigaciones, como las Lisen, (1975) y Smith y Curnow (1996) en supermercados, la de Milliman (1986) en restaurantes o la de Areni y Kim (1993) en tiendas de vinos, constatan que la música (su intensidad e incluso estilo), influenciaban la percepción del punto de venta, variando conforme la intensidad o el estilo de la música eran modificados.

En lo relativo a H2, se advierte que la estética no influye de manera significativa sobre la personalidad de la enseña. Este resultado puede venir explicado por los resultados del resto de constructos. Así, en un estudio conjunto como es el que nos ocupa, ejercen más peso el resto de antecedentes que la estética, anulando el efecto significativo de este factor.

En cuanto a H3, aunque se confirma la relevancia significativa del layout en la creación de autenticidad en un punto de venta, su influencia no es tan potente como la del resto de antecedentes considerados ( $\beta=0,132$ ,  $p<0,05$ ), concluyéndose que, efectivamente, el layout afecta a la percepción de autenticidad de un punto de venta pero, dentro del estudio conjunto de todos los antecedentes, su peso es el menos importante. Este menor impacto puede ser debido a que, como explica Buttle (1984), el cliente no es realmente consciente de los esfuerzos que en cuestiones de distribución del espacio de ventas realizan los responsables del punto de venta para evitar aglomeraciones y cuellos de botella. Tal vez si en las comunicaciones de empresa se divulgara esta labor, en un futuro tendría mayor importancia.

Respecto H4, que hacía referencia a la relevancia del personal de ventas en la configuración de la personalidad del punto de venta, queda igualmente confirmada ( $\beta=0,197$ ,  $p<0,05$ ). Más aún, este deviene un antecedente fundamental de la creación de una personalidad auténtica, ya que el cliente busca una atención personalizada y una respuesta a sus emociones como han probado Doria y Rico (2003).

Con referencia a H5, se confirma igualmente que las experiencias con la marca son determinantes de la personalidad del punto de venta ( $\beta=0,345$ ,  $p<0,05$ ). Ello se debe a que a partir de las experiencias con la marca y de las consiguientes respuestas del individuo (en términos de emociones, sensaciones, pensamientos y comportamientos) (Brakus et al. 2009), se forman los rasgos de su personalidad (auténtica, sofisticada, etc.). Tímidos y meritorios estudios interesados por estudiar la incidencia de esta variable (experiencia de marca) son los de Borghini, Diamond, Kozinets, Mcgrath, Muñiz y Sherry (2009), Brakus et al. (2009) y Hollenbeck, Peters y Zinkhan (2008). En ellos, se explora cómo el significado que puede adquirir una marca (su personalidad) se amplifica y se expande debido, por ejemplo, a la experiencia socio-cultural que envuelve el consumo de dicha marca (sería el caso de Harley-Davidson) o al uso de espacios asociados a la marca (como museos y tiendas temáticas), en los que en ocasiones se ofrecen entretenimientos, espectáculos, etc. En esta línea, Butterfield (2009) trata



de ilustrar la importancia de crear una conexión más real y significativa con las marcas despertando los cinco sentidos en el consumidor. Sería el caso de marcas como BMW y Niketown, que a través de la creación de eventos que permiten experimentarlas tratan de transmitir el espíritu de sus marcas. También de marcas como Apple y Disney, que a través en este caso de sus tiendas experienciales tratan de reforzar su identidad. O de marcas como Samsung Experience, que apelan a la experimentación mediante el sistema Brand Sensory Identity (identidad sensorial de marca) creado por la propia empresa. En suma, los estudios apuntados constatan, como en nuestro estudio, que las marcas más experienciales son las que tienen la capacidad para perfilar una personalidad más definida con la que pueda identificarse el individuo.

En cuanto a H6, tal y como los se muestra en los resultados, se constata la relación positiva y significativa entre la identificación punto de venta-consumidor y la personalidad auténtica del punto de venta ( $\beta=0,281$ ,  $p<0,05$ ). Es decir, las interacciones marca-consumidor son relevantes puesto que favorecen que se despierte en el individuo el componente emocional que subyace tras cualquier tipo de identificación (Einwiller, Fedorikhin, Jhonson y Kamis, 2006; Homburg, Wieseke y Hoyer, 2009).

Por último, H7 presenta la relación más fuerte del modelo, constatándose, de este modo, el gran impacto que tiene mejorar la personalidad del punto de venta para incrementa sus ventas ( $\beta=0,716$ ,  $p<0,05$ ). No en vano, son cada vez más numerosas las empresas que, para vender más, diseñan sus estrategias de marca en torno a la creación de experiencias que aporten valores sensoriales, emocionales, cognitivos, conductistas y sociales que complementen y enriquezcan los valores funcionales (Brakus, Schmitt y Zarantonello, 2009).

## **5. Implicaciones gerenciales, limitaciones y líneas futuras investigaciones.**

La naturaleza de la investigación ha permitido proporcionar algunas conclusiones de diversa índole. De las 7 hipótesis enunciadas, 6 pudieron ser constatadas. Así, en lo relativo a antecedentes, se constata que el ambiente, el layout, el personal de contacto, la experiencia de marca y la identificación son, efectivamente, antecedentes de la personalidad del punto de venta en su dimensión de autenticidad. Sin embargo, 1 de las 7 hipótesis propuestas no pudo ser aceptada a pesar de las importantes aportaciones teóricas encontradas en la revisión de la literatura. Se trata de la relativa a la estética interior y exterior del punto de venta. A la luz de tales resultados, cabe concluir que la presente investigación ha conseguido avanzar en la aplicación de un modelo de diseño de los antecedentes que configuran la autenticidad en la personalidad del punto de venta y de la influencia en su conjunto en la intención de compra.

Como implicaciones gerenciales cabría apuntar las siguientes: En primer lugar, se debería de apostar por la creación de un ambiente adecuado de ventas que no sea monótono, que implique al comprador haciéndole sentir a gusto dentro de la tienda, proporcionándole una experiencia gratificante. Para sorprender al cliente, se podrían incluir aromas en el punto de venta que le evoquen sensaciones placenteras. No en vano, junto a la relevancia del logotipo, cada vez cobra más auge la avocación de marcas con odotipos (Correa 2012). Pero no solo a través del aroma, también se podría mejorar el ambiente de la tienda mediante acciones novedosas, como espectáculos de animación afines al target de la tienda, que creen en el punto de venta un ambiente estimulador de las ventas y aporten una experiencia inolvidable al consumidor.

En segundo lugar, sería interesante la creación de espacios que favorezcan la circulación y la rápida localización de productos en la superficie de ventas. En este sentido, la apuesta por una correcta señalización sería una de las vías, siendo una de las alternativas más recientes el recurso a envases luminosos, a señales en el suelo sobre la ruta a seguir o a la entrega de mapas a la entrada del punto de venta. Aprovechando las nuevas tecnologías, el desarrollo de aplicaciones móviles que faciliten el transitar por el establecimiento y la localización del género serían otras alternativas diferenciadoras que permitirían avanzar en la autenticidad de la enseña.

En tercer lugar, no se debería descuidar la implicación del personal de contacto y su relación con el cliente. Así, los resultados obtenidos subrayan la importancia de prestar especial atención a la forma en que atienden y que se muestran al cliente. Para ello, se debería de vigilar que el personal de contacto utilice vestimenta adecuada, puesto que, a diferencia de lo que sucede en un entorno de

ventas industrial, en un entorno de ventas familiar (como es el caso que nos ocupa), la imagen, el trato y la profesionalidad del vendedor resultan claves. Así, para aumentar la profesionalidad, sería recomendable la realización de cursos periódicos de formación que permitan ofrecer un servicio que cumpla con los valores/requerimientos que la enseña desea transmitir. En cuanto al trato sería recomendable delegar en los vendedores la gestión relacional con los clientes (Webster, 1992), pero proveyéndoles antes de una formación previa en técnicas novedosas de atención al cliente.

En cuarto lugar, se debe trabajar la experiencia de marca y la identificación con la enseña a fin de conseguir la percepción de autenticidad que se desea, incidiendo en aspectos como la comunicación de los valores de la enseña con los que el cliente se va a sentir conectado. Sin embargo, no todas las marcas tienen la misma capacidad para satisfacer esta dimensión social y para favorecer este estado de relación ideal que permite al individuo crear un fuerte vínculo con la marca al usarla convirtiéndola en un vehículo de definición personal y de expresión social. Para tal fin, la literatura ha venido recomendando distintas fórmulas (véase Ahearne et al., 2005; Bhattacharya y Sen, 2003; Scott y Lane, 2000). Éstas van desde el uso de la comunicación, hasta el incremento de la presencia de la marca en la vida del consumidor para favorecer las interacciones marca-consumidor y consumidor-consumidor. Incremento de la presencia que podría efectuarse, por ejemplo, a través de redes sociales, blogs, clubs de clientes, etc.

Tal y como se viene indicando, tanto los fabricantes como los retailers, deberían de esforzarse en transmitir los atributos de la personalidad de su enseña con los que el comprador se pueda identificar. Para tal fin, sería interesante intensificar la personalización en el proceso de compra, por ejemplo, llamándole al cliente por su nombre (gracias a una pegatina que se le podría facilitar en la entrada de la tienda), ofreciéndole servicios a medida, envoltorios que combinen los elementos/colores que prefiere, o, en general, haciendo un uso efectivo de técnicas CRM (Alcaide, 2010) para ofrecer al cliente una experiencia personalizada.

Además de la personalización del servicio, se podría implicar al cliente con la política de autenticidad de la enseña a través de comunicaciones, eventos, cursos que impliquen y demuestren la autenticidad del punto de venta y que, efectivamente, esa autenticidad es real y existe (Gilmore y Pine, 2007). De tal forma, se conseguiría que la atribución de ciertos valores a la enseña sea una tendencia que perdure, sobrepasando las coyunturas económicas.

Por último, y dado que se ha constatado que tanto la estética interior como exterior no influyen significativamente sobre la creación de una personalidad del punto de venta, este sería un factor sobre el que, en épocas de recursos económicos limitados, los gerentes del punto de venta deberían de invertir comparativamente menos recursos o con mayor austeridad. Ello es debido a la posible percepción de superficialidad de la estética por clientes que otorgan más relevancia a valores más profundos (como la honestidad, la sinceridad o el grado de compromiso). Con esto no se pretende restar importancia al concepto de la estética, sino más bien apuntar que se trata de un factor menos importante. Es decir, otros aspectos, como puede ser la relación que se establece con el personal de contacto, la experiencia vivida en la superficie de ventas o incluso la identificación con la enseña, cobran más peso en la consolidación de la autenticidad en la personalidad de un punto de venta. Si bien es cierto que, como apuntan Newman y Potel (2004), una adecuada gestión de la estética ayuda a una percepción positiva de su personalidad.

Como limitaciones del presente estudio, cabría apuntar que la recogida de información se ha realizado sólo de clientes, sin incluir no clientes ni personal del punto de venta. Además, el procedimiento de recogida de información puede no haber sido el óptimo debido a que la atención de los clientes a la salida de la tienda se veía mermada por las ganas de cargar lo comprado, pudiendo crear un sesgo en las respuestas. Adicionalmente, hay que apuntar como limitación que el desarrollo de la investigación se ha llevado a cabo en un sector concreto y para una categoría de puntos de venta off line y a nivel nacional.

De tal forma, las limitaciones mencionadas anteriormente, darían pie al desarrollo de futuras líneas de investigación. Así, cabría la posibilidad de replicar el estudio en otras líneas de investigación que abarcaran tanto: (i) otros contextos con el fin de comprobar el comportamiento de las hipótesis en sectores distintos, (ii) la aplicación del estudio en entornos on line, (iii) la ampliación del estudio al

resto de las dimensiones de la personalidad del punto de venta, (iv) la ampliación de la presente investigación con datos cruzados y análisis clúster sacados de los datos almacenados en el programa SPSS utilizado para la tabulación de las respuestas al cuestionario.

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# LA INFLUENCIA DE LAS GRATIFICACIONES DERIVADAS DEL USO DE LA RED SOCIAL QZONE EN EL GRADO DE INTERACCIÓN CON LAS MARCAS DE LOS ADOLESCENTES CHINOS

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## RESUMEN

*Basándose en la teoría de los usos y gratificaciones, el presente estudio analiza la influencia de las gratificaciones emocionales derivadas del uso de la red social Qzone en la interacción con las marcas por parte de los adolescentes chinos en esta plataforma online. Con este propósito, se llevan a cabo encuestas auto-administradas a 220 adolescentes en la ciudad de Shanghai usuarios de la red social Qzone. Los resultados del estudio reflejan que mientras que las gratificaciones referentes a la socialización y el entretenimiento ejercen una influencia positiva y significativa en el grado de interacción con las marcas, la gratificación vinculada a la búsqueda de información, por el contrario, no incrementa la interacción de los adolescentes chinos con las marcas en Qzone. Estos resultados confirman la opinión de algunos investigadores que sugieren no centrar las estrategias de comunicación de marcas, dirigidas al segmento de adolescentes en redes sociales online, en proveer información acerca de las características del producto, sino en crear contenidos que entretengan y permitan satisfacer las necesidades de socialización de éstos.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE

*Marcas, Publicidad, Redes Sociales Online, Qzone, Adolescentes chinos*

## 1. Introducción

Actualmente, para las empresas que quieren internacionalizar su marca, los medios sociales son una poderosa plataforma para la proyección internacional de empresas por su capacidad para generar conversaciones, conectar con los consumidores de cada país, canalizar reacciones, reforzar vínculos con el público y desarrollar y potenciar la imagen de marca (Lázaro, 2013). Identificar los medios sociales locales más relevantes en cada país y realizar un análisis exhaustivo del comportamiento de la audiencia local online son dos de los factores más importantes para lograr dicho objetivo. En el caso específico de China, donde numerosas empresas desean internacionalizar sus marcas por su enorme potencial de mercado, el medio social que concentra la mayor audiencia es Qzone. Esta red social fue creada en 2005 por la compañía *Treencent* y actualmente sobrepasa los 700 millones de usuarios, lo que la hace la segunda red social mundial tras Facebook en términos de número de usuarios registrados. Al igual que otras redes sociales online, Qzone ofrece la posibilidad de compartir fotos, escribir blogs y escuchar música, siendo un medio muy popular entre jóvenes adolescentes. La mayor parte de los servicios ofrecidos por Qzone —cuya aplicación para teléfonos móviles también es muy activa— incluyen el pago de una cuota. Sin embargo, es posible conseguir un pase conocido como *Canary Diamond* que garantiza el acceso gratuito a casi todas sus aplicaciones.

Además de a través de perfiles personales, las marcas comerciales también pueden estar presentes en Qzone a través de sus páginas web o creando eventos en los que los usuarios de Qzone pueden participar. En los últimos años, muchas marcas han creado sus páginas oficiales en esta red social china buscando en esta plataforma un modo eficiente de contactar con los adolescentes a un bajo coste. Algunas publicaciones de expertos señalan que los consumidores jóvenes usan ahora los medios sociales con mayor frecuencia que las páginas web corporativas a la hora de buscar información sobre una compañía, marca o producto (Dei Worldwide, 2008). Asimismo, varios estudios señalan que las redes sociales han reemplazado al email como la actividad online más popular, convirtiéndose en la principal fuente de información (Fuscaldo, 2011; Albanesius, 2010). Por ello, para las marcas es muy importante estar presente en dichas plataformas con el objeto de interactuar con el público adolescente (Araujo y Neijens, 2012), más influenciable por el marketing, y conseguir fidelizarlo con el fin de que éste haga publicidad de la marca a través de un boca-oreja positivo (Chu y Choi, 2011). Al mismo tiempo, los medios sociales ofrecen nuevas oportunidades a los gestores de marca para poder construir relaciones más personalizadas con los consumidores (Kelly, Kerr y Drennan, 2010; Rowley, 2009). La literatura reciente sobre las actividades de los consumidores relacionadas con marcas sugiere que la participación en comunidades virtuales se asocia positivamente con la receptividad ante campañas virales y mensajes comerciales en los medios sociales (Chi, 2011; Chu, 2011), así como con el desarrollo de una mayor confianza en la marca y lealtad hacia ésta (Laroche et al., 2012; Laroche et al., 2013; Casalo et al., 2007).

Para que las estrategias de comunicación de las marcas en estas plataformas online sean efectivas, resulta fundamental que las empresas entiendan muy bien qué mueve a los adolescentes a interactuar con las marcas. Sin embargo, hasta el momento apenas encontramos estudios en la literatura centrados en cómo y por qué los individuos interactúan con las marcas en las redes sociales online, y menos aún, para el caso de redes sociales que no sean Facebook. Uno de los pocos estudios relacionados existentes en la literatura es la investigación reciente de Tsai y Linjuan (2013), que analiza las motivaciones de los consumidores para el uso de las páginas de marca en redes sociales. Estos autores observan que los encuestados normalmente usan una página de marca de Facebook como plataforma para buscar descuentos o noticias sobre rebajas, para intercambiar información con otros miembros y para divertirse y buscar pasatiempos. De acuerdo con los resultados de su investigación, cuando los usuarios visitan o siguen una página comercial de Facebook, lo hacen esencialmente por razones utilitarias, más que por la motivación de ganar mayor apoyo social, gestionar identidades sociales o expresar sus opiniones y expectativas.

Dada la carencia de investigaciones en relación a estos aspectos, planteamos el presente estudio con el objeto de contribuir al avance del conocimiento teórico sobre el mecanismo sobre el que se basa el compromiso de los consumidores con las marcas en redes sociales online y cubrir dicha carencia en la literatura científica.

El objetivo de este trabajo será el estudio de cómo las gratificaciones online pueden influenciar el comportamiento del usuario adolescente. En concreto, se pretende analizar la influencia de las gratificaciones derivadas del uso de la red social Qzone (socialización, búsqueda de información y entretenimiento) sobre el grado de interacción con las marcas de los adolescentes chinos. Este aspecto apenas ha sido tratado previamente en la literatura científica y, menos aún, para el caso de China. Es más, las investigaciones previas sobre redes sociales online en China son muy escasas (Jackson y Wang, 2013; Wang et al., 2012; Chu y Choi, 2013), especialmente en lo concerniente a Qzone, a pesar de la importancia de esta red social para los adolescentes chinos y el tiempo que éstos pasan en ella. Debido a las importantes diferencias culturales entre las culturas occidentales y orientales, creemos necesario no centrarse únicamente en Estados Unidos y Facebook, sino desarrollar investigaciones alrededor de otras redes sociales online en los países orientales para alcanzar un mejor conocimiento del impacto de los servicios de redes sociales online sobre el comportamiento adolescente.

## 2. Revisión de la literatura

### 2.1. Gratificaciones derivadas del uso de redes sociales online

Algunos estudios han demostrado las bondades del enfoque de la teoría de los usos y gratificaciones en el contexto concreto de los entornos online por su gran capacidad explicativa para predecir comportamientos individuales en los servicios de redes sociales (Lee y Ma, 2012). Existe cierto consenso en la literatura al identificar la socialización, la búsqueda de información y el entretenimiento como algunas de las principales gratificaciones asociadas al uso de las redes sociales online (Ko et al., 2005; Chua et al., 2012; Diddi y LaRose, 2006; Dunne et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2010; Lin et al., 2005; Park et al., 2009), inclusive en el caso de China (Wang et al., 2012; Chu y Choi, 2011; Ku et al., 2013; Jackson y Wang, 2013).

En primer lugar, la *socialización* se encuentra entre las gratificaciones principales y más estudiadas que los adolescentes obtienen del uso de las redes sociales online (Boyd, 2007; Kim, Sohn y Choi, 2011; Liu, 2008; Tong, Van Der Heide, Langwell y Walther, 2008; Howard y Corkindale, 2008; LaRose y Eastin, 2004; Lee y Ma, 2012; Chen y Marcus, 2012). Ellison et al. (2007) demuestran que Facebook se usa para vincular y mantener el capital social del que los usuarios obtienen satisfacción afectiva. En un estudio longitudinal de los datos de panel de usuarios de Facebook, Steinfield et al. (2008) detectan que la intensidad de uso de Facebook durante el primer año es un potente indicador de resultados de capital social en el segundo año. Estos autores argumentan que el uso de Facebook ayuda a superar las barreras de las que pueden ser víctimas alumnos con baja autoestima a la hora de relacionarse con otros en entornos off-line. En relación a los medios sociales, Park et al. (2009) apuntan que los alumnos universitarios consideran la socialización como una de las gratificaciones que les llevan a formar parte de grupos de Facebook. Los usuarios pueden encontrarse con viejos amigos y compañeros en Facebook, comunicarse con ellos y saber qué hacen y qué es de ellos últimamente. Urista et al. (2008), basándose en temas comunes que surgen en conversaciones de grupo cotidianas, proponen que los usuarios de redes sociales las usan como una forma selectiva, eficiente e inmediata de comunicación interpersonal (mediada) con los demás y de buscar su aprobación y apoyo. De forma similar, Dunne et al. (2010) describen el mantenimiento de relaciones como un estímulo fundamental para el uso de las redes sociales online. La socialización permite a los adolescentes estar en contacto con los demás, compartir opiniones y sentir que son escuchados, satisfaciendo así las necesidades de expresarse y de pertenecer a un grupo propias de esta edad.

En segundo lugar, la gratificación de la *búsqueda de información* se refiere al uso de los servicios de redes sociales para encontrar información útil y oportuna sobre eventos, tendencias, música, etc. Los adolescentes comparten temas candentes, nuevas tendencias, noticias interesantes e información útil en estas plataformas online (Lee y Ma, 2012; George et al., 2013; Papacharissi y Rubin, 2000; Luo, 2002). Investigaciones previas muestran que la búsqueda de información —junto con la posibilidad de compartir información con otros usuarios con intereses similares— constituye una de las gratificaciones más importantes del uso de estas plataformas (LaRose y Eastin, 2004; Ko et al., 2005; Leung, 2007).



Por último, el *entretenimiento* se refiere a la forma en que los medios sociales proporcionan formas de entretenerse y escapar de la rutina. Esta gratificación emocional trata del disfrute con amigos, sentirse bien y no aburrirse. Muchas personas usan los servicios de redes sociales para entretenerse en su tiempo libre y pasar el tiempo cuando se aburren. Por ejemplo, Qzone ofrece muchos juegos online para usuarios que pueden jugarse con amigos. De este modo, los servicios de redes sociales no son sólo proveedores de información básica, sino que también ofrecen un espacio para el disfrute a través de la interacción entre personas por medio de la discusión y el cotilleo. Van der Heijden (2004), en una investigación sobre los sistemas de información orientados al placer (juegos, por ejemplo), señala que el disfrute y el placer percibidos permiten "interactuar con un sistema hedonista diseñado para ser un fin en sí mismo". Los servicios de redes sociales han sido clasificados por muchos investigadores como sistemas recreativos de este tipo (Kang y Lee, 2010; Sledgianowski y Kulviwat, 2009; Lin y Lu, 2011; Nov et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2010; McQuail, 2005), ya que la principal motivación de uso de los usuarios es el ocio, o lo que es lo mismo, la posibilidad de disfrute, entretenimiento y pasatiempo.

## ***2.2. La influencia de las gratificaciones derivadas del uso de la red social Qzone sobre el grado de interacción con las marcas de los adolescentes chinos***

Las estrategias y necesidades de comunicación de las marcas han cambiado con la introducción de los entornos de los medios sociales. Las empresas buscan dirigirse al segmento de los adolescentes interactuando con ellos a través de sus perfiles oficiales de marca de un modo personalizado y directo (Kelly et al., 2010; Rowley, 2009). Para ello, las marcas se centran en proporcionar a sus clientes potenciales experiencias lúdicas y de entretenimiento, información y una participación activa que fomente la interactividad entre el consumidor y la marca. Los consumidores pueden dialogar con la marca de un modo inmediato, opinar, conocer sus nuevos productos o campañas, disfrutar de contenidos de diversa índole e incluso publicitar ellos mismos los productos a través de sus perfiles personales en la red social (Othman-Yousif, 2012).

A pesar de los esfuerzos que se están realizando desde las marcas, algunos estudios señalan sin embargo que el grado de interacción de los adolescentes con las marcas en las redes sociales es todavía bastante bajo (Hadija et al., 2012; Cooper, 2011). No es que no les gusten sus mensajes publicitarios, sino que simplemente no se fijan en ellos, les pasan desapercibidos entre el resto de las informaciones (Kelly et al., 2010). Lo que ocurre es que los jóvenes centran su atención en otros asuntos, para ellos más relevantes, como los perfiles de sus amigos, vídeos, fotos, etc. (Zeng et al., 2009). Según Hadija et al. (2012), es muy difícil llegar a ellos a no ser de que estén realmente muy interesados en la marca. De ahí, también la relevancia de la publicidad segmentada para lograr que los mensajes publicitarios lleguen al público objetivo de manera más efectiva (Bhattacharya et al., 2006). Y que después sea este público seguidor de la marca quien reenvíe los mensajes a sus amigos, ejerciendo de prescriptor de la marca (Othman-Yousif, 2012).

Por otra parte, otro de los grandes obstáculos de la publicidad en redes sociales es el nivel de intrusismo percibido por los usuarios: un anuncio puede definirse como intrusivo cuando distrae o irrita a los consumidores (Lee, 2002). Los consumidores perciben un contrato social implícito con los anunciantes en el caso de los medios tradicionales como televisión, radio y prensa escrita, ya que disponen de programas gratuitos o de bajo coste dedicados a actividades publicitarias (Gordon y De Lima-Turner, 1997). Por el contrario, los usuarios de Internet no perciben la publicidad como un contrato, sino como una desviación intrusiva y molesta (Mathews, 2000; Gaffney, 2001).

Para solucionar estos problemas y lograr que las estrategias publicitarias de las marcas en las redes sociales online sean efectivas, se necesita comprender por qué se usan los servicios de redes sociales y también cómo los usuarios responden o reaccionan a las acciones publicitarias (Rodgers y Thorson, 2009; Zeng et al., 2009). Algunos autores (Stafford, 2008; Stafford y Schkade, 2004) sugieren que las principales razones que hacen que los usuarios naveguen por Internet incluyen factores estructurales de contenido (información y entretenimiento) y de socialización (por ejemplo, contactar con los demás). Según la teoría de usos y gratificaciones (Katz y Foulkes, 1962), los consumidores buscan activamente formas de satisfacer necesidades tanto hedonistas como utilitarias. Por ejemplo, pueden ver la televisión para entretenerse con una película o para informarse con un documental o un

programa de noticias. Por lo tanto, esta teoría muestra que el valor de un anuncio se deriva de su capacidad para satisfacer las necesidades de entretenimiento, evasión, diversión y liberación emocional de los consumidores (McQuail, 1983; Sansone et al., 2012).

Asimismo, en relación con los contenidos más adecuados para las estrategias de comunicación de marca en los servicios de redes sociales, según algunos autores, el anuncio adquiere relevancia solo por su contenido informativo; es decir, un contenido que informa a los usuarios acerca de las bondades del producto (Rotzoll, Haefner y Sondage, 1990). Sin embargo, en opinión de otros autores ésta última no sería la táctica publicitaria más idónea para las marcas en sus estrategias de comunicación en redes sociales (Williams, 2010; Goldsmith y Lafferty, 2002). Para estos investigadores, cuando las marcas se dirigen al público adolescente, ya no basta con centrarse en proporcionar información acerca de las bondades del producto, como se hacía antaño en televisión, sino que se deben crear además contenidos entretenidos, que supongan algún tipo de diversión o entretenimiento para el usuario (por ejemplo, juegos publicitarios) y valerse también de herramientas como foros o chats que permiten a los adolescentes interactuar y entablar diálogos acerca de la marca con amigos u otros usuarios y, de este modo, satisfacer sus necesidades afectivas de socialización.

A tenor de lo anterior, en la presente investigación planteamos entonces la existencia de una relación positiva entre las principales gratificaciones derivadas del uso de las redes sociales online y el nivel de interacción de los adolescentes con las marcas dentro de la red social. Así, proponemos que —cuanto mayor es la percepción de entretenimiento, socialización y provisión de información útil y oportuna en Qzone por parte de los adolescentes chinos— mayor es su interacción con las marcas dentro de esta red social.

Derivado de lo anterior planteamos, por lo tanto, las siguientes hipótesis de investigación:

*H1: La socialización en Qzone incrementa la interacción de los adolescentes chinos con las marcas en esta red social.*

*H2: La búsqueda de información en Qzone incrementa la interacción de los adolescentes chinos con las marcas en esta red social.*

*H3: El entretenimiento en Qzone incrementa la interacción de los adolescentes chinos con las marcas en esta red social.*

### **3. Metodología de la investigación**

#### ***3.1. Características y selección de la muestra***

Para el contraste de las hipótesis y cuestiones de investigación planteadas, se entrevistó mediante encuestas auto-administradas a 220 adolescentes chinos en la ciudad de Shanghai (129 chicas y 91 chicos), usuarios de la red social Qzone, de edades entre los 14 y 19 años. Las encuestas se llevaron a cabo en siete distintos colegios de educación secundaria, después de haberse obtenido los correspondientes permisos de autorización, tanto por parte del centro escolar como de los padres de los participantes.

Asimismo, los adolescentes fueron informados acerca de que su participación sería voluntaria y anónima, y de que podrían dejar de realizar la encuesta en el momento que desearan.

#### ***3.2. Medición de variables***

Para la recopilación de la información y medición de las variables que se precisan, se ha elaborado un cuestionario que plasma, a través de una serie de preguntas, los objetivos perseguidos en la investigación. Asimismo, el desarrollo de las escalas de medición de las variables estudiadas se basa en la revisión de la literatura al respecto, con el fin de garantizar la validez de contenido de las mismas.

En primer lugar, para la medición del grado de interacción con las marcas en la red social online Qzone por parte de los adolescentes, siguiendo las recomendaciones de Bergkvist y Rossiter (2007) se

utiliza una escala de un único ítem. Así, se pregunta a los participantes “*en qué medida interactúan con las marcas en la red social Qzone*”, estando formada la categoría de respuestas por un intervalo de 4 puntos, donde: (1)=nada en absoluto, (2)=poco, (3)=bastante y (4)=mucho.

En segundo lugar, para la medición de las distintas gratificaciones derivadas del uso de la red social Qzone: *socialización, entretenimiento y búsqueda de información*, siguiendo las recomendaciones de la literatura (Lee et al., 2010; Park et al., 2009; Lee y Ma, 2012), se utiliza una escala multi-ítem con puntuaciones desde 1 hasta 4, donde (1)=nada en absoluto, (2)=poco, (3)=bastante y (4)=mucho. En la Tabla 1 se listan los ítems utilizados para medir cada constructo.

**TABLA 1**  
**Ítems de medición de cada una de las gratificaciones derivadas del uso de la red social Qzone:**  
**Socialización, entretenimiento y búsqueda de información**

Variable	Descripción	Ítem	Carga factorial	Media	Desviación típica	$\alpha$
Socialización	Mide el grado en el que la red social Qzone ayuda a mantener relaciones con amigos	Siento que puedo hablar más con mis amigos	0,81	2,56	0,95	0,83
		Siento que puedo mantener el contacto con mis amigos y acercarme a ellos	0,87	2,62	0,96	
		Puedo interactuar con mis amigos a la hora de compartir noticias	0,69	2,71	0,90	
Entretenimiento	Mide el grado en el que la red social Qzone proporciona una forma de divertirse y pasarlo bien	Me parece agradable	0,77	2,35	0,78	0,85
		Me parece placentero	0,92	2,10	0,73	
		Me parece emocionante	0,76	1,87	0,70	
Búsqueda de información	Mide el grado en el que la red social Qzone puede proporcionar a los usuarios información relevante y oportuna	Me ayuda a acumular información importante	0,73	2,33	0,92	0,82
		Me ayuda a encontrar información útil	0,86	2,23	0,91	
		Es fácil conseguir información cuando la necesito	0,75	2,03	0,89	

#### 4. Resultados

Con el fin de contrastar las hipótesis propuestas en el marco teórico, se procedió al desarrollo de un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales con el objetivo de determinar los efectos causales entre las variables latentes. Los coeficientes de ajuste del modelo estructural, así como los resultados del análisis de ecuaciones estructurales sobre las relaciones entre las variables latentes, se presentan en la Tabla 2.

Las medidas indican el buen ajuste del modelo (Bollen, 1989). El análisis de ecuaciones estructurales indica una influencia positiva significativa tanto de la gratificación de socialización (SRC=0.20, p=0.021) como de la de entretenimiento (SRC=0.20, p=0.022) en el grado de interacción con las marcas de los adolescentes en la red social Qzone. Se corroboran, por tanto, las hipótesis 1 y 3. Por otro lado, el análisis de ecuaciones estructurales indica la existencia de una relación positiva no significativa de la gratificación referente a la “búsqueda de información” en la interacción con las marcas de los adolescentes (SRC=0.05, p=0.54); en consecuencia, los datos obtenidos no permiten ratificar la hipótesis 2.

**TABLA 2**  
**Análisis de ecuaciones estructurales**  
**Coefficientes de ajuste y relación entre variables latentes**

Factor	Regression Coefficients (standardized, non-standardized; p)
Socialización → Interacción con las marcas	0,20; 0,25; $p = 0,021$
Entretenimiento → Interacción con las marcas	0,20; 0,31; $p = 0,022$
Búsqueda de información → Interacción con las marcas	0,05; 0,06; $p = 0,54$
<b>Ajuste del modelo</b>	GFI = 0,96; AGFI = 0,93; NFI = 0,95; CFI = 0,98; RMR = 0,03; RMSEA = 0,04 Chi cuadrado=44,1; Chi cuadrado/df=1,47

Nota: GFI = Índice de bondad de ajuste; AGFI = Índice ajustado de bondad de ajuste; NFI = Índice de ajuste normalizado; CFI = Índice de ajuste comparado; RMR = residuo cuadrático medio; RMSEA = Error de aproximación cuadrático medio.

## 5. Conclusiones e Implicaciones

Las dos principales contribuciones de este trabajo a la literatura científica son: en primer lugar, analizar el papel de las gratificaciones obtenidas del uso de las redes sociales online en el grado de interacción con las marcas de los adolescentes en estas plataformas, hasta ahora apenas estudiado en la literatura científica y, en segundo lugar, analizar dicho fenómeno para el caso de los adolescentes chinos y de la red social china Qzone. Dicha red social, a pesar de ser la segunda red social más grande en número de usuarios después de Facebook, no ha sido analizada hasta el momento en la literatura científica.

Los resultados de la presente investigación demuestran la existencia de una influencia positiva significativa tanto de la gratificación de socialización como de entretenimiento en la interacción con las marcas de los adolescentes en la red social Qzone. Por otro lado, el análisis de ecuaciones estructurales indica la existencia de una relación positiva no significativa de la gratificación referente a la “búsqueda de información” en la interacción con las marcas de los adolescentes en Qzone.

Los resultados confirman la opinión de algunos investigadores que sugieren no centrar las estrategias de comunicación de marcas en redes sociales online en proporcionar información acerca de las características del producto, sino en crear contenidos que entretengan a los adolescentes y les permitan satisfacer sus necesidades de socialización (Williams, 2010; Fosdick, 2012; Stafford, 2008; Kelly et al., 2010). Así, la provisión de información acerca de los atributos del producto habrá de dejarse para otros soportes de comunicación de la marca como, por ejemplo, su página web en Internet, pero no para las plataformas de redes sociales online. En esta misma línea, Goldsmith y Lafferty (2002) sugieren que para que las estrategias de marca dirigidas a los adolescentes en redes sociales sean efectivas, las marcas han de redefinir y cambiar su discurso publicitario. Así, este discurso debe pasar de estar centrado en las bondades del producto a enfatizar los valores y experiencias emocionales asociadas a él, intentando entretener, sorprender y persuadir al usuario con mensajes que van más allá de los propiamente informativos sobre el producto. Por citar un ejemplo, los diferentes formatos publicitarios que la marca *Coca Cola* utiliza en su perfil de Facebook se centran en el valor de la felicidad, recurriendo a cuestiones como la música, el amor o el ocio. Estos valores sociales cumplen una función persuasiva e intentan transmitir la necesidad de adquirir un producto determinado y, por extensión, adquirir también el valor que se pone en juego y sentirse aceptados socialmente como miembros pertenecientes a una ideología (Sáez, 2003; Martínez-Rodrigo y Marta-Lazo, 2011, p. 112).

El entendimiento de las motivaciones de los usuarios a la hora de interactuar con las marcas en las redes sociales online puede ayudar a los publicistas a atender mejor las necesidades y los intereses de los usuarios, lo que les permitiría estimular el compromiso con las marcas de los usuarios y construir relaciones de calidad. En concreto, de los resultados de la presente investigación se deriva que cuanto

mayor es la percepción de entretenimiento y de socialización en Qzone por parte de los adolescentes chinos, mayor es la interacción de éstos con las marcas dentro de dicha red social.

En consecuencia, dado que las gratificaciones emocionales del entretenimiento y la socialización potencian la interacción de los adolescentes con las marcas en redes sociales, los responsables de comunicación de marca en dichas plataformas deberían incorporar una gran variedad de contenido entretenido y agradable para los jóvenes como historias divertidas y emocionantes, adivinanzas, juegos, bromas, horóscopos diarios, vídeos musicales de sus cantantes favoritos, cómics, etc., tal y como recoge también el estudio de Tsai y Men (2013), realizado para el caso de Facebook. En otras palabras, los comunicadores de marca deberían centrarse en el contenido y las aplicaciones de la red social Qzone que son entretenidas y posibilitan satisfacer las necesidades de socialización de los adolescentes chinos a través de la interactividad y la participación activa con otros usuarios. Las futuras investigaciones deberían analizar si estos resultados son generalizables y en qué grado, por ejemplo, reproduciendo el análisis en mercados geográficos diferentes u otras redes sociales online.

## 6. Futuras líneas de investigación

El estudio e implementación de nuevas estrategias y acciones de comunicación que puedan ayudar a las marcas a seguir buscando y construyendo su identidad social en estos entornos digitales y a saber conectar y fidelizar al público joven constituye una línea de investigación de gran importancia e interés para la empresa, en la que se deberá continuar profundizando en el futuro. No obstante, entendemos que es necesaria, también, la formación de los adolescentes en redes sociales. No hay que olvidar que en ellas están constantemente recibiendo contenidos persuasivos. Por esta razón, creemos que aunque la competencia digital debe desarrollarse entre los adolescentes, también se les debe aportar las destrezas y conocimientos necesarios para enfrentarse a contenidos publicitarios en la red y que éstos no influyan negativamente en su desarrollo (Martínez-Rodrigo y Marta-Lazo, 2011).

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# THE IMPACT OF COLLECTIVE BRANDS ON THE ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY OF EXPERIENCE GOODS PRODUCERS

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## RESUMEN

*The aim of this paper is to analyse the economic efficiency of members of Protected Designations of Origin (PDO). For the first time we analyse the value of PDO labels from the point of view of economic efficiency. The central hypothesis is that a PDO has a positive impact on the economic efficiency of its member companies and that this is because a PDO label is a collective reputation indicator that foments efficient investment in quality in terms of member returns. The methodology applied to test this hypothesis is based on Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) to estimate economic efficiency, and econometric models to explain company efficiency through both the PDO label, as an indicator of collective reputation, and the characteristics of the company. Overall, the results reveal the importance of PDOs in industries in which the signal of reputation is not only reliant on the individual brands.*

## Palabras clave:

PDO, collective reputation, efficiency, experience goods.

## 1. Introduction

Collective brands have proliferated in recent years, and the products marketed under these brands now represent an important percentage of consumer purchases (Winfrey and McCluskey, 2005). This tendency in consumer preferences has led the European Union to introduce the following public labels (Fernández-Barcala and González-Díaz, 2006; Loureiro and McCluskey, 2000): Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indicator (PGI) and Guaranteed Traditional Speciality (GTS). A PDO covers the term used to describe foodstuffs which are produced, processed and prepared in a given geographical area using recognized know-how (e.g., Mozzarella di Bufala). A PGI indicates a link with the geographical area in at least one of the stages of production, processing or preparation (e.g., Turrón de Alicante). The link with the area is therefore stronger for PDOs and the level of protection is also stronger for PDOs. Two examples of products that can be categorized as PDOs are wine and cheese, and they are the object of our study. Finally, Guaranteed Traditional Specialities are agricultural products and foodstuffs that comply with certain specifications concerning their composition or method of production.

A determinant of the success of products under the umbrella of these labels is collective reputation: if the collective reputation of the product is high, the collective label will be a powerful indicator of quality (Tirole, 1996). In this way, collective labels created by public or government institutions are designed to ratify the product quality of the individual member companies, which can sell their products with a legal guarantee and the prestige of the superior quality of the specified geographical region and/or production method.

The wide use of the collective label strategy has provoked interest in the academic world but the extant studies are only based on estimating collective brand equity through the price premium consumers are ready to pay (e.g. Fernández Barcala and González Díaz, 2006) and on the impact of collective reputation indicators on product price (e.g. Landon and Smith, 1997, 1998; Loureiro and McCluskey, 2000; Schamel, 2000). This has allowed the characterisation of collective labels through two main features (Fishman, Finkelshtain, Simhon and Yacouel, 2008): i) their labels are perceived as signs of superior quality by consumers, who are prepared to pay a price premium for them; and ii) the member producers of collective labels only share a brand name, and are generally autonomous companies that take individual decisions and make their own profits.

In any case, we can ask ourselves what the efficiency of a member company of a PDO label would be and whether there are conditions that affect this efficiency. The efficiency of a company refers to a relative judgement around the relationship between the resources used -inputs- and the results obtained -outputs- in the development of its activities; bearing in mind that between the two elements is the underlying idea of opportunity costs. A company will be efficient if, given a certain availability of inputs, it is able to produce the maximum amount of output possible; or, alternatively, if it can reach a certain level of output using the lowest quantity of inputs possible. The efficiency of a company has a relative character, as it includes the performance of the other companies that make up the sample. The interest in studying these aspects rests on their important implications on managers' decisions in terms of the effectiveness of public PDO labels in creating value-added for producers.

Thus, the objective of this study is to examine the capacity of a PDO label to generate greater performance from a company efficiency perspective while controlling the role of the different characteristics of the member companies. The central hypothesis is that a PDO has a positive impact on the economic efficiency of its member companies and that this is because a PDO label is a collective reputation indicator in experience goods (i.e., the quality of a product is imperfectly observable prior to purchase) that foments efficient investment in quality in terms of member returns. The methodology is based on the non-parametric efficiency estimation technique of Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) and on the application of different regression models that explain company efficiency through both the PDO label, as an indicator of collective reputation, and the characteristics of the company. The empirical analysis is made on PDO labels in the experience goods of wine and cheese in Spain; two interesting examples for our purposes given the proliferation in the wine and cheese markets of PDO labels. Concretely, PDOs are used in Spain as a recognition of superior quality, resulting from individual differential characteristics due to the geographical environment where the

raw materials are produced and the product is made and the influence of the human factor (MMAMRM, 2009). These PDOs are used by a plurality of companies under the control and authorisation of the titleholder (the Regulatory Council of each PDO), which certifies that the products comply with certain common requisites, especially those concerned with quality, geographical origin, technical conditions or method of production.

Having established the objective of the study, the rest of the paper is organised as follows. In the second section we develop and argue the hypothesis. The third describes the methodology and sample used. In the fourth section, we present the results and the final section summarises the conclusions made from the study.

## **2. Literature review**

Researchers have given little empirical attention to the relationship between collective brands and the efficiency of their member companies. Despite this, the traditional theoretical position in Industrial Economy holds that collective labels can increase the efficiency of their members by providing scale economies in production and promotion (Fishman et al., 2008), meaning that companies in collective brands would be more efficient than those that do not use collective brands. With regard to scale economies in production (see Tirole, 1988), the bringing together of activities, derived from the same product or from different products, is related to reduced production costs. Thus, participation in a collective brand facilitates specialisation and brings significant savings. Moreover, coordinated activities are motivated by complementariness of demand. One can imagine a diversity of companies specialising in wine making, but the coordination required by membership of a PDO creates synergy. In this way, collective brands can deliver scale economies in production for their member companies. In terms of scale economies in promotion, the grouping together of activities can not only be associated with production in the strict sense of the word, but also with the services that accompany it (Tirole, 1988), such as promotion. Such groupings avoid the duplication of the fixed costs of promotion or they at least reduce them. In fact, one of the objectives sought by the use of collective brands is to reduce the marketing investment needed to launch new products.

Although the effects derived from scale economies in production and promotion could explain the greater efficiency of companies in collective brands, the logic of our proposal is based, alternatively, on the idea that collective labels are economically efficient in signalling quality when some characteristics of the product cannot be observed by consumers before or after its purchase.

### ***2.1. Economic efficiency in signalling quality***

Our proposal begins with the Signalling Theory of the Information Economics (see Erdem and Swait, 1998; Kreps and Wilson, 1982), which refers to the role of brand reputation as a quality indicator that reduces the perception of risk in conditions of asymmetric information on quality in the market. Basically, this theory assumes the existence of imperfect and asymmetric information in markets. When these information asymmetries refer to quality, high and low quality products can co-exist in the market (Akerlof, 1970), which means that consumers have to make ex-ante evaluations of the quality of their purchases; making the choice both problematic and costly (Nayyar, 1990) as there will be doubts around the quality of a product and the consumer will not know a priori which product to buy. Assuming rational consumer behaviour, we can expect consumers to try to make good purchases and reduce risk; meaning that the purchase decision process will be guided by any intrinsic and/or extrinsic signals of quality. One of the most analysed signals for reducing these asymmetries in consumer markets is brand reputation (Kreps and Wilson, 1982; Erdem and Swait, 1998). In fact, brand value is defined by the utility it gives the consumer as an information signal (e.g. Erdem et al., 1999), which means that the main determinant of brand value is consumer belief in the brand, which can help improve perception of quality and reduce the search costs and risk associated with purchase.

In this respect, the researchers of Industrial Economy distinguish two reputation models (Landon and Smith, 1997, 1998): individual company reputation and collective reputation. The role of individual company reputation has been developed in the theoretical models of Klein and Leffler (1981), Kreps et al. (1982), Shapiro (1983), Allen (1984), Rogerson (1987) and Jin and Leslie (2009), who explain the reputation of an individual company through its past output quality. Thus, with experience goods, the

quality of a product is imperfectly observable prior to purchase and can only be determined through its use. If these experience goods are not frequently bought, the information on the current quality of the product is not available to consumers or is costly to acquire. This means that consumer demand will depend, at least in part, on consumer predictions around the quality of the product. In this sense, these models consider that the reputation of an individual company is only a function of its past quality and proposes that the price of an individual company's product is explained by its reputation based on the past quality of its output.

For its part, the role of collective reputation, understood as an aggregate of individual reputations, is developed in the theoretical model of Tirole (1996), which uses group information to approximate the quality of the product of the individual company. In fact, in industries with a large number of producers, the specific information on the current or past quality of a given company is not easily available and it will only be possible (or it would be cheaper) to obtain information on the quality of a group of companies with which the company in question can be identified. This group information can be used as an indicator of the product quality of an individual company in the group.

In summary, among the mechanisms of reputation, the collective label stands out as the individual member companies share a collective reputation and the consumers of a given individual company can learn something about the quality of all the member companies. In any case, our proposal considers that collective reputation foments efficient investment in quality in terms of returns of members that produce experience products (i.e.: where quality is difficult to observe before purchasing). It is argued through the following extension of the ideas of Shapiro (1983): if consumers rely on the quality reputation of a group of companies, a company that chooses to join a collective label with a certain level of quality initially has to invest in reputation through the production of quality products, and continue the quality strategy over time as it will obtain high profits from its investment in quality derived from the large number of consumers that are adequately informed about the past quality of the group (Fishman et al., 2008). In fact, a collective label covers a larger market segment than any of its member companies, and given that the information on past quality is imperfectly disseminated, for example by word of mouth, the consumers of any given member company have a greater probability of having previously interacted with past consumers of the collective label than with those of a company outside the collective. Consequently, a collective label can promote more efficient investment in quality in its member companies in terms of returns on this investment.

Taking the above argumentation, we can expect PDO labels to increase the economic efficiency of their members because the PDO label provides a collective reputation indicator which foments efficient investment in quality in terms of the improvement of its members' returns. Consequently, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1. Companies that use PDO labels are more efficient from an economic point of view than companies that do not use PDO labels.

### **3. Methodology and sample**

#### ***3.1. Methodology***

The methodology is based on the estimation of the economic efficiency of a company, as well as on the different non-parametric tests to analyse the relationship between the PDO label, as a collective reputation indicator, and company economic efficiency. With regard to the first aspect, various models have been proposed to estimate efficiency. In this study economic efficiency is estimated using the non-parametric methodology of Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) (Charnes et al., 1978, 1981), which is based on linear programming techniques, in which it is not necessary to include specific functional forms for the production function (relationship between inputs and outputs) to establish the efficient frontier.

In general, DEA is an extension of the traditional ratios analysis insofar as each decision making unit (DMU) evaluated is considered efficient if no other DMU is able to produce higher outputs from the same inputs or, alternatively, produce the same output using lower input levels. In the literature on productivity and efficiency analysis the term DMU is used to describe a productive entity such as a

company, a retail outlet, a bank branch, or a business unit. The underlying assumption is that these decision making units employ the same type of inputs to obtain the same type of outputs. In our case, we employ the term DMU referring to a company (winery or cheese factory). With the DEA models we can distinguish units (companies) that operate efficiently from those that do not, with the efficient units defining the efficient frontier.

More concretely, we apply an output orientated model (it considers that a company will be efficient if, given a certain availability of inputs, it is able to produce the maximum amount of output possible), bearing in mind that the input and output orientated models estimate exactly the same frontiers and, therefore, identify the same companies as efficient. For each DMU we solve the linear programming problem of the BCC model (Banker et al, 1984) that assumes variable returns to scale. Returns to scale is a long run concept which reflects the degree to which a proportional increase in all inputs increases output. Constant returns to scale (CRS) occurs when a proportional increase in all inputs results in the same proportional increase in output. Variable returns to scale (VRS) occurs when a proportional increase in all inputs results in a more than proportional increase in output (increasing VRS) or in a less than proportional increase in output (decreasing VRS). The CRS assumption is only appropriate when all companies are operating at an optimal scale. However, when this is not the case, efficiency measurements can be confounded by scale efficiencies. The use of a VRS specification permits the calculation of efficiency devoid of these scale efficiency effects. Thus, to estimate scale efficiency we estimate the CCR model (Charnes et al., 1978), which assumes constant returns to scale (CRS). The efficiency measurements obtained with this model ( $\theta^*CRS$ ) are always lower than those obtained with the BCC model (Banker et al, 1984) ( $\theta^*VRS$ ), which assumes variable returns to scale (VRS), so that scale economies (SE) are defined as  $\theta^*CRS/\theta^*VRS$ . If  $SE = 1$ , the DMU analysed operates with scale efficiency, whereas if  $SE < 1$ , it indicates the presence of scale inefficiencies.

Second, to test whether PDO labels influence efficiency (Hypothesis 1) we use a series of non-parametric tests with the estimations of the efficiency of the different companies. Concretely, we apply the test of Mann-Whitney to the null hypothesis that the sample means of the different groups of companies are generated by the same density function, as opposed to the alternative hypothesis that the efficiency of a group is stochastically better than that of another. At this point, it is useful to remember that the estimated efficiency values are not independently distributed and that it is not possible to apply the central limit theorem, which impedes the application of a variance analysis as it does not meet the assumption of normality in the distributions of the indices of efficiency. Finally, to control the influence of some of the characteristics of the company on the relationship between the PDO label, as a collective reputation indicator, and the efficiency of the company, we also use a regression analysis. Concretely, we make a second stage analysis in which the efficiency estimations of each company are explained as a function of a dummy variable (that takes the value 1 if the company belongs to a PDO and 0 otherwise), the age of the company, the average wages paid by the company and the company size. Given that the estimated efficiency values are restricted to between 0 and 1, the usual procedure for this type of analysis is to employ a Tobit regression model estimated by maximum likelihood (e.g. Bravo-Ureta et al., 2007). Hoff (2007) indicates that this type of model is sufficient to analyse the effect that certain independent variables have on efficiency levels estimated through DEA. We have conducted two different regressions because the efficiency estimates for the wineries and the cheese factories are not comparable since they are specific for the sample considered.

### **3.2. Sample, data and variables**

The empirical analysis is performed on two samples of companies operating in the Spanish wine and cheese sectors, respectively. For the samples selection we use the populations of companies registered in paragraphs 1042 and 1053 of CNAE-2009, which are the equivalent of codes 2084 (“Wines, brandy and brandy spirits”) and 2022 (“Natural, Processed, and Imitation Cheese”) of the US SIC classification, and which are found in the SABI database (the Iberian version of the Bureau Van Dijk database). The initial sample comprises 2,563 companies in the wine sector and 456 in the cheese sector. To guarantee the homogeneity of the companies analysed, we exclude wineries that principally produce brandy and other distilled high alcohol products. When this database does not provide information on certain relevant variables (especially with regard to employee numbers at wineries), we use information from the FEV (Spanish Wine Federation). Finally, 46 wineries were contacted by e-

mail and/or telephone to complete the information on some of the variables needed to estimate efficiency. The companies in the 80 Spanish wine PDOs and in the 27 Spanish cheese PDOs are listed on the PDO websites. The final sample used for the empirical study is made up of 1,257 wineries, of which 437 are not members of any PDO, and of the 820 that are members of the 58 PDOs represented in the sample, 110 wineries are members of more than one PDO. The final sample of cheese factories is made up of 378 companies, of which 267 are not members of any PDO, and 111 are members of the 22 PDOs represented in the sample.

With regard to the variables used to estimate economic efficiency, we consider different representative inputs and outputs of the economic activity of the companies considered. As inputs, we use the following three productive factors: i) the number of employees, which represents the labour factor (Bucklin, 1978; Ingene, 1982; Pilling et al., 1995; Yoo et al., 1997; Thomas et al., 1998); ii) the funds of the company (capital plus reserves); and iii) the level of debt (long and short term). The last two variables are used as an alternative to a single capital variable as access to financing and the costs derived from it are a fundamental factor of international competition in the wine industry (Viviani, 2008).

In terms of outputs, firstly we use sales volumes (Bucklin, 1978; Ingene, 1982; Lusch and Serpkenci, 1990; Ratchford and Stoops, 1988; Donthu and Yoo, 1998; Thomas et al., 1998; Zhu, 2000). The justification of this choice is that companies work with a wide range of products (e.g., red, white, or rosé wines with different qualities and prices), which makes it impossible to obtain disaggregated information on the outputs produced. As a second output we use the profit volumes of the company (Bucklin, 1978; Doust, 1984; Thomas et al., 1998; Zhu, 2000) for the following reasons: i) companies can obtain atypical returns distinct from their principal activity which are not included in their sales volume figures; ii) along with sales volumes, company managers have to pay special attention to results, as they guarantee both the visibility of the company and the possibility of making future investments; and iii) considering profit levels allows us to include the influence of costs not considered as inputs. The consideration of these two outputs in monetary terms allows us to estimate an eminently economic concept of efficiency. We do not consider outputs in physical terms (for example, hectolitres of wine produced or tonnes of cheese produced) because this would entail estimating a technical concept of efficiency outwith the scope of this study.

Finally, in order to explain the estimated efficiency of the companies we consider the following variables. First, a collective reputation indicator, measured through a dummy variable that takes the value 1 if the winery or cheese factory belongs to a PDO and 0 otherwise (Landon and Smith, 1997, 1998). Second, as control variables we use three company characteristics: i) Age of the company, measured in years since its creation. More age leads to better market knowledge and better individual company reputation. Thus, as a company establishes itself within a community, its awareness and reputation spread with positive word of mouth (Thomas et al., 1998). In this sense, greater age allows a company to have more know-how, which can lead to more capacity to develop its activities more efficiently. So, in principle, we can expect that the older companies will be more efficient than the newer companies. ii) Average wage paid (Gómez-Mejía and Balkin, 1992), measured as the quotient between the total amount destined for salaries and the number of employees at the company. This variable, related to the management of human resources, can have an impact on the efficiency of a company. The existing empirical findings around the relationship between average remuneration level and company efficiency are not conclusive, which could be because of the existence of contextual or situational factors (Sánchez and Aragón, 2002). And iii) Size of the company, measured as the assets volume. Company size can affect economic efficiency because it can explain individual reputation as bigger companies have more financial resources to invest in quality and promotion (Cagriota and Delmastro, 2008).

#### 4. Results

In this section we first estimate the economic efficiency of the companies, using the DEA methodology. As can be seen in Table 1, the average economic efficiency using the DEA models that assume constant returns to scale (CRS) and variable returns to scale (VRS) is 0.431 and 0.477, respectively, which reflects a high degree of inefficiency among Spanish wineries. This result implies that, on average, the wineries considered could have attained the same levels of output using 55% fewer inputs. The average scale efficiency of the sample analysed is 0.925, which means that the largest part of the deviation from the efficient frontier is due to poor use of inputs and, to a lesser extent, because the wineries are not operating at the optimum size. In the case of cheese factories, the average economic efficiency using the CRS and VRS models are 0.372 and 0.422, respectively, which also reflects a high degree of inefficiency among the cheese factories. This result implies that, on average, the cheese factories considered could have attained the same levels of output using 60% fewer inputs. The average scale efficiency of the sample analysed is 0.894.

With the model that assumes CRS there are 64 wineries (23 cheese factories) considered economically efficient. With the model assuming VRS there are 183 wineries (41 cheese factories) considered economically efficient. Finally, the results show that there are 295 wineries (52 cheese factories) with optimum scale efficiency.

TABLE 1  
Estimations of efficiency

	Wine			Cheese		
	CRS Eff.	VRS Eff.	SE Eff.	CRS Eff.	VRS Eff.	SE Eff.
Mean	0.431	0.477	0.925	0.372	0.422	0.894
S.D.	0.264	0.284	0.150	0.275	0.300	0.182
Min.	0.026	0.026	0.187	0.002	0.002	0.224
Max.	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000

Second, we analyse the influence of PDOs on the efficiency of the companies analysed. As can be seen in Table 2, the average efficiency estimated with the CRS model for PDO wineries is 0.457, which is higher than the average efficiency of non PDO wineries (0.39). With the VRS model we find values of 0.495 for PDO wineries and 0.443 for non PDO wineries. Regarding cheese factories, results also show that the average efficiency estimated with the CRS model for PDO cheese factories is 0.436, which is higher than the average efficiency of non PDO cheese factories (0.346). With the VRS model we find values of 0.491 for PDO cheese factories and 0.394 for non PDO cheese factories. In both cases the non-parametric Mann-Whitney tests show that the PDO companies have significantly higher economic efficiency than the non PDO companies, which supports H1 that PDO labels positively influence the economic efficiency of their member companies. This result reveals the importance of PDO labels in the commercialisation of experience products, insofar as they reduce the risk perceived by consumers when making their purchases. It seems, therefore, that a PDO, as a collective reputation indicator, foments efficient investment in quality by the member companies, which would explain the greater economic efficiency of companies in a PDO label. It would support the idea of Fishman et al. (2008) that a company that chooses to join a collective label with a certain level of quality has to invest in reputation through the production of quality products as it will obtain high profits from its investment in quality derived from the large number of consumers that are adequately informed about the past quality of the group. With regard to scale efficiency, although the PDO companies (both wineries and cheese factories) have slightly better values than the non PDO companies, the result is not significant.

TABLE 2  
**Comparison between the efficiency estimations of PDO and non PDO companies**

		PDO label companies			Non PDO label companies		
		Ef. CRS	Ef. VRS	Ef. SE	Ef. CRS	Ef. VRS	Ef. SE
Wine	Average	0.457	0.495	0.930	0.390	0.443	0.917
	S.D.	0.286	0.298	0.146	0.213	0.251	0.157
	Min.	0.026	0.026	0.187	0.033	0.034	0.278
	Max.	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
	U-Mann-Whitney	166985.5	166742.0	177808.5			
	W-Wilcoxon	262688.5	262445.0	273511.5			
	Z	-1.988	-2.031	-0.224			
Prob>Z	0.047	0.042	0.823				
Cheese	Average	0.436	0.491	0.898	0.346	0.394	0.893
	S.D.	0.320	0.341	0.185	0.249	0.277	0.180
	Min.	0.005	0.018	0.230	0.002	0.002	0.224
	Max.	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
	U-Mann-Whitney	16807.50	16999.0	15924.0			
	W-Wilcoxon	23023.5	23215.0	21140.0			
	Z	-2.056	-2.255	-1.144			
Prob>Z	0.040	0.024	0.253				

Further, to test the central hypothesis of the paper we also carry out a regression analysis, which allows us to control the effect of several characteristics of the company on its efficiency. As can be seen in Table 3 the results show that the coefficient of the dummy variable reflecting PDO membership is positive and significant, in both the wine and cheese sectors. This result shows that the PDO companies have significantly higher economic efficiency than the non PDO companies, which supports H1 that PDO labels positively influence the economic efficiency of their member companies. The results also show that in both sectors the coefficient of the age of the company (number of years since established) is positive and significant, which indicates a positive effect on the economic efficiency of the company. This result can be explained by the age of the company being linked with better market knowledge and better individual company reputation. In fact, as a company begins to establish itself within a community, its reputation will be more widespread and it will have positive word of mouth (Thomas et al., 1998). With regard to remuneration levels, the coefficient of the variable reflecting the average wage paid is negative and significant for the wineries, showing a negative effect of the average level of wages paid on the efficiency of the company. This could be because any wage increases that are not accompanied by productivity increases will raise labour costs per product unit, which would necessarily lead to price increases or reduced company economic efficiency. However, this coefficient is positive and significant for the cheese factories, showing a positive effect of the average wage level on efficiency. This empirical finding is consistent with Sánchez and Aragón (2002), who state that the relationship between average remuneration level and company efficiency depends on contextual or situational factors. Specifically, this result shows the importance of adequate employee motivation in labour intensive sectors such as the cheese sector. With regard to the influence of company size, the coefficient is positive and significant in both sectors, which suggests that as company size increases economic efficiency will be higher. This could be explained because company size explains individual reputation as bigger companies have more financial resources to invest in quality and promotion (Cagriota and Delmastro, 2008). Thus, larger companies are able to attract the attention of the media and gain visibility: “large companies tend to receive a lot of public scrutiny. Availability of information could disproportionately benefit large companies by inflating audiences’ familiarity with their activities” (Fombrun and Shanley, 1990; Cagriota and Delmastro, 2008).



TABLE 3  
**Estimation of the determinant factors of company efficiency (Tobit)**

Wine	Variable	Coeff.	S.D.	Z-Statistic	Prob.
Wine	C	0.952	0.033	2.852	0.000
	PDO (dummy variable)	0.084	0.012	7.305	0.000
	Company age	0.002	0.001	4.017	0.000
	Average Wage paid	-0.036	0.008	-4.518	0.000
	Company size	0.059	0.007	8.103	0.000
	Log likelihood	-75.710			
Cheese	C	0.022	0.107	0.202	0.840
	PDO (dummy variable)	0.079	0.030	2.634	0.008
	Company age	0.003	0.001	2.430	0.015
	Average Wage paid	0.145	0.039	3.691	0.000
	Company size	0.022	0.010	2.257	0.024
	Log likelihood	-32.320			

Finally, in order to examine the effect of the collective reputation indicators (i.e. PDO) on company efficiency, we estimate the average efficiency of PDO wine and cheese companies. To ensure representation of the average efficiency of each PDO, we only use those that have more than 3 companies. Accordingly, we estimate the average efficiency of the wineries in 34 PDOs and of the cheese companies in 12 PDOs. With the VRS model, the average efficiencies of the PDO wineries show wide differences, ranging between 0.713 and 0.708 for the two most efficient PDOs (PDO 8 and PDO 2) and 0.251 for the least efficient (PDO 24). The non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test shows that the difference between the average efficiencies of the different PDO wineries is significant at a level below 1%. This result shows that there is not a homogenous perception of the collective reputation indicators of the wine PDOs in the market, with a differential effect on their economic efficiency. According to Cambra and Villafuerte (2009), this would suggest that consumers not only choose PDO products over non PDO products but are also capable of distinguishing among different PDO wines: for example, it is common to hear restaurant clients ordering wine from a particular PDO.

Regarding the cheese sector, the average VRS efficiencies of the PDO cheese companies show some differences, ranging between 0.572 and 0.564 for the two most efficient PDOs (PDO 9 and PDO 12) and 0.144 for the least efficient (PDO 1). However, in this case, the Kruskal-Wallis test shows that the difference between the average efficiencies of the different PDO cheese companies is not significant, showing a structural difference with the wine market.

The structural difference between these two markets could be explained in the following way: PDOs were introduced in Spain, as in France and Italy, to protect wines that, due to their place of origin, had specific characteristics that made them distinctive. In 1932 the first Spanish “Statue of wine and alcohol” was approved, which laid the groundwork for the PDOs, and in 1970 a new statute was approved that allowed PDOs to include all foodstuffs (Díaz, 2011). At present there are 80 wine PDOs in Spain, some very old such as Rioja, which has attained the level of “authorized”, for which it has to satisfy certain rules and age requirements; others which now have a reduced commercial importance, such as Jerez, whose excellent quality and almost unique product is losing its market share; others that entered the market some years ago and are now established, such as Ribera del Duero; some, such as Cava, which has been so internationalized that it is the biggest sparkling wine in the world; other more recent entrants that have surprised consumers with their quality, such as Toro or Somontano; others that are opening new market with promising futures, such as Madrid, which for years has been the only one bearing the name of a capital city; and many more that are in a growth phase.

It terms of cheese, around the middle of the 20th century there was growing interest in certifying certain cheeses whose traditional manufacturing methods, based on local raw materials, gave them prestige and individual personality and, therefore, differentiated characteristics (Frutos and Ruiz, 2012). However, the “Cheese catalogue” was not published until 1969 and led to the approval of the first cheese PDOs (Díaz, 2011). Actually only 8% of Spanish cheese production in 2010 is covered by PDOs (Frutos and Ruiz, 2012), and there are only 27 PDOs. The Spanish cheese industry was a late developer because of the lack of availability of milk, and this factor favoured the preservation of traditional cheeses, made in small regions with artisan methods. Nowadays, although cheese makers

emphasize quality and tradition without renouncing modernization and a commercial focus, they still give great importance to local development and to keeping an industry linked to its roots at a local or regional scale (Frutos and Ruiz, 2012). Finally, production levels of Spanish PDO cheese differ vastly to those of Italy and France. These two countries have reached far higher production levels because of their many differential factors, especially the willingness of the commercial sector (large supermarkets) to stock and promote a wide range of their PDO cheeses (Sanz, 1995).

The wide difference among average efficiencies of the PDO wine companies provokes the question of what distinguishes highly efficient companies from those showing lower efficiency. Thus, we have estimated a regression model for the PDO wineries where the dependent variable is the company economic efficiency and as independent variables we consider some specific variables related to the company (age, wages and size) and some specific variables related to the PDO in which the company operates: size of the PDO (number of wineries in the PDO), international market of the PDO (percentage of hectoliters of the PDO sold abroad) and age of the PDO (number of years since the PDO was established). Table 4 shows the results.

As expected, the coefficients of the company characteristics variables (age, wages and size) have the same significant signs as in Table 3. Regarding the variables related to the PDO in which the winery operates, the positive and significant coefficient of the number of producers of the PDO shows that as the number of producers in the PDO increases company efficiency is higher. This result is explained because large coalitions have higher resources for marketing campaigns and a larger buyer base which, combined with the word-of-mouth phenomena, make big coalitions more visible to the market (Rob and Fishman, 2005; Castriota and Delmastro, 2009). The positive and significant coefficient of the variable international market of the PDO shows that as the percentage of the international market of the PDO increases company efficiency is also higher, which could be explained by consolidated prestige in the international markets. Thus, the internationalization of some PDOs such as Cava, which has allowed it to overtake the volume of the mythical and much admired champagne; and Spanish wines are more and more well known, receiving maximum scores from Robert Parker and are also taking positions in emerging markets, especially the Asian markets (Díaz, 2011). Finally, the coefficient of the age of the PDO is not significant. Although we expected a positive and significant effect because older PDOs have built their reputations over time and it takes time for the age of the coalition and of its brand to be known among consumers (Castriota and Delmastro, 2009), the lack of significance would reflect that the new wine “boom” is a relatively recent phenomenon (Roberts and Reagans, 2007), and the markets may favour PDOs founded during the last two decades. For example, some PDOs have been relatively recently created but are surprising observers with their quality, such as Toro or Somontano (Díaz, 2011).

TABLE 4  
Determinant factors of PDO wineries efficiency

Variable	Coeff.	S.D.	Z-Statistic	Prob.
C	1.079	0.057	1.887	0.000
<i>Company characteristics</i>				
Company age	0.003	0.001	3.582	0.000
Average Wage paid	-0.071	0.011	-6.307	0.000
Company size	0.059	0.011	5.563	0.000
<i>PDO characteristics</i>				
Wineries in the PDO	0.016	0.008	1.911	0.056
International market of the PDO	0.001	0.000	2.975	0.003
PDO age	0.000	0.000	-0.293	0.770
Log likelihood	34.861			

## 5. Conclusions

The objective of this study is to estimate the efficiency of PDO companies in two experience goods industries, and to explain it through both PDO labels, as collective reputation indicators, as well as different characteristics of the member companies. The basic assumption is that a PDO label has a positive impact on the economic efficiency of its member companies because a PDO label is a

collective reputation indicator that foments efficient investment in quality in terms of members' returns.

The results of the study, applied to a sample of 1,257 Spanish wineries and a sample of 378 Spanish cheese factories show low average levels of efficiency. Additionally, the average economic efficiency of PDO companies is significantly higher than that of non PDO companies, which allow us to generalise the influence of PDO labels on company efficiency to both experience good industries. Finally, some characteristics of the company influence company efficiency. The age and size of the company increase efficiency in both industries while wage levels have a negative effect on wineries' efficiency but a positive effect on cheese factories' efficiency.

The following managerial implications are relevant: The finding of efficiency differences between PDO and non PDO companies supports the protection policy of PDO developed by Spanish Autonomous Communities, given that PDOs have the capacity to affect the efficiency of their member companies. If we extend the theoretical model of collective reputation (Tirole, 1996), which focuses on price equilibrium, the result obtained in this study of the differential effect of the collective label on company efficiency suggests that wine and cheese consumers formulate their quality predictions on the output of an individual company using information on the output of other similar companies, giving a primordial value to the quality indicators of the group. The value that consumers assign to Protected Designations of Origin implies that their Regulatory Councils should provide constant information to the market on the characteristics of their products.

The results obtained also suggest that choosing a collective label strategy can play an important role in the success of a company; in particular, a PDO label can help a company be more efficient because it can promote more efficient investment in quality by its members in terms of the returns on this investment. In fact, the products with this collective reputation can be sold with a price premium, which is necessary for producers to invest in quality and reputation (Quagraine et al., 2003). Moreover, although a top company with an outstanding individual reputation may have enough resources to sustain high investment in quality on its own, it will also be motivated to participate in collective branding because the high production levels associated with a collective brand can also have a positive impact on individual efficiency due to the increased number of units whose quality is observed by consumers increasing the collective reputation effect. However, PDO labels should not be seen as a guarantee against failure. In fact, PDO labels contribute favourably to company efficiency but they only explain a percentage of efficiency variability. Certain characteristics of the company also help explain company efficiency, such as the age, size and wage levels of the company. The result that the age of the company increases its efficiency suggests that company age entails better market knowledge and better individual company reputation. The result that the size of the company increases its efficiency suggests that bigger companies have more financial resources to invest in quality and promotion; therefore, larger companies would be able to attract the attention of the media and gain visibility. Finally, the result that wage levels have an influence on efficiency suggests the importance of employee wage levels in labour intensive industries.

Although the intention of this study is to contribute to the understanding of the impact of PDO label strategies on company efficiency, it has some limitations. Lack of information impedes the analysis of other factors that could explain company efficiency in a PDO label, such as the strength of the PDO label. As further lines of research we suggest analysing the influence of the strength of the different PDO labels on the efficiency of the companies belonging to them. Basically, a collective label can promote more efficient investment in quality in its member companies because the collective label covers a larger market segment than any of its member companies, and given that the information on past quality is imperfectly disseminated, for example by word of mouth, the consumers of any given member company have a greater probability of having previously interacted with past consumers of the collective label than with those of a company outside the collective. But, it would also be necessary to consider the strength of the PDO label because brand strength is one of the most central components of any model of brand equity, and not only can brand strength be conceptualized in terms of consumers' attitude toward the brand with respect to quality, but it also integrates behavioural dimensions such as brand loyalty and brand share across the markets in which the brand competes (Smith and Park, 1992; Aaker, 1991); so it is expected that strength of the PDO label influences

company efficiency, because a stronger PDO label should be better able to stimulate trial of the products of its members than a PDO label of lower strength. Second, the analysis is a cross sectional study, which prevents us from finding the longitudinal nature of the effect. Because collective reputation is a long-term, path dependent process, stereotypes about the expected quality of a PDO are history dependent (Tirole, 1996), so it would be necessary to develop a dynamic model to explain persistence in collective reputations and thus its expected positive effect on company efficiency. Finally, and ideally, a research question in the future would be the design of an experiment that considers other experience goods (e.g., ham) and other parts of the European Union, in order to generalize the results obtained in our paper. We would expect to see similar results to those of our paper, because consumers would use collective reputation when the quality of a product is imperfectly observable prior to purchase (experience good).

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# DOES INTEGRATED CORPORATE COMMUNICATION REALLY ENHANCE BUSINESS PERFORMANCE? INSIGHTS FROM THE SPANISH HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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## ABSTRACT

*Integrated Corporate Communication (ICC) has gained a great deal of attention among both academics and practitioners during the last three decades. The academic literature suggests that further empirical evidence for the beneficial effects of ICC implementation is called for. Thus, this paper aims to model the relationship between ICC and business market performance in the Spanish hospitality industry. To achieve this purpose, a new 25-item ICC scale has been developed (based on extensive literature review and a Delphi study) and subsequently pretested. Secondly, data were collected from senior managers via an online survey conducted to a sample of Spanish businesses providing accommodation services. A total of 180 valid responses was obtained. The findings provided evidence for the validity and reliability of the proposed ICC scale and demonstrated that ICC implementation significantly and positively influences business performance.*

## KEYWORDS:

Integrated corporate communication, integrated marketing communication, scale development, market performance, hospitality.

## 1. Introduction

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) has been considered “*the major communication development in the last century*” (Kitchen & Schultz, 2001) and is increasingly attracting interest and attention in both academic and professional contexts (Hackley, 2010) ever since its emergence in the early 1990s (Caywood, Schultz & Wang, 1991; Schultz, 1991, 1993). Despite the great *corpus* of publications developed over the last three decades on this area of knowledge, the theoretical background appears still fairly disjointed and characterised by the lack of scholars’ consensus over the definition and, especially in the last decade, there is not even a universally agreed terminology to be adopted to refer to the concept (Christensen, Firat & Torp, 2008; Christensen & Cornelissen, 2011; Einwiller & Boenigk, 2012; Smith, 2012; Smith, 2013).

Some academics (Taylor, 2010b; Laurie & Mortimer, 2011; Schultz, Kim & Kang, 2014) have pointed out that the voice of practitioners needs to be heard and taken into account in the process of theoretical development of the concept. In their provocatively entitled article “*IMC is Dead, Long Live IMC*”, Laurie & Mortimer (2011) underscored the need to reduce the gap between the academics’ and the practitioners’ views on IMC via a dialogue that would allow for a better clarification of the theoretical bases of the concept.

As mentioned above, communication and marketing practitioners have also formed part of the integrated communication development and are seeking to understand how integrated programmes can be implemented, what tangible and beneficial effects can be derived from them in terms of performance and how they can be assessed. For example, the *American Productivity and Quality Center* (APQC) promoted an IMC research study, led by Don and Heidi Schultz, consisting of a detailed analysis of how integration process takes place in US organisations and leading to the “*four levels pyramid of IMC development*” (Schultz & Schultz, 1998). Moreover, the *Association of National Advertisers* (ANA) regularly conducts research on IMC with marketing and corporate communication managers and practitioners and the results of the most recent IMC report (ANA, 2011) suggested that via integrating communication businesses achieve a sustainable competitive advantage.

Taylor (2010a, p.162), in his editorial published in the *International Journal of Advertising* and entitled “Integrated Marketing Communication in 2010 and beyond”, argued that in the current communication environment integration is more relevant than ever highlighting that “*there is clearly a need for more research on the return on investment from integrated programmes*” and “*to measure the positive returns it can provide when [IMC] is used effectively*”. The same author emphasised this call in the editorial entitled “Measuring return on investment from advertising: ‘holy grail’ or necessary tool” pointing out that “*too little research has focused on [IMC] performance metrics*” (Taylor, 2010b, p. 346-347).

Likewise, Ewing (2009) pointed out that the lack of valid and reliable scales to measure IMC is the main barrier preventing researchers from conducting more robust empirical researches, which are very much needed for both the theoretical development of integrated communication as a concept and for its understanding and implementation by practitioners. In fact, only few studies (Duncan & Moriarty, 1997; Low, 2000; Reid, 2005; Lee & Park, 2007) have addressed this research gap by developing and/or validating integrated communication measurement scales.

To sum up, the most recurrent themes of debate relate to definitional and measurement issues and to the ongoing paucity of in-company empirical research demonstrating the beneficial effects of integrated programmes.

Thus, the primary objective of this present paper is to determine whether the implementation of integrated communication exerts a positive influence on business performance in terms of economic-financial results, brand outcomes and customer satisfaction. To achieve the main research scope, two additional objectives are pursued: to provide further theoretical clarification over the integrated communication concept and to develop and validate a measurement tool to assess it.



## 2. Theoretical background

More than two decades of intense academic research after the first definition of the concept of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) by Caywood *et al.* (1991), the conceptual debate is still ongoing.

Although 'IMC' is the most popular and largely implemented term, several authors have dropped the term 'marketing' from IMC referring to the concept as Integrated Communication (Christensen *et al.*, 2008; Smith, 2012, 2013), or Integrated Communication Management (Einwiller & Boenigk, 2012) and Integrated Corporate Communication (Kitchen & Schultz, 2001; Pickton, 2004; Christensen & Cornelissen, 2011). In this regard, Kliatchko (2005, p. 7) argued: *"no matter what it is called, this new approach to business and marketing communication planning has become an irreversible prevailing tendency among academics and industry practitioners"*. Nowadays Integrated (marketing/corporate) Communication remains an *"extremely important topic in advertising literature"* (Kelly, 2010) and is considered as a very dynamic and challenging field of study (Schultz *et al.*, 2014), as demonstrated by the many calls for further research in this area.

The literature review suggests that integrated communication research has evolved from a narrow marketing communications-centered perspective to a more holistic approach, as marketing, more recently, a corporate and organisational concept. In fact, on the one hand, in the inception of the concept, Caywood *et al.* (1991) defined IMC as *"a concept of marketing communication planning that recognises the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluated the strategic role of a variety of communication disciplines- e.g. general advertising, direct response, sales promotion and public relations- and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communications impact"*; on the other hand, a more recent definition introduced the concept of Integrated Communication (IC) as *"the notion and the practice of aligning symbols, messages, procedures and behaviors in order for an organisation to communicate with clarity, consistency and continuity within and across formal organisational boundaries"* (Christensen *et al.*, 2008, p. 424).

On the basis of an extensive literature review, we developed a theoretical framework for the concept termed 'Integrated Corporate Communication' (ICC) to explicitly embrace the more holistic corporate and organisational approach expressing that the *locus* of integration is the whole *corporation* and defined as the **stakeholder-centered interactive process of cross-functional planning and alignment of organisational, analytical and communication processes, that allows for the possibility of continuous dialogue by conveying consistent and transparent messages via all media in order to foster long-term profitable relationships that create value.**

The proposed conceptualisation reflects the multidimensionality of the ICC construct and four dimensions were identified: **tactical consistency** (e.g. Caywood *et al.*, 1991; Nowak & Phelps, 1994; Porcu, Del Barrio-García & Kitchen, 2012), **interactivity** (e.g. Duncan & Moriarty, 1998; Duncan & Mulhern, 2004; Porcu *et al.*, 2012), **stakeholder-centred strategic focus** (e.g. Kliatchko, 2008, 2009; Einwiller & Boenigk, 2012) and **organisational alignment** (e.g. Christensen *et al.*, 2008; Christensen & Cornelissen, 2011; Porcu *et al.*, 2012).

Tactical consistency and interactivity have been recognised as dimensions of IMC and/or IC in previous conceptualisations, while the remaining two dimensions reflect the effort to theoretically clarify the central role of stakeholders (not only of customers) in ICC as a concept that embraces organisational issues, as suggested by recent literature (Kliatchko, 2005, 2008; Christensen & Cornelissen, 2011; Laurie & Mortimer, 2011; Moriarty & Schultz, 2012; Einwiller & Boenigk, 2012; Schultz *et al.*, 2014).

More in detail, the dimension 'tactical consistency' deals with the most basic level of integration and refers to the communication of coherent and clear positioning (*"one sound, one sight"*, Caywood *et al.*, 1991) via all the organisation's sources of communication.

The dimension “interactivity” is the element *sine qua non* to establish a two-way symmetric communication, an essential condition for a dialogue between organisation/brand and all the stakeholders (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998). Interactivity is intended here in terms of general human social experience (“behavioral interactivity”, Burgoon, Bonito, Ramírez, Dunbar, Kam, & Fischer, 2002) and reciprocity (that characterizes the relationship between the interlocutors), speed of response (to received messages) and interlocutors' (organisation and stakeholders) responsiveness are considered as crucial facets of this dimension. The Internet plays a crucial role, since it has maximised all the facets of the “interactivity” dimension, for example via the combination of social media and the use of cutting-edge mobile devices enabling an unprecedented ubiquitous communication.

The dimension “stakeholder-centred strategic focus” refers to the need for the whole organisation (including the human resources at all the hierarchical levels within the organisational chart) to ensure that creation of added value for all the stakeholders and building long-term relationships with them is acknowledged as the core strategic goal within the organization. A crucial prerequisite for implementing this approach is to know the stakeholders in depth, hence information needs to flow and be shared among all the members (even the outsourced functions) of the organization.

Finally, the dimension “organisational alignment” refers to internal integration (vertical and horizontal) at the organisational level, including all the outsourced functions (external agencies and partners) in the process of integration. The wide range of communication activities must take into account the company as a whole, hence aligning organizational processes and reducing the departmental divisions (*silos*) is of paramount importance to achieve the highest level of integration.

Based on these premises, we posit the following hypotheses:

*H1a: Tactical consistency is a dimension of Integrated Corporate Communication (ICC)*

*H1b: Interactivity is a dimension of Integrated Corporate Communication (ICC)*

*H1c: Stakeholder-centred strategic focus is a dimension of Integrated Corporate Communication (ICC)*

*H1d: Organisational alignment is a dimension of Integrated Corporate Communication (ICC)*

As mentioned in the introduction, only few studies have attempted to empirically assess the relationship between the implementation of integrated (marketing/corporate) communication and business performance (Schultz *et al.*, 2014). Ewing (2009, p.114) suggested that the failure to demonstrate this link represents the most importance barrier hindering the concept's broader acceptance “among both pragmatic practitioners and sceptical scholars”.

Nevertheless, extant literature (Low, 2000; Duncan & Mulhern, 2004; Reid, 2005; Lee & Park, 2007; Einwiller & Boenigk, 2012) suggests that ICC significantly improves the business performance. Low (2000) found a positive and strong influence of integrated communication on both economic-financial results and brand outcomes, while Duncan & Mulhern (2004) highlighted its influence in terms of more favourable customer attitudes and higher customer loyalty and retention. Moreover, Swain (2004) called for more research on the relationship between integrated communication and attitudes towards the brand, brand reputation and awareness.

Reid (2005) carried out a rigorous empirical research in Australia with the aim of refining and validating the scale developed by Duncan & Moriarty (1997) and examining the relationship between IMC and market performance. The results indicated that integrated communication enhances economic-financial results (e.g., overall profitability), brand-related outcomes (e.g., brand awareness) and customer satisfaction. More recently, the results of a study conducted in Switzerland by Einwiller & Boenigk (2012) yielded insights to the role of integrated communication in respect of both ‘soft’ psychological and ‘hard’ economic measures of

communication outcomes, demonstrating a positive relationship between integrated communication and business performance.

Following Reid (2005), we focused on business ‘market performance’ as a multidimensional construct composed of three dimensions: financial-economic outcomes, brand-related outcomes and customer satisfaction.

According to these contributions, the following hypotheses related to the dimensions of market performance are advanced:

*H2a: Financial and Economic outcomes is a dimension of market performance*

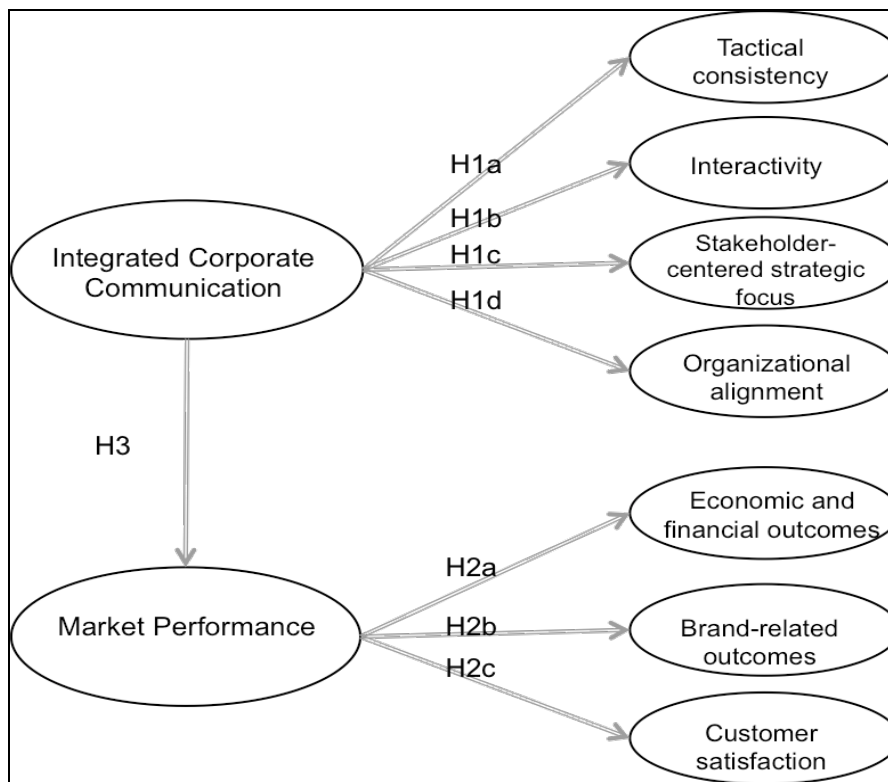
*H2b: Brand-related outcomes is a dimension of market performance*

*H2c: Customer satisfaction is a dimension of market performance*

*H3: Integrated Corporate Communication (ICC) significantly and positively affects the market performance.*

On the basis of the proposed hypotheses, a theoretical model was developed (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1  
**Integrated Corporate Communication-Market Performance theoretical model**



### 3. Empirical study

#### 3.1. The field of the study: the Spanish tourism industry

In this research study we adopted a single-industry strategy, which is designed to remove potentially confounding interindustry effects on ICC and associated market performance. Reid (2005) suggested that both multi-industry and single-industry approaches are needed to build a strong theoretical body of knowledge around integrated communication, highlighting that at the single-industry level the goal should be to analyse whether those organisations in the industry that apply ICC have achieved some form of superior performance.

Thus, we deliberately focused on the Spanish tourism industry given its relevance at both national and international level. In fact, Spain is one of the world’s top tourism destinations in

terms of incomes and tourist arrivals, as indicated by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO, 2013). More specifically, Spain is the second largest earner worldwide and the first in Europe (US\$ 56 billion), while ranking 4th in the world by arrivals (58 million). In addition, tourism is currently the industry that registers the highest impact on domestic GDP and employment (INE, 2013). Due to the heterogeneity of the tourism industry, we opted to focus our research to the most prominent economic activity within this industry: the accommodation services.

### **3.2. Measures**

#### *Development of an ICC measurement scale*

A new measurement tool was developed to assess ICC. Following Churchill (1979), we carried out an extensive literature review to identify the theoretical domain of ICC construct and to examine the existing measurement scales. Based on this first step, an initial set of 60 items designed to measure each of the four identified dimensions of ICC was generated and, subsequently, a two-round Delphi study was carried out for content validation. In the first round, the proposed conceptual framework and the initial set of items has been presented to an international expert panel composed of ten senior academics (affiliated to top universities in US, Canada, Germany, UK and Spain) for content evaluation and amendment (if necessary). The most influential scholars in the field, including the authors of top and seminal publications on Integrated Communication, participated in the study. The experts were asked to critically evaluate both the ICC theoretical framework (definition and dimensions) and the items proposed.

The first round provided a qualitative feedback that was subsequently incorporated to modify and rephrase several items, resulting in a reduction of the total number of items from 60 to 49, that went through the second round. The second round aimed to further reinforce the content evaluation and to reduce the number of items to a more manageable number. With these purposes, the expert panel was asked to provide also a quantitative assessment of the adequateness of each item in a 7-point-Likert scale (1 = very inadequate, 7 = very adequate). The experts were recommended to pay special attention to the content validity, representativeness, dimensionality, comprehensibility and unambiguousness. As evaluation criteria, we opted to retain the items scoring at least a 5 out of 7 from all the experts. The experts' assessment enabled us to further refine the content and to reduce duplication of items, and then the number of items was reduced from 49 to 25 items.

The proposed ICC scale is thus composed of 25 items rated on a seven-point Likert scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree): 4 items for 'tactical consistency', 7 items for 'interactivity', 7 items for 'stakeholder-centred strategic focus' and 7 items for 'organisational alignment'. Sample items assessing ICC are "My company maintains consistency in all visual components of communication (logos, colors, trademarks, etc.)", for tactical consistency; "My company promotes the creation of special programs to facilitate stakeholders' inquiries and complaints about our brands, products and the company itself", for interactivity; "The company's mission is a key consideration in the communications planning and it is promoted among stakeholders", for stakeholder-centred strategic focus; "My company ensures that its external agents and partners have at least several contacts/month with each other", for organisational alignment. All the items included in the final measurement are presented in Appendix 1.

#### *Others measures*

Market performance measures were drawn from the research on IMC and its impact on performance by Reid (2005), who implemented a modified version of the items previously proposed by Gray, Matear, Boshoff & Matheson (1998). The market performance scale was further slightly modified and the ten items included five perceptual items related to economic-financial results (in terms of sales and profitability), three related to brand outcomes and two related to customer satisfaction. All items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale (1 = much less compared with the closest competitor; 7 = much more compared with the closest competitor) and presented in Appendix 1.

Other items were included in the questionnaire to seek information on the characteristics of respondents (gender, experience, position in the company) and companies (business size, organisation type).

### **3.3. Sample and data collection**

The data for this research were gathered via an online survey study conducted between April and July 2013 to Spanish businesses providing accommodation services with 40 or more employees. As a sample frame, a commercial listing of 969 businesses was drawn from SABI (from the initials of its full name in Spanish, *Sistema de Análisis de Balances Ibéricos*, Iberian Balance Sheet Analysis System), the most comprehensive businesses database which includes relevant information of over 1.2 million Spanish companies and is based on both national (for example, CNAE, *Clasificación Nacional de Actividades Económicas*, National Classification of Economic Activities) and international (for example, SIC, *Standard Industrial Classification*) classification systems. The key informant method (Seidler, 1974) and top managers were targeted as key informants and a multi-item questionnaire was developed and hosted in the Qualtrics web platform ([www.qualtrics.com](http://www.qualtrics.com)).

The *modus operandi* of the empirical study consisted of two steps. First, a telemarketing firm was contracted to contact the sample (930 managers, after removing the 39 contacts used for the pre-test) by telephone to ask for their e-mail address (not included in the database due to privacy issues) and for their availability to participate in this study. Second, a customised link to the online questionnaire was emailed to the 524 managers who agreed to participate. Following an initial e-mailing, a follow-up e-mail was sent to encourage response. A total of 180 fully completed valid responses were received for an effective response rate of 18.6% (of the total population of 969 managers) and of 34.4 % of the 524 managers who agreed to participate. Appendix 2 presents a detailed description of the profile of respondents.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1. Pretest**

As a preliminary step, the proposed ICC scale was purified by conducting a pre-test to a sample of 180 businesses randomly extracted from the above described commercial listing and used in a pilot study carried out between February and March 2013, with the aim of assessing basic psychometric properties. The 25 items of the scale were included in an online survey hosted in the Qualtrics web platform ([www.qualtrics.com](http://www.qualtrics.com)) resulting in a total of 39 valid responses (21,6 % response rate). In order to test the dimensionality of the scale, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) with principal component analysis (varimax rotation) was applied resulting in four factors and items loading onto the previously identified factors. Moreover, Chronbach's alpha ( $\alpha_{\text{cons}}=.91$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{inte}}=.94$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{stak}}=.94$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{alin}}=.90$ ) exceed the recommended threshold of .8 for purified scales and item-to-total correlations exceed .5 and the inter-item correlations exceed .3 of each dimension.

### **4.2. Analysis of the psychometric properties of the measurement scales and hypotheses testing**

Analysis of data followed a process of testing the psychometric properties (dimensionality, reliability and construct validity) for both the ICC scale and the market performance measures and testing the hypotheses and the proposed ICC-market performance model.

Following Gerbing and Anderson (1988), the ICC scale was subjected to an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) (principal components analysis with varimax rotation) to assess their **dimensionality**, resulting in four factors all indicators being loading onto the previously identified dimension, thus revealing the underlying structure of the construct. Secondly, we conducted a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) (using LISREL 8.8. software) and, based on the results of the multinormality test performed, the Robust Maximum Likelihood (RML) estimation method was used. We adopted a competing models strategy by estimating two alternative models: M1 (via a first order CFA) based on ICC as a unidimensional construct and 25 items being loading onto one factor and M2 (via second-order CFA) based on ICC as a

multidimensional construct and the 25 items being loading onto 4 factors (following the conceptual framework). The results indicate that M2 (Satorra-Bentler  $\chi^2= 470.81$ , d.f. = 271, p-value= .00; Normed  $\chi^2= 1.73$ ; RMSEA= .06; CFI= .99; TLI= .99) achieved an acceptable overall fit, while the overall goodness-of-fit indices for M1 (Satorra-Bentler  $\chi^2= 1301.7$  d.f.=275 p-value= .00; Normed  $\chi^2= 4.73$  RMSEA=.14; CFI= .94; TLI= .93) suggested that this model is not acceptable. Therefore, the dimensionality of ICC measures is confirmed.

A structural equation modelling (SEM) was conducted to assess the overall proposed model, thus enabling us to examine the reliability and the construct validity of both ICC and market performance measures and test the proposed research hypotheses. The results indicate that the proposed model has an adequate goodness of fit with the observed data of Satorra-Bentler  $\chi^2= 820.47$  (d.f. = 552, p-value= .00), Normed  $\chi^2 = 1.49$  and RMSEA = .052.

Following Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson (2010) and Del Barrio and Luque (2012), **convergent validity**, defined as the extent to which indicators of a specific construct share a high proportion of variance in common, is tested. First, the results indicate that all standardised coefficients are statistically significant (t-values above the point 2.56, thus achieving a .01 level of significance) and higher than .7, the ideal size recommended by the literature (Hair et al., 2010) for items that are considered good measure of their latent factor, excepting for the item ALIN\_3 ( $\beta= .55$ ) above the less conservative .5 cutoff. Moreover, all the  $R^2$  values exceed the suggested threshold of .5, excepting for ALIN\_3 ( $R^2=.31$ ) and REFI\_4 ( $R^2=.46$ ) that become prime candidates to deletion. Therefore, a chi-square difference test is performed to assess whether the difference between the two alternative models (with ALIN\_3 vs without ALIN\_3 and with vs without REFI\_4) is statistically significant, resulting in the removal of REFI\_4, while ALIN\_3 was retained to support content validity. These decisions led us to re-estimate the model (see Figure 2), that shows again an adequate goodness of fit of S-B  $\chi^2= 778.02$  (d.f. = 519, p= .00) and RMSEA = .053 (additional goodness of fit indexes are presented in Figure 2).

The results of the measurement model indicate that all standardised coefficients are statistically significant (p-value < .01) and above .7, excepting for the item ALIN\_3 ( $\beta= .55$ ) above the less conservative .5 cutoff. Moreover, all the  $R^2$  values exceed the suggested threshold of .5, excepting for ALIN\_3 ( $R^2= .31$ ), which was retained based on the results of a chi-square difference. All these findings provide evidence for the convergent validity of ICC and market performance measures. Moreover, all the standard second-order coefficients (see Table 3) were above .7 and significant (p < .01), indicating that the proposed dimensions load very well onto the corresponding second-order construct ( $\beta_{cons} = .90$ ;  $\beta_{inte} = .86$ ;  $\beta_{stak} = .84$ ;  $\beta_{alin} = .84$ ;  $\beta_{refi} = .71$ ;  $\beta_{rema} = .99$ ;  $\beta_{sat} = .81$ ).

Subsequently, three diagnostic measures are implemented to estimate the **construct reliability** that is the degree of consistency between multiple measurements of a variable. First, the item-to-total correlation and the inter-item correlation is analysed and both exceed the suggested cutoffs (.5 and .3, respectively). Second, the reliability coefficient, which assesses the consistency of the entire scale, is evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, which exceeds the most conservative threshold of .8 recommended for purified scales. Third, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and the Composite Reliability (CR) were calculated (see Table 2) and the results show that both exceeded the recommended cutoffs of .5 and .7, respectively, providing evidence of an adequate reliability of the scales.

The criteria proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981) were applied to test the **discriminant validity** of the scales and, with this purpose, we calculated the square root of AVE and the correlations between the constructs (see Table 1). The results show that the squared root of the AVE was always greater than the correlation shared among the constructs, thus meeting the requirements indicated by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and providing evidence of discriminant validity. In addition, the correlations between the constructs do not exceed .8, the threshold suggested by Bagozzi (1980) and Bagozzi and Yi (2012) to consider two constructs as distinct, enabling us to confirm that the factors are strongly related, as it is to be expected since they measure the same second-order construct, while they retain conceptual difference.

TABLE 1  
Square root of AVE and correlations between constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981)

	stak	cons	alin	inte	refi	sat	refi
stak	<b>.82</b>						
cons	.76	<b>.87</b>					
alin	.71	.76	<b>.82</b>				
inte	.73	.78	.73	<b>.84</b>			
refi	.40	.43	.40	.41	<b>.85</b>		
rema	.56	.60	.56	.58	.79	<b>.76</b>	
sat	.46	.49	.46	.47	.70	.60	<b>.88</b>

The above-described results indicate that all the proposed relationships in the measurement model show significant ( $p < .01$ ) and high coefficients, thus providing empirical support to *H1a*, *H1b*, *H1c*, *H1d*, *H2a*, *H2b* and *H2c*.

Then, the analysis of the psychometric properties of the measures indicates that they are sufficient to enable the analysis of the relationship between ICC and market performance to proceed. A significant ( $t = 5.90$ ;  $p < .01$ ) and strong ( $\beta_{icc \rightarrow mp} = .67$ ) relationship was found between ICC and market performance, providing empirical evidence to *H3* and confirming that the implementation of ICC is strongly and positively related to business market performance in Spanish tourism industry. Based on these findings, we can conclude that ICC is crucial for organisation to achieve higher economic-financial results, brand-related outcomes and higher customer satisfaction. Finally, we observe that the obtained results are in line with previous studies (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998; Reid, 2005; Lee & Park, 2007; Einwiller & Boenigk, 2012) enabling us to provide evidence of the **nomological validity** of the proposed ICC scale.

TABLE 2  
Results of the SEM analysis. Measurement model

Items	Constructs	Non-standardised coefficients	Standardised coefficients	t-value	R <sup>2</sup>	AVE	CR
CONS_1	Tactical consistency (cons)	*	.85	*	.72	.76	.92
CONS_2		.85	.80	11.01	.63		
CONS_3		1.07	.91	14.66	.82		
CONS_4		1.03	.92	15.99	.85		
INTE_1	Interactivity (inte)	*	.78	*	.61	.70	.94
INTE_2		1.01	.77	14.82	.59		
INTE_3		.98	.84	16.52	.71		
INTE_4		.90	.84	15.11	.70		
INTE_5		1.07	.88	15.19	.77		
INTE_6		1.06	.92	16.76	.84		
INTE_7		1.03	.83	16.57	.69		
STAK_1	Stakeholder-centered strategic focus (stak)	*	.79	*	.62	.68	.94
STAK_2		1.08	.79	14.52	.62		
STAK_3		1.17	.90	16.74	.81		
STAK_4		1.04	.78	13.14	.60		
STAK_5		1.14	.84	13.64	.71		
STAK_6		1.10	.85	13.51	.72		
ALIN_1	Organisational Alignment (alin)	*	.82	*	.68	.68	.93
ALIN_2		1.04	.90	21.20	.82		
ALIN_3		.73	.55	9.61	.31		
ALIN_4		1.03	.85	13.19	.73		

<b>ALIN 5</b>		1.04	.86	11.96	.73		
<b>ALIN 6</b>		1.09	.87	14.35	.76		
<b>ALIN 7</b>		1.07	.86	14.99	.73		
<b>REFI 1</b>	Economic and financial outcomes (refi)	*	.83	*	.69	.72	.93
<b>REFI 2</b>		1.11	.88	13.14	.77		
<b>REFI 3</b>		1.19	.88	14.75	.78		
<b>REFI 5</b>		1.05	.79	9.88	.62		
<b>REMA 1</b>	Brand related outcomes (rema)	*	.81	*	.65	.58	.81
<b>REMA 2</b>		.98	.75	11.00	.56		
<b>REMA 3</b>		.91	.73	9.60	.53		
<b>SAT 1</b>	Customer satisfaction (sat)	*	.96	*	.92	.78	.91
<b>SAT 2</b>		.97	.84	17.11	.70		

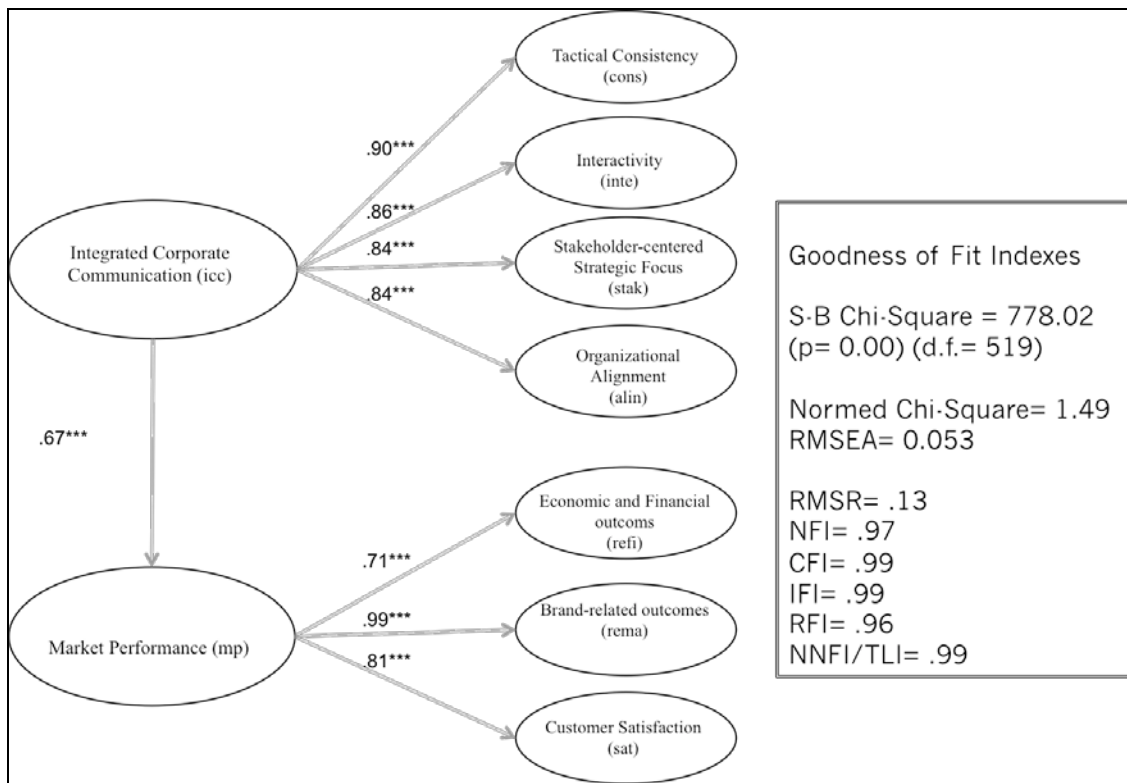
\*Parameter fixed at 1 to fix the scale of the latent construct. Note: t-value cutoffs (level of significance): 1.66 (p < .10); 1.96 (p < .05); 2.56 (p < .01)

TABLE 3  
Results of the SEM analysis. Structural model

Constructs	Non-standardised coefficients	Standardised coefficients	t-value	R <sup>2</sup>
icc → cons (H1a)	1.02	.90	10.24	.81
icc → inte (H1b)	1.09	.86	10.36	.75
icc → stak (H1c)	1.04	.84	11.97	.71
icc → alin (H1d)	1.07	.84	10.59	.71
mp → refi (H2a)	.66	.71	7.81	.50
mp → rema (H2b)	.98	.99	9.63	.98
mp → sat (H2c)	.79	.81	9.12	.65
icc → mp (H3)	.67	.67	5.90	.45

\*Parameter fixed at 1 to fix the scale of the latent construct. Note: t-value cutoffs (level of significance): 1.66 (p < .10); 1.96 (p < .05); 2.56 (p < .01)

FIGURE 2  
Integrated Corporate Communication-Market Performance SEM Model. Path Diagram





## 5. Discussion

This study sought to respond to the many calls for further research within the area of integrated communication and, more specifically, to provide more compelling evidence for the beneficial consequences of ICC in terms of performance, following the suggestions made by many authors (Taylor, 2010a; Einwiller & Boenigk, 2012; Moriarty & Schultz, 2012; Schultz *et al.*, 2014) who identified the dearth of empirical studies as the most salient research gap. Nevertheless, the lack of a valid and reliable ICC measurement tool and the confusion about the theoretical foundations of the concept have prevented scholars from conducting more rigorous and quantitative research studies. In this paper, we applied both qualitative and quantitative approaches to clarify the ICC conceptual background resulting in a new definition for the concept, the identification of its dimensions, the development and validation of an ICC scale and the assessment of the relationship between ICC implementation and market performance. These findings give relevant insights into the understanding of ICC definition, multidimensionality and measurement and provide researchers with the opportunity to further develop, refine and validate this instrument using both multi-industry and single-industry approaches.

As **managerial implications**, the assessment of the proposed ICC-market performance model and, more specifically, the revealed positive and strong link between ICC and market performance suggest that managers should pay more attention to ICC implementation. As suggested by Duncan & Mulhern (2004), the limited empirical evidence supporting the results derived from the implementation of integrated communication is a barrier that constrains its “*acceptance in boardrooms and practice by organisations*”. Therefore, the research presented here provides a relevant and empirically supported proof of the ICC benefits in terms of business performance suggesting managers to see ICC as a way to improve economic, financial, brand and customer-satisfaction related outcomes and encouraging top management to support and facilitate the introduction of ICC as a core organisational process. More specifically, the four constructs proposed to measure ICC have some important implications for managers, such as the need for the organisation to adequately coordinate the communication messages generated at all levels of the organisation (tactical consistency) to ensure that the voice of the stakeholders is listened and taken into consideration during the decision-making processes via enhancing the responsiveness and the speed of response and fostering the reciprocity of the relationship between the organisation and its stakeholders (interactivity), to develop mechanisms that allow for a meaningful dialogue with all the stakeholders, and not just the customers (stakeholder-centered strategic focus) and to ensure that the communication flows adequately both vertically and horizontally in the organisation and between the organisation and external partners and agencies to generate a climate of collaboration and cooperation (organisational alignment). In conclusion, the proposed ICC-performance model is likely to help top management and corporate and marketing communication practitioners in their decision-making processes. The ICC scale can also be used by senior managers as a tool to evaluate the level of integration among the diverse communication activities taking place in different organisational departments and functions.

Finally, as a **limitation**, the generalisability of the results could be limited due to the fact that this study was carried out in a specific industry and within Spain. However, we encourage **future research** to replicate this study across other sectors/industries and national contexts, with the aim of improving the external validity of these results, reinforcing the ICC theoretical background.

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APPENDIX 1  
**Integrated Corporate Communication and Market Performance items**

<b>Integrated Corporate Communication</b>
<i><b>Tactical consistency</b></i>
CONS_1. My company carefully coordinates all the messages originated by all the departments and functions with the aim of maintaining the consistency of its strategic positioning.
CONS_2. My company maintains consistency in all visual components of communication (logos, colors, trademarks, etc.).
CONS_3. My company periodically reviews all our planned messages (e.g., advertising, sponsorship, PR and marketing PR, sales promotion, direct marketing and personal selling) to determine its level of strategic positioning consistency.
CONS_4. In my company it is paramount to maintain the consistency between product messages, that are inferred from, and comprise everything embedded in the organisation's product and service messages, that derived from the experience of dealing with the organisation, its staff, agents and products.
<i><b>Interactivity</b></i>
INTE_1. My company promotes the creation of special programs to facilitate stakeholders' inquiries and complaints about our brands, products and the company itself.
INTE_2. My company collects stakeholders' information collected or generated via different sources from all divisions or departments (inquiries, complaints and other relevant information about the relationship between the company and its stakeholders ) into a unified database, that is easily accessible (internally) and configured to be useful to all the organizational levels.*
INTE_3. In my company it is crucial for the organization as a whole and for all its human resources (i.e. employees, managers, etc.) to have a responsive attitude towards the messages received from its stakeholders.
INTE_4. In my company a strategic use of Internet and other ICTs (i.e. mobile devices like smartphones and tablets) enhances the speed of response and the responsiveness of the organization as a whole that are crucial for interacting with stakeholders and within the organization itself.
INTE_5. In my company actively listening to stakeholder-generated messages, for instance via word of mouth (WOM and e-WOM), is of vital importance to set its communication strategies.
INTE_6. My company considers that the relationship between the company and its stakeholders must be reciprocal in order to establish a trust-based and ongoing dialogue.
INTE_7. My company proactively implements social media, by listening to the existing conversations and promoting a dialogue with its stakeholders, to strengthen its relationship with stakeholders.
<i><b>Stakeholder-centered strategic focus</b></i>
STAK_1. The company's mission is a key consideration in the communications planning and it is promoted among stakeholders.
STAK_2. My company develops and implements systematic studies to assess the efficacy and consistency of its corporate communications in order to build and maintain sound relationships with all the stakeholders.
STAK_3. In my company the acknowledgement of the main touch-points between the company and its stakeholders is paramount to strengthen them for a more effective communication.
STAK_4. In my company social media are an alternative way for stakeholders to contact the company, providing the company with the possibility to respond via the medium that is most suitable for stakeholders.
STAK_5. In working towards the goal of establishing and maintaining stakeholder relationships, in my company human resources in all organizational areas must cooperate and collaborate (through incentives, empowerment, etc.) as needed.
STAK_6. In my company human resources in all the organizational areas pursue the objective of providing stakeholder-centered solutions.
STAK_7. My company establishes and nourishes relationships with external agents/partners in order to achieve high value solutions for stakeholders.
<i><b>Organisational alignment</b></i>
ALIN_1. My company carefully manages horizontal (between different departments and functions) internal communication by ensuring that all the organizational areas acknowledge the goals pursued by the organization /the company/ the brand.
ALIN_2. My company carefully manages vertical (top-down and bottom-up) internal communication by ensuring that the information flows through all the hierarchical levels of the organization, as needed.
ALIN_3. My company ensures that its external agents and partners have at least several contacts/month with each other.
ALIN_4. In my company horizontal and vertical cooperation are crucial because all the departments affect the corporate reputation.
ALIN_5. In my company employees and managers share the corporate values and the main goals of the company that guide them in carrying out their specific tasks and functions.
ALIN_6. In my company encouraging and promoting a collaboration culture and climate (at both intra- and inter-functional level) is highly relevant in order to activate cross-functional coordination mechanisms that increase the value of the solutions offered to stakeholders.

ALIN_7. My company trains all human resources to make them develop cooperation and coordination skills.
<b>Market performance</b>
<i><b>Economic and financial results</b></i>
Please, assess the level to which the following goals have been achieved by your company compared to the closest competitor in the last three years (1 = much less ; 7 = much more)
REFI_1. The overall profitability.
REFI_2. The market share.
REFI_3. The sales growth.
REFI_4. The proportion of sales generated by new products/services.
REFI_5. The return on sales (ROS).
<i><b>Brand-related outcomes</b></i>
Please, focus on the main brand of your company and assess the level of achievement of the following goals compared to the closest competitor in the last three years (1 = much less ; 7 = much more)
REMA_1. The brand awareness.
REMA_2. The ability to command premium prices over similar competing brands in the principal market of the company.
REMA_3. The level of channel cooperation received relative to similar brands in the principal market of the company.
<i><b>Customer satisfaction</b></i>
Please, focus on the main brand of your company and assess the level of achievement of the following goals compared to the closest competitor in the last three years (1 = much less ; 7 = much more)
SAT_1. The customer satisfaction.
SAT_2. The customer loyalty.

APPENDIX 2  
**Profile of Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>
Female	62.8	113	Less than 25 years old	3.3	6
Male	37.2	67	25-35 years old	29.4	53
			36-45 years old	37.2	67
			46-55 years old	19.5	35
			55+ years old	10.6	19
<b>Position</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Experience</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>
CEO	47.2	85	Less than 5 years	30.6	55
Marketing and/or Communication manager	40	72	5-10 years	27.8	50
Other managers	12.8	23	10-20 years	23.3	42
			More than 20 years	18.3	33
<b>Number of employees</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Company type</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>
40-50	25	45	Hotel	85	153
51-249	63.3	114	Other accomodation	15	27
250 +	11.7	21			

# DURACIÓN DE LOS SPOTS Y RECUERDO PUBLICITARIO: OPTIMIZACIÓN EN FUNCIÓN DE LAS VARIABLES DE PLANIFICACIÓN DEL MEDIO TELEVISIÓN

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## RESUMEN

Maximizar el recuerdo generado por los spots es un objetivo prioritario para los agentes implicados en la utilización publicitaria de la televisión. En este contexto, los anunciantes deben optimizar la gestión de las variables de planificación debido a su influencia directa en el recuerdo. Entre estas variables destaca la duración del anuncio debido al creciente desarrollo de duraciones inferiores al estándar. El objetivo principal de este trabajo es analizar la relación directa entre el recuerdo espontáneo y la duración de un spot televisivo, controlando además el efecto directo de otras variables relacionadas con la planificación de medios. Concretamente se han analizado: (1) cadena televisiva, (2) posición del bloque publicitario respecto al programa, (3) presión publicitaria del bloque publicitario, (4) notificación de la duración del bloque publicitario, (5) notoriedad de marca, (6) día de la semana, (7) posición relativa del spot en el bloque y (8) efectos primacia y recencia. Dado que en la práctica el resultado de la eficacia de un anuncio depende de la interacción del conjunto de variables de planificación de medios, más allá del efecto individual de cada una de ellas, se ha planteado como segundo objetivo analizar o explorar el efecto moderador que tales variables ejercen sobre la influencia de la duración en el recuerdo. Para ello se ha llevado a cabo un estudio en un entorno real que ha supuesto la integración de dos fuentes de información, el panel de Kantar Media y un CATI aplicado a una muestra de 2.000 individuos que, mediante la utilización de un “coeficiente de ponderación”, han permitido obtener niveles de recuerdo espontáneo ajustados a la audiencia real de un elevado número de spots publicitarios. La consecución de estos objetivos ha permitido aportar sugerencias en la optimización de la planificación publicitaria en televisión para mejorar el recuerdo generado por los spots.

### Palabras clave:

Publicidad en televisión, recuerdo publicitario, spots, duración del spot, entorno real.

## 1. Introducción

En la actualidad, el medio televisión afronta la competencia de los nuevos medios publicitarios y de los cambios en los hábitos de consumo del medio de sus audiencias. En este contexto, la televisión debe mantener su liderazgo como soporte publicitario reforzando su capacidad para cumplir los objetivos de los anunciantes. A pesar de que presenta un contexto progresivamente desfavorable como soporte publicitario (Jeong et al., 2011), sus cualidades diferenciales frente a otros medios (Rubinson, 2009) hacen que, pese a sus limitaciones, sea líder en inversión publicitaria, con el 40% del total en medios convencionales en 2013 (Infoadex, 2014). Además existen estudios que afirman que la Televisión continuará siendo el soporte publicitario mayoritario, a pesar de la complejidad asociada a su gestión (Sharp et al., 2009; Precourt, 2010) y de las críticas acerca de la pérdida de su eficacia en el cumplimiento de los objetivos, relacionadas con la saturación, *zapping*, atomización de las audiencias, entre otras (Martín et al., 2011). La aparente pérdida de eficacia de la Televisión (Lowrey et al., 2005) exige a los anunciantes, a las agencias y centrales de medios, y a las cadenas de televisión, una utilización creativa del medio para conseguir el recuerdo publicitario de las campañas (Smit et al., 2009), así como una mayor atención por parte de la audiencia (Romaniuk, 2012). En esta línea, Jeong et al. (2012) señalan que los agentes publicitarios, para conseguir la eficacia, no sólo deben velar por la calidad de los anuncios, sino que además deben tener en cuenta una serie de estrategias creativas en la planificación de medios.

Entre las técnicas de medición de la eficacia publicitaria destaca el recuerdo, que es una medida de la capacidad de un anuncio para generar la atención y atraer el interés (Ross, 1982), siendo utilizada principalmente en los medios audiovisuales frente al reconocimiento, habitualmente utilizado en medios impresos (Beerli y Martín, 1999). Además, en la investigación publicitaria, tanto en el ámbito académico como aplicado, es considerada como una medida válida y fiable (Beerli y Martín, 1998; Wells, 2000), e idónea cuando el test se realiza en un período muy próximo a la exposición a los estímulos (Shapiro y Krishnan, 2013). De hecho, su utilización se fundamenta en la creencia de que la publicidad es más eficaz en la medida en que genera un mayor recuerdo, ya que en estas circunstancias es mayor la probabilidad de que se produzca un cambio de actitud y se consiga la conducta deseada (Vakratsas y Ambler, 1999). Entre las diferentes medidas de recuerdo publicitario, el recuerdo espontáneo destaca por su capacidad para detectar si el anuncio ha sido capaz de dejar alguna huella en la mente del individuo de forma espontánea, de manera que se evitan posibles distorsiones provocadas por campañas previas que los individuos puedan recordar en el momento de la recogida de los datos, si se les proporciona información que estimule el recuerdo (Beerli y Martín, 1999).

En este entorno, los anunciantes deben potenciar la mejora de la gestión de las variables de planificación de medios debido a su influencia directa en el recuerdo (Soberman, 2005). Si bien distintos estudios han abordado el efecto de las principales variables de planificación de forma individualizada son pocos los trabajos que aportan una perspectiva integrada de la relación entre recuerdo publicitario y planificación de medios. Entre estas variables, Newstead y Romaniuk (2009) señalan la importancia de estudiar la relación entre la eficacia del anuncio y la duración del mismo debido al creciente desarrollo de duraciones inferiores al estándar como consecuencia del incremento de los costes del espacio publicitario. Además, la relevancia de su estudio radica en que gran parte de la investigación se ha desarrollado previamente a la consolidación de spots con duraciones inferiores a 20 segundos. De hecho, en España se consolida la tendencia a planificar con spots de duración distintas a 20 segundos a partir de la entrada de la TDT en el año 2010, al pasar de 10 canales de televisión a 50 (Optimedia, 2012). Ello propició que las cadenas con mayor audiencia utilizaran spots de duración inferior a la media (20 segundos) para reducir el precio de la inserción, y que las cadenas nuevas ofreciesen duraciones superiores a 20 segundos a tarifas reducidas para captar anunciantes.

Con estos antecedentes, nuestro objetivo principal es analizar la relación directa entre el recuerdo espontáneo y la duración de un spot, controlando además el efecto directo de otras variables de la planificación de medios, como sugieren Pieters y Bijmolt (1997) y Moorman et al. (2005). No obstante, dado que en la práctica de la planificación de medios, el resultado de la eficacia de un anuncio depende de la interacción del conjunto de variables de la planificación más allá del efecto individual de cada una de ellas, en el presente trabajo se ha planteado explorar el efecto moderador que ejercen tales variable sobre la influencia de la duración en el recuerdo publicitario. La consecución de estos objetivos permitirá aportar indicadores para la optimización de la gestión publicitaria en televisión.

A partir de las sugerencias de Moorman et al. (2007) y Pieters y Bijmolt (1997), el presente trabajo se ha llevado a cabo en un entorno real, a diferencia de la mayoría de estudios realizados en un entorno de laboratorio. Estos autores señalan como limitaciones de los tests de laboratorio la fiabilidad de sus resultados, ya que los encuestados no se exponen a elementos distractores como sucede en un entorno real. Zhao (1997) se manifiesta

en este mismo sentido cuando afirma que los tests on-air también evitan los posibles sesgos derivados de la forma en la que los individuos son expuestos a los estímulos publicitarios. Adicionalmente, Hu et al. (2007) señalan que los tests on-air gozan de una mayor aceptación entre la comunidad publicitaria, ya que permiten evaluar los verdaderos efectos de la publicidad sobre el consumidor. Esta decisión de llevar a cabo el estudio en un entorno real ha supuesto la integración de dos fuentes de información, el panel de Kantar Media y un CATI, que han permitido obtener los niveles de recuerdo espontáneo ajustados a la audiencia real de un elevado número de spots publicitarios. De esta forma, se superan dos de las limitaciones metodológicas presentes en muchos trabajos consistentes en llevar a cabo el estudio en entornos de laboratorio y con tasas de recuerdo calculadas a partir de una muestra.

## 2. Estado de la cuestión e hipótesis

La duración del anuncio se define como su longitud medida en segundos (Alba y Chattopadhyay, 1986). El estudio de su efecto en la eficacia publicitaria, generalmente, se ha centrado en comparar los efectos derivados de un formato publicitario de mayor duración frente a uno de menor duración. De acuerdo con la hipótesis del tiempo total, en la que el nivel de aprendizaje es una función directa del tiempo empleado (Baddeley, 1990), los anuncios de televisión más largos dan una mayor oportunidad a los espectadores para atender y procesar el mensaje (Singh y Cole, 1993). También, Rossiter y Bellman (2005) sugieren que un anuncio más corto tiene una menor probabilidad de captar la atención de los espectadores, por lo que, según estos autores, cabe esperar un menor nivel recuerdo en los anuncios de menor duración. Las teorías procedentes de diferentes corrientes de investigación predicen que la duración de un anuncio tiene un impacto positivo en su capacidad para ser recordado (Alba y Chattopadhyay, 1986). Así, Mord y Gilson (1985), Patzer (1991) y Young (2008) sugieren que los anuncios de 30 segundos son más efectivos en general que los de 15 segundos en términos de recuerdo. Patzer (1991) cuantifica la diferencia de recuerdo entre la duración de un spot de 15 segundos y otro de 30, en un 20% superior a favor de la mayor duración. Por su parte, Newstead y Romaniuk (2010) afirman que el recuerdo generado por los spots de 15 segundos es el 80 % del generado por otro de doble duración (30 segundos) y atribuyen este escaso incremento a la mejora de los factores ejecucionales de la marca en los spots de corta duración.

Sobre la base de estos antecedentes, se formula la siguiente hipótesis:

*H1: Cuanto mayor es la duración del spot mayor es el recuerdo publicitario.*

Si bien los estudios citados coinciden en encontrar una relación positiva entre la duración del mensaje comercial y su recuerdo, no existe suficiente literatura respecto a otras variables de planificación de medios que pudieran moderar la relación esta relación. Esto hace necesario profundizar, mediante las hipótesis que se plantean a continuación, en las diferentes variables y en sus interacciones relacionadas con el proceso de planificación de medios que se considera pueden influir en el recuerdo y moderar la relación positiva entre la duración del anuncio y el recuerdo generado por el mismo. A este respecto, como se ha señalado, la escasa literatura, si bien justifica la relevancia de esta investigación, no ha permitido proporcionar los fundamentos teóricos necesarios que justifiquen todos los efectos de interacción. La necesidad de aportar evidencias empíricas al respecto, nos ha llevado a plantear proposiciones en aquellos casos en los que no es posible formular una hipótesis de trabajo. Concretamente, en este trabajo se han analizado las siguientes variables: (1) cadena televisiva, (2) posición del bloque publicitario respecto al programa, (3) presión publicitaria del bloque publicitario, (4) notificación de la duración del bloque publicitario, (5) notoriedad de marca, (6) día de la semana, (7) posición relativa del spot en el bloque (cociente entre la duración del bloque en segundos hasta el comienzo del spot y la duración total del bloque en segundos y (8) efecto primacía y recencia.

Comenzando por la primera variable, una cuestión de interés para los anunciantes es conocer si el recuerdo generado por un spot depende de las cadenas televisivas en las que se emita, ya que ofertan audiencias de similar perfil sociodemográfico, con una escasa diferenciación en su oferta de espacio publicitario y similares costes por GRP (Reinares y Reinares, 2013). A pesar de ello, las diferentes cadenas aportan estudios con objetivos comerciales y resultados dispares para argumentar los mayores niveles de recuerdo que una campaña en la misma puede conseguir respecto a otras cadenas. El interés de la praxis no ha tenido su reflejo en la literatura académica. No obstante, sí existen trabajos que han abordado la importancia del contexto en la planificación de medios. Este contexto en términos de programación o editorial ha sido ampliamente reconocido como factor relevante en las decisiones de selección del soporte publicitario por su influencia en la eficacia publicitaria (Shamdasani et al., 2001). Los estudios clásicos han demostrado que los diferentes soportes pueden generar distintos efectos comunicativos en una misma audiencia con los mismos anuncios (Shamdasani et al., 2001). La



investigación en los medios convencionales han contrastado que el contexto, o la programación o la editorial en la que se inserta un anuncio, puede tener efectos importantes sobre el procesamiento del mensaje (Yaveroglu y Donthu, 2008). Dentro de un medio, las personas que eligen un soporte determinado atribuyen más valor a la publicidad que se ajusta al entorno editorial de dicho soporte al considerar que se dirige a sus intereses particulares (Cannon, 1982). De hecho, un mensaje idéntico puede tener diferentes efectos dependiendo del contexto en el que se presenta (Yaveroglu y Donthu, 2008).

Trasladando las aportaciones de Gunter et al. (1997) realizadas en el contexto de un programa, se puede considerar que existe una relación entre el recuerdo de los spots y la implicación de las audiencias con la cadena; pues esta es, en definitiva, un conjunto de programas que, integrados, conforman un posicionamiento diferencial en el mercado de televisión. A partir de modernas técnicas de Neuromarketing, Peacock et al. (2011) aportan otra posible explicación a la influencia de la cadena en el recuerdo. Estos autores proponen el concepto de “engagement” para medir la eficacia publicitaria, definiéndolo como la capacidad de un medio para generar unos vínculos emocionales con la audiencia que influyen en el procesamiento de los anuncios. Esta implicación emocional de las audiencias (“mi cadena favorita”) puede también explicar que un spot consiga diferentes niveles de recuerdo en función de la cadena que lo emita. Por otra parte, en el trabajo de Arrazola et al. (2013), realizado en el mercado publicitario español, se demuestra que, en efecto, hay diferencias en el recuerdo generado por el patrocinio televisivo en función de la cadena que lo emita. Todo ello permite redactar la siguiente hipótesis en el sentido de:

*H2: La cadena de televisión influye en el recuerdo publicitario.*

Respecto al efecto moderador que puede ejercer la cadena de televisión en la relación entre la duración del spot y el recuerdo, la inexistencia de trabajos previos nos lleva a plantear la siguiente proposición:

*P1: La relación entre el recuerdo y la duración del spot está moderada por la cadena de televisión.*

En la planificación de las campañas, la colocación del bloque publicitario entre programas o en el intermedio es una decisión de gran relevancia por los efectos colaterales que tiene la implicación de la audiencia con los programas. La investigación psicológica sugiere que el material que rodea a un anuncio televisivo es determinante en el éxito de un mensaje (Norris y Colman, 1993). La cuestión de si la involucración de los espectadores con el programa afecta a la retención del mensaje publicitario ha sido abordada bajo diferentes perspectivas teóricas, dando lugar a resultados contrapuestos. En general, se asume que el recuerdo será mayor cuanto más alta sea la implicación de las audiencias con el programa que acompaña al mensaje publicitario (Lloyd y Clancy, 1991). Moorman et al. (2012) verifican que la implicación de las audiencias potencia el procesamiento de los mensajes publicitarios y, por lo tanto, mejora el recuerdo. Cabe esperar, por tanto, que la implicación de las audiencias con el programa disminuya al finalizar este y, por ello, los efectos esperados sobre el recuerdo son superiores en los bloques publicitarios situados dentro del programa frente a los bloques entre programas. De hecho, Krugman (1983), Chowdhury et al. (2007) o Moorman et al. (2007) coinciden en que el recuerdo que generan los anuncios es mayor cuando se insertan en el intermedio de un programa frente a su situación en un bloque publicitario al final del programa, debido a que, de acuerdo con Siddarth y Chattopahdyay (1998), cuando acaba un programa las audiencias emplean sus recursos cognitivos en la búsqueda de alternativas de nuevos programas afines a sus gustos. Por ello, la siguiente hipótesis propone:

*H3: La posición del bloque publicitario respecto al programa influye en el recuerdo.*

Al igual que en el caso de la cadena, la inexistencia de trabajos previos sobre el efecto moderador que puede ejercer la posición del bloque publicitario respecto al programa en la relación entre la duración del spot y el recuerdo, nos lleva a plantear la siguiente proposición:

*P2: La relación entre el recuerdo y la duración del spot está moderada por la posición del bloque publicitario respecto al programa.*

En un bloque publicitario convencional son numerosas las marcas que compiten por la atención y el posterior recuerdo de los consumidores, dando lugar al concepto de presión publicitaria, que se define habitualmente como un gran número de anuncios en un período determinado Riebe y Dawes (2008). Entre los diferentes paradigmas utilizados para analizar las respuestas de los consumidores a la publicidad, esto es, los enfoques de procesamiento estructural, funcional y de información (Ha y McCann, 2008), el estudio de la presión publicitaria se enmarca en el primero de ellos. Bajo este paradigma, Ha (1996) identifica la existencia de tres dimensiones en la presión publicitaria: cantidad, intrusismo y competitividad. La cantidad la define como el número de anuncios en el soporte. El intrusismo como al grado en el que los anuncios interrumpen el flujo de una unidad de contenido del soporte. Y, finalmente, la competitividad como el grado de similitud entre los productos

anunciados o mensajes publicitarios en el mismo corte publicitario. De estas tres dimensiones, la que ha gozado de una mayor atención, tanto en la práctica empresarial como en la literatura académica, es la cantidad, llegándose a la conclusión de que cuanto mayor sea la cantidad de anuncios en un bloque publicitario menor será el recuerdo publicitario (Ha y McCann, 2008). Esta conclusión se fundamenta en la creencia de que bajo estas condiciones de saturación, los anuncios recibirán menos atención por parte de los consumidores debido a que, por una parte, se irritarán, y consecuentemente, los evitarán, y por otra, no serán capaces de recordar los anuncios si son expuestos a un gran número de ellos al mismo tiempo debido a su limitada capacidad de memoria (Ha y McCann, 2008). Esta hipótesis ha sido confirmada por múltiples investigadores en cuyos trabajos se concluye que la presión publicitaria provoca menos atención de la audiencia a los anuncios al tiempo que aumenta la confusión del espectador (Jeong et al., 2011). Todo ello ha generado que en la actualidad exista un consenso en cuanto a que la presión publicitaria es un factor que reduce la eficacia publicitaria al provocar conductas evasivas e interferir en la memoria (Brown y Rothschild, 1993). Así, por ejemplo, Pieters y Bijmolt (1997) encontraron que tanto el recuerdo espontáneo como el sugerido de los anuncios de televisión disminuyen a medida que se incrementa el número de anuncios de un bloque. A pesar de este aparente consenso, autores como Hammer et al. (2009), destacan la necesidad de analizar los efectos de la presión publicitaria sobre el recuerdo dada la existencia de algunas inconsistencias en los resultados de los estudios realizados al respecto debido, probablemente, a la metodología utilizada (entorno de laboratorio *versus* entorno real), a las definiciones de presión publicitaria (centradas en cantidad, intrusismo o competitividad, por ejemplo) o a las medidas de respuesta utilizadas. De hecho, en el trabajo del propio Hammer et al. (2009), en el que se realizan varios estudios para comparar el efecto de la presión publicitaria sobre diferentes medidas de recuerdo, tanto en el medio televisión como radio, así como en el contexto real o de laboratorio, se concluye que aunque la presión publicitaria reduce el número de anuncios recordados, esta no parece afectar a la correcta identificación de las marcas que aparecen en bloques publicitarios con elevada presencia de marcas. Si bien este último resultado puede ser contrario a lo esperado, sus propios autores, en el caso de los estudios realizados en un entorno real, lo explican por el hecho de que en un entorno real algunos anuncios se repiten más que otros, afectando, por tanto, al recuerdo de marca. En coherencia con lo anterior, se plantea la siguiente hipótesis:

*H4: Cuanto menor es la presión publicitaria del bloque medida en número de spots mayor es el recuerdo publicitario.*

En lo que al efecto moderador de la presión publicitaria sobre la relación duración del anuncio-recuerdo se refiere, existen algunos trabajos, aunque muy escasos al respecto. Así, Mord y Gilson (1985) contrastan como el menor recuerdo de los spots cortos frente a los largos se potencia (disminuye) a medida que aumenta el número de anuncios del bloque publicitario. También Ward et al. (1989) demuestran, en un estudio comparativo de la eficacia de spots de diferentes duraciones, que la relación duración-recuerdo varía en función de la presión publicitaria en términos de duración total del bloque publicitario. Partiendo de estas escasas evidencias empíricas, la siguiente hipótesis es:

*H5: La relación entre el recuerdo y la duración del spot está moderada por la presión publicitaria del bloque.*

Actualmente es habitual que las cadenas, en aras de evitar el *zapping* publicitario, notifiquen a las audiencias la duración del publicitario. El trabajo de Yu et al. (2012) evidencia que, cuando la cadena avisa expresamente de la duración del bloque publicitario, los anuncios contenidos en el mismo se recuerdan más que si no se hubiera producido un aviso indicando el tiempo que resta de publicidad. Sin embargo, este recuerdo varía en función de si el aviso previo de la duración del bloque se refiere a bloques cortos o largos. Esta práctica puede reducir tanto la ansiedad que provoca no saber con exactitud la duración del bloque comercial, identificada por Rachman (1998), como la situación desagradable e incómoda que produce dicha incertidumbre, establecida por Bensi y Giusberti (2007). La Teoría de la eficiencia del procesamiento de Eysenck y Calvo (1992) propone que la ansiedad puede conllevar una reducción en la capacidad memorística. En esta misma línea, se manifiestan Leight y Ellis (1981) cuando señalan que tanto la ansiedad como la preocupación pueden dar lugar a un estado depresivo que lleva a una reducción de la actividad cognitiva de una persona afectando su capacidad de almacenar información. Por lo tanto, si se informa de la duración del bloque publicitario o del número de anuncios del mismo, la audiencia tiene una percepción más clara de la longitud del corte del corte publicitario, que lleva a un estado de motivación que puede mejorar su rendimiento (Smith, 1986).

Dado que parece existir consenso en que el aviso de la duración del bloque publicitario favorece la actividad cognitiva de la audiencia con respecto a los mensajes comerciales se propone la siguiente hipótesis:

*H6: La notificación de la duración del bloque publicitario incrementa el recuerdo.*

De la misma manera que en variables previas, el efecto moderador que puede ejercer la notificación de la duración del bloque publicitario sobre la relación entre la duración del spot y el recuerdo, la ausencia de literatura nos lleva a plantear la siguiente proposición:

*P3: La relación entre el recuerdo y la duración del spot está moderada por la notificación de la duración del bloque publicitario.*

Pieters et al. (2002), Kent y Allen (1994) y Keller (1993) señalan que la familiaridad de la marca para las audiencias (notoriedad previa) es una variable que influye en el recuerdo de los mensajes publicitarios. Una vez finalizada la campaña los niveles de notoriedad acumulados decrecen a lo largo del tiempo, aunque mantienen un efecto residual importante (Mela et al., 1997). Diferentes trabajos argumentan que las marcas notorias se ven afectadas en menor medida por los efectos negativos de un gran número de marcas que compiten por captar la atención de las audiencias. Kent y Allen (1994) concluyen que las marcas más notorias, en relación a los nuevos competidores, son más recordadas y resisten mejor los inconvenientes de un entorno publicitario saturado. Como corroboran Nelson-Field et al. (2013), las marcas notorias son menos vulnerables a los efectos de la presión publicitaria del bloque, debido a que su renombre hace que sea más fácil recordar su publicidad.

En línea con este discurso, parece coherente plantear que la notoriedad de marca, resultado de la presión publicitaria anterior, puede ejercer una influencia directa sobre el recuerdo, tal y como se plantea en la siguiente hipótesis:

*H7: La notoriedad previa de la marca anunciada incrementa el recuerdo.*

Fabian (1996) reconoce que el incremento que se produce en el recuerdo a medida que se aumenta la duración del spot, varía enormemente entre las diferentes campañas debido al efecto moderador que ejerce la notoriedad previa de la marca. En las marcas notorias con presencia continuada en el medio televisión, no hay diferencia en el recuerdo obtenido por el aumento de la duración del spot de 15 a 30 segundos. Sin embargo, si la marca es nueva o presenta una baja notoriedad para la audiencia del medio televisión, se produce un aumento del recuerdo al duplicar la duración del spot. Esto nos permite redactar la siguiente hipótesis:

*H8: La relación entre el recuerdo y la duración del spot está moderada por la notoriedad previa de la marca anunciada.*

A pesar de que el día de la semana no se considera una variable ejecucional en los planes de medios en televisión, Zigmond et al. (2009) señalan que las medidas de audiencia están altamente influenciadas por factores tangenciales como el día de la semana. Sin embargo, no existen evidencias empíricas que analicen su influencia en el recuerdo publicitario, aunque los datos de audiencia arrojan un comportamiento diferenciado de la audiencia los días laborables frente al fin de semana respecto al tiempo de visionado y el comportamiento de *zapping* (Kantar Media, 2013). A ello hay que añadir que el estado emocional de los espectadores difiere entre periodos de ocio, propios del fin de semana, y los laborables. Es por ello que en el presente trabajo se plantean las dos siguientes proposiciones al objeto de proporcionar alguna evidencia empírica preliminar al respecto:

*P4: El día de la semana en que se emite el spot influye en el recuerdo.*

*P5: La relación entre el recuerdo y la duración del spot está moderada por el día de la semana en que se emite el spot.*

A pesar de que pueda parecer obvio que la posición de un spot, en relación a la duración total del bloque publicitario, puede afectar al recuerdo, la investigación académica, salvo excepciones como los trabajos de Moorman et al. (2005) o Arrazola et al. (2013), ha obviado este efecto, considerando que el recuerdo de un spot quedaba explicado con variables ordinales (la posición que ocupa el anuncio en el bloque, generalmente medido mediante el efecto primacía) y el nivel de presión publicitaria dentro del bloque en que se inserta el spot (medido por la duración del bloque). Sin embargo, Pieters y Bijmolt (1997) consideran que si se reconoce la influencia de los programas y contenidos que rodean al spot en el recuerdo, dicha influencia puede disminuir a medida que el spot se aleja de los programas. Este fenómeno no quedaría recogido con el efecto primacía o recencia, pues el mismo sólo considera las primeras posiciones o últimas, y los spots tienen, en la actualidad, mayores posibilidades (dado la duración de los bloques publicitarios) de ocupar posiciones no preferenciales. En este sentido, el recuerdo que genera un spot debe estar afectado por el tiempo transcurrido desde que empieza el bloque publicitario. Esta influencia negativa sobre el recuerdo será más explícita en bloques de larga duración (Li, 2010). Por ello, trabajos como el de Singh y Cole (1993) consideran que el tiempo que transcurre desde que comienza el bloque tiene influencia en el recuerdo. Terry (2005) contrasta cómo un mismo anuncio genera

diferente recuerdo en función de las posiciones que ocupe en el espacio situado entre la primera y última posición. Mattes y Cantor (1982) analizaron un bloque largo (6 minutos), descomponiendo (como se ha hecho en nuestro trabajo) la duración del mismo en tres intervalos y demuestran que la situación de un spot en cada uno de los tres intervalos, genera diferentes niveles de recuerdo. En esta misma línea, un estudio realizado por Nielsen y el CTAB (2000) demostró que el recuerdo era mucho más alto para los anuncios colocados en las primeras posiciones y ligeramente superior para los colocados en las últimas posiciones en bloques publicitarios formados solo por cinco anuncios. Es por ello que Swaminathan y Kent (2013) recomiendan que este análisis se haga también para bloques publicitarios más largos, en los que la diferencia en los niveles de recuerdo entre los anuncios colocados en las primeras y últimas posiciones debería ser más acusada. A pesar de este aparente consenso, trabajos como el de Moorman et al. (2005) establecen que la posición del mensaje en el bloque no afecta al recuerdo, ya que es indiferente que el spot comience antes o después una vez transcurridas las primeras posiciones.

Dado que la mayoría de las fuentes consideran la influencia de la posición del anuncio en el bloque, se redacta la siguiente hipótesis que sintetiza como esta variable puede afectar al recuerdo:

*H9: La posición relativa del spot en el bloque publicitario influye en el recuerdo.*

Con respecto al posible efecto en el recuerdo del spot de la interacción entre la duración del anuncio y la posición relativa de este en el bloque publicitario Ward et al. (1989) afirman que la duración del spot es solo una de las variables de la ecuación que explicaría el recuerdo. Igualmente importantes serían la duración total del bloque y la duración de cada uno de los anuncios que aparecen en el bloque. Para explicar cómo la duración del anuncio afecta al recuerdo según la posición que este ocupa en el bloque Ward et al. (1989) afirman que la audiencia presta más atención a los spots situados al principio del bloque publicitario decreciendo la atención a medida que avanza el bloque, siendo significativo que esta no se recupera en los anuncios finales del bloque. Como explicación argumentan que al aumentar la duración del bloque las audiencias pierden la capacidad de anticiparse al comienzo del programa, que se había interrumpido por la publicidad, incrementando la atención en los anuncios finales del bloque. Según los autores la caída del recuerdo a medida que avanza el bloque sería todavía mayor si los spots son cortos frente a largos (15 s vs 30s). Por lo tanto, y a pesar de que los autores reconocen que el entorno experimental de su trabajo limita la validez de las conclusiones, se puede inferir que la relación entre la duración del spot y el recuerdo que genera esta moderada por la posición relativa del anuncio en el bloque publicitario. Sobre la base de lo anterior, se establece esta hipótesis:

*H10: La relación entre el recuerdo y la duración del spot está moderada por la posición relativa del spot en el bloque publicitario.*

Dado el elevado nivel de saturación publicitaria del medio televisión, otro de los factores que ha acaparado una gran atención por parte de los investigadores es el efecto del orden que ocupan los anuncios en el bloque publicitario (por ejemplo, primera, segunda, y última) (Pieters y Bijmolt, 1997; Singh y Cole, 1993; Zhao, 1997). Así, nos encontramos con numerosos trabajos que han intentado explicar cómo influye el orden que ocupa un anuncio sobre su eficacia desde una perspectiva psicológica. En general, los resultados de las investigaciones indican que los anuncios colocados en la primera y última posición son mejor recordados que los que aparecen en el medio (Brunel y Nelson, 2003; Burke y Srull, 1988; Pieters y Bijmolt, 1997). No obstante, es preciso señalar que respecto a la primera posición existe un consenso en cuanto a su influencia positiva en el recuerdo, no ocurriendo lo mismo con la última posición. Así, por ejemplo, Pieters y Bijmolt (1997), que analizaron los anuncios de televisión entre 1975 y 1992 emitidos en Holanda, encontraron que cuando el recuerdo de los nombres de marca de los anuncios no colocados en las posiciones extremas era del 100%, el nivel de recuerdo del primer anuncio del bloque era del 129%, mientras que el del último era del 101%. Sin embargo, en el trabajo de Terry (2005), dos spots de diferentes duraciones generan el mismo nivel de recuerdo al situarse en la primera o última posición del bloque. Y, por su parte, en los trabajos de Zhao (1997), Webb y Ray (1979) o Li (2010) la última posición no genera un mayor recuerdo, a diferencia de la primera.

Toda esta investigación ha dado lugar a los denominados efectos primacía y recencia, que se producen porque los primeros anuncios del bloque interfieren proactivamente en la retención de los últimos anuncios, produciendo el efecto primacía, y los últimos anuncios interfieren retroactivamente en la retención de los anuncios previos, produciendo el efecto recencia (Zhao, 1997). Así, Burke y Srull (1988) argumentan que los procesos de interferencia asociativos contribuyen a los efectos de primacía sobre el recuerdo y el reconocimiento de los anuncios de televisión porque los restantes estímulos inhiben la capacidad de los espectadores para recordar información persuasiva. A este respecto, Swaminathan y Kent (2013) señalan que, por lo general, los

espectadores empiezan a cambiar el canal al inicio del corte publicitario, dando al primer anuncio la oportunidad de una mayor exposición al mismo. Ahora bien, debido a que la longitud de los bloques publicitarios varía y a que los espectadores no son capaces de predecir su duración, los últimos anuncios del bloque pueden tener mejores puntuaciones porque los espectadores vuelven al canal en espera de la continuación o iniciación del programa que desean ver (Danaher, 1995). En esta misma línea argumental se manifiestan Swaminathan y Kent (2013) cuando afirman que si un bloque publicitario es relativamente corto, la diferencia en número de espectadores entre el primero y el último anuncio es mucho más elevada que cuando el bloque publicitario es más largo. De ahí, que estos autores recomienden a los anunciantes dar un mayor valor a la última posición del bloque cuando estos son relativamente largos. De hecho, señalan que el último anuncio de un bloque puede incluso llegar a tener un mayor impacto que el primero si el bloque publicitario se encuentra al inicio de un programa de gran impacto y viceversa. Partiendo de estas evidencias y de que en la actualidad el tamaño de los bloques publicitarios es muy elevado, se formulan las dos hipótesis siguientes relativas al efecto que ejerce el orden que ocupa un anuncio en el bloque sobre el recuerdo:

*H11a: La primera posición en el bloque publicitario genera mayor recuerdo.*

*H11b: La última posición en el bloque publicitario genera mayor recuerdo.*

En la literatura podemos encontrar estudios que han analizado el efecto moderador de la primacía y recencia en el efecto que, sobre el recuerdo, ejercen factores tales como el estado emocional y cognitivo de las audiencias, la motivación para procesar la información y la relevancia del mensaje (Jeong, 2007). Ahora bien, en cuanto al efecto moderador que pueden ejercer los efectos primacía y recencia sobre la relación entre la duración del spot y el recuerdo, la ausencia de literatura nos lleva a plantear las siguientes dos proposiciones:

*P6a: La relación entre el recuerdo y la duración del spot está moderada por la primera posición del spot en el bloque.*

*P6b: La relación entre el recuerdo y la duración del spot está moderada por la última posición del spot en el bloque.*

### **3. Método**

#### **3.1. Diseño metodológico**

En este trabajo se ha desarrollado una novedosa metodología que permite medir el recuerdo de los spots en un entorno absolutamente ajustado a las condiciones reales de audiencia de televisión. Esta aportación metodológica tiene su origen en el hecho de que las tasas de recuerdo obtenidas mediante la aplicación de una encuesta no consideran el efecto de un anuncio en términos de niveles de audiencia real, sino sobre la base del tamaño muestral definido. De esta manera, las tasas de recuerdo publicitario no contemplan el impacto real que ha generado un anuncio, ya que, por ejemplo, si un anuncio ha obtenido una tasa de recuerdo del 10% a partir de una encuesta, su tasa de recuerdo real será diferente en función de la audiencia real que haya tenido el bloque publicitario en el que se ha insertado el anuncio. Así, si la audiencia real ha sido del 80%, una tasa de recuerdo del 10% implica un menor impacto real en la audiencia que si estuviéramos ante una situación en la que la audiencia real fuese del 20%. La aplicación de la metodología propuesta tiene como objetivo obtener unas tasas de recuerdo ajustadas a las audiencias reales de cada spot. Para ello, se requiere la utilización conjunta de dos fuentes de información que habitualmente son utilizadas de forma independiente, (1) los datos de audiometría de la empresa Kantar Media y (2) los datos procedentes de una encuesta telefónica ad-hoc (CATI) que recoge el recuerdo publicitario. A partir de la integración de estos datos se obtiene un “coeficiente de ponderación” para cada spot, calculado como el cociente entre el porcentaje de recuerdo espontáneo obtenido a través de la encuesta telefónica y el porcentaje de audiencia del bloque publicitario en que se ha emitido el spot publicitario. De esta forma, es posible disponer de unas tasas de recuerdo ajustadas a la audiencia real, que se obtienen multiplicando dicho coeficiente de ponderación por los valores 1 ó 0 en función de si se ha producido o no el recuerdo en el entrevistado. Así hemos pasado de un recuerdo espontáneo de naturaleza dicotómica a una variable continua que, en nuestro trabajo, oscila entre 0 y 3,98.

Para llevar a cabo esta investigación se ha recogido la información necesaria durante dos meses consecutivos, obteniéndose un recuerdo real de la marca-producto (ej. Peugeot 306) de todos aquellos spots emitidos durante dicho periodo en el conjunto de cadenas generalistas de cobertura nacional que emiten en abierto en España. Ello ha supuesto la medición del recuerdo de 1.196 spots identificados a partir del sector de actividad y marca, que fueron emitidos en diferentes cadenas y programas, insertados en bloques de distinta duración y en posiciones diferentes y en distintos días de la semana, etc. Los spots analizados abarcan a 21 sectores y 400 marcas.

Para medir el recuerdo espontáneo de los spots emitidos durante el periodo considerado se utilizó una encuesta telefónica (CATI) mediante un cuestionario estructurado diseñado ad-hoc aplicado a una muestra de 2.000 individuos. La captación de los entrevistados se realizaba dos días antes de la emisión de los programas mediante el sistema *Random Digit Dialing*. Todos los entrevistados daban su consentimiento para ser entrevistados a una hora determinada mientras estaban viendo la televisión en casa. Se establecieron cuotas en función del género, edad, número de miembros de la unidad familiar y tamaño del municipio, al objeto de obtener una muestra fiable y representativa de la audiencia de televisión de edades comprendidas entre 16 y 65 años (véase Tabla 1).

Tabla 1

**Distribución de la muestra**

<b>Género</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Miembros de la unidad familiar</b>	<b>%</b>
Hombres	39,2	Hogares unipersonales	16,7
Mujeres	60,8	Hogares de 1 a 3 miembros	32,6
<b>Edad</b>	<b>%</b>	Hogares de 4 a 7 miembros	41,5
16-19 años	12,9	Hogares con mas de 8 miembros	9,2
20-24 años	10,9		
25-34 años	15,4		
35-44 años	18,3		

El cuestionario se adaptó en cada entrevista mediante el sistema informático del Call-Center de forma automática a cada bloque/emisión publicitaria. Los elementos que se incorporaban a la entrevista en el momento de realizarla fueron: canal, horario, situación de emisión del corte publicitario y las marcas-productos que en el periodo testado habían emitido spots. Su duración final fue de 4 minutos como máximo. Cada entrevistado fue interrogado por su visionado televisivo (programas contemplados) en los 30 minutos previos a la llamada (como mecanismo de control) y por las emisiones publicitarias que se emitieron en el cuarto de hora anterior al periodo horario en el que realizó la entrevista. En la Tabla 2 se resume el proceso metodológico seguido en la aplicación del cuestionario.

Tabla 2

**Ficha técnica de la investigación**

<b>Universo</b>	Individuos de 16 a 65 años representativos del total audiencia Televisión
<b>Ámbito geográfico muestral</b>	España
<b>Método de recogida de información</b>	Encuesta personal mediante cuestionario estructurado aplicado por teléfono (CATI).
<b>Tamaño de la muestra</b>	2.000 entrevistas.
<b>Error muestral</b>	± 4 %.
<b>Nivel de confianza</b>	95 % Z = 1,96.
<b>Procedimiento de muestreo</b>	Estratificado (sexo, edad, número de miembros de la unidad familiar y tamaño municipio).
<b>Varianza máxima admitida</b>	P = q = 50 %.

Una vez realizado el trabajo de campo se procedió a la transformación del fichero de individuos en un fichero con 36.362 observaciones (cada spot valorado por un individuo que ha sido entrevistado se convierte en registro). Por tanto, si un individuo ha visto 20 spots habrá dado lugar a una entrevista y a 20 registros individuo-spot distintos. En este estudio la tasa de recuerdo espontáneo ha sido del 0,54% sobre el total de las observaciones.

### 3.2. Variables de estudio

El cuestionario estaba estructurado en dos bloques. En el primero de ellos, que se realizaba en una fase de captación previa del individuo, se recogían los datos sociodemográficos y hábitos de audiencia. En el segundo bloque, se formularon las preguntas relativas al recuerdo espontáneo, debiendo indicar además el programa/cadena visionado. Partiendo de esta información, se obtuvieron las tasas de recuerdo ajustadas para cada spot. Por otra parte, del panel de audimetría de Kantar Media se extrajeron, además de la audiencia de cada Spot, las variables recogidas en la Tabla 3.

Tabla 3

**Variables de estudio**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Estados</b>
Duración del spot	1. Duración inferior a 20 segundos 2. Duración igual a 20 segundos 3. Duración superior a 20 segundos
Cadena	1. TVE1

	2. Antena 3
	3. Tele 5
Posición del bloque publicitario respecto al programa	1. Entre programas 2. Intermedio
Presión publicitaria del bloque publicitario	1. Bloque con baja presión publicitaria (entre 1 y 23 spots) 2. Bloque con media presión publicitaria (entre 24 y 43 spots) 3. Bloque con alta presión publicitaria (entre 44 y 49 spots)
Notificación de la duración del bloque publicitario	1. Normal 2. Volveremos en...
Notoriedad de marca	1. Marca notoria (la marca que aparece en el spot tiene una presencia publicitaria en el medio televisión, un 200 % superior al resto de marcas analizadas) 2. Marca no notoria.
Día de la semana	1. Laborables 2. Fin de semana
Posición relativa del spot en el bloque (cociente entre la duración del bloque en segundos hasta el comienzo del spot y la duración total del bloque en segundos)	1. Posición relativa temprana 2. Posición relativa media 3. Posición relativa tardía
Primacía	1. Primacía (primera posición) 2. Resto
Recencia	1. Recencia (última posición) 2. Resto

#### 4. Resultados

Como paso previo al análisis conjunto de la influencia de todos los factores de planificación considerados en el recuerdo espontáneo, se han realizado diez ANOVA para cada uno de estos factores de forma individual. Los resultados, recogidos en la Tabla 4, muestran que todas las variables consideradas, a excepción de la cadena televisiva en la que se planifica el spot, influyen en el recuerdo espontáneo del mismo. De ello se deriva que se logra un mayor recuerdo espontáneo al incrementar la duración del spot; al colocar el spot entre programas, en bloques de baja presión publicitaria, en posiciones relativas en el corte publicitario tempranas o tardías, ocupando la primera o última posición del bloque, preferiblemente la última, y en fines de semana; al notificar a la audiencia la duración del bloque publicitario y, finalmente, si se tiene una notoriedad de marca relevante.

Tabla 4  
Resultados ANOVA de un único factor sobre el recuerdo espontáneo

Fuentes de variación	Recuerdo espontáneo	
	F	P
Duración del spot	16,754	0,000
Cadena	2,146	0,117
Posición del bloque publicitario respecto al programa	11,300	0,001
Presión publicitaria del bloque publicitario	4,628	0,010
Notificación de la duración del bloque publicitario	11,334	0,001
Notoriedad de marca	64,446	0,000
Día de la semana	17,583	0,000
Posición relativa del spot en el bloque	3,697	0,025
Primacía	14,365	0,000
Recencia	29,703	0,000

Dado que en la práctica de la planificación de medios, el recuerdo espontáneo es el resultado de la interacción de todas estas variables, se procederá a contrastar las hipótesis de trabajo a través de un análisis univariante de la varianza de múltiples factores, donde la variable dependiente se corresponde con el recuerdo espontáneo y los factores fijos o variables independientes con las nueve variables de planificación analizadas en este trabajo, así como con las interacciones de la duración del spot con las restantes variables de planificación.

Como se desprenden de los resultados del ANOVA, que se recogen en las Tablas 5, la duración del spot y seis de las variables de planificación consideradas adicionalmente muestran diferencias significativas en el recuerdo espontáneo. De la Tabla 6 se desprende que los spots que más recuerdo generan son (1) de duraciones superiores a 20 segundos; (2) insertados en TVE1; (3) insertados en los cortes publicitarios en los intermedios de programa; (4) ubicados en bloques publicitarios con baja presión publicitaria, es decir, aquellos bloques con menos de 24 spots; (5) de aquellas marcas con notoriedad; (6) planificados en fin de semana frente a los días laborables, y (7) colocados en la última posición del bloque publicitario. De esta forma, se corroboran las hipótesis H1, H2, H3, H4, H7, P4 y H1 1b, y se rechazan H6, H9 y H1 1a.

Tabla 5  
Resultados ANOVA de múltiples factores del recuerdo espontáneo

Fuentes de variación	Recuerdo espontáneo	
	F	p
<i>Efectos principales</i>		
Duración del spot	3,617	0,027

DURACION DE LOS SPOTS Y RECUERDO PUBLICITARIO: OPTIMIZACION EN FUNCION DE LAS VARIABLES DE PLANIFICACION DEL MEDIO TELEVISION

Cadena	4,158	0,016
Posición del bloque publicitario respecto al programa	15,165	0,000
Presión publicitaria del bloque publicitario	3,284	0,037
Notificación de la duración del bloque publicitario	0,921	0,337
Notoriedad de marca	39,890	0,000
Día de la semana	3,923	0,048
Posición relativa del spot en el bloque	1,458	0,233
Primacia	1,584	0,208
Recencia	18,330	0,000
<b>Efectos interacción</b>		
Duración del spot x Cadena	4,909	0,001
Duración del spot x Posición del bloque publicitario respecto al programa	2,059	0,128
Duración del spot x Presión publicitaria del bloque publicitario	4,784	0,001
Duración del spot x Notificación de la duración del bloque publicitario	1,674	0,188
Duración del spot x Notoriedad de marca	8,652	0,000
Duración del spot x Día de la semana	0,461	0,631
Duración del spot x Posición relativa del spot en el bloque	0,230	0,921
Duración del spot x Primacia	0,924	0,745
Duración del spot x Recencia	8,948	0,000

Tabla 6

**Medias y desviaciones típicas del recuerdo espontáneo en función de la duración del spot para las diferentes variables de planificación**

Variables	Estados	Duración							
		Menos 20 seg.		20 seg.		Más 20 seg.		Total	
		Media	D.T.	Media	D.T.	Media	D.T.	Media	D.T.
Cadena	TVE1	0,002	0,041	0,006	0,089	0,014	0,148	0,006	0,090
	Antena3	0,002	0,057	0,004	0,058	0,008	0,085	0,004	0,064
	Tele5	0,004	0,055	0,006	0,071	0,006	0,071	0,005	0,066
Posición del bloque publicitario respecto al programa	Entre programas	0,000	0,020	0,003	0,071	0,003	0,060	0,002	0,056
	Intermedio	0,003	0,056	0,005	0,073	0,010	0,113	0,006	0,077
Presión publicitaria del bloque publicitario	Baja	0,002	0,039	0,006	0,073	0,015	0,143	0,007	0,087
	Media	0,003	0,048	0,004	0,071	0,008	0,096	0,004	0,069
	Alta	0,003	0,070	0,004	0,077	0,003	0,049	0,003	0,070
Notificación de la duración del bloque publicitario	Normal	0,003	0,052	0,005	0,072	0,008	0,033	0,005	0,073
	Volveremos en...	0,000	0,000	0,011	0,108	0,103	0,188	0,015	0,127
Notoriedad de marca	Notoria	0,003	0,049	0,008	0,099	0,156	0,143	0,009	0,103
	No notoria	0,002	0,052	0,002	0,045	0,003	0,049	0,002	0,049
Día de la semana	Laborables	0,002	0,051	0,004	0,065	0,008	0,096	0,004	0,068
	Fin de semana	0,004	0,052	0,009	0,109	0,015	0,138	0,009	0,106
Posición relativa del spot en el bloque	Temprana	0,003	0,051	0,006	0,082	0,009	0,097	0,006	0,079
	Media	0,002	0,042	0,004	0,069	0,007	0,104	0,004	0,069
	Tardía	0,003	0,069	0,005	0,073	0,013	0,120	0,006	0,083
Primacia	Primera posición	0,003	0,051	0,004	0,071	0,009	0,105	0,005	0,073
	Resto	0,006	0,069	0,013	0,105	0,014	0,117	0,013	0,107
Recencia	Última posición	0,003	0,051	0,005	0,073	0,008	0,102	0,005	0,073
	Resto	0,016	0,128	0,009	0,074	0,061	0,254	0,028	0,167
<b>Total</b>		<b>0,003</b>	<b>0,051</b>	<b>0,005</b>	<b>0,072</b>	<b>0,009</b>	<b>0,106</b>	<b>0,005</b>	<b>0,074</b>

En cuanto a los efectos interactivos de la duración del spot con las restantes variables de planificación, los resultados de la Tabla 5 indican que el efecto de la duración del spot sobre el recuerdo espontáneo está moderado por la cadena planificada, por la presión publicitaria del bloque publicitario en el que se inserta el spot, por el nivel de notoriedad de la marca anunciada y, finalmente, por el efecto recencia. Por tanto, se aceptan P1, H5, H8 y P6b, y se rechazan P2, P3, P5, H10 y P6a.

El efecto interactivo de la duración con la cadena sobre el recuerdo (véase Gráfico 1 de la Figura 1) se produce porque existen diferencias significativas en el recuerdo cuando los spots tienen duraciones superiores a 20 segundos ( $F=3,537$ ,  $p=0,029$ ); siendo TVE1 la que genera mayor recuerdo, seguida de Antena3 y, finalmente, Tele5. Este resultado no se observa en los spots de 20 segundos o menos, ya que no existen diferencias significativas.

Respecto al efecto interactivo de la duración con la presión publicitaria del bloque publicitario (véase Gráfico 2 de la Figura 1), los resultados son similares a los observados en la cadena, ya que solo se producen diferencias significativas en el recuerdo cuando los spots tienen duraciones superiores a 20 segundos ( $F=5,113$ ,  $p=0,006$ ); siendo los bloques con baja presión publicitaria los que generan mayor recuerdo.

El efecto interactivo de la duración con el nivel de notoriedad de marca (véase Gráfico 3 de la Figura 1) se produce porque existen diferencias significativas en el recuerdo para los spots de 20 segundos ( $F=28,021$ ,  $p=0,000$ ) y para los de más de 20 segundos ( $F=24,991$ ,  $p=0,000$ ), en los cuales las marcas con notoriedad

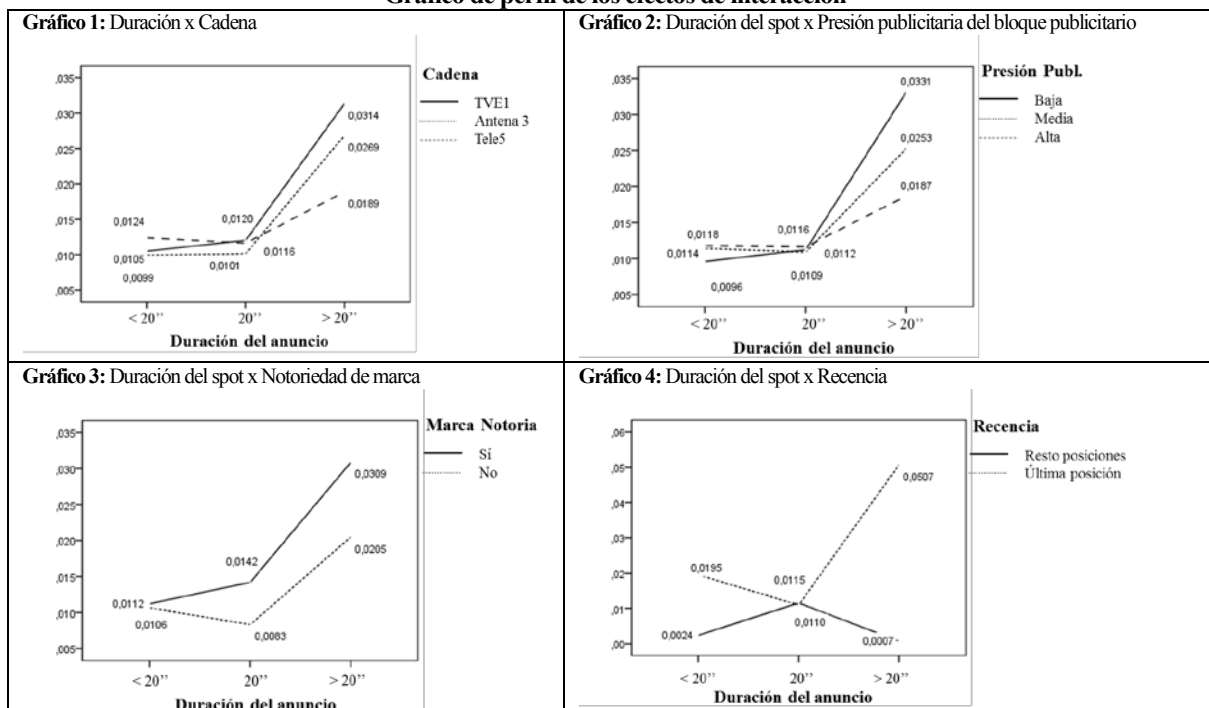


relevante son las que producen un mayor recuerdo. En los spots de menos de 20 segundos resulta indiferente sobre el recuerdo si se trata o no de una marca notoria.

Finalmente, el efecto positivo de la recencia sobre el efecto que genera la duración del spot en el recuerdo (véase Gráfico 4 de la Figura 1) se produce en aquellas duraciones distintas a 20 segundos ( $F=4,350$ ,  $p=0,037$  para duraciones inferiores a 20 segundos y  $F=24,765$ ,  $p=0,000$  para duraciones mayores de 20 segundos), siendo especialmente acusado en spots de más de 20 segundos.

Figura 1

### Gráfico de perfil de los efectos de interacción



## 5. Conclusiones

En la planificación publicitaria de televisión se precisa de una utilización creativa del medio para conseguir un mayor recuerdo. Una de las decisiones más importantes es la planificación adecuada de la duración del mensaje en función de los objetivos y su potencial eficacia. La literatura académica y profesional ha analizado ampliamente la eficacia de esta variable de forma individualizada. Sin embargo, existe una escasez de estudios sobre las variables que, de forma sistémica, pueden influir y moderar los efectos, en términos de recuerdo, de la duración de un mensaje. Esta carencia justifica la investigación integral de la influencia de esta variable sobre el recuerdo como se propone en este trabajo. De esta manera, se han podido aportar las necesarias evidencias empíricas para su desarrollo teórico y aportar sugerencias en la optimización de la planificación publicitaria en televisión para mejorar el recuerdo generado por los spots.

Tampoco se ha desarrollado suficientemente en este ámbito, posiblemente por su complejidad técnica, el análisis de estas variables de la planificación en un entorno real. En el presente trabajo hemos aplicado una metodología que integra dos fuentes de información diferentes para, por una parte, obtener niveles de recuerdo espontáneo ajustados a la audiencia real de un elevado número de spots publicitarios y, por otra, considerar de forma individual y conjunta todas aquellas variables que de forma fragmentada se analizan en la literatura como factores que afectan al recuerdo. Con esta metodología se ha pretendido superar las limitaciones identificadas en la literatura relacionadas con la habitual utilización de entornos de laboratorio y con tasas de recuerdo calculadas a partir de una muestra. De ahí que nuestros resultados permitan a los profesionales del medio tomar decisiones sobre este recurso de forma más adecuada y fiable.

Una de las primeras conclusiones tiene su origen en esta aportación metodológica. A pesar de que autores como De Pelsmacker et al. (2005) señalan que el recuerdo espontáneo es una medida más robusta de la memoria y, por ello, más difícil de obtener frente al recuerdo sugerido, es frecuente encontrar, especialmente en la *praxis* de las agencias, trabajos que sólo presentan cifras de recuerdo asistido y/o reconocimiento, dado los bajísimos niveles que genera el recuerdo espontáneo en entornos reales. En nuestro estudio esta tasa de recuerdo espontáneo se sitúa en un 0,54%, valor muy similar a los obtenidos en entornos reales por institutos de investigación que

trabajan con datos de audimetría y la imparcialidad necesaria en sus conclusiones, como es el caso de TNS (2007), que obtiene una tasa de recuerdo espontáneo del 0,5%. A su vez, si comparamos estas tasas de recuerdo espontáneo con las obtenidas en trabajos, principalmente del ámbito académico, desarrollados en entornos de laboratorio, las diferencias son notorias, ya que en estos trabajos se obtienen tasas muy superiores. Sobre esta base, una conclusión que se extrae es que una de las posibles causas de las discrepancias en las tasas de recuerdo espontáneo son las limitaciones metodológicas de algunos trabajos académicos, de ahí la necesaria prudencia a la hora de extrapolar los resultados.

Dado que en la práctica el resultado de la eficacia de un anuncio depende de la interacción del conjunto de variables de la planificación de medios, más allá del efecto individual de cada una de ellas, con esta metodología además de analizar el efecto individual de cada una de estas variables sobre el recuerdo espontáneo también se ha analizado el efecto conjunto, ya sea directo o moderado por la duración del spot, que tales variables ejercen sobre el recuerdo. En cuanto al efecto individual de estas variables de planificación sobre el recuerdo, nuestros resultados coinciden con el estado de la cuestión, a excepción de la influencia de la cadena de televisión, en contra de los habituales argumentos comerciales utilizados por las propias cadenas televisivas. Sin embargo, cuando todas estas variables son analizadas de forma conjunta, la influencia directa de la posición relativa del spot en el bloque publicitario y del efecto primacía sobre el recuerdo espontáneo no se producen como indica la literatura. Por otra parte, los resultados también indican que el efecto directo de la duración del anuncio sobre el recuerdo se encuentra moderado por la cadena de televisión, la presión publicitaria del bloque, la notoriedad de la marca y el efecto recencia. Estos efectos nos llevan a concluir la necesidad de llevar a cabo estudios adicionales que corroboren estos resultados y que a su vez permitan avanzar en el efecto conjunto que ejercen todas estas variables de planificación sobre el recuerdo espontáneo en aras de optimizar la gestión publicitaria en televisión, que debe ir más allá de la simple consideración de los efectos individuales que cada variable ejerce sobre el recuerdo.

La existencia de efectos interactivos entre la duración del anuncio y las restantes variables de planificación de medios consideradas nos permite plantear una serie de implicaciones prácticas orientadas a la optimización del recuerdo y la duración del anuncio. Si bien la decisión de la cadena donde planificar un spot no ejercía un efecto significativo sobre el recuerdo cuando se analizaba de forma individual, el análisis del efecto conjunto de todas las variables de planificación sobre el recuerdo indica que éste es mayor en la televisión pública y que además existe un efecto interactivo entre la cadena y la duración del anuncio. De esta forma, cuando la decisión requiere la utilización de spots con duraciones de 20 segundos o inferiores, la planificación en una cadena u otra resulta indiferente para mejorar el recuerdo; mientras que, si la decisión implica utilizar duraciones superiores a 20 segundos, la elección de la cadena afecta al recuerdo, siendo este mayor en la TVE1 y más bajo en Tele 5.

En cuanto a la posición que debe ocupar el bloque publicitario respecto a los programas, nuestros resultados son coherentes con los trabajos de Krugman (1983), Chowdhury (2007) o Morman et al. (2007), que ya demostraron que el recuerdo que generan los anuncios es mayor cuando se insertan en los bloques situados en los intermedios de programas frente a los situados entre programas. Aunque no existen evidencias empíricas sobre el papel moderador que puede ejercer la posición del bloque publicitario sobre la influencia de la duración del anuncio en el recuerdo, nuestros resultados indican que se trata de una decisión indiferente que no tiene ningún efecto sobre el recuerdo.

A pesar de que en la literatura existen resultados contradictorios acerca de la influencia de la cantidad de presión en el bloque publicitario, los resultados confirman que el mayor recuerdo se produce en los bloques con baja presión y viceversa. Respecto al efecto moderador de la presión publicitaria se trata de una decisión importante en aquellas duraciones de 20 segundos o más, siendo algo irrelevante sobre el recuerdo en spots de menos de 20 segundos.

Curiosamente, a pesar de que en la literatura se ha contrastado recientemente que la notificación de la duración del bloque publicitario influye en el recuerdo (Yu et al., 2012), como así se constata en nuestro trabajo, cuando se analiza conjuntamente con las restantes variables de planificación no se contrasta su influencia directa ni tampoco su efecto moderador en la relación existente entre la duración del spot y el recuerdo espontáneo.

Respecto a la notoriedad previa de la marca anunciada se ha contrastado su efecto directo de forma individual y conjunta sobre el recuerdo y, además, su efecto moderador en los spots con duraciones de 20 segundos o más, por lo que es preciso destacar como conclusión la importancia de la inversión en notoriedad para incrementar el recuerdo publicitario de campañas futuras.

La planificación publicitaria en función del día de la semana y su relación con el recuerdo no ha recibido ninguna atención en la literatura académica. Por este motivo resulta especialmente interesante resaltar el efecto directo que tiene sobre el recuerdo, tanto cuando se analiza de forma individual como conjunta, siendo los fines de semana los que obtienen mejores resultados. No obstante, no se observa ningún efecto interactivo con la duración del spot.

Una variable interesante del estudio relacionada con la presión publicitaria y la posición del anuncio en el bloque es la posición relativa del spot en el bloque. Si bien no existe un consenso, la mayoría de las fuentes indican que a medida que el anuncio se aleja de las primeras posiciones disminuye el recuerdo. Este efecto individual se ha contrastado en nuestro estudio, sin embargo, al interactuar con el resto de variables de planificación, el efecto directo desaparece y tampoco ejerce un rol moderador.

La literatura ha contrastado ampliamente el efecto primacía y, aunque con menor consenso, el efecto recencia. Nuestros resultados constatan la existencia de tales efectos sobre el recuerdo espontáneo cuando se analizan de forma individual. Sin embargo, cuando se analizan de forma conjunta con el resto de variables, sólo se contrasta el efecto directo y moderador de la recencia. Por tanto, cuando la decisión requiere la utilización de spots con duraciones diferentes a 20 segundos, la planificación en última posición es la que va a generar mayor recuerdo.

Finalmente, los resultados presentados en este trabajo no están exentos de limitaciones, de las que se pueden derivar futuros trabajos. Como se puede observar en la revisión teórica del estado de la cuestión, apenas existen estudios sobre algunas de las variables de la planificación de medios abordadas en este trabajo y sus relaciones interactivas. Ambas carencias han supuesto una limitación para el planteamiento de las hipótesis de trabajo que ha obligado a proponer unos objetivos exploratorios a través de la formulación de proposiciones de investigación. Como futuras líneas de investigación parece conveniente desarrollar, a partir de la metodología propuesta y de los resultados preliminares, nuevos estudios encaminados a profundizar en estas variables y analizar los efectos interactivos en el recuerdo de otras variables de la planificación de medios. Son numerosas las fuentes que consideran como variables moderadoras del recuerdo, el conocimiento previo de la marca, la exposición anterior de los individuos a la campaña o, la frecuencia previa de la campaña en cuestión. Dificultades derivadas del trabajo de campo en un entorno real han impedido, en esta ocasión, incorporar estas variables en el cuestionario. Aunque el diseño de la investigación ha permitido aislar razonablemente estas variables, es seguro que tienen la capacidad de moderar de alguna manera el efecto de la duración del spot en el recuerdo, por lo que en futuros trabajos de investigación resultaría interesante conocer qué efecto moderador pueden tener en el proceso.

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# EFECTO DE LOS RECLAMOS EN LOS ENVASES DE ALIMENTOS ORGÁNICOS SOBRE LAS PERCEPCIONES DEL CONSUMIDOR. GRADO DE EXPLICITUD Y TEMÁTICA DEL MENSAJE

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## RESUMEN

*¿Qué reclamos deben usarse para mejorar la percepción del producto orgánico y ayudar, así, al consumidor a diferenciarlo del producto convencional? La confusión de los consumidores para con los productos orgánicos constituye una barrera importante a su consumo. Así, nuestro estudio se centra en el uso de reclamos en el envase distinguiéndolos según el grado de explicitud con que se expresan los principales beneficios asociados al producto orgánico, la protección del medioambiente y la salud. A través de un experimento de laboratorio probamos que la respuesta cognitiva del consumidor definida por las percepciones hacia el producto orgánico está condicionada por los reclamos empleados en los envases de los productos. Se observa que el uso de un solo reclamo influye positivamente en la percepción hacia el producto, pero el efecto positivo se anula al emplear más reclamos. Atendiendo a la temática del reclamo destaca lo que los autores llaman un Efecto de Alcance Temático: los mensajes sobre el medioambiente tienen mayor alcance influyendo fuertemente tanto en la percepción de medioambiente como en la de salud. Adicionalmente, los datos reflejan que los mensajes relacionados con el beneficio de salud mejoran la percepción en mayor medida cuanto más explícitamente se expresa el beneficio.*

## Palabras clave:

*Mercado de orgánicos, respuesta cognitiva, Teoría de Señales, reclamos en los envases, explicitud del mensaje, temática del mensaje.*

## 1. Introducción

Los productos orgánicos son aquellos bienes obtenidos de una agricultura que busca mantener y mejorar la salud de los suelos, los ecosistemas y las personas (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements - IFOAM, 2012). Estos productos constituyen, dentro del sector de la alimentación, una pieza clave para los minoristas (Bauer et al., 2012; Van Doorn y Verhoef, 2011; Van Nierop et al., 2012) debido a su creciente interés por las iniciativas de Responsabilidad Social Corporativa (Ailawadi et al. 2014; Bhattacharya y Sen, 2004; Groening, et al., 2009) y los mayores márgenes que tienen estos productos respecto a sus contrapartidas convencionales (Bezawada y Pawles, 2010).

El orgánico es un mercado atractivo dado su carácter creciente, incluso durante la actual crisis económica (BCG, 2011; Willer y Kilcher, 2012). No obstante, este mercado presenta todavía niveles bajos de consumo en relación al de sus contrapartidas (D'Souza et al., 2007; Gleim et al., 2012; Izagirre-Olaizola et al., 2013; Kollmus y Angyernan, 2002; Moraes et al., 2012; Peattie, 1999). Las barreras al consumo identificadas serían: los altos precios, la falta de confianza por parte del consumidor en las organizaciones relacionadas con este mercado (Bhaskaran et al., 2006; Gleim et al., 2012; Terrachoice Environmental Marketing, 2009) y la falta de disponibilidad (Gleim et al., 2012).

Otro obstáculo a la compra de los productos orgánicos es la confusión y la escasa diferenciación entre el producto orgánico y el producto convencional que percibe el consumidor (Chryssochoidis, 2000; Gleim et al., 2012; Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Medio Rural y Marino, 2011). Esta situación se vería agravada por el escaso empleo de herramientas de marketing como las de comunicación en el mercado de orgánicos (Aertsens et al., 2011; Hughner et al., 2007; Krystallis et al., 2006; Ngobo 2011) dado que dichas herramientas buscan diferenciar los productos en el mercado (Boulding et al, 1994).

La literatura previa sobre percepciones de los productos orgánicos se ha centrado en las percepciones y creencias sobre los productos como determinantes de la respuesta conativa (e.g. Kim y Chung, 2011; Lin y Chang, 2012), en la sensibilidad al precio del consumidor (Van Door et al., 2011), o simplemente en la descripción de las dimensiones perceptuales sobre los productos orgánicos (e.g. Fotopoulos y Krystallis, 2002; Krystallis et al., 2006). Nuestro estudio sigue la línea del trabajo de Bauer et al. (2013) al tratar de explicar las percepciones de los orgánicos aunque, a diferencia de éste, nos centramos en la comunicación y no en las estrategias de marca.

El presente trabajo estudia el efecto de la comunicación en forma de reclamos o mensajes en los envases de los productos sobre las percepciones de los consumidores. Los mensajes en los envases son una estrategia de comunicación muy utilizada en los productos de consumo frecuente (Lado et al., 2012). Esto estaría justificado en el carácter no planificado de la mayoría de las compras, en concreto un 59% (Inman et al., 2009; Stillely et al., 2010), lo que provoca que los fabricantes estén prestando especial atención a los estímulos de comunicación dentro de las tiendas. Los mensajes en el envase podrían minimizar la confusión del consumidor sobre las propiedades del producto orgánico y, por tanto, mejorar su consumo.

Las percepciones sobre los atributos orientados hacia la preservación del medioambiente y de la salud de las personas (Essoussi et al. 2008 Kareklas et al., 2014), son los beneficios más frecuentemente atribuibles al alimento orgánico y que lo diferencian de su contrapartida convencional. Por ello, serán éstas las principales percepciones consideradas en el presente trabajo a la hora de evaluar cómo influyen en las mismas los mensajes que difieren en el beneficio expresado consecuentemente en términos de protección del medioambiente y de la salud.

Por otra parte, la forma en que se exprese el mensaje de comunicación en cuanto a su claridad afecta a la percepción. Nuestro estudio distingue dos tipos de mensajes: explícitos e implícitos. Los mensajes explícitos son aquellos que expresan los beneficios de forma clara y sin lugar a dudas. Los mensajes implícitos pueden entenderse de varios modos o admiten distintas interpretaciones. Así, el trabajo propone un efecto diferencial de los mensajes acerca de los beneficios atribuibles al alimento orgánico de tipo explícito versus implícito sobre las percepciones del bien. En resumen, se estudiarán los efectos que tiene sobre las percepciones los mensajes explícitos e implícitos, la combinación de ambos tipos de mensajes y la temática de los mismos, sobre el medioambiente o sobre la salud.

En el ámbito de la investigación gerencial de empresa, se distinguen dos estilos cognitivos al procesar información o evaluar estímulos, el estilo intuitivo y el estilo analítico (Allison y Hayes, 1996; Simon, 1987; Taggart y Valenzi, 1990). En el caso de los consumidores, existirían individuos más analíticos que realizarán un mayor esfuerzo consciente y explícito a la hora de evaluar estímulos llevando a cabo un análisis de paso a paso. Mientras que otros consumidores serían más intuitivos y desarrollarían un proceso más implícito al evaluar de forma holística y en un plano menos consciente los estímulos. Este estudio contribuye a la literatura previa al analizar también como el estilo cognitivo del consumidor afecta a la relación señal-percepción.

En los contenidos subsiguientes se aborda el marco teórico del estudio, realizando una revisión de las investigaciones previas conducentes a la argumentación de las hipótesis de trabajo. Seguidamente se describe el escenario del estudio y los datos. A continuación se detalla la metodología del análisis empírico y se presentan, interpretan y comentan los resultados alcanzados. En una última sección se sintetizan las principales conclusiones e implicaciones.

## **2. Marco teórico**

### ***2.1. Congruencia señal-percepción***

Según la teoría de economía de la información (Nelson, 1970, 1974) en el proceso de compra los consumidores tienen incertidumbre sobre los atributos y/o beneficios de los productos que desean adquirir. Dicha incertidumbre procede de la información imperfecta y asimétrica que caracteriza a la mayoría de los mercados de productos; es decir, las empresas se comportan de forma oportunista estando más informadas sobre sus propios productos que los consumidores. En esta situación las empresas tendrán que transferir información al consumidor y dar señales sobre su credibilidad (Erdem y Swait 1998).

La teoría de la utilización de señales (Olson, 1972) muestra que a la hora de realizar evaluaciones sobre un producto o una marca, el consumidor se vale de una serie de señales representadas por el conjunto de atributos relacionados con el bien en cuestión. Así, los consumidores podrán compensar la falta de conocimiento buscando expresamente información sobre los atributos del producto — productos de búsqueda— u obteniendo más información a través de la experiencia de compra del producto —productos de experiencia— (Nelson 1970, 1974). Darby y Karni (1973, p. 68-69) introducen un nuevo tipo de productos, los productos de creencia. En estos productos la calidad no puede ser evaluada con búsqueda de información previa a la compra o experiencia después de la compra, y, por tanto, son productos más difíciles de evaluar.

Dado que los alimentos orgánicos son considerados como productos de creencia (Karstens y Beltz, 2006; Loureiro et al. 2002), el problema de asimetría de información se agrava en el contexto del mercado orgánico. No obstante, el uso de mensajes en los envases es una señal informativa que puede ayudar a solucionar ese problema de asimetría de información y mejorar la evaluación de los productos (Larceneux et al., 2012; Loureiro et al. 2002; Roe y Sheldon, 2007). La evidencia previa muestra argumentos a favor de dicha propuesta. Kozup et al. (2003) revelan que los consumidores tienen una actitud más positiva hacia productos saludables que incluyen información nutricional o mensajes de salud frente a los que no los tienen. Mientras que, Bauer et al. (2012) y Larceneux et al. (2012) demuestran que el uso de mensajes como “orgánico” afecta positivamente a las percepciones del consumidor.

Este trabajo propone que los mensajes publicitarios en los envases constituyen una señal extrínseca que influiría de forma positiva en la percepción del producto. Por tanto,

**H1.** Los mensajes publicitarios en los envases de los productos orgánicos mejoran la percepción de este tipo de productos.

El proceso de inferencia a través del que se construyen las creencias y percepciones de los consumidores es un proceso altamente selectivo. De forma que, el consumidor usará unas señales y obviará otras, así como realizará sus asociaciones en función de las señales que ha recibido (Olson 1978). Por tanto, cabe esperar que el consumidor a la hora de establecer juicios sobre determinados atributos del producto se valga de las señales que asocia con el atributo en cuestión. De hecho, los



consumidores analizan la información de los productos con relación al beneficio o beneficios buscados (Haley, 1971) que en la compra de productos orgánicos son la salud (Baker et al., 2004; Bauer et al., 2012; Essoussi et al. 2008; Zanolí y Naspetti, 2002) y el cuidado del medioambiente (Bauer et al., 2012; Essoussi et al. 2008).

Ratneshwar et al. (1997) definen la prominencia de un beneficio buscado como la rapidez con que dicho beneficio es traída a la mente de un consumidor en relación a una categoría de producto. Así, al tener en cuenta que los reclamos y mensajes en los envases son una forma de captar la atención de los consumidores, un concepto clave en la comunicación en marketing y que tiene una naturaleza selectiva (Pechmann y Steward, 1990), proponemos que la inclusión de un mensaje sobre un determinado atributo hará más prominente la percepción asociada al mismo ya que el consumidor centrará más su atención sobre dicho atributo y, así, la percepción asociada será mayor.

**H2.** Existe congruencia entre el mensaje publicitario en el envase de los alimentos orgánicos y la percepción de los mismos, es decir, la percepción de protección medioambiental (de salud) está explicada principalmente por los mensajes sobre la misma dimensión, la protección medioambiental (sobre la salud).

## **2.2. Grado de explicitud del mensaje**

Investigaciones previas han analizado la efectividad del contenido de la comunicación y cómo la explicitud de los mensajes influye en la actitud hacia la publicidad y hacia el producto (Ahearne y Saxton, 2000; Sawyer y Howard, 1991). Sawyer y Howard, (1991) distinguen entre anuncios de composición abierta-implícitos (no contienen una conclusión específica y por tanto invitan al consumidor a formar su propia conclusión) y anuncios cerrados-explicitos (siguen un proceso de razonamiento deductivo y presentan una conclusión al consumidor). Ahearne y Saxton (2000) señalan que los mensajes implícitos son más efectivos que los mensajes explicitos a la hora de influenciar la actitud del consumidor en productos de baja complejidad pero no afecta el tipo de mensaje para los productos complejos. Sin embargo, en el área de los productos verdes las evidencias muestran que el tipo de mensaje influye en la respuesta del consumidor hacia dichos productos (Chan, 2009; Kronrod et al, 2012).

Según la legislación europea (CE 834/2007 del 28 de junio, artículo 23) los términos BIO y ECO sólo pueden ser empleados por los productos ecológicos que cumplan con la legislación y que hayan pasado el proceso de certificación para poder usar dichos reclamos. Este tipo de mensajes, por tanto, están restringidos legalmente y pueden ser considerados como mensajes implícitos dado que pueden entenderse de varios modos o admiten distintas interpretaciones. La incorporación de estos mensajes legales en el envase de los productos, es una señal de calidad y ofrece una garantía al consumidor. Sin embargo, dichos reclamos y el etiquetado legal no es reconocido por los consumidores, que tienen dificultades para identificar los productos orgánicos o ecológicos por sus etiquetas (Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Medio Rural y Marino, 2011; Harbaugh et al., 2011).

Nosotros proponemos que cuanto más explícito sea el mensaje, es decir, cuanto más detalle se aporte en los mensajes de los envases sobre el beneficio asociado al producto, mejor será el entendimiento del producto por parte del consumidor y, en consecuencia, la valoración del mismo.

**H3.** Los mensajes publicitarios explicitos en los envases de los alimentos orgánicos mejoran la percepción de este tipo de productos en mayor medida que los mensajes publicitarios implícitos.

## **2.3. Combinación de mensajes explicitos e implícitos**

Con respecto al uso de más de un mensaje, la investigación de Shu y Carlson (2014) revela que el consumidor percibe el uso de varios reclamos como una estrategia de persuasión en vez de como una estrategia de transmisión de información y, siguiendo la línea del modelo del conocimiento de persuasión de Friestad y Wright (1994), cuando el consumidor percibe que el mensaje ha sido diseñado para persuadirle adopta una estrategia de enfrentamiento.

Aunque Shu y Carlson (2014) encuentran que tres es el número óptimo de reclamos para incrementar la impresión positiva hacia el producto, en un entorno como el del mercado de productos orgánicos, los cuales son productos de creencia y, por tanto, difíciles de evaluar, y donde existe confusión hacia

el producto en sí por parte del consumidor (Chrysochoidis, 2000; Gleim et al., 2012; Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Medio Rural y Marino, 2011) nosotros proponemos que la inclusión de sólo un reclamo más, combinando un mensaje implícito con uno explícito, no resultará en una mejor impresión. De forma que, si el mensaje explícito tenía un mayor efecto positivo sobre la percepción que su análogo implícito, tratar de mejorar el efecto empleando de manera simultánea reclamos explícitos e implícitos no resultará en un efecto positivo más fuerte, es decir, no contribuirá a mejorar la percepción.

**H4.** La combinación de un mensaje explícito y un mensaje implícito en el envase de productos orgánicos no dará lugar a una mejor percepción del producto frente a la encontrada con sólo uno de los mensajes.

#### ***2.4. Papel del estilo cognitivo***

Bloch (1995) en su estudio sobre la influencia del diseño del producto en la respuesta del consumidor muestra como las formas de procesar la información por parte del consumidor condicionan su respuesta. Por un lado, habría individuos que ante un producto en concreto procesarían el conjunto de información o estímulos a los que están expuestos de un modo holístico, en general. Por otro lado, habría quienes ante ese producto analizarían toda la información de manera minuciosa o detallada.

La distinción de Bloch (1995) coincide con la empleada en los trabajos gerenciales que tratan de explicar la conducta organizativa (e. g. Hayes y Allison, 1994; Mintzberg, 1976). En relación a la forma de interpretar o la predisposición a un modo particular de procesar y evaluar datos e información, se diferencian dos estilos, intuitivo y analítico (Allison y Hayes, 1996; Simon, 1987; Taggart y Valenzi, 1990). Según Allison y Hayes (1996), los más analíticos son aquellos que realizan un esfuerzo consciente y deliberado para lograr entender. Estos individuos usan un análisis de paso a paso más detallado al centrarse de forma secuencial en los distintos elementos a los que se ven expuestos. Los más intuitivos serían aquellos que desempeñarían un proceso de aprendizaje más implícito evaluando de forma holística y realizando juicios inmediatos en base a una adopción de una perspectiva más global.

Si la relación entre el diseño del producto y la respuesta conductual y psicológica del consumidor está condicionada por el estilo cognitivo (Bloch 1995), cabe esperar que también dicho estilo cognitivo afecte a la relación entre los estímulos dados por los mensajes en los envases y la respuesta cognitiva del consumidor en forma de percepciones. Con base a la descripción de los estilos cognitivos, en concreto, se esperaría que los mensajes explícitos tuviesen un mayor efecto para los más analíticos puesto que al detallar expresamente más información y, así, ser más extensos son más propicios a un análisis más detallado y no a un juicio inmediato. Del mismo modo, los mensajes implícitos tendrían un mayor efecto para los intuitivos al ser más propicios de cara a un juicio inmediato pues suponen un menor detalle de información expresa.

**H5.** La relación estímulo-percepción en los productos orgánicos depende del estilo cognitivo de los consumidores de manera que los mensajes explícitos tienen un mayor efecto en los consumidores más analíticos y los mensajes implícitos tienen un mayor efecto en los consumidores más intuitivos.

### **3. Metodología**

Según un informe de Willer y Kilcher (2012), las mayores cuotas de producción en el mercado de orgánicos son las de Oceanía (2.9%) y Europa (2.1%) siendo en esta última región donde se observan las mayores tasas de crecimiento. Uno de los tres países europeos donde más fuerte ha sido el aumento ha sido España. No obstante, en dicho país el consumo de orgánicos sobre el gasto total en alimentación sigue siendo bajo, un 0.97% en 2009. Esto hace que dicho contexto geográfico sea interesante a la hora de analizar el mercado de productos orgánicos.

Con el fin de aportar evidencia empírica en torno a las hipótesis planteadas se realizó un experimento a sujetos responsables de la compra en el hogar o que participaban activamente en la misma. Además del experimento se solicitó su colaboración en la cumplimentación posterior de un cuestionario. Para el muestreo de la población se usó un muestreo no probabilístico por cuotas. El tamaño de la muestra es de 311 individuos y la recogida de información se realizó de abril a junio del año 2013.

### 3.1. Diseño experimental

Se realizó un experimento entre sujetos de tipo factorial 3 (categorías de producto: chocolate/ muesli/ yogur) x 3 (mensajes implícitos: ECO/BIO/ “sin mensaje”) x 3 (mensajes explícitos: Sin aditivos químicos ni pesticidas de síntesis, CUIDA DEL MEDIOAMBIENTE/ Sin aditivos químicos ni pesticidas de síntesis, CUIDA DE TI/ “sin mensaje”). Independientemente del grado de explicitud del mensaje, éstos versan sobre los dos beneficios típicamente asociados a los productos orgánicos: la protección del medioambiente (ECO/ Sin aditivos..., CUIDA DEL MEDIOAMBIENTE) y la protección de la salud del individuo (BIO/ Sin aditivos..., CUIDA DE TI).

Cada sujeto fue asignado aleatoriamente a cada una de las condiciones experimentales aunque controlados para asegurar un tamaño muestral similar a través de los tratamientos.

En cada condición experimental, se facilita al sujeto una imagen del producto que tiene que valorar frente a su correspondiente contrapartida convencional. Cada imagen difiere en los mensajes utilizados. Así pues, se crearon 9 imágenes: 1) sin mensaje, 2) sólo mensaje BIO, 3) sólo mensaje ECO, 4) sólo mensaje Sin aditivos químicos ni pesticidas de síntesis, CUIDA DEL MEDIOAMBIENTE, 5) sólo mensaje Sin aditivos químicos ni pesticidas de síntesis, CUIDA DE TI, 6) mensaje BIO y Sin aditivos químicos ni pesticidas de síntesis, CUIDA DEL MEDIOAMBIENTE, 7) mensaje BIO y Sin aditivos químicos ni pesticidas de síntesis, CUIDA DE TI, 8) mensaje ECO y Sin aditivos químicos ni pesticidas de síntesis, CUIDA DEL MEDIOAMBIENTE y 9) mensaje ECO y Sin aditivos químicos ni pesticidas de síntesis, CUIDA DE TI.

El sujeto sólo valoró una categoría de producto de las tres categorías analizadas. La finalidad del uso de distintas categorías de producto no es otra que la de aportar mayor validez al estudio dado que contamos con un producto de origen vegetal (la caja de cereales de desayuno tipo muesli), uno de origen animal (un pack de 8 yogures naturales) y uno de origen mixto (una tableta de chocolate con leche).

Para asegurar la pureza de los tratamientos, siempre se utilizó la misma marca, tanto para el producto convencional como para el producto orgánico. La marca seleccionada fue Carrefour. Ésta era la marca de alimentación con mayor notoriedad en 2012 (TNS, 2012) y cuenta con un producto orgánico y su contrapartida convencional en las categorías analizadas.

### 3.2. Medidas empleadas en el estudio

La percepción de los productos después de su visualización se cuantificó basándonos en la escala utilizada por Krystallis et al. (2006). Las respuestas fueron codificadas en una escala tipo Likert de siete puntos (1= “totalmente en desacuerdo” y 7 = “totalmente de acuerdo”). Cada ítem se expresa en términos relativos. Esto es, se comparaba al producto 1 (imagen del producto orgánico) con el producto 2 (imagen del producto convencional). De ese modo se pretende evitar el sesgo derivado de la afinidad que tenga el entrevistado con la categoría de producto utilizada y se obtiene su valoración sobre el tipo de producto en cuestión, el orgánico. La Tabla 1 detalla los ítems utilizados y resume los análisis realizados a las escalas.

TABLA 1  
Descripción de los ítems y análisis factoriales de las medidas perceptuales

	Factors	Item	M	S.D	Cargas factoriales				F.C.	A.V.E
					F1	F2	F3	F4		
<b>Análisis Factorial 1. Percepciones dimensionales del producto orgánico frente al convencional (V.E. = 0,845)</b>	<b>Percepción de protección medioambiental del producto orgánico (F1)</b>	“tiene menos componentes dañinos para el medioambiente”	4,443	1,232	0,921				0,927	0,864
		“es más responsable con el medioambiente”	4,566	1,165	0,938					
	<b>Percepción de salubridad del producto orgánico (F2)</b>	“es más puro”	4,222	1,434		0,916			0,918	0,850
		“es más saludable”	4,177	1,386		0,928				

	<b>Percepción hedónica del producto orgánico (F3)</b>	“es más sabroso”	2,209	1,251	0,809	0,837	0,721	
		“es más saciante”	2,531	1,124	0,887			
<b>Análisis Factorial 2. Percepción global del producto orgánico frente al convencional (V.E. = 0,797)</b>	<b>Percepción de calidad del producto orgánico (F4)</b>	“es mejor producto”	3,698	1,425		0,893	0,887	0,594*
		“es de calidad superior”	3,521	1,220		0,893		

Notas: M = media, S.D. = desviación estándar, V.E. = varianza total explicada, F.C. = fiabilidad compuesta, A.V.E. = varianza extraída media, \* Correlación de Pearson con  $p < .01$

Las percepciones fueron consideradas como constructos reflectivos. Se realizaron dos análisis factoriales de componentes principales para garantizar la validez de contenido. En el primero, se incluyeron los ítems que hacen referencia al medioambiente, la salud y el hedonismo del producto orgánico. Se utilizó la rotación promax dado que las dimensiones analizadas no tienen porqué ser estrictamente independientes. Tal y como se muestra en la Tabla 2, los resultados permiten asumir la tridimensionalidad de la escala. En el segundo análisis se consideran los ítems que hacen referencia no a determinadas dimensiones del producto sino a su evaluación global validándose la unidimensionalidad de dicha escala. Asimismo, los resultados en ambos casos muestran la fiabilidad de la escala (tanto la fiabilidad compuesta de cada factor como la varianza explicada en ambos análisis es también superior a 0,7).

También se midió el índice de estilo cognitivo (IEC) que caracteriza al sujeto cuando procesa información. La escala empleada se basó en la desarrollada por Allinson y Hayes (1996) pero se utilizó una versión reducida de seis ítems. Tres caracterizan el estilo analítico y otros tres el estilo intuitivo. Dado que, según los autores de la escala que tomamos de partida, el estilo cognitivo es una variable continua donde un individuo puede compartir características de un estilo intuitivo y un estilo analítico, se emplea una escala tipo Likert de siete puntos (1= “totalmente en desacuerdo” y 7 = “totalmente de acuerdo”). Los ítems “analíticos” puntúan siguiendo una línea ascendente (de 1 a 7) mientras que para los ítems “intuitivos” se puntúa siguiendo una línea descendente (de 7 a 1), es decir, se invierten las puntuaciones de los ítems expresados en un sentido intuitivo. La puntuación final de IEC se basa en la suma de las valoraciones dadas a los seis ítems de forma que cuanto mayor fuese IEC, más analítico sería el individuo y, en consecuencia, cuanto menor fuese IEC, más intuitivo sería el sujeto. La Tabla 2 detalla los ítems utilizados y resume los análisis realizados a la escala.

TABLA 2

**Índice de Estilo Cognitivo ó IEC (factor formativo)**

Ítem	M	S.D	Correlaciones bivariadas (Pearson)					
			I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6
I1: Trato de mantener una rutina regular en las tareas que emprendo en los distintos ámbitos de mi vida, profesional y personal	3,312	1,458	1	0,917**	0,163**	0,138*	0,215**	0,199**
I2: Suelo preferir la búsqueda de la variedad antes que la constancia (R)	3,142	1,446		1	0,164**	0,140*	0,233**	0,248**
I3: Tiendo a prestar atención a los detalles antes de llegar a una conclusión	3,312	1,447			1	0,846**	0,433**	0,431**
I4: Tomo muchas de mis decisiones en base a la intuición (R)	3,029	1,490				1	0,373**	0,436**
I5: Para comprender plenamente los hechos necesito una explicación precisa de las causas o antecedentes	3,010	1,583					1	0,892**
I6: Estoy más a gusto con ideas generales que con extensas argumentaciones (R)	2,772	1,593						1

Notas: M = media, S.D. = desviación estándar, R = ítem con puntuaciones invertidas, \*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ .

Además de la información perceptual y del IEC, se solicitó información relativa al perfil demográfico de los participantes. Básicamente, el sexo, la edad, el nivel de ingresos, el número de miembros que componen el hogar, si el hogar tiene niños menores de 6 años o si tiene niños de entre 7 y 12 años.

El sexo se midió como una variable dicotómica (0 = hombre; 1= mujer), contando finalmente con una población femenina representada por el 86,5 % de la muestra. La edad se midió como una variable de recuento y la media de los sujetos fue de 45,85 años (con una desviación típica de 12,06). El nivel de ingresos se midió como variable categórica: ingresos iguales o inferiores a los 20000 euros anuales (40,8% de la muestra), ingresos anuales de entre 20001 y 50000 euros (50,5 %) y sólo el 8,7% son hogares con ingresos superiores a los 50001 euros al año. Tanto el número de miembros que constituía el hogar como el número de niños menores de 6 años y de entre 7 y 12 años eran obtenidos mediante preguntas abiertas. El número de miembros del hogar, se mide con una variable de recuento: 19,6% (hogares con 1 miembro), 27,7% (2 miembros), 28,3% (3 miembros), 21,2%(4 miembros) y 3,1%(5 o más miembros). Un 10,6% de los encuestados tiene niños menores de 6 años y un 11,6% de la muestra tiene niños de entre 7 y 12 años.

#### 4. Análisis y resultados

Para contrastar las hipótesis propuestas se estiman modelos de regresión lineal. Concretamente, se utiliza la siguiente especificación para contrastar las hipótesis de la 1 a la 4:

$$P = \alpha + \sum \beta (VC) + \sum \gamma (CE) + \xi$$

donde P denota las percepciones de los individuos (percepción de protección del medioambiente, percepción de protección de la salud, percepción hedónica y percepción de calidad),  $\alpha$  es la constante a estimar del modelo, VC hace referencia al vector de variables de control empleadas en el estudio (género, edad, ingresos, número de miembros del hogar, número de menores de 6 años en el hogar y número de menores de entre 7 y 12 años en el hogar);  $\beta$  denota un vector de parámetros a estimar que recoge el efecto de las variables de control, CE es el vector de variables que hace referencia a las condiciones experimentales (ECO, BIO, “Mensaje promedioambiental”, “Mensajes prosalud”, “ECOxMensaje promedioambiental”, “BIOxMensaje prosalud”, “ECOxMensaje prosalud” y “BIOxMensaje promedioambiental”) y  $\gamma$  denota un vector de parámetros a estimar que recoge el efecto de las condiciones del experimento. Se ha contrastado la posible heterocedasticidad en los modelos de regresión lineal relacionados con las primeras cuatro hipótesis a través del contraste de Breusch-Pagan. Dicho contraste nos lleva a rechazar la homocedasticidad en una de las estimaciones, la correspondiente al modelo de percepción de calidad, por lo que, en dicho caso, se ha usado estimación robusta.

Tal y como se detalla en la Tabla 3 se ha procedido a realizar cuatro estimaciones, una para cada variable dependiente considerada. Tres de las percepciones son dimensionales, es decir, sobre determinados atributos del producto. Dos tienen carácter utilitario o, lo que es lo mismo, están enfocadas en la maximización de la utilidad por parte del consumidor y se relacionan con los principales beneficios asociados al producto orgánico (percepción de protección del medioambiente y percepción de protección de la salud). La tercera hace referencia a la percepción hedónica del consumo del producto, con atributos asociados al sabor y la saciedad. La última, la percepción de calidad, supone una evaluación global del producto.

TABLA 3

#### Influencia de los estímulos publicitarios en las percepciones de los productos orgánicos (coeficientes sin estandarizar)

	Percepción promedioambiental	Percepción prosalud	Percepción hedónica	Percepción de calidad
<b>Variables de control</b>				
Constante	-0,222	-0,995***	-0,680***	-0,420*
Género (1: mujer)	0,343**	0,205	0,031	0,085

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Edad	-0,013**	-0,006	0,004	-0,001
Ingresos	-0,142	0,047	0,009	-0,035
Nº miembros en el hogar	-0,050	-0,087**	-0,067	-0,126***
Nº niños menores de 6 años	0,051	0,209**	-0,063	0,116
Nº niños de entre 7 y 12 años	-0,043	-0,031	0,149	0,091
<b>Mensajes implícitos</b>				
ECO	1,150***	1,284***	0,736***	0,698***
BIO	0,314	0,868***	0,750***	0,433**
<b>Mensajes explícitos</b>				
Promedioambiental	1,336***	1,577***	0,748***	1,064***
Prosalud	1,083***	1,629***	0,795***	1,070***
<b>Interacción de mensajes</b>				
ECOxPromedioambiental	-1,257***	-1,292***	-0,738**	-0,957***
BIOxProsalud	-0,397	-0,802***	-0,660**	-0,508
ECOxProsalud	-1,251***	-1,399***	-1,159***	-0,684**
BIOxPromedioambiental	-0,331	-0,940***	-0,514	-0,579*
<b>Coefficiente de determinación corregido (R<sup>2</sup>)</b>	0,224	0,314	0,073	0,109

\*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ .

La Tabla 3 resume los resultados de las estimaciones realizadas. Los efectos de los mensajes ECO, BIO, promedioambiental y prosalud son bastante consistentes a través de las distintas percepciones y todos salvo uno (BIO en el modelo de percepción promedioambiental) ejercen un efecto positivo y significativo sobre la percepción analizada. Por tanto, los resultados obtenidos aportan una fuerte evidencia a favor de la hipótesis H1: los mensajes publicitarios mejoran la percepción de los productos orgánicos.

Los resultados también muestran congruencia entre el mensaje publicitario y la percepción de protección del medioambiente: el efecto de los reclamos sobre el medioambiente tanto para los mensajes implícitos como para los explícitos parece ser mayor al de los reclamos sobre la salud. Cuando hablamos de la percepción de protección de la salud ocurre lo mismo para los mensajes explícitos: es mayor el efecto del mensaje centrado en la salud. Sin embargo, en el caso de los mensajes implícitos el resultado es contrario a lo esperado: el efecto de ECO es mayor que el de BIO. No obstante, los contrastes de diferencias entre los coeficientes de ECO y BIO y de diferencias entre el mensaje promedioambiental y el mensaje prosalud revelan que sólo en el caso de percepción de protección del medioambiente los mensajes implícitos tienen un efecto significativamente distinto en función de su temática con más de un 99% de nivel de confianza. Así pues, no podemos confirmar que existe congruencia entre la dimensión del mensaje y la percepción (H2). Una posible explicación a este resultado podría deberse a un efecto denominado Efecto de Alcance Temático, La protección del medioambiente o, en términos genéricos, el entorno del individuo supone un mayor alcance que la salud, la cual se asocia a una persona o conjunto de personas concretas. De esta forma, el sujeto podría formar percepciones de salud a partir no sólo de los mensajes sobre salud, sino también a partir de los mensajes sobre la protección del medioambiente. Por el contrario, para las percepciones de protección del medioambiente emplearía principalmente los mensajes de protección del medioambiente frente a los mensajes sobre la salud, principalmente, cuando se trata de reclamos implícitos, en cuyo caso la diferencia entre los coeficientes según su temática sí es significativa.

Por otro lado, observamos que los coeficientes de los mensajes explícitos son mayores que los de los mensajes implícitos, independientemente del tema sobre el que versen. Sin embargo, los contrastes de

diferencias entre parámetros según el grado de explicitud de los mensajes solo resultan significativos en el caso de los mensajes de salud y para todas las variables dependientes excepto para la percepción hedónica. En el resto de casos, si bien los coeficientes asociados a los reclamos explícitos son más elevados, las diferencias no son significativas. Así, los resultados parecen estar en línea con nuestra hipótesis H3, aunque solo son significativos en la dimensión salud. En consecuencia, H3 solo se acepta parcialmente: cuanto más explícito es el mensaje de salud, mejor es la percepción del producto.

Los resultados también aportan evidencias a favor de la hipótesis H4 sobre el efecto de la combinación de mensajes implícitos/explicitos frente al uso de un solo mensaje. Los coeficientes de las variables de interacción de mensajes implícitos y explícitos son en su mayoría negativos y significativos (de las 12 interacciones, 8 son significativas al 0,90%). Para contrastar formalmente dicha hipótesis realizamos un contraste que compara en cada modelo el valor absoluto de la diferencia entre el efecto de los mensajes combinados y el menor efecto de entre los mensajes directos, no observándose diferencias significativas en ninguno de los casos. Así, los resultados obtenidos nos llevan a confirmar que la combinación de mensajes no resulta en mejores percepciones en relación a las percepciones encontradas con sólo un mensaje. Esto podría deberse a la propia confusión manifestada por el consumidor con respecto a los productos orgánicos o a que el consumidor perciba el uso de varios reclamos como estrategias de persuasión por parte de la empresa y no de información.

Para contrastar la última de las hipótesis, se especificó el siguiente modelo:

$$P = \alpha + \sum \beta (VC) + \sum \gamma (CEMA) + \delta (IEC) + \sum \lambda (IECxCEMA) + \xi$$

las diferencias de este modelo respecto al anterior residen en que en este caso CEMA es el vector de variables que hace referencia a las condiciones experimentales sobre mensajes aislados (ECO, BIO, “Mensaje promedioambiental” y “Mensajes prosalud”),  $\gamma$  denota un vector de parámetros a estimar que recoge el efecto de las condiciones del experimento, IEC es la variable de índice de estilo cognitivo y  $\delta$  es el parámetro a estimar que recoge el efecto de la variable IEC, IECxCEMA es el vector de variables con las interacciones entre las condiciones experimentales aisladas y el IEC, siendo  $\lambda$  el vector de parámetros a estimar que mide el efecto de las variables de interacción. Al igual que en el modelo anterior, se ha contrastado la posible heterocedasticidad de los modelos a través del contraste de Breusch-Pagan y de nuevo sólo se rechaza la homocedasticidad en una de las estimaciones, la correspondiente al modelo de percepción prosalud, por lo que, en dicho caso, se ha usado estimación robusta.

Al igual que en el resto de hipótesis, hemos estimado cuatro modelos cuyos resultados se detallan en la Tabla 4. Los coeficientes para la moderación de IEC no resultan significativos ni para percepción hedónica ni para percepción de calidad. Con respecto a los temas relacionados, percepción promedioambiental y prosalud, no se observan resultados significativos de los mensajes explícitos. Sí que se observan, tal y como se proponía, dos efectos negativos y significativos entre los mensajes implícitos y el IEC, lo que supone evidencias a favor de que los mensajes implícitos tengan un mayor efecto en los consumidores más intuitivos. Por tanto, y aunque de forma más débil que en el resto de hipótesis, dicha hipótesis se confirma sólo parcialmente.

TABLA 4

**Influencia del estilo cognitivo en la relación estímulo-percepción (coeficientes sin estandarizar)**

	Percepción promedioambiental	Percepción prosalud	Percepción hedónica	Percepción de calidad
<b>Variables de control</b>				
Constante	-0,240	-0,815 ***	-0,566	-0,410*
Género	0,329*	0,237	-0,013	0,070
Edad	-0,012*	-0,005	0,006	-0,000
Ingresos	-0,131	0,010	-0,004	-0,043
Nº miembros en el hogar	-0,043	-0,081*	-0,059	-0,126***
Nº niños menores de 6 años	0,049	0,199	-0,080	0,126

Nº niños de entre 7 y 12 años	-0,047	-0,052	0,166	0,060
<b>Mensajes implícitos</b>				
ECO	0,894*	1,372***	0,021	0,502
BIO	0,746*	0,770**	0,426	0,237
<b>Mensajes explícitos</b>				
Promedioambiental	0,421	0,403	0,512	0,373
Prosalud	0,963**	0,782**	0,673*	1,367***
<b>Estilo cognitivo al procesar información</b>				
IEC	0,012	0,011	0,004	0,012
<b>Interacción IEC-mensajes</b>				
IECxECO	-0,028	-0,050**	0,007	-0,017
IECxBIO	-0,033*	-0,022	-0,001	-0,007
IECxPromedioambiental	0,022	0,028	-0,007	0,013
IECxProsalud	-0,021	0,010	-0,024	-0,035
<b>Coefficiente de determinación corregido (R<sup>2</sup>)</b>	0,178	0,250	0,031	0,092

\*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ .

## 5. Conclusiones e implicaciones para la gestión

En el mercado de productos orgánicos, los comerciantes apenas utilizan herramientas de marketing aún cuando el consumidor manifiesta confusión para diferenciar al producto orgánico frente a su contrapartida convencional. Por ello, el presente trabajo se ha centrado en analizar el efecto que sobre la respuesta cognitiva del consumidor tiene un tipo concreto de comunicación, los mensajes en los envases.

Los resultados empíricos de este trabajo indican que los mensajes publicitarios empleados en los envases de los productos orgánicos influyen en las percepciones inferidas por el consumidor acerca de los productos en cuestión. El uso de un solo mensaje mejoraría la percepción hacia el alimento orgánico, algo que no se vería reforzado al sumar un reclamo al envase. También se observa un mayor efecto de los mensajes explícitos, aunque sólo cuando expresan beneficios de salud. Por último, si bien el estilo cognitivo a la hora de procesar información teóricamente parece relevante cuando se trata de evaluar productos mediante el uso de señales, nuestros resultados sólo avalan el efecto moderador en el caso de la influencia del mensaje implícito sobre las percepciones asociadas a los productos orgánicos.

Los resultados obtenidos conducen a una serie de interpretaciones e implicaciones. Para aprovechar el potencial del mercado de orgánicos, los comerciantes deberían emplear mensajes en los envases que se asocien a los beneficios que los caracterizan, protección del medioambiente o salud. Con ello conseguirían potenciar la percepción de protección del medioambiente o salud que infiere el consumidor ayudándole a diferenciar al producto orgánico del convencional. No obstante, no se debería abusar del uso de reclamos en el envase puesto que combinar dos mensajes no mejoraría la percepción con respecto a la encontrada con solo un reclamo. Atendiendo a la temática-grado de explicitud del mensaje, la empresa debe expresar el mensaje con el mayor grado de explicitud posible si opta por un mensaje sobre la dimensión de salud para influir más fuertemente en las percepciones que el consumidor infiere. Es decir, mensajes del tipo “Sin aditivos químicos ni pesticidas de síntesis, CUIDA DE TI” muestran un mejor resultado sobre la percepción de salud que el mensaje “BIO”.

Asimismo, los comerciantes podrían utilizar distintos tipos de mensaje para captar la atención de distintos tipos de consumidores. Por ejemplo, podrían usar los mensajes implícitos (ECO y BIO) para mejorar las percepciones de medioambiente o de salud de los consumidores más intuitivos.

Este estudio no está exento de limitaciones que requieren investigaciones futuras. Los sujetos valoran percepciones de tres productos de alimentación. Aunque los alimentos son de distinto origen —



vegetal, animal y mixto—, futuras investigaciones podrían tratar de replicar el estudio en otras categorías alimentarias o en otras categorías más allá de los alimentos. Este trabajo ha realizado un experimento de laboratorio en el que el sujeto se enfrenta a fotos aisladas en lugar de a los expositores habituales en los establecimientos de alimentación. De manera que, las futuras investigaciones podrían encaminarse hacia el desarrollo de experimentos de campo para analizar la relación entre mensaje y percepción inferida. Adicionalmente, las futuras investigaciones se podrían centrar en analizar otras posibles moderaciones entre las percepciones y el mensaje, por ejemplo, la interacción entre el tipo de marca y el tipo de mensaje (Bauer et al. 2013).

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# EFICIENCIA DE LA ACTIVIDAD FERIAL EN ESPAÑA: ANÁLISIS LONGITUDINAL

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## RESUMEN

*Las ferias representan una importante plataforma de comunicación para los expositores, cuyo uso se ha generalizado en todas las áreas económicas, pues supone la puesta en práctica de diversas herramientas de comunicación con las que hacer llegar la oferta al mercado y a un gran número de clientes con disposición favorable a la obtención de información. Pero también aporta ventajas a los visitantes, entre otras, les permite conocer la oferta y comparar precios.*

*Varios estudios han demostrado la utilidad de la participación en ferias, y utilizan para dicha evaluación diferentes indicadores como son el número de asistentes (tanto profesionales como particulares) y el número de expositores participantes.*

*El objetivo que persigue este trabajo es analizar la evolución de la actividad ferial en España en el periodo 2002-2010, para hacer frente a una cuestión relevante como es su eficacia y eficiencia como herramienta de comunicación.*

## Palabras clave:

Ferias comerciales, comunicación, indicadores, eficiencia.

## 1. Introducción

En los últimos años, los sistemas de comunicación han experimentado un gran desarrollo gracias a las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación, dando lugar a formas de comunicación más sofisticadas.

La comunicación en marketing se realiza principalmente por medio de cinco herramientas: publicidad, promoción de ventas, relaciones públicas, venta personal y marketing directo. Y la elección de una u otra dependerá de una serie de aspectos que determinan su adecuación o conveniencia, como son:

- Recursos disponibles.
- Tipo de producto a vender.

- Características del mercado.
- Tipo de estrategia de marketing utilizada.
- Etapa del proceso de decisión de compra.
- Etapa del ciclo de vida del producto.

Sin embargo, a pesar de ese desarrollo, formas de comunicación más simples que permiten una comunicación más personal y un contacto cara a cara se han seguido manteniendo, tal es el caso de las ferias.

El objetivo de este trabajo es analizar el uso de las ferias comerciales como variable de comunicación, su evolución durante el periodo 2002-2010 y el análisis de los principales indicadores de rentabilidad, que permitan determinar el estado en el que se encuentra esta herramienta de comunicación en el momento actual, su desarrollo en los últimos años y su situación en los diferentes sectores de actividad.

Con estos objetivos la principal aportación de este trabajo es dar continuidad a estudios previos que han analizado la evolución de la actividad ferial en los periodos: 1985-1989 (Mas, Munuera, Hernández y Ruiz, 1993), 1995-1999 (Cervera, Franco y Gracia, 2001), 1990-2000 (Jiménez, Cazorla y Linares, 2002), 1999-2003 (Triviño, 2006).

## **2. Ferias**

### **2.1. Concepto**

Una feria también conocida como salón, es un certamen de celebración periódica en el que empresas o entidades de una misma actividad comercial exponen sus productos y/o servicios al público asistente.

Las ferias representan el instrumento de comunicación más antiguo (Jiménez, Cazorla y Linares, 2002), cuyo origen se remonta a la civilización fenicia (2º milenio a.c.) en forma de mercados.

En cuanto a los usos de las ferias, se considera que es una herramienta importante de exhibición y comunicación de la oferta comercial, así como un instrumento de contacto frente al cliente (Gázquez y Jiménez, 2002); es decir, es una herramienta de comunicación empleada tanto en promoción de ventas como en venta personal.

Aunque otros enfoques (Rodríguez, De La Ballina y Santos, 1997) consideran que las ferias se emplean también como elemento para mejorar la imagen de la empresa y transmitirla al mercado, considerándolo así como una herramienta de relaciones públicas.

Por tanto, la utilización de las ferias como herramienta de comunicación se encuentra presente en tres de las cinco herramientas de comunicación: promoción de ventas, relaciones públicas y ventas personales; de manera que su uso permite alcanzar los objetivos perseguidos en cada herramienta de comunicación.

### **2.2. Características**

Las ferias proporcionan a las empresas participantes el desarrollo de una serie de funciones (Rubalcaba y Cuadrado, 1994):

- Función comercial: venta, creación y consolidación de redes de distribución comercial.
- Función expositiva: alternativa rentable a procedimientos publicitarios tradicionales.
- Función de comunicación: su finalidad es poner en contacto la oferta y la demanda.
- Otras funciones: incentivar la competencia entre las empresas y vehículo de difusión de las innovaciones.

La asistencia y participación en ferias se considera una acción de gran utilidad, porque en ellas se encuentra la mejor información del sector, porque representa un punto de encuentro entre empresas y clientes especializados, porque favorece el intercambio de tendencias y opiniones (Muñiz, 2010) y que permite al empresario introducirse, consolidarse o investigar mercados (Navarro, 2001).

Las ferias comerciales poseen una serie de diferencias con respecto al resto de actividades de promoción, que son (Jiménez, Cazorla y Linares, 2002):

- Es la única forma de promoción donde el comprador acude al vendedor, lo cual representa una ventaja consistente en contar con la predisposición del cliente a escuchar, ser atendido y obtener información.
- Permite el contacto con un número elevado de clientes en un tiempo reducido.
- Acceso a empresarios y clientes no accesibles en condiciones habituales de venta.
- Intervención simultánea de varias herramientas de comunicación: publicidad, promoción de ventas, venta personal y relaciones públicas, que incrementan la posibilidad de efecto de la comunicación.
- La intervención de otras variables de marketing: producto, precio y distribución, poniendo en uso todas las variables de marketing. De manera que la política ferial constituye una combinación de las diferentes políticas de marketing (Mas, Munuera, Ruiz y Hernández, 1993).

Por esta última característica, frente a la consideración tradicional de las ferias como herramientas de comunicación, se impone su carácter multidimensional por su contribución al resto de variables de marketing:

- Precio: existencia de un precio de feria inferior y ofrecimiento de descuentos para asistentes.
- Producto: se realiza la presentación de nuevos productos, demostraciones de los mismos, captación de ideas para la creación de nuevos productos en la visita a la feria.
- Distribución: la feria es un lugar de distribución, y también un lugar idóneo para establecer relaciones con intermediarios del canal de distribución.

Y la sinergia y complementariedad adecuada de todas las herramientas de marketing conducen al éxito de la estrategia ferial (Puchalt y Munuera, 2008).

Así, llegamos a una definición más actual de feria (Puchalt, 2001), en la que se confirma su carácter multidimensional, que la define como instrumento de marketing, cuya puesta en práctica permite a las empresas y profesionales que hacen uso del mismo, desarrollar diferentes funciones para lograr sus objetivos: comunicación, promoción, ventas, relaciones, intercambio de información, investigación, fidelización de clientes, posicionamiento, distribución, formación, test de mercado y producto, entre otras.

### **2.3. Resultados de su utilización**

Este mismo carácter multidimensional de las ferias se observa en las razones y/o objetivos que una empresa tiene para ser expositor, de manera que junto a la política de comunicación se indican también motivos de producto, precio y distribución, como (Gázquez y Jiménez, 2002):

- Aumento de la cuota de mercado: aumentar ventas y participación en el mercado.
- Prospección de mercado: conseguir nuevos clientes y ver la aceptación de los productos.
- Imagen: mejorar su posicionamiento y su percepción por el sector, y por los clientes.

Sin embargo, pese a los objetivos señalados, ante todo prima el criterio de rentabilidad (Jiménez, Cazorla y Linares, 2002).

La participación en ferias constituye un medio eficaz y de bajo coste para acceder a nuevos clientes, constituyendo así una herramienta con buena relación coste/eficacia. Así, se considera que durante la feria por término medio un vendedor mantiene relación directa y personal con más clientes, actuales y potenciales, que durante seis meses de trabajo habitual (Grupo Planner, 2010).

Pese a la evolución creciente que el sector ferial ha experimentado en los últimos años (Munuera, 2008), una cuestión que centra el interés de las investigaciones es la obtención de resultados en su participación, que sirva para justificar la inversión y el esfuerzo realizados.

Un estudio (Marketing News, 2006) se centra en el análisis de la rentabilidad de las acciones de comunicación a partir de la opinión de 700 directivos de Norteamérica, Europa y Asia. Los resultados globales (Tabla 1) muestran que la actividad ferial es considerada como la herramienta que ofrece mayor rentabilidad en las diferentes zonas geográficas analizadas, siendo el más valorado por los directivos de Asia, seguidos de los de Europa y por último Norteamérica.

TABLA 1  
Directivos que valoran más alto la rentabilidad de las acciones de marketing (%)

Herramientas de marketing	Total	América del norte	Europa	Asia-Pacífico
Ferias	23	19	23	32
Publicidad impresa	10	9	7	17
Publicidad no impresa	7	7	5	10
Promoción de ventas	9	8	11	10
Relaciones públicas	15	16	14	15
Marketing electrónico	12	17	13	5
Marketing directo	13	16	14	7

Fuente: Marketing News, 2006.

Otro estudio realizado en 2003 sobre 250 miembros de la asociación de profesionales de marketing de EEUU (Business Marketing Association Survey, 2003) analiza el nivel de inversión realizada en diferentes herramientas de marketing para apoyar la venta de productos. Los resultados mostraron en media que los directivos dedicaban la mayor parte de su presupuesto a la participación en ferias comerciales (18,6%), seguido del 13,8% a la publicidad en prensa especializada, 13,5% a Internet y otros medios electrónicos, 10,9% a la promoción de ventas, 10,8% a las relaciones públicas, 5,6% a merchandising, 4,1% a investigación de mercados, 3,2% a publicidad en prensa general y 19,6% a otras herramientas (Stevens, 2005).

En este contexto se plantean dos cuestiones (Molina y Cuestas, 2008): ¿siguen siendo las ferias un instrumento eficaz para comunicar la oferta comercial de la empresa? y ¿ha disminuido su poder para mantener o establecer nuevas relaciones a favor de las nuevas tecnologías? La respuesta a estas preguntas constituye el objetivo de este trabajo, para ello se persigue analizar diferentes indicadores y la posible relación entre ellos.

### 3. Metodología

Para la realización de este estudio se utilizará la información estadística facilitada por la Asociación de Ferias Españolas (AFE), que es la única fuente de datos a nivel nacional. Anualmente publica memorias estadísticas sobre los certámenes feriales organizados por sus asociados que pertenecen a todo tipo de sector empresarial, y que en la actualidad asciende a 58 socios, de los cuales 49 son organizadores feriales, tanto públicos como privados, y los 9 restantes son miembros colaboradores.

Se utilizará la información de los años 2002 a 2010 para determinar la evolución experimentada.

#### 3.1. Variables de interés

Para analizar la eficacia de la participación en ferias comerciales se van a prestar atención a las siguientes variables:

- Número de ferias: totales, generales, sectoriales y mixtas.
- Grado de especialización.
- Cifra de expositores.
- Público participante: total, general y profesional.
- Nacionalidad de los participantes.
- Lugares de celebración: ciudades e instituciones.
- Número de países participantes.
- Cifra de entradas vendidas.
- Cantidad de pases distribuidos.
- Superficie dedicada a la actividad.

Además, se estudiará la posible relación entre algunas de estas variables, como son los ratios de expositores y visitantes por evento, o el número de expositores indirectos sobre directos.

#### 4. Conclusiones

Indicar en primer lugar que se trata de un trabajo en curso y las conclusiones que en estos momentos se pueden plantear responden únicamente a aspectos teóricos destacables, cuya comprobación empírica se plantea realizar como siguiente paso para contribuir al conocimiento de la actividad ferial en España en los últimos años.

Como conclusiones señalar, en primer lugar, la consideración de la política ferial no sólo como una herramienta de comunicación, sino como una combinación de varias políticas (ventas, producto, comunicación, distribución e investigación de mercados), que maximiza el beneficio y la utilidad de los expositores para participar en las mismas. Pues permite no sólo dar a conocer su actividad, sino que además permite conocer las tendencias del mercado, lanzar nuevos productos e incluso venderlos.

La evolución de la actividad ferial mantiene un paralelismo con la situación económica nacional, pero también va a depender de la evolución del sector al que pertenece. Sin embargo, frente a la situación económica en la que se encuentra España el número de ferias celebradas no se ha reducido, lo que constituye un indicador de la confianza en esta plataforma de comunicación en el sector empresarial.

Por otro lado se observa también una tendencia al incremento del grado de especialización de las ferias (Purchalt, 2001), con el fin de facilitar el alcance de los objetivos de expositores y de asistentes.

Como principal limitación señalar que los datos utilizados dejan fuera la información sobre eventos organizados por instituciones no asociadas a AFE, siendo en su mayoría de carácter local; y, por tanto, hay que tener cuidado a la hora de generalizar los resultados.

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# EL IMPACTO DEL MIX DE MEDIOS EN EL VALOR DE LA EMPRESA

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## RESUMEN

*Los ejecutivos de marketing están bajo la creciente presión de demostrar el impacto financiero de sus decisiones ante la alta dirección, financieros y accionistas. La investigación previa ha demostrado el efecto del gasto en publicidad sobre el valor de la empresa. Sin embargo, se ha pasado por alto cuáles son las decisiones específicas de publicidad más adecuadas para incrementar el valor de la empresa. En esta investigación cubrimos este hueco analizando el impacto del gasto en el mix de medios sobre el valor de la empresa. Para ello analizamos el valor de la empresa y el gasto publicitario mensual en prensa, radio y televisión para 84 empresas utilizando un modelo de vectores autorregresivos. Los resultados preliminares sugieren que la prensa es el medio más eficaz a la hora de crear valor para la empresa, gracias a la aparición de sinergias cuando va acompañado de otros medios como la radio y la televisión.*

## Palabras clave:

Publicidad, mix de medios, valor de empresa.

## 1. Introducción

La publicidad es una de las actividades de marketing más visibles y costosas (Wang et al. 2009). No es de extrañar, por tanto, que los ejecutivos de marketing y publicidad necesiten medir y justificar cada vez más el valor creado por sus acciones ante la alta dirección, financieros y accionistas. Para lograr este objetivo, los ejecutivos de marketing deben emplear un lenguaje comprensible y sobre todo creíble, tanto para directivos como para financieros y accionistas. Tarea difícil, ya que los objetivos de marketing se han formulado tradicionalmente desde el corto plazo y en términos de impacto sobre ventas y actitud de los consumidores, empleando métricas como la notoriedad, crecimiento en ventas, fidelidad, satisfacción de cliente, repetición de compra, etc. (Ambler 2003). Métricas estas que bien por desconocimiento o por considerar que no son de interés para los accionistas de la empresa, más preocupados por la rentabilidad a largo plazo de sus inversiones, no han sido puestas en valor por directivos y financieros como indicadores válidos del esfuerzo de marketing. Esta situación obliga a los ejecutivos de marketing a adoptar un lenguaje financiero al evaluar e informar de sus acciones (McAlister, Srinivasan y Kim 2007).

En consecuencia, la eficacia del gasto publicitario ha sido ampliamente estudiada, más allá de su impacto en variables de negocio como las ventas y los beneficios (Hanssens, Parsons y Schultz 2001). Por ejemplo, algunos estudios han demostrado que el gasto en publicidad influye en métricas financieras, tales como la demanda de acciones, la liquidez y el valor de la empresa (Frieder y Subrahmanyam 2005; Huberman 2001; Joshi y Hanssens 2010). Por lo general, este tipo de estudios se han realizado a partir de datos agregados del gasto en publicidad, con independencia de cómo se distribuye el presupuesto entre los componentes de la publicidad, es decir, el copy del anuncio y el mix de medios (McAlister, Srinivasan y Kim 2007). Hasta donde sabemos, las consecuencias financieras de estos componentes no se han estudiado todavía.

En esta investigación pretendemos cubrir parcialmente este hueco. En particular, nos centraremos en el componente que suele consumir la mayor proporción del presupuesto publicitario – el mix de medios. Por tanto, el objetivo de esta investigación es analizar el impacto del mix de medios publicitario en el valor de la empresa. Los resultados de esta investigación tienen implicaciones tanto teóricas como de gestión. Desde una perspectiva teórica contribuye a aclarar cómo las decisiones del mix de medios contribuyen a aumentar el valor para los accionistas y, por tanto, establece una base para la investigación sobre el impacto de las decisiones de publicidad (creatividad del anuncio, mensaje, estrategia de medios, etc.) en el valor de la empresa. Para los profesionales de la publicidad y planificadores de medios los resultados de esta investigación permite extraer una mayor rentabilidad a sus planes de medios, lo que mejora la eficiencia de sus decisiones (McAlister, Srinivasan y Kim 2007).

## 2. Marco conceptual e hipótesis

La investigación publicitaria se ha centrado tradicionalmente en el estudio de los efectos de esta herramienta del marketing en los consumidores. Se han estudiado dos tipos de efectos: efectos intermedios, que se refieren a los cambios en las creencias y actitudes de los consumidores, y los efectos en el comportamiento, que se refieren a intención de compra y la elección de marca (Vakratsas y Ambler 1999). Gran parte de la literatura también nos indica que la publicidad influye en varias métricas de negocio, como las ventas (Leone 1995, Vakratsas y Ambler 1999; Hanssens, Parsons y Schultz 2001) y los beneficios (Erickson y Jacobson 1992).

Además, hay un grupo creciente de académicos que postula que la publicidad también tiene un impacto financiero en la compañía y analiza los efectos del gasto en publicidad en diferentes métricas de valor de la empresa. Grullon, Kanatas y Weston (2004) demuestran que el gasto en publicidad ofrece una mayor visibilidad de la empresa y aumenta la familiaridad del mercado de valores con la empresa, lo que aumenta la demanda del número de acciones y la liquidez (Frieder y Subrahmanyam 2005, Huberman 2001, Joshi y Hanssens 2010). Además, el gasto publicitario también afecta el valor de la empresa. Por un lado, tiene un impacto indirecto en valor de la empresa, a través de un aumento en las ventas y beneficios. Por otro lado, tiene un efecto directo, mediante la construcción de activos intangibles relacionados con la marca (Joshi y Hanssens 2010). Además, la publicidad que se mantiene

constante en el tiempo puede afectar a la percepción de los inversores sobre las ganancias esperadas y los flujos de efectivo futuros (Kim y McAlister 2011). También permite el aislamiento de la empresa de las turbulencias del mercado, disminuyendo así su riesgo sistemático (Veliyath y Ferris 1997; Osinga et al 2001).

Los estudios que analizan los efectos del gasto publicitario en las finanzas de la empresa generalmente emplean datos agregados - cifras anuales del gasto en publicidad, sin distinguir entre sus componentes. Entre ellos, el mix de medios que es clave a la hora de determinar la eficacia de la publicidad y que compromete un alto porcentaje del presupuesto de comunicación. En consecuencia, la elección del mejor mix de medios publicitario capaz de lograr la máxima eficacia es uno de los problemas más acuciantes para los profesionales de la publicidad hoy en día.

A pesar de su importancia, carecemos de evidencias para apoyar la influencia del mix de medios publicitario en el valor de la empresa. Sin embargo, algunos estudios sugieren que esta influencia existe. En primer lugar, investigaciones precedentes han demostrado como los medios de comunicación publicitarios no contribuyen por igual a la variación de las ventas. Por ejemplo, Tellis (2003) en un meta-análisis de 262 elasticidades publicitarias de marcas pertenecientes a 130 mercados diferentes demostró como la elasticidad de las ventas a la publicidad es mayor en prensa que en televisión. Teniendo en cuenta que la publicidad tiene un impacto indirecto en valor de la empresa a través de las ventas (Joshi y Hanssens 2010), podemos esperar que la combinación de medios de comunicación en los programas de publicidad también tenga un efecto sobre el valor de la empresa. En particular, los medios de comunicación que generan ventas más altas también podrían conducir a un aumento del valor de la empresa.

En segundo lugar, los efectos que los medios tienen sobre las actitudes de los consumidores no son homogéneos. Por ejemplo, la credibilidad de un medio de comunicación cuando se transfiere un mensaje modifica la forma en que se percibe la publicidad. La publicidad insertada en un medio de comunicación más creíble, como un periódico es percibida como más informativa, fiable y creíble que la publicidad colocada en un medio de menor credibilidad como la televisión (Bauer y Greyser 1968; Becker, Martino y Forasteros 1976; Larkin 1979). Del mismo modo, el impacto de los medios en algunas métricas de rendimiento de marketing, como la notoriedad y la familiaridad de marca tampoco es homogénea. La televisión es el medio más adecuado para aumentar la notoriedad de marca, seguido de cerca por las revistas. Sin embargo, las revistas son más apropiados que la televisión o los medios de comunicación on line para crear familiaridad de marca (Magazine Publishers of America 2008). Estas diferencias sugieren que algunos medios de comunicación podrían ser más apropiados que otros para crear activos intangibles relacionados con la marca – en particular, el valor de marca - que influye a su vez en valor de la empresa (Joshi y Hanssens 2010).

Por tanto, teniendo en cuenta que el mix de medios influye no sólo en las ventas de la marca, sino también en los activos de la marca, y que tanto las ventas como los activos están vinculados al valor de la empresa, podemos esperar que el mix de medios también influya en el largo plazo sobre el valor de la empresa.

*H1: El impacto de la publicidad en el valor de la empresa varía según el medio utilizado.*

Además, el efecto de cada medio en el valor de la empresa podría ser potenciado por la existencia de sinergias entre los medios de comunicación. El uso de distintos medios de comunicación en una campaña de publicidad favorece la aparición de sinergias, es decir, cada medio contribuye a potenciar el efecto del resto de medios empleados en la comunicación, de tal modo que la interacción entre medios produce un efecto mayor que la suma de sus efectos individuales. Estas sinergias afectan a las ventas de la marca de tal modo que el aumento de ventas ocasionado por un medio se ve reforzado por la presencia de otros medios de comunicación, haciendo así que el efecto combinado de los medios de comunicación supere la suma de sus efectos individuales (Naik y Raman 2003). Teniendo en cuenta su efecto sobre las ventas, es de esperar que estas sinergias también afecten valor de la empresa.

*H2: El impacto que la publicidad en un medio de comunicación tiene en el valor de empresa varía según la combinación de medios utilizada por la compañía.*

### 3. Metodología

Para lograr los objetivos de esta investigación empleamos un modelo vectorial autorregresivo con corrección de errores (VECM) en el que nuestras variables endógenas son valor de la empresa y el gasto publicitario realizado en tres medios de comunicación: prensa, radio y televisión. Estudiamos el comportamiento de estas variables sobre un conjunto de datos que contiene información financiera y de publicidad durante un periodo de 5 años (enero 2007 - diciembre 2011). Esta información procede de diversas fuentes. En cuanto a los datos financieros hemos recopilado información sobre el precio de las acciones de 84 empresas que operan en la Bolsa de Valores de Madrid. Del mismo modo, hemos recogido datos sobre la exposición a los medios de comunicación de estas empresas en España para el mismo periodo de tiempo. Todos los datos han sido analizados a nivel mensual.

### 4. Resultados

Nuestros resultados son preliminares pero confirman que el gasto en publicidad influye positivamente sobre el valor de la empresa, en consistencia con trabajos anteriores, y además sugieren que las decisiones sobre el mix de medios son importantes para el incremento del valor de la empresa. Así, cuando desagregamos el gasto en publicidad a través de los medios de comunicación empleados en una campaña, los resultados demuestran que la influencia de todos los medios sobre el valor de la empresa es diferente. En otras palabras, en promedio, algunos medios de comunicación parecen ser más apropiados que otros para aumentar valor de la empresa. En particular, se ha encontrado que la prensa es el medio más eficaz a la hora de generar valor para la empresa. Además, la eficacia de los medios se incrementa cuando estos se combinan con otros, gracias a la aparición de sinergias entre los medios que potencian su efecto sobre el valor de la empresa. Aquellas empresas que utilizan estrategias multimedia, combinando los tres medios analizados (prensa, radio y tv) consiguen que su publicidad tenga un mayor impacto sobre el valor de la empresa.

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# ANÁLISIS COMPARATIVO DE LA ADOPCIÓN DE SISTEMAS DE PAGO MÓVIL SMS, NFC Y QR

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## RESUMEN:

*El rápido crecimiento de la tecnología móvil entre la población mundial ha llevado a muchas empresas a intentar aprovechar los dispositivos móviles como una herramienta de ventas. Este estudio compara algunos de los factores que determinan la aceptación del consumidor de los pagos móviles a través de SMS (Short Message Service), NFC (Near Field Communication) y QR (Quick Response). A partir del Modelo de Aceptación de Tecnología (TAM) se desarrolla un análisis multigrupo con un enfoque comparativo basado en la T-Student. Los resultados obtenidos en este estudio demuestran que hay diferencias en los factores que determinan la aceptación de cada uno de los sistemas, así como el nivel de la intención de uso. Por último, el trabajo muestra las principales implicaciones para la gestión y determina algunas estrategias para reforzar este nuevo negocio en el contexto de los nuevos avances tecnológicos.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE:

Mobile payment, SMS, NFC, QR, TAM, Intention to use.

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## 1. Introducción: Pagos móviles

En los últimos años, los dispositivos móviles como *smartphones*, PDAs (*personal digital assistants*), tabletas y ordenadores portátiles han sido utilizados para la transmisión de datos de todo tipo. Estos dispositivos también son cada vez más utilizados como herramientas facilitadoras de pagos de bienes y servicios a través de la transmisión de datos, conocidos como *mobile payments* o simplemente *m-payments*.

Según la Unión Internacional de Telecomunicaciones (UIT, 2013), el número total de suscripciones de teléfonos móviles alcanzó casi 7 mil millones a finales de 2012, lo que supone una penetración global del 95% (128% en los países desarrollados y el 89% en países en desarrollo). A la luz de estos datos, la mayoría de las empresas tecnológicas están centrando sus esfuerzos en aumentar el número de servicios disponibles en los mismos, incluyendo los pagos móviles.

Según el último informe publicado por el Banco Central Europeo (BCE), en 2013 en relación al número de transacciones de pago y su tipología en España en el año 2012, el 41,94% de las mismas se efectuaron mediante pagos directos, el 41,58% con sistemas de pago relacionados con las tarjetas bancarias, y el 14,60% mediante transferencias bancarias. Si revisamos la tendencia desde el año 2007, el sistema de pago que ha experimentado un mayor crecimiento ha sido el asociado a los medios de pago del tipo tarjeta con un crecimiento próximo al 25%, seguido de los pagos por transferencia bancaria con una variación positiva del 15,7% y, finalmente, los pagos directos (en efectivo) con un ascenso del 9,7%.

En lo que se refiere a los sistemas de pago más empleados en el mundo online, destacamos el liderazgo del pago con tarjeta bancaria (débito o crédito) con el 66,20%, el pago a través de PayPal con el 11,60% y el pago contra reembolso con el 10,70%.

**TABLA 1**

Evolución 2006-2012 del uso de medios de pago utilizados en compras por Internet (%)

Sistema de pago	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Tarjeta débito/crédito	48,30%	60,90%	54,00%	50,20%	64,60%	62,90%	66,20%
Contra reembolso	34,70%	25,70%	27,70%	29,10%	13,60%	11,30%	10,70%
Transferencia bancaria	13,40%	8,40%	11,70%	6,70%	9,20%	4,70%	3,90%
PayPal	1,30%	2,10%	4,50%	10,70%	5,00%	14,90%	11,60%
Tarjeta prepago	0,70%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	3,00%	7,20%	3,20%
Tarjeta del establecimiento	0,50%	0,40%	0,70%	0,10%	1,20%	1,00%	0,70%
Domiciliación bancaria	0,00%	0,60%	1,00%	1,80%	0,70%	1,30%	2,20%
Móvil	0,00%	0,20%	0,20%	0,00%	0,10%	0,10%	0,00%
Otros	0,80%	0,40%	0,00%	1,30%	1,00%	1,30%	2,00%
NS/NC	0,20%	1,20%	0,10%	0,10%	1,60%	1,30%	0,90%

Fuente: CMT (2013)

Como se observa en la tabla 1 los nuevos medios de pago han tenido un crecimiento considerable. Si bien es cierto que en el caso de Paypal el crecimiento que ha experimentado es notable, los pagos usando teléfonos móviles no se han consolidado en los últimos años. Según un reciente estudio de Mobile Life de TNS (2012) realizado en 58 países, el 15% de los usuarios españoles ha usado recientemente su móvil para comprar o buscar información previa a la compra, si bien es cierto que aún se encuentra a distancia de los sistemas de pago tradicionales.

A pesar de esta baja penetración como medio de pago, consideramos que estas tecnologías tendrán un crecimiento elevado, por diferentes motivos: en primer lugar, por la tasa de penetración que tiene la telefonía móvil en nuestro país próxima al 119% (CMT, 2013) y del 66% sobre el total de telefonía móvil en el caso de los teléfonos inteligentes o *smartphones* (comScore, 2013) lo que denota el elevado potencial con el que cuenta; en segundo lugar, por los diferentes intereses de los *stakeholders* de este negocio, tales como instituciones financieras, operadores de telefonía, proveedores de servicios tecnológicos, fabricantes, comerciantes y clientes (Liébana-Cabanillas et al., 2013); y, por último, por las diferentes ventajas que para las empresas y usuarios presenta este sistema de pago sobre otros sistemas de pago alternativos en Internet.

En general, cualquier actividad de carácter particular o empresarial en la que intervenga un soporte electrónico que permita la conexión a una red móvil para concluir con éxito una transacción económica (Liébana-Cabanillas, 2012) podrá ser considerada un pago móvil. Innopay (2013) clasifica los medios de pago móvil (MPM) de acuerdo con dos criterios: la proximidad y el modelo de negocio. Los pagos de proximidad se clasifican sobre la base de la ubicación física de un consumidor, por ejemplo, la proximidad en el mostrador de una tienda, o los pagos a distancia, como el pago en línea a través de un teléfono móvil. En segundo lugar, el modelo de negocio se caracteriza por las diferentes relaciones de consumo (*Peer to Peer –P2P–* o *Consumer to Consumer –C2C–*) o las relaciones entre empresas y clientes (*Business to Consumer, B2C*). En nuestra investigación analizaremos los MPM desde la perspectiva del B2C con la aplicación de las tres tecnologías principales sobre las que, tanto empresas como particulares, están centrando sus esfuerzos: los basados en SMS (*Short Message Service*), las comunicaciones de corto alcance o NFC (*Near Field Communication*) y los códigos QR (*Quick Response*). La primera de ellas (SMS) se caracteriza por ser a distancia, mientras que la segunda y tercera (NFC y QR) se consideran como de proximidad con el comercio.

El uso de SMS para el pago móvil requiere un protocolo de comunicación que permite el intercambio de mensajes cortos de texto entre dos dispositivos móviles (Valcourt et al., 2005); por otra parte, los pagos NFC se realizan con la presencia física en un comercio o ante un terminal compatible, en los que basta con acercarse al terminal móvil debidamente preparado y, finalmente, los códigos QR son sistemas de almacenamiento que utilizan una matriz de puntos o un código de barras bidimensional creado por Denso Wave que puede imprimirse o mostrarse en una pantalla y se interpretan por un lector especial (Denso Wave, 2000). En contraste con los sistemas de pago de SMS, tanto los pagos NFC y QR se hacen en persona en una tienda acercando el dispositivo móvil al receptor o realizando una lectura de un código en el comercio, la web de una empresa en una valla publicitaria, etc.

Dado el potencial de este nuevo mercado y la cantidad limitada de investigación científica publicada relevante, nuestro estudio pretende analizar los factores determinantes relacionados con la adopción de nuevas tecnologías o medios de pagos móviles (MPM), centrándose en los tres sistemas de pago anteriormente citados (SMS, NFC y QR). Para lograr este objetivo, hemos empleado el Modelo de Aceptación de Tecnología (TAM) para analizar los determinantes de la intención de uso de los nuevos MPM y contrastar las posibles diferencias que pudieran existir. A partir de los resultados de ajuste del modelo teórico propuesto, se aportan recomendaciones de índole empresarial para mejorar su adopción entre los potenciales usuarios mediante estrategias concretas.

## **2. La adopción de los sistemas de pago móvil: Hipótesis de la investigación.**

La mayoría de las investigaciones sobre adopción de servicios de pagos móviles o tecnologías móviles, se fundamentan en tecnologías ya existentes y en su uso posterior. El objeto de estudio de este trabajo compara los sistemas de pago QR, SMS y NFC en virtud de las relaciones previamente establecidas.



En resumen, el actual estudio propone que (1) las normas subjetivas pueden tener relación directa o indirecta sobre la intención de uso (2) la facilidad de uso determina la utilidad de las herramientas de pago y la actitud del usuario hacia las mismas, (3) la utilidad percibida del usuario potencial manifiesta una relación con la actitud y hacia la intención de uso de los MPM, y (4) la actitud hacia el nuevo sistema influye positivamente sobre el comportamiento futuro.

### **2.1. Normas subjetivas.**

Las influencias sociales en forma de normas subjetivas han sido empleadas en los modelos de aceptación de la tecnología y sus posteriores adaptaciones (Fishbein y Ajzen, 1975; Venkatesh y Bala, 2008), siendo definida como el grado por el cual un individuo percibe que las personas que son importantes para un individuo, piensan que éste debería usar un sistema o llevar a cabo una acción determinada (Fishbein y Ajzen, 1975; Venkatesh y Davis, 2000; Venkatesh y Bala, 2008). Este constructo se compone de dos factores subyacentes básicos, por una parte las creencias que el consumidor posee sobre las personas que considera de referencia, y de otra, la motivación que posee para comportarse de acuerdo a los deseos de dichas personas (Herrero et al., 2005). A partir de este planteamiento han sido muchos los autores que han identificado una relación positiva y directa entre las normas subjetivas y la facilidad de uso (Lu et al., 2005; Bhatti, 2007), la utilidad (Rouibah y Abbas, 2011; Zhang et al., 2011) y por supuesto sobre la intención de uso (Shih y Fang, 2006; Chung et al., 2012). Por tanto, se proponen las siguientes hipótesis:

*H1: Las normas subjetivas tienen un efecto positivo sobre la facilidad de uso del nuevo sistema de pago.*

*H2: Las normas subjetivas tienen un efecto positivo sobre la intención de uso del nuevo sistema de pago.*

*H3: Las normas subjetivas tienen un efecto positivo sobre la utilidad del nuevo sistema de pago.*

### **2.2. Facilidad de uso.**

La facilidad de uso se refiere a la percepción del individuo de que el empleo de un determinado sistema se encontrará libre de esfuerzo, o simplemente le resultará fácil su manejo (Davis, 1989), siendo por ello considerado uno de los atributos de mayor influencia en la adopción de una nueva tecnología. Para Davis et al. (1989), la facilidad de uso tiene un doble impacto; por una parte sobre la actitud, debido a la autoeficacia y la instrumentalidad, y por otro lado a través de la utilidad, como propone el TAM (Muñoz, 2008).

El efecto de la facilidad de uso percibida sobre la utilidad percibida se ha demostrado en múltiples investigaciones aplicadas a diferentes contextos (Aldás et al., 2011; Muñoz et al., 2012) así como la relación entre la facilidad de uso, actitud e intención (Chau y Lai, 2003; Hernández, 2010). Ante tales fundamentos se proponen las siguientes hipótesis:

*H4: La facilidad de uso del sistema de pago propuesto tiene un efecto positivo sobre la actitud hacia el mismo.*

*H5: La facilidad de uso del sistema de pago propuesto tiene un efecto positivo sobre la utilidad del mismo.*

### **2.3. Utilidad percibida.**

Según el TAM, la utilidad percibida es el grado en que una persona cree que el uso de un sistema en particular aumentará su eficacia y su rendimiento en el trabajo (Davis, 1993).

Diferentes investigaciones han demostrado como la utilidad mantiene una relación directa con la actitud (Wu y Chen, 2005; Muñoz et al., 2012), pero adicionalmente también con la intención de uso (Qi et al., 2009; Shin y Shin, 2011). En el contexto de nuestra investigación, entenderemos que la utilidad del sistema de pago influirá en la intención de uso a través de la actitud que mantiene el usuario hacia el sistema de pago, pero también de forma directa en virtud de los principios del TAM. Derivado de todo lo anterior se proponen las siguientes hipótesis:

*H6: La utilidad tiene un efecto positivo sobre la actitud hacia el sistema de pago propuesto.*

*H7: La utilidad tiene un efecto positivo sobre la intención de uso hacia el sistema de pago propuesto.*

#### **2.4. Actitud.**

Los estudios empíricos relacionados con la difusión de las innovaciones tecnológicas han ampliado el uso del modelo TAM para incluir a las actitudes, tal y como propone la Teoría de la Acción Razonada, TRA (Davis et al., 1989). Según Polatoglu y Ekin (2001) la actitud del cliente está compuesta por unas creencias sobre el objeto e importancia percibida de ese atributo en tomar la decisión a adoptar. En consecuencia, en los entornos online, se espera que la actitud facilite las transacciones y reduzca las barreras a la adopción de las relaciones de intercambio (Pavlou 2002a, 2002b) y en nuestro caso más concretamente que favorezca la intención de uso de los MPM (Schierz et al., 2010). En línea con los trabajos anteriores, se propone una relación similar en el caso de los nuevos sistemas de pago, objeto de esta investigación, estableciéndose, por tanto, la siguiente hipótesis:

*H8: La actitud hacia el sistema de pago propuesto tiene un efecto positivo sobre la intención de uso del mismo.*

### **3. Aspectos metodológicos.**

#### **3.1. *Ámbito de estudio y recogida de información.***

Para evaluar el modelo de comportamiento propuesto, se elaboraron tres cuestionarios auto-administrados que el usuario cumplimentaba tras la visualización de un vídeo explicativo de cada uno de los MPM. Además el cuestionario fue sometido a varias pruebas preliminares que verificaron su fiabilidad, total entendimiento y ausencia de errores en su cumplimentación.

Para el caso de los sistemas de pago SMS y QR empleamos un método de muestreo por cuotas en base a las características de los consumidores reflejados en la Encuesta sobre Equipamiento y Uso de Tecnologías de la Información y Comunicación en los Hogares del INE. La encuesta se realizó por primera vez entre enero y febrero de 2012 y, de nuevo, entre febrero y marzo de 2013. Las muestras asociadas a cada uno de estos medios de pago se compusieron de 287 y 168 encuestas válidas, respectivamente.

Para la encuesta del sistema de pagos NFC, se aplicó un muestreo no probabilístico por conveniencia. El estudio, se realizó entre julio y agosto de 2012, alcanzando un tamaño muestral final de 287 encuestas válidas.

#### **3.2. *Evaluación de la calidad de las escalas de medida utilizada.***

Las escalas de medida empleadas en el cuestionario se adaptaron a partir de investigaciones anteriores (véase Anexo 1). En concreto, las escalas utilizadas por Taylor y Todd (1995), Venkatesh y Davis (2008) y Schierz et al. (2010) fueron empleadas para medir las normas subjetivas acerca de los nuevos MPM. La escala de actitud hacia el uso la escala fue adaptada de

las investigaciones de Yang y Yoo (2004) y Schierz et al. (2010). La escala de utilidad percibida es una adaptación de la Bhattacharjee (2001), Van der Heijden (2003) y Schierz et al. (2010). La escala de facilidad percibida de uso fue adaptada de Bhattacharjee (2001), Davis et al. (1989), Taylor y Todd (1995), Venkatesh y Davis (2000) y Schierz et al. (2010). Por último, la escala de intención de uso fue adaptada de Davis (1989), Gefen et al. (2003), Venkatesh y Davis (2000) y Schierz et al. (2010).

Para comprobar la idoneidad de las escalas de medida se ha examinado su fiabilidad y validez a través de una serie de análisis tanto exploratorios (para los cuales se utilizó el programa SPSS 15.0) como confirmatorios (utilizándose AMOS 18).

### ***Análisis exploratorios.***

En primer lugar, para medir la fiabilidad de las escalas se utilizó el indicador *alpha* de Cronbach, considerando como valor de referencia 0,7 (Nunnally, 1978). En este caso todas las variables obtuvieron valores buenos o muy buenos ( $\alpha > 0,8$ ).

Posteriormente se procedió a realizar un Análisis de Componentes Principales para comprobar el grado de unidimensionalidad de las escalas. En este sentido se comprobó que el análisis era adecuado para las variables objeto de estudio, debido a:

- La proporción de la varianza que tienen en común las variables (a partir del coeficiente de Kaiser Meyer Olkin, KMO), superándose siempre el valor 0,5, considerando por tanto, que la adecuación muestral era correcta.
- La prueba de esfericidad de Barlett era significativa (sign.= 0,000), rechazando por tanto la hipótesis nula relativa a la ausencia de diferencias entre la matriz de correlaciones y la matriz identidad.
- Los coeficientes de correlación de la matriz de correlaciones anti-imagen fuera de la diagonal principal presentaba valores bajos.
- Por último, se verificó la existencia de altas comunales ( $> 0,5$ ) en las variables objeto de análisis, lo que implicaba que todas estaba muy bien representadas en el espacio de los factores y las cargas factoriales en los indicadores superaban el mínimo recomendado ( $R^2 > 0,5$ ).

Por tanto, se puede concluir que las escalas de medida presentaban una estructura unidimensional.

### ***Análisis confirmatorios.***

Para contrastar la validez convergente y divergente de las escalas se procedió a realizar un Análisis Factorial Confirmatorio (AFC) para cada uno de los grupos en que se dividió la muestra en base a la experiencia (análisis multigrupo). La validez convergente fue evaluada a través de las cargas factoriales de los indicadores. Se comprobó que los coeficientes eran significativamente distintos de cero, y además que las cargas entre las variables latentes y observadas eran altas en todos los casos ( $> 0,7$ ), una vez eliminada una de ellas del constructo facilidad de uso. Por tanto, se podía afirmar que las variables latentes explicaban de forma adecuada a las variables observadas (Del Barrio y Luque, 2012).

**TABLA 2**

Análisis de la fiabilidad compuesta (FC) y varianza extraída (VE)

Variable	Items	SMS			NFC			QR		
		$\alpha$	FC	VE	$\alpha$	FC	VE	$\alpha$	FC	VE
Normas subjetivas	3	0,92	0,92	0,79	0,93	0,93	0,82	0,91	0,92	0,8
Facilidad de uso	4	0,80	0,83	0,81	0,91	0,92	0,74	0,92	0,92	0,75
Utilidad percibida	4	0,92	0,93	0,76	0,87	0,88	0,65	0,88	0,88	0,65
Actitud	4	0,93	0,93	0,78	0,92	0,92	0,74	0,89	0,89	0,67
Intención de uso	3	0,94	0,94	0,83	0,93	0,93	0,82	0,94	0,91	0,78

Con respecto a la validez discriminante, se comprobó que las varianzas eran significativamente distintas de cero y que la correlación entre cada par de escalas no era superior a 0,8 (Flavián et al. 2004), lo que demuestra la existencia de cinco constructos individuales.

Nuevamente la fiabilidad de las escalas puede evaluarse a partir de una serie de indicadores extraídos del análisis confirmatorio (véase Tabla 2). Precisamente, la fiabilidad compuesta del constructo (FCC) y análisis de la varianza extraída (AVE) superaban el umbral utilizado como referencia: 0,7 y 0,5, respectivamente, así como otros indicadores de ajuste global para el modelo de medida (Del Barrio y Luque, 2012).

#### 4. Resultados.

##### 4.1 Modelo de ecuaciones estructurales

Una vez analizada la fiabilidad y la validez de las escalas de medida, se procedió a contrastar las hipótesis de investigación apoyadas en la revisión de la literatura. Para ello se desarrolló un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales multigrupo en función de cada uno de los tres MPM descritos anteriormente (SMS, NFC y QR), empleando el método de máxima verosimilitud con la técnica de remuestreo o *bootstrapping* (con 1.000 réplicas) por no cumplirse el supuesto de normalidad multivariante.

Antes de evaluar cada uno de los tres modelos con mayor profundidad y el examen de las diferencias entre ellos, se comprobó que el ajuste del modelo, evaluado a través de las medidas absolutas, incrementales y de parsimonia, era razonablemente bueno de acuerdo a los niveles recomendados por la literatura (Bollen, 1989; Lai y Li, 2005): RMSEA < 0,08 GFI y AGFI > 0,80, CFI y NFI > 0,90 (véase la Tabla 3).

**TABLA 3**

Análisis de la fiabilidad compuesta (FC) y varianza extraída (VE)

Coefficientes*	SMS	NFC	QR
RMSEA	0,06	0,06	0,07
X <sup>2</sup>	284,01	288,37	251,68
df	127	127	127
Bollen-Stine's p	0,00	0,00	0,00
NCP	157,00	161,37	124,69
GFI	0,90	0,87	0,86
AGFI	0,87	0,86	0,81
NFI	0,94	0,94	0,9
CFI	0,97	0,97	0,95
IFI	0,67	0,97	0,95

\*Nota: RMSEA, *root mean square error of approximation*; NCP, *noncentrality parameter*; RFI, *relative fit index*; GFI, *goodness-of-fit index*; AGFI, *adjusted goodness-of-fit index*; NFI, *normed fit index*; CFI, *comparative goodness of fit*; IFI, *incremental fit index*.

Para evaluar el modelo estructural se analizó la significación estadística de las cargas estructurales del modelo. Los resultados del análisis de ecuaciones estructurales así como los resultados de las hipótesis se muestran en la Tabla 4 y en la Figura 1.

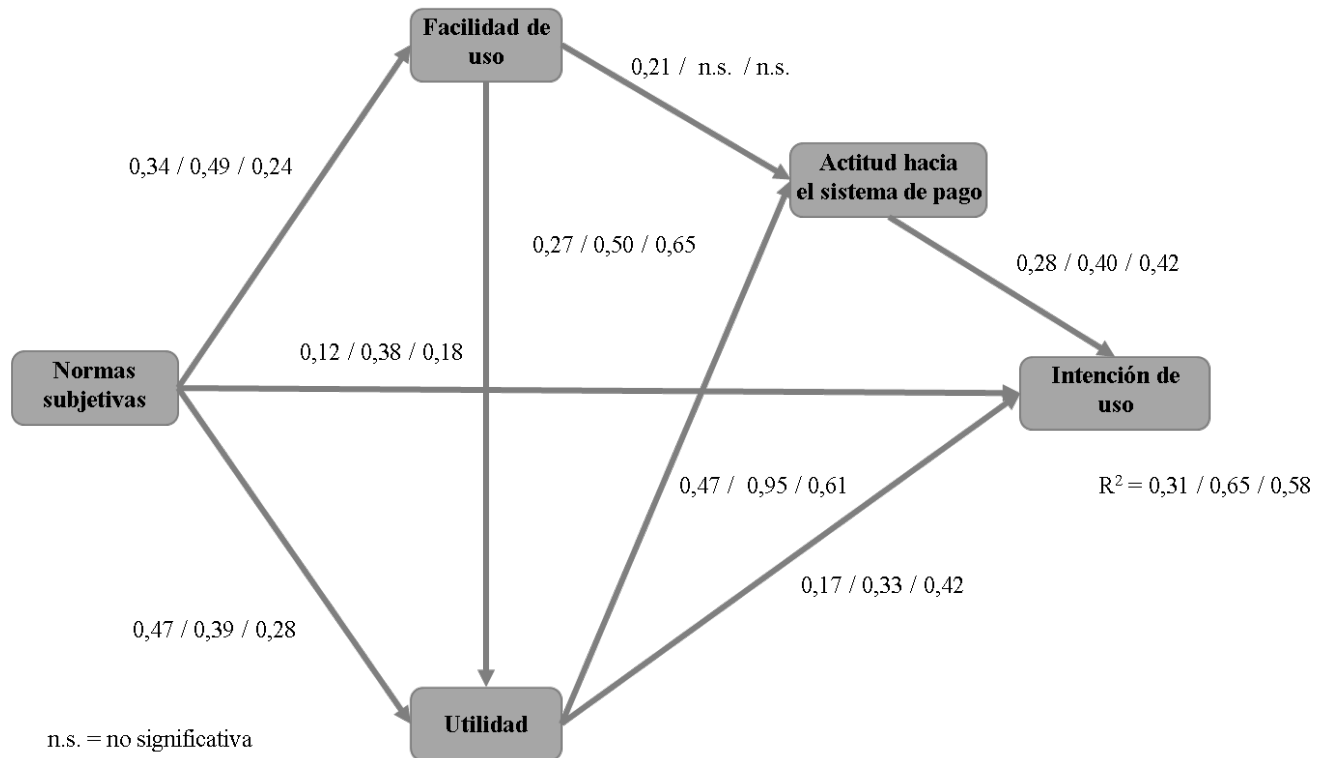
**TABLA 4**

Significación estadística de las cargas estructurales estandarizadas

Hipótesis	MPM	SMS			NFC			QR		
		$\beta_{sms}$	S.E.	Sig.	$\beta_{nfc}$	S.E.	Sig.	$\beta_{qr}$	S.E.	Sig.
H1. Normas subjetivas → Facilidad de Uso		0,34	0,07	0,00	0,49	0,05	0,00	0,24	0,06	0,00
H2. Normas subjetivas → Intención de uso		0,12	0,06	0,02	0,38	0,07	0,00	0,18	0,07	0,00
H3. Normas subjetivas → Utilidad percibida		0,47	0,06	0,00	0,39	0,05	0,00	0,28	0,07	0,00
H4. Facilidad de uso → Actitud		0,21	0,05	0,00	-0,07	0,09	0,43	-0,01	0,07	0,00
H5. Facilidad de uso → Utilidad percibida		0,27	0,05	0,00	0,50	0,07	0,00	0,65	0,11	0,93
H6. Utilidad percibida → Actitud		0,47	0,05	0,00	0,95	0,11	0,00	0,61	0,08	0,00
H7. Utilidad percibida → Intención de uso		0,17	0,07	0,01	0,33	0,11	0,00	0,42	0,15	0,00
H8. Actitud → Intención de uso		0,28	0,07	0,00	0,40	0,08	0,00	0,42	0,19	0,03

**FIGURA 1**

Modelo de comportamiento (betas estandarizadas): SMS, NFC y QR



En primer lugar las hipótesis 1, 2 y 3 derivadas de las normas subjetivas no pudieron ser rechazadas ( $p < 0,001$ ). En este caso, las normas subjetivas presentan una influencia directa y positiva sobre la facilidad de uso ( $\beta_{sms} = 0,34$   $p < 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{nfc} = 0,49$   $p < 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{qr} = 0,24$   $p < 0,001$ ), sobre la intención de uso ( $\beta_{sms} = 0,12$   $p < 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{nfc} = 0,38$   $p < 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{qr} = 0,18$   $p < 0,001$ ) y sobre la utilidad ( $\beta_{sms} = 0,47$   $p < 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{nfc} = 0,39$   $p < 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{qr} = 0,28$   $p < 0,001$ ). Estos resultados son congruentes con los obtenidos por las investigaciones comentadas en los anteriores apartados.

En segundo lugar, las hipótesis derivadas del efecto de facilidad de uso (hipótesis 4 y 5) no pudieron ser rechazadas categóricamente. La relación entre la facilidad de uso percibida y actitud sólo pudo ser corroborada en el caso del sistema SMS ( $\beta_{sms} = 0,21$   $p < 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{nfc} = -0,07$   $p > 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{qr} = -0,01$   $p > 0,001$ ), mientras que se rechazaba en los otros dos casos. Estos resultados demuestran que los usuarios dan menos importancia de lo que la literatura sugiere a la relación entre la facilidad de uso percibida y la actitud (Lorenzo et al., 2011) y se presta mayor importancia a la utilidad percibida como un factor de uso previsto.

En tercer lugar, la relación entre la utilidad y la actitud e intención en las hipótesis 6 y 7 tampoco puede ser rechazada en ninguno de los casos propuestos. En este caso, la utilidad que los consumidores confieren al sistema de pago móvil tendrán un efecto directo tanto sobre su actitud hacia él ( $\beta_{sms} = 0,47$   $p < 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{nfc} = 0,95$   $p < 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{qr} = 0,61$   $p < 0,001$ ) como sobre la intención de utilizarla en el futuro ( $\beta_{sms} = 0,17$   $p < 0,10$ ;  $\beta_{nfc} = 0,33$   $p < 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{qr} = 0,42$   $p < 0,001$ ). Estas relaciones implican una relación directa y positiva entre el valor percibido de estos medios de pago y la actitud del usuario y la intención hacia su uso.

Finalmente, la hipótesis 8, que se refiere a la mejora de la intención de uso a partir de una actitud favorable hacia el sistema de pago y su uso previsto, no pudo ser rechazada ( $\beta_{sms} = 0,28$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{nfc} = 0,40$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ;  $\beta_{qr} = 0,42$   $p < 0,05$ ). Siguiendo la investigación de Ajzen y Fishbein (1980) y otros estudios posteriores, la actitud favorable del consumidor hacia una propuesta de instrumento de pago móvil mejorará la intención de adoptarlo. Aunque es difícil definir la actitud de un usuario potencial debido a la multidimensionalidad del constructo, esta relación se ha demostrado en investigaciones anteriores relacionada con la compra a través de los móviles (Aldás-Manzano et al., 2008), o con los sistemas de pago móviles (Shin, 2009; Liébana-Cabanillas et al., 2014), entre otros.

#### **4.1 Comparación de modelos**

Para demostrar la existencia de un modelo común para los tres sistemas de pago (SMS, NFC y QR) después de haber sido evaluados, se compararon los coeficientes de regresión o pesos en pares entre los modelos estructurales utilizando una versión modificada de la prueba T-Student para muestras independientes (Goodman y Blum, 1996; Chin, 2000).

Los resultados revelaron diferencias significativas (significación entre 0,01 y 0,05) en las relaciones entre ciertas variables de los tres modelos estructurales (véase la Tabla 5). Con respecto a la comparación entre los modelos NFC y SMS, las diferencias son especialmente pronunciadas en las relaciones existentes entre las normas subjetivas y la intención de uso (diferencia = -2,58,  $p = 0,00$ ), la facilidad de uso y la actitud (diferencia = 5,28,  $p = 0,00$ ), la facilidad de uso percibida y la utilidad percibida (diferencia = -2,70,  $p = 0,01$ ), y, finalmente, la utilidad percibida y la actitud (diferencia = -3,91,  $p = 0,00$ ). Las mayores diferencias se encuentran entre la facilidad de uso y la actitud, y entre la utilidad y la actitud percibida. Por tanto, la facilidad de uso tiene un peso más importante en la adopción de un sistema de pago por SMS debido a su fuerte relación con la actitud, mientras que la norma subjetiva y percepción de utilidad indican una mayor relevancia con el sistema de pago NFC, debido a su impacto en la actitud y la intención.

**TABLA 5**

Diferencias en los coeficientes no estandarizados de los modelos SMS, NFC, QR

	SMS-NFC	T (SMS-NFC)	Sig.	SMS-QR	T(SMS-QR)	Sig.	NFC-QR	T(NFC-QR)	Sig.
H1	-0,07	-0,79	0,43	0,10	1,06	0,29	0,17	<b>2,00</b>	<b>0,05</b>
H2	-0,26	<b>-2,86</b>	<b>0,00</b>	-0,06	-0,65	0,51	0,20	<b>2,03</b>	<b>0,04</b>
H3	0,09	1,14	0,25	0,20	<b>2,14</b>	<b>0,03</b>	0,11	1,20	0,23
H4	0,55	<b>5,28</b>	<b>0,00</b>	0,48	<b>5,39</b>	<b>0,00</b>	-0,06	-0,57	0,57
H5	-0,23	<b>-2,70</b>	<b>0,01</b>	-0,38	<b>-3,16</b>	<b>0,00</b>	-0,15	-1,14	0,25
H6	-0,48	<b>-3,91</b>	<b>0,00</b>	-0,14	-1,48	0,14	0,34	<b>2,51</b>	<b>0,01</b>
H7	-0,17	-1,29	0,20	-0,26	-1,56	0,12	-0,09	-0,49	0,62
H8	-0,12	-1,06	0,29	-0,14	-0,66	0,51	-0,02	-0,10	0,92

En la comparación entre los modelos de QR y SMS, también se descubrieron diferencias significativas, esta vez entre la norma subjetiva y la percepción de utilidad (diferencia= 2,14, p = 0,03), entre la facilidad de uso y la actitud la facilidad de uso (diferencia = -5,39, p = 0,00), y entre la facilidad de uso y utilidad percibida (diferencia = -3.16, p = 0,00). En esta ocasión las mayores diferencias se presentaron en las relaciones entre la facilidad de uso y la utilidad, siendo mayor en el caso de los sistemas de pago QR.

Finalmente, en la comparación entre los modelos para el caso del MPM NFC y el basado en QR, se observaron diferencias significativas en la relación entre las normas subjetivas y la facilidad de uso percibida (diferencia = 2,00, p = 0,05), entre las normas subjetivas y la intención de uso (diferencia= 2,03, p = 0,04) y entre la utilidad percibida y la actitud (diferencia = 2,51, p = 0,01). En esta última comparación las mayores diferencias se originan en la relación utilidad y actitud, con mayor fuerza en el caso de los sistemas de pago NFC.

### 5. Conclusiones e implicaciones para la gestión.

Si bien existen numerosos estudios que analizan la aceptación de las nuevas tecnologías, nuestra investigación es novedosa desde una doble perspectiva. En primer lugar, se presenta un análisis comparativo de los tres MPM principales utilizados en la actualidad por usuarios y empresas a nivel internacional y, en segundo lugar, esta investigación se llevó a cabo en un país en el que las tres tecnologías tienen un nivel de penetración incipiente, por lo que los resultados tendrán aplicaciones prácticas actualmente y en un futuro próximo.

El objetivo principal de esta investigación es analizar la aceptación del consumidor de los sistemas de pago móviles SMS, NFC y QR desde un punto de vista percibido, tratando de modelizar cuáles son sus factores constitutivos. En este sentido, los modelos explican la variación de la intención de uso en el 31,7%, 65,3% y 57,9%, respectivamente. Los resultados del estudio son consistentes con los de la literatura, a saber, que el TAM original vuelve a ser un modelo robusto y parsimonioso para el estudio de los MPM. En nuestro caso todas las relaciones del modelo de TAM se verifican en los tres sistemas, excepto la relación entre la facilidad de uso y la actitud en los sistemas de pago NFC y QR. Esto puede ser debido a la alta adopción por los usuarios de terminales móviles y a que entre los usuarios de la muestra no se plantean dificultades destacables en el manejo de estas herramientas, y, en consecuencia, la eliminación de inconvenientes para su adopción. Sin embargo, hay diferencias en los tres modelos en la definición final de la intención de uso del usuario potencial.

Por otro lado, vale la pena señalar que las diferencias detectadas entre los tres medios de pago analizados refuerzan la idea de que el comportamiento del consumidor difiere dependiendo del tipo de sistema de pago móvil, como se observa a través de la diferencia en la intensidad en las relaciones de las variables. En nuestro caso, hemos observado diferencias en los niveles entre

las normas subjetivas y facilidad de uso, normas subjetivas e intención de uso, normas subjetivas y utilidad percibida, facilidad de uso y actitud, facilidad de uso y utilidad percibida y utilidad percibida y actitud. En consecuencia, las únicas relaciones que no mostraron diferencias significativas fueron las existentes entre utilidad percibida e intención de uso y entre actitud hacia el sistema de pago e intención de uso. Esto nos sugiere que las normas subjetivas, la facilidad de uso y la utilidad son determinantes clave de la intención, aunque se presentan con diferente intensidad dependiendo del MPM.

Desde una óptica gerencial debemos destacar la importancia que suponen estos sistemas de pago en la sociedad actual, aunque será el dinamismo de los sistemas, la globalización, el perfil de los clientes y los competidores los que definirán el escenario futuro de los MPM. En virtud del análisis efectuado, el sistema de pago que ha manifestado una mayor intención de uso ha sido el NFC, seguido por el QR y finalmente por el SMS. Curiosamente los sistemas de pago más novedosos atraen en mayor porcentaje a los usuarios, lo que nos sugiere que las empresas deban de facilitar a los usuarios los sistemas de pago más novedosos para mejorar su adopción junto con la evaluación de la utilidad, actitud y normas subjetivas.

Como la mayoría de trabajos de investigación, éste presenta una serie de limitaciones que deben ser debatidas y de las que pueden derivarse futuras líneas de investigación. En primer lugar, al tratarse de un estudio comparativo en un país, somos conscientes de que el alcance del estudio es nuestra principal limitación. No obstante, consideramos que los resultados pueden generalizarse a países con un perfil similar al español e incluso realizar un análisis *cross-cultural* con el objetivo de verificar los resultados y analizar posibles diferencias entre países o regiones. Finalmente, con respecto al método de recolección de datos, se ha desarrollado una investigación de corte transversal lo cual impide analizar la evolución del comportamiento de los usuarios a lo largo del tiempo. Un enfoque longitudinal permitiría comprobar la robustez los efectos de las variables moderadoras analizadas a lo largo del tiempo. Por último, tan solo hemos valorado las variables propias del TAM por lo que futuras investigaciones podrían incluir nuevas variables e incluso analizar el efecto moderador de algunas variables como el género, la edad o la experiencia del participante.



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## Anexo 1: Escalas empleadas

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Escala</b>
<b>Normas subjetivas</b>	La gente cuyas opiniones valoro aprobaría que utilizara el MPM para comprar algún producto
	La mayoría de personas a las que tengo en cuenta piensan que debería utilizar el MPM para comprar algún producto
	Las personas cercanas a mi estarían de acuerdo con que utilizara el MPM para comprar algún producto
<b>Facilidad de uso</b>	La interacción con la herramienta es clara y comprensible
	La interacción con la herramienta no requiere un esfuerzo mental
	Me parece que es fácil que la herramienta haga lo que quiero que haga
	En general la herramienta es fácil de usar
<b>Utilidad percibida</b>	Usar el MPM puede ayudarme a realizar las compras
	Usar el MPM puede incrementar mi eficacia a la hora de realizar compras
	Usar el MPM para mis compras en Internet puede incrementar mi productividad
	En general, los MPM pueden ser útil para mí a la hora de realizar mis compras
<b>Actitud</b>	Utilizar el MPM para realizar mis compras es una idea que... Me disgusta - Que me gusta
	Utilizar el MPM para realizar mis compras es una idea que... Absurda - Inteligente
	Utilizar el MPM para realizar mis compras es una idea que... Aburrida - Interesante
	Utilizar el MPM para realizar mis compras es una idea que... Desagradable - Agradable
<b>Intención de uso</b>	Asumiendo que tuviera acceso al MPM, tengo intención de utilizarlo para realizar mis compras
	Si tuviera acceso al MPM durante los próximos meses, considero que la usaré, en lugar de otro sistema alternativo
	Suponiendo que tuviera acceso al MPM, la usaría en los próximos meses

# BRANDING IN INTERACTIVE MEDIA: BRAND CONNECTION PLATFORMS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT AND BRAND IMAGE

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## ABSTRACT

*Branding in digital worlds has become a critical issue and is shifting from a firm-focused management to a customer-focused one. This is especially relevant in brand connection platforms, which are designed to promote customers' value-creating activities. This research aims to explore whether the active role of customers in brand connection platforms (BCPs) influences brand image and customer engagement. Building on the stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) framework, we also explore the role of emotions as the drivers of the customer perceptions in these platforms. Multivariate and SEM analyses are used to test the hypothesized relationships. Our results corroborate that, during the interaction with the platform, customers experience emotions that influence their engagement. Brand image mediates the effects of emotions and customer engagement on his/her purchase behavior.*

## KEYWORDS:

*Brand image, Customer engagement, emotions, brand connection platforms*

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## 1. Introduction

Branding digitally has become a challenge for marketers as it has evolved from a firm-focused perspective to a customer-focused one, due to the influence of the Internet and the sophisticated platforms that have emerged. These *brand connection platforms* (BCPs) are described as focal touch points beyond purchase that allow individuals to integrate resources and co-create value between them and with the firm (Breidbach, Brodie, and Hollebeek, 2013; Sawhney, Verona, and Prandelli, 2005). These kinds of platforms specifically focus on facilitating customer-brand interactions, including a variety of cues that offer customers greater interaction possibilities and foster their collaboration, promoting commercial exchanges from a more social approach (Fiore, Jihyun and Hyun-Hwa, 2005; Varadarajan et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2007). Likewise, BCPs create value through relationships, facilitate user-generated contents and enrich the experience, determining customers' decisions (Kim, Ju, and Jonson, 2009; Malthouse and Hofacker, 2010; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). Managing a brand in these computed-mediated environments implies that different types of interactions need to be considered, due to their potential influence on the customer brand-related perceptions (Leeflang et al., 2014; Libai et al., 2010; Yadav et al., 2014). Thus, branding becomes a dynamic activity, meaning that the brand evolves because "the fact that consumers buy and use brands, and share their experiences with others implies a constant state of change" (Ind, Fuller and Trevail, 2012). Despite the interest of BCPs, most research on this topic has implicitly assumed their potential benefits for firms and customers, so it has not proposed models to understand how these benefits can be obtained through extrinsic, platform-related characteristics and their potential to foster intrinsic, customer-related mechanisms such as the emotions elicited during the experience in the platform. Moreover, few works have analyzed how interactions in these platforms contribute to develop customer engagement, which constitutes a key factor to understand customer participation and behavior in interactive media.

Customer engagement has attracted a lot of attention in the recent marketing literature, being highlighted as a new approach to capture customer value and a key concept to understand contemporary marketing and branding dynamics (Verhoef, Reinartz, and Krafft, 2010). However, and in spite of the relevant pioneering studies, empirical evidence about this concept is still in its infancy and theoretical conclusions are not definitive to-date. Several gaps need to be addressed. First, the relationship between customer engagement and branding has not been analyzed in the first stages of the customer lifecycle (i.e. customers' acquisition and first interactions with the firm through the BCPs). Research related to the topic has mainly addressed situations in which the customers already know the brand and have previously interacted with it, so some level of engagement has been developed. While the potential risks on reputation and loss of control for well-established brands have been already pointed out, the potential benefits of managing brands digitally for new or less known brands has not been addressed (Leeflang et al., 2014; Verhoef, Beckers and Van Doorn, 2013). Second, research on the topic has focused in the non-transactional consequences of engagement (e.g. Mollen and Wilson, 2010; Van Doorn et al., 2010) and has ignored the potential transactional consequences that it may have, such as the influence of engagement on purchase intentions. Consequently, it is necessary to gain a better understanding about the influence of customer engagement and brand image in the customer transactional responses.

The present research fills these gaps by examining how BCPs promote customer engagement with the firm and positive brand image during the first purchase experience. It focuses on the new power of customers in interactive media and considers the online purchase experience as a context in which customer can participate and interact with the firm and other customers, instead of its mere consideration as a transactional situation to acquire resources (see, for example, Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008a). We explore two specific cues included in BCPs: (1) customer to customer interactions-related cues (C2C interactions-related cues), and (2) personalization-related cues. C2C interactions-related cues empower customers by allowing them to access to more information about the firm, the offering and previous experiences of other customers. Personalization-related cues enable customers to interact with the firm and design their own offering (Bendapudi and Leone, 2003; Etgar, 2008). Both kinds of cues serve as environmental prompts of the possibilities offered by the platform, promote the collaboration of customers and generate meaningful experiences, forming the starting point of behavioral processes (Wang et al., 2007).

Our objective is threefold. First, we analyze the existing relationship between customer engagement and brand image in BCPs, testing their effects in the customer purchase behavior. Customer engagement with the firm and brand image are developed from the first interactions in BCPs and are crucial for setting up long-lasting relationships and encouraging purchase behavior. Second, we empirically study whether cues included in BCPs improve customer engagement with the firm and brand image during the purchase experience. Third, we explore the influence of emotions elicited in BCPs on the customer non-transactional (i.e. customer engagement and brand image) and transactional (i.e. purchase intentions) responses. These objectives are addressed in the following research questions:

*RQ1: ¿Is there any relationship between entre customer engagement with the firm and brand image in brand connection platforms (BCPs)?*

*RQ2: How brand connection platforms influence customer engagement with the firm and brand image?*

*RQ2a: Which extrinsic factors influence customer engagement and brand image?*

*RQ2b: Which intrinsic factors influence customer engagement and brand image?*

*RQ3: ¿Does customer engagement with the firm and brand image influence purchase behaviour in brand connection platforms?*

We carry out two studies based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model (Merahblian and Russell, 1974). Study 1 adopts an experimental approach to analyze, on the one hand, the relationship between customer engagement with the firm and brand image in BCPs and, on the other, whether the mere exposure to certain cues in BCPs elicits positive customer responses related to his/her relationship with the firm and brand. Study 2 employs structural equations modelling (SEM) techniques to verify customer engagement and brand image relationship, check their influence on purchase intentions and explore the importance of the emotions elicited during the customer's interaction with the platform. Our findings contribute to the academic research in three ways. First, we provide insights into the relationship between customer engagement with the firm and brand image in BCPs, studying their pivotal role to improve customer purchase intentions. Second, we address the effect of cues included in BCPs to strengthen the customer engagement with the firm and brand image. Third, we demonstrate the role of emotions elicited in BCPs as intrinsic drivers of non-transactional and transactional customer responses beyond this context. Overall, the present research shows what the firm should manage in its BCP and what decisions have their roots in the individuals, resulting in behavioral changes. .

## **2. Brand image and customer engagement with the firm in BCPs**

The importance of branding in contemporary marketing has been highlighted in research from 1990s, specifically in the relationship marketing paradigm, which is focused on the influence of brand strategy on customer-firm relationships. Aspects related to how customers internalize brand information that the firm makes available to them have been broadly analyzed (Kapferer, 1992; Keller, 1993). In this regard, brand equity models (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 1993) reveal the importance of brands to create value and reflect the social image that the consumer desires, demonstrating that they can satisfy customer's symbolic and *internally* generated needs, such as self-enhancement and self-identification (Park et al., 1986). Overall, this research considers that the firm defines brand identity and transmits it to the customer during a dyadic process (Payne et al., 2009).

In recent years, academics are intensifying the attention directed towards understanding brand meaning and value, which is modifying the branding process logic (Schouten et al., 2007; Merz et al., 2009). The conceptualization of brand as a firm-provided attribute is no longer applicable, emerging a new brand logic that states the premise that brand value is co-created and built on experiences between the firm and its stakeholders (Payne et al., 2009; Vallaster and Von Wallpach, 2013). Branding has therefore shifted to a "collaborative, value co-creation activity of firms and all of their stakeholders" (Merz et al., 2009, p.329). Customers buy and use brands adopting an active role, so they collaborate with the firm and share their experiences with others through the variety of interactions that they are

able to establish. Likewise, instead of dyadic relationships, they form network relationships with brands, which imply interesting challenges for brand meaning creation and management (Aggarwal, 2004; Payne et al., 2009). In accordance to this, studies related to brand communities have shown how brand attributes and meanings are constructed dynamically through social interactions and have corroborated that brand value resides on the customers' and other interest groups' experiences with the brand (Schau, Muñiz, and Arnould, 2009; Vallaster and Von Wallpach, 2013). Consequently, traditional branding concepts should be revised (Arnould et al., 2006) and focused on brand experiences, consumer interactions and collaborative participation (Keller and Lehmann, 2006).

Brand image has achieved great relevance for managers in order to manage and design brand-related strategies. According to the *Associative Network Theory*, brand image is defined as a mental scheme formed by several concepts interconnected by linkages and associations (Anderson, 1983; Morrin, 1999; Martinez and Pina, 2009). Brand image symbolizes customer brand knowledge, it is developed from the first customer-firm interaction, and depends on his/her own experiences. It provides consumers with a meaning for the brand, differentiating the firm's offering from competition and forming affect-oriented relationships (Padgett and Allen, 1997). When the customers' mental scheme is coherent with the existing, firm-determined associations, customers will assimilate brand image with no significant alterations. On the contrary, if results substantially differ from the initial scheme, customers' perceived brand image changes and adapts to the new associations (Park et al., 1993). These adaptation or assimilation processes act as an *anchor* that influences customer behavior, adjusting to the new information and interactions. According to the latest trends on branding, brand image is also turning from a firm-determined aspect to an increasingly networked approach. Thereby, it refers not only to pieces of information that consumers hold about a particular brand from the results that they have obtained (Grohs and Reisinger, 2014) but also to the knowledge that other customers create and the experiences about the brand that they share. Brand image is an evolving concept that should be defined from a multi-dimensional perspective and contingent on the community experiences and the existing customer-customer and customer-firm relationships. In this context, customer engagement with the firm emerges as a key concept to understand customer's participation and brand image created through social interactions and experiences (Brodie et al., 2011).

Nowadays, customer engagement is taking a prime role in the marketing literature and is considered a driving force in contemporary consumer behavior research (Gambetti and Graffigna 2010). It has been posited as a central factor to describe individuals' specific interactions and contributes to understanding new dynamics related to customer experiences, post-purchase behavior and customer retention (Bowden 2009; Brodie et al. 2011b; Van Doorn et al. 2010). As can be observed in the literature, different subforms of engagement have recently emerged: customer engagement (Bijmolt et al. 2010; Brodie et al. 2011a; Verhoef, Reinartz and Krafft 2010; Vivek 2009), online customer engagement (Mollen and Wilson 2010), customer brand engagement (Hollebeek 2010, 2011a,b, 2012), customer engagement behavior (Van Doorn et al. 2010; Verleye et al. 2013), brand engagement (Sprott, Czellar and Spangenberg 2009) and advertising engagement (Calder, Malthouse and Schaedel 2008, 2009; Phillips and McQuarrie 2010). Some definitions stress emotional aspects (Hollebeek 2011; Mollen and Wilson 2010; Vivek 2009), while others take a behavioral approach (Bijmolt et al. 2010; Van Doorn et al. 2010). Despite the great interest of this concept, research on customer engagement is still fragmented, being no consensus regarding the conceptualization and dimensions of the concept.

We focus on customer engagement with the firm in interactive media such as BCPs. This concept is closely related to other marketing concepts but goes beyond them to reflect the importance of "interactive and co-creative experiences" (Brodie et al., 2011). Customer engagement is defined as a highly interactive concept, usually characterized as an individual's psychological state resulting from the interactions between a focal engagement subject (e.g. the customer) and an object (e.g. brand, product or firm) (Brodie et al. 2011a; Hollebeek 2013). We propose that it should be approached from an attitudinal perspective since it addresses emotional relationships that may result in transactional and non-transactional customer behaviors (Hollebeek, 2013). Moreover, it is highlighted that customer engagement has a contextual-dependent nature and is particularly relevant for understanding consumer experiences in technology-mediated environments (Bowden, 2009; Hollebeek, 2011; Mollen and



Wilson, 2010; Sawhney, Verona, and Prandelli, 2005). Consistent with Brodie et al. (2011a) and Mollen and Wilson (2010), we study BCPs as an online environment in which customer engagement with the firm may be encouraged, leading to meaningful relationships with the brand.

BCPs are developed by firms in order to support specific actor-to-actor interactions in the online environment, both customer-customer and customer-firm interactions. In contrast to traditional brand websites, they are geared to the co-creation process and promote customer active participation. Thereby, BCPs create a relaxed atmosphere through their interactive possibilities that aim to strengthen ties and go beyond the purchase. Following Wu and Fang (2010), we suggest that BCPs allow customers to actively participate and co-create their purchase experiences, which constitutes a relevant aspect in the engagement process. As a result of the positive co-creative experiences in the BCP, customers are engaged with the firm, increase their trust, and feel pride and passion for the brand (McEwen, 2001, 2004). Thus, the better brand experience customers enjoy, the more engaged they will be, and the more positive brand image they will perceive. Despite the importance of the relationship between engagement and brand perceptions, there are no studies that have empirically tested it in the first purchase context for new or less known brands (Leeflang et al., 2014; Verhoef, Beckers and Van Doorn, 2013). In this context, the customer has little information about and no relationship with the firm, so there is not other experience that conditions brand image. Considering that customer engagement with the firm is developed through interactive brand experiences in BCPs (Brodie et al., 2011), it is feasible to propose that positive brand image perceptions are a consequence of engagement development. We hypothesize the following relationship:

*Hypothesis 1: Customer engagement with the firm developed in the BCP positively influences brand image.*

### **3. Study 1: The role of extrinsic cues in BCPs**

#### ***3.1 Extrinsic antecedents: the role of cues in BCPs***

BCPs have been previously analyzed being defined in different ways, such as *engagement* platforms (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Ramaswamy and Gouillart, 2010) or *connection* platforms (Malthouse and Hofacker, 2010). However, most definitions agree in considering visualization and dialogue as the two most prominent aspects to characterize them. Building on this, we consider the importance of including cues related to C2C interactions as a form of dialogue, and cues related to personalization, as a form of visualization (Ramaswamy and Gouillart, 2010). These cues can be considered a source of observational learning, so their mere presence influences customer decisions (Chen, Wang and Xie 2011; Libai et al., 2010). Furthermore, they offer interesting possibilities to integrate resources and to collaborate during the purchase, promoting customer value-creating activities and participation (Ramaswamy and Gouillart, 2010).

C2C interactions are defined as the active or passive interactions between customers during the purchase experience but also during pre- and post-purchase stages (Johnson and Grier 2011). They are closely related to customer social influence definition and encompass both verbal and non-verbal communications between customers that condition their preferences feelings and behaviors (Blazevic et al. 2013; Libai et al. 2010). BCPs promote online C2C interactions in two different ways. First, these platforms offer networking possibilities and foster interactions because customers can read other consumers' opinions, publish their own contributions and create new content, increasing customer connectivity and participation (Blazevic et al., 2013; Hennig-Thurau et al. 2010; Libai et al. 2010; Bolton et al., 2013). Second, BCPs provide opportunities for customers to see and learn from other customers' behavior (Chen, Wang and Xie 2011; Libai et al., 2010; Zhang 2010). Most of research in interactive media has focused on the former way, analyzing the effect of active interactions on aspects such as customer choices and sales (Libai et al., 2010). Nevertheless, how the mere customer exposure to C2C-related cues may influence customer behavior has been underexplored.

We focus on the role of C2C interactions-related cues in BCPs, as they serve as a signal of other customers' actions and behavior (Chen, Wang and Xie 2011; Libai et al., 2010). These cues reduce the problem of the lack of physical presence inherent to interactive media and elicit social responses that may condition consumers' behavior (Adjei et al., 2010; Moon, 2000; Trusov et al., 2009). Moreover,

exposure to C2C interactions-related cues may foster customer participatory behavior and generate more positive attitudes towards the firm and the brand (Berger and Fitzsimons 2008). Specifically, C2C interactions-related cues have been considered important to achieve “compelling engagement experiences” (Ramaswamy 2009) since they are one of the conceptual foundations of customer engagement (Lusch and Vargo 2010). According to Van Doorn et al. (2010), customer engagement results from motivational drivers like word-of-mouth and C2C interactions. We propose that C2C interactions-related cues constitute a source of connection for customers with other customers and with the firm, as the interactions that they can observe in the BCP makes them feel acknowledged and empowered, increasing their satisfaction with the experience. This satisfaction may result in tighter bonds with the firm, which improves customer engagement and brand image (Pralhad and Ramaswamy 2004b; Van Doorn et al. 2010; Brodie et al., 2011a; Ballantyne and Varey 2006; Wang et al., 2007). We hypothesize the following relationships:

*H2a. C2C interactions-related cues positively influence customer engagement with the firm in BCPs.*

*H2b. C2C interactions-related cues positively influence the brand image in BCPs.*

Personalization has been studied in various academic fields but there is still some confusion among researchers about what the term actually means (Kwon and Kim, 2012; Sunikka and Bragge, 2012). In the marketing arena, Vesanen (2007) proposes that personalization is a broad concept that encompasses execution, marketing outputs in the form of products/services, promotion/communication, price and delivery, and the creation of value for both the customer and the marketer. This concept implies the customers’ capacity for designing the offering that they are going to purchase, which has also been called co-design.

The inclusion of personalization-related cues in BCPs promotes customer participation in the purchase experience since they encourage the tailoring of each choice to his/her own preferences and the recognition of individualized needs (Füller and Matzler, 2007). Possibilities to design a product or service allows customers to obtain more information, open the black box of consumption, and anticipate the potential value derived from the future use of the offering, although they do not have direct contact with it. Moreover, according to Norton and Ariely (2007), customers value the offering they can produce more than the offering the firm supplies, even when the latter is objectively higher in value. Consequently, personalization cues also act as a source of observational learning and their mere presence may improve customer evaluations, which conditions his/her relationship with the firm and Brand perceptions (Pralhad and Ramaswamy, 2004). We propose that personalization-related cues included in BCPs improve brand image and the development of customer engagement with the firm (Cheung and To, 2011; Mohr and Bitner, 1991). If the BCP provides customers with cues to facilitate decision-making and to collaborate in the elaboration of the offering that they may purchase, they will perceive that they are taking an active role in the experience and are powerful actors (Bendapudi and Leone, 2003; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004a). These cues give customers a better knowledge of the product and the firm, increase their loyalty beyond a transactional focus and build positive outcomes for their relationship with the firm and the brand (Auh et al., 2007; Bendapudi and Leone, 2003; Brodie et al., 2011a). Thus, we hypothesize the following relationships:

*H3a. Personalization-related cues positively influence customer engagement with the firm in BCPs.*

*H3b. Personalization-related cues positively influence the brand image in BCPs.*

Personalization has advanced greatly in conjunction with the evolution of interactive marketing (Lee et al., 2012), since implementing the possibility of personalizing the offering requires an environment that is information-rich and well-suited to the interactions between customers and with the firm (Malthouse and Hofacker, 2010; Montgomery and Smith, 2009). In this sense, C2C interactions-related cues benefit consumer decision-making and promote a more personalized marketing strategy. They permit the collection of information and expertise from other customers, cultivating an environment suitable for personalization activities (Auh et al., 2007; Montgomery and Smith, 2009; Yadav and Varadarajan, 2005). Moreover, observational learning derived from C2C interactions-related cues contribute to minimizing the information overload in online environments and the negative effects of an increasing variety of options that entail personalization strategies. C2C interactions-related cues allow customers to access and provide more pertinent data with less effort

and, hence, they receive personalized value in terms of services and information (Lee et al., 2012; Miceli et al., 2007; Montgomery and Smith, 2009).

Following these ideas, we propose the importance of the presence of both kinds of cues in BCPs for two reasons. First, C2C-interactions related cues reduce the uncertainty and complexity related to personalization cues, diminishing perceived risk and improving customer attitude. Second, the exposure to social information provided by C2C interactions-related cues is an important support for customers to also interact with the firm and personalize his/her product. Consequently, we hypothesize that the interplay between personalization and C2C interactions-related cues increase customer engagement and brand image during the purchase experience.

*H4a. The interplay of personalization-related cues and C2C interactions-related cues in BCPs increases customer engagement with the firm.*

*H4b. The interplay of personalization-related cues and C2C interactions-related cues in BCPs increases brand image.*

### **3.2 Instrument and experimentation process**

To test our hypotheses, an online platform was designed and a purchase situation simulated. The experimental design used was two-way factorial between subjects: two levels of C2C interactions-related cues (high and low) and two levels of personalization-related cues (high and low). First of all, the participant was requested to fill in a short online questionnaire which contained control variables related to individual features that could affect the further development of the experiment and the participant's subsequent behavior. These control variables were (1) individual innovativeness and (2) his/her frequency of Internet access. Then, each participant was randomly assigned to one of the four experimental scenarios and seated in a separate booth, ensuring that no interaction between subjects was possible during the experiment (Franke et al., 2009). They were asked to buy a pair of sneakers, performing different activities depending on the scenario provided. In order to ensure the same conditions in each scenario for all the participants, they were told to read all the instructions from the screen and an extra instruction sheet was provided. Moreover, the online platform did not allow the participants to continue with the experiment unless all the instructions were followed. In this way, we made sure that all the participants were aware of the available cues provided in the experienced scenario and could properly evaluate the analyzed variables.

In the two scenarios with high personalization-related cues, participants had to design the sneakers they wanted to buy selecting the colors and patterns for different parts of the sneaker. On the contrary, in the two scenarios with low personalization-related cues, participants did not have these possibilities and they could only select the sneaker they wanted to buy from the gallery. Moreover, participants in the scenarios with high C2C interactions-related cues were asked to interchange messages and information through several tools: e-mail, forums and social networks. They were also asked to vote for the most beautiful sneaker and comment on the designs that other customers had uploaded in the "most viewed" gallery. C2C interactions and personalization-related cues were obtained from research on the topic and from practice carried out by firms in the virtual environment (Ramaswamy, 2008; Song and Zinkhan, 2008; Wang et al., 2007). Subsequently, the respondents in the four scenarios were redirected to a second online questionnaire about their perceptions and experience with the platform and the purchase they carried out.

### **3.3 Scales and sample**

Previous to data gathering, the scenarios were pre-tested with a convenience sample of 30 individuals in each scenario, in order to improve the platform design as well as to refine the manipulations used and the measurement scales. In the experimentation process, we gathered a sample of 196 university students aged between 20 and 38 (109 females), who participated voluntarily. We consider that a population sample based on university students is an adequate choice for our research purposes due to their intensive usage of the Internet and social media. At the end of the experiment, the participants received a refreshment voucher. The experiments were carried out in the university computer labs over a seven-week period during May and June, 2010.

Control variables were measured as follows: (1) individual innovativeness: “If I heard about a new information technology, I would look for ways to experiment with it” and “Among my peers, I am usually the first to try out new information technology”, measured with a 7-point Likert scale, the lowest perception being scored with 1, and (2) Internet frequency access: “How often do you access the Internet?”, measured with seven ordinal answers ranging from “Never or almost never” to “Several times per day”, measured with a 7-point Likert scale, the lowest perception being scored with 1. There were no significant differences in any of these variables between participants in the scenarios analyzed, indicating that the random assignment to the four experimental scenarios was successful.

In the second questionnaire, participants were asked to score the personalization and C2C interactions-related cues in order to check that the manipulations were adequate. Moreover, they should value their engagement with the firm and brand image. All the variables were measured on a 7-point Likert scale, the lowest perception being scored with 1, and the items included in the survey were adapted from prior research. Brand image scale gathers items which attempt to assess functional and affective attributes and benefits (e.g. Martinez and Pina, 2009; Weiss et al., 1999). For the customer engagement scale, Medlin and Green's (2009) employee engagement and Calder, Malthouse and Schaedel's (2009) scales has been taken into account to manifest the interactive nature of this construct and the importance of the individual's proactive role. Moreover, Sprott, Czellar and Spangenberg's (2009) scale of brand engagement in self-concept (BESC) has allowed us to include the emotional aspects of customers' self-identification and connection with the firm. Taking as the starting point the works of these authors, we designed parsimonious scales, focused in the interactive media. Because our study is focused on a fictitious company, the responses are not biased by previous opinions about the firm.

### ***3.4 Validation of the measuring scales***

The measurement model was evaluated on the basis of the result of a confirmatory factor analysis through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), using the robust maximum likelihood estimation method and the statistical software EQS, version 6.1. (Bentler, 1995). This analysis purifies measures and reduces possible confusions in interpretation (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). First of all, we checked the criteria proposed by Jöreskog and Sörbom (1993): weak convergence, strong convergence and the explanatory coefficient ( $R^2 < 0.5$ ) (Steenkamp and Van Trijp, 1991) and we progressively eliminated, one by one, the indicators which did not satisfy one or more of them. The fourth item of the brand image factor (BRAN\_4) was excluded, as they did not attain a sufficiently high  $R^2$ . A continuación, los análisis fueron repetidos, alcanzándose aceptable valores for all the indicators tested. The goodness-of-fit indices exceeded the optimal levels recommended by Hair et al. (1999): SB  $\chi^2 = 59.30$ , d.f. 26, NFI: 0.956, NNFI: 0.965, CFI: 0.975, IFI: 0.975, RMSEA: 0.08, SB  $\chi^2 / df = 2.27$ .

Measurement properties of the final model were evaluated in terms of reliability and construct validity, which implies both convergent and discriminant validity (Churchill, 1979; Gerbing and Anderson, 1988). The reliability of the scales was tested using the Composite Reliability Coefficient (CRC) and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). In all cases, the results achieved overcome the recommended limit of 0.6 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) and 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) respectively, so we can state that the items used in each scale are measuring the same factor. As for convergent validity, the standardized loadings were higher than 0.5 and they were also significant at the 99% confidence level (Steenkamp and Van Trijp, 1991). Discriminant validity of the measures was established by calculating the 99 per cent confidence interval of the latent factor correlation matrix and verifying that 1 was not included (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Moreover, we checked that the AVE for each construct exceeded the shared variance between the two factors (i.e. the squared correlation) and no correlation between factors surpassed 0.8 points (Fornell and Larcker 1981). After the performed analysis, we conclude that customer engagement and brand image measures obtained evidence of reliability and validity.

### ***3.5 Relationship between customer engagement and brand image***

In order to analyze the influence of customer engagement with the firm on brand image, we applied SEM and the robust maximum likelihood estimation method. The results of the model obtained good

fit indexes: SB  $\chi^2=59.3$ , d.f.= 26,  $p= 0.00$ ; RMSEA= 0.079; NFI= .956; NNFI= .965; CFI= .975; IFI= .975; SB  $\chi^2/ df=2.27$  .

We find that customer engagement with the firm positively influences brand image ( $\beta_1= .753$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), so we corroborate the significance of the relationship and verify H1. The explanatory power achieved by the model is 57%.

### **3.6 The influence of cues: manipulation checks and experimental results**

In order to test the adequacy of the manipulations, independent-means t-test analyses were performed. For the C2C interactions-related cues manipulation, the means are  $M_{\text{high C2C}}= 5.84$  and  $M_{\text{low C2C}}= 3.57$  ( $t_{194}= 10.868$ ,  $p< .001$ ,  $r=.61$ ), showing that this manipulation is successful. Similarly, the personalization-related cues manipulation means are  $M_{\text{highpersonalization}}= 5.92$  and  $M_{\text{lowpersonalization}}= 2.98$  ( $t_{194}= 13.168$ ,  $p< .001$ ,  $r=.68$ ). These results show both significant different means and effect sizes of the manipulations applied in the experiment.

As we are testing the effects of manipulated variables on several dependent variables, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) is the most appropriate method (Hair et al., 1999). Considering the large sample size and the robustness of MANOVA to departures from multivariate normality (Swait and Adamowicz, 2001), violations of multivariate normality are not expected to be severe. Moreover, as MANOVA assumes linear relationships between dependent variables in each scenario, we plotted the dependent variables and obtained a clear indication of linear relationships. Correlations between the two dependent variables were also significant. The multivariate effects of the C2C interactions-related cues (Wilks'  $\lambda= 0.876$ ,  $F= 13.547$ ,  $p< .001$ ) and personalization-related cues (Wilks'  $\lambda= 0.935$ ,  $F= 6.631$ ,  $p< .05$ ) are both significant.

Follow-up univariate analyses were used to test our hypotheses. The univariate results for the influence of the C2C interactions-related cues reveal that there are significant main effects for both the customer engagement ( $F_{1,192}= 23.634$ ,  $p< .001$ ,  $\omega^2=.31$ ) and brand image ( $F_{1,192}= 21.601$ ,  $p< .001$ ,  $\omega^2=.29$ ) factors, which supports H2a and H2b.

The main effects for the influence of the personalization-related cues on the dependent variables were also significant for both customer engagement with the firm ( $F_{1,192}= 13.263$ ,  $p< .001$ ,  $\omega^2=.20$ ) and the brand image ( $F_{1,192}= 6.831$ ,  $p< .001$ ,  $\omega^2=.10$ ), corroborating H3a and H3b.

Regarding the interaction effects of the stimuli on the dependent variables, this effect was not significant for the customer engagement factor ( $F_{1,192}= 1.885$ ,  $p> .1$ ), rejecting H4a. However, interaction effect was significant for the brand image ( $F_{1,192}= 3.832$ ,  $p= .05$ ,  $\omega^2=.05$ ), so H4b is corroborated. This result highlights that the presence of both stimuli in the platform increases the brand image compared to the one obtained for the stimuli separately.

## **4. Study 2: The role of emotions in BCPs Methodology**

### **4.1 Intrinsic antecedents: the role of emotions in BCPs**

Having corroborated the importance of the platform cues in Study 1, Study 2 focuses on the role of emotions in BCPs as antecedents of customer engagement and brand image and the potential transactional consequences for the customer behavior (i.e. purchase intentions).

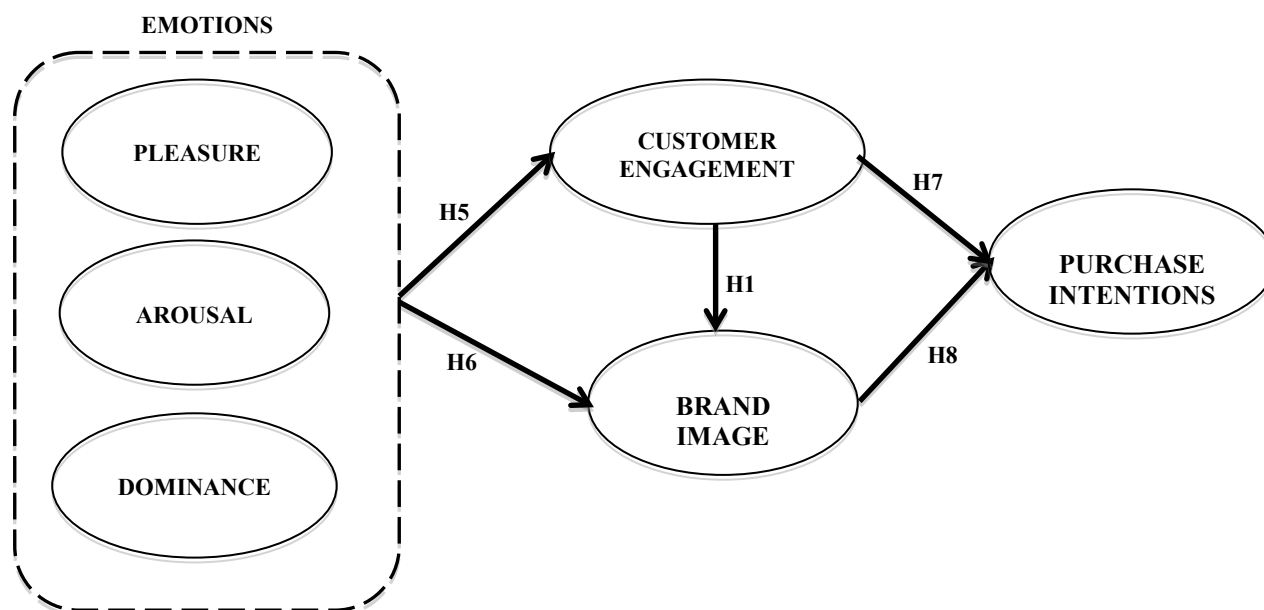
Individuals' emotional responses to the environmental factors is a broadly recognized aspect in psychology research, and it has been applied to research in marketing in areas such as advertisement or the customer purchase behavior (e.g. Batra and Holbrook, 1990; Westbrook, 1987). In the online environment, most of research is based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework. This research studies how different stimuli contribute to elicit positive emotional responses on customers (Eroglu, Machleit, and Davis, 2003), influence cognitive evaluations about their experiences and encourage purchase intentions (Fiore, Ji Hyun, and Hyun-Hwa, 2005; Mazaheri, Richard, and Laroche, 2011; Nambisan and Baron, 2007). In this regard, one of the most used approaches to emotions has been the pleasure-arousal-dominance (P-A-D) model or dimensional approach. This model has been successfully applied to the analysis of aspects related to the interface design (e.g. colors, size and display of information, quantity of content, visuals...) and others related to interactivity (Fiore, Ji Hyun,

and Hyun-Hwa, 2005, Mummalaneni, 2005; Oh et al., 2008), checking their effects on customer emotions and further behaviors (Machleit y Eroglu, 2000; Machleit y Mantel, 2001).

As it was previously explained, BCPs are characterized by their potential to foster co-creative experiences, exchange-related activities and interactions between several agents. Through the platform's cues, customers are empowered and able to adopt an active role that conditions not only their emotional response to the experience but also the established relationship with the Brand and the firm. We propose that emotions elicited as a consequence of the customer interaction in the BCP are intrinsic drivers of customer responses, influencing customer engagement and brand image.

Figure 1 describes the conceptual model proposed for Study 2. This model is focused on the role of emotions as antecedents of customer engagement and subsequently, the customer purchase behavior.

**FIGURE 1.** Conceptual Model of Study 2



The definition of customer engagement as a cognitive and affective process derived from interactive and co-creative experiences implies the importance of emotions in its development. During these experiences, if customers feel pleasure and dominance, they will have positive perceptions about the product and the firm (Mazaheri et al., 2012). Moreover, co-creative experiences require a high level of activation in individuals, aspect that will also influence in their level of engagement (Brodie et al., 2011a; Hollebeek 2012; Vivek et al., 2012). Several conceptual research has proposed the key role of emotions and other emotional concepts, as flow and involvement (Hollebeek, 2011; Vivek, 2009), to define and develop customer engagement (Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek 2011; Mollen and Wilson, 2010). Nevertheless, and despite the apparent interest of this relationship, it has not been previously tested.

Regarding brand image, if emotions derived from the experience have been pleasurable and positive, it is plausible to think that they will reflect in the customer's brand perceptions (Drengner et al., 2008). Customers positively evaluate not only the experience but also the "cause" and responsible of it, that is the brand. Following de Chernatony's (2006) experiential definition of brand, we can consider that brand image encompasses a cluster of functional and emotional values related to the welcome experience lived by customers with the brand. Thereby, if customers live a collaborative experience with the firm during their purchase, customer emotional connection with the brand is likely to improve (Demirbilek and Sener, 2003).

According to this reasoning and consistent with research that builds on environmental psychology theories (Mazaheri, Richard, and Laroche, 2011; Wang et al., 2007), we propose that emotions experienced by

customers during their interaction in the BCP will influence customer engagement with the firm and brand image, formulating the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 5a: Pleasure experienced by customers in brand connection platforms positively influences customer engagement with the firm.*

*Hypothesis 5b: Arousal experienced by customers in brand connection platforms positively influences customer engagement with the firm.*

*Hypothesis 5c: Dominance experienced by customers in brand connection platforms positively influences customer engagement with the firm.*

*Hypothesis 6a: Pleasure experienced by customers in brand connection platforms positively influences brand image.*

*Hypothesis 6b: Arousal experienced by customers in brand connection platforms positively influences brand image.*

*Hypothesis 6c: Dominance experienced by customers in brand connection platforms positively influences brand image.*

#### **4.2 Transactional consequences: purchase intentions**

We consider that going through co-creative and interactive experiences in the BCP is critical to understand customer purchase intentions, so we test the importance of customer engagement and brand image as two pivotal factors in this context (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). Customer engagement is developed in any of the customer lifetime stages and is an important factor to evaluate the customer value both at a transactional and non-transactional level (Bijmolt et al., 2010; Kumar et al., 2010). So, if the customer experience in the BCP develops customer engagement with the firm, this engagement will influence his/her purchase intentions. Regarding brand image, it is remarkable that consumers buy products or brands not only because of their attributes and functional consequences, but also for the symbolic benefits associated with them (Padgget and Allen, 1997). Levy (1959, p. 118) states that people buy things both for what they can do and for what they mean. Consequently, brand image that has been created and modified during customer interactions in the BCP is likely to influence attitudes towards purchasing brand products (Teng and Laroche, 2007), which may result in sales for the firm (Suntornpithug and Khamalah, 2010). We formulate the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 7: Customer engagement with the firm developed during his/her interactions in the BCP influences purchase intentions.*

*Hypothesis 8: Brand image developed by customers during their interactions in the BCP influences purchase intentions.*

#### **4.3 Methodology**

We used the platform with high levels of both cues developed in Study 1 as our research context for this study. In order to make the purchase experience as realistic as possible, the participants were asked to navigate through the platform and carry out several activities related to the available cues. We followed a similar procedure than in study 1 and used the same control variables. Likewise, all the participants were going through a similar simulated purchase and the response variability was only dependent on the importance that each participant gives to the cues provided by the platform.

The study was carried out in a European university's computer labs. We obtained a sample of 332 students (135 males) aged between 20 and 38; all of them were experienced Internet and e-commerce users.

The participants first answered questions related to their innovativeness and previous Internet surfing experience. Then, they were asked to imagine that they wanted to buy a pair of sneakers, so they visited a fictitious company website called My Favorite Sneaker, performed different personalization and C2C interactions activities, and finalized the purchase. Finally, the participants were asked to complete a questionnaire about their experience, emotions, engagement with the firm, brand image and purchase intentions. All the variables were measured on a 7-point Likert scale, the lowest perception being scored with 1, and the items included in the survey were adapted from prior research.

Regarding customer engagement and brand image, the same scales from Study 1 were used to verify their convenience and stability across samples. The rest of variables were measured using scales that are frequently used in the literature. Before the validation of the measuring scales, we checked that the participants had perceived their interaction with the platform and the specific cues. They valued items related to C2C interactions and personalization with an average above 5.

Because our independent and dependent variables were obtained through survey data, our results could be affected by common-method bias. In order to deal with this issue, we used the procedural remedies suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2003). First, we guaranteed response anonymity and did not reveal the survey's exact goal to respondents. Second, the questionnaire items related to the dependent variables followed, rather than preceded, the independent variable and the questions were mixed (Chang, Van Witteloostuijn and Eden 2010). Lastly, we performed Harman's single-factor test. This technique consists of loading all the variables onto an exploratory factor analysis and examining the unrotated factor solution in order to determine the number of factors necessary to account for the variance of the data. Consequently, if there was a significant amount of common-method bias in the data, a single factor would emerge from the factor analysis or one general factor would account for the majority of the covariance among the measures (Morgan, Kaleka and Katsikeas 2004; Podsakoff et al. 2003). Unrotated factor analysis revealed five factors accounting for 75% percent of the variance, with the first factor accounting for only 25% percent, thus suggesting the absence of common-method bias.

#### ***4.4 Validation of the measuring scales***

In order to guarantee the psychometric properties of unidimensionality, reliability and validity of the measurement scales, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) has been carried out by Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), using the robust maximum likelihood estimation method and the statistical software EQS 6.1. (Bentler, 1995). We progressively eliminated, one by one, the indicators which did not satisfy one or more of the criteria proposed by Jöreskog and Sörbom (1993): weak convergence, strong convergence and explanatory coefficient ( $R^2 < 0.5$ ) (Steenkamp and Van Trijp, 1991). After excluding BRAN\_4, the results suggest that our measurement model provided a good fit to the data (Hair et al., 1999): SB  $\chi^2 = 455.51$ , d.f. = 237,  $p = 0.00$ ; RMSEA = .053; NFI = .924; NNFI = .956; CFI = .962; IFI = .962; SB  $\chi^2 / df = 1.9$ .

The reliability and validity of the constructs were analyzed (Churchill 1979; Gerbing and Anderson 1988). The reliability of the scales was tested using the CRC and the AVE. In all cases, the results achieved surpassed the limit of 0.6 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) and 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), respectively.

Regarding validity, we analyze the construct validity, i.e. convergent and discriminant validity, and the nomological validity. For convergent validity, we check that the standardized loadings were higher than 0.5, significant at the 99% confidence level (Steenkamp and Van Trijp 1991). Therefore, we can conclude that the items that comprise each scale converge to the same measurement. Evidence for the discriminant validity of the measures was provided by checking that none of the 99 per cent confidence intervals of the latent factor correlation matrix contained a value of 1.0 (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). Moreover, we checked that no correlation between factors exceeded 0.8 points (Bagozzi 1994) and confirmed that the AVE for each construct did not exceed the variance shared with any other factor in the model (i.e. the squared correlation between the two factors) (Fornell and Larcker 1981).

In order to analyze the nomological validity, we undertook a  $\chi^2$  differences test to compare the revised measurement model (CFA) with the proposed theoretical model that posits the existing causal relationships between the factors, which is analyzed next. The theoretical model will attain nomological validity if there are no significant differences between the fit of the two models, which means that the scales used are able to establish predictive relationships with other variables that have similar goodness-of-fit indices (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). The  $\chi^2$  differences test consists of subtracting the measurement model's  $\chi^2$  from the theoretical model's  $\chi^2$  (in our model  $456,18 - 455,51 = 0,67$ ). The degrees of freedom (d.f.) for this test are the difference between the d.f. of the two models ( $238 - 237 = 1$ ). The critical value of  $\chi^2$  when d.f.=1 is 10.83 ( $p < 0.001$ ). Consequently, as  $0,67 < 10,83$ , we can confirm that the scales used attain nomological validity. The scales have been able to reveal relevant relationships between the factors that achieve the above-mentioned fit.



On the basis of these results, we can state that the measures in the study satisfy reliability and validity properties.

#### 4.4 Structural analysis

We tested the structural relationships existing between concepts using SEM. The results indicate that the data fit our conceptual model acceptably: SB  $\chi^2 = 456.19$ , d.f. = 238,  $p = 0.00$ ; RMSEA = .053; NFI = .924; NNFI = .956; CFI = .962; IFI = .962; SB  $\chi^2 / df = 1.91$ .

We find that customer engagement with the firm positively influences brand image ( $\beta_1 = .73$ ), so we corroborate the significance of the relationship, also found in the Study I, and verify H1.

Regarding emotions, pleasure, arousal and dominance positively influence customer engagement with the firm ( $\beta_{5a} = .28$ ;  $\beta_{5b} = .23$ ;  $\beta_{5c} = .14$ ), so H5a, H5b and H5c are supported. Nevertheless, for brand image, results demonstrate that only dominance ( $\beta_{6c} = .11$ ) has a significant effect, satisfying H6c and rejecting the influence of pleasure and arousal, i.e. H6a and H6b respectively.

Customer engagement and brand image positively influence customer's purchase intentions ( $\beta_7 = .48$ ;  $\beta_8 = .50$ ), so H7 and H8 are confirmed. It is remarkable that brand image channels the influence of customer engagement on the purchase intentions, reporting a total engagement effect of .85. Moreover, pleasure, arousal and dominance exert an indirect effect on brand image and purchase behavior through customer engagement. The explanatory power of customer engagement is 28%, the brand image is 61% and that of purchasing intentions is 38%.

## 5. Conclusions

In the last years, interactive media are rapidly developing, providing customers and firms with greater access to information and networking possibilities. These media favor the development of brand connection platforms, through which customers, firms and other stakeholders interact and create compelling experiences with brands. From our results, several key findings emerge for further discussion.

First, our results demonstrate the relationship between customer engagement with the firm and brand image in BCPs, showing that during the first purchase experience, brand perceptions are developed from the links created between the customers and the firm. BCPs allow customers to relate to others and jointly create co-creative experiences, developing customer engagement with the firm. This engagement not only depends on the customer's individual evaluation but also on the interactions that he/she undertakes in the platform, which positively influence his/her evaluation of the brand and the firm.

Second, our findings verify that extrinsic characteristics of the platform, as C2C interactions and personalization cues, empower customers and condition their relationship with the firm and the brand. The influence of these cues is especially important for brand image since there is an interaction effect between them that substantially improves customer perceptions regarding brand image. Therefore, the mere presence of these stimuli in BCPs can establish affective bonds beyond utilitarian purposes. C2C interactions- and personalization- related cues are a reliable source of information and learning through the actions and behaviors of others that inspire customers and condition their behavior.

Third, our research also obtains interesting results regarding the influence of customers' intrinsic mechanisms, as the emotions elicited during the interaction in BCPs, on their brand image and engagement. The more positive are the emotions that the customer experience, the more engaged the customer will feel and the better the brand image will be. So, brand image and customer engagement depend not only on the information provided by the firm but also on the customers' emotions derived from value-creating activities performed in the BCP. These emotions consequently influence long-term relationship with the firm and offer new possibilities to manage branding issues in online environments. It is interesting to highlight the main influence of arousal on customer engagement, which is aligned with previous works that consider activation as a main dimension of this concept. For brand image, dominance is the most important customer's emotion, which corroborates that customers create brand meanings through the interactions that occur in BCPs.

Finally, our findings state that customer engagement and brand image explains purchase intentions, which demonstrates the importance of these variables to foster not only non-transactional responses but also transactional ones. They play a pivotal role to manage the importance of customer emotions since act as a channel to achieve positive behaviors.

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# ¿INFLUYE LA LEALTAD DEL CLIENTE BANCARIO Y EL *CROSS-BUYING* EN LA ADOPCIÓN DE LA BANCA ONLINE?

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## RESUMEN

*Este trabajo se sirve del contexto bancario para investigar los factores comportamentales relativos a la lealtad de los clientes y el cross-buying que afectan a la adopción del canal online, en este caso, la banca online. Utilizando una base de datos de clientes bancarios cuyo comportamiento ha sido observado durante dos años, se analiza si la lealtad de los clientes, medida a través de las variables longitud de la relación, el trio de variables RFM y el cross-buying, medido a través de la diferencia en el número total de productos adquiridos por el cliente entre el periodo  $t$  y  $(t-1)$ , el nivel de uso de tales productos y el balance en activos y pasivos, afectan a la adopción del canal online. A partir de este trabajo se demuestra que, en líneas generales, la recencia en la compra, la recencia en la cancelación, la rentabilidad del cliente y el balance en productos de pasivo no favorecen al proceso de adopción de la banca online, mientras que aquellos clientes que utilizan un mayor número de productos y poseen un mayor balance en productos de activo adoptan el canal online más rápidamente.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE

*Banca online, Comportamiento del consumidor, Lealtad, Longitud de la Relación, RFM, Cross-buying, Nivel de uso de productos bancarios, Balance.*

## 1. Introducción

Este trabajo analiza los factores comportamentales relativos a la lealtad del cliente y la compra cruzada (*cross-buying*) que afectan a la adopción de la tecnología en las interacciones cliente-empresa, en particular nos referimos al canal online. Para ello, hacemos uso del contexto bancario, ya que la banca online se configura como un elemento fundamental en la estrategia de comercialización de cualquier entidad bancaria en la actualidad. Desde un punto de vista empresarial, la banca online ofrece la posibilidad de ahorrar costes e incrementar tanto los ingresos, como los ratios de retención de clientes (Campbell y Frei, 2010). Además, la banca online favorece el aumento del denominado *add-on selling* (formado por el *cross-selling*, *up-selling* y la adquisición por parte de los clientes de mayores cantidades del producto) (Sarel y Marmorstein, 2003). Por otro lado, desde el punto de vista del consumidor, el canal online y en particular, la banca online, también ofrece a los clientes numerosas ventajas, tales como facilidad de uso, mayor comodidad y más funciones a menor coste que la banca tradicional (Han y Baek, 2004).

Los bancos tienen una historia relativamente larga en la introducción de tecnologías destinadas a la reducción de los costes de interacción con el cliente. Por ejemplo, podemos mencionar los cajeros automáticos, los *call centers* o el *touch-tone banking*. Sin embargo, a pesar de que la banca online es una de las últimas tecnologías que se han integrado como un nuevo canal de distribución en el contexto bancario (Campbell y Frei, 2010), la realidad actual es que se ha convertido en un factor de competitividad clave para el futuro de cualquier entidad bancaria.

Investigaciones previas sobre la adopción y uso de la banca online se han centrado principalmente en analizar dimensiones sociales y técnicas que afectan a dicha adopción, por ejemplo, nos referimos a actitudes hacia las nuevas tecnologías, conocimiento o experiencia previa, acceso, conveniencia, usabilidad y temas relacionados con la seguridad, privacidad y confianza. Por tanto, la principal fuente de datos utilizada ha sido la encuesta. En este sentido, destaca el uso de Modelo de Aceptación Tecnológica (TAM), propuesto por Davis (1989), para predecir la aceptación de la banca online, o en general, del canal online por los clientes (e.g., Cheng *et al.*, 2006; Chong *et al.*, 2010; Lichtenthein y Williamson, 2006). Aunque estos estudios son capaces de considerar una amplia variedad de antecedentes de la adopción de la banca online, tienen ciertas limitaciones (Xue *et al.*, 2011), en particular: (i) analizan un conjunto de datos de *cross-section* o de corte transversal, no pudiendo examinar factores o variables que varían con el tiempo, y (ii) se basan en percepciones de los clientes en lugar de en datos observados, hecho que introduce error de medida y limita los resultados del estudio a aquellos que son perceptibles por los clientes (i.e., utilizando esta aproximación no podríamos investigar, por ejemplo, si la rentabilidad del banco aumenta con la adopción del canal online). Otras investigaciones fuera del marco del TAM han detectado las diferencias a nivel de rentabilidad y retención entre clientes que usan la banca online y la tradicional (Hitt y Frei, 2002), o las consecuencias a nivel de costes, ingresos, rentabilidad y retención que el uso de la banca online por parte de los clientes puede reportar al banco (Campbell y Frei, 2010). En general, se ha demostrado que los clientes que utilizan la banca online son más leales, rentables y valiosos que el resto de clientes (Xue *et al.*, 2011). A este respecto se ha detectado en la literatura cierta carencia de estudios que analicen los determinantes comportamentales que afectan a la adopción de la banca online. Por ello, el principal objetivo de este trabajo persigue detectar si los clientes que utilizan la banca online, de quienes, como hemos señalado anteriormente, se ha demostrado que son más leales, rentables y valiosos que el resto de clientes, ya lo eran antes de adoptar la banca online o por el contrario estas ventajas se consiguen a partir del uso de la banca online. En definitiva, las empresas necesitan comprender adecuadamente los factores que influyen la elección de canales de los consumidores a lo largo de las diferentes etapas que conforman el proceso de decisión de compra (Neslin *et al.*, 2006), con objetivo de poder definir mejor y de forma más precisa su estrategia.

Por tanto, utilizando una base de datos compuesta por un total de 1.357 clientes bancarios cuyo comportamiento ha sido observado durante un total de 24 meses (desde Diciembre de 2010 hasta Noviembre de 2012), se analiza si la lealtad de los clientes, medida a partir de variables como la longitud de la relación y el trio de variables RFM, y la compra cruzada o *cross-buying*, medida a partir de la diferencia en el número total de productos adquiridos por el cliente entre el periodo  $t$  y  $(t-1)$ , el nivel de uso de productos bancarios y el balance en activos y pasivos, influyen en la adopción del

canal online. Los resultados derivados de este trabajo tienen interesantes implicaciones para la gestión, ya que se analiza en profundidad qué componentes de la lealtad de los clientes y el *cross-buying* afectan a la adopción del canal online, obteniendo un diagnóstico preciso sobre si tales comportamientos afectan o no a su proceso de adopción. Debido a que la inversión que una empresa debe realizar para implementar un canal online es alta, especialmente para una entidad bancaria, es importante comprender si esta estrategia añade o no valor. De esta forma en primer lugar hemos demostrado si la lealtad y el *cross-buying* son factores que influyen en la adopción de la banca online, es decir, si los clientes más leales y que presentan mayores niveles de compra cruzada ya poseían tales características antes de adoptar la banca online. En segundo lugar, los resultados de esta investigación pueden ayudar a las empresas a conocer qué clientes son más propensos a utilizar este tipo de canales y diagnosticar si en su caso la puesta en práctica de una estrategia online tiene o no sentido.

El resto del trabajo se organiza como indicamos a continuación. En la sección 2 revisaremos la literatura más relevante sobre los determinantes de la adopción de la banca online y formularemos la hipótesis de investigación. A continuación, se describen los datos, las variables utilizadas en este estudio, así como la metodología utilizada. Seguidamente se señalan los principales resultados. Finalmente, se hace una reseña de las principales contribuciones, limitaciones e implicaciones para la gestión derivadas de este estudio.

## **2. Determinantes de la adopción de la banca online: lealtad del cliente bancario y *cross-buying***

### **2.1. Lealtad**

Jacoby y Kyner (1973 p.2) definen la lealtad del cliente a través de seis condiciones necesarias y conjuntamente suficientes de la siguiente forma: “*La lealtad del cliente es (1) la respuesta comportamental (e.g., compra), (2) sesgada (no aleatoria), (3) expresada a lo largo del tiempo, (4) por alguna unidad de toma de decisiones, (5) con respecto a una o varias marcas alternativas de un conjunto de tales marcas y que (6) es función de procesos psicológicos (i.e., toma de decisiones, evaluación)*”. Jacoby y Kyner establecen que el proceso de evaluación compuesto por estas seis etapas se lleva a cabo por aquellos individuos que desarrollan compromiso hacia una marca. Más tarde, Oliver (1999 p.34) define la lealtad como un comportamiento de elección de marca repetido desarrollado de una forma consistente (es decir, a pesar de las influencias situacionales y esfuerzos de marketing que tienen el potencial de causar un comportamiento de búsqueda). Cuando un cliente es leal, este continuará comprando la misma marca, tenderá a comprar más y recomendará la marca a otros (Hepworth y Mateus, 1994).

Desde las primeras investigaciones sobre lealtad del cliente, al menos tres han sido las perspectivas propuestas para definir y operar con el concepto, en particular se trata de: (i) el enfoque actitudinal, (ii) el enfoque comportamental y (iii) el enfoque compuesto (Jacoby y Chestnut, 1978). En primer lugar, respecto al (i) enfoque actitudinal, este va más allá de la conducta manifiesta y expresa la lealtad en términos de fuerza de afecto de los consumidores hacia una marca (Backman y Crompton, 1991; Bennett y Rundle, 2002). Las actitudes se relacionan con comportamientos, aunque es importante diferenciar que el individuo puede mantener una actitud favorable hacia la marca, pero no realizar compras repetidas por la opción comparable o superior que ofrecen otras marcas (Dick y Basu, 1994). De forma similar, Sharp *et al.* (2002) sugieren que la actitud no es relevante para determinar la lealtad a la marca, ya que ésta contradice los principios epistemológicos básicos, no es una medida estable (añade otro factor de incertidumbre, en lugar de contribuir a explicar y poseer capacidad predictiva), y existe cierta contradicción en las explicaciones causales existentes que relacionan la actitud y la lealtad a la marca en diversas disciplinas, entre ellas el marketing. El segundo enfoque define a la lealtad estrictamente desde una (ii) perspectiva comportamental. La principal asunción implica que la compra de repetición capturará la fidelidad de un consumidor hacia la marca de su interés (Hughes, 1996a; Farley, 1964). Y finalmente, el (iii) enfoque compuesto define a la lealtad como un conjunto de compras repetidas impulsadas por una fuerte predisposición positiva interna que lleva al cliente a realizarlas (Day, 1969; Dick y Basu, 1994; Pritchard y Howard, 1997; Schijns y Schröder, 1996). Este último enfoque engloba las dimensiones comportamental y actitudinal.

En la investigación empírica, el enfoque actitudinal para medir la lealtad no es tan utilizado como el enfoque comportamental (Uncles *et al.*, 2003). Esto es así porque las medidas de lealtad comportamental son más fácilmente observables que las medidas sobre lealtad actitudinal. Además, para medir la lealtad es más adecuado trabajar con los datos de la base de datos de la compañía (Wong y Chung, 2008), como es nuestro caso con una base de datos de un banco, ya que los registros de compras e interacciones con el cliente grabados en este tipo de bases de datos recogen la lealtad comportamental real y observada de los mismos. Por tanto, para el desarrollo de esta investigación consideraremos el segundo enfoque de lealtad: el enfoque comportamental.

Para identificar a los clientes leales desde una perspectiva comportamental, las empresas típicamente analizan aquellos comportamientos de los clientes que dan respuesta a las siguientes preguntas (Kumar *et al.*, 2006):

- a) ¿Durante cuánto tiempo ha estado activo el cliente? (Colgate y Lang, 2001; Reichheld, 1996)
- b) ¿Con cuánta regularidad compra el cliente? (Farley, 1964; Massey *et al.*, 1970)
- c) ¿Cuál es la puntuación RFM de cada cliente? (Hughes, 1996a; Kahan, 1998)

Para esta investigación hemos seleccionado tanto la longitud de la relación, como la triada RFM para medir la lealtad comportamental de una forma completa (Chang y Tsay, 2004; Kumar *et al.*, 2006; Li *et al.*, 2011) y comprobar si afectan al proceso de adopción de la banca online.

### ***Longitud de la relación cliente-empresa***

Existe evidencia en la literatura de que el uso de la banca online se asocia con mayores ratios de retención de los clientes (Hitt y Frei, 2002; Xue *et al.*, 2007), pero no se ha demostrado si estos resultados se derivan de que precisamente es el segmento de los clientes leales el seleccionado por la empresa como usuarios del canal o por el contrario estos mayores ratios de retención se derivan del propio uso del canal online (e.g., por un incremento en los costes de cambio, una mejora en la calidad del servicio, menores costes, más conveniencia) (Campbell y Frei, 2010). Al mismo tiempo, cuando un cliente se plantea la adopción de una nueva tecnología de auto-servicio, éste asume los costes implícitos derivados de aprender a utilizarla, así como los costes derivados de establecer una relación con la empresa a través de un nuevo canal (Klemperer, 1987; Chen y Hitt, 2002), es por ello que, si el cliente no lleva suficiente tiempo operando con el banco, o se plantea abandonar la entidad en el corto plazo, es probable que no le interese asumir esos costes indirectos de adoptar el canal online. Por tanto,

**Hipótesis 1:** Una mayor longitud de la relación se asocia con una más rápida adopción de la banca online.

### ***RFM***

Uno de los principales motivos que impulsan a los clientes a adoptar los canales online es que estos les generan conveniencia (Childers *et al.*, 2001; Kumar y Ruan, 2005). En particular, tanto la conveniencia, como una efectiva gestión de las finanzas personales, son dos de las mayores ventajas que reporta el uso de las innovaciones basadas en tecnologías en el contexto de los servicios financieros (Lee *et al.*, 2003). Así mismo, tanto el control percibido, como el ahorro de tiempo derivados del uso de los canales de autoservicio también se consideran motivaciones relevantes del uso de tales canales (Ding *et al.*, 2007). Consecuentemente, en esta investigación perseguimos demostrar que si un cliente no interacciona (i.e., para adquirir o cancelar productos) con el banco, es decir, tiene una alta recencia en la adquisición y en la cancelación de productos del banco, la adopción de la banca online, a priori, no le reportará ventajas derivadas de poder interactuar con el banco cuando y donde quiera. Por tanto,

**Hipótesis 2a:** Una mayor recencia en la adquisición de productos bancarios se asocia con una más lenta adopción de la banca online.

**Hipótesis 2b:** Una mayor recencia en la cancelación de productos bancarios se asocia con una más lenta adopción de la banca online.

Del mismo modo, si un cliente adquiere productos del banco de manera frecuente, la adopción de la banca online le podrá reportar las ventajas derivadas de poder hacerlo desde prácticamente cualquier lugar y en cualquier momento utilizando su propio ordenador o dispositivo móvil sin tener que desplazarse a la sucursal física. Por tanto,

**Hipótesis 3:** Una mayor frecuencia de adquisición de productos bancarios se asocia con una más rápida adopción de la banca online.

De igual modo que ocurre con los ratios de retención, existe evidencia en la literatura que indica que los clientes que utilizan el canal online tienden a ser más rentables que los clientes que utilizan el canal tradicional (Hitt y Frei, 2002; Xue *et al.*, 2007). Sin embargo, no se ha demostrado si estos resultados se derivan de que precisamente es el segmento de los clientes rentables el seleccionado por la empresa como usuarios del canal o por el contrario este cambio comportamental es causado por su adopción (Hitt y Frei, 2002). Adicionalmente, y aludiendo de nuevo a las ventajas de conveniencia, control percibido y ahorro en costes que le reportan al cliente la adopción del canal online (Ding *et al.*, 2007; Lee *et al.*, 2003), si este es un sujeto activo en su relación con la empresa, con uno o más productos y un saldo medio mantenido por producto (consecuentemente un cliente rentable), la adopción del canal online le reportará las ventajas derivadas de poder interactuar con el banco cuando y donde quiera. Por tanto,

**Hipótesis 4:** Una mayor rentabilidad del cliente bancario se asocia con una más rápida adopción de la banca online.

## 2.2. Cross-buying

Tanto el *cross-buying* (desde el punto de la demanda) como el *cross-selling* (desde el punto de vista de la oferta), persiguen conseguir la adquisición por parte de los clientes actuales de un mayor número de productos de la empresa procedentes de múltiples categorías (Gupta y Zeithaml, 2006). Mientras que el *cross-selling* es una acción de la empresa que se emplea para ampliar relaciones con los clientes, el *cross-buying* se refiere a la propensión de un cliente para hacer compras cruzadas (Reinartz y Venkatesan, 2008). El *cross-buying* o compra cruzada ha sido asociado con mayores niveles de retención de los clientes, mayores ingresos y lealtad. En particular, Donkers *et al.* (2003 p. 21) evidenció que los clientes eran más propensos a permanecer en la empresa cuando compraban más productos (en particular, más pólizas de seguro). Al examinar la relación ente el *cross-buying* y la lealtad comportamental, Reinartz *et al.* (2008) descubrieron que el *cross-buying* es realmente una consecuencia y no un antecedente de la lealtad comportamental, ya que dicha lealtad impulsa tanto el número de categorías de las que una persona compra como el nivel de dispersión del gasto a través de esas categorías. Por lo tanto, los directivos cada vez más reconocen que la retención del cliente no es suficiente para tener éxito y muchos están tratando de mejorar el valor de sus clientes mediante la ampliación de la gama de productos y servicios que compran de la empresa (Blattberg y Deighton, 1996; Rust *et al.*, 2000 p.46). De esta forma, y siguiendo las sugerencias de Reinartz *et al.* (2008), para esta investigación hemos seleccionado tanto el nivel de uso de productos bancarios, como el balance en activos y pasivos para el medir el *cross-buying*. Así mismo, utilizamos como medida del *cross-buying* la diferencia en el número total de productos que adquiere el cliente entre el período  $t$  y  $(t-1)$  (Verhoef *et al.*, 2001). De esta forma se analiza si estos factores comportamentales afectan al proceso de adopción de la banca online.

### ***Diferencia en el número total de productos adquiridos entre el periodo $t$ y $(t-1)$***

De acuerdo con el Modelo de Aceptación Tecnológica (TAM), la facilidad de uso percibida se define como el grado en el cual el posible adoptante espera que el proceso de adopción de la nueva tecnología se desarrolle libre de esfuerzo (Davis, 1989). Se ha demostrado que la facilidad de uso tiene un efecto positivo en el proceso de adopción de la banca online (Chong *et al.*, 2010). Además de la facilidad de uso, se ha demostrado que el ahorro de tiempo que le supone al cliente el uso de canales de autoservicio es uno de los factores más importantes para su adopción (Ding *et al.*, 2007). En este sentido, si un cliente presenta cierta tendencia a adquirir más productos del banco entre un periodo temporal y el siguiente, la facilidad de uso y el ahorro de tiempo que le reporte el hacerlo utilizando la banca online puede ejercer un efecto motivador para adoptarla. Por tanto,



**Hipótesis 5:** Una mayor adquisición de productos bancarios, se asocia con una más rápida adopción de la banca online.

#### ***Nivel de uso de productos bancarios***

Se ha demostrado que la adopción del canal online influye en el nivel de uso de productos, ya que en promedio, los clientes de la banca online utilizan más productos que los clientes tradicionales (Hitt y Frei, 2002). Del mismo modo que la facilidad de uso y el ahorro en tiempo se han propuesto como elementos motivadores de la adopción de la banca online (Chong *et al.*, 2010; Ding *et al.*, 2007) considerando el nivel de adquisición de productos, si un cliente utiliza diversos productos del banco, la facilidad de uso que le reporte el poder interactuar con el banco utilizando la banca online puede ejercer un efecto motivador para adoptarla. Por tanto,

**Hipótesis 6:** Si el cliente utiliza un mayor número de productos bancarios la adopción de la banca online será más rápida.

#### ***Balance en activos y pasivos***

Haenlein *et al.* (2007) definen dos condiciones bajo las cuales un cliente se considera activo (o por el contrario inactivo) en un contexto bancario, en particular: (condición 1) todos los clientes que poseen un producto de ahorro, un producto de financiación de una vivienda, un préstamo o un seguro, se definen como activos debido a los flujos de ingresos regulares (e.g., ahorro, pago de intereses, cuotas de seguros) como resultado de cualquiera de estos productos; y (condición 2) todos los clientes que poseen cuentas corrientes y depósitos se definen como clientes activos cuando estas cuentas muestran un saldo positivo de un mínimo de 100 euros o al menos una transacción se ha realizado durante los tres últimos meses (en el caso de las cuentas corrientes) o últimos doce meses (en el caso de los depósitos). En este sentido, tanto el balance en productos de pasivo como el balance en producto de activo ofrecen información sobre el nivel de actividad de los clientes con la empresa (Haenlein *et al.*, 2007). Por tanto, siguiendo con la argumentación utilizada anteriormente sobre la conveniencia y la facilidad de uso que le reporta la adopción del canal online al cliente (Lee *et al.*, 2003), si este es un sujeto activo en su relación con la empresa, la adopción del canal online le reportará las ventajas derivadas de poder interactuar con el banco cuando y donde quiera. Por tanto,

**Hipótesis 7a:** Cuanto mayor es el balance en productos de activo, la adopción de la banca online será más rápida.

**Hipótesis 7a:** Cuanto mayor es el balance en productos de pasivo, la adopción de la banca online será más rápida.

### **3. Metodología de la investigación**

#### **3.1. Datos**

Un banco español ha provisto la base de datos para realizar el presente estudio (véase Tabla 1). Originalmente la base de datos estaba compuesta por una muestra aleatoria de clientes del banco, con observaciones mensuales relativas a la propiedad y al uso de los productos que ofrece el banco, así como determinadas variables sociodemográficas de los clientes. Se realizó una primera etapa de pre-procesamiento de datos, eliminando aquellos registros no necesarios para el presente estudio. Así mismo, se llevó a cabo un completo análisis de datos perdidos. En particular, se ha seleccionado la técnica de imputación múltiple (utilizando el software SPSS v.21) para imputar valores a aquellos registros que aparecían como perdidos. De esta forma se consiguió una muestra compuesta por un total de 1.357 clientes, con 24 meses de información de cada uno de ellos (en particular, el periodo de observación de datos comprende desde Diciembre de 2010 hasta Noviembre de 2012), obteniendo un total de 32.568 registros de datos.

Tabla 1. Descripción de la base de datos

<b>Datos</b>	Panel
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<b>Categoría de productos</b>	Capital social, tarjetas de crédito y débito, seguros de ahorro, de hogar, de vida, cuenta corriente, cuenta vivienda, depósito, fondo de inversión, plan de pensión, valores, préstamo consumo, hipoteca, crédito
<b>Contexto</b>	Entidad bancaria que opera a nivel nacional
<b>Periodo</b>	2 años: Diciembre 2010 - Noviembre 2012
<b>Clientes</b>	Clientes no empresariales que empezaron su relación con el banco al comenzar el periodo de observación (Diciembre 2010)
<b>Tamaño</b>	1.357 clientes, 24 meses para cada cliente = 32.568 registros

### 3.2. Medida de las variables de la investigación

#### 3.2.1. Medición del evento en el tiempo: Adopción de la banca online

La variable adopción de la banca online se mide utilizando una variable binaria para cada cliente  $i$  y cada periodo temporal  $t$ . En particular, la variable adopción de la banca online toma el valor de 1 si el cliente  $i$  adopta la banca online en el mes  $t$  o toma el valor 0 para los meses en los que el cliente no ha adoptado el canal online (Campbell, 2006; Campbell y Frei, 2010).

#### 3.2.2. Variables explicativas

##### 3.2.2.1. Lealtad

**Longitud de la relación.** Se define como el periodo de tiempo transcurrido entre la entrada del cliente en la empresa y el final del periodo de observación de datos (Glady *et al.*, 2009). Para medir la longitud de la relación utilizamos una variable continua que indica la longitud de la relación (en meses) de cada cliente  $i$  en la base de datos (Reinartz y Kumar, 2003 p.88). Algunos clientes en la muestra acaban su relación con el banco antes de que finalice el periodo de observación, para este caso se registran un total de 179 clientes.

Para medir la recencia, incluimos dos variables continuas: (1) recencia en la adquisición o compra de productos y (2) recencia en la cancelación de productos. En primer lugar, la **recencia en la compra de productos** mide el número de periodos (meses) que transcurren entre la última adquisición de producto/s del banco y la siguiente. En segundo lugar, la **recencia en la cancelación de productos** mide el número de periodos (meses) que transcurren entre la última cancelación de producto/s del banco y la siguiente. Donkers *et al.* (2007) midió estas dos variables como binarias, pero para esta investigación hemos seguido la definición estricta de recencia (Pfeifer y Caraway, 2000), definiendo la recencia en la compra como la diferencia en meses entre la última adquisición y la siguiente y la recencia en la cancelación como la diferencia en meses entre la última cancelación y la siguiente. Por tanto, utilizamos dos variables continuas que varían con el tiempo en lugar de dos variables binarias (como es el caso de Donkers *et al.*, 2007).

**Frecuencia de adquisición de productos bancarios.** Para medir la frecuencia de adquisición de productos bancarios, utilizamos una variable que recoge el número total (relativo a todas las categorías de producto) de nuevas adquisiciones que el cliente  $i$  ha realizado en cada periodo temporal  $t$  (Khajvand y Tarokh, 2011; Reinart *et al.*, 2008). Se trata de una variable continua que varía con el tiempo.

**Valor monetario.** Para el valor monetario de cada cliente, utilizamos una medida de contribución al margen para cada cliente  $i$  y cada periodo  $t$ . En particular, se trata de una variable continua que contiene información relativa a la diferencia entre el devengo de intereses-comisiones cobrados al cliente y el coste-ingreso que para el banco suponen los fondos invertidos o captados del cliente en el Mercado Interbancario (Kumar y Shah, 2009).

##### 3.2.2.2. Cross-buying

**Diferencia en el número total de productos entre el periodo  $t$  y  $(t-1)$ .** Siguiendo las sugerencias de Verhoef *et al.* (2001), una medida de *cross-buying* se obtiene calculando la diferencia en el número de productos comprados-cancelados (de todas las categorías de producto) de la empresa entre el periodo  $t$  y  $(t-1)$ . Nótese que la diferencia puede ser también negativa (en caso de las cancelaciones). En este sentido, consideramos conjuntamente estas puntuaciones positivas y negativas, ya que tanto el incremento como el decremento del número de servicios que posee el cliente implica llevar a cabo el mismo proceso de decisión (Bolton y Lemon, 1999; Verhoef *et al.*, 2001). En definitiva, esta variable se ha considerado porque ofrece una manera de cuantificar el número real de productos que cada cliente adquiere (si la variable toma un valor positivo) o cancela (si la variable toma un valor negativo). Por su parte, las variables recencia en la compra y en la adquisición nos dan una información limitada acerca de si ha ocurrido una cancelación o una compra, ya que no cuantifican el número real de productos que son adquiridos o cancelados.

**Uso de productos bancarios.** Esta variable recoge la cantidad total de productos (de todas las categorías) que cada cliente  $i$  utiliza en cada periodo temporal  $t$  (Bolton y Lemon, 1999; Venkatesan *et al.*, 2007 p. 585).

**Balance.** En este caso se han considerado dos variables continuas (medidas en euros) y que varían con el tiempo: (1) **Balance medio mensual en activos**, en un contexto bancario se consideran activos los créditos, préstamos o las deudas en cuentas corrientes (Prinzle y Van den Poel, 2006; Reinart *et al.*, 2008), es decir, se consideran clientes de activo a aquellos clientes sobre los que el banco tiene derechos de cobro. (2) **Balance medio mensual en pasivos**, en un contexto bancario se consideran pasivos los productos de ahorro e inversión (Prinzle y Van den Poel, 2006; Reinart *et al.*, 2008), es decir, se consideran clientes de pasivo a aquellos clientes sobre los que el banco tiene una serie de obligaciones de pago. Aunque estas dos variables vienen caracterizadas por su dimensión continua en el tiempo, son registradas en la base de datos en momentos discretos, por ejemplo, a final de mes en el caso de cuentas corrientes, o anualmente en el caso de los seguros.

### 3.2.3. Variables de control

Campbell y Frei (2004) subrayan la importancia de considerar variables sociodemográficas en un contexto bancario por su influencia en la rentabilidad de la entidad, así como en los patrones de consumo de los clientes. Por ejemplo, señalan que los clientes de mediana edad tienden a ser más rentables que los más jóvenes porque tienden a mantener mayores balances y es más probable que tengan hipotecas. En general, Campbell y Frei (2004 p.110) indican que los bancos estadounidenses gastan entre 1 y 2 millones de dólares anuales para obtener más información sociodemográfica de sus clientes de fuentes externas al banco. En este sentido, en este trabajo se han considerado varias variables sociodemográficas como son la **edad** del cliente (variable continua medida al final del periodo de observación de los datos), **género** (variable dicotómica que toma el valor 1 para los hombres y el valor 2 para las mujeres, medida al principio de la relación entre el cliente y el banco) y finalmente **ingresos** (variable continua que indica el salario medio que cada cliente recibe cada mes).

### 3.3. Modelo empírico

Para testear las hipótesis propuestas sobre los factores que influyen en la adopción del canal online, utilizamos el denominado análisis de supervivencia. Esta metodología relaciona a las variables explicativas (incluyendo variables individuales y *time-varying*) con el momento del tiempo en el que el cliente adopta la banca online. Cada uno de los sujetos de la base de datos existe para el análisis de supervivencia hasta que el evento ‘adopción de la banca online’ ocurre o el cliente abandona el banco.

Existen diferentes modelos de supervivencia, entre ellos aquellos en los que el resultado es un evento en el tiempo (denominados *accelerated failure time* o *AFT models*) o aquellos en los que el resultado es un ratio *hazard* (denominados *proportional hazard* o *PH models*). Así mismo, dentro de cada uno de estos dos grupos de modelos, pueden asumirse diferentes funciones relativas al evento de adopción y sus características correlacionadas. Para esta investigación, cuyo objetivo es analizar la influencia en el tiempo de determinadas variables sobre el proceso de adopción, se utiliza un modelo de supervivencia paramétrico. Esta elección viene determinada porque se trata de modelos estadísticamente más eficientes en este tipo de escenarios que los no paramétricos o los semi-paramétricos (Hosmer y Lemeshow, 1999; Tellis *et al.*, 2003; Cleves *et al.*, 2004). Por tanto, siguiendo

la literatura sobre difusión de innovaciones (Tellis *et al.*, 2003), ajustamos el modelo de adopción seleccionado utilizando un *AFT model* basado en una distribución log logística. En particular, los *AFT models* relacionan el evento en el tiempo ( $t_i$ , en nuestro caso, la adopción de la banca online), a un conjunto de variables ( $x_i$ , véase apartado 3.2.) y un término de error ( $e_i$ ), y estima un conjunto de parámetros para las variables ( $\beta_i$ ).

$$\ln(t_i) = x_i\beta_i + e_i$$

En nuestro caso:

$$\ln(\text{adopción banca online}_i) = \text{longitud de la relación}\beta_1 + \text{recencia compra}\beta_2 + \text{recencia cancelación}\beta_3 + \dots$$

### 3.4. Resultados

Los parámetros del modelo se estiman por máxima verosimilitud con un estimador de varianza robusto (comando STREG para el software STATA v.12). En la Tabla 2 se señalan los resultados del modelo. En particular, en la primera columna se indican los coeficientes de regresión obtenidos por el modelo, a los que hemos denominado *log-time* ( $\beta_i$ ), mientras que en la segunda columna se adjuntan los resultados *en tiempo normal* (aplicando la transformación  $e^{\beta_i}$ ), ofreciendo estos últimos una más fácil interpretación. Un coeficiente *log-time* negativo o un coeficiente *en tiempo normal*  $< 1$ , indica una adopción más rápida.

Tabla 2. Resultados *AFT model* (\*)

	<b>Coficiente <i>log-time</i></b>	<b>Coficiente <i>en tiempo normal</i></b>
Longitud de la relación	-0,003 (0,007)	0,997 (0,007)
Recencia compra	0,307 (0,023)*	1,359 (0,023)*
Recencia cancelación	0,147 (0,018)*	1,158 (0,018)*
Frecuencia adquisición	10,763 (552,813)	47.240,176 (552,813)
Rentabilidad	9,84e <sup>-4</sup> (8,34e <sup>-4</sup> )	1,000 (8,34e <sup>-4</sup> )
Diferencia productos <i>t</i> y <i>t-1</i>	-10,335 (552,813)	3,247e <sup>-5</sup> (552,813)
Uso de productos	-0,223 (0,025)*	0,800 (0,025)*
Balance activos	-2,12e <sup>-7</sup> (1,42e <sup>-6</sup> )	1,000 (1,42e <sup>-6</sup> )
Balance pasivos	8,47e <sup>-6</sup> (2,30e <sup>-6</sup> )*	1,000 (2,30e <sup>-6</sup> )*
Edad	0,003 (0,002)*	1,003 (0,002)*
Género	0,048 (0,059)	1,049 (0,059)
Ingresos	-4,18e <sup>-6</sup> (1,16e <sup>-6</sup> )*	0,999 (1,16e <sup>-6</sup> )*
<b>Bondad del ajuste:</b>		
Nº parámetros	12	
LL(null)	-1.998,297	
LL(model)	-1.555,587	
$\chi^2$	885,42	
AIC	3139,175	
BIC	3.250,264	

(\*) Error estándar entre paréntesis; \* resultado significativo al 0,05; \*\* resultado significativo al 0,1.

Longitud de la relación: Los resultados no muestran que la longitud de la relación afecte de forma significativa a la adopción de la banca online ( $\beta = -0,003$ ,  $p > 0,05$ ) no pudiendo dar soporte a la hipótesis 1.

Recencia en la compra: Los resultados muestran que un cliente con una mayor recencia en la compra adopta el canal online más lentamente ( $\beta = 0,307$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ), corroborando la hipótesis 2a. En

particular, cada mes que se añade en la recencia en la compra, el tiempo que el cliente tarda en adoptar la banca online se incrementa en un 30,7% ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Recencia en la cancelación: Los resultados muestran que un cliente con una mayor recencia en la cancelación adopta el canal online más lentamente ( $\beta = 0,147$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ), corroborando la hipótesis 2b. En particular, cada mes que se añade en la recencia en la cancelación, el tiempo que el cliente tarda en adoptar la banca online se incrementa en un 14,7% ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Frecuencia de adquisición: Los resultados no muestran que la frecuencia de adquisición de productos afecte de forma significativa a la adopción de la banca online ( $\beta = 10,763$ ,  $p > 0,05$ ), no pudiendo dar soporte a la hipótesis 3.

Rentabilidad: Los resultados muestran que un cliente con una mayor rentabilidad adopta el canal online más lentamente ( $\beta = 9,84e^{-4}$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ), corroborando la hipótesis 4 pero en sentido inverso. En particular, cada euro que se añade en la rentabilidad, el tiempo que el cliente tarda en adoptar la banca online disminuye en un 0,0984% ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Diferencia de productos entre  $t$  y  $(t-1)$ : Los resultados no muestran que la diferencia de productos entre  $t$  y  $(t-1)$  afecte de forma significativa a la adopción de la banca online ( $\beta = -10,335$ ,  $p > 0,05$ ), no pudiendo dar soporte a la hipótesis 5.

Uso de productos: Los resultados muestran que un cliente que utiliza un mayor número de productos adopta el canal online más rápidamente ( $\beta = -0,223$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ), corroborando la hipótesis 6. En particular, por cada producto más que utiliza el cliente, el tiempo que este tarda en adoptar la banca online disminuye en un 22,3% ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Balance activos: Los resultados muestran que un cliente con un mayor balance en activos adopta el canal online más rápidamente ( $\beta = -2,12e^{-7}$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ), corroborando la hipótesis 7a. En particular, por cada euro más que el cliente tenga en su balance de activos, el tiempo que este tarda en adoptar la banca online disminuye en un 2,12e<sup>-5</sup>% ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Balance pasivos: Los resultados muestran que un cliente con un mayor balance en pasivos adopta el canal online más lentamente ( $\beta = 8,47e^{-6}$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ), corroborando la hipótesis 7b pero en sentido inverso. En particular, por cada euro más que el cliente tenga en su balance de pasivos, el tiempo que este tarda en adoptar la banca online aumenta en un 8,47e<sup>-5</sup>% ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Respecto a las variables sociodemográficas, los clientes más mayores adoptan la banca online más lentamente ( $\beta = 0,003$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ), en particular, por cada año más que posee el cliente, el tiempo que este tarda en adoptar la banca online aumenta en un 0,3% ( $p < 0,05$ ), mientras que los clientes con mayores ingresos adoptan la banca online más rápido ( $\beta = -4,18e^{-6}$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ), en particular, por cada euro más de ingresos del cliente, el tiempo que este tarda en adoptar la banca online disminuye en un 4,18e<sup>-4</sup>% ( $p < 0,05$ ).

#### 4. Conclusiones

En este trabajo se analizan los factores relativos a la lealtad y al *cross-buying* del cliente que influyen en la adopción de la banca online. Para ello se ha utilizado una muestra de clientes bancarios españoles de los que se dispone de dos años de datos. Se ha demostrado que los clientes con una mayor recencia en la compra y en la cancelación adoptan el canal online más lentamente (dando soporte a las hipótesis 2a y 2b), los clientes con una mayor rentabilidad adoptan el canal online más lentamente (corroborando la hipótesis 4 pero en sentido inverso), los clientes que utilizan un mayor número de productos adoptan el canal online más rápidamente (soportando la hipótesis 6), y finalmente, los clientes con un mayor balance en activos adoptan el canal online más rápidamente (corroborando la hipótesis 7a), mientras que los clientes con un mayor balance en pasivos adoptan el canal online más lentamente (corroborando la hipótesis 7b pero en sentido inverso).

Las implicaciones para la gestión derivadas de este trabajo pueden ayudar a las empresas a conocer qué clientes son más propensos a utilizar este tipo de canales y diagnosticar si en su caso la puesta en

práctica de una estrategia online tiene o no sentido. En particular, el uso de un mayor número de productos bancarios es un factor influyente en el proceso de adopción, así como el balance en productos de activo (en un contexto bancario se consideran activos los créditos, préstamos o las deudas en cuentas corrientes). El resto de variables o bien no demuestran tener un efecto significativo en el proceso de adopción, o bien en lugar de acelerarlo, lo ralentizan.

Una de las limitaciones de este trabajo está ligada a disponer de una base de datos con información de dos años. Otros trabajos previos utilizan periodos temporales más amplios para llevar a cabo este tipo de análisis, por ejemplo 4 o 5 años (e.g., Xue *et al.*, 2011). Para investigaciones futuras sería deseable disponer de más histórico de datos y replicar el análisis. Adicionalmente, se propone como futura línea de investigación el testear otras distribuciones en las que basar el *AFT model*, además de la log logística, así como analizar los resultados aplicando un modelo de supervivencia no paramétrico y comparar los resultados. Finalmente, la introducción en el modelo de variables de uso de producto diferenciando entre categorías se configura como otra futura línea de investigación.

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# MOBILE SOCIAL COMMERCE ACCEPTANCE MODEL: FACTORS AND INFLUENCES ON INTENTION TO USE S-COMMERCE

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## ABSTRACT

*The aim of this paper is to contribute to the research field which studies the consumer behavior model in mobile social commerce, starting from the evolution of the concepts of electronic commerce, mobile commerce and social commerce: It also identifies the main factors that influence intention to use, through the classical TAM model and subsequent extensions and the inclusion of the perceived risk. Consequence of all we proposed the Mobile Social Commerce Acceptance Model (MSCAM).*

*To carry out this research, we created a survey answered by 353 social network users who had previously watched a video explaining the functioning of this new online commercial format.*

*The results confirm the relevance of the relationships proposed, highlighting the influence of subjective norms on usefulness and attitude, except for the relationship between perceived risk and intention to use.*

## Key Words:

E-commerce, mobile-social-commerce, technology acceptance model (TAM), perceived risk, intention to use

## 1. Introduction

The emergence of mobile telephones and the rise of social networks constitute unprecedented landmarks. In the first place, the large number of features that help make daily life easier can explain the widespread, growing use of mobile phones. The increasing number of smartphones in the mobile market is also a clear example of this trend (Allen et al., 2010; Calzada and Estruch, 2011). Generator Research (2013) estimates that by 2015 there will be over 1,500 million smartphone users, representing 24.8% of active SIM cards, leaving no doubt that the smartphone market presents a strategic opportunity for many companies as they attempt to profit from the distribution of their services and multiple marketing programs (Sheehy, 2011). Secondly, ENISA (2010) computes the number of worldwide users of social networks by means of mobile devices by 2011 as 554 million, corresponding to 13.3% of mobile phone users. Actually, in Spain the penetration rate for SNS is over 79 % and the 70% of these users access by mobile phone (IAB, 2014).

Gómez and Otero (2011) argue that the future of Facebook, the most popular national and international social network, must pass through the path of social commerce (S-commerce) as a tool that complements advertising and the integration of Social Networks (SN) in the real world via other parallel technologies such as Quick Response (QR) codes or implementing RFID technology (Radio Frequency Identification). From our perspective, social commerce is at an emerging phase and will be one of the main tools for sale in the coming years.

Sun (2011) reveals that although the terms social commerce or social shopping are considered analogous by most authors, some regard them differently. In this sense, some researchers believe that social commerce refers to the perspective of the company that sells the product, while social shopping refers to the perspective of the consumer (Stephen and Toubia, 2010). Both concepts are actually similar and only differ, in the first case, from whether the perspective is that of the seller or consumer. For this reason we apply the term indiscriminately.

Social commerce is an electronic commerce that involves using social media, online media that supports social interaction, and user contributions to assist in the online buying and selling of products and services. In a more direct way this would be put into place in the same manner as the applications that combine online shopping and social networks (Tedeschi, 2006) in the line that Stephen and Toubia (2010) defined as the integration of social network characteristics in the functions of basic e-commerce web sites so as to "... allow people to participate actively in the marketing and selling of products and services in online marketplaces and communities."

Following the principles established by Shen (2008), we can define social commerce as "an extension of Business-to-Consumer E-commerce where consumers interact with each other as a main mechanism in conducting online shopping activities, such as discovering products, aggregating and sharing product information, and collaboratively making shopping decisions."

Based on this initial approach, our work presents the following objectives: 1) to analyze the theoretical evolution of the concepts of electronic commerce (e-commerce), mobile commerce (m-commerce) and social commerce (s-commerce), 2) to establish a pattern of behavior following the principals and modifications of the classic TAM model on the question of the social shopping experience, and 3) to define strategies of action for companies that choose to implement s-commerce based on the results achieved.

Our study is structured in six sections. Following this introduction, in section 2 we provide a theoretical framework aimed at examining e-commerce, m-commerce and s-commerce. In section 3, we establish the research hypotheses and the behavioral model proposed. In section 4, we describe the methodology used in our research. In section 5 we analyze and discuss the results. Finally, we draw the main conclusions and discuss some implications and limitations of the study in section 6

## 2. Theoretical framework: e-commerce, m-commerce and s-commerce

The evolution of our society has been marked by innovation since its very beginning. For many, the sudden rise of ICT has brought about a revolution similar to that of the emergence of electricity or the invention of printing.

Although investments in technology have been limited for some years in Spain, as shown by the innovation indicators in the European Union (EU) and the resources invested (Cotec Foundation, 2011), it appears that since 2008 there has been a change in this trend and the level of investment in Spain, compared to that of the rest of the EU countries, has reached equal proportions.

In spite of all this, the economic activity is undergoing an important transformation process, marked by a triple interaction: 1) a process of technological revolution, led by the investment in and the massive use of ICT; 2) a dynamic of temporal and spatial enlargement of the factors and products markets, also known as the globalization process; and 3) new patterns of consumer demand and of the investment of companies and households (Torrent-Sellens et al., 2010). These factors were confirmed in the last report of the Spanish Corporate Association for Electronics, Information and Communications Technologies (AMETIC, 2010), which verifies the high level of technological acceptance in the Spanish business sector.

In recent years, developments in the field of information and communications technologies (ICT) and the important business applications derived from them, have created significant economic progress in terms of profitability, productivity, competitiveness and economic growth for both companies and countries (Dehning and Strapoulos, 2003; Lafuente, 2005).

Trade on the Internet today is the most important potential tool for companies. This means a revolution in both the buying habits of consumers and consumer-business relationship formulas (Sharma and Sheth, 2004). Currently over 90% of total OECD companies have access to Internet. Though in Spain that number is only 86.6%, the evolution of recent years shows signs of it catching up with the average of OECD countries (AMETIC, 2010).

Different formulas have been identified in the scientific literature to define e-commerce (Vilaseca et al., 2007). For Treese and Stewart (1998), this represents "the use of global Internet for the purchase and sale of products and services, including post-sale service and support". Kalakota and Whinston (1996) define e-commerce as "the modern method of doing business that takes into account the needs of organizations, merchants and customers to reduce costs by improving the quality of goods, services and distribution".

E-commerce is now an essential tool for the business development of many companies and has many advantages, including (Poong et al., 2009; Armesh et al., 2010): continuous accessibility; increased quantity and quality of information; direct contact between customers and producers to facilitate interaction; multimedia access to companies' contents; the creation of new products and services; open markets; cost reductions; time savings; the immediacy of interaction; the personalization and globalization of offers of markets. These advantages will only be enhanced with the integration of web 2.0 in online marketing activities in the near future (Hannah and Lybecker, 2010).

In this context, m-commerce is an online trading model where mobile devices perform the classic functions of trade, for example, assisting in information searches, facilitating contact between the consumer and business and completing transactions. M-commerce is strategically important for companies because it promotes online sales using a support system that already takes advantage of varied marketing activities, and therefore reinforces the channel itself.

In today's society, the mobile phone has proven itself to be a vital tool in any personal or professional activity, with a very high level of acceptance by consumers (Masamila et al., 2010).

The main similarities between e-commerce and m-commerce are (Liébana-Cabanillas, 2012): 1) the maturity of the former and the growth potential of the latter, 2) the greater penetration of e-commerce,

3) the increased accessibility of m-commerce, 4) analogous users, 5) the similar levels of personalization available; and finally 6) the diversity of buying motives.

On the other hand, s-commerce is a new wave of e-commerce in which traditional e-commerce is mediated by social media and social networking services in order to promote online transactions and shopping-related information exchanges (Wang and Zhang 2012). Social commerce can be defined as word-of-mouth applied to e-commerce (Dennison et al. 2009) or as a type of trade supported by social media and social network services (SNS) (Curty and Zhang, 2013). S-commerce generates two advantages which improve any other previous form of commerce (Zhang, 2009). First of all, it facilitates interactions between network users, enabling direct interaction for sharing opinions, purchase advice and experiences (participatory environment and word of mouth, see Wallace et al., 2009). Secondly, it allows surfing and getting to know a variety of products, which in the offline context would be impossible to reach (unlimited access). Apart from these two advantages, we would like to add two more: the third one would be the technological accessibility, since this allows access to this type of commerce from different types of modern technological devices (conventional mobile phones, smartphones, tablets, etc.), and lastly, the payment facilities that some social networks are already providing or will provide in the future.

As claimed by different authors (Castelló, 2011; Huang and Benyoucef, 2013), s-commerce is going through an introductory phase. This means that it has not taken off yet in our country. However, after consulting several sources, we have detected a promising background, with many probabilities of success (Kumar and Benbasat, 2006; Hsiao et al., 2010; The Cocktail Analysis, 2013): a notable acceptance of social networks, a lower rejection of advertising on social networks, a higher level of the activity of social network users, a high access rate to social networks from mobile phones, better results of online purchases based on the opinion of other users, etc.

The emergence of s-commerce reflects the new power users have nowadays, removing sellers' bargaining power and replacing it by the consumers themselves (Wei, Straub and Poddar, 2011; Gu et al., 2012). This has reached the point that their behavior is recognized within that network and the visibility of their actions has a greater personal and social impact.

For all of the above, we consider that s-commerce will be crucial for future commercial activity. Hence, we define a behavioral model to verify the intention to use, based on Davis' (1989) classical model and subsequent adaptations, adding the risk that the user might perceive in purchase transactions on social networks.

### **3. Research proposal: antecedents of intention of use with mobile social commerce**

The objective of this research is, from a holistic perspective, to develop a behavior model to define the intended use of a social commerce among population users. Our Mobile Social Commerce Acceptance Model (MSCAM) integrates factors from different existing models and theories (Hajli, 2012) to respond to the acceptance of this new commerce system.

In the scientific literature, numerous models have been used to measure technology acceptance. However, we will focus on the TAM, as it is the most widely used model in the scientific literature concerning commercial mobile services (Wei, Xinyan and Yue, 2011). Most models mentioned in the reviewed scientific literature are based on the TAM model for analyzing the acceptance of innovation, although with some limitations. Based on the classical TAM (Davis et al., 1989), our model is completed with the inclusion of risk as a relevant element in the adoption of social commerce.

The TAM model, as stated by Alcántara (2012), does not include subjective norms, as is the case in the TRA (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Davis et al. (1989) "recognize the importance of social influence, but they exclude it from their model because of the problems it entails, for not being able to distinguish

whether the behavior of use is caused by the influence of reference groups or by attitudes, mainly due to the fact that subjective norms are significant when subjects have little experience with technology". In our research, we have taken this variable into account due to the importance of this influence for the adoption of innovations (e.g. Venkatesh and Bala, 2008; Kim, Chol and Han, 2009). Subjective norms are defined as the extent to which an individual perceives that people who are important to them think they should or should not use a certain system or perform a certain action, etc. (Hsu and Lu, 2004; Venkatesh and Bala, 2008).

Therefore, subjective norms will have an impact on the ease of use (Lu et al., 2005; Bhatti, 2007) and on usefulness (Scheepers and Wetzels, 2007; Zhang et al., 2011; Chang et al., 2011; Kim, Kim and Shin, 2009; Teh and Ahmed, 2011; Yang et al., 2012; Chung et al., 2012). We therefore propose the following research hypotheses:

H1: Subjective norms have a positive effect on the ease of use of s-commerce

H2: Subjective norms have a positive effect on the perceived usefulness of s-commerce

H3: Subjective norms have a positive effect on the intention to use s-commerce

On the other hand, the ease of use refers to the individual's perception that using a certain system is effortless or simply easy to do (Davis, 1989, Taylor and Todd, 1995). For this reason, it is considered to be one of the qualities of greatest impact on the acceptance of a new technology (Moore and Benbasat, 1991). Particularly in e-commerce, Vijayarathy (2004) defines it as "the extent to which a consumer believes that online purchasing would be free of effort". Therefore, this concept is closely linked to the structure of the website, its content, its ease of use, etc.

The impact of the perceived ease of use on the perceived usefulness has been proved in numerous research studies applied to different contexts, as for example in the use of online services (Liao et al., 2007), the acceptance of e-commerce (Sánchez-Franco and Roldán, 2005), online purchase intention (Hernández-García et al., 2011), technology in teaching (Chang et al., 2011), mobile payment (Liébana-Cabanillas, 2012) and even in s-commerce (Teh and Ahmed, 2012). On the other hand, Lai and Li (2005), Sánchez-Franco et al. (2007), Fadil (2009), Qi et al. (2009) and Schierz et al. (2009) prove that the perceived ease of use has a positive impact on the user's attitude and perceived usefulness.

Considering these circumstances, we propose the following hypotheses:

H4: Perceived ease of use positively influences the attitude towards the intention to use s-commerce

H5: Perceived ease of use positively affects usefulness in the adoption of s-commerce

Davis et al.'s (1989) original model established an indirect relationship between the belief of usefulness and the behavioral intention, based on the idea that users will form their intentions towards certain behaviors when they believe they will improve their performance. This way, usefulness will affect behavior and therefore the use of the s-commerce analyzed below. Different research studies have proven how usefulness is directly related to attitude (Hsu et al., 2013), but also to the intention to use. In line with this idea, we would like to highlight the studies carried out in the context of tourism (Luque et al., 2007), social network games (Shin and Shin, 2011), 2.0 travel tools (Muñoz-Leiva et al., 2012; Ayeh et al., 2013), mobile commerce (Aldás-Manzano et al., 2008) and mobile payment (Liébana-Cabanillas, 2012), among others. In the context of our research, we understand that the usefulness of s-commerce will influence the intention to use through the user's attitude toward the purchase, but also directly, according to the principles of the TAM. In the light of these circumstances, we propose the following hypotheses:

H6: Perceived usefulness has a positive effect on the intention to use s-commerce.

H7: Perceived usefulness has a positive effect on the attitude toward the use of s-commerce.

Finally, the relationship between the attitude toward technological innovation and the intention of use has been empirically supported by research in different fields of study, such as using an information

system (Bhattacharjee and Premkumar, 2004), the intention of online auctions (Huang et al., 2011) and mobile payment systems (Schierz et al., 2009), etc. We therefore propose the following hypothesis:

H8: Attitude toward the intended use is an antecedent of intention to use s-commerce

### 3.1. Extensions of the TAM

Bauer (1960) starts an analysis of perceived risk through two components: uncertainty (consumers' lack of knowledge regarding what might happen when they make a purchase) and the eventual negative consequences of the purchase. Later, this same author stated that all consumer behavior entails a risk, since the consequences derived from it cannot be anticipated with certainty (Bauer, 1967). Gupta and Kim (2010) define it as "a consumer's perception about the uncertainty and the adverse consequences of a transaction performed by a seller".

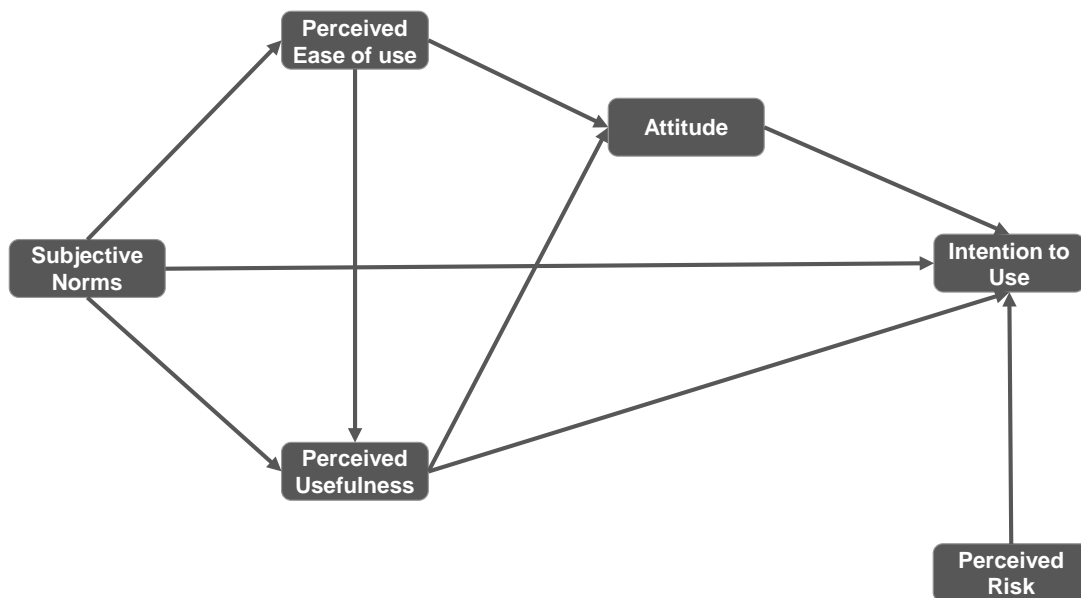
Perceived risk is a multidimensional construct consisting of different factors, which together explain the global risk associated with the adoption of a given product - in the present case, s-commerce (Featherman and Pavlou, 2003; Lee et al., 2012).

Some authors suggest that the perceived risk in online exchange relationships is a factor that limits the development of e-commerce (Culnan and Armstrong, 1999; Reichheld and Scheffer, 2000). From our point of view, the perceived risk associated with s-commerce is higher than the risk of any other online purchase (Gupta and Kim, 2010; San Martín and López, 2010), since the abovementioned multidimensionality increases due to the risk of being exposed to the social network on which the purchase will take place. Considering these arguments, we propose the following hypothesis:

H9: The perceived risk negatively influences the intention to use s-commerce.

The final model proposed is summarized in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1  
Model proposed: Mobile Social Commerce Acceptance Model (MSCAM)



### 4. Research methodology and data collection

The aim of this study was to analyze the adoption of social commerce by users of social networks. The study subjects were students of the Business Management and Administration degree course at a southern university of Spain. We developed a questionnaire based on our research model to measure the variables. The questionnaire was completed in class. Following a pre-test, some questions were rewritten for clarification.

The questionnaire was made up of two sections: the first one was a group of questions which analyzed the students' socio-demographic profile, as well as their level of technological innovation and presence on social networks (see Table 1); the second one was a group of questions matching the constructs of our model. The students had access to the questionnaire after having watched a video explaining s-commerce. The constructs analyzed were measured on the basis of an adaptation of the scales proposed - listed in Annex 1.

The questionnaire was completed by 378 students during May and June 2013, of which 353 completed questionnaires (93 per cent) were deemed valid.

The sample profile of participants appears in Table 1, which shows that 52.69 per cent of those surveyed were women and 47.31 per cent were men.

TABLE 1  
Demographic and technological information of the participants

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Sex</b>		
<b>Male</b>	167	47.31%
<b>Female</b>	186	52.69%
<b>TOTAL</b>	353	100%
<b>Age</b>		
<b>19</b>	45	12.75%
<b>20</b>	134	37.96%
<b>21</b>	99	28.05%
<b>22</b>	75	21.25%
<b>TOTAL</b>	353	100%
<b>Social Network users</b>		
<b>Yes</b>	353	100%
<b>No</b>	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	353	100%

### 5. Results: reliability and validity of measurement items

First, to measure the scales' reliability, we applied the Cronbach alpha indicator (see Table 2), with 0.6 as the reference value (Malhotra, 1997), and 0.7 to be more restrictive (Nunnally, 1978). A Confirmatory Factorial Analysis was also conducted to compare the scales' convergent and divergent validity.

The convergent validity was evaluated through the indicators' factorial loads. We verified that the coefficients were significantly far from zero and that the loads between the latent and observed variables were high in all cases ( $\alpha > 0.7$ ). It could therefore be confirmed that the latent variables adequately explained the observed variables (Hair et al., 1995).

In terms of discriminative validity, we confirmed that the variations were significantly far from zero and that the correlation between each pair of scales was 0.9 (Hair et al., 1995).

The scales' reliability can be evaluated based on a series of indicators extracted from the confirmatory analysis. Specifically, the factor's compound reliability (CR) and extracted variance analysis (EVA) surpassed the reference threshold, 0.7 and 0.5, respectively, as well as other indicators of global adjustment for the corresponding models of individual measurements (Hair et al., 1995).

TABLE 2  
**Convergent validity and reliability of the internal consistency**

Variable	Item	Stand. Coef.	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	EVA
Subjective Norms	SN1	0.891	0.93	0.9	0,76
	SN2	0.898			
	SN3	0.82			
	SN4	0.78			
Ease of use	EOU1	0.63	0.88	0.86	0,61
	EOU2	0.913			
	EOU3	0.482			
	EOU4	0.897			
Perceived Usefulness	US1	0.915	0.94	0-.94	0,8
	US2	0.892			
	US3	0.916			
	US4	0.854			
Attitude	AT1	0.809	0.92	0.92	0,76
	AT2	0.89			
	AT3	0.916			
	AT4	0.857			
Intention of use	IU1	0.907	0.96	0.96	0,88
	IU2	0.961			
	IU3	0.944			
Perceived Risk	PR1	0.907	0.9	0-91	0,71
	PR2	0.845			
	PR3	0.697			
	PR4	0.897			

After analyzing the reliability and validity of the initial measurement scales, we tested the research hypotheses in the literature review using the structural equation model (SEM). Considering the absence of normality of the variables, we opted for the maximum likelihood estimation method and bootstrapping technique (or bootstrap learning samples) for 500 consecutive steps or samples, and a significance level of 95 percent. The maximum likelihood is preferable in the case of small samples, as opposed to generalized or weighted least squares (West et al., 1995). In the bootstrapping technique we used the Bollen-Stine's corrected p-value, testing the null hypothesis that the model is correct. Through re-sampling, this technique permits the standard error of the constructs to be corrected.

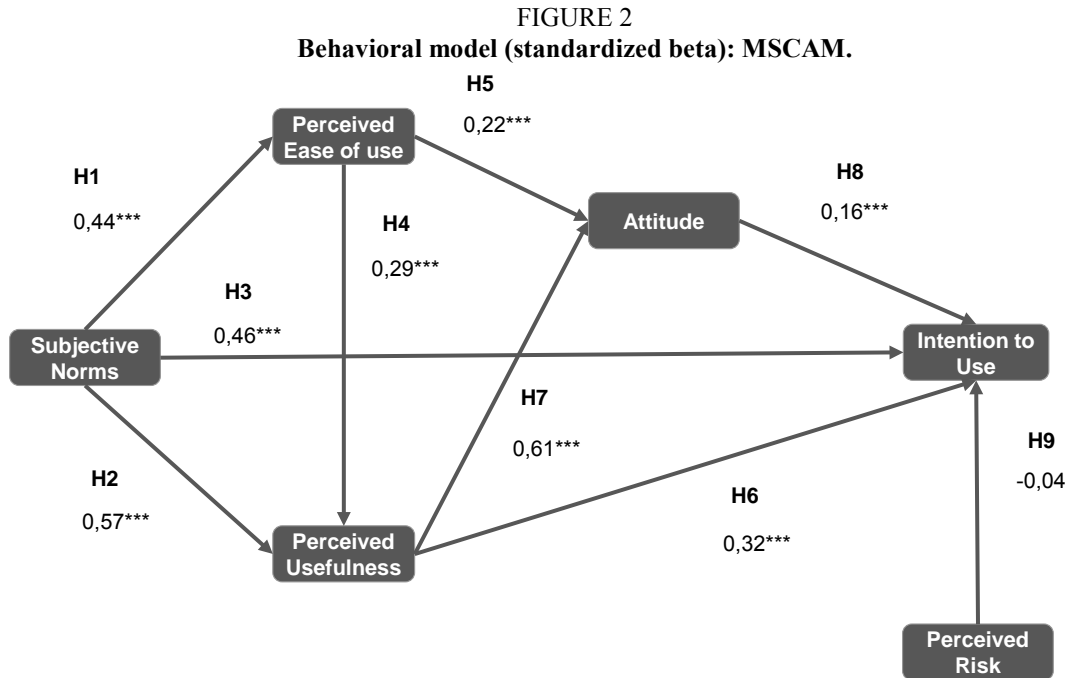
TABLE 3  
**Statistical summary of the model's goodness-of-fit.**

Goodness-of-fit index	Recommended value	Results in the study
$\chi^2$ /degrees of freedom	<3	2.4
Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	>0.90	0.88
Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)	>0.80	0.85
Comparative fit index (CFI)	>0.90	0.96
Normed fit index (NFI)	>0.90	0.93
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	<0.08	0.06



Adjusting the model with absolute, incremental and parsimonious measurements verified that the model's adjustment was reasonably effective. Table 3 shows that the goodness-of-fit of all the statistics is within an acceptable range (Hu and Bentler, 1995; Hu et al., 1999).

The results of the structural model are shown in Figure 2.



Note: \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

The results of the SEM analysis and the results of the hypotheses are shown in Table 4. All the hypotheses were considered significant except hypothesis 9. The results for H9 reveal that the relation between perceived risk and intention to use is not significant ( $\beta = -0.04$ ,  $p > 0.001$ ), although there is a negative and small value relationship between them. This situation could be explained by the profiles of the survey respondents (Akman and Mishra, 2010), that is, students with an average age of 20.5. Age is a risk inhibitor in the adoption of certain technologies (Liébana-Cabanillas, 2012). This means that younger users have minor problems in the adoption of technology (Phang et al., 2006).

On the other hand, hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 could not be rejected ( $p < 0.001$ ), thus proving the importance of subjective norms in s-commerce. It is precisely subjective norms which establish the most significant relationship with the intention to use ( $\beta = 0.45$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), as a consequence of the environment in which the purchase is carried out (a social network). This somehow conditions the users' potential behavior (Liébana-Cabanillas, 2012). For this reason, we have found out that through subjective norms, users will improve their perception of the ease of use ( $\beta = 0.37$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and usefulness ( $\beta = 0.54$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

Furthermore, our hypotheses regarding the effect of the ease of use (H4 and H5) could not be rejected either. The ease of use is directly and positively related to perceived usefulness ( $\beta = 0.32$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and attitude ( $\beta = 0.21$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), according to the literature analyzed previously.

Additionally, the relationship between usefulness and intention and attitude in H6 and H7 cannot be rejected either. On this occasion, the usefulness the user gives to s-commerce directly affects both the intention of future use ( $\beta = 0.33$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and the user's attitude towards it ( $\beta = 0.52$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

Lastly, H8, which relates the users' favorable attitudes towards s-commerce and their intention, cannot be rejected either ( $\beta = 0.18$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), although it has a lower value than the other variables associated with intention of use.

In the model all the relationships turned out to be significant, except for the one between perceived risk and intention to use. The percentage corresponding to the variable 'intention to use' attained 70.7%. The intention to use is positively related to subjective norms ( $\beta = 0.46$ ), usefulness ( $\beta = 0.32$ ) and attitude ( $\beta = 0.16$ ), and negatively related to perceived risk ( $\beta = -0.04$ ).

TABLE 4  
Non- standardized coefficients ( $\beta$ ) of the model

Hypotheses	Effect	$\beta_{sc}$	S.E.	Sig.	Valuation
1	SN $\rightarrow$ PEOU	0.373	0.05	0.000	Accepted
2	SN $\rightarrow$ PU	0.547	0.04	0.000	Accepted
3	SN $\rightarrow$ IU	0.459	0.05	0.000	Accepted
4	PEOU $\rightarrow$ PU	0.324	0.05	0.000	Accepted
5	PEOU $\rightarrow$ ATT	0.219	0.05	0.000	Accepted
6	PU $\rightarrow$ IU	0.332	0.06	0.000	Accepted
7	PU $\rightarrow$ ATT	0.529	0.04	0.000	Accepted
8	ATT $\rightarrow$ IU	0.188	0.06	0.000	Accepted
9	PR $\rightarrow$ IU	-0.04	0.037	0.243	Eliminated

## 6. Conclusion and future research directions

The technological advances of recent years have modified the way clients carry out their purchases. From the classic concept of e-commerce, the implementation of mobile technology and the emergence of social networks, human behaviors have had to adapt to the environment. With the emergence of social commerce, the technology and socialization of purchases have come together, strengthening the user's presence on the network. This becomes even stronger with the massive penetration of mobile phones.

Social commerce is increasingly drawing the attention of the professional and academic world. As we have already mentioned in this paper, the evidence of the data analyzed and of previous studies shows that social commerce is a new phenomenon which needs deeper analysis in terms of economic and social consequences.

Given the importance of this new commercial format and the massive penetration of mobile phones in society, there has been a proposal of a review of the intention to use in the Spanish context, in which this type of activities is still at an embryonic stage. The model selected to this end was the TAM model. TAM has been widely used in our research and it is considered a highly validated model in a large number of technological innovations - hence our decision to use it, including some subsequent modifications.

The results of our research significantly confirm the classic relationships of the TAM. The variables 'subjective norms', 'usefulness' and 'attitude' establish a significant relationship with the intention to use. We highlight the case of subjective norms as the most important determining factor for the intention to use social commerce, precisely because of the environment in which the eventual purchase is carried out. This leads us to suppose that the user will be aware of the importance of his/her actions on the network, being influenced by them at the same time, and to some extent promoting the mobile social word of mouth (M-S-WOM). However, the relationship established between risk and intention does not attain the necessary significance, although this is a negative relationship, as expected. This suggests that the risk among the selected population (young users) is not as important as we theoretically expected it to be at the beginning, since younger users have fewer difficulties in the adoption of a new purchase system.

The inclusion of social networks in the business activity of companies -based on the domestic use of SNS- represents a great opportunity both for companies and consumers.

Traditional sales systems are adopting the new trends existing in the market, with a special emphasis on social commerce as a trading system which includes the use of social networks in the transactions carried out by their users. Although this activity is going through an expansion phase in some countries, in Spain it is still at an embryonic stage. This reduces the chances of success in light of the data analyzed. Therefore, it could be interesting to explore new lines of research related to the social web/network on which the purchase is carried out, as well as to the activity of purchasing.

Concerning the website on which the purchase takes place, we need to further the analysis of website functionalities, the different existing methods (Storefront, social commerce store and smart commerce store, among others), as well as the website operating level.

With regard to the activity of purchasing, we have to analyze the influence of social commerce at each stage of the purchasing process, including the review of the Elaboration Likelihood model (ELM). Taking into account the ELM, it would be interesting to analyze users' behavior in the central route, in which users assess the information provided in an active, cognitive and assiduous way, as well as in the peripheral route, in which users will have less experience and their behavior will be influenced by secondary aspects, such as the organization of the website itself, the order on the website (functional aspects or aspects that determine the perception of the ease of use) and other elements related to the format (color, images, etc.).

With regard to technology, we should conduct comparative analyses to find out if the use of mobile phones, tablets or similar devices can modify the results of our research, thus enhancing a better adoption of the mobile social commerce.

Finally, we believe it is crucial to analyze the eventual impact of virtual brand communities, as well as the impact of the existing social networks and how their users' profile and nature will affect the results of the social commerce activities (Facebook commerce, Pinterest commerce, etc.).

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# SMART CARDS CONSOLIDATION FROM A CITIZEN ORIENTED PERSPECTIVE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

*Despite public administration efforts to develop smart card technology and to spread its use, smart cards are not always well accepted by citizens. This research analyzes the determinants of continuance intentions to use smart cards in post-adoption stages. Specifically, we propose that smartcard continuance intentions depends on its usefulness and the personal demand of local services. Three citizens' concerns related to smart cards features (i.e. ease-of-use, security, and privacy issues) are also proposed as determinants of continuance intentions. Results support most of the hypothesis, except for the influence of privacy, and confirm usefulness as the most relevant antecedent of continuance intentions.*

## Keywords:

*Smart Cards; Continuance Intentions; Perceived Usefulness; Privacy Concerns; Security Concerns; Demand of Local Services*



## 1. Introduction

Urban population is continuously increasing and nowadays more than half of the world's population lives in bigger and bigger cities, which complicate citizens' daily life in urban areas but also the public management of local infrastructures and services (Chourabi *et al.*, 2012). In this context, smart cities emerge to better fulfill citizens' needs and demands in the local level by increasing interactivity with citizens and making an intensive use of IT as a mean to improve the city quality of life and its social, health, economic and environmental welfares (Aldana-Nalda *et al.*, 2012). In initial stages of smart cities implementation, as it is the case of most projects worldwide, smart cards represent a crucial innovation to advance on local services' integration and citizen interaction with the surrounding infrastructures (Deakin and Al Waer, 2011). Essentially, smart cards are based on radio frequency identification (RFID) technology and facilitate user's identification, access to local facilities, and payment of small fees in basic services such as public transport (Chan *et al.*, 2010; Bunduchi *et al.*, 2011). Among multiple advantages, card-holders make use of public services with shorter transaction times and greater convenience (Truman *et al.*, 2003). Despite public administration remarkable efforts to develop smart card technology and to spread its use, smart cards are not well accepted by citizens (Smith, 2005). Empirical evidence in previous studies confirm that the introduction of this innovation in some cities has ended in failure because of citizens' perceptions of complexity as well as privacy and security concerns (e.g. Truman *et al.*, 2003; Bailey and Caidi, 2005). Therefore, because the system needs to achieve a critical mass of users to attain efficiency in the medium term (Tung and Rieck, 2005) and to move into further stages in the development of smart cities, there is a managerial need to understand the factors that may affect the continued use of smart cards by citizens.

Due to the increasing interest in launching smart cards by many different public organizations, literature has started to focus on this topic in the last decade. Most of these studies have analyzed smart cards adoption processes (e.g. Plouffe *et al.*, 2001; Lee *et al.*, 2003; Chan *et al.*, 2010), proposed launching strategies (e.g. Wonglimpiyarat, 2004), or just described smart cards from a system perspective (e.g. M'Chirgui, 2005). However, given the initial costs of RFID technology implementation for the public sector (Bunduchi *et al.*, 2011), the viability and success of this kind of technology-based services in the medium term depend on its continued use rather than on its adoption (Bhattacharjee, 2001). Therefore, to move on this topic, this work focuses attention on the analysis of citizens' continuance intentions to use a smart card.

To be precise, we first consider that continuance intentions may be determined by smart card functional benefits; that is, their perceived usefulness by citizens. This is consistent with previous literature on acceptance of innovations that mainly relies on deterministic frameworks (e.g. Arts *et al.*, 2011). Second, since the smart card provides access to some conventional and frequently necessary public services for many citizens, the personal demand frequency of these services for daily tasks may determine continuance intentions too. Third, the features of smart cards present them as a payment system dealing with private information to access many services regularly. Thus, several potential citizen concerns related to the basic attributes of the innovation (i.e. perceived ease-of-use, privacy and security) are also proposed as antecedents of continuance intentions. Finally, socio-demographic characteristics of the individuals and the kind of payment associated to the card are also included in our framework as control variables.

More specifically, this work presents the following contributions to this emerging body of literature: (a) our research focuses on continuance intentions to use smart cards from a user oriented perspective, (b) the research model integrates essential functional perceptions, citizens' concerns regarding smart card use, and the personal demand of local services, and (c) we control the effect that specific characteristics of users or payment system may have on continuance intentions. To do that, we focus on the smart card service of Zaragoza (a north-eastern city in Spain) launched in 2009, which is gradually introducing this service as an essential element to evolve in a broader smart city plan. This scenario provides an appropriate context for analyzing the continued use of the smart card.

Taking into account the previous considerations, this work is structured as follows. First, we briefly describe the main characteristics of the smart card service in Zaragoza. Second, we explain the main citizens' concerns and barriers that endanger the success of smart card initiatives. Next, we develop a

research model to explain continuance intentions of smart card use and formulate the hypotheses of the study. Then, we describe the methodology employed and the processes of data collection and measures validation. After that, we present the results obtained in the empirical analysis. Finally, we discuss the main conclusions and managerial implications, and expose the limitations of the study that open new avenues for future research.

## **2. Theoretical Development**

### ***2.1. The smart card use in Zaragoza***

In the last years, like many cities around the world (Chourabi *et al.*, 2012), the City Council of Zaragoza is implementing a plan to gradually become a smart city. This strategy involves several initiatives such as the creation of a technologic and innovative district with residential and business areas or the launching of e-government services such as those based on open government information (e.g. traffic information on mobile applications). As a valuable instrument to join citizens to this plan and in order to better satisfy citizens' daily needs, public managers launched a smart card service in 2009. City residents voluntarily obtained their personal cards for free in municipal offices or by means of an online request. Similarly to other smart cards worldwide (Chan *et al.*, 2010; Truman *et al.*, 2003), the Zaragoza smart card accomplishes three purposes: (1) Identification by means of the name and a picture of the card-holder appearing on the front of the card, (2) access to public facilities as a member card by mean of contactless RFID technology, and (3) payment of small fees to access public services also through RFID. Related to the payment systems, the service functions either as a prepaid card with up to 100€ credit or as a postpaid card with payments charged in a bank account monthly. This multiple function card can be employed in a long list of public and private services linked to the urban area such as the public transport system, indoor and outdoor car parks, sport and cultural facilities (e.g. swimming pools, theaters, etc.), municipal WIFI, cloud computing storage service, taxis, old people homes entrance, and similar services that has been added progressively. It is important to note that this innovation does not substitute already existing systems such as specific IDs, cards or payments in cash, but unify the benefits of all of them in just one card. After three and a half years from launching, around 170,000 inhabitants (which represent around 25% of the total population) hold a personal smart card to interact with Zaragoza local services according to City Council records.

### ***2.2. Citizen's concerns regarding the use of smart cards***

Previous literature on smart card adoption has focused mostly on adoption and relayed on standard frameworks or list of antecedents leading to adoption (e.g. Plouffe *et al.*, 2001; Lee *et al.*, 2003; Chan *et al.*, 2010). In this respect, researchers have relied on well-known theories such as the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis *et al.*, 1989) or the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 1995). However, in spite of their explanatory power, these frameworks are very deterministic and mainly focus on the functional benefits of adoption, ignoring many other aspects such as users' personal characteristic and habits that may affect decision making (Bagozzi, 2007). Also users' perceptions of the technological innovation as a threat may influence adoption, specifically in uncertain or risky contexts such as e-government (Belanger and Hiller, 2006). It could be also the case of the smart card services which deals with citizens' private information and which use implications may worry some citizens (Bailey and Caidi, 2005). Indeed, smart cards represent a payment method that also deals with users' personal identity and records of services used. However, little effort has been done by previous literature to analyse and empirically confirm to what extent privacy and security concerns are relevant to explain smart card users' behaviors. In order to develop our research model, we describe below the main citizens' concerns regarding smart cards in order to identify the crucial aspects that may affect the use of these cards.

First, privacy is a great concern for users of technology-based public services that hardly know who and how manage and handle their personal information (Belanger and Hiller, 2006). Perceived privacy is defined as the extent to which a potential user believes that his or her personal information is protected and will not be used without authorization (Casaló *et al.*, 2007). For example, privacy worries for internet users are related to the fact that companies might transfer personal data to others

without express consent, or hackers might steal personal information. Also, there is a perception of citizens' personal information mismanagement by public administration (Layne and Lee, 2001), and this awareness may be even enhanced due to recent news about government data safety failures and secret programs to collect user's private information in collaboration with important firms (The Guardian, 2013). Since smart cards include personal information about the card-holder that is recorded and managed by public administration (Bailey and Caidi, 2005), we expect that citizens' perceived privacy of the technology might be a critical concern to be included in our research framework.

Second, security of payment systems is the aspect that usually most worry innovation users (e.g. Flavián and Guinalú, 2006). Perceived security represents a barrier to use innovations and refers to the extent to which a potential customer believes that a system has the technical guarantees for completing transactions and transmitting sensitive information in a secure manner (Casaló *et al.*, 2007). This means that security does not only refers to the system as a mean of a payment but also as a mechanism for storing and transmitting information securely (Kolsaker and Payne, 2002). Since smart cards are employed as a payment and information exchange system to interact with many public services (e.g. facilities entrance, bicycle rental), we expect that the perceived security of the smart card may be a critical concern of many citizens that need to be integrated in our research model. Indeed, security concerns have been a common issue when providing public services, as previous studies suggest that many e-government sites were vulnerable to security attacks (Zhao and Zhao, 2010).

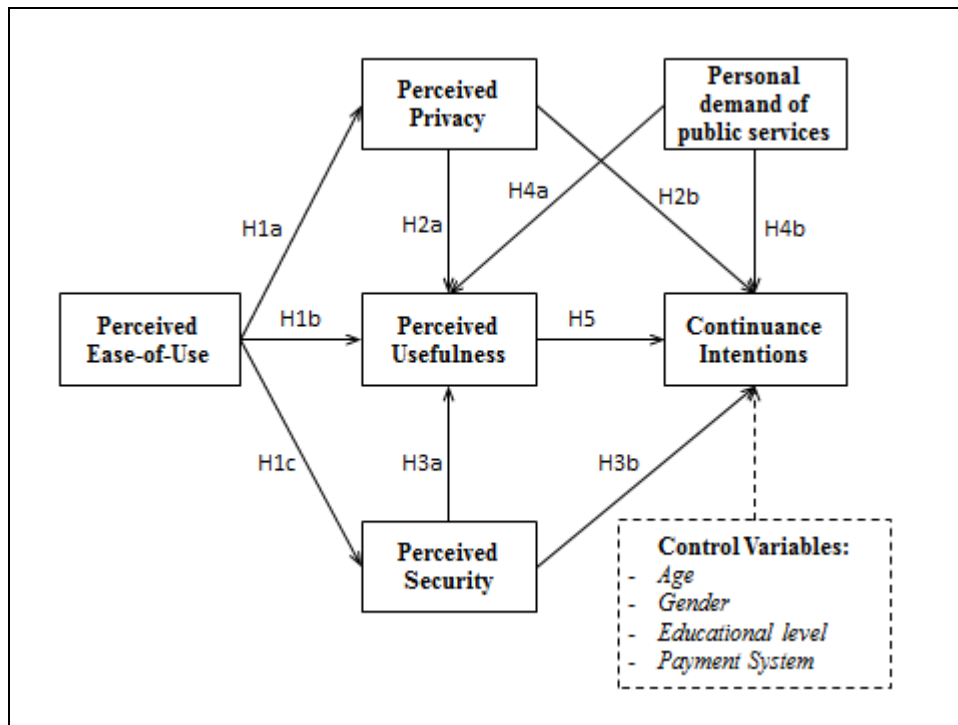
From a different approach, smart cards allow access to a great number of public services. Since public services have a wide range of users in terms of socio-demographic characteristics (age, educational level, etc.), smart cards are therefore directed to all city dwellers, which exhibit different levels of knowledge and ability to use innovations (Belanche *et al.*, 2012). Indeed, previous research recognizes that the level of complexity in the understanding and use of the smart card diminishes smart card acceptance (Truman *et al.*, 2003). To facilitate the use of smart cards to a wide range of citizens, ease-of-use must be a priority (Plouffe *et al.*, 2001). Perceived ease-of-use has been traditionally considered a relevant aspect in the acceptance of many technological innovations. Based on Davis (1989), we define perceived ease-of-use as the belief that using the smart card will be free of effort. Because ease-of-use is one of the most clearly observable characteristics of smart card technology, we consider it as an initial relevant factor that affects other variables in our framework.

To complete our research proposal, we also consider perceived usefulness as the principal factor determining the continued use of smart cards. Perceived usefulness refers to a person belief that using a particular system would enhance his or her activity performance (Davis, 1989). Basically, a citizen would not use a service that is perceived as useless; this explains why usefulness is the belief that most consistently influences users' intentions both at pre and post adoption stages of information systems use (e.g. Bathacherjee, 2001). Finally, since smart cards provides access to different public services (public transport, car parks, sport and cultural facilities, etc.), we consider that the citizens' demand frequency of these local services may be also a crucial aspect to continue using the smart card.

### **3. Formulation of Hypotheses**

In this section, the relationships among the variables included in the research model are justified. Specifically, we consider that: (H1) perceived ease-of-use positively influences perceived privacy, security and usefulness; (H2) perceived privacy positively influences perceived usefulness and continuance intentions; (H3) perceived security positively influences perceived usefulness and continuance intentions; (H4) personal demand of local services positively influences perceived usefulness and continuance intentions; and (H5) perceived usefulness positively influences continuance intentions. Finally, we also include both socio-demographic (age, gender, educational level) and innovation characteristics (payment system) as control variables. With the inclusion of socio-demographic characteristics of participants and payment system as control variables we aim to clearly differentiate to what extent the citizen's continuance intentions are determined by our proposed hypotheses or whether they may depend on control variables. To sum up, Figure 1 presents our proposed framework.

FIGURE 1.  
Proposed model including control variables.



### 3.1. Effects of perceived ease-of-use

Many authors suggest that perceived ease-of-use of a new service exerts a positive effect on perceived usefulness because improvements in perceived ease-of-use contribute to increase performance and help perceive benefits derived from use (e.g. Davis *et al.*, 1989). For example, as Davis *et al.* (1989) note, a person could complete more tasks due to effort saved thanks to improvements in perceived ease-of-use. Therefore, this relation has been confirmed in several contexts including the provision of new public services (e.g. Belanche *et al.*, 2012). As well, improvements in perceived ease-of-use reduce the likelihood of error and simplify processes, which are crucial aspects of public services provision (Belanche *et al.*, 2012). An easy to use system may help citizens better comprehend the service and increase their self-confidence when using it. All these may help increase the levels of perceived security of the service (Casaló *et al.*, 2007). Perceived ease-of-use may also positively affect perceived privacy since a well-explained and easy to understand technology alleviates user uncertainty and reduces perceived risks when using the service (Featherman *et al.*, 2010). Indeed, one of the major privacy concerns of a public service that involves the exchange of personal data is the use of this information. In this respect, perceived ease-of-use makes exchange processes more transparent and favors interaction between both parties (Casaló *et al.*, 2007), which may help increase perceived privacy of the service. Taking all these into account, our first hypothesis proposes that perceived ease-of-use positively affects perceived privacy, usefulness and security of the service:

*H1a: Perceived ease-of-use of the smart card has a positive effect on its perceived privacy.*

*H1b: Perceived ease-of-use of the smart card has a positive effect on its perceived usefulness.*

*H1c: Perceived ease-of-use of the smart card has a positive effect on its perceived security.*

### 3.2. Effects of perceived security and perceived privacy

Several studies suggest that customer privacy concerns may diminish the perceived benefits of a service; therefore, assuring privacy is crucial to enhance the perceived benefits by users (e.g. Lee and Cranage, 2011). As well, increasing perceived privacy may help reduce perceived costs (Li, 2012). Given that perceived usefulness refers to the belief that using the system will be helpful (Davis, 1989) –that is, that the innovative service is advantageous in terms of benefits and costs–, higher privacy perceptions of a system may increase its perceived usefulness. Similarly, privacy is also related to use

intentions in previous literature (Phelps *et al.*, 2001; Dinev *et al.*, 2008). In this sense, privacy has been traditionally considered a key barrier to the development of services that involve the exchange of personal information. Research about online transactions suggests that the perception of lower levels of privacy reduce behavioral intentions in order to minimize the negative outcomes of performing a transaction (e.g. Hoffman *et al.*, 1999, Liao *et al.* 2011). Therefore, we expect that an improvement in perceived privacy may favor continuance intentions to use a smart card since the negative outcomes of using the card will be reduced. In sum, we propose in our second hypothesis that perceived privacy positively affects perceived usefulness and continuance intentions:

*H2a: Perceived privacy of the smart card has a positive effect on its perceived usefulness.*

*H2b: Perceived privacy of the smart card has a positive effect on citizen's continuance intentions to use it.*

In turn, a consumer that perceives high levels of security when using a service may infer that the service provider has the intention to fulfill the requirements for a successful relationship and diminish perceived risks (Kim *et al.*, 2008a). Perceived security is related to the belief that a transaction will be concluded securely and, in this situation, it will be easier for the consumer to think that using a service will be useful (Lallmahamood, 2007). Therefore, we expect a positive link between perceived security and perceived usefulness of the smart card. As well, previous literature suggests that consumers continue using an innovative service, like online services, when they perceive high levels of security (e.g. Chang and Chen, 2009). This is especially relevant when monetary transactions are involved, like it is the case of smart cards. In a similar way, security concerns are found to negatively affect the internet banking use (Yoon and Steege, 2013). Therefore, we propose in our third hypothesis that perceived security positively affects perceived usefulness and continuance intentions:

*H3a: Perceived security of the smart card has a positive effect on its perceived usefulness.*

*H3b: Perceived security of the smart card has a positive effect on citizen's continuance intentions to use it.*

### **3.3. Effects of the personal demand of local services**

The personal demand of local services refers to the actual citizen's needs of use of public services that can be accessed with the smart card (i.e. public transport, car parks, sport and cultural facilities, etc.). Therefore, the greater the demand of these public services, the most useful the smart card will be because the innovative service provide access to all these services. Indeed, smart card can be used to replace different services' systems such as specific IDs, previous RFID transport cards or payments in cash, unifying the benefits of all of them in just one card (Lee *et al.*, 2003). At the same time, citizens that need to use local services frequently in their daily interaction with the city would tend to employ the smart card innovation as a way to access public local services. Therefore, we propose that:

*H4a: The personal demand of public services has a positive effect on perceived usefulness of the smart card.*

*H4b: The personal demand of public services has a positive effect on citizen's continuance intentions to use the smart card.*

### **3.4. Effects of perceived usefulness**

Previous literature proposes that perceived usefulness directly influences use intentions, because people may form their behavioral intentions according to the expected productivity associated with that behavior (e.g., Davis *et al.*, 1989). The usefulness-intention link is also based on cognitive decision rules that are invoked unconsciously in this kind of behavioral contexts. Thus, although this relationship was originally proposed in the acceptance context, it is also commonly applied to subsequent continuance stages (Bhattacharjee, 2001). The positive effect of perceived usefulness on continuance intentions has been empirically confirmed in several innovative services like the electronic commerce (Bhattacharjee, 2001) or the provision of new public services (Hu *et al.*, 2009). Adapting this relationship to our specific context, we propose our last hypothesis:

*H5: Perceived usefulness of the smart card has a positive effect on citizen's continuance intentions to use it.*

### **3.5. Control variables**

Finally, for the sake of completeness, we also include both socio-demographics and payment system as control variables directly affecting continuance intentions in our research framework. First, previous studies suggest that socio-demographic characteristics of individuals may influence the intentions to use technology-based products or services (e.g. Arts *et al.*, 2011). In this regard, many researches recognize that the use of innovations may depend on individual's age, gender, or educational level (Sun and Zhang, 2006); therefore, we include these variables in our framework. Second, beyond general perceptions about the innovation, the specific characteristics of the innovation may also affect usage intentions (Fang *et al.*, 2005). The most relevant characteristic of the smart card in Zaragoza is that there are two payment alternatives: (a) a prepaid or (b) postpaid system. Thus, we also include the payment system as a control variable directly affecting continuance intentions to use the innovation.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1. Data collection**

Data were collected in municipal buildings as a part of a longer collaboration project with the Zaragoza City Council. Sample was randomly selected from different groups of citizens according to their socio-demographic profile. The questionnaire was presented as an opinion survey about the smart card service and was targeted to smart card-holders that were at municipal facilities carrying out administrative matters or participating in community activities. For this purpose, we design a questionnaire including all constructs and information required in the research that each respondent had to answer individually. All the variables of the study were measured by reflective constructs based on 7-point Likert scales (being 1 "totally disagree", and 7 "totally agree"). Exceptionally, the personal demand of local services was measured by a formative construct using a 5-point scale of frequency of use (from 1 "never" to 5 "several times a day") of the main services that can be accessed with the smart card. In addition, we also gather some basic information such as the type of payment system selected by participants and sample demographics. This method provided us with a sample of 398 valid responses, after the removal of incomplete and atypical cases. Based on socio-demographic information, the sample is representative of the smart card-holders and residents of the city in terms of age, gender and level of education. In addition, in our sample, 68,8% of participants use the prepayment card and 31,2% use the post-payment card, which is also similar to the proportion of smart card-holders that use the pre or post-payment system according to the City Council records (79,9% and 20,1% respectively).

### **4.2. Measures validation and analytical procedure**

To operationalize the constructs of the research model, measurement scales were adapted from previous studies targeted to users of services and information systems. Specifically measures of perceived ease-of-use and perceived usefulness were borrowed from Davis *et al.* (1989), Venkatesh and Davis (2000), and Bhattacharjee (2000); security scale was taken from Cheung and Lee (2001), and Kim *et al.* (2008a); privacy items were based on the scale of Flavián and Guinaliú (2006), and Kim *et al.* (2008a); and finally, continuance intentions scale was adapted from Bhattacharjee (2001), and Wu and Chen (2005). Each of these scales consisted of 3 items except for continuance intentions, which was measured by 2 items. Alternatively, the personal demand of local services was measured by a 5-item formative construct referring to the respondent's request for the key municipal services that can be accessed with the smart card (public urban bus transport, municipal bicycles rental, sports facilities, public car parks, and public libraries). Specifically, we used a measurement of demand frequency adapted from Fransoo and Wouters (2000). Socio-demographic information and card payment system were considered as control variables in the research model. Specifically, gender and payment system were operationalized as dummy variables (Gender: man=1, woman=0; Payment system: post-pay=1, prepay=0). As an initial validation of measurements, content validity was ensured by the extensive review of the literature we undertook to identify suitable scales.

In line with a growing number of researchers, we used Partial Least Square (PLS) as the estimation procedure. Unlike other estimation methods based on Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), PLS can handle at the same time both reflective and formative factors (Chin, 1998), as it is the case of our research. PLS is particularly convenient because it employs a component-based estimation method and, in addition, it makes no assumptions regarding the underlying distribution of the data and does not require large sample sizes (Chin and Newsted, 1999).

Data analysis was carried out using SmartPLS software version 2.0 (Ringle and Wende, 2005). First, we analyzed data to check validity of measures. A confirmatory factor analysis corroborates the initial factor structure with all items loading scores around 0,9 on their respective construct, highly above the recommended benchmark of 0,7 (Henseler *et al.*, 2009). As well, composite reliabilities of all reflective constructs are higher than 0,9, proving their internal consistency. As an additional indicator of convergent validity, average variance extracted (AVE) values are also higher than 0,8 for all reflective constructs (again highly above the benchmark of 0,5 [Fornell and Larcker, 1981]). Table 1 shows the composite reliability and AVE values for each reflective construct in the model. To confirm discriminant validity, we checked that the value of the square root of the AVE was greater than the shared variance among constructs (correlations) (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). All pair of constructs satisfy this criterion, supporting discriminant validity of measures. Table 1 also shows the square root of the AVE value for reflective constructs (diagonal elements in bold), and correlations among all measures in the study (off-diagonal elements).

TABLE 1.  
Construct reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity for reflective constructs.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	$\rho_c$	AVE
1. Perceived Ease-of-use	<b>0,910</b>										0,936	0,829
2. Privacy	0,402	<b>0,926</b>									0,948	0,857
3. Security	0,525	0,740	<b>0,914</b>								0,939	0,836
4. Perceived Usefulness	0,583	0,473	0,619	<b>0,943</b>							0,960	0,890
5. Continuance intentions	0,538	0,448	0,613	0,716	<b>0,980</b>						0,979	0,960
6. Demand of local services	0,292	0,300	0,435	0,430	0,452	-					-	-
7. Gender (Man=1)	-170	-0,222	-0,209	-0,123	-0,053	-0,100	-				-	-
8. Age	-0,078	0,094	0,069	-0,065	-0,023	-0,017	-0,269	-			-	-
9. Education level	0,131	0,004	0,047	0,041	0,104	0,138	-0,072	-0,060	-		-	-
10. Payment System (Postpay=1)	-0,084	-0,040	-0,115	-0,133	-0,152	-0,076	-0,072	0,205	-0,098	-	-	-

Notes:  $\rho_c$  = Composite Reliability, AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

Following Henseler *et al.* (2009), the validity of the formative construct was confirmed by the application of four criteria referring to theoretical content, nomological validity, significance of weights and multicollinearity. Table 2 explains this validation process in detail.

TABLE 2.  
Formative construct validity.

Criterion	Variable: Demand of local services
Theoretic content and expert opinion (Rossiter, 2002)	A first examination of the validity of formative constructs should be based on the use of theoretical rationale and expert opinion. The variable refers to the demand of use of the five most demanded local services that can be accessed with the smart card according to municipal records. Additionally, ten experts identified each measure of the construct as representative of each of the five relevant local services (Zaichkowsky, 1985).

Nomological validity (Henseler <i>et al.</i> , 2009)	The formative variable should be related to other constructs in the model, which are sufficiently well known through prior research. Our results are in line with previous research findings linking demand of public services with usefulness perceptions or continuance intentions related variables (Andreasen, 1995; Michalos and Zumbo, 1999).		
Significance of weights (Chin, 1998)	Estimated weights of formative measurement models should be significant to guarantee that each indicator delivers a contribution to the formative index. All the indicators present significant weights on the formative construct, with the exception of DEM2 which represents the demand of public bicycle rental service. However, insignificant weights should not be discarded automatically, and could be maintained as long as it is conceptually justified (Henseler <i>et al.</i> , 2009). We maintain the item because it is one of the most demanded services among some groups of citizens.		
Multicollinearity (Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer, 2001)	Multicollinearity should be assessed by means of the variance inflation factor (VIF) for each of the indicators of the formative construct. All VIF values were lower than the benchmark of 10 and were very close to 1, which indicates low multicollinearity (Henseler, <i>et al.</i> , 2009).		
<b>Items of the formative construct:</b>			
<b>Demand of local services</b> (Mean=2.40, s.d.=.62) <sup>a</sup>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>VIF</b>
DEM1. I demand the use of urban bus transport	0,304	1,65	1,06
DEM2. I demand the use of municipal bicycles rental	0,045	,25	1,08
DEM3. I demand the use of sport facilities	0,325	1,72	1,11
DEM4. I demand the use of public car parks	0,584	4,11	1,12
DEM5. I demand the use of public libraries	0,361	2,01	1,13

Note: <sup>a</sup> 5-point scale (1 never, 2 hardly ever, 3 several times per month, 4 several times per week, 5 several times a day)

Once measures were validated, the model was estimated and hypotheses tested using PLS. To estimate the effects proposed in the model and their significance we used the recommended bootstrap of 500 iterations (Chin, 1998). Findings obtained in the causal model are disclosed in the next section.

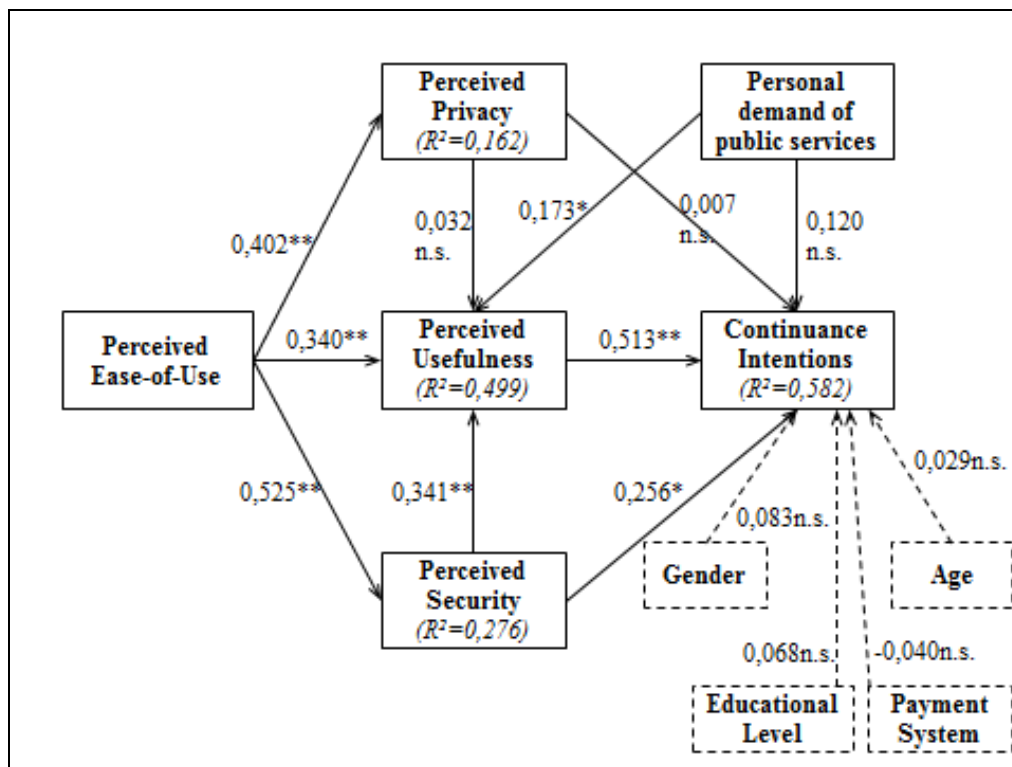
## 5. Results

Results of the estimated model are presented in Figure 2. Results of the proposed model reveal that smart card ease-of-use has high and positive impacts on perceived privacy ( $\beta=0,402$ ,  $p<0,01$ ), usefulness ( $\beta=0,340$ ,  $p<0,01$ ), and security ( $\beta=0,525$ ,  $p<0,01$ ), in support of hypotheses H1a, H1b, and H1c respectively. Ease-of-use thus plays a determinant role in continue using the smart card by favoring the perceptions of a secure, private and useful service. Contrary to our expectations, the effects of privacy on usefulness perceptions ( $\beta=0,032$ ,  $p>0,05$ ) and continuance intentions ( $\beta=.007$ ,  $p>0,05$ ) are both non-significant; therefore, H2a and H2b are not supported. On the other hand, the effects of security on perceived usefulness ( $\beta=0,341$ ,  $p<0,01$ ) and continuance intentions ( $\beta=0,256$ ,  $p<0,05$ ) are positive and significant, supporting hypotheses H3a and H3b. In support of H4a, the personal demand of local services significantly influences the perceived usefulness of the smart card ( $\beta=0,173$ ,  $p<0,05$ ). Nevertheless, the positive impact of the demand of local services on continuance intentions is less strong ( $\beta=0,120$ ,  $p>0,05$ ). Thus, while H4a is confirmed, H4b is not supported. Finally, H5 is also supported given the high and positive effect of perceived usefulness on continuance intentions ( $\beta=0,513$ ,  $p<0,01$ ).

In turn, the estimation of the effects of control variables (gender, age, education level, and payment system) on continuance intentions revealed that all of them are non-significant. Remarkably, neither card-holders' socio-demographic characteristics nor the kind of prepaid or postpaid system chosen influence the continuance intention to use the smart card. In any case, the inclusion of these control variables reinforces the support to the proposed model.



FIGURE 2.  
PLS Results of estimated coefficients and significance.



Notes: \* coefficients significant at the 0,05 level; \*\* coefficients significant at the 0,01 level; n.s. coefficients are not significant. Control variables in dashed lines.

Finally, in terms of explained variance, the proposed model presents high levels of  $R^2$  for the two key dependent variables: perceived usefulness ( $R^2=0,499$ ) and continuance intentions ( $R^2=0,582$ ). As an additional assessment of the models' predictive capability we examined the Stone-Geisser's  $Q^2$  (Stone, 1974; Geisser, 1975). The Stone-Geisser's criterion assess the model capability to predict the endogenous latent variable indicator (in our model: continuance intentions to use the smart card) using the blindfolding technique (Tenenhaus *et al.*, 2005).  $Q^2$  indicator reaches a value of .544, highly above zero, which means that observed values are well reconstructed as a sign of models' predictive relevance (Henseler *et al.*, 2009). Consequently, the analysis of Stone-Geisser's  $Q^2$  indicator corroborates the suitability of our proposed model in terms of predictive relevance.

## 6. Conclusions

Our research has proposed a conceptual framework to better understand the key determinants of the continued use of smart cards among citizens that already hold the card. This is especially relevant because the long-term viability and success of smart cards relies on their continued use by a majority of citizens rather than on its initial adoption (Bhattacharjee, 2001). Indeed, although smart card is an innovative RFID-based service that gathers numerous advantages (such as identifying the card-holder, providing access to local services and allowing payments of small customary fees), some failed launchings have already occurred (Truman *et al.*, 2003). As well, the continued use of the smart card represents an opportunity to latter expand the number of services and applications linked to the card.

First, perceived ease-of-use is one the main advantages of smart cards. Although citizens may ignore the technical issues of the technologic service, they clearly realize that it is an easy to use system contributing to their daily welfare because the card simplify payments and access to services facilitating many routine processes. Results of our study verify the principal role of this variable in the research framework since ease-of-use positively influences perceived privacy, security and usefulness. As well, our research framework proposes three main antecedents of continuance intentions to use the smart card associated to the three basic features of this innovation:

- *Privacy* is associated to the personal information that the card holds both in the front and embedded in the card. Nevertheless, results of our study do not support our hypotheses linking privacy to perceived usefulness and continuance intentions. Probably, given that the personal information appearing in the card is very limited, card-holders do not worry about the privacy issues related to smart card use. Citizens could be also familiarized with showing their name and photograph in an ID given the existence of a mandatory national ID. As well, the fact that local services are usually managed by the local administration could diminish privacy worries associated to other similar private managed services (e.g. shopping centers fidelity cards that usually employ personal information for commercial purposes).
- *Security* could be associated to the card since it can be used as a payment instrument to make transactions. A safe system is needed to guarantee that transactions are made without troubles. The results of this research corroborate the positive influence of security on perceived usefulness and continuance intentions. Our findings suggest that citizens perceive the smart card as a payment system and thus, public managers and smart card developers need to guarantee smart card security in order to make the service useful and worthy of use for citizens. In this line, public resources should be invested in human resources, technological equipment, and security protocols to ensure the reliability of smart cards payment systems.
- *Perceived usefulness* linked to card convenience to access many valuable local services is also a key antecedent of continuance intentions. Confirming the theoretical rationale that relates usefulness to the benefits and increments of productivity associated to the technology, perceived usefulness exerts a high positive impact on continuance intentions to use the smart card. Usefulness also represents a central factor in the model, which is affected by perceptions of ease-of-use and security, and by the demand of local services made by card-holders. In line with previous research (Belanche *et al.*, 2012), results corroborate that smart card usefulness is the most relevant feature for the success of this innovation. Public administration should therefore acknowledge not only the costs but also the advantages of implementing the RFID smart card service (Bunduchi *et al.*, 2011), and communicate these benefits to the citizenry through marketing campaigns from a user oriented perspective.

In addition, our framework contemplates that the demand of local services may act as an antecedent of smart card perceived usefulness and continuance intentions. This concept –largely ignored by previous works– assumes that the demand of local services varies among citizens (e.g. some citizens show higher demand because they need to use public transport every day while others not). The measurement of this variable as a combination of the demands of different services required a formative construct. Data analysis revealed that the demand of local services effectively influences usefulness perceptions, but its direct effect on continuance intentions is not supported. The lack of this direct influence could be explained by the existence of alternative systems to access local services. In sum, results suggest that those citizens that demand local services more frequently perceived a higher usefulness of the card but do not necessarily use it because they can also use other specific cards or in-cash payment methods. In this sense, public administration strategy should seriously consider whether to favor and promote the use of smart card instead of alternative systems (even substitute them) to better achieve public management objectives.

Finally, control variables are also considered in the framework to reinforce the validity of the proposed effects. Results reveal that socio-demographic characteristics do not affect continuance intentions to use the smart card. This lack of significance emphasizes the initial objective of this public management initiative designed to be used by a wide-range of citizens, independently of their age, gender or educational level. On the other hand, this is not an unexpected result given that the smart card can be used to access a high number of services for different collectives in the urban area (e.g. young people, the elderly, etc.), and that almost every citizen needs to access local services and pay their corresponding small fees quite often. This finding, together with the relevance of ease-of-use, suggests that the design of a citizen oriented innovation, such as the smart card, should focus on a high number and wide-range of users. On the other hand, the kind of payment system does not influence continuance intentions either. Attending to the study results, the preference for prepaid or postpaid smart cards does not represent a determinant of smart card continuance. Probably, this result can be

explained due to the fact that citizens use the smart card only for small payments, so that they tend to assimilate both systems to a prepaid card instead of a credit card. In sum, the lack of socio-demographics and payment system effects reinforce the conclusions that smart cards should be oriented to all kind of citizens.

### **6.1. Limitations and further research lines**

Our research also involves several limitations that open new research avenues for future studies. Our theoretical framework has been only tested in a single city, which could be considered as a case study. Although the selected city and sample of respondents satisfy the requirements to carry out an empirical research focused on post-adoption stages, the study should be replicated in other cities. This further research in other places could be employed to both corroborate our hypotheses in a different context and to explore the possible differences that might appear as a consequence of local or cultural differences. As well, another research line could explore the different groups of smart card users to identify the different interpretations and kind of uses that citizens attribute to the smart card (e.g. perceived as an ID, as a payment system, etc.). In addition, the successful implementation of a smart card service may be studied from many perspectives (technical, administrative, etc.). Our research has focused on the determinants of continuance intentions from a citizen perspective. However, other approaches could complement the findings of our study.

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# WEBSITE DESIGN AS MODERATING FACTOR OF ONLINE USER BEHAVIOR

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## ABSTRACT

*It is widely assumed that online user behaviour is mainly utilitarian, although hedonic motivations such as enjoyment have also been found by recent research to have a marked influence on such behaviour. The present study explores the influence of website design (utilitarian motivation) on online user behaviour, in the context of a site promoting a tourist destination. The results underline the importance of utilitarian aspects for the effectiveness of online information-processing and the formation of perceived risk online. It is recommended that websites should reflect this type of motivation so as to make browsing useful for the online consumer.*

## KEYWORDS:

*Website design, usability, browsing time, perceived risk online*

## 1. Introduction

Thanks to the arrival of digital media, firms and institutions have changed how they communicate with their stakeholders. While this communication used to be one-way only and largely functional in nature, it is now two-way, reflecting a more integrated, relational approach. In this regard, Duncan & Moriarty (1998) assert that it is interactivity, rather than mere persuasion, that forms the basis of relations between firms and their stakeholders, and that such relations are therefore difficult to achieve without interactive media.

The development of information and communications technologies (ICT) has led to greater diversity in the contexts within which relationships based on exchange may evolve. The passivity shown by consumers in traditional markets may largely be attributed to the impossibility of interacting with firms, rather than to their lack of interest in doing so (Pels, 1999). By contrast, the tremendous scope for interactivity offered by the Internet has led to an increase in consumers' involvement with the brand and its promotional messages, and thus in their brand receptivity. This brings with it greater participation in the firm's marketing initiatives, leading to the concepts of 'reverse marketing' (Giannakis & Croom, 2004; Miceli, Ricota & Costabile, 2007; Sharma & Sheth, 2004; Sheth & Sharma, 2005), consumer-centric orientation (Drews, 2009; Klein & Laczniak, 2013; Sheth, Sisodia & Sharma, 2000; Stellefson & Eddy, 2008) and relationship marketing (Patsioura, Vlachopoulou & Manthou, 2009; Rafip, Fulford & Lu, 2012; Wang, Head & Archer, 2000).

Meanwhile, Ramey (2000) highlights the importance of personal motivation in the user's development and skill-acquisition in the digital environment. Motivations can be classified as utilitarian (extrinsic) or hedonic (intrinsic) (Childers, Carr, Peck & Carson, 2001; Scarpi, 2012; Wolfenbarger & Gilly, 2001, 2003).

Amongst the key aspects of utilitarian benefits are comfort, ease of access to products and services, time-saving and reduction of errors committed during purchase, and sensation of control – all of which are related to the usability dimension of the website design. This latter aspect is related to the sense of insecurity experienced by some users, which some authors have measured as perceived risk (Belanche, Casaló & Guinalú, 2012). Meanwhile hedonic factors include: surprise, excitement and uniqueness; social benefits; the search for online bargains; involvement with a product or service category; the corresponding information available on the website; and the flow achieved by the user whilst browsing (Belanche *et al.*, 2012; Bolton & Saxena-Lyer, 2009; Bridges & Florsheim, 2008; Childers *et al.*, 2001; López & Ruiz, 2011; Overby & Lee, 2006; Turel, Serenko & Bontis, 2010).

From this perspective, website design – measured in terms of usability – would be related to utilitarian motivation, thanks to its connection to attributes such as functionality, perceived usefulness and ease of use (Chiu, Chang, Cheng & Fang, 2009; Coursaris & Kim, 2011; O'Brien, 2010; Schaik & Ling, 2008, 2009, 2011).

In view of these factors, the present work seeks to examine mainly the effect of website design (utilitarian motivation) on perceived risk online and on site effectiveness during the browsing process – the latter being measured in terms of the number of errors committed by the user while selecting an online purchase, together with the length of time spent browsing to complete the selection.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. *The effect of website design on site effectiveness*

In the sphere of electronic commerce – both business-to-customer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) – a firm's website represents its image in the digital environment. The site acts as an interactive shop window via which the firm can attract clients and display its online product catalogue – rather like an intermediary with potential customers. In this regard it operates both as a virtual shopping cart and also as a means of closing the sale. As such, the usability of a firm's website is a key success factor. Usability refers to the speed and ease with

which users are able to carry out their tasks via a given website (Nielsen, 1993). A website with good usability is one that: is well organized (Nielsen, 2005); shows and explains the products and services clearly and concisely (Greiner, 2007); makes the registration process as simple as possible (Nielsen & Norman, 2000); downloads quickly; (Nielsen & Coyne, 2001); is easy to use (ibid.); and fosters positive experiences for the user (Nielsen & Norman, 2000).

Achieving usability therefore involves focusing on the potential users of a site so as to structure it around their needs, organizing the navigation such that it facilitates the information-search process. The key strategy that should inform the entire process of site design, then, is to draw on the needs of users and the requirements of potential customers as a reference point.

Many authors have based their work on that of Shackel (1991), which is particularly notable for its focus on the user, to measure website usability using various methods (Han, Yun, Kwahk & Hong, 2001; Huang & Cappel, 2012; Kay, 2009; Koohang, 2004; Lin, Lin & Roan, 2011). Shackel (1991) proposes that the practical acceptance of a system is determined by four factors: (1) effectiveness, in terms of achieving tasks during the interaction, as measured by processing time and errors committed; (2) learnability, which refers to the time required by the novice to learn to use the system properly; (3) flexibility, in terms of adaptability of tasks to specific requirements (different sectors or target publics, for instance); (4) and attitude, referring to acceptable levels of human costs, such as tiredness, unease, frustration, and personal effort. Nielsen & Loranger (2007) also make an important contribution to the literature in their work on website design. They explore what is considered by some to be a key factor in usability, namely site effectiveness when carrying out tasks online, which is directly related to the speed with which users can learn to navigate the system, learnability, and effectiveness of use. Following the recommendation of Macleod & Rengger, (1993) in their Diagnostic Recorder for Usability Measurement (DRUM), the researchers decided to measure speed by the time spent, and effectiveness of use by the number of errors committed by the user during the purchasing process. Other authors have also used time spent and number of errors as a way to measure effectiveness; for example, Hussain & Kutar (2009) for mobile phone application, Huang & Strawderman (2011) for multiple device systems (UPMDS); and Seffah, Donyae, Kline & Padda (2006) in their model for usability measurement and metrics.

In light of these works, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H<sub>1</sub>: Site effectiveness, measured in terms of user browsing time during the purchasing process, will be significantly greater amongst sites that are perceived to be usable than amongst those that are not.*

*H<sub>2</sub>: Site effectiveness, measured in terms of the number of errors committed by the user during the purchasing process, will be significantly greater amongst sites that are perceived to be usable than amongst those that are not.*

## *2.2. The effect of website design on perceived risk online*

Usability and appearance are two of the indicators that represent the utilitarian aspects of a website. Those websites with high usability of design enable users to carry out their tasks coherently and achieve the results they expect (Palmer, 2000). This sensation of control during browsing is inversely related to the sense of insecurity and vulnerability experienced by the user (Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001; Featherman & Paulou, 2003; Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995; Roth, Straub & Richter, 2005). Perceived risk online is a key element in the initial interaction between user and website, on which users base their assessment of the site (Beldad, Jong & Steehouder, 2010; Chang, Cheung & Tang, 2013; Klaus, 2013; Koufaris & Hampton-Sosa, 2003; Zhang *et al.*, 2011). On the one hand, Belanche *et al.* (2012) analysed the moderating role played by perceived risk in website usability, finding that the effect of usability on consumer satisfaction is moderated by perceived risk. Following on from the work of Belanche *et al.* (2012), Ting, Chen & Lee (2013) confirmed the importance of perceived risk online in users' acceptance of websites. On the other hand, Green & Pearson (2011) found that website design (measured via usability) influences confidence, perceived risk and intention to use, and demonstrated that the usability of a website influences several outcomes that are



important for businesses endeavouring to attract and retain customer. In this same vein, Herrero & Rodriguez (2010) and Kim, Kim & Shin (2009) affirm that perceived risk is also a critical factor that exerts a significant influence on the user's decisions when visiting or revisiting a site.

In view of these assertions, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H<sub>3</sub>: Perceived risk will be significantly lower amongst websites that are perceived to be usable than amongst those that are not.*

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1. Experimental design and sample

In order to achieve the research objectives a between-subjects experimental design was conducted, in which the website design type was the independent variable.

With regard to the site design, in order to manipulate this, the works of Moss (2004) and Nielsen (1993, 1999, 2004, 2009) were followed as a guide (see Table 1), with two treatments being established: (1) website design with high usability (V1) and (2) website design with low usability (V2).

Table 1  
Design factors for the website

Factor	V1: Website with high usability	V2: Website with low usability
Invisible browsing options	In this version all the options will be visible, with no need to pass the mouse pointer over the screen.	In this version, multiple options will appear as the mouse pointer passes over the screen.
Inconsistent browsing	The information conveyed to users via icons, links and images will be easy to use.	Icons will not be recognized as commonly used on the Internet, and the menu may appear to the right of the screen rather than the left, or divided in two, horizontally and vertically.
Menu option style	The main options, icons and symbols etc. will be those commonly found on the Internet.	The length of each page will be excessive, especially in terms of image and font size.
Page length excessive	The length of each page will be normal.	The site will carry pop-ups.
Pop-ups	There will be no pop-ups on the site.	The product information will be presented in unbroken narrative text.
Product information	The product information will be organized in tabular form.	The different pages will be designed in such a way that the user has to browse using the scroll bar, either horizontally, because the images are too big, or vertically.
Scroll bar	The pages will be separated by category and adjusted so as to avoid the user having to use the scroll bar.	The site will be badly structured, with poorly designated categories, and it will be more extensive than V1 in terms of number of pages, but they will be of no use to the user.
Design of the structure	Recommended guidelines for designing the site will be applied, with information structured around where the user finds themselves. The site will be divided into categories but not overly so.	

*Source: Own elaboration, based on Moss (2004) and Nielsen (1993, 1999, 2004, 2009)*

A website for a fictitious tourist destination called Buyuada was used as the framework for the experiment. The reasoning behind choosing the tourism sector as the focus for the research was that the World Tourism Organization (WTO) has declared that the key to success in this medium as a source of tourism information is to swiftly identify consumers' needs and establish direct contact with tourists. Furthermore, the WTO has asserted that websites should offer tourists information that is comprehensive, personalized and up-to-date (Vich-I-Martorell 2004). The Internet is one of the main sources of information used by tourists when making travel plans (Buhalis & Law 2008; Wu, Wei & Chen, 2008).

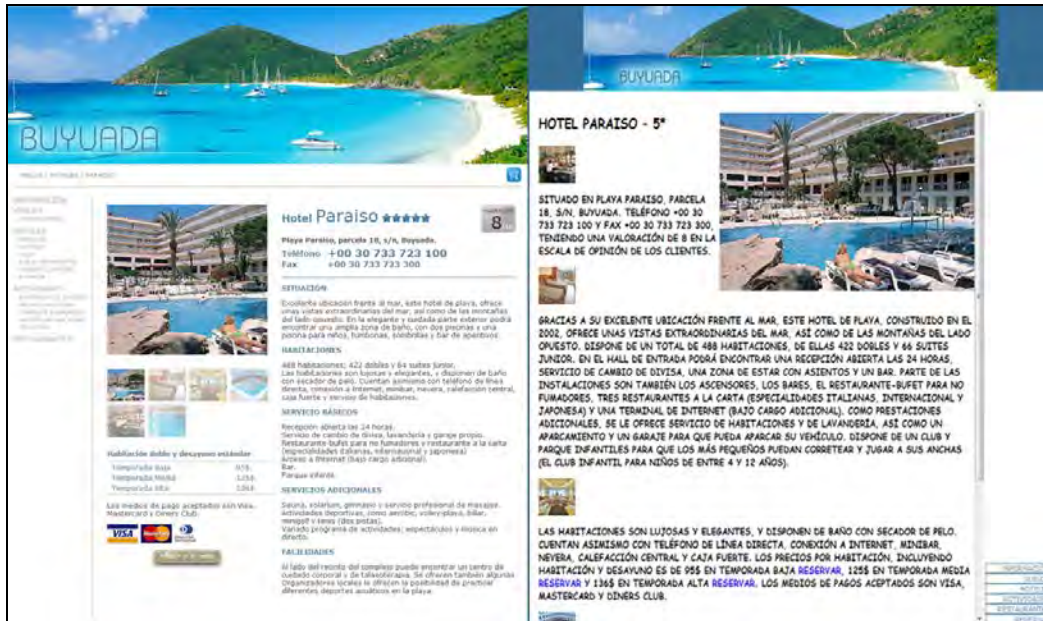
A fictitious location was devised with a view to avoiding a scenario in which subjects' previous awareness of, or attitudes towards, the destination might affect the results. In this same regard, Dahlén, Friberg & Nilson (2009) used fictitious brands to minimise the possibility of differences between subjects, as using real brands could have meant that some individuals had preconceived representations and associations. Similarly, Nelson, Yaros & Keum (2006)

recommend using fictitious brands as this gives the researcher greater control over the possible effects of subjects' past experiences.

The experiment itself required a professional website to be purpose-built, with its own domain name, providing information on the fictitious tourist destination (www.buyuada.org). The site was hosted via a domain pertaining to the researchers, enabling them to simulate natural browsing conditions at all times for the subjects. Two versions of the site were created: V1 (site with high usability) and V2 (site with low usability) (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1.

Site with high usability (V1) on the left and low usability (V2) on the right



The subjects were selected by an external company commissioned to establish an online survey panel for the experiment. The company made email contact with each panel member, following the gender and age quotas that had been pre-established: 240 individuals (planned sample size) (120 V1; 120 V2).

The subjects were sent a link to the appropriate version of the website (V1 or V2), together with instructions (see Figure 3 and its translation in Table 2).

Figure 3

Instructions given to the user (original Spanish version)

**Buyuada**

A continuación, visitará una página web relativa a un destino turístico durante un tiempo mínimo de 2 minutos. Concretamente, se trata de la isla de Buyuada situada en el mar Mediterráneo.

Buyuada está surgiendo como un destino cada vez más demandado por parte de los turistas.

Su tarea consistirá en simular una situación en la que usted tiene pensado ir de vacaciones en los próximos meses durante **temporada media** para lo cual deberá diseñar un paquete de turístico en Buyuada que incluya lo siguiente:


- Un vuelo de ida.
- Un vuelo de vuelta.
- Un hotel donde alojarse.
- Un restaurante.
- Una actividad o excursión a realizar.

Para contratar estos servicios debe seleccionar la alternativa deseada, pulsar el botón "añadir a la cesta" y finalmente confirmar la reserva a través del carro de la compra.

**Tenga en cuenta que entre las alternativas que encontrará hay una que es mejor que las demás en relación calidad - precio. Todos aquellos participantes en el estudio que hayan respondido a las preguntas del cuestionario y al final hayan seleccionado la mejor opción en términos de calidad-precio, entrarán en el sorteo de un iPod-Touch que se celebrará el día 15 de enero de 2011. Para ello, deberá proporcionarnos al final del cuestionario su dirección de email.**

Gracias por su colaboración.

[Entrar a la web](#)



Contacto:

Table 2

Instructions given to the user (text translated into English)

*Next, you will visit a web site relating to a tourist destination – namely, the island of Buyuada in the Mediterranean. The visit will last a minimum of 2 minutes.*

*Buyuada is becoming increasingly popular as a tourist destination.*

*Your task is to imagine a situation in which you are thinking of going on holiday in the next few months, during mid-season. To this end, you need to design a tourist package on Buyuada that includes the following:*

- *An outward flight*
- *A return flight*
- *A hotel for your stay*
- *A restaurant*
- *An activity or excursion*

*To book these services you must select the options of your choice, press the button 'add to basket' and confirm your bookings using the shopping trolley icon.*

*Please bear in mind that, amongst all the alternatives you will find, there is one option that is superior to the others in terms of quality/price.*

*All those participating in the study who have responded to the questionnaire and who have chosen the best option in terms of quality/price will be entered into a draw to win an iPod-Touch. The draw will take place on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011. If you wish to be entered, please provide your email address at the end of the questionnaire.*

*Thank you very much for your collaboration.*

*Enter the website*

The users were thus invited to browse through the website and put together their own tourism package based on an outward flight, a return flight, hotel accommodation, and a restaurant, from

the multiple options on offer. In line with the recommendations of several authors (Muñoz-Leiva, Sánchez-Fernández, Montoro-Rios & Ibañez-Zapata, 2010), subjects were offered an incentive to achieve the optimum result for the task and complete the subsequent questionnaire, in the form of a free prize draw to win an iPod Touch.

Once they had completed the task and browsing was complete, subjects were redirected to a questionnaire.

A representative sample of the population was obtained using data issued by the Spanish Association for Media Research (AIMC, 2010) relating to the socio-demographic profile of internet users between the age of 18 and 64. The final sample size was 227 Spanish users: 110 browsing V1 and 117 browsing V2. Overall, the subjects were highly experienced in the Internet medium, with 66.08% going online for more than 10 hours a week. The minimum age was 18 and the maximum was 64, giving an average age of 38.66 years.

### *3.2. Measures*

In line with the proposed hypotheses, the four dependent variables in the present study were: perceived risk online; the total browsing time and the number of errors committed during the purchasing process. The questionnaire consisted of closed questions for the constructs, seven-point Likert scales, and socio-demographic data (see Annex 1).

Perceived risk online was measured using the scale proposed by Wakefield and Whitten (2006).

Browsing time was measured in terms of the number of seconds it took subjects to browse the experimental website and complete the task assigned to them. As regards capturing the number of errors committed by users during the purchasing process, when selecting their tourism package, for each of the four components (flight, accommodation, restaurant, and excursion) there was always one option that was preferable to the rest in terms of the relationship between quality and price. Those instances in which the subject failed to select the optimum option were thus considered to be errors for the purposes of the research. On this basis, each subject was assigned a score of between 0 and 4, depending on the number of errors they committed during the process of selecting and purchasing their tourism package. In other words, those who correctly identified the best option for all four components of the package were given a score of 4, while those who failed to do so for any of the components received a score of 0.

Perceived usability of the site, according to the subjects, was also measured, with a view to subsequently checking to ensure correct manipulation of the independent variable 'website design'. This control variable was measured from the user's perspective by applying the Website Analysis and Measurement Inventory (WAMMI) scale proposed by Kirakowski, Claridge & Whitehand (1998) and adapted by Flavián, Guinalú & Gurrea (2006a, 2006b).

Finally, other variables were also measured to classify the subjects: gender, age in years, and level of online experience, based on the number of hours spent each week on the Internet.

## **4. Results**

### *4.1. Analysis of the psychometric properties of the scales*

Prior to testing the hypotheses it was necessary to examine the reliability and validity of the multi-items scales used in the present study. For this purpose a multi-group confirmatory factorial analysis (CFA) was used, according to website design (V1 vs. V2), which demonstrated that the different scales all presented sound psychometric properties as all the standardized coefficients were significant and very close to one, while the individual reliability of each indicator was above the recommended limit of 0.50 (see Table 3). The overall goodness-of-fit indices and the Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted indices were also, in all cases, well over the recommended values (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & William, 1995; Del Barrio and Luque, 2012; Kline, 2011).

Table 3

Analysis of the psychometric properties of the scales (non-standardized parameters)

Items	V1				V2			
	Param. (t-value)	R <sup>2</sup>	Composite reliability	Variance extracted	Param. (t-value)	R <sup>2</sup>	Composite reliability	Average Variance Extracted
<b>RISK1</b>	1.00 (p.f.)*	0.81	0.94	0.85	1.00 (p.f.)*	0.82	0.94	0.85
<b>RISK2</b>	1.06 (29.15)	0.88			1.02 (28.66)	0.88		
<b>RISK3</b>	1.05 (25.84)	0.87			1.07 (30.40)	0.88		
<b>USAB1</b>	1.00 (p.f.)*	0.75	0.97	0.79	1.00 (p.f.)*	0.75	0.96	0.82
<b>USAB2</b>	0.91 (22.33)	0.79			1.16 (23.22)	0.82		
<b>USAB3</b>	0.92 (19.50)	0.79			1.10 (19.81)	0.80		
<b>USAB4</b>	0.98 (23.45)	0.91			1.08 (18.40)	0.79		
<b>USAB5</b>	0.94 (21.37)	0.88			1.15 (19.15)	0.80		
<b>USAB6</b>	0.97 (18.95)	0.86			1.13 (18.31)	0.77		
<b>USAB7</b>	0.95 (19.84)	0.81			1.08 (18.52)	0.83		

Note (\*): Value not calculated since the parameter was established at 1 in order to set the scale for the latent variable

#### 4.2. Manipulation check

As the CFA had demonstrated that the scale of perceived usability presented good psychometric properties, an index variable was calculated as the sum of the seven indicators of the WAMMI scale (min: 7/max: 49). To check the correct manipulation of the ‘website design’ independent variable, a t-test was carried out to test the difference in averages of this index variable for each of the two experimental conditions (V1 and V2). The results showed that the perceived usability was significantly greater for V1 than for V2 ( $p < 0.05$ ), which endorsed the correct manipulation of the independent variable between-subjects (see Table 4).

Table 4

Test for differences in perceived usability by website design type (all indicators)

Items	V1	V2	p-value	Items	V1	V2	p-value
USAB1	5.70	4.92	0.00	USAB5	5.94	4.97	0.00
USAB2	5.84	4.97	0.00	USAB6	5.82	4.86	0.00
USAB3	5.80	4.98	0.00	USAB7	5.77	4.91	0.00
USAB4	5.86	4.96	0.00				

#### 4.4. Testing the hypotheses

To test the hypotheses, a number of variance analyses (ANOVA) were carried out, using the following depending variables: browsing time; number of errors performed during the online purchasing process; and the perceived risk online. The experimental factor, website design (V1 vs. V2), is the independent variable. As the scales presented good psychometric properties, prior to testing the hypotheses an indicator for each dependent variable was calculated, as the sum of the items from the original scales.

H<sub>1</sub> and H<sub>2</sub> proposed that site effectiveness when the user browses the site and performs online tasks – measured in browsing time and the number of errors committed while performing these tasks – would be significantly greater amongst those websites that are perceived to be usable than amongst those that are not.

After testing to ensure that all the assumptions of the ANOVA were fulfilled, the data analysis demonstrated that the website design had a significant main effect on browsing time ( $F=29.46$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), such that when users browsed V1 of the site they took less time to put together their

tourism package ( $\text{Time}_{V1}=344.72$  seconds) than when they browsed V2 ( $\text{Time}_{V2}= 633.35$  seconds). Therefore  $H_1$  cannot be rejected (see Table 5). These findings echo those of other authors (Nielsen & Loranger, 2002; Shackel, 1991).

Table 5  
Effect of website design on browsing time (ANOVA)

Variable	Treatment	Mean	SE	F	p-value
Website design	V1	344.72	19.38	29.46	0.00
	V2	633.35	49.11		
Normality		Homoscedasticity			
No major deviations observed		Levene's test: $p<0.05$			

According to  $H_2$ , effectiveness of website performance – measured in terms of the number of errors committed by the user during the purchasing process – will be significantly better in those websites perceived to be usable than in those perceived not so (that is, there will be fewer errors). To test this hypothesis, once again an ANOVA was carried out. The results demonstrated that when browsing V1 of the website, users registered significantly fewer errors ( $N^{\circ}\text{Errors}_{V1}=2.30$ ) than when browsing V2 ( $N^{\circ}\text{Errors}_{V2}=2.67$ ) ( $F=6.354$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). Together, these findings confirm  $H_2$  (see Table 6).

Table 6  
Effect of website design on number of errors committed (ANOVA)

Variable	Treatment	Mean	SE	F	p-value
Website design	V1	2.30	0.10	6.354	0.01
	V2	2.67	0.10		
Normality		Homoscedasticity			
No major deviations observed		Levene's test: $p\geq 0.10$			

A further ANOVA was performed to test  $H_3$  and establish whether perceived risk online was moderated by website design type. It demonstrated that website design type exerted a significant effect on perceived risk online, in the expected direction ( $F=7.30$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). Users exposed to the more usable version of the website generated a lower perceived risk online ( $\text{Risk}_{V1}=9.80$ ) than those browsing the less usable version ( $\text{Risk}_{V2}=11.36$ ), meaning that  $H_3$  can be confirmed (See table 7).

Table 7  
Effect of website design type on perceived risk online (ANOVA)

Variable	Treatment	Mean	SE	F	p-value
Website design	V1	9.80	0.40	7.30	0.00
	V2	11.36	0.41		
Normality		Homoscedasticity			
No major deviations observed		Levene's test: $p\geq 0.10$			

The ANOVA results indicate that both the effectiveness of website performance (measured in terms of user browsing time and number of errors) and perceived risk online should be considered utilitarian variables.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Conclusions

The present work has examined the extent to which the functional design of the website (representing utilitarian motivations) affect their purchasing behaviour and how they process information when browsing the site.

The key contribution is the approach taken in the present study, namely to examine the effect of website design (as a utilitarian aspect) on the user's response. The findings of the present work point to the conclusion that when a firm is aiming to maximise the browsing time of users and thus reduce bounce rate, or to significantly reduce the number of user errors when performing

associated tasks on the website, it should place greater emphasis on the utilitarian aspects of the site design.

Of particular interest the work lies in its original use of professional design in creating two parallel websites hosted under one single domain name (buyuada.org), each with different objectives in terms of usability. This approach is in line with the recommendations of Moss (2004) and Nielsen (1993, 1999, 2004, 2009). To date, the majority of studies examining the role of website design on online user behaviour have used subjective measurements of usability (Belanche *et al.*, 2012; Lee & Koubek, 2010; Wahab, Jusoff, Al Momani, Mohd & Mohd, 2001). The present methodology thus represents an important advancement in understanding the moderating effect of website design on online information-processing and, more specifically, on the effectiveness of the site's performance when the user is carrying out tasks while browsing. Data analysis demonstrated that a website with good usability will significantly reduce the subject's browsing time and the number of errors they commit during the purchasing process, and will also lower the perceived risk online.

## **5.2. Implications**

A number of interesting implications for management arise from the present work. Firstly, investing in a good website design is shown to be a prerequisite for improving the interest shown by users during browsing, which will, in turn, reduce the bounce rate and increase the length of time spent on processing the website information. This issue needs to be taken into account in particular by those firms and institutions offering e-commerce (particularly those operating in the tourism-related field, such as hotels, tour operators, travel agencies, and public bodies), since consumers report important functional and utilitarian benefits when browsing a site they perceive to have high usability compared to one they consider to have low usability. Such benefits include greater effectiveness in performance and a lower perceived risk online. As also demonstrated by Wood (2004), it is important to remember that website design is not an end in itself, but is rather a means of facilitating purchase and information-search on the part of the user.

In this regard, when designing a website it is not sufficient to follow the recommendations of Nielsen (1993, 1999, 2004, 2009) by simply drawing on heuristic lists of features for usability. It is also essential to base the site design on the user, for example by seeking their views on its usability via different questionnaires. For this purpose, the present study employed the WAMMI questionnaire (Kirakowski *et al.*, 1998). Another invaluable technique that is widely employed by firms when designing their websites, so as to ensure the design is centred on the user, is card sorting. In a card sorting session, participants organize topics from a website into categories that make sense to them. Participants may also help to label these groups. Card sorting may involve physical cards or pieces of paper, or it may be accomplished with one of several online card-sorting software tools. It can help firms ascertain their users' expectations and understanding of topics central to the firm. Knowing how users group information can also help the firm to build the structure for its website, decide what to put on the homepage, or label categories and navigation effectively. There are different types of card sorting techniques, including in-person sessions with an observer, concurrent in-person sessions, and computer-based sessions.

The firm's choice of approach will depend on factors such as the available budget, the type and size of the organisation, and the complexity of their website. There are numerous examples of firms that have improved profits by investing in user-centred website design. For example, in the late 1990s IBM increased its e-commerce sales by 400% thanks to improving the usability of ibm.com (Tedeschi, 1999), while Dell achieved an increase of 33 million dollars in its daily online sales following an initiative to enhance the usability of dell.com (Black, 2002).

The present work reveals that it is important, therefore, to build elements into the site design desired. In this regard, the requirements of usability can give clues as to how to make the browsing experience even more pleasurable, such as the use of simpler menus, bullet points, bold and italic fonts, text in different sizes and colours, hypertext, images, and search tools.

Meanwhile, social networks are changing how users and consumers share the information they derive from the Internet, and how they interact with others. To improve the user's experience it is essential to foster interactivity by including features such as widgets, buttons and plug-ins from the main social networks (that is, Twitter, Facebook, G+, LinkedIn and so on). Other means such as contact and complaint forms, forums, chat-rooms, handy tools such as personal calculators (for weight, heart rate/risk, intelligence, emotional state, for instance), or virtual assistants can be of enormous use in achieving a greater level of enjoyment for the user. This approach will undoubtedly lead to an enhanced brand image and reputation.

The results of the present study offer some interesting implications for those website managers who operate in the tourism field (hotels, tour operators, travel agencies, public bodies, and so on). Firstly, it has been clearly demonstrated that investment in good website design is critical for all firms active in e-commerce and tourism, where consumers often search online to research and compare destinations and services. They browse a site that consider as having a good level of usability. This brings a number of important benefits over a site with poor usability, such as lower perceived risk. A good site design is the very basis of the online marketing strategies developed by tourism firms. If the design is such that the user not only finds the site easy to browse, but also enjoys with it because he/she doesn't have to lose a lot of time to get the right information, it will help also to develop loyalty towards the service on offer (Alcántara-Pilar & Del Barrio-García, 2014).

Further research is therefore needed to investigate whether the hedonic motivations moderate the results of the present study.

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#### Appendix 1: Items used on the scale from the empirical study

Dimensions	Items
Perceived risk online	<p>Whilst I was browsing this website, and due to its characteristics I felt that:</p> <p>RISK1. There is a high risk of loss if I make a reservation via this site</p> <p>RISK2. There is a major risk involved in making a reservation via this site</p> <p>RISK3. Making tourism reservations via this site is risky</p>
Perceived usability	<p>Please assess the website you have just browsed...</p> <p>USAB1. Everything on this website is easy to understand</p> <p>USAB2. This website is simple to use even for the first time</p> <p>USAB3. Finding the information I need on this website is simple</p> <p>USAB4. The content structure on this website is easy to understand</p> <p>USAB5. It's easy to find your way around this website</p> <p>USAB6. The way in which the content on this site is organized enables me to know where I am when I browse through the different pages</p> <p>USAB7. When I am browsing this site I feel in control of what I can do</p>

# COMERCIO SOCIAL VS COMERCIO ELECTRÓNICO: ¿INFLUYEN LOS ESTÍMULOS SOCIALES EN EL COMPORTAMIENTO DEL INDIVIDUO?

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## RESUMEN

*Las redes sociales suponen un reto para la gestión de los clientes, que se convierten en agentes activos en las relaciones comerciales. Su integración en las webs de las empresas y la posibilidad de utilizarlas a nivel comercial han dado lugar al denominado comercio social o social commerce, una ramificación del comercio electrónico que se apoya en el uso de redes y medios sociales para fomentar la compra-venta de productos. El objetivo del presente trabajo consiste en profundizar en el concepto de comercio social frente al comercio electrónico “tradicional”. En este contexto, proponemos un modelo que recoge el efecto que los estímulos sociales incluidos en la plataforma ejercen en el estado de flujo experimentado por el cliente y en el comportamiento realizado. Este modelo será testado mediante metodología experimental que comparará dos escenarios: comercio social vs comercio electrónico. Los resultados obtenidos pondrán de manifiesto la importancia de los estímulos sociales y permitirán concluir si este tipo de comercio ofrece nuevas oportunidades de negocio.*

## Palabras clave:

Comercio social, Estado de flujo, Comportamiento del cliente, Interacciones sociales, Comercio electrónico.

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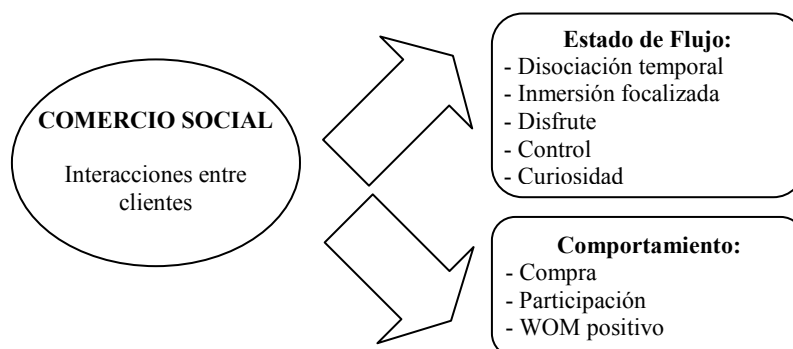
## 1. Introducción

En los últimos años, el desarrollo y la creciente popularidad de medios y redes sociales como LinkedIn, Facebook y Twitter y su integración en la web tradicional han dado lugar a sofisticadas plataformas y entornos interactivos que han modificado el modo en que las empresas y los individuos interactúan y se comunican entre sí (Labrecque, 2014). Estos medios ofrecen nuevas fuentes de información, promueven el papel activo del cliente y, en definitiva, incrementan su poder en las relaciones comerciales (Wang et al., 2012; Zhang y Daugherty, 2009). Así, el comercio electrónico “tradicional” (*e-commerce*) ha evolucionado hacia un nuevo concepto, dejando de ser simplemente un intercambio diádico empresa-cliente, en el que la empresa controlaba la información y tomaba sus propias decisiones, para adoptar una estructura dinámica de red donde diferentes agentes forman parte del proceso, integran recursos y participan en la relación (Godes et al., 2005; Libai et al., 2010). Tal y como afirman Shankar y Malhotra (2007: 3), “Internet ha dado poder a los clientes para interactuar con las empresas en sus propios términos, permitiéndoles a su vez comunicarse con otros clientes”.

En este contexto, surge un nuevo tipo de comercio denominado comercio social o *social commerce*, el cual se define como una ramificación del comercio electrónico que se apoya en el uso de redes y medios sociales para fomentar la compra-venta de productos. Este tipo de comercio conjuga la participación activa del cliente y las interacciones sociales, aplica una orientación basada en la co-creación de valor, y pretende ir más allá de los objetivos meramente transaccionales. Las plataformas online con un enfoque social promueven la integración de recursos y el intercambio de información entre diferentes agentes, dando lugar a nuevos modelos de negocio que pueden conllevar importantes oportunidades para aquellas empresas que sepan gestionarlos. Según Forrester Research (Anderson et al., 2011), las plataformas online vinculadas al comercio social generarán alrededor de 30.000 millones de dólares de beneficio en 2015. Sin embargo, a pesar del interés de este nuevo tipo de comercio, la mayoría de las empresas han optado por continuar aplicando políticas de marketing orientadas exclusivamente al cliente individual y han ignorado las posibilidades que ofrece el enfoque social. Así, se pone pues de manifiesto la necesidad de profundizar en el ámbito del comercio social debido a la novedad del fenómeno, la escasez de estudios empíricos existentes en la materia, y el cambio de paradigma que supone frente a las teorías clásicas centradas exclusivamente en cuestiones económicas y en las decisiones tomadas por la empresa (Yadav et al., 2013).

El objetivo del presente trabajo en curso consiste en profundizar en el concepto de comercio social, analizando el estado de flujo y el comportamiento del cliente durante su interacción en una plataforma comercial con este enfoque. Para ello, llevamos a cabo una exhaustiva revisión de la literatura y proponemos un modelo teórico basado en la experiencia del cliente. Así, consideramos que el estado de flujo puede ser alcanzado a partir de las interacciones que el individuo lleva a cabo directa y/o indirectamente en la plataforma, las cuales influyen también positivamente en su comportamiento. El concepto de flujo ha sido medido a partir del trabajo de Agarwal y Karahanna (2000), recogiendo las siguientes dimensiones: Disociación temporal, Inmersión focalizada, Disfrute, Control y Curiosidad. Por otro lado, el comportamiento del cliente se analiza a partir de las intenciones de compra, de participar activamente en el proceso, y de hablar positivamente sobre la empresa que respalda la experiencia (WOM) (ver Figura 1).

FIGURA 1  
Modelo conceptual propuesto



La base teórica del presente trabajo en curso descansa en dos pilares fundamentales. Por un lado, las nuevas teorías de creación de valor surgidas en los últimos años, las cuales ponen de manifiesto la importancia del papel activo del cliente a la hora de establecer relaciones estables y duraderas (Malthouse y Hofacker, 2010; Prahalad y Ramaswamy, 2004). Por otro lado, las teorías sobre el estado de flujo y su relevancia para generar experiencias positivas en entornos online y motivar comportamientos positivos transaccionales y no transaccionales (Hoffman y Novak, 2009). Los análisis que pretendemos realizar se apoyan en metodología experimental, a partir de la cual se compararán dos escenarios: (1) una plataforma de *e-commerce*, la cual no permite al cliente comunicarse con otros clientes y (2) una plataforma de *social commerce*, la cual incluye herramientas que posibilitan llevar a cabo interacciones directas e indirectas. Los resultados obtenidos pondrán de manifiesto la importancia de las interacciones entre clientes que el individuo puede llevar a cabo en una plataforma de comercio social. De este modo, pretendemos cubrir el hueco existente en la literatura relativo a las diferencias que surgen en el comportamiento del individuo cuando éste tiene la posibilidad de interactuar socialmente durante el proceso de compra.

## 2. Marco teórico

### 2.1 *Social commerce vs e-commerce*

El comercio social se origina a partir de la conjunción de otros dos fenómenos comerciales que surgieron en la década de los 90: el boca-oído electrónico (eWOM) y el comercio electrónico (IBM, 2009). Apoyándose en estos conceptos, el comercio social combina aspectos propios de un entorno comercial (compra-venta, distribución, etc.) con otras propiedades de corte social que hasta ahora habían pasado desapercibidas (relaciones con la comunidad, influencia de la red, etc.). A pesar de sus evidentes puntos en común, el comercio social presenta importantes diferencias y beneficios respecto al comercio electrónico.

En primer lugar, destacaríamos un cambio en el **tipo de interacción dominante**. Mientras que en el comercio electrónico la relación fundamental es aquella que se establece entre la empresa y los clientes, el comercio social considera que las interacciones entre clientes son una fuerza de mercado clave, tanto si se llevan a cabo de manera directa (diálogo) como si se efectúan indirectamente (aprendizaje observacional) (Blazevic et al., 2013). Estas interacciones emergen como una fuente de información que condiciona el comportamiento del consumidor y que le permite acceder a las valoraciones, recomendaciones, comentarios y experiencias vividas por otros consumidores y comunidades virtuales (Godes et al., 2005).

En segundo lugar, señalaríamos que el **tipo de intercambio** que se establece en el ámbito social deja de tener carácter diádico empresa-cliente, característico del *e-commerce*, para adquirir un enfoque de red (Aggarwal, 2004; Payne et al., 2009). Así, la empresa pierde el control del que había gozado tradicionalmente en los intercambios comerciales y surge un tipo de inteligencia colectiva también denominada *sabiduría de masas* (O'Reilly, 2005). En tercer lugar, identificaríamos un cambio en el **tipo de relación** que se establece. Mientras que el comercio electrónico tradicional potencia las relaciones unidireccionales, iniciadas por la empresa en la búsqueda de clientes, el comercio social persigue lograr una respuesta activa del cliente. Esta respuesta se alcanza a partir del aumento de la **conectividad** y de la emergencia de herramientas sociales 2.0 (redes sociales, blogs, webs de opinión, etc.), las cuales dan lugar a nuevas opciones de interacción, incrementan la posibilidad de relacionarse con otros clientes y generan plataformas que van más allá del sitio web del vendedor (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010; Libai et al., 2010). Igualmente, debemos destacar que el comercio social también modifica la **orientación** aplicada por la empresa, desapareciendo el enfoque centrado en un objetivo concreto vinculado con la transacción, y emergiendo una orientación que trata de optimizar la experiencia vivida por el cliente.

Por último, debemos destacar un cambio en el tipo de **métricas utilizadas** para evaluar el valor generado por el cliente. Mientras que el comercio electrónico se apoya en medidas vinculadas con aspectos transaccionales, las cuales trataban de recoger el valor generado por el cliente a partir de los retornos económicos generados (ej. *Customer Lifetime Value*) (Blattberg et al., 2001; Kumar y Reinartz, 2006), el comercio social señala la importancia de abordar aspectos no transaccionales, como sería el *Customer Engagement Value* (CEV) (Kumar et al., 2010). Este tipo de medidas centran su atención en la importancia de profundizar en el valor de las interacciones realizadas por el cliente, en su influencia sobre otros consumidores, y en el conocimiento que aporta dicho cliente a la empresa.

Teniendo en cuenta estos aspectos, el presente trabajo en curso propone testar empíricamente el efecto que los atributos de una plataforma orientada al comercio social ejercen sobre el estado de flujo experimentado por el individuo durante su interacción y sobre el comportamiento realizado.

## **2.2 El estado de flujo en el ámbito online**

A lo largo de las dos últimas décadas, el concepto de flujo (*flow*) ha sido una de las variables que mayor éxito ha alcanzado en la investigación sobre el comportamiento tecnológico del cliente (ej. Skadberg y Kimmel, 2004; Smith y Sivakumar, 2004). Así, frente a los modelos teóricos basados en las percepciones y la cognición del individuo, este concepto pretende explicar las sensaciones experimentadas por el cliente durante su interacción con una determinada tecnología, considerando que aspectos intrínsecos relacionados con la diversión, la concentración o el control de la situación ejercen un papel fundamental en su comportamiento.

El concepto de flujo se definió inicialmente como aquel estado holístico que una persona experimenta cuando lleva a cabo una actividad con total implicación, ignorando cualquier otra cuestión que surja en ese momento (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Dicho estado pretende ir más allá del objetivo inicialmente buscado por el individuo cuando emplea una tecnología y suele vincularse a las experiencias óptimas que éste puede vivir durante su interacción (Davis et al., 1992; Hoffman y Novak, 1996). Estas experiencias generan emociones y sensaciones placenteras, que trascienden la plataforma y que empujan al individuo a tratar de repetir las en el corto plazo, pudiendo generarse relaciones afectivas estables con la empresa (Luna et al., 2002).

A partir de la revisión de la literatura llevada a cabo, el presente trabajo plantea que las interacciones que el individuo puede realizar en una plataforma de comercio social originan un mayor estado de flujo durante su experiencia. Para definir el concepto, seguimos la recomendación de Hoffman y Novak (2009) de aplicar una perspectiva multidimensional y estudiamos cinco dimensiones del concepto (Agarwal y Karahanna, 2000): (1) disociación temporal o la incapacidad del individuo de registrar el paso del tiempo mientras está realizando la interacción; (2) inmersión focalizada o experiencia de implicación máxima, durante la cual el cliente ignora otros aspectos que demandan su atención; (3) disfrute o captura del placer de la interacción; (4) control o percepción del usuario de ser responsable de la interacción; y, por último, (5) curiosidad. Así, proponemos las siguientes relaciones:

**H1: La posibilidad de interactuar con otros clientes durante una experiencia de compra social influye positivamente en el estado de flujo experimentado por el individuo.**

*H1a: La posibilidad de interactuar con otros clientes durante una experiencia de compra social influye positivamente en la disociación temporal experimentada por el individuo.*

*H1b: La posibilidad de interactuar con otros clientes durante una experiencia de compra social influye positivamente en la inmersión focalizada experimentada por el individuo.*

*H1c: La posibilidad de interactuar con otros clientes durante una experiencia de compra social influye positivamente en el disfrute experimentado por el individuo.*

*H1d: La posibilidad de interactuar con otros clientes durante una experiencia de compra social influye positivamente en el control experimentado por el individuo.*

*H1e: La posibilidad de interactuar con otros clientes durante una experiencia de compra social influye positivamente en la curiosidad experimentada por el individuo.*

## **2.3 Comportamiento del cliente**

Dado el carácter participativo y comercial del comercio social, este trabajo se centra en tres conceptos diferentes para medir el comportamiento del cliente: intenciones de participar activamente, intenciones de hablar positivamente sobre la empresa que respalda la plataforma social (WOM) e intenciones de compra.

El concepto de participación del cliente ha sido analizado de forma extensiva desde diferentes puntos de vista, convirtiéndose en un aspecto crítico de estudio en el marketing contemporáneo (Grönroos, 2008). En los últimos años, la creciente importancia alcanzada por dicho fenómeno, así como los avances de la tecnología han influido en su conceptualización y en las líneas de investigación que lo abordan (Heinonen et al., 2010; Prahalad y Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo y Lusch, 2004). Así, el cliente

deja de ser un agente pasivo en su relación con la empresa para convertirse en un agente activo y fundamental en la creación de valor (Grönroos, 2008; Prahalad y Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo y Lusch, 2004). Los individuos ya no demandan ofertas prefabricadas, sino que prefieren personalizar sus compras, compartir sus opiniones con otros consumidores y colaborar activamente (Prahalad y Ramaswamy, 2004). En el contexto del comercio social, la participación del cliente durante el proceso de compra emerge como un aspecto fundamental al recoger la posibilidad del cliente de aplicar sus propios recursos, vendiendo, comparando, comprando y compartiendo información sobre productos y servicios (Zhou et al., 2013). De este modo, el comercio social permite tomar decisiones de compra más precisas, desarrollar experiencias adaptadas a cada situación y generar relaciones entre los clientes y con la empresa (Edvardsson et al., 2011; Prahalad y Ramaswamy, 2004). En esta línea, proponemos la siguiente hipótesis:

*H2a: La posibilidad de interactuar con otros clientes durante una experiencia de compra social influye positivamente en la intención del cliente de participar activamente durante el proceso.*

La intención de hablar positivamente a otros clientes (WOM) se define como la intención del cliente, real o potencial, de realizar afirmaciones positivas sobre un producto, una empresa o una experiencia. Este tipo de comportamiento es especialmente relevante cuando los comentarios se realizan en medios sociales online, ya que el número de individuos y el alcance geográfico logrado es mucho mayor (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Así, la información vertida en estos medios se convierte en una fuerza principal del mercado, capaz de enriquecer las experiencias vividas por otros individuos y de condicionar sus decisiones de compra (Schau et al., 2009; Vallaster y Von Wallpach, 2013). Respecto al comercio social, analizar este tipo de comportamiento nos permitirá determinar si el hecho de interactuar con otros agentes a través de una plataforma social hace que, posteriormente, el individuo tenga mayores intenciones de hablar positivamente sobre la empresa y su experiencia, generando a su vez nuevas opiniones y un mayor conocimiento.

*H2b: La posibilidad de interactuar con otros clientes durante una experiencia de compra social influye positivamente en la intención del cliente de hablar positivamente sobre la empresa que respalda dicha experiencia.*

Por último, estudiaremos la intención de compra del cliente ya que ha sido una de las principales variables relativas al comportamiento que han sido analizadas en el ámbito del comercio electrónico (ej. Chiu et al., 2014). En el contexto del comercio social, Yadav et al. (2013) también pone de manifiesto su relevancia, destacando el efecto que los atributos sociales pueden ejercer en cada una de las fases del proceso de compra realizado por el cliente: reconocimiento de necesidades, actividades previas a la compra, decisión de compra y actividades post-compra. Así, el conocimiento compartido por los clientes a través de las interacciones sociales realizadas en la plataforma reduce el esfuerzo y el riesgo relativo a la toma de decisiones, incrementando la probabilidad de que el cliente finalice la compra (Yadav et al., 2013). En esta línea, proponemos la siguiente hipótesis:

*H2c: La posibilidad de interactuar con otros clientes durante una experiencia de compra social influye positivamente en la intención del cliente de comprar el producto.*

### **3. Metodología propuesta: diseño de la plataforma y proceso experimental**

Para llevar a cabo el estudio, se aplicará una metodología experimental mediante la cual se compararán dos escenarios: (1) una plataforma de comercio social y (2) una plataforma de comercio electrónico tradicional. Ambos escenarios simularán una experiencia online vinculada a la compra de un par de zapatillas deportivas, planteando como principal diferencia entre ellos la inclusión de herramientas sociales en el primero. Las herramientas sociales incluidas en la primera plataforma permitirán a sus usuarios interactuar con otros clientes, intercambiando mensajes e información a través del email, foros y redes sociales. Además, estos usuarios podrán votar por el par de zapatillas que más les guste de la galería y comentar los diferentes diseños que otros clientes han subido a la plataforma. La elección de estas herramientas se basará en otros trabajos anteriores y en la observación de prácticas empresariales reales realizadas en el ámbito online.

El planteamiento del experimento será el siguiente. En primer lugar, todos los participantes deberán cumplimentar un cuestionario online, en el cual se les preguntará por sus características personales.



Estas características permitirán llevar a cabo cierto control sobre la muestra analizada. Una vez respondido este cuestionario, cada participante será asignado de manera aleatoria a uno de los dos escenarios, asegurándonos de que no exista ningún tipo de contacto entre los participantes durante la realización del experimento. A continuación, se solicitará a los participantes de ambos escenarios que compren un par de zapatillas y que lleven a cabo diferentes acciones en función de la plataforma que les haya sido asignada. Con el objetivo de asegurar las mismas condiciones para todos los participantes, se facilitará una hoja de instrucciones en la cual se explicarán todos los pasos que tendrán que seguir. Además, el diseño de la plataforma no permitirá continuar realizando el experimento a menos que las instrucciones sean correctamente cumplimentadas. De esta manera, nos aseguraremos que todos los participantes experimentan las posibilidades de su plataforma (electrónica o social) y de que son conscientes de las posibilidades que aporta, pudiendo valorar a continuación la experiencia de compra vivida.

#### 4. Conclusión

Durante los próximos meses, se pretende testar los datos recogidos. En primer lugar, se validarán las escalas de medida y se comprobará que las manipulaciones realizadas en ambos escenarios experimentales han sido correctamente realizadas. Para ello, se obtendrán los alfas de Cronbach para cada escala y se realizarán test t de medias. En segundo lugar, se contrastarán las hipótesis propuestas mediante dos análisis multivariante de la varianza (MANOVA), uno para estudiar el comportamiento del individuo y otro para testar las variables relativas al flujo.

Los resultados obtenidos pondrán de manifiesto la influencia que las posibilidades ofrecidas por el comercio social ejercen sobre el estado de flujo experimentado y el comportamiento del cliente. Así, podremos concluir si el comercio social realmente ofrece nuevas oportunidades de negocio frente a otras formas tradicionales de distribución (Zhou et al., 2013) y estableceremos aquellos cambios vinculados a una orientación social, que una empresa debe realizar para incentivar el comportamiento del cliente, transaccional y no transaccional.

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# IDENTIFICACIÓN DE LÍDERES DE OPINIÓN A TRAVÉS DE TWITTER: CÓMO SABER SI SON LEALES A LA MARCA

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## ABSTRACT

*Twitter es la red social elegida por muchas empresas para crear comunidades de marca. Uno de los objetivos de estas comunidades es que se hable bien de la marca. La identificación de líderes de opinión en estas comunidades puede ayudar a que se genere debate sobre la marca, pero si el líder de opinión no es leal a la marca puede provocar el efecto contrario al deseado. Este estudio tiene por objetivo ayudar a la empresa a identificar líderes de opinión que sean leales a la marca. Esta identificación permitirá seleccionarlos en sus campañas de difusión de la marca. El estudio realizado concluye que la identificación de un líder de opinión leal en una comunidad de marca se ha de hacer atendiendo a tres criterios: la información del perfil del individuo, su número de seguidores y el número de personas o páginas a las que esa persona está siguiendo.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Líder de opinión, lealtad hacia la marca, seguidor, Twitter, comunidad de marca*

## **1. Introducción**

Las redes sociales están cada vez más presentes en nuestra vida diaria. El 72% de usuarios de Internet tiene un perfil en al menos una red social (Princeton Survey Research Associates International, 2013), y pasa una media de dos horas diarias en estas plataformas (Nielsen, 2012). Facebook, Twitter y Google+, las tres redes sociales más importantes a nivel mundial, tienen más de dos billones de usuarios (Search Engine Journal, 2013). Además, un estudio realizado a empresas de todo el mundo revela que invertir en redes sociales genera mejores resultados que asistir a ferias, hacer marketing directo o contratar publicidad online (Hubspot, 2013). Tanto consumidores como marcas pueden crear cuentas en redes sociales. Una empresa puede crear una cuenta con el objetivo de desarrollar una comunidad de marca en la que los consumidores y la marca puedan interactuar e intercambiar información y sensaciones. Los consumidores se pueden unir a las páginas de marca en cualquier momento y empezar a formar parte de la comunidad. En la actualidad, más del 80% de las grandes empresas ya tiene una comunidad de marca en alguna red social (Medialuna, 2013).

Estudios previos han demostrado que una de las ventajas más importantes de una comunidad de marca es la generación de conversaciones sobre la marca (Carlson et al., 2008). A pesar de que se pueda hablar sobre la marca fuera de la comunidad, el hecho de tener una comunidad propicia que buena parte del debate generado en torno a la marca se produzca en el seno de la comunidad. En este contexto, la influencia de las opiniones que se expresan sobre productos o marcas depende de quién las emita. Por ello, los esfuerzos de las empresas se están centrando en identificar a personas que tengan cierta influencia en las redes sociales, denominadas líderes de opinión. La identificación de estos líderes se considera necesaria para poder desarrollar campañas de promoción de la marca exitosas. Sin embargo, que un líder de opinión sea miembro de una comunidad de marca no asegura que hable bien de la misma. La probabilidad de que hable bien depende sobre todo de su lealtad hacia la marca (Carpenter y Fairhurst, 2005). Los individuos leales son aquellos que están comprometidos con la marca y que además tienen intención de comprar o seguir comprando esa marca (Chaudhuri y Holbrook's, 2001). Pero, ¿cómo puede la empresa saber si un líder de opinión es leal a la marca?

Para dar respuesta a esa pregunta, este estudio tiene como objetivo identificar a líderes de opinión que sean miembros de la comunidad de marca y que además sean leales hacia la misma. Las empresas pueden crear comunidades de marca en redes sociales como Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Instagram o Pinterest. Sin embargo, investigaciones recientes (Burson-Marsteller, 2012) indican que prefieren crearlas en Twitter. Además, Twitter es la red social con mayor crecimiento y con mayor número de páginas de marca (Globalwebindex, 2013), por lo que se ha elegido esta red social para realizar el estudio. El trabajo es de interés para la práctica empresarial en la medida que facilita la identificación de líderes de opinión leales que puedan ser utilizados en campañas de de la marca. Concretamente, proponemos que esta identificación se puede realizar a través de información que está disponible a todas las empresas que tienen creada una comunidad de marca en Twitter.

## **2. Revisión de la literatura y desarrollo de hipótesis**

Las comunidades de marca se definen como comunidades especializadas, sin localización geográfica, basadas en las relaciones sociales entre usuarios de una marca (Muñiz y O'Guinn, 2001, p. 412). Una comunidad de marca está formada por consumidores que comparten interés sobre la misma marca. En estas comunidades los miembros comparten vivencias y opiniones sobre la marca, interactúan con la misma e incluso pueden participar en actividades organizadas por la marca o por los miembros de la comunidad (Algesheimer et al., 2005). Las primeras comunidades de marca en internet se desarrollaron en la propia web de la empresa (Jang et al., 2008). Actualmente, dada la importancia que están adquiriendo las redes sociales para los consumidores, las comunidades de marca se están trasladando a estas plataformas (Laroche et al., 2012). Para el consumidor es muy fácil unirse a la comunidad de marca. Un solo click es suficiente. Por ejemplo, en Twitter habría que pinchar en "seguir" a la marca. De esta manera, al igual que ocurre con las comunidades de marca tradicionales, los consumidores pueden recibir información sobre la marca e interactuar con otros individuos a los que les gusta la misma marca.

Una de las principales ventajas de la creación de una comunidad de marca es la generación de boca a boca (Carlson et al., 2008). Una opinión favorable sobre una marca escrita por un consumidor en una

red social puede ser vista por individuos de todo el mundo que siguen a la marca a través de esa red social (Laroche et al., 2012). En la actualidad, es clave que las empresas puedan obtener rentabilidad de esas opiniones favorables. Muchas de las estrategias online de las marcas están orientadas a que se hable bien de ellas, fomentando las conversaciones entre consumidores. Sin embargo, no todos los seguidores de la marca son leales a la misma ni ejercen el mismo grado de influencia (Smith et al., 2012), por lo que la empresa necesita saber cómo identificar los seguidores que pueden ser a la vez influyentes y leales a la marca.

Para identificar a aquellos consumidores más influyentes puede servir de ayuda el concepto de líder de opinión. Los líderes de opinión son individuos con mayor conocimiento, experiencia, implicación y familiaridad con la categoría de producto que los individuos que no son líderes de opinión (Goldsmith et al., 2003). Son individuos con una gran actividad social, que tienen un gran número de contactos en diferentes grupos (Valente, 1996). Al tener un mayor conocimiento de la categoría de producto suelen desarrollar un pensamiento más crítico y elaborado sobre las posibles alternativas. Además, los líderes de opinión tienden a querer sentirse diferentes del resto de consumidores, por lo que no actúan como los demás (Chan y Misra, 1990). Son más arriesgados e innovadores, lo que les lleva a comprar marcas y productos nuevos (Myers y Robertson, 1972). Estas características del líder de opinión hacen que sus opiniones ejerzan una gran influencia en la decisión de otros consumidores (Van Eck et al., 2011).

A pesar de que los líderes de opinión tienen un enorme potencial para actuar como posibles embajadores de la marca, que un líder de opinión siga a una marca no garantiza que vaya a hablar bien sobre la misma. De hecho, se ha observado que muchos líderes de opinión utilizan su influencia para hablar mal o desprestigiar a ciertas marcas. Un ejemplo de esto lo encontramos en el lanzamiento por parte de Apple del iPhone 5S, modelo muy criticado en redes sociales incluso por miembros de la comunidad Apple. Teniendo en cuenta la facilidad con la que un individuo puede hacerse miembro de una comunidad de marca en una red social como Twitter, el mero hecho de estar en la comunidad y seguir a la marca no implica que al individuo le guste realmente esa marca. Por tanto, para poder llevar a cabo campañas o acciones exitosas con eco/difusión en las redes sociales hay que identificar a individuos con dos requisitos: 1) que sean líderes de opinión y 2) que sean leales a la marca. Que sean líderes hace que la información que transmiten pueda propagarse muy rápidamente, es decir, asegura impacto y difusión. Por su parte, que sean leales implica que el individuo prefiera esa marca respecto a otras, es decir, que tengan una actitud hacia la marca más favorable que aquellos que no son leales y que la probabilidad de hablar bien de la marca sea mayor (Chaudhuri y Holbrook, 2001; Carpenter y Fairhurst, 2005). Por lo que si además de ser líder, el individuo es leal a la marca la empresa se asegura una elevada difusión de boca a boca positivo sobre su marca.

La red social Twitter ofrece información que permite a las empresas identificar a posibles líderes de opinión. Cualquier individuo con un perfil en Twitter puede “seguir” a otro o a una marca en esta red social. Si un consumidor sigue a una marca implica que todo lo que escriba la marca podrá ser visto por ese consumidor. Lo mismo ocurre cuando un consumidor sigue a otro, todo lo que publique este último podrá ser visto por su “seguidor”. Si un individuo sigue a otro suele implicar que está interesado en lo que esta persona publica. Por lo que si una persona tiene muchos seguidores es porque sus publicaciones resultan interesantes. El número de seguidores se ha convertido en el principal indicador de éxito en esta red social y, por esta razón, a las personas con más seguidores se les suele considerar líderes de opinión en Twitter (Choi et al., 2010; Westerman et al., 2012). Sin embargo, si solo atendemos al criterio de seguidores podemos equivocarnos a la hora de clasificar a ese individuo como líder de opinión. Estudios previos han establecido que un líder de opinión es líder en una categoría de producto, no en todas (Marshall y Gitosudarmo, 1995). Por ejemplo, una persona experta en moda con muchos seguidores puede estar en la comunidad de marca de un producto tecnológico, pero eso no quiere decir que sea líder de opinión de tecnología ni que sus opiniones sobre tecnología tengan una gran influencia. Por lo que además del número de seguidores, la empresa debe tener en cuenta más información para identificar su implicación con la categoría de producto. Como la empresa puede ver tanto los mensajes previos que ha escrito el individuo (*tweets*) como la información de sus perfiles, deberá utilizar toda la información disponible para identificar con mayor precisión cuántos líderes de opinión reales hay en su comunidad.

Existe cierta controversia respecto a la relación que hay entre ser líder de opinión y ser leal a la marca. El gran conocimiento que tiene un líder de opinión sobre la categoría de producto puede llevarle a que sea más leal a la marca por el hecho de tener más criterio que otros individuos para seleccionar el producto que más satisfaga sus necesidades (Chan y Misra, 1990). De hecho, Stokburger-Sauer y Hoyer (2009) demostraron que los líderes de opinión son más leales que los individuos que no lo son. Sin embargo, el líder de opinión también puede querer comportarse de forma diferente al resto de miembros, lo que le llevaría a una actitud más cambiante y menos leal (Chan y Misra, 1990). Además, dada la facilidad con la que un individuo puede ser miembro de una comunidad de marca en redes sociales y la necesidad del líder de opinión de estar informado sobre la categoría de producto (Goldsmith et al., 2003), los líderes de opinión pueden hacerse miembros de las comunidades de marca con el objetivo de obtener información sobre productos de distintas marcas, no porque les gusten, o sean leales a las mismas. Además, muchos líderes de opinión lo son por tener un juicio crítico con las marcas, por lo que no se puede decir que sean leales a ninguna de ellas (Gnambs and Batinic, 2012; Goldsmith et al., 2003). Por tanto, la tendencia actual parece favorecer una relación negativa entre el grado de liderazgo de un individuo y su lealtad a la marca. En consecuencia, cuanto más propensión tenga el individuo a ser líder, menor será su grado de lealtad, por lo que planteamos la siguiente hipótesis:

**H1: La propensión que tiene un individuo a ser líder de opinión influye negativamente sobre el grado de lealtad hacia una marca a la que sigue en Twitter**

Otro dato de interés que se puede obtener del perfil de los usuarios de Twitter es a cuántas personas y marcas sigue esa persona (indicador “siguiendo”). Como hemos dicho anteriormente, un individuo seguirá a otro o a una marca si le interesa lo que éstos publican. Por lo que un individuo que sigue a muchas personas y marcas en Twitter estará más informado de lo que publican otros que un individuo que sigue a pocas personas o marcas. Este comportamiento está asociado a un comportamiento de búsqueda activa de información (Westermana et al., 2012), también denominado comportamiento de “merodeador” en el contexto de las comunidades de marca (Ridings et al., 2006). En comunidades de marca creadas en redes sociales, se trata de personas que suelen leer y estar al tanto de todo lo que acontece en la red social. Estudios previos han mostrado que aquellos que suelen tener este comportamiento de merodeador suelen ser leales a la marca de las comunidades a las que pertenece (Lin et al., 2011). Por lo tanto, consideramos que aquellas personas que tienen un comportamiento de merodeador en Twitter serán más leales a las comunidades de marca a las que sigue en esta red social que aquellos que aquellos que no son merodeadores. Siguiendo este razonamiento proponemos la siguiente hipótesis:

**H2: El número de cuentas a las que sigue un individuo influye positivamente sobre el grado de lealtad hacia una marca a la que sigue en Twitter**

Sin embargo, el número de cuentas a las que sigue un individuo puede afectar de manera diferente en la lealtad de aquellos que son líderes de opinión. Un líder de opinión es más crítico que el resto de consumidores (Goldsmith et al., 2003), por lo que si un líder sigue a pocos individuos/marcas, será porque aquellos le proporcionan información relevante. Si entre ellos se encuentra la página de la marca, los mensajes que escriba la misma y otros miembros de la comunidad serán leídos por el líder de opinión, lo que le puede generar lealtad hacia la misma, dado que la exposición a estímulos de una marca puede llevar a tener una mayor preferencia por la marca (Kanetkar et al., 1992). Sin embargo, los líderes de opinión que sigan a muchas personas y marcas, recibirán también más mensajes de otras marcas, pero dada la ingente cantidad de información que reciben no podrán procesarla ni leerla toda. Además, en este grupo se encuentran los individuos que siguen a otros en Twitter para que los sigan a ellos y así aumentar el número de seguidores que tienen, por lo que, en este caso, no serán miembros de la comunidad de marca porque les interese realmente la marca ni los mensajes que escriba la misma en la comunidad, sino para aumentar su propio número de seguidores. Por lo tanto, proponemos la siguiente hipótesis:

**H3: La propensión que tiene un individuo a ser líder de opinión modera la relación entre el número de cuentas a las que sigue un individuo y la lealtad hacia la marca de la que es seguidor en Twitter.**

**H3a: Para niveles altos de liderazgo de opinión, el número de cuentas a las que sigue un individuo influye negativamente sobre el grado de lealtad hacia la marca a la que sigue en Twitter.**

**H3b: Para niveles bajos de liderazgo de opinión, el número de cuentas a las que sigue un individuo influye positivamente sobre el grado de lealtad hacia la marca a la que sigue en Twitter.**

### 3. Metodología

Se seleccionaron para el estudio comunidades de marca de cámaras fotográficas. La población objeto de estudio son los seguidores de estas comunidades en Twitter. Concretamente se eligieron las comunidades de Canon, Lomo y Leica. Con esta elección se pretendía obtener una muestra de individuos pertenecientes a comunidades de marca de diferentes tamaños y características. En este sentido, Canon tiene una comunidad de marca en Twitter compuesta por más de 150.000 seguidores, Lomo tiene más de 85.000 seguidores, mientras Leica no llega a los 63.000. Asimismo, la notoriedad de la marca Canon es mayor que la de Lomo y Leica.

Debido al propósito del estudio, para formar parte de la muestra los individuos debían estar interesados o implicados con la categoría de producto. Muchos individuos escriben en su perfil en Twitter que son fotógrafos o amantes de la fotografía. Observando si en sus últimos tweets hablan sobre fotografía también se puede averiguar su implicación con esta categoría de producto. Incluso las fotos de fondo o la de perfil puede servirnos como indicador de la implicación con el producto. Realizar esta pre-selección nos garantizaba que los participantes estuvieran implicados con la categoría de producto y conocieran realmente la marca. Una vez cumplido este requisito previo se seleccionó de forma aleatoria a los individuos participantes en el estudio.

Para la recogida de información se creó un cuestionario online cuyo link fue enviado mediante un mensaje (*tweet*) donde se mencionaba al individuo y se le invitaba a contestar el cuestionario. El mensaje enviado fue el siguiente: “@cuenta de Twitter” que eres seguidor de “nombre de la comunidad de marca” ayúdame contestando este breve cuestionario “link”. Más de 2000 mensajes fueron enviados a los miembros las tres comunidades de marca mencionadas anteriormente siguiendo este procedimiento. Se contactó con el mismo número de individuos en cada comunidad de marca. Siguiendo este procedimiento se obtuvieron 318 cuestionarios, alcanzando una tasa de respuesta del 15,9%. En el cuestionario se midió la lealtad hacia la marca que tenía el individuo utilizando la escala de tres ítems de Chaudhuri y Holbrook (2001). Los individuos tenían que indicar su grado de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones en una escala de 7 puntos: (1) La próxima vez que compre una cámara de fotos compraré la misma marca que la que tengo actualmente; (2) Intentaré seguir comprando la misma marca de cámara en un futuro; (3) Estoy comprometido con mi marca actual de cámara. Además, se les preguntó por su edad, género y país de origen. Al finalizar la encuesta se pedía a los participantes que escribieran su cuenta de Twitter.

Cuando finalizó la recogida de datos accedimos a las cuentas de Twitter de los participantes para obtener el número de seguidores y número de marcas y personas a los que seguía cada individuo. Dado que algunos usuarios proporcionaron cuentas de Twitter falsas o inexistentes, los cuestionarios válidos fueron finalmente 269. 80 individuos de la comunidad de marca de Leica, 88 de Lomo y 101 de Canon.

### 4. Resultados

Para ayudarnos a averiguar qué factores explican la lealtad a una marca de los seguidores de una comunidad en Twitter hemos realizado un análisis de regresión lineal. En este análisis se plantea que la lealtad a la marca depende del número de seguidores que tiene el individuo, de las personas/marcas que está siguiendo y de la posible interacción que exista entre estos dos factores. Como podemos observar en la **Tabla 1**, la propensión de un individuo a ser líder de opinión (medido a través del número de seguidores) afecta negativamente a la lealtad hacia la marca seguida ( $\beta_1 = -0,911$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ),

por lo que los líderes de opinión no serán leales a la marca, aceptando H1. Con respecto al indicador “siguiendo”, los análisis indican que a cuantas más personas y marcas siga el individuo, más probable es que éste sea leal hacia la marca seguida ( $\beta_2=0,111$ ;  $p<0,10$ ). Es decir, aquellas personas que siguen a más individuos y marcas en esta red social suelen ser más leales que aquellos que siguen a menos individuos y marcas. Sin embargo esta relación es significativa al 10%, por lo que aceptamos parcialmente H2.

**Tabla 1: Resultados**

<b>VD: Lealtad hacia la marca</b>	<b><math>\beta</math> estandarizada</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Significatividad</b>
Seguidores $\beta_1$	-0,911	-2,719	0,007
Siguiendo $\beta_2$	0,108	1,671	0,096
Interacción: Seguidores x siguiendo $\beta_3$	-0,765	-2,275	0,0024

Una vez que hemos observado que estos dos factores tienen efectos distintos sobre la lealtad a la marca necesitamos saber si entre ellos hay algún tipo de relación que permita matizar los efectos anteriores y que sirva de ayuda al propósito de identificación de líderes de opinión leales. Para testar H3 es necesario examinar el efecto interacción que existe entre el indicador “seguidores” y el indicador “siguiendo”. Los resultados de este análisis revelan un efecto interacción negativo entre estas dos variables ( $\beta_3=-0,835$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). Para interpretar el efecto interacción se han calculado las ecuaciones de regresión para dos niveles de la variable seguidores: para individuos con pocos seguidores (desviación típica por debajo de su valor medio) y para individuos con muchos seguidores (desviación típica por encima de su valor medio). Los resultados obtenidos en este análisis se muestran en la **Tabla 2**. El efecto interacción nos indica que aquellos individuos con muchos seguidores (es decir, los potenciales líderes de opinión) serán más leales hacia la marca seguida cuantos menos individuos o marcas sigan en esta red social. Por lo tanto aceptamos H3a. Además, podemos ver que aquellos individuos que tienen pocos seguidores tendrán una mayor lealtad a la marca conforme más cuentas sigan en esta red social, por lo que podemos aceptar H3b.

**Tabla 2: Lealtad a la marca en función de los indicadores “siguiendo” y “seguidores”**

<b>VD: Lealtad hacia la marca</b> <b>VI: Siguiendo</b>	<b><math>\beta</math> estandarizada</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>t (cambio en <math>\beta</math>)</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Individuos con muchos seguidores (potenciales líderes)	-0,73	-2,09	0,037	-2,27	0,024
Individuos con pocos seguidores (no líderes)	0,95	2,38	0,018		

## 5. Conclusiones

Las redes sociales ya forman parte de la vida diaria del consumidor (Princeton Survey Research Associates International, 2013). Las empresas, conscientes de este hecho, han pasado de crear comunidades de marca en sus propias páginas web a hacerlo en estas plataformas (Laroche et al., 2012). Una de las ventajas de crear comunidades de marca en redes sociales es tener acceso a información sobre los seguidores de estas marcas, lo que nos ha permitido averiguar quiénes son los líderes de opinión leales dentro de una comunidad. Los resultados establecen que, a priori, los potenciales líderes de opinión son menos leales a las marcas que siguen, confirmando a los estudios que sugieren que el líder de opinión es más cambiante y menos leal (Chan y Misra, 1990; Gnambs and Batinic, 2012). Sin embargo la lealtad de los potenciales líderes de opinión depende del número de cuentas a las que siga en Twitter. Los líderes de opinión más leales serán aquellos que siguen a pocas cuentas. Al recibir menos información será más probable que lea lo que escribe la marca en su comunidad, generando mayor lealtad hacia la marca por la mera exposición a los mensajes de la marca y pudiendo transmitir dicha información a sus seguidores. De esta forma la empresa conseguirá que sus campañas dirigidas a generar conversaciones sobre la marca sean más efectivas. El mensaje tendrá una gran difusión e impacto reduciendo el riesgo de que se hable mal sobre la marca.



Por otra parte, hemos demostrado que aquellos que no son líderes de opinión y tienen muchos seguidores también presentan niveles altos de lealtad hacia la marca. De esta forma, si la empresa es muy conservadora y no quiere arriesgarse a seleccionar para sus campañas a líderes de opinión a pesar de ser leales por miedo a que hablen mal sobre la marca, sugerimos una estrategia alternativa. Estas empresas podrían identificar a aquellos individuos más leales dentro de la comunidad para estar totalmente seguros de que no se generan opiniones negativas sobre la marca. En este caso, se seleccionarían individuos que tienen pocos seguidores, es decir, individuos que no son potenciales líderes de opinión y que, además, siguen a muchas personas y marcas en Twitter. Esta estrategia generaría un menor impacto y difusión, dado el pequeño número de seguidores de estos individuos. Sin embargo, es menos probable que se genere boca a boca negativo dado el gran nivel de lealtad de los individuos seleccionados.

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# LA BÚSQUEDA DEL ESTADO DE FLOW EN ENTORNOS SOCIAL COMMERCE

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## RESUMEN

*El social commerce, caracterizado por la participación activa de los usuarios en la navegación, presenta un importante desafío para el marketing relacional. Este tipo de comercio en línea no está únicamente centrado en las relaciones, sino también en las experiencias de los usuarios. Por ello, se plantea la utilización de la teoría del flow, proveniente de la psicología positiva, en la que se persigue el alcance de la experiencia óptima. Se presenta un modelo conceptual con el fin de analizar si el estado de flow hace que los usuarios de las páginas de s-commerce encuentren la experiencia de navegación gratificante, influyendo positivamente en la intención de compra, en la satisfacción del usuario y en la intención de eWOM.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE

*flow, experiencia óptima, social commerce, eWOM, intención de compra, satisfacción,*

## 1. Introducción

La presencia de Internet y de las TIC en los usos y costumbres de nuestra sociedad es indudable y una muestra de ello es la cada vez mayor aceptación del *e-commerce*, tanto por volumen de negocio como por porcentaje de compradores. Las razones de este crecimiento son de sobras conocidas (ONTSI, 2013): básicamente, aumenta el número de internautas compradores y suben las compras realizadas en movilidad. Además, uno de los estímulos más importantes en los últimos años ha sido el desarrollo de las redes sociales, dando lugar a lo que se ha denominado *social commerce* o *s-commerce*. Éste ha sido definido como un medio donde los usuarios, además de comprar productos, pueden compartir información, intercambiar opiniones, recibir el consejo de individuos de confianza (Zhou et al., 2013) e incluso realizar compras grupales (Kim, 2013). Es una forma de negocio basada en la interacción B2C y C2B2C (Pralhad y Ramaswamy, 2004), que cambia el rol del consumidor, ya que ahora genera y comparte la información, formando parte del proceso comercial. A diferencia del *e-commerce*, el *s-commerce* se caracteriza por resaltar la importancia de las interacciones entre usuarios y empresas, de ahí que sea de gran interés conocer cuáles son los factores que favorecen este tipo de relaciones. Es decir, el *s-commerce* está orientado a fortalecer los vínculos con los potenciales clientes, y eso implica ir más allá en el paradigma relacional, para centrarse en la experiencia del usuario e involucrarlo en la compañía de forma que se considere un miembro más. Una forma de lograr esta relación es generando una experiencia óptima de navegación para el usuario, es decir, que se sienta a gusto, que fluya en la Red; esto ha sido denominado estado de *flow*.

El objetivo de este estudio es analizar si alcanzar el estado de *flow* hace que los usuarios de las páginas de *s-commerce* encuentren la experiencia de navegación gratificante, influyendo en la intención de compra, en la satisfacción del usuario y en la intención de eWOM. La investigación puede ayudar a las empresas a centrarse en la importancia de las web de *s-commerce*, y cómo éstas deben ser diseñadas, con especial atención al fomento de las interacciones con los usuarios, con el fin de ofrecer una experiencia óptima que facilite el establecimiento de relaciones productivas y duraderas con los clientes.

## 2. Marco teórico

### 2.1. La teoría del *flow* en el *social commerce*

El *flow* es un estado que puede ocurrir en cualquier momento y en cualquier lugar (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Y, efectivamente, la teoría del *flow* se ha aplicado en diversos contextos tan variados como el trabajo, el deporte, la educación, la navegación... algunos próximos al marketing, como el comportamiento del consumidor, otros vinculándolos con el uso de nuevas tecnologías de comunicación, como los entornos mediados por ordenador o el *m-commerce*. El concepto de flujo o *flow* fue presentado por primera vez por Csikszentmihalyi (1975) para describir el estado de experiencia óptima. De esta manera, el *flow* se define como “la sensación holística que la gente siente cuando actúa con total implicación” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Y para ello, el requisito previo es lograr un equilibrio entre los desafíos percibidos y las habilidades de las que una persona disponga. Posteriormente, Chen et al. (2000) realizan una nueva conceptualización e incluyen otros factores; así, describen el *flow* como una experiencia óptima y extremadamente agradable que se alcanza cuando el individuo se compromete en una actividad con *total implicación, concentración y diversión, y experimenta un interés intrínseco y una distorsión temporal*. Por tanto, el *flow* aparece cuando el individuo está centrado en el proceso, en lugar de concentrarse en los resultados, ya que la experiencia de *flow* es autotélica o intrínsecamente gratificante, de ahí que provea su propia motivación (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). En otras palabras, el *flow* es una experiencia temporal o *peak performance* (Privette, 1983). Por ello, una vez experimentado el *flow* los individuos buscan repetir esta sensación. De ahí que la teoría del *flow* sea de gran interés en investigaciones relacionadas con el *e-commerce*, ya que el retorno a la web puede conllevar un incremento de la intención de compra; sin embargo, apenas ha sido contrastada en entornos *s-commerce*.

## 2.2. Modelo Conceptual

Hasta la fecha autores como Koufaris (2002) o Shin (2006), entre otros, proponían modelos para explicar el comportamiento de navegación de los usuarios basados en la teoría del *flow* con variables como las habilidades, los desafíos o la diversión de los usuarios. Sin embargo, los nuevos entornos *online* demandan una atención hacia las relaciones, por lo que las herramientas de las páginas web que fomenten la interacción e intercambio de información y opiniones, pueden afectar la experiencia del usuario. Por ello, se plantea un modelo que, aunque se apoya en la teoría del *flow*, introduce nuevos antecedentes y consecuencias vinculadas al *s-commerce*.

## 2.3. Antecedentes al estado de *flow*

Como antecedentes para alcanzar el estado de *flow* se proponen aquellas variables relacionadas con las relaciones sociales que puedan tener influencia en la generación de la experiencia óptima. En primer lugar se han seleccionado las tres características del *s-commerce* utilizadas por Hajli (2012): los sistemas de recomendaciones y referencias, los foros y comunidades virtuales y los ratings y las reseñas. En su investigación utiliza estas tres variables como antecedentes de la confianza y analiza su influencia sobre la intención de compra, es decir, demuestra que los componentes propios de las páginas web de *s-commerce* pueden provocar un clima de confianza que se traduzca en un aumento de la intención de compra. El autor ha demostrado que un usuario, con las *habilidades* necesarias para navegar y hacer frente a los *desafíos* que se encuentre en este tipo de páginas web, cuenta con más información para su navegación, por lo tanto, dicha información aporta una *sensación de control* al individuo. Así, existe similitud entre las percepciones previas del usuario en el estudio de Hajli (2012) y los antecedentes de la teoría del *flow*, por lo que podemos considerar que la información que se ofrece al individuo, gracias a estas tres variables vinculadas al del *s-commerce*, ayuda también a la consecución del estado de *flow*. De ahí, se plantean las siguientes hipótesis:

- H1a: La información proveniente de las recomendaciones y referencias de otros usuarios afecta positivamente al alcance del estado de *flow* en entornos *s-commerce*.
- H1b: La información aportada en los foros y las comunidades virtuales afecta positivamente al alcance del estado de *flow* en entornos *s-commerce*.
- H1c: La información sobre los ratings y reseñas de los usuarios afecta positivamente al alcance del estado de *flow* en entornos *s-commerce*.

Por otro lado, y puesto que la comunicación que se establece en el *s-commerce* da gran importancia al papel activo del usuario y a las relaciones, se incluyen las variables interactividad y presencia social. En el caso de páginas de *s-commerce*, las herramientas que facilitan la comunicación entre usuarios y empresas es fundamental, de ahí que la interactividad sea uno de los aspectos claves en los enfoques de marketing relacional. Una de las contribuciones literarias más relevantes en este campo es la Teoría de la Interactividad. El concepto interactividad ha sido caracterizado por una comunicación con un flujo de información bidireccional y simultáneo, donde las partes ejercen un control activo (Rafaeli, 1988; Kim, 2011). Kim (2011) añade que la socialización del individuo puede conllevar mayores niveles de implicación por parte del usuario, que pueden traducirse en una experiencia de compra más divertida y entretenida. Igualmente Rafaeli y Sudweeks (1997) destacan que la interactividad puede influir en el *engagement* del usuario y, por ende, en su socialización. El concepto presencia social ha sido definido por Gefen y Straub (2003) como la percepción de interacción con otro ser humano. Por tanto, cuando se trata de entornos *online*, la búsqueda de presencia social trata de cubrir la carencia de contacto humano que sí se obtiene *offline*. Por su parte, en la teoría del *flow* autores como Hoffman y Novak (1996) han utilizado como antecedentes la interactividad y la telepresencia, entendida como la sensación que experimenta el usuario cuando navegando por una web siente que su presencia forma parte de la acción. De todo ello se deduce que la interactividad afecta positivamente al estado de *flow*. Por otro lado, al tratarse de un entorno *s-commerce*, consideramos conveniente utilizar el concepto presencia social, es decir, que la sensación que experimente el usuario sea de contacto humano. De ahí que se formulen las siguientes hipótesis:

- H2a: La interactividad afecta positivamente al alcance del estado de *flow* en entornos *s-commerce*.
- H2b: La presencia social afecta positivamente al alcance del estado de *flow* en entornos *s-commerce*.

#### 2.4. Consecuencias de alcanzar el estado de *flow*

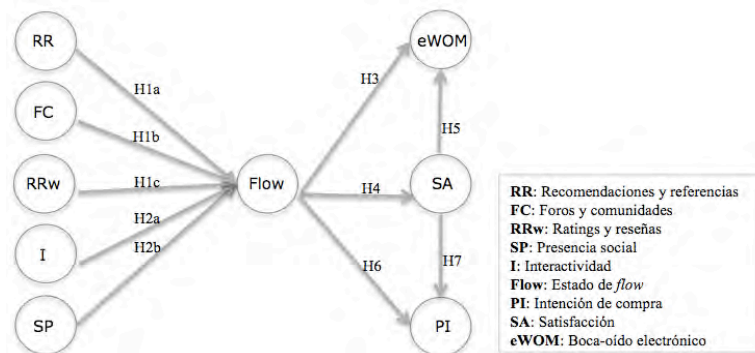
En el presente estudio se incluye como consecuencia novedosa el efecto del *flow* sobre el eWOM. Zhou y Lu (2011) demuestran cómo la experiencia de *flow* influye positivamente en la satisfacción del usuario, y Ha e Im (2012) consideran que la satisfacción puede afectar positivamente el eWOM:

- H3: El estado de *flow* en entornos *s-commerce* afecta positivamente a la intención de realizar eWOM positivo.
- H4: El estado de *flow* en entornos *s-commerce* incrementa la satisfacción.
- H5: Mayores niveles de satisfacción incrementan la intención de realizar eWOM positivo en entornos *s-commerce*.

En varios estudios sobre la teoría de *flow* aplicada al comportamiento de compra, entre los que podemos destacar las investigaciones de Kim y Han (2014) y Hausman y Siekpe (2009), se demuestra el efecto positivo que tiene el *flow* sobre la intención de compra. Además, un usuario satisfecho aumentará su intención de compra, puesto que si está contento y complacido con su experiencia de navegación estará también más predispuesto a la compra (Yoon, 2002). Por tanto, se plantea también el efecto que puede tener la satisfacción sobre la intención de compra:

- H6: El estado de *flow* en entornos *s-commerce* afecta positivamente a la intención de compra.
- H7: La satisfacción en entornos *s-commerce* afecta positivamente a la intención de compra.

FIGURA 1  
Modelo conceptual sobre la influencia de los entornos social commerce en el *flow*.



#### 2.5. Metodología

La técnica utilizada para la recogida de datos será la encuesta *online* a usuarios habituales de una conocida web de *s-commerce*. Para analizar el modelo planteado se utilizarán las siguientes escalas: para los constructos recomendaciones y referencias, foros y comunidades y ratings y reseñas, Hajli (2012); para la variable presencia social, Gefen y Straub (2003); para interactividad, Kim (2011); para la satisfacción, Flavián et al. (2006) y Ha e Im (2012); para analizar la intención de compra, Kim y Park (2013) y Gefen y Straub (2003); y para estudiar el eWOM, Kim y Park (2013) y Ha e Im (2012). El estado de *flow*, centro de la investigación, es un concepto multidimensional de cuatro dimensiones (concentración, diversión, telepresencia y *engagement*), para su medición se emplearán escalas de Koufaris (2002) y Shin (2006).

### 3. Conclusiones

Se confía que los resultados esperados ayuden a entender cómo las características del *s-commerce*, la interacción y la presencia social a través de la web estimulan el estado de *flow*. Una vez alcanzado dicho estado de experiencia óptima se supone que el usuario se sentirá tan a gusto que fluirá por la web, incrementará su intención de compra y se sentirá tan satisfecho con su navegación que aumentará su intención de realizar eWOM positivo.

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# LAS CARACTERÍSTICAS DEL BOCA-OÍDO ELECTRÓNICO Y SU INFLUENCIA EN LA INTENCIÓN DE RECOMPRA ONLINE: UNA PROPUESTA DE INVESTIGACIÓN

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## RESUMEN

*Con la creciente expansión de Internet, cada vez más empresas incluyen en sus páginas de venta online un espacio virtual donde los usuarios comparten información. Este trabajo en curso pretende estudiar las características de las recomendaciones publicadas por los usuarios como antecedentes de la intención de recompra online a través la confianza en el vendedor online y en la utilidad percibida de la tienda virtual. Para testar el modelo se utilizarán ecuaciones estructurales en una muestra de 252 consumidores online. Los resultados permitirán ofrecer evidencias empíricas sobre el grado de importancia que cada una de estas características del boca-oído electrónico tienen en la respuesta del cliente (confianza y utilidad percibida) y su repercusión en la intención de repetir la compra. También se analiza el efecto moderador ejercido por el nivel de implicación de los consumidores en la compra online sobre las relaciones establecidas en el modelo.*

## Palabras clave:

Boca-oído electrónico, comercio electrónico, confianza, implicación en la compra, intención de recompra online.



## 1. Introducción

Estudios recientes confirman la utilidad de Internet como herramienta que pone al alcance de los consumidores una serie de plataformas virtuales donde compartir opiniones y acceder a un gran volumen de datos (Kim y Park, 2013; Luo *et al.*, 2013). En España, el 73,5% de los usuarios de Internet afirma consultar valoraciones de otros usuarios antes de tomar su decisión de compra, y un 46,8% confía en dichas recomendaciones (AIMC, 2012). Este comportamiento ha sido denominado por los investigadores del marketing como boca-oído electrónico -Electronic Word-of-mouth o EWOM- (Henning-Thurau *et al.*, 2004), y ha provocado que cada vez sean más las empresas que ofrezcan en sus propias páginas web un espacio virtual en el que los usuarios pueden publicar sus opiniones e intercambiar experiencias.

A pesar de que investigaciones previas han examinado las características del boca-oído electrónico de forma separada, y otros estudios han incorporado la confianza en el vendedor online y la utilidad de la página web como variables importantes en el comercio electrónico (Cheung *et al.*, 2008; Kim y Park, 2013), un número limitado de ellas han explorado su influencia en la intención de recompra desde una perspectiva holística. Así, el principal objetivo de este trabajo persigue proponer un modelo que analice cómo las diferentes características del boca-oído electrónico -en concreto la cantidad, credibilidad y diferentes dimensiones de la calidad de la información- determinan, en última instancia, la intención de recompra online. Este estudio también incorpora la implicación del consumidor en la compra como variable moderadora de las relaciones propuestas. Se espera que los resultados obtenidos determinen el efecto de cada una de las características del EWOM en la respuesta del cliente (confianza y utilidad percibida) para volver a comprar en la misma tienda online, además de su variación según el grado de implicación del consumidor.

Este trabajo en curso se estructura del siguiente modo: en primer lugar, se presenta el marco teórico y el modelo propuesto, incluyendo las principales variables a estudiar; y, en segundo lugar, se explica la metodología que se utilizará en la investigación.

## 2. Marco teórico y modelo propuesto

### 2.1. Las características del EWOM y su influencia en la utilidad percibida de la página web

El desarrollo de Internet y las propias características del medio han brindado a los consumidores la oportunidad de aumentar sus opciones de búsqueda y difusión de información, permitiéndoles publicar sus propias valoraciones y experiencias sobre los productos y servicios adquiridos (Zhu y Zhang, 2010). Este fenómeno, conocido como EWOM, ha sido definido por Henning-Thurau *et al.* (2004) como *“cualquier opinión positiva o negativa realizada por consumidores actuales, potenciales o pasados sobre un determinado producto o empresa y que es puesta a disposición de multitud de personas y organizaciones a través de Internet”*.

Con respecto a las características del EWOM, la cantidad hace referencia al número de comentarios difundidos a través de una página web. Este volumen de recomendaciones online resulta especialmente importante para los usuarios que visitan la página web, dado que les permite obtener una idea más amplia del producto o servicio, lo que en definitiva representa su popularidad (Park *et al.*, 2007). De hecho, la existencia de un elevado número de recomendaciones en la web del vendedor puede considerarse un elemento identificativo del grado de utilidad percibido por el usuario, permitiendo a los consumidores disponer de una mayor cantidad y variedad de información (Park *et al.*, 2007). Ello mejorará la utilidad percibida de la plataforma online, concebida en este estudio como *“el grado según el cual una persona confía en que el uso de una nueva tecnología mejorará el desempeño de su trabajo”* (Davis, 1989) y facilitará el proceso de decisión de compra.

La credibilidad de la información está formada por el conjunto de creencias del usuario acerca de la veracidad de los comentarios leídos en Internet (Cheung *et al.*, 2008). El papel de esta variable es determinante en el grado de influencia que las recomendaciones de otros consumidores pueden tener en el receptor de la información, ya que los consumidores identificarán una mayor autenticidad y realismo, y por tanto una mayor utilidad, en aquellos comentarios publicados por otros usuarios que consideran más sinceros e imparciales (Henning-Thurau *et al.*, 2004).

De acuerdo con Cheung *et al.* (2008), la calidad del EWOM está formada por cuatro dimensiones: actualidad, precisión, relevancia y comprensión. Así, la actualidad de las recomendaciones hace referencia a la novedad de los comentarios publicados en este tipo de plataformas y al hablar de relevancia se alude a la importancia y significatividad de estas valoraciones online. La precisión de la información constituye el grado de exactitud y corrección en el EWOM y la comprensión incluye la amplitud y profundidad de las recomendaciones. En el comercio electrónico, los consumidores no pueden obtener información completa de los productos ofertados en la red, quedando limitada a los datos difundidos por el vendedor (Kim *et al.*, 2008). En este caso, resulta de vital importancia que el contenido de las publicaciones sea lo suficientemente amplio, completo y actualizado para los usuarios que las consultan, aportando información relevante que les ayude en su proceso de decisión de compra (Park *et al.*, 2007). Teniendo en cuenta estas ideas, se plantea que la cantidad, la credibilidad y las dimensiones de la calidad del EWOM influirán en la utilidad percibida de la página web del vendedor:

*H<sub>1</sub>: La cantidad de EWOM tiene un efecto positivo y directo en la utilidad percibida de la web.*

*H<sub>2</sub>: La credibilidad del EWOM tiene un efecto positivo y directo en la utilidad percibida de la web.*

*H<sub>3</sub>: La actualidad del EWOM tiene un efecto positivo y directo en la utilidad percibida de la web.*

*H<sub>4</sub>: La precisión del EWOM tiene un efecto positivo y directo en la utilidad percibida de la web.*

*H<sub>5</sub>: La relevancia del EWOM tiene un efecto positivo y directo en la utilidad percibida de la web.*

*H<sub>6</sub>: La comprensión del EWOM tiene un efecto positivo y directo en la utilidad percibida de la web.*

## **2.2. Las características del EWOM y su influencia en la confianza en el vendedor online**

La confianza es un concepto ampliamente estudiado en literatura de marketing debido a su importancia en las relaciones comerciales entre clientes y vendedores, especialmente en el entorno virtual (Kim y Park, 2013). Este trabajo centra su estudio en la confianza en el vendedor online, o “*la expectativa de que otros individuos o empresas con las que se establece interacción, se comportarán de manera no abusiva*” (Gefen *et al.*, 2003).

La existencia de un elevado número de comentarios en la página web del vendedor permitirá a los consumidores racionalizar sus decisiones de compra y reducir el riesgo percibido (Park *et al.*, 2007), ayudando el hecho de que otros muchos usuarios hayan utilizado o adquirido previamente el mismo producto o servicio. Así, la cantidad de EWOM puede contribuir al desarrollo de la reputación de la empresa, dado que los consumidores depositarán una mayor confianza en el vendedor online que ofrezca un gran volumen de información elaborada por los usuarios (Sparks y Browning, 2011).

Los datos procedentes de los propios consumidores son más creíbles que los aportados por los vendedores (Henning-Thurau *et al.*, 2004), lo cual puede redundar en una mayor confianza entre los receptores del mensaje. De esta manera, la credibilidad del EWOM puede suponer un determinante directo de la decisión de compra online, al reducir la incertidumbre en estas transacciones y favorecer una actitud más confiada hacia el vendedor que posee dicha plataforma (Awad y Ragowsky, 2008).

Los usuarios tienden a confiar más en las empresas que ofrecen información de forma eficiente y completa, dado que les ayuda a reducir el riesgo inherente en las transacciones online (Kim y Park, 2013). Por tanto, si los compradores consideran que la plataforma online presenta información precisa, fiable, correcta y actualizada, también percibirán que el vendedor se esfuerza por mantener estos niveles de calidad (Kim *et al.*, 2008), aumentando su confianza en la empresa que está detrás de esa plataforma. En base a esto, se plantean las siguientes hipótesis:

*H<sub>7</sub>: La cantidad de EWOM tiene un efecto positivo y directo en la confianza en el vendedor online.*

*H<sub>8</sub>: La credibilidad del EWOM tiene un efecto positivo y directo en la confianza en el vendedor online.*

*H<sub>9</sub>: La actualidad del EWOM tiene un efecto positivo y directo en la confianza en el vendedor online.*

*H<sub>10</sub>: La precisión del EWOM tiene un efecto positivo y directo en la confianza en el vendedor online.*

*H<sub>11</sub>: La relevancia del EWOM tiene un efecto positivo y directo en la confianza en el vendedor online.*

*H<sub>12</sub>: La comprensión del EWOM tiene un efecto positivo y directo en la confianza en el vendedor online.*

### **2.3. La utilidad percibida y la confianza como antecedentes de la intención de recompra online.**

La intención de recompra se define como la “*disposición del individuo para realizar otras compras de la misma compañía, basadas en su experiencia previa*” (Hellier *et al.*, 2003) y es considerada en la literatura del marketing como una manifestación de la lealtad del cliente.

Las características de las páginas web cobran especial relevancia en el entorno virtual, al ser el primer elemento visible que representa al vendedor online. Si la web del vendedor cuenta con un elevado contenido informativo, generará mayor utilidad para los usuarios que la visitan, contribuyendo a mejorar el sentimiento de confianza hacia la tienda online (Koufaris y Hampton-Sosa, 2004). Además, si el sitio web es percibido como una herramienta útil en la búsqueda de información, puede favorecer la predisposición del usuario a volver a visitar la tienda online (Gefen *et al.*, 2003), manifestando una intención de comportamiento más favorable hacia las empresas en las que confía, al reducir el esfuerzo y los costes de búsqueda de información, pudiendo generar la repetición de la compra (Chiu *et al.*, 2012). Consecuentemente, se propone que:

*H<sub>13</sub>: La utilidad percibida de la web tiene un efecto positivo y directo sobre la confianza en el vendedor online.*

*H<sub>14</sub>: La utilidad percibida de la web tiene un efecto positivo y directo sobre la intención de recompra online.*

*H<sub>15</sub>: La confianza en el vendedor online tiene un efecto positivo y directo sobre la intención de recompra online.*

### **2.4. El efecto moderador de la implicación del consumidor en la compra online.**

La implicación en la compra hace referencia a la importancia personal que un consumidor da a un determinado producto o servicio (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Así, cuando la implicación del consumidor en la compra es alta, dicho usuario estará más motivado a realizar búsquedas intensivas de información en Internet, consultando los comentarios y valoraciones con mayor detenimiento y exhaustividad. El nivel de implicación en la compra puede afectar al comportamiento del cliente (Novak *et al.*, 2000), moderando su percepción sobre la confianza en el vendedor online y la utilidad percibida del sitio web, que será más elevada para los usuarios con una alta implicación, así como a la intención de recompra online, que también será mayor. Teniendo en cuenta estas ideas, se propone que:

*H<sub>16</sub>: La implicación con la compra modera la influencia de las características del EWOM en (a) la utilidad percibida de la página web y (b) la confianza hacia el vendedor online.*

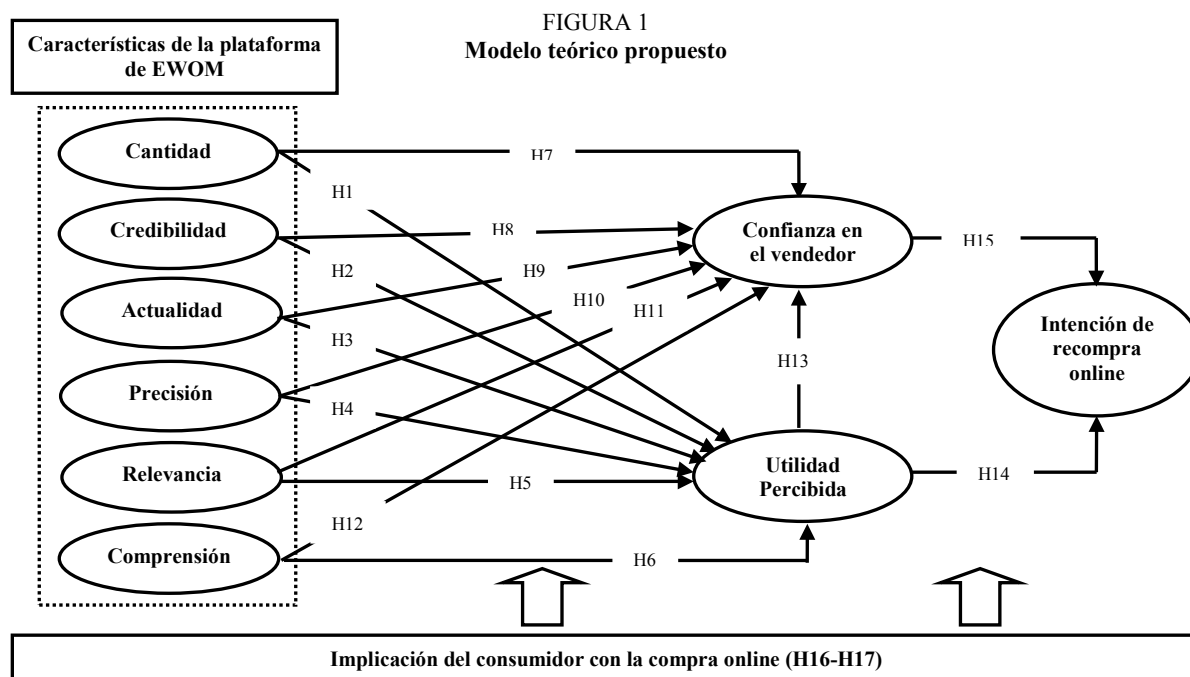
*H<sub>17</sub>: La implicación con la compra modera la influencia de (a) la utilidad percibida de la página web y (b) la confianza hacia el vendedor online, en la intención de recompra online.*

## **3. Metodología**

Para alcanzar los objetivos propuestos se ha realizado un estudio cuantitativo mediante un cuestionario dirigido a usuarios de Internet y difundido en las redes sociales. Los encuestados debían facilitar el nombre de una web en la que previamente habían realizado alguna compra o reserva online, tras leer las recomendaciones de otros usuarios publicadas en la propia web de la tienda, contestando siempre de acuerdo con esa experiencia previa de compra. La muestra cuenta con 252 cuestionarios válidos.

Todas las variables incluidas en este trabajo han sido medidas por ítems extraídos de la literatura previa, utilizando escalas tipo Likert de 7 puntos. Para medir la cantidad de boca-oído electrónico se utiliza una escala adaptada de Park *et al.*, (2007). La credibilidad se basa en el trabajo de Luo *et al.* (2013). La actualidad, relevancia, comprensión y precisión se miden cada una de ellas por tres ítems respectivamente, originarios de los trabajos de Wixom y Todd (1995) y Citrin (2001). Las tres dimensiones de la confianza (honestidad, benevolencia y competencia) se han medido a partir del trabajo de Doney y Cannon (1997). La utilidad percibida se basa en el estudio de Gefen *et al.* (2003) y la intención de recompra online en el trabajo de Chiu *et al.* (2012). Por último, la escala de implicación del consumidor con la compra es adaptada del trabajo de Zarchkowsky (1985).

Para testar las hipótesis propuestas, se está utilizando un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales mediante la técnica Partial Least Squares (PLS) y los programas informáticos *SmartPLS 2.0* y *SPSS 17.0*. La figura 1 recoge las relaciones que subyacen entre las distintas variables del modelo.



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# **“MY POSTS CANNOT BE BOUGHT”. STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE BLOGGERS TO SPREAD THE WORD**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Blogs have experienced an increasing importance as a source of eWOM in last years. Consumers judge blogs as more credible than other media such as TV or newspapers and they have more influence on consumers' purchases than eWOM in other social media platforms. Thus, companies are more and more interested in engaging bloggers in order to create eWOM about their products and brands. However, it is not clear how to encourage bloggers to spread the word. In this working paper we show that most techniques to approach bloggers to spread the word may be effective. However, not all of them are equally successful. Giving money to bloggers has no impact on the intention to write a post about the product. However, giving a product to bloggers enhances the likelihood of posting about it. The highest intention to post about the product is observed when bloggers can keep the product.*

## **KEYWORDS**

*Blogs, eWOM, monetary incentive, non-monetary incentive, bloggers*

## **1. Introduction**

Blogs have experienced an increasing importance in last years. They are defined as social media platforms with a form of diary where individuals, called bloggers, provide information with journal style entries in a reverse chronological order (Thevenot, 2007; Wenger, 2008). Bloggers post information about several topics on a frequent basis (Zhu and Than, 2007). Nowadays, there are more than 180 million of blogs around the world, up from 36 million only five years earlier (Nielsen, 2012). Blogs reached 58 millions of unique visits in 2012 (Nielsen, 2012). Interestingly, there are blogs that have more audience than some online newspapers (Kanlli, 2012). The most visited blog in the world (The Huffington Post) has 46 million U.S. unique visitors monthly and 78 million global unique visitors (ComScore, 2013), while the online publication of one of the most popular newspapers in US, The New York Times, has “only” 31 million unique visitors each month (New York Times, 2013).

Blogs are not just relevant for the great audience they have but also for the influence they exert on consumers (Hsiao and Lu, 2013). Consumers judge blogs as more credible than other media such as TV or newspapers (Johnson and Kaye, 2004). Blogs and their readers may talk about products and brands generating electronic word of mouth (eWOM). Besides the higher influence of eWOM over firm-generated sources of information (Bickart and Schindler, 2001), eWOM in blogs has shown more influence on consumers purchases than eWOM in other social media platforms (Technorati, 2013). In fact, bloggers have been related with opinion leaders (Droge et al., 2010). According to a survey developed by Technorati (2013) using 2.5 million of people that exert influence on others over the average, 86% of influencers have a blog. As a consequence of their potential influence, companies are more and more interested in engaging bloggers in order to create eWOM about their products and brands (Carr and Hayes, 2014; Kozinets et al., 2010).

However, it is not clear how to encourage bloggers to spread the word. Previous studies have shown that monetary incentives increase the intention to generate both traditional WOM (Ryu and Feick, 2007; Wirtz and Chew, 2002) and eWOM (Hansen and Lee, 2013; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). However, this result may not be valid for bloggers because they could lose their reputation if their readers knew that they are recommending a product due to a monetary incentive. To the best of our knowledge, the use of monetary incentives has been previously studied in referral programmes (e.g. Ruy and Feick, 2007; Verlegh et al., 2013) and in sales promotions (Palazón and Delgado-Ballester, 2013) but not in blogs. Non-monetary incentives may be also used to enhance WOM (Libai et al., 2013). However, very little is known about the effects of using non-monetary incentives to enhance eWOM in a blog context. Thus, companies may use products or information about them as non-monetary incentives with the aim of engaging bloggers in eWOM. Therefore, this study analyses the effects of monetary incentives on bloggers' behaviour and contributes to WOM marketing literature by showing how to increase the probability of engaging bloggers in eWOM. The results obtained will be useful for companies in order to approach bloggers to spread the word about their products. They will provide valuable information about the strategies that best work with these consumers.

## **2. Literature review and hypotheses development**

Blogs serve as a channel for the blogger to express his/her own opinions and experiences (Zhu and Than, 2007). Bloggers have a duty with their audience, the readers. As readers can post comments and interact with the blogger; the blogger may develop contents looking for interaction with readers, thereby facilitating the formation of bloggers-readers relationships (Tan et al., 2009). As a result, it is very likely that a community will be built around the blog composed of its readers and other bloggers (Kozinets et al., 2010; Nardi et al., 2004). Thus, when bloggers are approached by a company, a great tension may appear between the blogger and the company (Kozinets et al., 2010). Therefore, it is very important to carefully consider how to approach bloggers for commercial purposes.

Companies can motivate bloggers to spread the word about their products using several strategies. Giving a monetary incentive to bloggers in reward for blogging about the product could be the most salient and aggressive strategy to encourage eWOM. Companies can pay bloggers in exchange for posting about the product, while no reward will be obtained if they do not write anything. Thus, this strategy can be seen as a mean of buying bloggers' opinions about products. When bloggers write a post

due to a company approach, readers may receive the text-based advertisement in an intimate, friendly, engaging, and relatively informal way, probably without realizing that it is an advertisement or a marketing message (Zhu and Than, 2007). Thus, bloggers are acting against the implicit norms of the community that are built around trust and friendship. Since this action goes against the expectation of readers, it is likely that bloggers perceive some kind of negative reactions from their readers (Burnkrant and Cousineau, 1975). A backlash may be expected from readers when they feel that the contents in the blog cross the line into traditional advertising. The audience may feel they are being 'fooled'. The blogger may then expect that readers will no longer trust the blog as it contains ulterior commercial motives and serves as a marketing tool instead of as a personal motivation (Zhu and Than, 2007). Thus, bloggers will perceive that their readers could react against them if they write a post in exchange for a monetary incentive. On the basis of the above reasoning, we propose the following:

**H1: Bloggers will perceive a more negative reaction from their readers when a monetary incentive is offered than when it is not.**

Given the salience of paying for opinions, it is likely that bloggers resist to the persuasion of the company. In fact, the payment in exchange for a post could be considered a bribery as a bribe implies reciprocity (Tanzi, 1998). Thus, bloggers can suffer from the "bribe effect". This effect may occur when people feel they are being bought off and/or perceive that it is morally inappropriate (Elster, 1992; Gerrard, 1994). According to the bribe effect, people will reject a monetary compensation when they perceive the bribery as larger than the benefit obtained (Claro, 2007). In a bloggers' context, the lost in reputation that may occur when accepting the participation in this type of campaign may be higher than the benefits obtained with it. As credibility and reputation are related with the independence and honesty of bloggers (Huang et al., 2007; Wright 2006), they can lose credibility and reputation by writing a post in exchange for money (Tan et al., 2009). In such a case, the cost assumed would not compensate the money received. Therefore, bloggers can feel both the risk of reputation lost and the feeling of being bribed when the company offers them a monetary incentive. Thus, we propose:

**H2: Bloggers will show a lower intention to generate eWOM when a monetary incentive is offered than when it is not.**

Once bloggers decide to write a post about a product motivated by a monetary incentive, they may reveal they have obtained a monetary incentive or not. This action is called as disclosure (Tuk et al., 2009). When bloggers receive a monetary incentive, a conflict of interest may arise. Conflict of interests occurs when individuals' professional responsibilities diverge from their personal interests (Cain et al., 2005). Individuals face a conflict of interests between their professional ethic and their personal gains (Dana and Loewenstein, 2003). Bloggers could face a conflict of interests when they are trying to maintain their professionalism as bloggers offering their independent opinion and a company offers them a monetary incentive for writing a post. Bloggers may reduce this conflict by giving information to their readers, that is, by disclosing they have been approached by a company. In fact, the most important response to conflicts of interests is disclosure (Cain et al., 2005). As people are averse to being viewed as biased, individuals are motivated to avoid conflict of interests disclosing that they have been contacted by a company (Sah and Loewenstein, 2013). Disclosure may reduce the perceived immorality of giving possible biased advice by signaling that bias is widespread and therefore less aberrant (Schultz et al., 2007). Based on this reasoning, we can infer that bloggers will show a higher propensity to disclose that they have been approached by a company when a monetary incentive is offered than when it is not. Therefore, we propose:

**H3: Bloggers will show a higher intention to disclose when a monetary incentive is offered than when it is not.**

Companies can also give bloggers some information about products or even the product in order to spread the word about it. When companies follow the strategy of giving the product to bloggers, they have two options. They can either allow bloggers to keep it, or ask them to return it once they have tried it.

A common practice of bloggers is searching for information susceptible of being in their blogs (Huang et al., 2007). According to Technorati (2011), bloggers use several sources of information such as other bloggers, conversations with friends, print media and social media. Thus, companies may facilitate the



bloggers' job by offering them information about their products or even the product itself. Bloggers very much value this type of information and product trials, especially if products have not been launched yet into the market (Kanlli, 2012). Thus, bloggers could feel proud to receive information about products or even the product itself. In addition, bloggers can feel that they are performing a service for their community because they offer some information and their own opinion about a new product (Kozinets et al., 2010). They do not feel that this behavior may be punished. Offering a product could be seen as less ethical by readers than offering information about the product. When the company sends the product to bloggers, it could be seen as an incentive. However, this strategy allows bloggers to try the product and write a more accurate review. Thus, this marketing technique allows readers to be aware of new products and the opinion of bloggers about them. Therefore, bloggers may feel that readers will not react against the blogger if they write about a product when they have received either information or a product as a non-monetary incentive. Thus, we propose:

**H4: Bloggers will perceive a similar negative reaction from their readers when receiving a product than when receiving only information about the product.**

When the company gives a product to the blogger they can choose between allowing the blogger to keep it or asking the blogger to return it. Both giving a product to bloggers and allowing them to keep it can be seen as rewarding them but not as a bribe. For example, Tanzi (1998) suggests that a bribe implies reciprocity while a gift should not. Similarly, Okada (2005) demonstrates that passively receiving rewards does not require the same justification than receiving money that is more difficult to justify. In addition, people are deterred from bribery because the society signals that this behavior is unacceptable. In contrast, giving and receiving gifts are seen as good things to do (Ben-Ner and Putterman, 1999). Thus, bloggers will not perceive that their readers can react against them when they write a post about a product that a company has given them as a gift. Since gifts are well considered, their reaction will not differ from a strategy in which they have to return the product. Therefore, we propose:

**H5: In case of a product seeding campaign, bloggers will perceive a similar negative reaction from their readers when they can keep the product and when they have to return it.**

If bloggers receive some information about the product, the post about the product will be limited to this information. However, if the company sends the product to them, they will be able to try it and post their experience with the product with a more accurate point of view. Previous studies have shown that as the confidence in one's ability to provide interesting or useful information to others increases, individuals will have a higher intention to share information (Lu and Hsiao, 2007). Thus, the blogger will have a higher intention to share information in the blog when the company gives the product to them than when it sends only information about it. Besides being able to post a more accurate opinion about the product, bloggers may perceive more social risk in giving an opinion based just on information than in expressing their opinion based on a product trial. Previous literature has consistently shown that product trial reduce perceived risk (Smith, 1993). If a reader buys the product as a result of a blog post and it is not what he/she expected, the relationship between blogger and reader will suffer (Folkes 1984; Stephen and Lehman, 2009). According to normative influence (Wooten and Reed, 2004), this punishment will try to be avoided by bloggers. Thus, it is more likely that bloggers write about the product in the blog when the company gives the product to them than when only information is sent them:

**H6: Bloggers will show a higher intention to generate eWOM when receiving a product than when receiving only information.**

Initially, as bloggers may not consider the product as an incentive, their intention to blog should be the same regardless of the strategy used in a product seeding campaign. However, previous studies have demonstrated the difficulty showed by individuals in taking a neutral and objective perspective when they have a personal interest in arriving at a specific behaviour (Babcock et al., 1995). This issue has been broadly studied in the relationship between medical practitioners and pharmaceutical industry when pharmaceutical industry rewards the prescription of products (Dana and Loewenstein, 2003). Previous studies in this context have shown that medical practitioners view that gifts do not influence them (Hume, 1990). However, research has shown that when individuals try to be objective, their

judgments are subject to an unconscious and unintentional self-serving bias. When individuals have a stake in reaching a particular behaviour, they weigh arguments in a biased fashion that favors a specific conclusion (Babcock et al., 1995; Loewenstein et al., 1992). Individuals are generally unaware of the bias that generate the gifts, so they do not make efforts to correct for them (Dana and Loewenstein, 2003). A similar reasoning may be applied to bloggers. When a company allows bloggers to keep the product, they may perceive they are free to decide if posting about it or not. Nevertheless, they unintentionally and unconsciously will succumb to bias showing a higher intention to spread the word when they can keep the product than when they cannot. Therefore, we propose:

**H7: In case of a product seeding campaign bloggers will show a higher intention to generate eWOM when they can keep the product and when they have to return it.**

As we have explained before, bloggers mainly blog by satisfying their need of self-expression, self-fulfillment (Nardi et al., 2004; Herring et al. 2005; Huang et al., 2007; Papacharissi, 2004) and social interactions (Huang et al., 2007). Thus, they will desire to create a high community around their blog. This community is based on honesty and trust (Wright 2006). Therefore, they may not want to assume any risk that could damage their community. Previous studies have shown that when the sender does not disclose the reward, there is uncertainty and unclearness about the real motives (Tuk, 2008). In addition, the senders are rated as more credible when they reveal that they are giving an opinion about a brand or product because a company has approached them (Carl, 2008). Thus, although bloggers may not consider the product as an incentive, they may want to make sure that their readers are aware of the reward obtained, in this case the received product. In contrast, when they have only received information, their intention to disclose may be lower since no risk is perceived. If they hide that a company has given them a product, it could be thought that bloggers have ulterior motives to not disclose it. In order to do not damage their reputation, bloggers will prefer to disclose that the company has given them a product, regardless of the need of returning it. Thus, we propose:

**H8: Bloggers will show a higher intention to disclose when receiving a product than when receiving only information about the product.**

**H9: Bloggers will show a similar intention to disclose when they can keep the product than when they have to return it.**

### **3. Methodology**

A 2 monetary incentive (yes vs. no) x 3 non-monetary incentive (only product information vs. keep the product vs. return the product) between-subjects experimental study was developed using bloggers. A control condition in which the blogger is aware of the product without the company intervention was also introduced. Seven scenarios were created for the study.

First, we had to select the topic of the blog. According to Technorati (2011), the topic most blogged is technology. Thus, the study is just focused on technological blogs. As it is important that the product fits with the type of blog because the reaction of bloggers to the campaign can vary, we chose a technological blog for the study. Thus, we selected a tablet as a target product. We did not provide any information about the brand and characteristics of the tablet in order not to bias the results.

We created a data base for developing the study including Hispanic technological blogs. We used the two most important Hispanic blog directories, "Bitácoras" and "La Blogoteca" for this purpose. The following information was registered for each blog: URL of the blog, name/s of the blogger/s, nationality and contact information. Contact information consists of an email, the URL of the contact form located in the blog or the Facebook/Google+ profile of either the blog or blogger. Duplicity between both data base were controlled. In addition, not updated blogs were not considered by excluding blogs without any post in 2013. The final data base includes 1,153 Hispanic blogs about technology.

Data were collected through an online survey. Contact information provided by bloggers was used to invite them to participate in the study. The link of the survey was accompanied by a message explaining the aim of the study. All respondents were offered a summary of the results. As we had seven experimental conditions (six experimental conditions and the control condition), we created different scenarios accessed through links. The questionnaire was the same for all participants in the six

conditions except for the manipulation checks. The questionnaire for the control condition had to be adapted to the absence of company approach. Bloggers were randomly assigned to the seven conditions.

We sent 1,120 messages to bloggers. 33 messages could not reach their corresponding bloggers because their contact information was wrong or communications failed. Following this procedure, 262 valid questionnaires were collected. A second message was sent between one and two weeks later as a reminder obtaining 97 additional valid questionnaires. Altogether, 359 valid questionnaires were collected with a final response rate of 32.05%.

We measured the intention to eWOM in the blog using semantic differential scale asking participants how likely they would blog about the product. Regarding the reaction of readers, we asked bloggers about their perceived negative reactions of readers using the scale of Tan et al. (2009) composed of four items (Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.919$ ). We used a three items scale to assess intention to disclose (Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.864$ ). All these concepts were measured on 11-point likert scales. Some information about the blog was requested at the last part of the questionnaire. Number of readers was measured by asking how many unique readers per month their blogs have. Blog address was also requested in order to avoid the same blogger participated twice in this study.

#### 4. Main results

Analyses of variance were performed to test the proposed hypotheses. As bloggers' perception of negative reaction of readers, intention to eWOM and intention to disclose were highly correlated, a MANOVA approach was used to test the proposed hypotheses. We also ran independent ANOVAs on each of the dependent variables in order to better interpret the proposed hypotheses.

As the size of the community of each blog may affect the results, we developed a MANCOVA test introducing the number of readers as a covariable. Number of readers had a great range, and therefore it was previously transformed into a logarithmic variable as Weisberg (2005) recommends. The MANCOVA tests shows that the number of readers of the blog has no effect on the perceived negative reaction of readers ( $F=0.688$ ,  $p=0.407$ ), nor on the intention to eWOM ( $F=0.000$ ,  $p=0.998$ ). The effect of the covariate is also non-significant on the intention to disclose ( $F=1.018$ ,  $p=0.314$ ).

Bloggers perceive a higher negative reaction of readers when the company offers them a monetary incentive than when monetary incentive is not offered ( $M_{\text{Monetary Incentive}}=2.83$  vs.  $M_{\text{Non-Monetary Incentive}}=2.24$ ;  $F=4.745$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), supporting H1. However, there are not differences between the strategy in which a monetary incentive is given to bloggers and the one in which a monetary incentive is not given on bloggers' intention to eWOM ( $M_{\text{Monetary Incentive}}=6.84$  vs.  $M_{\text{Non-Monetary Incentive}}=6.76$ ;  $F=0.059$ ,  $p>0.10$ ). Intention to disclose campaign in the blog is neither affected by the use of a monetary incentive ( $M_{\text{Monetary Incentive}}=6.14$  vs.  $M_{\text{Non-Monetary Incentive}}=6.00$ ;  $F=0.132$ ,  $p>0.10$ ). Thus, H2 and H3 are not supported. In addition, bloggers perceive that their readers will have similar negative reactions regardless the type of non-monetary incentive used ( $M_{\text{Product}}=2.45$  vs.  $M_{\text{Only Information}}=2.67$ ;  $F=0.632$ ,  $p>0.10$ ). Among those who were offered a product, the need for returning it did not affect the expected reaction of readers ( $M_{\text{Keep the Product}}=2.66$  vs.  $M_{\text{Return the product}}=2.22$ ;  $F=1.625$ ,  $p>0.10$ ). Thus, H4 and H5 are both supported. In addition, bloggers show a higher intention to eWOM when the company offers them a product compared to when they give them only information ( $M_{\text{Product}}=7.42$  vs.  $M_{\text{Only Information}}=5.77$ ;  $F=23.066$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). When the company offers the product to bloggers they show a higher intention to eWOM when being allowed to keep it than when not being allowed ( $M_{\text{Keep the Product}}=7.87$  vs.  $M_{\text{Return the product}}=6.96$ ;  $F=4.714$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). These results support H6 and H7. Finally, bloggers have a higher intention to disclose the WOMM campaign when they receive a product than when they receive only information about it ( $M_{\text{Product}}=6.43$  vs.  $M_{\text{Only Information}}=5.47$ ;  $F=6.774$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Thus, H8 is also supported. In contrast, when bloggers receive the product, their intention to disclose is similar when they have to return it than when they do not have to ( $M_{\text{Keep the Product}}=6.09$  vs.  $M_{\text{Return the product}}=6.78$ ;  $F=2.322$ ,  $p>0.10$ ). Therefore, H9 is supported.

We also compared the intention to eWOM derived from these strategies with the control condition in which the company does not take part and the blogger is aware of the product through other channels. The two strategies that obtained worst results (those in which only product information is provided) generate a similar intention to eWOM than the control condition ( $M_{\text{Only Product Information+Monetary Incentive}}=5.57$  vs.  $M_{\text{Control Condition}}=5.59$ ,  $p>0.10$ ;  $M_{\text{Only Product Information+Non-Monetary Incentive}}=5.97$  vs.  $M_{\text{Control Condition}}=5.59$ ,

$p > 0.10$ ). In contrast, the strategies in which the product is given generate a higher intention to eWOM than the control condition ( $M_{\text{Keep the Product+Non-Monetary Incentive}}=8.09$  vs.  $M_{\text{Control Condition}}=5.59$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ;  $M_{\text{Keep the Product+Monetary Incentive}}=7.62$  vs.  $M_{\text{Control Condition}}=5.59$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ;  $M_{\text{Return the Product+Non-Monetary Incentive}}=7.02$  vs.  $M_{\text{Control Condition}}=5.59$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ;  $M_{\text{Return the Product+Monetary Incentive}}=6.90$  vs.  $M_{\text{Control Condition}}=5.59$ ,  $p < 0.10$ ).

Further analysis are being developed in order to test the mediation effects of monetary and non-monetary incentives on the intention to eWOM and the intention to disclose through the negative perceive reactions of readers.

## 5. Conclusions

Blogs have become an important information source for consumers. Many blogs have more audience and are more credible than other mass media such as newspapers or TV (Johnson and Kaye, 2004; Kanlli, 2012). In addition, information provided by blogs is more influential than information provided by other social media platforms (Technorati, 2013). Thus, companies are interested in encouraging bloggers to post about their products and brands (Li and Du, 2011).

We have shown that most techniques to approach bloggers to spread the word are effective. However, not all of them are equally successful. Giving only information to bloggers has not very much enhanced the likelihood to spread the word about the product. Giving money to bloggers has no impact on the intention to write a post about the product. However, giving a product to bloggers enhances the likelihood of posting about it. The highest intention to post about the product is observed when bloggers can keep the product. Most of these results are explained by the trade-off between how ethical the monetary incentive is versus a gift. People are deterred from monetary incentives because the society signals that this behavior is unacceptable, however giving and receiving gifts are seen as good things to do (Ben-Ner and Putterman, 1999) and people generally strive to present themselves in a favorable light (Kunda, 1990; Sedikides, 1993).

## 6. Study 2. Readers' reaction

In the previous study we have shown that a monetary incentive does not affect the intention to eWOM of bloggers, while a non-monetary incentive, that is, when a company gives a product to bloggers, increases their intention to eWOM. Bloggers also think that readers will not react against the blog when they write a post due to a company gift. However, the real readers' reactions could be different. In fact, previous studies have shown that some readers have rejected their favourite bloggers when they have started to commercialize their blogs (Wijnia, 2004). In addition, 76% of consumers trust in bloggers who have received a free product, while only 45% of them trust in bloggers who were paid for writing a post (Social Media Link, 2013). Thus, it will be interesting to complement the results of this study with the readers' opinions about the participation of bloggers in this type of campaigns. Thus, we will develop a next study in which blogs' readers will be asked about their reactions in a situation in which their favourite blogger writes post because of company approach.

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# THE APPLICATION OF THE SIGNALLING THEORY TO MOBILE SHOPPING. THE GENDER EFFECT

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## ABSTRACT

*In mobile shopping contexts, where consumers cannot try or touch the products before purchasing and where quality cannot be inferred ex\_ante, consumers will perceive higher risk and opportunistic behavior on the part of the vendor. Following the signaling theory and applying it to a mobile commerce context, we propose hypotheses related to the power of some quality signals from the vendor and the site to reduce shopper perceived risk and fear of opportunism: vendor reputation, site design, personalized service and personalized information. Besides, as long as research suggests that male and female behavior is somewhat different, we propose to analyze differences and similarities between men and women in those perceptions. Information has been collected from 447 mobile shoppers and results will allow us to know what signals are more effective to reduce perceived risk and opportunism by men and women.*

## KEYWORDS:

Mobile shopping; signaling theory; opportunism; risk; gender.

## 1. Introduction

The penetration of mobile phones is clearly increasing and allows many daily operations such as shopping. There are almost 7 billions of mobile telephone subscriptions in the world and more than 90% of the population has access to mobile networks ITU (2013). The mobile phone is the most used device in the world. 82% of Spanish consumers have searched for a product or service with a smartphone and it is decisive in the shopping decision (24% of smartphone users have bought with it). IAB Spain research study (2012) finds that 59% of the Internet users own a smartphone and that 8 out of 10 mobile users surf the Internet using their devices. Mobile shopping (m-shopping) refers to the activities of consumers who use wireless Internet service when shopping using mobile phones.

Among the advantages of mobile phones, there are ubiquity, personalization, convenience, mobility, localization and interactivity (Lee, 2005), which are key to adoption of this technology. When the consumer has to choose the most appropriate mobile vendor to buy from, a problem of information asymmetry may appear (Mishra et al., 1998; Kirmani and Rao, 2000; Singh and Sirdeshmukh, 2000). Due to a lack of information, the consumer has difficulties to distinguish the true quality of different products/services and the true behavior of vendor firms (Mishra et al., 1998; Pavlou et al., 2007) and has, therefore, fear of vendor opportunism. This information asymmetry is greater when consumers do not have information about the vendor and mobile shoppers (m-shoppers) feel there are lack of interaction and advice, lack of experience with this kind of shopping, impossibility to touch or try products and services, distrust when paying and transferring personal data with the mobile phone, lack of knowledge, too small mobile phone screens.

There are different factors –signals- that vendors can use to facilitate shoppers the evaluation of products and services and reduce perception of risk and opportunism. For the purposes of this study, a signal is regarded as a firm's characteristic or cue that reveals information about product quality or firm behavior and that offers its costs or revenues as a hostage, bond, promise or commitment (Kirmani and Rao, 2000; Mishra et al., 1998). Signals can be a good solution to the perceived risk and opportunism problem in B2C relationships (Mishra et al., 1998; Singh and Sirdeshmukh, 2000). There are few studies that analyze them in a m-shopping context (Yeh and Li, 2009). Moreover, research has determined that demographic and contextual characteristics such as gender (Zhang et al., 2007; Kolsaker and Payne, 2002) influence the purchase experience. The objective of this study is to study gender differences and similarities regarding the influence of four signals- reputation, personalized information and service and design- on perception of risk and opportunism. Information has been collected from Spanish mobile shoppers.

## 2. Theoretical background and proposed hypotheses

### 2.1. Proposed relations among signals, risk and opportunism

Consumers usually perceive more risk in distance shopping in comparison with offline shopping (Kim et al., 2009). In distant shopping risk decreases in the evaluation of alternatives phase of the shopping process and increase in the shopping phase (Cunningham *et al.*, 2005), which is the one analyzed in this study. Some typical risks in m-shopping refer to the need to provide personal information to the vendor and the suspicion that after payment is processed, the goods purchased could not arrive (Singh and Sirdeshmukh, 2000). If a technology fails to provide the expected result, it will result in a loss for the consumer (Laukkanen and Kiviniemi, 2010). Several works studying perceived risk in the context of mobile marketing treat it essentially as a fear of providing personal or banking data to a firm and of loss of privacy (Gao et al. 2010). All those risks can lead to a need for controlling the vendor or the fear that the vendor does not fulfil its promises or hides relevant information.

*H1: Perceived risk increases perceived opportunism.*

The signals that we are going to propose in this study are especially relevant in a m-shopping context and refer both to the m-vendor and the m-site. Moreover, we confirmed they are important signals for m-shoppers by performing a pre-test with 15 consumers.

*Reputation* indicates quality of the products and services, given the absence of vendors who advise the m-shopper and given the impossibility of seeing, testing and touching the products before the m-shopping. Reputation is an important signal to reduce risk as in many cases it is transferred from



offline contexts to electronic contexts and it is supposed that a reputable vendor will find it easy to sell electronically than a not-known vendor. Xiong and Liu (2005) and Jarvenpaa et al. (1999) consider that customers will favour sites that represent a merchant with good reputation in the market. Siau and Shen (2003) suggest that m-vendor reputation contributes to the reduction of risk and initial trust formation.

*Design aesthetics* is relevant in a m-shopping context as there are not vendors and it is impossible to touch and try products electronically. Given the fact that users actually interact through their mobile device interface, the design and development of effective mobile interfaces can be a major determinant for the penetration and growth of m-shopping (Manganari et al., 2007). Li and Yeh (2010) suggest that aesthetics might be an important part of designing an overall enjoyable user experience with mobile devices. A m-shopping environment may also be effective in encouraging transactions (Yeh and Li, 2009) and reducing risk and fear of inappropriate or opportunistic behavior on the part of the m-vendor.

*Personalization* is an important signal in m-shopping contexts, as it is related to the especial characteristic of mobile phones in comparison with other means of buying and selling and scarcely investigated in m-shopping literature (Lee, 2005; Zarpou et al., 2012). Personalization is not so possible in offline selling than in mobile selling as the mobile phone is a personal tool and goes with the consumer anywhere and anytime. We propose that both personalized information and personalized service are relevant signals of quality and vendor behavior. In a similar vein and for online shopping, Thirumalai & Sinha (2011) distinguish decision (information) and transaction (products/services bought) personalization. Mobile phones are a personal tool and allow customization. The mobile environment allows marketers to build profiles of its customers and develop an interactive relationship so that marketing actions can be personalized to meet the needs and wants of a small or even individual segment of homogeneous audience (Lee, 2005). Zarpou et al. (2012) consider that personalization is a relevant relationship driver in m-shopping contexts. Lee (2005) and Li and Yeh (2010) suggest that personalization help to reduce risk and be confident when buying in m-shopping contexts. Therefore, it is expected that the m-shopper will perceive less risk and will have less fear of opportunism if he/she perceives that he/she is treated as a unique customer and receives personalized products, services and information.

*H2: Vendor reputation reduces perceived risk (H2a) and perceived opportunism (H2).*

*H3: Mobile site design reduces perceived risk (H3a) and perceived opportunism (H3b).*

*H4: The offer of personalized information reduces perceived risk (H4a) and perception of opportunism (H4b).*

*H5: The offer of a personalized service reduces perceived risk (H5a) and perception of opportunism (H5b).*

## **2.1. The gender effect**

Research about gender and risk is not conclusive (Coley and Burgess, 2003). Some studies have failed to identify gender differences in certain phases of purchase (Okazaki, 2004) and other studies in different purchasing contexts do show gender differences. In general, women are more risk averse than men and have a lower preference for competitive environments, especially when they face a risky situation (Croson and Gneezy, 2009), as it happens in a m-shopping context. Jayawardhena et al. (2010) state that men and women respond in different ways in a mobile context, men are more decisive and especially value perceived control as mobile marketing is a functional activity destined more for men.

The study carried out by Luo et al. (2006) suggests that women seek elements that help them to reduce risk in on-line purchasing. Women attach greater relevance to the elements that mitigate risk and allow privacy and security in the use of new information technologies (Garbarino and Strahilevitz, 2004). On the contrary, men seek to develop their own identity, they are more independent in their purchase process and have more utilitarian motives when buying (Citrin et al. 2003), thus it is expected that they are less influenced by vendor signals.

As for the role of gender as a moderating variable of the previous hypotheses, it is possible that the relations proposed in H1-H5 differ in accordance with the gender of the m-shopper. However, the rest of signals can be more important in the case of women as they are more receptive to signals as they are more concerned to reductions of risk when making decisions, especially to personalization because it

allows the shopper to feel there is a close relationship. It appears that females are more involved in buying activities, value salespeople more than males do and are more concerned about privacy, attach greater value to relationships with salespeople and value relational aspects of the purchase more than men (Jacobucci and Ostrom, 1993). In consequence, we believe that, at the time their trust is generated, women will value the personalization of products and services, and the information that is made available. As long as background is not controversial and no study has analyzed the reduction of risk and opportunism through signals, we propose a general hypothesis to obtain innovative results in this field.

*H6: Gender moderates relations between quality signals, perceived risk and opportunism.*

### 3. Empirical study

A sample of 447 m-shoppers was collected using C.A.T.I. systems in June. They were randomly selected from a national panel of m-users, but they had to have bought at least once with the mobile phone to be included in the sample. We think that collecting information from m-shoppers is interesting and innovative in Spain because it is essential to have first-hand information from early adopters to know their perceptions to improve m-vendor strategies. The type of Spanish m-shopper is mainly young (less than 25 years old), with secondary studies, and with a low social and economic level. Products or services acquired with the mobile phone are principally music and participation in contests as ONTSI (2012) also shows.

In the questionnaire, the members of the survey were asked to indicate the product/service and the company from which they had lastly bought by mobile phone and, regarding these answers, they were asked about the signals, perception of risk and opportunism and profile variables. To measure the proposed variables, 5-position Likert Scales were employed. These scales were adapted to the context of the study basing on the indicators proposed in the literature and with the help of a pre-test performed with 15 consumers who have already bought with the mobile phones. The measurement scales proposed here are based on Ganesan (1994) and Jarvenpaa et al. (1999) in the case of reputation; on Cyr et al. (2006) for design aesthetics; on Luarn and Lin (2005) and Schierz et al. (2010) in the case of perceived risk; Srinivasan et al. (2002), in the case of personalization (although we have separated all the indicators into the ones referred to personalization of information and the ones referred to personalization of customer service); Ping (1993) and Wathne and Heide (2000) in the case of opportunism. Analyses will be made with SPSS and structural equation modeling programs and we hope to have some preliminary results to present in the Conference.

### 4. Contributions

The aim of this study is to empirically analyze if men and women are different regarding perceptions of signals, risk and opportunism in the asymmetric relationships that can exist in m-shopping. The contributions are: (1) The application of variables from signaling theory to the study of m-shopping, which involves an advance in the study of m-shopping and the ways and the role of signals in reducing risk and perceived opportunism and we do not know any similar study in m-commerce. (2) The analysis of gender differences, which has relevant academic, but also managerial implications. Results confirm that gender is an important criterion to take into account, and in each case, the effect of the signals on perceived risk and opportunism is different. (3) We have used a sample of m-users who have already bought with the mobile and this is the first of this kind in Spain as others are only based on information gathered from users and none of them about the variables in our model. M-vendors can address an information asymmetry problem using signalling, but it would be advisable to know which are the most appropriate signals to reduce perceived risk and opportunism if the m-vendor target is mainly women or men.

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# WHY DO MARKETERS REALLY NEED TO WORK WITH DIGITAL ENGINEERS ?

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## RESUMEN

*Due to the prolific rise of consumer digital technologies and of Web sites in particular, we contribute a framework that evidences the need for engineers and marketers to collaborate in the development of combined online consumer behaviour (OCB) models. Previous marketing researchers affirmed that there is a scarcity of combined consumer-technology research, and that robust online consumer behaviour models should take into account both marketing and technological viewpoints. After comparing previous frameworks of human computer interaction (HCI) and OCB, we evidence that there are still many research gaps that exist due to the fragmented nature of OCB. This in turn highlights the substantial opportunities for combined research.*

## Palabras clave:

*online consumer behaviour, human computer interaction, interdisciplinary digital framework, Web site*

## **1. Introduction**

There is no doubt that technology in general and digital technologies in particular, such as Web sites, are shaping the destiny of consumers. In order to better understand exchange (Bagozzi, 1975) within the Internet medium, recent research has acknowledged the need for combined consumer-technology approaches (Dennis et al., 2010; Taylor and Strutton, 2009). Many digital communication devices such as Web sites or mobile phones stand at the intersection of technology with marketing. Whilst technology clearly contributes to the systems infrastructures of digital devices, from a marketing perspective aspects such as experience, information overload, interaction, content design, cognition and balance of attributes -just to name a few- also play crucial important role in device development. Online consumer behaviour (OCB) literature is too fragmented, the scarcity of OCB research frameworks and the inexistence of a combined consumer-technology framework overall represents a limitation for the progress of research within this field (Dennis et al., 2010; Taylor and Strutton, 2009, Pomirleanu et al., 2013). The marketing discipline would be better positioned to 'lead the study of the next area in online purchasing' should information systems and marketing researchers collaborate (Taylor and Strutton, 2009). Still, researchers from both areas are not working together and this could be the reason why there is a scarcity of multidisciplinary models crucial for making progress in the field of OCB. Based on this limitation, the objective of this work in progress is to exemplify why combined consumer-technology research models are needed, how they are relevant to digital marketing research in general and to the study of online consumer behaviour in particular. Our contribution specifies interdisciplinary topics to be taken into account when conducting future combined technology-consumer research.

## **2. Background research**

Dennis et al. (2010) differentiated between consumer oriented research and technology oriented research affirming that there is a scarcity of literature that combines these two perspectives into a combined consumer-technology research approach required for appropriately studying how consumers behave on Web sites. Online consumer behaviour examines customers' online behaviour from a marketing perspective (e.g. Bigné, Ruiz, Aldás and Sanz, 2008). Kwong et al. (2003) and Cheung et al. (2005) suggested two frameworks for the analysis of online consumer behaviour literature arguing that the literature on online consumer behaviour is very fragmented. In contrast, human-computer interaction (HCI) is a research field that belongs to the discipline of information systems and is concerned with the study of interaction between people and computers. (Hewett, Baecker, Card, Carey, Gasen, Mantei, Perlman, Strong and Verplank, 1996). From an industry perspective, consumer navigation Web sites is solely assessed with technological metrics such as clickstreams (Bucklin and Sismeiro, 2009) and neglect the use of consumer surveys in order to assess psychological behavioural aspects such as attitudes. Models should take into account these two perspectives together. Whilst there is yet no framework that combines previous OCB and HCI research frameworks together, in what follows we analyse the overlaps that arise between HCI and OCB.

## **3. A combined OCB-HCI framework**

We propose the framework illustrated in table 1 that illustrates how fields from both research areas of OCB and HCI overlap or are very similar. This framework has been built by analysing the content of a HCI framework suggested by Zhang and Galleta (2006). Then, based their HCI topic classification, similar OCB content from Cheung, 2005 and Kwong et al., 2003 was organised so that it matched the HCI category. In table 1, the column marked 'category in HCI' comprises the HCI research topics in the column on its right. A similar approach for the OCB frameworks has been utilised. The 'OCB research topic' column has been specifically organised so that it matches the 'HCI research topic' column on its left. The HCI topic classification of Zhang and Galleta (2006) shows how research areas are similar and overlap across OCB and HCI. However, there are other HCI areas that overlap with marketing topics that are not represented in the two OCB frameworks, for instance information presentation evaluation (Hong et al., 2005) and retention (e.g. Li et al., 2006). This lack of inclusion of these other topics in previous OCB and HCI frameworks could evidence that there is still much

progress to be done due to the fragmented nature of OCB. This in turn represents substantial opportunities for research within this discipline.

**Table 1. Overlap of consumer and technology research issues**

Technology-oriented research		Consumer-oriented research	
Human-computer interaction classification (Zhang and Galleta, 2006)		Online consumer behaviour frameworks (Cheung, 2005; Kwong et al., 2003)	
Category in HCI	HCI research topic	OCB research topic	Category in OCB
Attitude	Attitude	Attitude	Consumer characteristics
	Satisfaction	Satisfaction	After purchase evaluation
Cognitive belief and behaviour	Incentives	Incentives	Merchant and intermediary characteristics
	Intention	Intention	Consumer characteristics
	Behaviour	Past experiences / behaviour	Need recognition
	Adoption	Adoption	Online consumer purchase
Acceptance, use	Adoption		
Development methods and tools	Social-cognitive	Social	Need recognition
Emotion	Affect, emotion, enjoyment, flow, hedonic quality, humour	Experience	Consumer characteristics
	Intrinsic motivation	Motivation	
Performance	Effectiveness, efficiency, performance, productivity	Navigation, usefulness	Medium characteristics
Trust	Loyalty, trust, risk, security	Continuance, trust, risk, security	Consumer characteristics
			Online consumer purchase
User interface design and development	Interface metaphors	Interface	Medium characteristics
	Information presentation	Web site design and content	Information search
		Information presentations	Medium characteristics
		Layout	Product / services characteristics
Instrumental usability (Ease of use)	Ease of use	Medium characteristics	
User interface evaluation	Usability	Navigation	Medium characteristics
User Support	Issues related to user support, general support and information centre	After sales services	After purchase evaluation
			Merchant and intermediary characteristics

#### OVERLAP OF RESEARCH TOPICS

#### 4. Conclusion

With this work in progress we are evidencing that as both engineers and marketers are researching on equivalent topics that will have an impact on the consumer, in order to develop robust models they should take into account research from the contrary field. For instance, a digital interface on a mobile phone or a Web site should be well-developed from both a technological performance viewpoint and from consumers' performance perspective. These two research orientations might have not yet been brought together, as perhaps researchers from both areas might not have been aware of the research existing in other fields or simply persist in their research disciplines. Table 1 could be utilised in the future for the development of new consumer-technology behavioural models. Whilst it is understandable that researchers from both OCB and HCI have focused on their own individual research fields, table 1 could serve as a means to bring researchers from the fields of online consumer behaviour and HCI into a common space. Our suggested framework has implications for both academics and practitioners in the sense that it reflects the need for creating multidisciplinary teams

for the achievement of improved outputs in both research and practice. Future research can make progress by continuing to develop interdisciplinary models like the one suggested by Dennis et al. (2010).

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# INFLUENCIA DE LOS VALORES DE LOS DIRECTIVOS DE PYMES INTERNACIONALIZADAS EN LOS RESULTADOS EXPORTADORES

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## RESUMEN

*En este trabajo se analiza si los valores según la escala de Schwartz varían entre los directivos responsables de exportación de pymes entre las empresas con mayor éxito exportador, frente a las que tienen un éxito exportador limitado. El estudio se aplica a una muestra de 196 Pymes exportadoras españolas. En primer lugar se aplica un clúster de clases latentes para clasificar las empresas en función del performance exportador, para después aplicar test de comparaciones de medias y buscar diferencias significativas en los valores de Schwartz entre directivos de empresas de ambos grupos. Los valores en los que aparecen diferencias significativas son: honestidad, influencia, ambición, lealtad, justicia social, autoridad, vida excitante y orden social.*

## Palabras clave:

Performance exportador, escala de valores de Schwartz, internacionalización, pymes, clúster de clases latentes.



## 1. Introducción

En cualquier situación empresarial saber distinguir los factores que llevan al éxito de una empresa es una cuestión capital. No menos importante, en una etapa de globalización de los mercados en la que nos encontramos, es analizar los factores que llevan al éxito de una empresa exportadora. Esto es así, ya que el número de empresas exportadoras en España aumenta de forma progresiva. Si a esto unimos el hecho de investigar factores clave para el éxito exportador de PYMES, teniendo en cuenta que las PYMES suponen el 99% de las empresas de la OCDE, la justificación de cualquier estudio que permita mejorar su conocimiento y gestión es fundamental (Aragón-Sánchez & Rubio-Bañón, 2005). Su importancia en la creación de puestos de trabajo, innovación tecnológica y rejuvenecimiento económico está reconocido por todos los actores económicos, por ello, es importante que los factores que ayuden a explicar los resultados exportadores de las pymes sean una prioridad en la investigación (Freeman, Styles, & Lawley, 2012)

Un aspecto clave de las pymes es la influencia de las características personales de sus directivos en la toma de decisiones. En las grandes empresas las decisiones tomadas en los equipos directivos son más consensuadas y corporativas. Sin embargo, en las pymes la influencia individual y el carácter de los directivos y/o propietarios tiene un mayor efecto en la toma de decisiones (Della Torre & Solari, 2013), es decir, son organizaciones con menos trabas burocráticas, lo que da a los directivos más libertad de acción a la hora de tomar e implementar decisiones estratégicas (Hakonsson, Burton, Obel, & Lauridsen, 2012). Por ejemplo, se ha demostrado el efecto del nivel educativo, edad o experiencia de los directivos en la toma de decisiones de pymes (Wagner & Paton, 2014). Respecto a la influencia de los directivos de pymes en la internacionalización, aspectos como la orientación global, experiencia de trabajo, conocimiento de lenguas extranjeras, o relaciones formales e informales de sus directivos son aspectos clave para una rápida internacionalización de sus empresas (Przybylska, 2013). Tampoco se pueden olvidar otras características de estos directivos tales como percepción del riesgo, tolerancia de la ambigüedad, resistencia al cambio y auto-confianza (Acedo & Jones, 2007).

Sin embargo, junto a las características personales de los directivos, aunque la literatura también reconoce la importancia e influencia de los valores personales en la toma de decisiones y resultados empresariales (Hambrick, 2007), escaso es el conocimiento que se posee sobre esta cuestión, existiendo un gap investigador sobre el que es necesario ir avanzando. Con todo esto, el objetivo que nos planteamos en este trabajo es analizar si los valores, según la escala de Schwartz, varían entre los directivos responsables de exportación de pymes con mayor éxito exportador, frente a las que tienen un éxito exportador limitado. Por tanto, nuestra pregunta o cuestión de investigación es comprobar si las empresas con mayor éxito exportador tienen unos directivos con valores personales diferentes de aquellos que gestionan las exportaciones de empresas con un éxito exportador limitado.

Sobre la cuestión de investigación planteada, este trabajo tiene como principal contribución demostrar que efectivamente los directivos de pymes exportadoras con mejores resultados poseen un sistema de valores más proactivo frente a directivos de pymes exportadoras cuyo sistema de valores es más conservador.

Para lograr el objetivo planteado, el presente trabajo tiene la siguiente estructura. En primer lugar, se definen los antecedentes teóricos centrados en la internacionalización de las pymes, el resultado exportador y los sistemas de valores en los directivos. A continuación, se presenta la metodología empleada, definiéndose la muestra, las escalas de medidas y la herramienta de análisis de datos. Finalmente, se presentan los resultados y conclusiones del estudio, así como las limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación.

## 2. Antecedentes teóricos

### 2.1. *La internacionalización de las Pymes*

La internacionalización de las pymes es un factor muy estudiado en la literatura reciente de negocios internacionales y marketing internacional. Los estudios se han centrado principalmente en las

características distintivas de los procesos de internacionalización de este tipo de empresas, como son: rápidas expansiones internacionales, gran uso de redes y alianzas, expansión nacional e internacional al mismo tiempo, falta de recursos y experiencia y centrarse en nichos de mercados globales (Schweizer, 2012). Según datos de la Unión Europea, un 25% de las Pymes de la UE27 han hecho exportaciones en los tres años anteriores al estudio (el valor en empresas españolas está prácticamente en ese promedio), que es el año 2009 ([http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/market-access/files/internationalisation\\_of\\_european\\_smes\\_final\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/market-access/files/internationalisation_of_european_smes_final_en.pdf)). Según este estudio las principales barreras que se encuentran las pymes para exportar son:

- Barreras internas: precio de su producto o servicio y alto coste de la internacionalización.
- Barreras externas: falta de capital, falta de información adecuada, falta de apoyo institucional y los costes y dificultades burocráticas del transporte internacional.

Este mismo estudio concluye que:

- las Pymes internacionalizadas tienen mayores rendimientos económicos que las no internacionalizadas,
- mientras mayores son las pymes mayor es su probabilidad de exportar
- mientras más pequeño es el mercado doméstico también aumenta la probabilidad de exportar,
- pymes fabricantes y mayoristas son especialmente activas en el comercio internacional,
- las pymes más involucradas con la innovación de productos y procesos son más proclives al comercio internacional.

A partir de un estudio más reciente, también de la UE ([http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/international/files/2013-sme-internationalisation-final-report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/international/files/2013-sme-internationalisation-final-report_en.pdf)), la mayoría de las agencias de promoción exterior europeas están fomentando la internacionalización hacia países del BRIC (Brasil, Rusia, India y China), así como USA y países limítrofes de la frontera europea como Turquía y Ucrania.

## **2.2. Medición de resultados exportadores**

El resultado exportador es el output fundamental con el que se suele medir la actuación de la empresa exportadora en los mercados extranjeros y es un aspecto esencial para la toma de decisiones en el ámbito internacional (Madsen, 1998). Cavusgil y Zou (Cavusgil & Zou, 1994) definen el resultado exportador como la extensión por la cual la firma alcanza sus objetivos a través de la exportación de sus productos-marcas a los mercados extranjeros, incluyendo tanto aspectos económicos (beneficio, ventas, etc.) como estratégicos (posicionamiento internacional, incremento de la cuota de mercado derivado de la exportación, logro de objetivos internacionales, etc.), a través de la planificación y ejecución de la estrategia de marketing de la empresa exportadora.

Se han usado principalmente 3 paradigmas alternativos para explicar teóricamente el performance exportador: paradigma performance-conducta-estructura, paradigma relacional y el enfoque basado en los recursos (Freeman et al., 2012). El primero, basado en la teoría de la organización industrial, indica que los resultados dependen principalmente de las características del sector en el que opera la empresa (Ruppenthal & Bausch, 2009; Zou & Cavusgil, 2002). El segundo, basado en la teoría de intercambio relacional, destaca la relevancia de la naturaleza e impacto de las relaciones exportador-cliente (Ural, 2009). El enfoque basado en los recursos (RBV con sus siglas en inglés) indica que las empresas pueden conseguir ventajas competitivas sostenibles distribuyendo recursos y capacidades valiosas que son inelásticas en el mercado (Akhter & Robles, 2006). Algunos trabajos han integrado los tres enfoques con la idea de ofrecer un modelo integrador que reúna los diferentes determinantes del resultado exportador (Navarro, Acedo, Losada, & Ruzo, 2011; Navarro-García, Rondán-Cataluña, & Acedo-González, 2013). En todo caso, de la revisión de la literatura (Rose & Shoham, 2002; Sousa, Martínez-López, & Coelho, 2008) se desprende dos aspectos básicos del resultado exportador: (1) es un concepto multidimensional, el cual debe ser valorado a través de medidas cuantitativas (ventas, rentabilidad, crecimiento, etc.) y cualitativas (éxito percibido, satisfacción, logro de objetivos, etc.) (Freeman et al., 2012); (2) las medidas empleadas para su evaluación deben reflejar las percepciones directivas sobre los resultados alcanzados (ej. satisfacción directiva con el resultado exportador) (Lages, Jap, & Griffith, 2007).

En el presente trabajo se tienen en cuenta los dos aspectos señalados (1) se conciben dos dimensiones del resultado exportador, una cuantitativa -crecimiento de las ventas de exportación y rentabilidad de las exportaciones- y otra cualitativa –satisfacción directiva-; (2) se tienen en cuenta las percepciones directivas (satisfacción directiva global) asociada a la actividad exportadora.

### 2.3. Los valores de Schwartz en los directivos

Los valores personales son los principios que de una forma estable se emplean para evaluar el comportamiento propio y el de los demás. Generan una forma subjetiva de interpretar la realidad asociada al entorno en el que se actúa (Finkelstein, Hambrick, & Cannella Jr, 2008). La teoría de valores básicos humanos de Schwartz (Schwartz, 1992) se ha utilizado con gran profusión durante más de 20 años en estudios de diversas áreas de conocimiento, países y con objetivos muy diversos (Schwartz et al., 2012). Hay varios factores que diferencian la escala de valores de Schwartz de otras anteriores, destacando la universalidad de la estructura y del contenido de esos valores. Así los 10 tipos de valores propuestos por su teoría son valores reconocidos en todas las culturas. En la tabla 1 se presentan la definición de cada uno de los valores y los valores representativos de los mismos.

TABLA 1  
Ítems y definición de la escala de valores de Schwartz

<b>Tipo</b>	<b>Definición</b>	<b>Valores representativos</b>
<b>Auto-dirección</b>	Pensamiento y acción independiente (eligiendo, creando, explorando)	Creatividad, libertad, independencia, curiosidad, elección de las propias metas.
<b>Estimulación</b>	Excitación, novedad y desafío en la vida	Osadía, una vida variada, una vida excitante
<b>Hedonismo</b>	Placer y gratificación sensorial para uno mismo	Placer, vida placentera
<b>Logro</b>	Éxito personal al demostrar competencia de acuerdo a los estándares sociales	Triunfador, competente, ambicioso, influyente
<b>Poder</b>	Estatus social y prestigio, control o dominios de las personas o recursos	Poder social, autoridad, riqueza
<b>Seguridad</b>	Seguridad, armonía, y estabilidad de la sociedad, de las relaciones sociales y de uno mismo.	Seguridad familia, seguridad nacional, orden social, decencia, reciprocidad en los favores.
<b>Conformidad</b>	Moderación de las acciones, inclinaciones e impulsos probables de disgustar o dañar a otros y de transgredir las expectativas o normas sociales	Auto-disciplina, obediencia, amabilidad, respeto a los padres y personas mayores.
<b>Tradición</b>	Respeto, compromiso y aceptación de las costumbres e ideas que la cultura tradicional o religión brindan	Aceptar ser parte de la vida, humildad, devoción respecto por la tradición, moderación.
<b>Benevolencia</b>	Preservación y bienestar de la gente con quien uno está en frecuente contacto personal	Amabilidad, honestidad, perdón, lealtad, responsabilidad
<b>Universalismo</b>	Entendimiento, apreciación, tolerancia, y protección del bienestar de todas personas y de la naturaleza	Tolerancia, sabiduría, justicia social, equidad, un mundo en paz, un mundo de belleza, unidad con la naturaleza, protección del ambiente

Un aspecto interesante respecto a estos valores culturales es el alto nivel de consenso con respecto a la importancia relativa de los 10 valores citados entre diferentes sociedades. En la gran mayoría de las naciones estudiadas benevolencia, universalismo y auto-dirección son los aspectos más relevantes y

tradición, poder y estimulación son los menos. Esto indica que aspectos de la naturaleza humana y del funcionamiento social que conforman las prioridades individuales de valores son ampliamente compartidas entre culturas diversas (Schwartz et al., 2012).

Con respecto a los directivos, estos siguen modelos psicológicos que influyen en la forma de percibir el entorno y afectan a su toma de decisiones (Johnson & Hoopes, 2003; Nadkarni & Barr, 2008). Las creencias y valores individuales ejercen una influencia importante en la creación de las opiniones y modelos mentales de los directivos (Hambrick, 2007; Soriano & Castrogiovanni, 2012). En este contexto, es importante comprender el papel que pueden jugar los valores personales en la toma de decisiones empresariales, pues influye en la forma en que los directivos interpretan las situaciones de mercado, las decisiones estratégicas adoptadas, los recursos comprometidos, etc., y, por tanto, pueden ser determinantes de los resultados empresariales (White, Varadarajan, & Dacin, 2003).

Desde el punto del continuo que supone el inventario de valores humanos (Schwartz, 1992), dos posturas cabe destacar desde la óptica directiva: (a) *enfoque conservador*, caracterizado por un predominio de la visión individualista, de mantenimiento del status quo y que se muestra reacia a realizar cambios, en la cual predominan los valores de seguridad, conformidad, tradición, poder y logro. Esta postura implica aplicar una lógica tradicional, fruto de una cultura reactiva, en la resolución de problemas, toma de decisiones, actitudes y comportamientos empresariales (Schwartz & Bardí, 2001). Sus repercusiones suelen ser negativas en la rapidez de respuesta y adaptación a los deseos de los consumidores, motivaciones para innovar, o diversificar mercados (Krasnikov & Jayachandran, 2008); (b) *enfoque proactivo*, caracterizado por un predominio de la visión colectiva, de apertura al cambio y predisposición para realizar adaptaciones y orientarse al mercado, donde predominan los valores de estimulación, independencia de pensamiento o auto-dirección, hedonismo, benevolencia y universalismo (Sousa, Ruzo, & Losada, 2010).

Algunos estudios ha evidenciado los planteamientos expuestos (Carpenter, Geletkanyez, & Sanders, 2004; Hambrick, 2007). Sin embargo, en el ámbito exportador, como señalan Sousa et al. (Sousa et al., 2010)) existe un importante desconocimiento del papel que desempeñan los valores de los responsables de exportación en las decisiones adoptadas y éxito alcanzado por la empresa exportadora en los mercados exteriores, a pesar de que algunos trabajos han mostrado la gran relevancia de su estudio (Leonidou, Katsikeas, & Piercy, 1998). En este gap investigador encuentra su fundamento el presente trabajo, describiendo a continuación la metodología desarrollada para alcanzar los objetivos propuestos.

### **3. Metodología**

#### **3.1. Muestra**

La muestra de empresas obtenidas se obtuvo a partir de la base de datos de empresas exportadoras del Instituto de Comercio Exterior (ICEX). Se mantuvo la proporcionalidad sectorial, los cuestionarios se enviaron por e-mail a 1200 directivos responsables de las exportaciones de sus empresas. Se obtuvieron 196 encuestas de empresas con menos de 250 empleados (Pymes). Se obtuvo una tasa de respuesta del 16,3%, que está dentro de los límites normales de respuesta a encuestas mandadas por e-mail. Sólo se usó un encuestado en cada empresa que tenía que ser el responsable de las exportaciones de la empresa, que por ser pymes en muchos casos coincidía con el gerente de la misma. A los encuestados se les pidió que pusieran el puesto que desempeñaban en la empresa y que valoraran su competencia, habilidades y responsabilidades en términos de exportaciones. Altos valores en estas competencias de los encuestados nos aseguran minimizar el riesgo potencial atribuible del sesgo del encuestado.

#### **3.2. Escalas de medida**

Para medir la escala de valores de Schwartz, se ha seguido el “Draft Users Manual” que el mismo Prof. Shalom Schwartz publicó (Schwartz, 2009), con el fin de ayudar a los investigadores que usen su escala para usarla correctamente. La escala se tradujo al castellano para pasarla en el cuestionario. Los 45 ítems de la escala SVS han demostrado tener una fuerte fiabilidad entre distintas culturas (Schwartz, 1992). La escala original se presenta en el anexo 1. Respecto al resultado exportador,

incluye tanto aspectos cuantitativos (crecimiento de las ventas de exportación en el último año y rentabilidad de las exportaciones) como cualitativos (satisfacción global directiva con el resultado de las exportaciones).

### 3.3. Análisis estadísticos

Teniendo en cuenta que el objetivo de este trabajo es analizar si los valores, según la escala de Schwartz, varían entre los directivos responsables de exportación de pymes entre las empresas con mayor éxito exportador, frente a las que tienen un éxito exportador limitado, el primer paso es clasificar a las empresas de la muestra en función de sus resultados exportadores. Para ello hemos utilizado un clúster de clases latentes usando las variables sobre performance exportador que estaban recogidas en el cuestionario que son: satisfacción global con las exportaciones, crecimiento de las ventas de exportación el último año y rentabilidad de las exportaciones en el último año. Otros trabajos han demostrado las ventajas del clúster de clases latentes, frente a las técnicas tradicionales de conglomerados (Javier Rondan-Cataluna, Jesus Sanchez-Franco, & Francisco Villarejo-Ramos, 2010) entre las que destacan: creación de segmentos a posteriori, se pueden usar variables cualitativas, y los casos se asignan a cada grupo en función de sus probabilidades de pertenencia que se estiman directamente del modelo.

Una vez clasificadas las empresas en grupos usamos test t de comparación de medias, y como los datos no cumplen el requisito de normalidad usamos también los test no paramétricos siguientes: prueba de la mediana para muestras independientes, U de Mann-Whitney y la prueba de Kolmogorov-Smirnov para muestras independientes. En este caso, analizamos cada uno de los ítems de la escala de valores de Schwartz de los directivos de las Pymes de la muestra para cada uno de los grupos de empresas obtenidos del clúster de clases latentes, viendo de esta manera si hay diferencias significativas entre ellos.

## 4. Resultados

Como se indica en la sección anterior, primero hicimos un clúster de clases latentes usando las variables de performance exportador, atendiendo al criterio de menor BIC (Bayesian Information Criterion), nos quedamos con el modelo de dos grupos o clases latentes (ver tabla 2).

TABLA 2  
Selección del número de clústeres

		LL	BIC(LL)	Npar	L <sup>2</sup>	df	p-value	Class.Err.
Model1	1-Cluster	-737,5576	1538,4526	12	129,9805	92	0,0056	0
<b>Model2</b>	<b>2-Cluster</b>	<b>-711,2792</b>	<b>1507,0083</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>77,4238</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>0,78</b>	<b>0,1033</b>
Model3	3-Cluster	-703,817	1513,1963	20	62,4993	84	0,96	0,1068
Model4	4-Cluster	-702,2803	1531,2353	24	59,4259	80	0,96	0,2288
Model5	5-Cluster	-702,3152	1552,4177	28	59,4958	76	0,92	0,3313
Model6	6-Cluster	-700,8099	1570,5195	32	56,4852	72	0,91	0,3789

Respecto a las medidas de bondad de ajuste, el modelo con 2 grupos tiene un error de clasificación de 0.103, R<sup>2</sup> de entropía de 0.617, R<sup>2</sup> standard de 0.657, valores todos ellos aceptables.

Los dos clústeres que salen son los siguientes:

TABLA 3  
Descripción de los clústeres

	Cluster1	Cluster2
Tamaño Clúster	0,7071	0,2929
Indicadores		
SAT. GLOBAL EXPORT.		
Media	3,791	2,658

CREC. VENTAS EXPORT. ULT. AÑO		
Media	5,0252	2,5175
RENTAB. EXPORT ULT. AÑO		
Media	2,8918	2,3902

Se observa en la tabla 3 que el clúster 1 engloba a casi el 71% de las empresas de la muestra, y el segundo algo más del 29%. El clúster 1 representa a las empresas con mayor éxito exportador ya que la satisfacción global con las exportaciones, el crecimiento de las ventas de exportación y la rentabilidad de las exportaciones del último año están valoradas mucho más positivamente que en el clúster 2, que está formado por aquellas empresas cuyos directivos perciben un desempeño exportador limitado.

El siguiente paso fue depurar la muestra, eliminando los casos en los que no se habían rellenado por parte del responsable de exportación la parte de la encuesta relacionada con los valores de Schwartz. No se eliminaron en la fase anterior porque de estas empresas si teníamos datos de resultados. Se pasó de 196 a 183 pymes exportadoras.

Las empresas son asignadas al clúster al que tienen mayor probabilidad de inclusión. Así aparecen 127 en el clúster 1 y 56 en el clúster 2. Aplicamos un test t de comparación de medias, y como los datos no cumplen el requisito de normalidad usamos también los test no paramétricos siguientes: prueba de la mediana para muestras independientes, U de Mann-Whitney y la prueba de Kolmogorov-Smirnov para muestras independientes. La tabla 4 refleja sólo las variables que en el test t y en alguno de los no paramétricos mostraron diferencias significativas entre los dos grupos son los que hemos señalado, buscando al máximo la robustez de los resultados obtenidos.

TABLA 4  
Prueba t para la igualdad de medias

	Prueba de Levene de calidad de varianzas		prueba t para la igualdad de medias						
	F	Sig.	t	gl	Sig. (bilateral)	Diferencia de medias	Diferencia de error estándar	95% de intervalo de confianza de la diferencia	
								Inferior	Superior
v08 Se asumen varianzas iguales No se asumen varianzas iguales	,570	,451	1,823	181	,070	,471	,258	-,039	,980
			1,806	102,930	,074	,471	,261	-,046	,988
v09 Se asumen varianzas iguales No se asumen varianzas iguales	,881	,349	2,387	181	,018	,756	,317	,131	1,381
			2,388	105,379	,019	,756	,317	,128	1,383
v27 Se asumen varianzas iguales No se asumen varianzas iguales No se asumen varianzas iguales	1,583	,210	1,815	181	,071	,561	,309	-,049	1,172
			1,892	116,288	,061	,561	,297	-,026	1,149
			,961	100,529	,339	,314	,326	-,334	,962
v30 Se asumen varianzas iguales	,010	,919	-1,705	181	,090	-,440	,258	-,948	,069

	No se asumen varianzas iguales			-1,704	105,180	,091	-,440	,258	-,951	,072
v33	Se asumen varianzas iguales	13,064	,000	2,549	181	,012	,568	,223	,128	1,008
	No se asumen varianzas iguales			2,230	79,817	,029	,568	,255	,061	1,075
v34	Se asumen varianzas iguales	1,046	,308	2,085	181	,039	,597	,287	,032	1,163
	No se asumen varianzas iguales			2,110	108,289	,037	,597	,283	,036	1,159
v39	Se asumen varianzas iguales	,163	,687	2,887	181	,004	,856	,296	,271	1,441
	No se asumen varianzas iguales			2,819	99,647	,006	,856	,304	,253	1,458
v45	Se asumen varianzas iguales	4,549	,034	2,019	181	,045	,441	,219	,010	,873
	No se asumen varianzas iguales			1,886	90,557	,063	,441	,234	-,024	,906

Los ítems 8, 9, 27, 30, 33, 34, 39 y 45 de la escala de Schwartz muestran diferencias significativas entre los directivos de las empresas del clúster 1 y el clúster 2, con un nivel de confianza de al menos el 90%. Analizamos para estos ítems los test no paramétricos de diferencias de medias para muestras independientes (tabla 5).

TABLA 5

**Pruebas no paramétricas para muestras independientes**

Ítems de la escala de Schwartz	Significación asintótica de la Prueba de la mediana para muestras independientes	Significación asintótica de la U de Mann-Whitney	Significación asintótica de Kolmogorov- Smirnov para muestras independientes
V08	0.063	0.044	0.068
V09	0.007	0.012	0.033
V27	0.078	0.071	0.35
V30	0.066	0.055	0.343
V33	0.588	0.071	0.156
V34	0.007	0.037	0.033
V39	0.114	0.008	0.177
V45	0.315	0.086	0.468

Todos estos ítems de la escala de Schwartz han mostrado diferencias significativas entre los directivos de pymes exportadoras en alguno de los test no paramétricos y en el test t de igualdad de medias con un nivel de confianza de al menos 90%. A continuación, se presentan los valores medios de dichos ítems en cada uno de los clústeres.

TABLA 6

**Estadísticas de grupo**

Cluster modal	N	Media	Desviación estándar	Media de error estándar

v08	1	127	4,69	1,597	,142
	2	56	4,21	1,637	,219
v09	1	127	3,76	1,975	,175
	2	56	3,00	1,973	,264
v27	1	127	3,28	1,987	,176
	2	56	2,71	1,786	,239
v30	1	127	4,88	1,607	,143
	2	56	5,32	1,608	,215
v33	1	127	5,69	1,212	,108
	2	56	5,13	1,727	,231
v34	1	127	4,47	1,803	,160
	2	56	3,88	1,748	,234
v39	1	127	3,68	1,812	,161
	2	56	2,82	1,927	,257
v45	1	127	5,64	1,283	,114
	2	56	5,20	1,531	,205

Así los ítems de la escala SVS que muestran diferencias significativas entre los directivos encargados de las exportaciones en PYMES entre los clústeres 1 (éxito exportador) y 2 (poco éxito exportador) son: 8 orden social, 9 una vida excitante, 27 autoridad, 30 justicia social, 33 lealtad, 34 ambición, 39 influencias, 45 honestidad. Por tanto, encontramos diferencias significativas en 6 de las 10 dimensiones de la escala: seguridad, estimulación, poder, universalismo, benevolencia y logro.

## 5. Conclusiones

La mayoría de estudios centrados en el análisis de la influencia de los aspectos personales de los directivos en la toma de decisiones y resultados empresariales en el contexto internacional se ha centrado en las propias características personales (Przybylska, 2013); (Wagner & Paton, 2014) y pocos trabajos han ofrecido conclusiones sobre la repercusión de los valores. En este trabajo se demuestra algo que intuitivamente se podría pensar, pero que es difícil de demostrar, y es que los directivos dedicados a la exportación de las pymes con mayor éxito exportador poseen valores y rasgos de personalidad que difieren significativamente de los directivos de pymes cuyos resultados exportadores no son tan buenos.

En particular los aspectos que difieren son los siguientes. Para los directivos de pymes con éxito exportador es más importante el orden social y la estabilidad de la sociedad que para sus colegas de pymes con menor resultado exportador. Es decir, este aspecto de la seguridad es una dimensión que predomina en los directivos de empresas exportadoras con mejores resultados en los mercados extranjeros. También, los primeros le dan mayor importancia a tener una vida excitante y llena de experiencias estimulantes, aflorando la dimensión de estimulación; a tener más autoridad y dirigir o capitanear equipos de personas, reflejando una capacidad de poder; a ser más leales a las personas y a los grupos a ser más sincero y honesto, aspectos estos relacionados con la benevolencia; a ser ambicioso y trabajar duro para aspirar a más logros y a ser más influyente teniendo más impacto en las personas y acontecimientos estos son aspectos asociados al logro. Todo ello muestra el predominio de un sistema de valores proactivo, caracterizado por una visión colectiva de los negocios, de tolerancia y apertura al cambio, y predisposición para realizar adaptaciones y orientarse al mercado, repercutiendo positivamente en el resultado exportador ((Sousa et al., 2008; Sousa et al., 2010).



Sin embargo, para los directivos de pymes con éxito exportador es menos importante corregir las injusticias o cuidar del débil que para los directivos del grupo de pymes con menos éxito exportador, este aspecto está relacionado con el universalismo, mostrándose éstos últimos más proteccionistas o conservadores. Ello puede ser un reflejo de un enfoque conservador, caracterizado por un predominio de la visión individualista, de mantenimiento del status quo, mostrándose reacio a realizar cambios. Esta postura implica aplicar una lógica dominante tradicional, fruto de una cultura reactiva, en la resolución de problemas, toma de decisiones, actitudes y comportamientos empresariales (Schwartz & Bardí, 2001). Sus repercusiones suelen ser negativas en la rapidez de respuesta y adaptación a los deseos de los consumidores, motivaciones para innovar, o diversificar mercados (Krasnikov & Jayachandran, 2008). Todo ello puede repercutir negativamente en los resultados empresariales, como se refleja en la presente investigación.

Es interesante resaltar el hecho de que corregir las injusticias o cuidar del débil, sea el único valor en los que hemos encontrado diferencias significativas al que los directivos de pymes con menos éxito exportador han dado más importancia que a los directivos del otro grupo. Parece que estos aspectos más sociales, más asertivos tienen menos presencia en los directivos de pymes con éxito exportador. El perfil de estos directivos es más agresivo en los que una vida excitante, la autoridad, la lealtad, el orden social, ambición, ser influyente y sincero son valores a los que les dan más importancia que sus colegas de pymes con menor éxito exportador.

En definitiva, este trabajo demuestra que las empresas con mayor éxito exportador tienen unos directivos con valores personales diferenciados de aquellos que gestionan las exportaciones de empresas con un éxito exportador limitado.

Para finalizar, señalar la principal limitación de este trabajo como es considerar exclusivamente la influencia de los valores en los resultados empresariales, obviando otros aspectos sobre los que la literatura apunta una repercusión más directa como son las orientaciones directivas y decisiones estratégicas, actuando estos factores, en ocasiones, como mediadores o moderadores de la relación valores-resultados empresariales. Esta limitación constituye una guía para orientar futuros trabajos de investigación.

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#### ANEXO 1. ESCALA DE VALORES DE SCHWARTZ

1 EQUALITY	equal opportunity for all
2 INNER HARMONY	at peace with myself
3 SOCIAL POWER	control over others, dominance
4 PLEASURE	gratification of desires
5 FREEDOM	freedom of action and thought
6 A SPIRITUAL LIFE	emphasis on spiritual not material matters
7 SENSE OF BELONGING	feeling that others care about me
8 SOCIAL ORDER	stability of society
9 AN EXCITING LIFE	stimulating experiences
10 MEANING IN LIFE	a purpose in life
11 POLITENESS	courtesy, good manners
12 WEALTH	material possessions, money
13 NATIONAL SECURITY	protection of my nation from enemies
14 SELF RESPECT	belief in one's own worth
15 RECIPROCATION OF FAVOURS	avoidance of indebtedness
16 CREATIVITY	uniqueness, imagination
17 A WORLD AT PEACE	free of war and conflict
18 RESPECT FOR TRADITION	preservation of time-honoured customs
19 MATURE LOVE	deep emotional & spiritual intimacy
20 SELF-DISCIPLINE	self-restraint, resistance to

	temptation
21 PRIVACY	the right to have a private sphere
22 FAMILY SECURITY	safety for loved ones
23 SOCIAL RECOGNITION	respect, approval by others
24 UNITY WITH NATURE	fitting into nature
25 A VARIED LIFE	filled with challenge, novelty and change
26 WISDOM	a mature understanding of life
27 AUTHORITY	the right to lead or command
28 TRUE FRIENDSHIP	close, supportive friends
29 A WORLD OF BEAUTY	beauty of nature and the arts
30 SOCIAL JUSTICE	correcting injustice, care for the weak
31 INDEPENDENT	self-reliant, self-sufficient
32 MODERATE	avoiding extremes of feeling & action
33 LOYAL	faithful to my friends, group
34 AMBITIOUS	hard-working, aspiring
35 BROADMINDED	tolerant of different ideas and beliefs
36 HUMBLE	modest, self-effacing
37 DARING	seeking adventure, risk
38 PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT	preserving nature
39 INFLUENTIAL	having an impact on people and events
40 HONOURING OF PARENTS AND ELDERS	showing respect
41 CHOOSING OWN GOALS	selecting own purposes
42 HEALTHY	not being sick physically or mentally
43 CAPABLE	competent, effective, efficient
44 ACCEPTING MY PORTION IN LIFE	submitting to life's circumstances
45 HONEST	genuine, sincere
46 PRESERVING MY PUBLIC IMAGE	protecting my "face"
47 OBEDIENT	dutiful, meeting obligations
48 INTELLIGENT	logical, thinking
49 HELPFUL	working for the welfare of others
50 ENJOYING LIFE	enjoying food, sex, leisure, etc.
51 DEVOUT	holding to religious faith & belief
52 RESPONSIBLE	dependable, reliable
53 CURIOUS	interested in everything, exploring
54 FORGIVING	willing to pardon others
55 SUCCESSFUL	achieving goals
56 CLEAN	neat, tidy
57 SELF-INDULGENT	doing pleasant things

58 OBSERVING SOCIAL NORMS	to maintain face
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**SVS ítems**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Conformity</b>	<i>11, 20, 40, 47</i>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Tradition</b>	<i>18, 32, 36, 44, 51</i>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Benevolence</b>	<i>33, 45, 49, 52, 54</i>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Universalism</b>	<i>1, 17, 24, 26, 29, 30, 35, 38</i>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Self-Direction</b>	<i>5, 16, 31, 41, 53</i>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Stimulation</b>	<i>9, 25, 37</i>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Hedonism</b>	<i>4, 50, 57</i>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Achievement</b>	<i>34, 39, 43, 55</i>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Power</b>	<i>3, 12, 27, 46, 58</i>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Security</b>	<i>8, 13, 15, 22, 56</i>

# FACTORES QUE AFECTAN LA DINAMICA DE LAS EMPRESAS INTERNACIONALES: UN ANALISIS EMPIRICO EN COLOMBIA

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## RESUMEN

*El objetivo de este artículo es identificar los determinantes de los resultados internacionales de las empresas exportadoras tanto de tipo Tradicional como Born Global. Por tanto, se utiliza una muestra que incluye 319 empresas exportadoras pertenecientes a los dos grupos. Los autores utilizan un sistema de ecuaciones estructurales multigrupo para identificar si las empresas Born Global ven afectados sus Resultados internacionales de forma diferente a las empresas exportadoras tradicionales o si las diferencias sólo se enfocan en el modo de entrada al mercado internacional sin afectar significativamente los factores que inciden en los Resultados internacionales entre ambos grupos de empresas. Por tanto, se plantea como contribución la elaboración de un modelo general con factores relevantes de los Resultados internacionales como: la Orientación al Mercado Internacional, la Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo, la Orientación Innovadora, la Experiencia internacional y el Dinamismo del Mercado, para contrastar empíricamente si existen diferencias significativas entre las empresas Born Global y las empresas exportadoras tradicionales.*

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** *Internacionalización, Orientación al mercado, Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo, Resultados internacionales*

## 1. INTRODUCCION

El presente artículo pretende incluir los factores relevantes de los Resultados internacionales de las empresas exportadoras en Colombia a partir de tres orientaciones estrategicas como la Orientación al mercado, a la Orientación al aprendizaje y la Orientación innovadora. Estos autores tienen en cuenta que la Orientación al mercado tiene un efecto determinante en los Resultados organizacionales. Pero también existe una relación coetánea entre Orientación al mercado y Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo. La Orientación innovadora es considerada como uno de los más importantes factores que influyen sobre los resultados empresariales (Hurley y Hult, 1998) pero los antecedentes claves de esta orientación son la Orientación al mercado (Narver y Slater, 1990; Jaworski y Kohli, 1993) y la Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo (Baker y Sinkula, 2002).

## 2. RELACIONES CONCEPTUALES

### **La Experiencia internacional: antecedente de la Orientación al mercado internacional y de la Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo**

Se sugiere una relación positiva entre Experiencia internacional y Orientación al mercado internacional teniendo en cuenta que la Orientación al mercado internacional es considerada como una nueva dinámica del marketing internacional que permite a las empresas identificar mejor las oportunidades que ofrece el mercado internacional y minimizar las amenazas para lograr ser competitivo (Cadogan et al., 1999). De tal forma que poseer experiencia sobre la forma como se realizan las actividades internacionales permite tener un mayor acceso a la información, generando y difundiendo la información de los mercados y estableciendo una respuesta ágil y precisa para el cliente. Por lo tanto, la primera hipótesis propone:

Hipótesis 1: La Experiencia internacional influye positivamente sobre la Orientación al mercado internacional.

Por otra parte, tener una Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo puede aumentar la capacidad de absorber conocimientos específicos de aquellos aliados que cuentan con cierta experiencia dentro de la industria (Lane y Lubatkin, 1998). Por lo tanto, la tendencia de las empresas por desarrollar procesos de aprendizaje a partir de la conformación de redes de colaboración es impulsada por la experiencia adquirida previamente. En consecuencia se propone:

Hipótesis 2: La Experiencia internacional influye positivamente sobre la Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo.

### **El Dinamismo del mercado: efectos sobre la Orientación al mercado internacional y la Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo**

Cuanto mayor Dinamismo del mercado se genere debido a cambios en las preferencias de los clientes y movimientos estratégicos de los competidores, mayor será la tendencia de la organización por obtener información y posteriormente dar respuesta acorde a las necesidades de sus clientes (Blesa et al., 2008) en los diferentes mercados en los que opera como mecanismo para agregar valor y resultados empresariales. Por lo tanto la tercera hipótesis afirma:

Hipótesis 3: El Dinamismo del mercado influye positivamente sobre la Orientación al mercado internacional

En especial, la Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo, que se basa en el intercambio de información dado en las redes empresariales, acelera el flujo de información y aumenta la frecuencia de retroalimentación teniendo en cuenta que la actuación en mercados altamente dinámicos hace que las empresas utilicen más

mecanismos de aprendizaje de tipo formal e informal (Ellis y Shpielberg, 2003). A partir de esta información se llega a la siguiente propuesta:

Hipótesis 4: El Dinamismo del mercado tiene una influencia positiva sobre la Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo.

#### **La Orientación Innovadora como resultado de la Orientación al mercado internacional**

La razón detrás de esta relación radica en que las empresas que responden al mercado muestran un mayor compromiso hacia las necesidades de los clientes y evolucionan rápida y constantemente, buscando asegurar la satisfacción de sus clientes y ofreciendo innovaciones más radicales. Esta respuesta lleva a generar productos con mayor valor a los clientes, reforzando así la posición competitiva de la empresa, traduciéndose en mayores beneficios (Hurley et al., 2004; Erdil, 2004). Se plantea entonces la siguiente hipótesis:

Hipótesis 5: La Orientación al mercado internacional influye positivamente sobre la Orientación innovadora.

#### **La Orientación innovadora como resultado de la Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo**

Esta relación se debe a que una organización comprometida con el aprendizaje es probable que tenga mayor capacidad para innovar con respecto a sus competidores dado que dentro de sus actividades de aprendizaje se encuentran las acciones para monitorear a sus competidores, entendiendo las fortalezas y debilidades de sus rivales y aprendiendo tanto de sus éxitos como de sus fracasos (Gatignon y Xuereb, 1997). Por lo tanto:

Hipótesis 6: La Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo influye positivamente sobre la Orientación innovadora.

#### **Efectos de la Orientación al mercado internacional sobre los Resultados internacionales**

La Orientación al Mercado Internacional brinda la capacidad de crear valor superior para los clientes extranjeros. Si una empresa identifica las necesidades y preferencias de los clientes y es capaz de anticiparse a las necesidades futuras, tendrá una mejor posición para satisfacer a los clientes y desempeñarse bien frente a los competidores (Cadogan et al., 2002). De lo anterior se plantea la siguiente hipótesis:

Hipótesis 7: La Orientación al mercado internacional influye positivamente sobre los Resultados internacionales.

#### **Efectos de la Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo sobre los Resultados internacionales**

Las empresas orientadas al aprendizaje colaborativo logran intercambiar experiencias con otros miembros de la red de colaboración beneficiándose en términos de mayor cooperación, mayor información por compartir, y mejores acuerdos para el desarrollo de sus actividades en el mercado (Poh-Lin, 2004) mejorando así el rendimiento de los miembros de las empresas que forman parte de la red de colaboración. Por lo tanto, las ventajas obtenidas a partir del aprendizaje colaborativo conducen a resultados superiores a nivel organizacional. Por lo tanto se plantea la siguiente hipótesis:

Hipótesis 8: La Orientación al aprendizaje colaborativo influye positivamente sobre los Resultados internacionales de las empresas.

#### **Efectos de la Orientación innovadora sobre los Resultados internacionales**

Kirbach y Schmiedeberg (2006) han señalado que la Orientación innovadora puede afectar a los Resultados internacionales de las empresas, teniendo en cuenta que las empresas en los mercados extranjeros se han aprovechado de dicha capacidad para aprender cómo crecer en entornos altamente competitivos logrando el crecimiento en las exportaciones. De acuerdo a lo anterior se plantea:



### Hipótesis 9: La Orientación innovadora influye positivamente sobre los Resultados internacionales

Las hipótesis planteadas son contrastadas para la muestra total de empresas exportadoras. Sin embargo en la revisión de la literatura se ha observado que las empresas Born Global, caracterizadas por su diferente modo de entrada al mercado internacional, desarrollan ciertas capacidades que las hacen diferenciarse de las empresas exportadoras tradicionales e incluso obtener mayores Resultados internacionales que las empresas exportadoras tradicionales. De esta forma empiezan a aparecer diferentes estudios argumentando una mayor influencia de ciertas variables sobre los Resultados internacionales de las Born Global y por esta razón los estudios relacionados con el desempeño de las empresas Born Global.

## 3. METODOLOGIA

La presente investigación tiene como unidad de análisis las empresas exportadoras en Colombia, utilizándose los datos de las empresas exportadoras registradas en Proexport (Promoción de Turismo, Inversión y Exportaciones de Colombia) con fecha de corte octubre de 2012. A la hora de distinguir las empresas Born Global de las exportadoras tradicionales se utilizan tres criterios. El primero se relaciona con su primer año de exportación, que no superará los 5 años de constituida. En segundo lugar, debe tener más del 30% de ventas anuales en el exterior. El tercer criterio, tener presencia de sus productos en más de dos países destino.

## 4. Resultados

En la Tabla 1 se muestran los resultados de la estimación de un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales multigrupo donde se permiten obtener datos para todas las empresas exportadoras (muestra total) y para las dos clases de empresas exportadoras por separado: Born Global y Exportadoras tradicionales. Se observa que los parámetros obtenidos para cada relación son significativos y tienen el mismo signo postulado en las hipótesis. El ajuste de los modelos total y multigrupo son satisfactorios (Anderson y Gerbing, 1988). El RMSEA es menor de 0,05 y las medidas de ajuste incremental (CFI, NNFI) son superiores a 0,9. El GFI no supera el umbral de 0,90, sin embargo el NNFI y el IFI por ser índices de ajuste incremental son considerados mejores índices de ajuste con respecto al GFI que es un índice de orden absoluto. Por tanto, el modelo total se convierte en la base para la explicación de las hipótesis planteadas y se rechaza la existencia de diferencias globalmente significativas en los comportamientos mostrados por las empresas exportadoras tradicionales y las Born Global. En términos del modelo total se confirma la hipótesis 1, donde se plantea que la Experiencia previa tiene una influencia positiva en la Orientación al mercado internacional ( $\gamma_{11} = 0,75$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). Con respecto a la Hipótesis 2, la significatividad del coeficiente obtenido permite señalar una relación directa entre la Experiencia previa y el Aprendizaje colaborativo ( $\gamma_{51} = 0,49$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). Por otra parte, la hipótesis 3 asociada a la relación positiva entre el Dinamismo del mercado y la Orientación al Mercado Internacional queda corroborada ( $\gamma_{12} = 0,27$ ,  $p < 0,01$ ). Los resultados confirman la Hipótesis 4 de la influencia positiva entre el Dinamismo del mercado sobre el Aprendizaje colaborativo ( $\gamma_{52} = 0,15$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). En este sentido se confirma el papel de la Experiencia previa internacional y el Dinamismo del mercado como antecedentes de la Orientación al mercado internacional y de la Aprendizaje colaborativo. Con respecto a las consecuencias de la Orientación al mercado internacional y del Aprendizaje colaborativo se comprueba la influencia positiva de estas dos variables sobre la Orientación innovadora. Se confirma la hipótesis 5 acerca de la existencia de una influencia positiva de la Orientación al mercado internacional sobre la Orientación innovadora ( $\beta_{61} = 0,37$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). También es comprobada la hipótesis 6. Existe una influencia positiva del Aprendizaje colaborativo sobre la Orientación innovadora ( $\beta_{65} = 0,26$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). Por otra parte, también se comprueba que los Resultados internacionales dependen de la Orientación al mercado internacional y del Aprendizaje colaborativo. Se acepta la hipótesis 7 donde un comportamiento orientado al mercado internacional afecta positivamente a los Resultados internacionales ( $\beta_{71} = 0,26$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). También se logra comprobar la hipótesis 8 acerca de la influencia positiva del Aprendizaje colaborativo sobre los Resultados internacionales ( $\beta_{75} = 0,24$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). La hipótesis 9 hace referencia a la influencia positiva de la Orientación innovadora sobre los Resultados internacionales no

## FACTORES QUE AFECTAN LA DINAMICA DE LAS EMPRESAS INTERNACIONALES.....

comprobándose esta relación teniendo en cuenta que el coeficiente da no significativo ( $\beta_{76} = 0,09$ ;  $p > 0,1$ ).

**Tabla 1. Modelo Estructural de antecedentes y consecuencias de la Orientación al mercado internacional**

Relaciones en el modelo	Análisis Estructural Multigrupo							
	Total muestra			Born Global		Exportadoras tradicionales		Test diferencias X <sup>2</sup>
	Parámetro	Coefficiente estimado	t-valor	Coefficiente estimado	t-valor	Coefficiente estimado	t-valor	
EI-APRECOL	$\gamma_{51}$	0,49	7,74***	0,52	5,10***	0,44	5,41***	=
DM-OMI	$\gamma_{12}$	0,27	4,70***	0,26	2,70***	0,27	3,88***	=
DM-APRECOL	$\gamma_{52}$	0,15	2,37***	0,10	1,14	0,20	2,39***	=
APRECOL-OI	$\beta_{65}$	0,26	3,54***	0,19	1,86	0,30	2,96***	=
APRECOL-RI	$\beta_{75}$	0,24	4,54***	0,20	2,19***	0,12	1,12	=
OMI-OI	$\beta_{61}$	0,37	4,49***	0,55	3,81***	0,29	2,84***	=
OMI-RI	$\beta_{71}$	0,26	3,43***	-0,08	-0,66	0,43	4,23***	>
OI-RI	$\beta_{76}$	0,09	1,30	0,24	1,90	0,06	0,68	=
FE-RI	$\gamma_{73}$	0,37	6,24***	0,44	5,59***	0,28	3,35***	=
	X <sup>2</sup> <sub>(511)</sub> =819,31			X <sup>2</sup> <sub>(1022)</sub> =1531,50				
	GFI=0,87			GFI=0,83				
	RMSEA=0,044			RMSEA=0,050				
	CFI=0,98			CFI=0,97				
	TLI(NNFI)=0,98			TLI(NNFI)=0,9				

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# ANTECEDENTS OF SATISFACTION IN CITY BREAK TRAVELLING

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## RESUMEN

*Research on tourism has been enormously benefited from the marketing of services literature in the understanding of satisfaction, its antecedents and its consequent factors. However, recent emphasis on customers' experiences has shifted the focus to a redefinition of the antecedents of satisfaction. From a survey to a sample of 136 British city travelers, using Partial Least Squares, we compare the Quality and Value of Services frameworks and the Experience Economy framework in a series of three regression models in order to determine which one shows higher explanatory power. Both alternative frameworks allow for a high but almost equal levels.*

## Palabras clave:

Experience Economy framework, Quality of services, Value of services, City travelling, Satisfaction

## 1. Introduction

During the end of the 80s and the 90s, with the focus on reaching higher quality levels in products and services, advances were made both in disentangling the concepts of perceived quality, value satisfaction and its interrelations (Parasuraman *et al.* 1985, Zeithaml 1988, Cronin & Taylor 1992) and in developing measurement scales, such as SERVQUAL (Parasuraman, *et al.* 1988, Zeithaml *et al.* 1990) and SERVPERF (Cronin & Taylor 1992, 1994, Cronin *et al.* 2000) in services, or GLOVAL (Sánchez *et al.* 2006), PERVAL (Sweeney & Soutar 2001, Williams & Soutar 2009) and SERVPERVAL (Petrick & Backman 2002) in the context of touristic travelling.

More recently, the focus on customers' own experiences, particularly in the case of hospitality and touristic services, have added new insights in this long-standing trend to include 'relevant higher level abstractions' (Zeithaml 1988). As Pine and Gilmore (1999) state, "when a customer buys a service, he purchases a set of intangible activities carried out on his behalf. But when he buys an experience, he pays to spend time enjoying a series of memorable events that a company stages to engage him in a personal way" (p. 2).

With these ideas in mind, the principal aim of our study is to determine empirically up to which extent this shift of focus brings an improvement to the understanding of tourist satisfaction and behavioral intentions. To this end, we focus on city break travelling, a type of touristic activity that, compared to vacation travelling, is characterized by lower risk, lower involvement (Dunne *et al.* 2001) and, in many cases, a greater amount of autonomy from the side of travelers. Secondly, we aim to add more insight to the knowledge of city break travelling, a niche type of tourism that despite the fact of being increasingly acknowledged by city managers and administrators (Dunne *et al.* 2011), is yet to receive the attention it deserves from the academy.

## 2. Research hypotheses

Traditionally, the study of quality in services has been based on the Expectancy disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1981, Zeithaml 1988, Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry 1985, 1988). In particular, perceived quality is (1) different from objective quality, (2) entails a higher level of abstraction than focus on specific attributes, (3) it is a global assessment resembling attitude, and (4) it is rather "a judgment usually made within a consumer's evoked set" (Zeithaml 1988).

In the tourism context, this insight on the consumer's own judgments and attitudes has gone a step further with the differentiation between service quality and experience quality. The former has been referred to as the quality of the attributes of a service which are under the control of the supplier, while the latter adds to these attributes the tourists' own affective responses (Chen & Chen 2010).

A particular feature of short touristic travels to cities, compared to other types of vacation, may lie in the absence of a service provider. Consuming experiences can occur with or without an interaction with a service provider or 'experience enabler' in a market relation (Baron *et al.* 2010). In fact, touristic consuming experiences outline a continuum. At one extreme, there are complete products, services and experiences provided by private companies. At the other extreme, a traveler may opt for a travelling experience provided after contracting only a number of services from independent providers, sometimes at the point of destination, and seeking his or her travelling experience by himself or herself. This means that the quest of consumption experiences in city break travelling can fit in any point of this continuum. As a consequence, this idea brings important changes in the way to define quality of travel experience, when there can be no other service provider than the city itself.

For this reason, by quality of travel experience, in this study we refer to an overall judgment by a city traveler about the excellence of the ambience, amenities, services and options for leisure and entertainment that are offered in a city.

For its part, despite the fact of being a critical concept in customer consumption behavior, customer value has received less attention than service quality or satisfaction (Woodruff 1997, Williams & Soutar 2009). A customer forms an idea of the value of a product or service after considering the relative weight of its benefits against its costs or sacrifices (Zeithaml, 1988, Sweeney et al. 1999, Williams & Soutar 2009). In other words, the value of a product is the consumer's overall assessment of its utility based on perceptions on what is received and what is given (Zeithaml 1988, p.14).

Thus, our first three hypotheses form the core of our first proposed model are:

H<sub>1</sub>: The higher the level of quality of travel experience, the higher the tourist's value of travel experience.

H<sub>2</sub>: The higher the quality of travel experience the higher the tourist's satisfaction.

H<sub>3</sub>: The higher the value of travel experience, the higher the tourist's satisfaction

The second model we aim to test puts the antecedents of satisfaction in the experiences that a customer or, in this case, a traveler seeks. A critic to the expectancy disconfirmation theory, and its tangible form in the SERVQUAL model, has been argued on the fact that it does not adequately address the affective and holistic factors contributing to the overall quality of 'service experience' (Otto & Ritchie 1996). From the practice of marketing management, Pine and Gilmore (1999) argue that there has been a 'commodity mind-set' due to which many businesses missed the point on the fact that instead of services, customers want and are willing to pay for experiences, not merely tasks.

This difference in the point of view has been increasingly studied, and measurement scales have been proposed especially in the hospitality and touristic services literature (Stamboulis & Skayannis 2003, Quan & Wang, 2004, Oh et al. 2007, Andersson, 2007; Yuan & Wu, 2008, Hosany & Witham 2009, Mehmetoglu & Engen 2011). According to Pine and Gilmore's framework, the four factors that comprise the 'experience realms' are: entertainment, educational, escapist and esthetic.

An entertainment type of experience happens when customers passively absorb the consuming experience through their senses, "as generally occurs when viewing a performance, listening to the music or reading for pleasure" (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, p. 31). Secondly, the educational realm involves an active participation of the individual, contrary to the case of entertainment. Through it, the customer "absorbs the events unfolding before him" (p. 32). Thirdly, the escapist experience is one involving "a greater immersion than entertainment and education", and making the customer become an actor, detached or distracted from his or her own self at least for a time (p.33). Finally, the esthetic realm refers to experiences in which individuals are immersed and affected by the environment, contemplating and discovering through the senses about the fact of being there in that moment.

Pine and Gilmore (1999) also distinguish these four experience realms according to two coordinates forming a plane (p.30): passive *versus* active participation, and absorption *versus* immersion. In this sense, educational and escapist experiences demand active participation, whereas entertainment and esthetic are of a passive type. Correspondingly, entertainment and educational are more absorptive compared to esthetic and escapist experiences, which entail more immersion.

According to this, and following the ideas set in the same way in previous works (Oh et al. 2007, Hosany & Witham 2009, Mehmetoglu & Engen 2011) our hypotheses are:

H<sub>4</sub>: The higher the level of education experienced, the higher the tourists' satisfaction.

H<sub>5</sub>: The higher the level of entertainment in the travelling experience, the higher the tourist's satisfaction.

H<sub>6</sub>: The higher the level of escapism in the travelling experience, the higher the tourist's satisfaction.

H<sub>7</sub>: The higher the level of esthetics in the travelling experience, the higher the tourist's satisfaction.

From a practical point of view, it is obvious that the public and private agents in a city not only need to obtain an assessment of the perceived quality and the value from its touristic visitors. They also seek to set aims in favor of repetition of visiting experiences and good reputation. It is for this reason that quality and value have been related to word-of-mouth and repetition of destination in the study of touristic travelling (Cronin et al. 2000, Baker & Cropton 2000, Petrick & Backman 2002, Petrick 2004, Williams & Soutar 2009, Chen & Chen 2010, to mention a few).

Although there have been differing results in terms of the direct links between quality, value, satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Cronin et al. 2000, Chen & Chen 2010), in our study the main focus is to analyze the explanatory power of the first two on satisfaction, and the antecedent effect that this factor supposes on repetition and word-of-mouth. Thus, our general hypotheses are:

H<sub>8</sub>: The higher the general satisfaction from travelling, the higher the tourist's intention to revisit.

H<sub>9</sub>: The higher the general satisfaction from travelling, the higher the tourist's positive word-of-mouth.

H<sub>10</sub>: The higher the intention to revisit, the higher the tourist's positive word-of-mouth.

### 3. Empirical research

The empirical study is based on an internet survey to a group of 136 valid interviews to British Internet users during April 2013. Selection criteria was followed by means of two consecutive filter questions, the first of which differentiated whether the respondent travelled for touristic or working reasons to any national or international European destination within the last twelve months. The second filtering question was used to discard those respondents whose travelling consisted on visiting rural or non-urban destinations for more than 50% of the time spent. Finally, a one-by-one selection process was applied in order to discard those travellers whose destination was clearly non-urban, consisted on longer trips of a month or more or did not refer to any real or specific European city. Table 1 describes the main features of the sample gathered.

TABLE 1  
Descriptive values obtained from the respondents

Variable		Result
Gender	Female	63.2%
	Male	36.8%
Age	18 to 34 years	36.1%
	35 to 54 years	31.6%
	55 to 64 years	18.4%
	65 years or more	15.4%
Marital status	Single/ Alone	27.1%
	Married/living with partner	72.8%
Education level	Secondary school	25.7%
	Vocational Education and Training (VET)	17.6%



	General Academic Studies Degree	16.2%			
	Graduate	32.4%			
	Master's / Doctoral degree	8.1%			
<b>Destination</b>	Own country (UK)	36%			
	Abroad	64%			
<b>Travelling with...</b>	Alone	16.2%			
	With company	83.8%			
<b>No. times of visit to this city</b>	Never before	39%			
	1 to 4 times	22.3%			
	5 times or more	28.7%			
<b>Type of visit and main reason</b>	A trip within a longer vacation trip	15.4%			
	Within a longer trip for other purposes	13.2%			
	An expressly planned trip to this city	71.3%			
<b>Days spent in the city</b>	1	12.5%			
	2	12.5%			
	3	25.7%			
	4	17.6%			
	5	14%			
	6 to 21 (highest)	17.6%			
<b>Quoted total budget (individual)</b>	Less than € 500 (£ 433)	44.9%			
	From 500 € to 1000 € (£ 433 to £ 866)	26.5%			
	From 1001 € to 1500 € (£ 867 to £ 1300)	15.4%			
	From 1501 € to 2000 € (£ 1301 to £ 1333)	8.1%			
	2001 € (£ 1334) or more	5.1%			
<b>Contracting form of:</b>	<b>Trip</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>	<b>Meals</b>	<b>Rent-a-car</b>	<b>Sightseeing program</b>
<b>Didn't contract</b>	16.2%	24.3%	27.9%	89.7%	44.9%
<b>Internet</b>	60.3%	56.6%	12.5%	5.1%	16.2%
<b>On destination</b>	8.8%	5.1%	53.7%	3.7%	32.4%
<b>With travel agent</b>	14.7%	14%	5.9%	1.5%	6.6%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

### 3.1. Preparation and testing of the questionnaire

Although the constructs for the Education, Entertainment, Escapism and Esthetic experience realms were defined by Pine and Gilmore as central components of their Experience Economy framework (1999, pp.29-31), they did not propose measurement scales for them. However, other authors from the academic field have developed scales, such as Oh et al. (2007), Hosany and Witham (2009), and Mehmetoglu and Engen (2011). The first work presents a thorough set of scales for the aforementioned factors. However, we choose Mehmetoglu and Engen's (2011) set for brevity reasons in the need to handle an affordable extension in the questionnaire<sup>1</sup>. For the case of Value of travel experience we drew on Sweeney and Soutar (2001), Petrick (2004), Gallarza and Saura (2006), Williams and Soutar (2009), Cronin *et al.* (2000), and Forgas-Coll *et al.* (2012). In the particular case of Quality of travel experience, we also based generically on these works, although in this case, due to the specificity of city break travelling, consisting on giving an opinion about the own perceived quality as a result to a visit to a city, we had to set an own list of items for it. Lastly, the consequent (resulting) factors of General Satisfaction, Intention to revisit, and Word-of-Mouth were based on Petrick (2004).

<sup>1</sup> We also defined and included scales for measuring the antecedents of quality and value of travel experience, that were currently set in the literature. However, they are not relevant for the specific purposes of our study here.

### 3.2. Results of the contrast tests

To analyse the measuring model, we extracted the Cronbach's alpha, average variance extracted (AVE) and construct reliability measures. All these reliability measures give values above the recommended levels of 0.707 for the case of loading factors, 0.7 (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2005) for Cronbach's alphas, of 0.5 for the case of the average variances extracted (AVE), and of 0.65 for the case of composite reliability measures (Fornell & Larcker 1981). For their part, general goodness-of-fit tests provide good results. Table 2 shows the final set of items that complied with the reliability, validity and measurement invariance tests.

TABLE 2  
Standardized loadings and reliability measures for items and factors

	Standzd. loadings	Cronbach's alpha	AVE	Composite reliability
F1 EDU1: The visit to this city made me more knowledgeable	0.933			
EDU2: I learnt something new during my visit	0.911	0.824	0.850	0.919
F2 ENT2: I enjoyed sightseeing this city	0.891			
ENT1: The visit to this city was entertaining to me	0.889	0.738	0.792	0.884
F3 ESC1: I forgot all about time	0.944			
ESC2: During my visit to this city, I got carried away by the different events	0.810	0.727	0.774	0.872
F4 EST1: I experienced the surroundings of this city as attractive	0.909			
EST2: The surroundings strengthened my overall experience	0.890	0.765	0.809	0.895
F5 RQual3: Definitely, this is a good city for visitors	0.935			
RQual1: Overall, I believe this is a city of good quality for visitors	0.911			
RQual2: In general, I believe this city offers amenities, services and infrastructures of good quality to visitors	0.897	0.879	0.805	0.925
F6 REV2: The travelling experience from visiting this city is worth the time and effort spent on it	0.906			
REV1: The value I received from visiting this city is worth the money it cost	0.887			
REV3: The travelling experience compares favorably to other cities that we've seen	0.831	0.902	0.836	0.939
F7 RSat1: I am happy with the experience of having gone to this city	0.932			
RSat2: My choice to travel to that place was a wise one	0.900			
RSat3: We were delighted by what we lived and we saw there	0.867	0.847	0.766	0.907
F8 RRev1: I will choose to visit this city again	0.947			
RRev2: If I find a good price, in the future I will choose to visit this city again	0.929			
RRev3: It is possible that I will come back within the next five years	0.918	0.883	0.810	0.928
F9 RWOM2: If I completed a travel review on this city, it would be in general a positive one	0.960			
RWOM3: Overall, I would recommend this place to visit	0.949			
RWOM1: Overall, I have done a good comment about the travel to the city to my friends and relatives	0.928	0.924	0.868	0.952

Also, the square roots from any AVE value obtained bring resulting values that are higher than any squared correlation from their corresponding row or column. Therefore, convergent and discriminant validity among the obtained factors is ascertained (Anderson & Gerbing 1988). Table 3 shows the linear correlations of the obtained factors.

TABLE 3  
Bivariate correlations among factors

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8
<b>Education</b>								
<b>Entertainment</b>	0.612							
<b>Escapism</b>	0.513	0.463						
<b>Esthetics</b>	0.712	0.865	0.439					
<b>QualTravExp</b>	0.480	0.727	0.363	0.676				
<b>Value TravExp</b>	0.638	0.728	0.547	0.662	0.704			
<b>GenSat</b>	0.625	0.771	0.492	0.588	0.719	0.807		
<b>IntRevisit</b>	0.453	0.688	0.455	0.588	0.664	0.734	0.798	
<b>W-O-M</b>	0.573	0.770	0.467	0.712	0.771	0.818	0.837	0.791

The regression analysis was performed by means of Partial Least Square analysis. Three alternative models are tested, all including the resulting constructs of Satisfaction, Intention to revisit and Word-of-Mouth related in the same way (Table 4). Model 1 comprises the four defined measures of Experience economy as sole antecedents, whereas Model 2 considers the alternative of quality of travel experience, value of travel experience and the moderating effect of value on the relation between quality and satisfaction. Finally, Model 3 is an aggregation of the two previous models.

Table 4 shows the results from the coefficients and regression functions of satisfaction on the previously defined factors from the two compared frameworks, as well as the intention to revisit and word-of-mouth on the former.

In the case of Model 1, results show that the attributes of Entertainment followed by Aesthetics significantly affect on general satisfaction. The third factor in size of effect is Escapism. Thus, respectively, hypotheses H<sub>5</sub>, H<sub>7</sub> and H<sub>6</sub> are supported. For its part, Education does not seem to explain general satisfaction of travel experience among city breakers, meaning that hypothesis H<sub>4</sub> is not supported. Judging these results from Pine and Gilmore's (1999) classification of experience realms, at an aggregated level, it seems that city break travelling could be characterized as an experience of passive participation, and of immersion up to an extent, meaning that it entails a high degree of entertainment and aesthetics, and some degree of escapism.

From the results in Model 2, both the value of travel experience, followed by the perceived quality seem to exert a significant influence on general satisfaction. Also, the mediation effect of the value of travel experience in the relation between quality and satisfaction appears to be statistically significant. Therefore, hypotheses H<sub>3</sub> and H<sub>2</sub> are sustained. Also, judging from the values of the coefficients and the significance of this mediating effect, value of travel experience turns out to be clearly the most influential factor between these two.

Judging from the size of the coefficients of determination ( $R^2$ ) between Models 1 and 2, we find that the second is only slightly greater. The calculated confidence intervals for both models,  $R_1^2$  and  $R_2^2$  (Cohen et al., 2003, p.88) give overlapping values, meaning that Model 2 does not predict General Satisfaction significantly more than Model 1.

With respect to Model 3, comprising the combined effects, results indicate that only aesthetics and entertainment from the Experience Economy framework, along with value of travel experience, from the second framework, have significant regression coefficients, meaning that H<sub>3</sub>, H<sub>7</sub> and, also significantly but to a lesser extent H<sub>5</sub>, would still be supported. However, these significant effects have a reduced size in their slopes compared to their respective values in alternative Models 1 and 2. On the contrary, hypotheses H<sub>2</sub> (quality of travel) and H<sub>6</sub> (escapism) would not hold as in their respective (previously tested) models. Finally, the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) for Model 3 shows a confidence interval that overlaps with those from Models 1 and 2. Therefore, it cannot be concluded that this model has a significantly greater explanatory power than the two previous models.

TABLE 4  
**Regression Coefficients, *t* values, and Model Summary Information  
for the Serial Multiple Mediator Model depicted in Figures 1a and 1b:**

	Total	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Hypothesis	Direct and indirect effects	Stand. Coeff.	Two-tailed <i>t</i>	Stand. Coeff.	Two-tailed <i>t</i>	Stand. Coeff.	Two-tailed <i>t</i>
H <sub>1</sub>	<i>Quality of TE</i> → <i>Value of TE</i>			0.099	1.784*	0.099	1.761*
H <sub>2</sub>	<i>Quality of TE</i> → <i>GenSatisf</i>	---	---	0.301	3.926***	0.107	1.278
H <sub>3</sub>	<i>Value of TE</i> → <i>GenSatisf</i>	---	---	0.595	8.429***	0.402	5.129***
	<i>Quality of TE</i> → <i>Value of TE</i> → <i>GenSatisf</i>	---	---	0.057	1.671*	0.039	1.646
H <sub>4</sub>	<i>Education</i> → <i>GenSatisf.</i>	0.052	0.754	---	---	-0.013	0.864
H <sub>5</sub>	<i>Entertainment</i> → <i>GenSatisf</i>	0.410	4.269***	---	---	0.181	1.894*
H <sub>6</sub>	<i>Escapism</i> → <i>GenSatisf</i>	0.113	1.908*	---	---	0.031	0.547
H <sub>7</sub>	<i>Esthetics</i> → <i>GenSatisf</i>	0.370	3.914***	---	---	0.286	3.174**
	<b><i>R</i><sup>2</sup><sub>GenSatisf</sub></b>	<b>0.687</b>		<b>0.696</b>		<b>0.766</b>	
	<i>CI of R</i> <sup>2</sup> <sub>GenSatisf</sub>	(0.602 , 0.772)		(0.612 , 0.780)		(0.700 , 0.832)	
H <sub>8</sub>	<i>GenSatisf</i> → <i>IntnRevisit</i>	0.798	26.352***	0.798	25.546***	0.798	26.559***
	<b><i>R</i><sup>2</sup><sub>IntnRevisit</sub></b>	<b>0.637</b>					
	<i>CI of R</i> <sup>2</sup> <sub>IntnRevisit</sub>	(0.540 , 0.734)					
H <sub>9</sub>	<i>GenSatisf</i> → <i>W-O-M</i>	0.580	4.952***	0.568	4.932***	0.567	4.934***
H <sub>10</sub>	<i>IntnRevisit</i> → <i>W-O-M</i>	0.338	2.999**	0.337	3.045**	0.338	3.038**
	<i>GenSatisf</i> → <i>IntnRevisit</i> → <i>W-O-M</i>	0.260	2.864**	0.261	2.930**	0.261	2.940**
	<b><i>R</i><sup>2</sup><sub>W-O-M</sub></b>	<b>0.743</b>					
	<i>CI of R</i> <sup>2</sup> <sub>W-O-M</sub>	(0.669 , 0.817)					

One tail significance levels: \*  $p < 0.05$  ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

With respect to the regression functions of the intention to revisit on satisfaction, and word-of-mouth, on the former two, all the obtained regression coefficients give statistically significant values<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, satisfaction leads to intention to revisit the city. Also, both satisfaction and the intention to revisit the city seem to lead to a good word-of-mouth with friends and acquaintances. In particular, there is also a significant mediating role from the factor of intention to revisit the city in the relation between satisfaction and word-of-mouth.

#### 4. Conclusions

Over the last 30 years the study of determinants of satisfaction in touristic services has experienced significant progress. The efforts made in the measurement of perceived quality and value, and their relations with satisfaction and behavioral intentions in services have given light to the understanding of customers' interpretations about their consumption process. It has been known and repeatedly evidenced that consumers organize information at increasing levels of abstraction, ranging from a product's physical attributes, through its functional and practical benefits, up to reaching its emotional payoffs (Young & Feigin 1975). In this line, progress in measurement scales during these years has gradually given way to the inclusion of "the salient intrinsic attributes, extrinsic attributes, perceived quality, and other relevant high level abstractions", as it was proposed by Zeithaml (1988, p. 14).

In the case of touristic travelling, this evolving process has given way to conceptually rich and new points of view stressing more on the *experiential aspect* of consumption. Despite the advantages of these alternatives, at least from the results of the regressions performed in our study, it does not seem this new factors or their combined use with the previous ones add more explanatory power.

Secondly, with regard to the characterization of city break travelling, interestingly, these trips seem to create basically an entertaining and esthetic experience, and a slight degree of escapism in travelers.

Finally, evidence sustains the idea that in city breaks, satisfaction leads very especially to an intention to revisit the city, but also to a positive word-of-mouth. It also seems clear that the intention to revisit mediates in the relation from satisfaction to word-of-mouth.

#### 5. Limitaciones and implications for future research

We must admit that there is still more work to do in future analyses delving into the primary antecedents of satisfaction and behavioral intentions, especially in the case of adding attributes defined from the prism of travelers' experiences, for which the literature is still scarce. Also, it is convenient to conduct additional tests to the combined relations among factors from these two frameworks, in order to understand more deeply what determines satisfaction, repetition and good-referencing in city travelling.

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<sup>2</sup> Although some of the coefficients and all of their *t* values may slightly vary, this is only due to the fact that they were obtained in three different bootstrapping trials of 5,000 values in each. In theory, they are the same regression and should not differ.

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# ANÁLISIS DE LA INFLUENCIA DEL MEDIO DE COMPRA EN LA EVALUACIÓN DE UN SERVICIO TURÍSTICO: UN ANÁLISIS MULTIPAÍS

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## RESUMEN

*El objetivo de esta investigación es analizar el impacto de la cultura en la percepción de valor de un servicio en función del medio que se haya utilizado para su adquisición, bien sea el canal tradicional (canal offline) o Internet. La muestra está formada por 300 consumidores españoles y 300 británicos. Dado que los dos países objeto de estudio difieren en sus dimensiones culturales, se realiza un análisis multigrupo que permite analizar el efecto moderador de la cultura sobre los determinantes de la calidad del servicio hotelero y del valor. Los resultados muestran que las diferencias culturales se ponen de manifiesto cuando el servicio se adquiere vía online, mientras que cuando el servicio se adquiere a través del canal offline, la cultura no determina la percepción de calidad del consumidor.*

## Palabras clave:

Satisfacción, Riesgo percibido, Calidad del servicio, Valor percibido, Cultura, Canal offline e Internet.

## 1. Introducción

El conocimiento por parte del proveedor de un servicio de la evaluación del mismo por el consumidor, es fundamental para comprender su comportamiento (Nilson 1992; Ostrom y Iacobucci 1995). Además, la evaluación del servicio se ha considerado un constructo subjetivo que puede variar en función del medio en el que se haya comprado, es decir, esa evaluación se ve afectada por el canal utilizado para la adquisición del servicio.

En los últimos años las agencias de viaje tradicionales han experimentado grandes dificultades para atraer y mantener a los consumidores, además de hacer frente a los desafíos presentados por la naturaleza cambiante de la industria turística. El aumento de las expectativas de los visitantes y el crecimiento del uso de las tecnologías de la información, en particular Internet, son algunos de los factores que han hecho que sea más difícil para las agencias de viaje mantener su ventaja competitiva. Las agencias de viajes tradicionales han sido el canal de distribución más usado por los turistas (Buhalis y Law, 2008; Suárez et al., 2007). Sin embargo, en los últimos años, Internet ha revolucionado la industria del viaje y del turismo (Xiang et al., 2014) y se ha convertido en la fuente de información más importante para los turistas (Wu et al., 2008; IET, 2010) así como el medio más usado para la adquisición de determinados servicios turísticos (Frontur, 2010).

Dado el crecimiento exponencial de los viajes internacionales, el interés por las influencias de las dimensiones culturales en el comportamiento de los turistas está empezando a fortalecer el conocimiento en este campo. Para alcanzar el éxito en el desarrollo del turismo internacional, los profesionales del sector deben entender las diferencias culturales entre los turistas, así como entre los turistas y los lugares visitados (Meng, 2010) y adaptar el diseño de sus plataformas de venta para atender las necesidades de estos turistas internacionales (Tigre et al., 2014).

Concretamente, la investigación cross-cultural es relevante dentro de la industria turística por varias razones (Pizam y Fleischer, 2005). En primer lugar, la industria ha experimentado un importante crecimiento internacional en los últimos años. En segundo lugar, las características culturales son de importancia vital para el atractivo real de un producto. Por último, el turismo es un servicio consumido por personas de diferentes nacionalidades.

A pesar de la importancia reconocida de la cultura en turismo (Pizam y Jeong, 1996; Kozak, 2002, entre otros), se han llevado a cabo pocos estudios para comprender cómo las dimensiones culturales influyen en la evaluación del servicio turístico. En este contexto, es importante considerar el papel determinante de la cultura nacional en la conformación de la interacción humana en todas sus formas, incluyendo tanto las agencias de viaje tradicionales como el mercado online, teniendo en cuenta que la cultura puede ayudar a explicar muchos de los patrones observados en las preferencias de los turistas y en sus comportamientos. En palabras de Reisinger y Turner (2003, p. 10) "la cultura del turista explica su comportamiento". Tomando estas consideraciones como punto de referencia, el propósito de este estudio es analizar el impacto de la cultura en el valor percibido de un servicio en función del medio que se haya utilizado para su adquisición, bien sea el canal tradicional o Internet. Concretamente, el objetivo de esta investigación es analizar cómo la evaluación que realiza el individuo sobre el canal de compra (satisfacción, riesgo percibido) influye sobre la evaluación del servicio turístico consumido (calidad y valor percibido del servicio hotelero), teniendo en cuenta dos canales principales de compra (agencia e Internet). Además, se analizan las posibles



diferencias que se puedan encontrar debidas a las dimensiones culturales “aversión al riesgo” e “individualismo-colectivismo”.

## **2. Revisión de la literatura e hipótesis**

### ***2.1. El canal de compra en la evaluación de un servicio turístico***

#### ***2.1.1. El canal de compra como determinante de la evaluación del servicio turístico***

La calidad del servicio y el valor percibido son dos de las variables clave de la evaluación de un servicio turístico. Con respecto a la calidad percibida del servicio, estudios previos establecen, tanto desde un punto de vista teórico (Chen and Dubinsky, 2003; Cronin et al., 2000), como desde un enfoque empírico (Liao and Wu, 2009; Kumar and Lim, 2008; Kim et al., 2008; Snoj et al., 2004) – que la calidad del servicio es un factor determinante del valor percibido. Concretamente, diversos investigadores proponen que la calidad del servicio tiene un efecto positivo sobre el valor percibido global (Fornell et al. 1996) y queda demostrado en estudios previos (Cronin et al. 2000; Dodds et al. 1991).

La evaluación de un servicio se ve afectada por la experiencia en la compra del turista. En el caso concreto de un turista, se puede asumir que, la evaluación que el turista realiza del proceso de compra en un canal –tradicional o electrónico- (fundamentalmente medido a partir de la satisfacción y el riesgo) debe influir sobre la evaluación del propio servicio. Basándonos en la Teoría de Redes (Collins and Loftus, 1975) que postula que la memoria está estructurada por nodos y que los nodos están relacionados entre ellos. Podemos asumir que, el canal usado para adquirir el servicio y el propio servicio son nodos que están vinculados.

#### ***2.1.2. Diferencias entre los canales de distribución: agencias de viaje tradicionales e Internet***

La revisión de la literatura pone de manifiesto que la evaluación de la oferta electrónica difiere de los servicios tradicionales interpersonales (Liljander et al., 2002; Santos, 2003; van Riel et al., 2001). Claramente el componente diferenciador es la tecnología (Parasuraman y Grewal, 2000). Internet presenta ventajas importantes respecto a las agencias tradicionales tales como la accesibilidad, la facilidad de actualización, la información en tiempo real, comunicaciones interactivas, etc. Sin embargo, desde el punto de vista del consumidor, la percepción de riesgo en la utilización de Internet para hacer compras es más alta que en las agencias de viaje tradicionales, ya que deben proporcionar los datos personales y la información relacionada con el pago antes de recibir el producto o servicio. En otras palabras, la compra a través de Internet trae consigo un mayor grado de ambigüedad que las compras en los establecimientos tradicionales, como las agencias de viajes (Suki y Suki, 2007). A diferencia de los sitios webs, las agencias de viajes obtienen mejores resultados en la interacción personal. Obtienen mejores resultados que los oferentes online en relación al contacto humano y los servicios personalizados (Law, et al., 2004) y por lo tanto se espera una mayor satisfacción en este canal.

Así se propone que,

*H1. El canal a través del cual compra el cliente un servicio turístico influye en la calidad percibida de dicho servicio.*

## **2.2. Efecto moderador de la cultura en la evaluación de un servicio turístico**

Estudios previos establecen que la cultura es persuasiva en todos los aspectos del consumo y el comportamiento del consumidor y debería de ser integrada en las teorías de comportamiento del consumidor (Mooij, 2004). A partir de los años 80, diversos investigadores han debatido sobre las dimensiones más apropiadas para conceptualizar la cultura (Hofstede, 1980, 1991; Keillor y Hule, 1999; Steenkamp, 2001, por ejemplo). Sin embargo, el marco desarrollado por Hofstede (1980, 2010) es el paradigma cultural más empleado (Sivakumar and Nakata, 2001; Steenkamp, 2001). Hofstede define la cultura nacional como “el programa colectivo de la mente que distingue a los miembros de un grupo de los miembros de otro grupo diferente” (Hofstede, 1991, p. 5). Su marco propone cinco dimensiones con el propósito de ilustrar que “las diferencias culturales entre las naciones modernas deberían ser significativamente medidas y ordenadas en un conjunto discreto de variables, representando diferentes respuestas a un problema universal de la sociedad humana” (Hofstede, 1991). Las cinco dimensiones son: distancia al poder, aversión al riesgo, individualismo-colectivismo, masculinidad-feminidad y orientación a largo plazo. Sin embargo, las dimensiones de individualismo-colectivismo y aversión al riesgo son las más empleadas en la investigación cross-cultural del comportamiento del consumidor (Yaveroglu y Donthu, 2002; Yenyurt y Townsend, 2003; Reimann et al., 2008).

Individualismo se refiere a una cultura en la cual la gente cuida solamente de sí mismo y de su familia más inmediata, mientras que en culturas colectivistas prevalecen los valores del grupo frente a los individuales. La aversión al riesgo hace referencia a la extensión por la cual la gente se siente asustada por la incertidumbre y la ambigüedad e intenta evitar tales situaciones (Hofstede, 1980, 1991, 2001).

Estudios previos ponen de manifiesto que los sentimientos y las emociones de los consumidores son aspectos importantes del comportamiento del consumidor (Derbaix y Pham 1991; Havlena y Holbrook 1986). De modo que, los aspectos emocionales y afectivos de las teorías del proceso de decisión evidencian que el valor de la experiencia puede influir en la calidad percibida del servicio (Schwarz y Clore 1988). Además, un sentimiento positivo que tiene un consumidor de una experiencia previa llevaría a una evaluación positiva de calidad, mientras que un sentimiento negativo nos conduciría a una percepción de calidad negativa (Schwarz y Clore 1988).

La literatura pone de manifiesto que turistas de diferentes culturas difieren en la evaluación global de la calidad percibida de un servicio (Donthu y Yoo, 1998, Furrer et al., 2000, Hsieh y Tsai 2009). Estas variaciones pueden deberse a la dimensión cultural de individualismo-colectivismo.

Culturas consideradas individualistas ponen más énfasis en los atributos específicos de un proceso o producto y presentan una mayor preferencia por los valores utilitarios del intercambio (Bhawuk y Brislín 1992). Mientras que culturas colectivistas dan más valor a las opiniones de otras personas (Samli 1995; Mooij 2004). En concreto, en las sociedades individualistas, los consumidores principalmente persiguen sus propios intereses (Dash et al. 2009) y son menos tolerantes con los proveedores que ofrecen una calidad del servicio deficitaria. Por el contrario, los consumidores colectivistas son más tolerantes frente a un servicio defectuoso (Donthu y Yoo 1998). La búsqueda de

información online y la satisfacción con el sitio web son en gran medida experiencias individuales. Por lo tanto, es de esperar que los consumidores de culturas individualistas pongan más énfasis en la relación entre la satisfacción con la atención recibida durante la contratación del servicio y la calidad percibida del servicio turístico consumido que los individuos de culturas colectivistas.

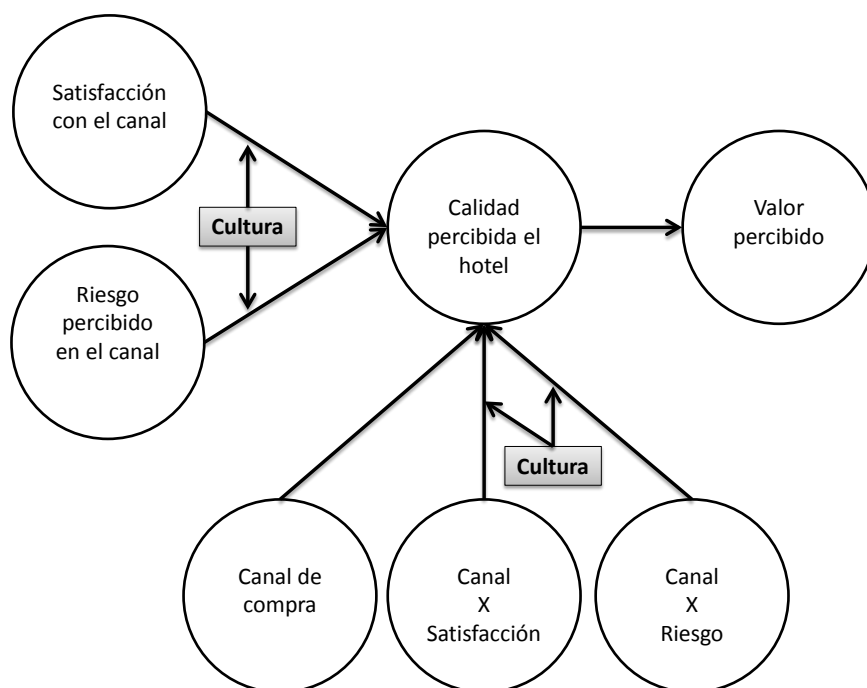
También el riesgo asumido en la decisión de compra tendrá un impacto en la calidad percibida del hotel. De modo que podría plantearse una relación negativa entre el riesgo y la percepción de la calidad para turistas de culturas con fuerte aversión al riesgo. Consumidores procedentes de culturas con una elevada aversión al riesgo están más preocupadas por las promesas hechas por el proveedor del servicio y con la seguridad (Lee and Joshi, 2007) – en otras palabras, con la calidad del servicio. Sin embargo, estas relaciones serán poco importantes para los turistas con una baja aversión al riesgo, dada su sensibilidad al riesgo relativamente baja (Suki y Suki 2007).

En resumen, se puede concluir que las diferencias encontradas en turistas de distintas culturas en términos de individualismo-colectivismo y aversión al riesgo van a tener un efecto moderador sobre la formación de la calidad percibida del servicio turístico, por lo tanto se propone que,

*H2. La cultura a la que pertenece un turista modera el efecto de la satisfacción y del riesgo como principales determinantes de la calidad percibida del servicio turístico adquirido.*

A partir de esta revisión de la literatura, el modelo conceptual que se propone testar en esta investigación es el recogido en la figura 1.

**Figura 1. Modelo teórico propuesto**



### 3. Metodología

#### 3.1. Diseño de la muestra y recolección de datos

Se ha seleccionado una muestra de turistas procedentes de dos nacionalidades, española y británica. La elección está basada en que España y Reino Unido muestran grandes diferencias en las dimensiones culturales individualismo/colectivismo y de aversión al riesgo (Hofstede 1980, 2001).

TABLA 1  
Puntuaciones de las dimensiones culturales de Hofstede para España y Reino Unido

	España	Reino Unido
Individualismo-Colectivismo	51	89
Aversión al riesgo	86	35

El estudio está basado en dos cuestionarios estructurados realizados telefónicamente. Un cuestionario fue administrado a turistas, tanto españoles (150) como británicos (150), que han contratado el servicio turístico a través de las agencias de viaje tradicionales y otro cuestionario administrado a turistas (españoles – 150 - y británicos-150-) que han contratado el servicio turístico a través de agencias de viaje online. Concretamente el servicio contratado era el de un hotel. Los cuestionarios cuentan con dos preguntas filtro para poder incluir a los turistas en la muestra. En primer lugar, que los turistas hayan contratado el hotel usando uno de los dos canales analizados y, en segundo lugar, que su nacionalidad, bien sea española o británica, coincida con su país de residencia

Respecto a la composición de la muestra, el 51,4 % de los encuestados fueron hombres y el resto mujeres. La mayoría de los turistas tenían más de 35 años. Alrededor del 90% de todos los encuestados provenían de hogares formados por dos o más personas, el 59% cuenta con estudios universitarios y el 74% contaba con un trabajo remunerado.

### 3.3. Escalas de medida

Todas las escalas de medida han sido adaptadas de instrumentos validados usados en la literatura.

**Satisfacción:** se midió usando dos ítems ampliamente aceptados en la literatura (grado de satisfacción y grado de placer) (Oliver 1981).

**Calidad percibida del hotel:** se midió usando una versión adaptada de la escala de Dodds et al. (1991), Grewal et al. (1998), Sweeney et al. (1999) y Teas y Agarwal (2000). (El hotel es de buena calidad; El hotel es fiable; El hotel está disponible).

**Riesgo percibido:** se midió a partir de una escala adaptada de estudios previos (Gupta and Kim 2010; Chen and Dubinsky 2003; Sweeney et al. 1999). (Es arriesgado comprar un producto de estas características; Es probable que en la reserva haya algún error).

**Valor percibido:** se usó una escala utilizada en el sector servicios (Gallarza and Gil 2006; Cronin et al. 2000; Zeithaml 1988). (El valor de esta compra ha sido bueno; La diferencia entre lo que he dado y recibido ha sido positiva; La compra ha satisfecho mis necesidades y mis carencias).

Para todas las escalas de medida se utiliza un rango 1-5 en formato Likert.

## 4. Resultados

Para estimar los dos modelos, y dado que, tanto en las agencias de viajes como en Internet los datos no siguen una distribución normal multivariante, se utilizó bootstrap con 1000 réplicas para los test de significación de los parámetros.

Con respecto a la evaluación del modelo de medida, se demuestra que el alpha de Cronbach ( $\alpha$ ) está dentro de los límites recomendados por la literatura. También se calcularon los índices de fiabilidad compuesta (FC) y varianza extraída (VE), con resultados favorables, por encima del 0,7 y 0,5 respectivamente (Tabla 2).

TABLA 2  
Fiabilidad compuesta y Varianza Extraída

	España			Reino Unido		
	FC	VE	$\alpha$	FC	VE	$\alpha$
<b>Satisfacción</b>	0.89	0.80	0.89	0.86	0.76	0.86
<b>Riesgo percibido</b>	0.70	0.55	0.68	0.67	0.48	0.64
<b>Calidad del hotel</b>	0.86	0.75	0.84	0.89	0.80	0.88
<b>Valor percibido</b>	0.89	0.75	0.89	0.91	0.78	0.91

Para analizar el modelo, se llevó a cabo un path análisis multi-grupo, diferenciando por culturas. La variable canal de compra se introduce en el modelo como variable de interacción, incluyendo su efecto principal y la interacción con la satisfacción y el

riesgo percibido en el canal. El canal es codificado como “0” Internet, “1” agencia de viajes.

La bondad de ajuste de los indicadores del modelo path multi-grupo se muestra en la Tabla 3.

TABLA 3  
Índices globales

<b>Chi cuadrado</b>	55.18
<b>Grados de libertad</b>	10
<b>p-valor</b>	0.00
<b>RMSEA</b>	0.08
<b>NFI</b>	0.95
<b>IFI</b>	0.96
<b>CFI</b>	0.96
<b>GFI</b>	0.97

Todos los indicadores se encuentran dentro de los límites recomendados por la literatura, con la excepción de la Chi-cuadrado.

Con respecto al modelo estructural, se muestran los coeficientes estandarizados distinguiendo entre grupos de consumidores españoles y británicos.

TABLA 4  
Coeficientes estandarizados (valores p)

	<b>España</b>	<b>Reino Unido</b>	<b>Diferencias por cultura (test-t)</b>
<b>Satisfacción → Calidad del hotel</b>	0.27 (0.003)	0.62 (0.002)	3,48(0.001)
<b>Riesgo percibido → Calidad del hotel</b>	-0.33 (0.002)	0.01 (0.894)	3,35 (0.001)
<b>Canal de compra → Calidad del hotel</b>	0.00 (0.972)	0.00 (0.977)	0.00 (1,00)
<b>Canal x Satisfacción → Calidad del hotel</b>	0.14 (0.099)	-0.08 (0.253)	-2,14 (0.033)
<b>Canal x Riesgo → Calidad del hotel</b>	0.26 (0.004)	0.04 (0.517)	-2,17 (0.030)
<b>Calidad del hotel → Valor percibido</b>	0.14 (0.03)	0.22 (0.002)	0,96(0.335)

En general, el modelo de determinantes de la calidad percibida del hotel para el caso del turista español muestra que las evaluaciones que éste realiza respecto al canal de compra en términos de satisfacción y de riesgo tienen un efecto significativo sobre su percepción de calidad del hotel, como es de esperar de acuerdo con las conclusiones a las que llegan trabajos previos (Schwarz y Clore 1988; Lee and Joshi, 2007). Sin embargo, para los turistas británicos es solamente significativo el coeficiente de la relación entre satisfacción y calidad percibida. Mediante la comparación entre ambas culturas, se puede concluir que para los británicos es más importante la satisfacción en la formación de su percepción de calidad del hotel (0.62 vs. 0.27 respectivamente para británicos y españoles, p-valor de la diferencia=0.001), y menos relevante el riesgo percibido en el canal (0.01 vs -0,33, respectivamente, p-valor de la diferencia=0.001). Este resultado apoya la existencia de un efecto moderador de la cultura en los

determinantes de la calidad percibida del servicio turístico, tal y como se propone en la hipótesis 2.

Respecto al efecto del canal de compra sobre la percepción de calidad, por sí solo, no tiene efecto principal significativo ni en el caso de los turistas españoles ni en el caso de los británicos. Sin embargo, su efecto interacción con la satisfacción y el riesgo sí son significativos en turistas españoles. Así, cuando el canal de compra es Internet (codificado como 0), el efecto total de la satisfacción y del riesgo sobre la calidad es el descrito en párrafos anteriores, mientras que cuando el canal es agencia de viajes (codificado como 1), el efecto total de la satisfacción sobre la calidad aumenta en 0.14 ( $0.27+0,14=0,41$ ), mientras que el efecto negativo del riesgo se reduce en 0,26 ( $-0,33+0,26=-0,07$ ). Este resultado apoya el efecto moderador del canal sobre la evaluación de la calidad percibida (hipótesis 1). Sin embargo, en el caso de los turistas británicos, este mismo efecto moderador resulta ser no significativo para ambas variables (satisfacción y riesgo), lo que sugiere la existencia de una interacción cultura x canal.

Para finalizar, la relación entre calidad percibida del hotel y el valor percibido por el turista es significativa, positiva y sin diferencias significativas entre culturas.

## 5. Conclusiones

En este estudio se ha analizado el efecto que sobre la evaluación de un servicio turístico disfrutado (calidad y valor percibido del servicio hotelero) tiene la evaluación que realiza un individuo sobre el canal de compra (satisfacción y riesgo percibido) teniendo en cuenta dos canales principales de compra (agencia e Internet). Además, se analizan las posibles diferencias que se puedan encontrar debidas a las dimensiones culturales “aversión al riesgo” e “individualismo-colectivismo”.

La principal aportación de este trabajo es la comprobación empírica de la influencia del canal y el efecto moderador de la cultura del turista sobre la evaluación del servicio consumido. En esta línea, los resultados ponen de manifiesto que la relación entre la satisfacción con el medio (tradicional u online) y la calidad percibida del hotel es significativa tanto para turistas individualistas (británicos) como colectivistas (españoles). Sin embargo, el coeficiente de dicha relación es mayor para turistas individualistas que han contratado el servicio turístico a través de Internet que para aquellos que lo han contratado a través de las agencias de viajes.

En lo que se refiere a la relación entre el riesgo percibido y la calidad percibida del hotel, los resultados derivan que hay una relación significativa y negativa para individuos de culturas aversas al riesgo (españoles) que han adquirido el servicio a través de Internet. Sin embargo, este efecto no es significativo para turistas de culturas con baja aversión al riesgo con independencia del medio a través del cual se haya adquirido el servicio.

De modo que, para aquellos turistas que provienen de culturas individualistas y con escasa aversión al riesgo su evaluación de la calidad del servicio hotelero estará condicionada principalmente por la satisfacción que percibe en el canal de compra, sin diferencias para el canal físico o electrónico, y sin que el riesgo percibido suponga un factor de menoscabo de dicha calidad. Sin embargo, para los turistas de culturas colectivistas y con alta aversión al riesgo, el canal será determinante para identificar los principales determinantes de la calidad, la satisfacción cuando se trata de una agencia de viajes y conjuntamente satisfacción y riesgo cuando se trata de Internet.

Desde un punto de vista gerencial, los resultados derivan importantes implicaciones. Durante mucho tiempo, los temas culturales han sido muy trabajados en aspectos relacionados con la vida en general y con la satisfacción en el trabajo (Hofstede, 2001). Sin embargo, no hay muchas investigaciones que traten la discusión de la influencia de los valores culturales en la evaluación de un servicio turístico. Mientras que estudios previos ponen de manifiesto que los proveedores del servicio no alcanzan las expectativas de los consumidores procedentes de diferentes culturas (Warden et al., 2003) y que la cultura debe jugar un papel primordial (Clark et al., 1996), el objetivo de estos estudios no ha sido controlar la evaluación del servicio de acuerdo a los valores culturales de los individuos. Basándonos en lo anterior, en este estudio se pone de manifiesto que las variaciones culturales tienen una influencia significativa en la evaluación del servicio turístico.

De modo que, si los proveedores del servicio quieren competir de manera eficaz en un entorno globalizado, deben conocer cómo los turistas evalúan los servicios que contratan. Este análisis es de especial interés en el mercado internacional ya que la evaluación de los turistas va a estar influenciada por su cultura de origen. Estos resultados están en línea con estudios previos que ponen de manifiesto la necesidad de adaptar las plataformas de venta, para atender mejor las necesidades de los mercados internacionales (Tigre et al., 2014).

Por último, cabe destacar que estos resultados podrían aplicarse no sólo a las empresas que trabajan a nivel internacional, sino también a los que operan en un solo país. De ahí que los autores de esta investigación sugieran que todos los proveedores de servicios deben tener en cuenta la aversión al riesgo y el individualismo/colectivismo a la hora de ofertar sus servicios.

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# ANTECEDENTES DEL VALOR DE MARCA EN LA INDUSTRIA HOTELERA<sup>1</sup>

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## RESUMEN

*La literatura advierte sobre la necesidad de investigar el concepto “valor de marca”, puesto que la creación de marcas fuertes y la mejora de su valor hoy en día representa una línea de actuación prioritaria para las empresas. A pesar del gran interés por este tópico entre los académicos y prácticos, la investigación empírica sobre su eco, impacto y medición en las empresas hoteleras está en su fase inicial de desarrollo. Por ello, este trabajo progresa en la dirección de una propuesta del proceso de creación del valor de marca basado en el consumidor en la industria hotelera. El estudio empírico fue realizado entre 475 huéspedes de hoteles de categoría superior ubicados en Croacia. Los resultados demuestran que la imagen y la lealtad ejercen un impacto positivo sobre el valor de marca, mientras que el impacto de la confianza y el compromiso es mediado por la lealtad.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE

*Valor de marca, hoteles de categoría superior, consumidores, PLS.*

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## **1. Introducción**

La literatura de marketing ha sugerido en múltiples ocasiones que los consumidores otorgan un valor adicional a los productos a través de su marca (Lassar et al., 1995; Yoo et al., 2000; Pappu et al., 2006). Así, el valor de marca se entiende como el valor añadido con el que la marca dota a un producto (Yoo et al., 2000), reflejando la idea de que la marca es uno de los activos más importantes de las empresas, debido a su capacidad de asegurar ventajas competitivas sostenibles y no imitables (Aaker, 1991).

Con la incorporación del concepto “valor de marca” o “capital de marca” quedó arraigada la idea de que las características intangibles asociadas a las marcas contribuyen al valor empresarial, puesto que proporcionan a la organización una plataforma para lograr una ventaja competitiva y la obtención de unas mayores ganancias futuras (Delgado y Munuera, 2001). Asimismo, según explican Bravo et al. (2011), una marca fuerte favorece la atracción de todos los agentes del mercado, dificulta los movimientos de los competidores y permite obtener un posicionamiento diferenciado. Todo ello ha conducido a un gran interés por el estudio de la marca y de su valor tanto en el ámbito académico, como empresarial (Del Río et al., 2002; Oliveira et al., 2008), mostrando, en particular, una creciente repercusión en el entorno hotelero (Bailey y Ball, 2006).

Sin embargo, la amplia variedad de planteamientos y metodologías ha originado desacuerdos relativos a la concepción y evaluación del valor de marca (Villarejo, 2001). En este sentido, Srivastava y Shocker (1991) han iniciado un debate relativo a la redundancia de la noción, indicando que su definición no es necesaria, tratándose de un constructo equivalente a la idea de lealtad, apego a la marca, posicionamiento o ventaja competitiva. A partir de ahí, se ha creado una cierta confusión sobre cuál es la mejor forma de estimar el concepto (Keller, 1998), en qué consiste realmente su valor, cómo se genera y de qué factores depende (Del Río et al., 2002). Desde entonces, las cuestiones relativas a una correcta evaluación del concepto siguen estando presentes tanto en la teoría como en la práctica (Lee et al., 2011).

Con el fin de ofrecer una panorámica completa en torno al valor de marca, en este trabajo presentamos una revisión de las perspectivas del análisis del constructo y distintas propuestas de concepción y evaluación. Esto nos permitirá ofrecer una nueva evaluación del concepto y contrastarla en un entorno específico – la industria hotelera, donde la investigación empírica acerca del valor de marca todavía está en su fase inicial (Bailey y Ball, 2006).

Este trabajo está compuesto por seis partes. Después de esta primera parte introductoria, en la segunda parte se presenta el marco conceptual que recoge distintas perspectivas del análisis del valor de marca, centrándose en el valor de marca basado en el consumidor y su repercusión en la industria hotelera. En la tercera parte se enuncian las hipótesis, seguidas por el diseño de la metodología de la investigación, abordado en la cuarta parte. En la quinta parte se describe el análisis y el tratamiento estadístico de los resultados obtenidos en la investigación empírica. El trabajo acaba con las conclusiones, las implicaciones y las futuras líneas de investigación derivadas.

## **2. Marco conceptual**

### ***2.1. Perspectivas del análisis del valor de marca***

Desde la literatura se han evidenciado varios criterios de estimación del valor de marca. En concreto, destacan tres perspectivas de análisis del constructo: a) la perspectiva financiera; b) la perspectiva del consumidor; y c) la perspectiva global (Del Río et al., 2002; Kim et al., 2003; Kim y Kim, 2005; Bailey y Ball, 2006; Buil et al., 2010; Xu y Chan, 2010).

De un lado, la perspectiva financiera se basa en los beneficios o resultados monetarios que la marca puede aportar a las empresas (Buil et al., 2010). Por tanto, este enfoque adopta una orientación económica, enfatizando el papel de la marca como activo de las empresas con capacidad para afectar a los flujos de caja de la compañía, el valor de las acciones y/o el precio de venta en caso de adquisición, absorción o fusión (Del Río et al., 2002). Es decir, representa la diferencia entre los flujos de caja

obtenidos por un producto con marca y los flujos de caja resultantes en el caso de que ese mismo producto se vendiera sin marca (Simon y Sullivan, 1993).

De otro lado, la perspectiva centrada en el consumidor parte de la premisa de que el valor de las marcas reside en la mente de los consumidores (Leone et al., 2006). En este sentido, la marca generará el valor para la empresa siempre y cuando aporte valor al consumidor (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Cobb et al., 1995; Prasad y Dev, 2000; Yoo y Donthu, 2001; Round y Roper, 2012). Por tanto, los trabajos que adoptan este enfoque sugieren aproximarse al valor de marca a través de las percepciones (atributos, beneficios y actitudes), las preferencias o los comportamientos de los consumidores hacia la marca (Del Río et al., 2002). Las conceptualizaciones del valor de marca propuestas por Aaker (1991), Keller (1993) y Yoo y Donthu (2001) han abordado el concepto desde esta perspectiva. Como veremos más adelante, estas son las contribuciones más relevantes y referenciadas en la literatura de marketing.

Por último, la perspectiva global combina las dos perspectivas anteriores, abarcando tanto el valor financiero de la marca como el poder de mercado (Motameni y Shahrokhi, 1998). Esta aproximación tiene en cuenta las actitudes y las conductas de todos los agentes que pueden interactuar con la marca: principalmente, la empresa, los consumidores, los distribuidores y los mercados financieros (Del Río et al., 2002). Según, Farquhar (1989), para la empresa, el valor de marca representa un incremento en los flujos de caja o en cualquier otro indicador financiero. Desde la perspectiva de los distribuidores, el valor de una marca se aprecia en el menor poder negociador que éstos tienen con relación a la empresa propietaria de la misma. Y desde el punto de vista del consumidor, equivale a la utilidad no explicada por los atributos tangibles.

Entre estas tres perspectivas del análisis del valor de marca, domina aquella basada en el consumidor. Según matiza Keller (1993), la conceptualización de valor de marca desde la perspectiva del cliente es fundamental, ya que proporciona unas pautas específicas para las estrategias de marketing y la toma de decisiones en la administración de empresas. Por tanto, si bien un enfoque financiero podría proporcionar una visión más precisa a la hora de evaluar la marca, es posible que a los gerentes de marca esta aproximación no les resulte útil en el desarrollo de su estrategias de marketing, puesto que la perspectiva financiera sólo se limita a estimar el valor de una marca. En cambio, la perspectiva del consumidor es más práctica porque ofrece una visión estratégica del comportamiento del consumidor y ayuda a los directivos a establecer las estrategias de marca adecuadas (Kim et al., 2008).

A partir de la revisión de 60 estudios empíricos en torno al valor de marca, 30 de ellos llevados a cabo en el sector turístico y hotelero y 30 en otros ámbitos, podemos observar que la literatura de marketing pone un fuerte énfasis en el valor de marca basado en el consumidor. En concreto, encontramos un gran número de estudios (p.e. Cobb et al., 1995; Kayaman y Arasli, 2007; Kim et al., 2008; Lee y Kim, 2009; Nel et al., 2009; Kimpakorn y Tocquer, 2010; So y King, 2010; Malik y Naeem, 2011; Dioko y So, 2012; Hsu et al., 2012; Šerić y Gil, 2012) que han examinado el valor de marca desde la perspectiva del consumidor en las empresas hoteleras, tal y como abordamos a continuación.

## **2.2. Valor de marca basado en el consumidor en la industria hotelera**

En la industria hotelera, el valor de marca ha sido definido como *“las actitudes y percepciones formadas, favorables y desfavorables, que influyen al consumidor a la hora de reservar el hotel”* (Prasad y Dev, 2000, p. 24). Bailey y Ball (2006) definen el valor de marca del hotel como *“el valor que los consumidores y los propietarios del hotel asocian con la marca del hotel y el impacto de estas asociaciones en su comportamiento”* (p. 34).

Desde la revisión empírica observamos que distintos estudios (p.e. Kim et al., 2003; Kim y Kim, 2005; Kayaman y Arasli, 2007; Lee y Kim, 2009; Nel et al., 2009; Malik y Naeem, 2011) han concluido que en las empresas hoteleras el valor de marca es entendido mejor según la propuesta de conceptualización de Aaker (1991). Este autor ha abordado el valor de marca desde la perspectiva del consumidor, considerando el constructo como un conjunto de asociaciones y comportamientos (Delgado y Munuera, 2001) e identificado en el valor de marca cuatro dimensiones principales: a) la lealtad hacia la marca; b) la notoriedad de marca; c) la calidad percibida y d) las asociaciones de la marca (en el sector hotelero frecuentemente consideradas como la imagen de marca).

A partir de la concepción de Aaker (1991), en la literatura de marketing hotelero han sido desarrolladas otras propuestas empíricas y conceptuales que frecuentemente han sido referenciadas en la literatura. Así, Prasad y Dev (2000) han establecido un marco hipotético del valor de marca de hotel que contiene dos dimensiones: a) el rendimiento de la marca, compuesto por la satisfacción, la intención de recompra, la relación entre precio-valor percibido y la preferencia hacia la marca y b) la notoriedad de marca, evaluada a través de la *top of mind* y el recuerdo. Por su parte, a partir de una extensa revisión de la literatura, basándose en las aportaciones de Aaker (1991) y Keller (1993), Xu y Chan (2010) han propuesto un marco conceptual en torno al valor de marca en las empresas hoteleras, clasificando el constructo en los aspectos relativos a la actitud (el conocimiento de la marca) y el comportamiento (la lealtad hacia la marca). De acuerdo con esta concepción, tres dimensiones del conocimiento de marca (la notoriedad, las asociaciones y la calidad de experiencia) son fundamentales para determinar el valor de marca del hotel y la lealtad hacia la marca. Sin embargo, como los mismos autores han señalado, es cuestionable si las asociaciones de la marca y la calidad de experiencia pueden ser consideradas como conceptos distintos y separables, por lo que futuras investigaciones son necesarias para corroborar esta propuesta.

En su estudio sobre el valor de marca de hoteles de lujo abordado desde la perspectiva del consumidor, Kimpakorn y Tocquer (2010) han identificado seis dimensiones del valor de marca de servicios: a) la notoriedad de marca; b) la calidad percibida; c) la diferenciación de la marca; d) las asociaciones primarias y secundarias; e) la confianza en la marca y f) las relaciones con la marca. Sus resultados revelaron que la diferenciación y la confianza son las dimensiones que tienen el máximo impacto sobre las relaciones que se establecen con la marca. Además, estos autores han estudiado el compromiso de los empleados del hotel, mostrando que en los hoteles con un elevado valor de marca, los empleados mostraron un elevado nivel de compromiso hacia la marca, mientras que en los hoteles con un bajo valor de marca, el compromiso de los empleados ha sido más bajo. Al haber incorporado el papel de las variables confianza y compromiso en la creación del valor de marca, este estudio ha sido el primero en profundizar en el enfoque relacional en la investigación empírica en torno al valor de marca en las empresas hoteleras.

Del mismo modo, Dioko y So (2012) han considerado la confianza y el compromiso como dimensiones del valor de marca de hotel de un lado y el valor de marca de destino de otro. Además, el estudio de Hsu et al. (2012) ha demostrado que la confianza influye de forma positiva sobre la lealtad hacia la marca en hoteles de categoría superior en China y que, como tal, representa una dimensión esencial del valor de marca del hotel. Esta creciente tendencia actual de considerar la confianza y el compromiso como variables que influyen sobre la creación del valor de marca en hoteles implica la necesidad de abordarlas más detenidamente en función de los generadores de valor en la relación.

Por último, observamos que algunos estudios llevados a cabo en el sector turístico en general (p.e. Gómez y Molina, 2012) y en restaurantes (p.e. Rajh y Ozretić, 2009) y hoteles (p.e. So y King, 2010) en particular, han considerado el valor de marca de forma global. La evaluación del constructo desde una perspectiva global ha sido desarrollada por Yoo y Donthu (2001). Estos autores han medido el constructo a través de cuatro indicadores reflectivos que resumen su esencia. De este modo, el valor de marca global viene evaluado a través del diferencial de preferencia del individuo debido a la presencia de la marca en comparación con otra que tiene las mismas características, atributos y estímulos comerciales (Delgado y Munuera, 2001).

Con todo, concluimos que las siguientes variables pueden influir sobre la creación del valor de marca en las empresas hoteleras: a) la notoriedad; b) la imagen; c) la calidad percibida; d) la lealtad; e) la confianza y f) el compromiso.

### **3. Hipótesis de investigación**

A partir de la revisión de la literatura, de un lado, hemos concluido que existe la tendencia a considerar el valor de marca como un constructo multidimensional compuesto por cuatro dimensiones sugeridas por Aaker (1991), es decir: a) la notoriedad de marca; b) la imagen de marca; c) la calidad percibida y d) la lealtad hacia la marca. Cobb et al. (1995) han agrupado estas dimensiones en función de su perspectiva de estudio. Así, la notoriedad, la imagen y la calidad percibida se pueden entender como

variables perceptuales, mientras que la lealtad hacia la marca es considerada como una variable de naturaleza más relacional.

De otro lado, si bien en la literatura se encuentran aportaciones (p.e. Yoo et al., 2000; Delgado y Munuera, 2001; Arnett et al., 2003; Washburn y Plank, 2002; Atilgan et al., 2005; Wang et al., 2006; Rajh y Ozretić, 2009; Chahal y Bala, 2010; Gómez y Molina, 2012) que han examinado empíricamente el impacto de distintas dimensiones del valor de marca sobre el valor de marca global propuesto por Yoo y Donthu (2001), observamos que la tendencia de estudiar el valor de marca global en las empresas hoteleras es muy limitada (p.e. So y King, 2010), siendo necesario corroborar la forma en la que distintas dimensiones identificadas contribuyen a su formación.

Así, en primer lugar, varios estudios (p.e. Arnett et al., 2003; Rajh y Ozretić, 2009; Wang et al., 2011; Gómez y Molina, 2012) han mostrado que la notoriedad influye de forma positiva al valor de marca global. En este sentido, Aaker (1991) considera que la notoriedad contribuye al valor de marca en cuatro formas: a) el reconocimiento como “ancla” (Villarejo, 2001, p. 30) a la que se pueden vincular otras asociaciones; b) la familiaridad y el agrado que se siente hacia las marcas conocidas; c) el compromiso que se establece entre empresa y cliente; y d) el hecho de considerar las marcas entre las alternativas en la elección de un producto (Villarejo, 2001). Por todo ello, proponemos la primera hipótesis de investigación:

*H1: La notoriedad influye de forma positiva y significativa sobre el valor de marca.*

En segundo lugar, desde la literatura se advierte que la imagen de marca tiene un impacto positivo y significativo sobre el valor de marca global (Rajh y Ozretić, 2009; Wang et al., 2011; Gómez y Molina, 2012), puesto que facilita el conocimiento de una marca, sus asociaciones con los diferentes atributos tangibles e intangibles y su posicionamiento en la mente del consumidor. Adicionalmente, contribuye al proceso de obtención de información, ayuda en el proceso de decisión del consumidor a través de la diferenciación y la extensión de la marca, creando los sentimientos y actitudes positivas hacia la misma y proporcionando a la vez una razón para comprar (Aaker, 1991). A partir de ahí, proponemos la segunda hipótesis de investigación:

*H2: La imagen influye de forma positiva y significativa sobre el valor de marca.*

En tercer lugar, la calidad percibida genera valor de marca de diversas formas: a) suministra la razón sobre la que se basa la compra; b) otorga la posibilidad de diferenciación y el consecuente posicionamiento de la marca en la mente del consumidor; c) da la opción de cargar un precio superior; d) puede ser significativa para los intermediarios del canal de distribución; y e) constituye la base para las estrategias de extensión de marca, a través del uso de su nombre para introducir nuevas categorías de producto (Aaker, 1991). Este impacto positivo de la calidad percibida sobre el valor de marca ha sido contrastado empíricamente tanto en las investigaciones centradas en el producto (p.e. Yoo et al., 2000; Yoo y Donthu, 2001; Washburn y Plank, 2002) como aquellas centradas en los servicios (p.e. Arnett et al., 2003; Wang et al., 2006; 2011). Esperamos corroborar esta relación en la industria hotelera y planteamos la tercera hipótesis de investigación:

*H3: La calidad percibida influye de forma positiva y significativa sobre el valor de marca.*

En cuarto lugar, una serie de contribuciones ha evidenciado que la lealtad ejerce un efecto positivo sobre el valor de marca global en distintos sectores (p.e. Yoo et al., 2000; Yoo y Donthu, 2001; Washburn y Plank, 2002; Arnett et al., 2003; Atilgan et al., 2005; Bravo et al., 2006; Wang et al., 2006; 2011; Buil et al., 2010; Chahal y Bala, 2010), incluido el sector turístico (p.e. Gómez y Molina, 2012). La lealtad hacia la marca se conforma como la medida del vínculo entre el consumidor y la marca que a menudo constituye el núcleo del valor de marca, siendo la satisfacción uno de sus indicadores (Aaker, 1991). La lealtad genera valor a una marca principalmente reduciendo los costes de marketing, ya que mantener los clientes satisfechos resulta menos costoso que conseguir nuevos clientes y porque los clientes leales son posibles prescriptores del producto al convencer a los demás de su uso (Aaker, 1991; Villarejo, 2001). Además, una marca con alta lealtad favorece la introducción en nuevos mercados y reduce los gastos de promoción (Villarejo, 2001). Teniendo en cuenta estas consideraciones, proponemos la cuarta hipótesis a investigar:

*H4: La lealtad influye de forma positiva y significativa sobre el valor de marca.*



Por último, si bien algunos estudios han identificado la confianza (p.e. Kimpakorn y Tocquer, 2010; Dioko y So, 2012; Hsu et al., 2012) y el compromiso (p.e. Dioko y So, 2012) como las dimensiones del valor de marca del hotel, solo Hsu et al. (2012) han testado empíricamente el impacto que la confianza ejerce sobre el valor de marca, analizando la lealtad como el constructo mediador en la relación. Además, varios autores (p.e. Mattila, 2006; Tanford et al., 2011) han concluido que el compromiso afectivo, entendido como una dimensión del compromiso que implica la relación con una empresa, disfrutar de la colaboración y tener un sentido de pertenencia a la empresa (Jaros et al., 1993; Geyskens et al., 1996) es la forma del compromiso que más incide sobre la lealtad del consumidor en empresas hoteleras. Por ello, en este estudio nos centramos en este componente afectivo del constructo.

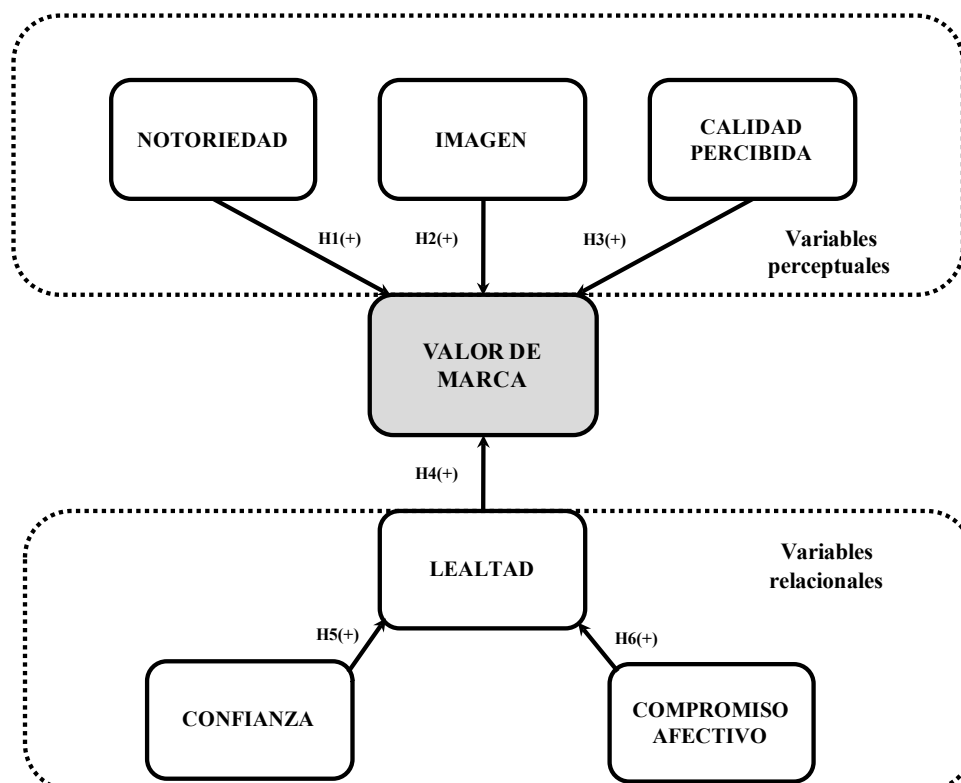
Con todo, se puede concluir que en el contexto de los intercambios relacionales, la literatura de marketing reconoce la confianza y el compromiso como variables centrales para la continuidad de las relaciones a largo plazo. En este sentido, la teoría de “compromiso-confianza”, propuesta por Morgan y Hunt (1994) ha sugerido que el compromiso y la confianza presentan los elementos clave del marketing de relaciones. De forma específica, encontramos diversas investigaciones (p.e. Mattila, 2006; Kimpakorn y Tocquer, 2010; Wilkins et al., 2010; Choi et al., 2011; Tanford et al., 2011; Hsu et al., 2012; Leeman y Reynolds, 2012) que confirman que estas variables actúan como antecedentes de la lealtad hacia la marca en el entorno hotelero. Por ello, consideramos que el impacto de la confianza y de la dimensión afectiva del compromiso sobre el valor de marca es mediado por la lealtad y planteamos las dos últimas hipótesis a investigar:

*H5: La confianza de los huéspedes influye de forma positiva y significativa sobre su lealtad.*

*H6: El compromiso afectivo de los huéspedes influye de forma positiva y significativa sobre su lealtad.*

Todas las hipótesis de investigación se recogen en el modelo causal propuesto, ilustrado en la Figura 1. Como se puede observar, consideramos que sobre el valor de marca global inciden tanto las variables perceptuales (la notoriedad, la imagen y la calidad percibida), como las variables relacionales (la lealtad, la confianza y el compromiso afectivo).

**FIGURA 1**  
**Modelo causal**



#### 4. Metodología

Con el fin de lograr los objetivos propuestos, hemos elaborado un cuestionario para los huéspedes de hoteles, que pretendía medir el valor de marca global y sus antecedentes. Así, evaluamos la imagen, la calidad percibida y la lealtad mediante las escalas de Kim et al. (2003) y Kim y Kim (2005), elaboradas para medir las dimensiones del valor de marca en los hoteles de lujo, reteniendo ocho indicadores para evaluar la imagen, 10 para medir la calidad percibida y seis para valorar la lealtad. Por lo que respecta a la evaluación de la notoriedad, proponemos tres indicadores a partir de la adaptación de la escala desarrollada por Kim et al. (2008) y un indicador que pretendía evaluar la conciencia de la marca del hotel. En relación a la evaluación de la confianza utilizamos una versión adaptada de la escala de Hsu et al. (2012), midiendo el constructo a través de dos indicadores, mientras que para la medición del compromiso afectivo utilizamos tres indicadores a partir de la escala de Mattila (2006). Por último, con el fin de evaluar el valor de marca global, adaptamos a la industria hotelera la escala de Yoo y Donthu (2001). Con todo, el cuestionario incluía preguntas cerradas medidas a través de una escala Likert de 5 puntos y fue redactado en castellano y posteriormente traducido en inglés, italiano y croata por nativos y expertos en materia.

El trabajo de campo se ha llevado a cabo en Croacia en el año 2012, abarcando los hoteles de cuatro y cinco estrellas ubicados en todo el país. Croacia es considerada como uno de los principales destinos turísticos emergentes en el área del Mediterráneo que actualmente viene experimentando un auge turístico notable (Marrero y Santana, 2008). Según los datos publicados por el Consejo Mundial de Viajes y Turismo, el turismo actualmente representa el 26,5% del PIB del país, lo que supone más del triple del peso medio del turismo sobre el PIB en la Unión Europea. Además, se espera un crecimiento del 4,6% hasta el año 2022 (WTTC, 2012). Así, a pesar de la actual crisis económica, el país ha logrado aprovechar al máximo la costa y las 1200 islas, atrayendo la financiación tanto de los sectores públicos como privados (Norton, 2010).

Decidimos incluir en el estudio empírico todos los hoteles de cinco estrellas de Croacia, que según los datos publicados en la página web del Ministerio de Turismo de Croacia en junio de 2012 eran 27 (MINT, 2012). De otro lado, con la ayuda de los expertos en la industria hotelera del país identificamos 50 hoteles de cuatro estrellas, que por las características de sus prácticas de gestión sostenemos que son los más adecuados para este estudio. En 24 de ellos obtuvimos permiso para entrevistar a 20 huéspedes en cada hotel. Obtuvimos un total de 475 encuestas válidas suministradas a través de entrevista personal o auto-administradas. Indicar que 252 huéspedes se alojaron en 14 hoteles de cuatro estrellas, mientras 223 se alojaron en 10 hoteles de cinco estrellas.

#### 5. Análisis de datos y resultados

El instrumento de medida del modelo estructural ha sido validado a través de la técnica de regresión por mínimos cuadrados parciales (PLS) con ayuda del software Smart PLS (versión 2.0). Este método es una técnica establecida que ha despertado creciente interés en la literatura y elevado uso en un gran número de investigaciones (p.e. Barclay et al., 1995; Chin, 1998; Chin y Newsted, 1999; Arnett et al., 2003; Cepeda y Roldán, 2004; Wang et al., 2006; 2011; Sanz et al., 2008; So y King, 2010; Gómez y Molina, 2012).

Si bien la técnica PLS puede ser utilizada para la confirmación de la teoría, en la literatura se señala que es aconsejable usarla también en los casos donde las relaciones podrían o no existir y cuando el constructo estudiado es relativamente nuevo (Chin y Newsted, 1999). Consideramos que este estudio parte de este supuesto, dado que el valor de marca del hotel está en su fase principal de desarrollo (Bailey y Ball, 2006). Además, las relaciones entre los antecedentes del valor de marca global, si bien observadas en teoría, han sido raramente contrastadas empíricamente. Por ello, consideramos completamente válido aplicar esta técnica en el análisis de los datos.

A continuación pasamos a analizar la validez (convergente y discriminante) y la fiabilidad del instrumento de medida empleado.

### 5.1. La validez y la fiabilidad del instrumento de medida

Para la valoración de la validez convergente analizamos las cargas de cada indicador sobre su variable latente, la varianza extraída promedio (AVE) y las cargas cruzadas (cross-loadings) (Barclay et al., 1995; Sanz et al., 2008) (véase Tabla 1). Al revisar las cargas de los constructos, eliminamos algunos indicadores de la imagen, al tener, según el criterio de Bagozzi y Yi (1988), cargas inferiores a 0,6. En la siguiente fase analizamos las cargas cruzadas, eliminando otro indicador de la imagen, dado que tenía carga superior sobre un constructo distinto de aquel al que estaba asociado. Una vez analizada la varianza extraída promedio de los constructos, concluimos que todos los valores obtenidos son mayores de 0,5, con lo que se sostiene que más del 50% de la varianza del constructo es debida a sus indicadores (Fornell y Larcker, 1981; Cepeda y Roldán, 2004). Con todo, corroboramos la validez convergente del instrumento de medida del modelo propuesto (Barclay et al., 1995; Sanz et al., 2008).

Para comprobar la fiabilidad de las escalas propuestas, analizamos la consistencia interna a partir de los criterios  $\alpha$  de Cronbach (fiabilidad simple) e índice de fiabilidad compuesta (IFC). Los  $\alpha$  de Cronbach tienen valores superiores a 0,7 (Nunnally y Bernstein, 1994) y el valor de IFC es superior a 0,6 (Bagozzi y Yi, 1988), lo que da un resultado aceptable.

TABLA 1  
Instrumento de medida: Medias, desviación típica, fiabilidad y validez convergente

FACTOR	INDICADOR	M	D.T.	CARGA	<i>t</i>	Cr. $\alpha$	IFC	AVE
NOT.	Conocimiento del hotel.	3,10	1,410	0,7995*	26,9935	0,8531	0,8986	0,6895
	Conocimiento de la marca del hotel.	3,14	1,402	0,7835*	24,2225			
	Recuerdo de las características del hotel.	3,78	1,142	0,8783*	61,1443			
	Reconocimiento del hotel entre otros.	3,83	1,087	0,8565*	53,0307			
IMG.	Cómodo.	4,35	,752	0,6830*	20,8617	0,8699	0,8978	0,5247
	Alto nivel de servicio.	4,29	,791	0,6058*	18,1484			
	Imagen limpia.	4,33	,843	0,7239*	24,3106			
	De lujo.	3,96	,902	0,7487*	28,0965			
	Adecuado para la clase alta.	3,94	,927	0,7626*	32,9380			
	Sentirse especial.	3,72	1,076	0,7339*	23,8359			
	Larga historia.	3,53	1,228	0,7828*	34,0147			
Imagen diferenciada.	3,75	1,091	0,7395*	33,0561				
CAL. PERC.	Trato especial.	4,26	,826	0,7496*	26,7037	0,8992	0,9171	0,5268
	Equipamiento moderno.	4,08	,913	0,7695*	34,9619			
	Apariencia del personal.	4,49	,802	0,6410*	22,6988			
	Buen trato del personal.	4,50	,759	0,7392*	26,8184			
	Servicios puntuales.	4,32	,755	0,7576*	27,3775			
	Gestión de quejas.	4,21	,845	0,7288*	30,1177			
	Comunicación activa con los huéspedes.	4,31	,815	0,7435*	28,1542			
	Atractivo.	4,29	,787	0,7788*	36,0162			
	Calidad de bebida y comida.	4,20	,830	0,7321*	27,0957			
Servicio personalizado.	4,20	,848	0,5965*	14,6820				
LEA.	Frecuencia de visita.	2,58	1,444	0,5506*	14,5978	0,8357	0,8795	0,5538
	Intención de repetir la visita.	3,93	1,142	0,8305*	48,7568			
	Primera opción.	3,09	1,456	0,6416*	18,1971			
	Satisfacción.	4,37	,775	0,7913*	36,7363			
	Intención de recomendación.	4,40	,882	0,8044*	33,4047			
	No intención de cambio.	4,05	1,007	0,8031*	35,0105			

ANTECEDENTES DEL VALOR DE MARCA EN LA INDUSTRIA HOTELERA

<b>CONF.</b>	Confianza en el hotel.	4,32	1,077	0,9467*	146,0526	0,8692	0,9385	0,8841
	El hotel sabe hacer su trabajo.	4,27	,836	0,9337*	84,1408			
<b>COMP. AFE.</b>	Nivel de compromiso afectivo.	3,52	1,118	0,8966*	76,9040	0,9098	0,9434	0,8474
	Apego emocional.	3,20	1,204	0,9333*	113,3897			
	Carga personal en la relación.	3,23	1,189	0,9313*	113,0111			
<b>V.M.</b>	Tiene más sentido alojarse en el hotel elegido que en otro.	3,84	1,091	0,8987*	71,2393	0,9405	0,9573	0,8488
	Preferencia por el hotel, incluso cuando otro tiene las mismas características.	3,75	1,055	0,9375*	117,2966			
	Preferencia por el hotel, incluso cuando otro es igual de bueno.	3,68	1,064	0,9382*	137,3450			
	Preferencia por el hotel, si otro no se distingue de ese.	3,77	1,036	0,9102*	66,8941			

NOT.-Notoriedad; IMG.-Imagen; CAL. PER.-Calidad percibida; LEA.-Lealtad; CONF.-Confianza; COMP. AFE.-Compromiso afectivo; V.M.-Valor de marca; M-Media; D.T.-Desviación típica.  
\*p<0,01.

Posteriormente, el análisis se ha centrado en la validez discriminante (véase Tabla 2). Ésta indica en qué medida un constructo dado es diferente de otros constructos (Cepeda y Roldán, 2004). Para valorarla Fornell y Larcker (1981) recomiendan el uso de la varianza extraída promedio (AVE). En ambos estudios, la raíz cuadrada del valor AVE de todos los constructos resulta mayor que la varianza compartida entre el constructo con los otros constructos del modelo (la correlación al cuadrado entre dos constructos). Esto corrobora la validez discriminante de las escalas de medida empleadas (Barclay et al., 1995; Sanz et al., 2008).

TABLA 2  
Instrumento de medida: Medias, desviación típica y validez discriminante

	M	D.T.	CAL. PER.	COMP. AFE.	CONF.	IMG.	LEA.	NOT.	V.M.
<b>CAL. PER.</b>	4,28	,591	<b>0,7258</b>						
<b>COMP. AFE.</b>	3,32	1,078	0,4451	<b>0,9205</b>					
<b>CONF.</b>	4,29	,806	0,6996	0,4851	<b>0,9403</b>				
<b>IMG.</b>	3,98	,685	0,7132	0,5120	0,6430	<b>0,7244</b>			
<b>LEA.</b>	3,74	,836	0,6606	0,6445	0,7009	0,6258	<b>0,7442</b>		
<b>NOT.</b>	3,46	1,053	0,3758	0,4773	0,3240	0,5186	0,4564	<b>0,8304</b>	
<b>V.M.</b>	3,76	,978	0,5978	0,6911	0,6182	0,6468	0,7155	0,4499	<b>0,9213</b>

Notas. M-Media; D.T.-Desviación típica; CAL. PER.-Calidad percibida; COMP. AFE.-Compromiso afectivo; CONF.-Confianza; IMG.-Imagen, LEA.-Lealtad; NOT.-Notoriedad; V.M.-Valor de marca.

Diagonal en negrita: Raíz cuadrada de la Varianza Extraída Promedio (AVE). Debajo de la diagonal: Correlación estimada entre los factores.

Una vez verificado que el modelo de medida es satisfactorio en relación a los criterios precedentes, es decir, las medidas de los constructos son fiables y válidas, damos paso a la evaluación del modelo causal (Barclay et al., 1995; Cepeda y Roldán, 2004).

### 5.2. La evaluación del modelo causal

La medida del poder predictivo de un modelo es dada por el valor R<sup>2</sup> para las variables latentes dependientes. Esta medida indica la cantidad de varianza del constructo que es explicada por el modelo (Falk y Miller, 1992; Cepeda y Roldán, 2004). Los resultados demuestran que todos los valores son mayores de 0,1, lo que supera el límite necesario establecido por Falk y Miller (1992), - indicar que el valor R<sup>2</sup> de notoriedad, imagen, calidad percibida, confianza y compromiso afectivo

equivale a zero, siendo estas variables independientes-. A la vez que se ha analizado el tamaño del valor  $R^2$  como criterio de relevancia predictiva, también se ha aplicado la técnica de reutilización de muestra – *blindfolding*, proporcionando una distancia de omisión de siete (Aldás, 2008). El estadístico  $Q^2$  de todas las variables resulta positivo. Este estadístico representa una medida de lo bien que los valores observados son reconstruidos a partir de los parámetros estimados (Sanz et al., 2008). Por tanto, las hipótesis formuladas respecto a las variables latentes tendrán un nivel predictivo adecuado y permitirán evaluar la significatividad de las relaciones causales establecidas.

Para la estimación del modelo, igual que para la validación del modelo de medida, utilizamos la técnica PLS y el procedimiento de remuestreo por *bootstrapping* de 500 submuestras de tamaño igual a la muestra original, para la determinación de la significatividad de los parámetros obtenidos (Chin 1998; Sanz et al., 2008).

Según se puede observar en la Tabla 3, encontramos que existen relaciones positivas y significativas entre: a) la imagen y el valor de marca ( $\beta=0,2645$ ,  $p<0,001$ ; H2); b) la lealtad y el valor de marca ( $\beta=0,4699$ ,  $p<0,001$ ; H4); c) la confianza y la lealtad ( $\beta=0,5077$ ,  $p<0,001$ ; H5) y d) el compromiso afectivo y la lealtad ( $\beta=0,3982$ ,  $p<0,001$ ; H6). Sin embargo, no podemos confirmar las hipótesis que proponían la existencia de relación positiva y significativa entre la notoriedad y el valor de marca de un lado ( $\beta=0,0713$ ; H1) y la calidad percibida y el valor de marca de otro ( $\beta=0,0719$ ; H3). Si bien estas relaciones son positivas, el valor  $t$  resultante del procedimiento de remuestreo indica que el parámetro obtenido no es significativo.

TABLA 3  
Contraste de hipótesis de investigación

RELACIÓN	HIPÓTESIS	$\beta$	$t$
H1: Notoriedad → Valor de marca.	RECHAZADA	0,0713ns	1,6802
H2: Imagen → Valor de marca.	ACEPTADA	0,2645*	4,4026
H3: Calidad percibida → Valor de marca.	RECHAZADA	0,0719ns	1,4093
H4: Lealtad → Valor de marca.	ACEPTADA	0,4699*	10,0094
H5: Confianza → Lealtad.	ACEPTADA	0,5077*	12,4042
H6: Compromiso afectivo → Lealtad.	ACEPTADA	0,3982*	10,2091

Notoriedad:  $R^2=0,000$ ,  $Q^2=0,4789$ ; Imagen:  $R^2=0,000$ ,  $Q^2=0,3929$ ; Calidad percibida:  $R^2=0,000$ ,  $Q^2=0,4189$ ;  
Lealtad:  $R^2=0,6125$ ,  $Q^2=0,3866$ ; Confianza:  $R^2=0,000$ ,  $Q^2=0,5375$ ; Compromiso afectivo:  $R^2=0,000$ ,  $Q^2=0,6518$ ;  
Valor de marca:  $R^2=0,5824$ ,  $Q^2=0,7249$ .

\* $p<0,01$ ; ns=no significativo.

## 5. Conclusiones

A través de este estudio se ha pretendido contribuir a la investigación en torno al valor de marca, contrastando empíricamente su creación en el ámbito de la industria hotelera. Los resultados confirman la influencia directa sobre el valor de marca de dos variables que en la literatura hemos identificado como dos posibles antecedentes del valor de marca global: la imagen y la lealtad hacia la marca. El impacto de estas dos variables sobre el valor de marca global es significativo al 1%, al igual que el efecto de la confianza y del compromiso afectivo sobre la lealtad. Sin embargo, el impacto de la confianza y compromiso afectivo sobre el valor de marca es indirecto, pues resulta mediado por la lealtad hacia la marca. Las relaciones que se muestran entre las variables relaciones, es decir entra la confianza y la lealtad de un lado y el compromiso afectivo y la lealtad de otro, al igual que la relación que se establece entre la lealtad y el valor de marca global son las relaciones más fuertes dentro del modelo propuesto. Esto quiere decir que las variables relacionales tienen más importancia en la creación del valor de marca global, comparado con las variables perceptuales, es decir la imagen (significativa al 1%) y la notoriedad y la calidad percibida (no significativas). Otros estudios (p.e. Yoo et al., 2000) han mostrado también mayores efectos de la lealtad sobre el valor de marca, argumentando un mayor vínculo existente entre esta dimensión y el valor de marca que entre el resto de dimensiones.

Por otra parte, observamos que el impacto de la notoriedad y de la calidad percibida sobre el valor de marca es positivo, pero no significativo. Esto coincide con algunas contribuciones previas. Así, en primer lugar, distintos estudios que examinaron el valor de marca en la industria hotelera han demostrado que la notoriedad no representa una dimensión significativa en formación del constructo (p.e. Kim et al., 2003; Kim y Kim, 2005; Bailey y Ball, 2006; Kayaman y Arasli, 2007), ni que influye sobre el valor de marca global del hotel (p.e. So y King, 2010). En este sentido, los estudios que han sido realizados en hoteles de lujo en Corea del Sur (p.e. Kim et al., 2003; Kim y Kim, 2005), han demostrado que la notoriedad afecta significativamente al rendimiento de las empresas estudiadas, pero no al valor de marca. Asimismo, en el trabajo de Kayaman y Arasli (2007) centrado en los hoteles de lujo en el Norte de Chipre, la notoriedad ha sido eliminada después del análisis factorial confirmatorio, puesto que no ha cargado de manera significativa sobre el valor de marca. Además, el efecto de la notoriedad de marca sobre el valor de la marca no ha sido significativo en el estudio de So y King (2010), realizado entre 288 turistas alojados en un hotel en Australia. Por ello, podemos concluir que la notoriedad, a pesar de ser un factor importante, no siempre ha sido considerada como una dimensión clave del valor de marca en la industria hotelera. Como matizan Bailey y Ball (2006) en su estudio sobre los significados del valor de marca de hotel, esto puede ser explicado por la observación de Olsen et al. (1998), según la cual hay muchos hoteles conocidos que no son consistentes en su oferta y por tanto, padecen pobres percepciones de sus servicios. Esto significa que solo la notoriedad de marca no garantiza el éxito en las empresas hoteleras. So y King (2010) lo explicaron sosteniendo que no es la notoriedad de marca la que afecta al comportamiento del consumidor, sino las percepciones basadas en la experiencia durante la estancia en el hotel.

En segundo lugar, concluimos que la calidad percibida no influye de forma significativa sobre el valor de marca global y por tanto, no podemos aceptar la hipótesis que establecía la relación positiva y significativa entre estas dos variables, el resultado que también coincide con algunos estudios previos (p.e. Atılğan et al., 2005; Bravo et al., 2006; Buil et al., 2010). En esta línea, la razón de esta falta de influencia significativa de la calidad percibida sobre el valor de marca puede deberse a que la calidad percibida tiene un carácter cognitivo y actitudinal y que por ello, no ejerce un efecto tan significativo como, por ejemplo la lealtad, la variable que implica, además, un componente conductual. Así, la compra del servicio y la visita del hotel parece ser la consecuencia de la mayor valoración del huésped de la marca frente a otras alternativas, y en muchos casos esta elección es realizada entre marcas percibidas como similares. En cualquier caso, otros estudios (p.e. Yoo et al., 2000) han mostrado también mayores efectos de la lealtad sobre el valor de marca, argumentando un mayor vínculo existente entre esta dimensión y el valor de marca que entre el resto de dimensiones. Además, otra posible causa de esta influencia no significativa de la calidad percibida puede encontrarse en el hecho de que según los resultados obtenidos los hoteles estudiados gozan de una elevada calidad percibida, lo que puede haber originado que esta variable no tenga un papel predominante en la creación del valor de marca.

### ***5.1. Implicaciones y futuras líneas de investigación***

A la luz de los resultados obtenidos pueden derivarse diversas implicaciones para los profesionales de marketing en general y los directivos de empresas hoteleras en particular. Los hallazgos de este estudio apuntan a la necesidad de formación y gestión de una imagen positiva de marca y al logro y mantenimiento de un cliente leal, si el hotel quiere generar un valor de marca basado en el consumidor. En este sentido, los directivos deben procurar la creación de una imagen de marca favorable, asegurando comodidad y un alto nivel de servicio. Asimismo, deben ser capaces de generar una imagen diferenciada haciendo lo posible para que sus huéspedes se sientan especiales durante la estancia en el hotel. Al hacerlo, se obtendrán clientes satisfechos, que estarán dispuestos a repetir la visita y hacer recomendaciones positivas sobre el hotel. Además, otro aspecto que hay que tener en cuenta es que la confianza y el compromiso afectivo inciden sobre el valor de marca a través de la lealtad. Por ello, los directivos deben conseguir la confianza del huésped e incentivar el apego emocional y la carga personal en la relación con tal de obtener un cliente leal y aumentar el valor de marca del hotel.

De otro lado, la calidad percibida no ha mostrado tener el efecto significativo esperado sobre el valor de marca. Sin embargo, los gestores de los hoteles no deben pensar que su papel deja de ser

importante, dado que desde la literatura se advierte que la calidad percibida ejerce un papel relevante en la creación tanto de la imagen (p.e. Kayaman y Arasli, 2007; Malik y Naeem, 2011) como de la lealtad (p.e. Kayaman y Arasli, 2007; Hyun y Kim, 2011; Malik y Naeem, 2011; Hsu et al., 2012), que según los resultados de este estudio inciden de forma positiva y significativa sobre el valor de marca global.

Si bien este estudio es un intento de una nueva propuesta de medida del valor de marca, el constructo invita a profundizar en su investigación, sobre todo en el hecho de determinar cuáles son las dimensiones que contribuyen a su formación. A pesar de la contrastada influencia de algunos antecedentes generadores de valor de marca contemplados en este trabajo, la notoriedad y la calidad percibida no se manifiestan como componentes significativos en la creación del valor de marca global. Si bien estos hallazgos coinciden con resultados obtenidos en otros estudios, nos llevan a proponer futuras investigaciones que validen el impacto de estos constructos en el proceso de generación del valor de marca. En esta línea, se podría volver a examinar la influencia de las seis dimensiones propuestas sobre el constructo entendido de forma global. Esto implica evaluar la influencia directa de la confianza y del compromiso sobre el valor de marca, sin considerar el impacto mediador de la lealtad en dichas relaciones. Además, sería interesante incorporar en futuros estudios nuevas dimensiones posibles del valor de marca, que han sido validadas en otros estudios, tales como la satisfacción o el valor percibido.

Para concluir, nuevas aportaciones podrían considerar otras perspectivas metodológicas diferentes. Sería una alternativa interesante, dentro de la perspectiva del análisis estructural, una estrategia de modelización competitiva, que permitiría comparar distintas estructuras de relaciones entre los antecedentes del valor de marca, en particular, para explorar de manera más robusta las relaciones establecidas entre estas variables. Adicionalmente, nuevas contribuciones podrían considerar la lealtad como una consecuencia del valor de marca, dado que la lealtad del consumidor es entendida como el output final de las estrategias de marketing empleadas por una empresa. Por ello, en lugar de ser analizada como un antecedente, en futuros trabajos esta variable podría ser examinada como un resultado del valor de marca.

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# CRISIS ECONÓMICA Y ACTITUD DE LOS RESIDENTES HACIA EL TURISMO EN DESTINOS TURÍSTICOS MADUROS. UN ENFOQUE LONGITUDINAL

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## RESUMEN

*Las investigaciones que estudian la influencia de la actitud de los residentes hacia la actividad turística en momentos de incertidumbre económica son escasas. A partir de un modelo de medición de la percepción de los impactos del turismo basado en la teoría del intercambio social se ha efectuado una exploración de cómo la crisis económica influye en las actitudes de los residentes hacia el turismo. Utilizando los datos de una muestra de ciudadanos de Tenerife y Mallorca tomada en dos momentos diferentes: en 2005 en auge económico y en 2014 en situación de crisis prolongada, se analiza la variación de las percepciones. En general se confirma que los residentes en momentos de crisis muestran un mayor apoyo a la actividad turística, tienden a sobrestimar los beneficios y a subestimar los costes. El estudio avanza en la comprensión teórica del apoyo de los residentes hacia el turismo durante un período de incertidumbre económica y se discuten las implicaciones prácticas para la planificación y el desarrollo del turismo.*

## Palabras clave:

Crisis económica, percepción impactos turismo, apoyo de los residentes

1.

## 1. Introducción

La importancia de la actividad turística en muchas economías ha llevado a numerosos autores a analizar y a constatar la importancia que tiene la actitud de los residentes a la hora de favorecer su desarrollo (Pearce 1998; Nunkoo y Gursoy, 2012). Dicha actitud condiciona aspectos fundamentales del éxito del desarrollo turístico de un destino, como son la predisposición a trabajar en el sector, las iniciativas de emprendimiento e innovación, las inversiones de empresarios locales y de forma muy especial afecta a la satisfacción en la interacción entre el residente y el turista (Allen, Long, Perdue y Kielselbach, 1988; Ritchie, 1988).

En consecuencia, el tema ha suscitado un gran atractivo académico y son numerosos los trabajos sobre modelos explicativos del apoyo a la actividad turística por parte de los residentes (Sharples, 2014), una parte importante de los mismos fundamentados en la teoría del intercambio social (TIS) (Sutton, 1967; Perdue, Long y Allen, 1990; Ap, 1992) que sostiene que las actitudes de un individuo como integrante de la comunidad hacia la industria del turismo, y el posterior apoyo que muestre para su desarrollo, estarán influenciadas por la evaluación que realice de las repercusiones que tiene la actividad, es decir será el resultado de la comparación de la percepción de los impactos positivos frente a la percepción de los impactos negativos (Ap 1992; Gursoy, Jurowsky y Uysal, 2002; Jurowski, Uysal y Williams, 1997; Lindberg y Johnson 1997; McGehee y Andereck 2004; Nunkoo y Ramkissoon, 2012; Garau, Díaz y Gutiérrez 2013).

Sin embargo, la actual situación de crisis económica, ha empezado a generar un debate sobre la influencia que tiene la percepción de la situación económica en la percepción de los impactos del turismo y en la actitud de soporte a desarrollo turístico y algunos trabajos han sugerido que las percepciones se ven afectadas por la percepción que se tiene del estado de la economía local y de los beneficios personales que cada individuo obtiene del turismo (Stylidis y Terzidou 2014; Smeral, 2009)

Lamentablemente, la mayor parte de estos estudios no suelen disponer de datos longitudinales o comparaciones entre destinos con lo cual es difícil generalizar los resultados sobre los efectos de una crisis en la percepción de los impactos del turismo (Stylidis y Terzidou 2014). En este contexto y con el fundamento conceptual de la teoría del intercambio social, este trabajo tiene como objetivo comprobar la influencia de una situación de crisis en la percepción de los impactos del turismo, utilizando para ello dos mediciones efectuadas en 2005 y 2014 en dos destinos turísticos de primer orden como son Tenerife y Mallorca.

Así pues, este estudio pretende generar un avance en la comprensión teórica de cómo se forma el apoyo de los residentes hacia el desarrollo del turismo y los cambios que se producen en una situación de económica, para con estas informaciones ser capaces de proporcionar recomendaciones a los gestores del destino turístico para mejorar la actitud de los residentes en relación al turismo.

## 2. El apoyo de los residentes a la actividad turística

### 2.1. Los impactos de la actividad turística

El concepto de apoyo o actitud hacia el turismo está relacionado con la predisposición de los residentes a apoyarlo que viene determinada por la percepción que tienen los residentes por los impactos de dicha actividad (Allen et al., 1993; Johnson, Snepenger y Akis, 1994; Lankford, 1994; Lindberg y Johnson, 1997; Perdue, Long y Allen, 1987; Snaith y Haley, 1999; Concua y Atzenib, 2012).

La mayoría de los estudios relacionados con la actitud hacia el desarrollo turístico por parte de los residentes suelen tener como base la Teoría del Intercambio Social (Sutton, 1967; Perdue, Long y Allen, 1990; Ap, 1992) que sostiene que las actitudes de un individuo como integrante

de la comunidad hacia la industria del turismo, y el posterior apoyo que muestre para su desarrollo, estarán influenciadas por la evaluación que realice de las repercusiones que tiene la actividad y de la comparación de la percepción de los impactos positivos frente a los negativos (Ap 1992; Gursoy et al. 2002; Jurowski et al. 1997; Lindberg y Johnson 1997; McGehee y Andereck 2004; Nunkoo y Ramkissoon, 2012). En general, se suele aceptar que la percepción de los residentes suele estar relacionado con tres (Murphy, 1985; Gursoy et al, 2002) o cuatro (Gutiérrez, 2010) grandes grupos de impactos que incluyen impactos, económicos, culturales, sociales y medioambientales, siendo numerosas las aportaciones relacionadas con impactos situados en cada una de las dimensiones.

En la dimensión económica, normalmente los residentes suelen reconocer el impacto económico positivo que genera el turismo en relación con las oportunidades de empleo de la población, los ingresos para los negocios locales y el aumento del nivel de vida, mientras que como costes económicos se han identificado la generación de empleos de bajos salarios estacionales y poco estables, a un aumento del coste de vida ante la mayor demanda de bienes y servicios, que siempre la actividad turística incorpora mano de obra local y que los negocios pueden estar en manos de empresas foráneas que no reinvierten sus beneficios en el territorio (Ritchie, 1988; Tosun, 2002; Weaver y Lawton, 2001; Um y Crompon, 1987; Liu et al., 1987; Pizam, 1978; Keogh, 1989; Gutiérrez, 2010).

En relación a los impactos sociales, la literatura ha identificado un conjunto de aspectos en los que la actividad turística puede influir positivamente tales como la mejora de la calidad de vida, mayor limpieza de los espacios, conservación de los recursos y mejora de los servicios públicos, o negativamente. Impactos sociales negativos que pueden incluir la pérdida de valores tradicionales, problemas de congestión de tráfico o incremento de problemas sociales en general (Lankford y Howard, 1994; Liu y Var, 1986; Tyrrell y Spaulding, 1984; Long, Perdue y Allen, 1990; Keogh, 1990; Prentice, 1993; Sethna y Richmond, 1978; Perdue, Long y Gustke, 1991; King, Pizam y Milman, 1993; Gutiérrez, 2010, Tovar y Lockwood, 2008)

En la dimensión cultural los investigadores (Schadler, 1979; Belisle y Hoy, 1980; Meleghy, Preglan y Tafershofer, 1985; Liu et al., 1987; Pizam, 1978; Tosun, 2002; Mathieson y Wall, 1982; Gutiérrez, 2010, Nunkoo y Gursoy, 2011) consideran que la actividad turística provoca impactos culturales positivos como son la recuperación de la artesanía, la preservación de la cultura local y los beneficios derivados de la relación cultural entre los residentes y los turistas. Los impactos culturales negativos percibidos por la población residente están relacionados con la pérdida de las tradiciones, la aculturación y la desvirtualización y banalización del acervo cultural.

Finalmente, se ha identificado que el turismo es un factor que causa efectos en el medioambiente, generalmente asociado a impactos negativos, la polución medioambiental, la destrucción de recursos naturales, la degradación de la vegetación y el agotamiento de la vida salvaje (Ahmed y Krohn, 1992; Andereck, 1995; Koenen, Chon y Christianson, 1995; Var y Kim, 1990; Gutiérrez, 2010), la congestión en el uso de las instalaciones de recreo al aire libre (Johnson et al., 1994), exceso de transeúntes (Brunt y Courtney, 1999; Reid y Boyd, 1991). No obstante, se han encontrado percepciones positivas hacia los impactos medioambientales del turismo, tales como la mejora en la apariencia de la comunidad (Perdue et al., 1990) y el aumento de las oportunidades de ocio (McCool y Martin, 1994; Perdue et al., 1990) o que el turismo ayuda a crear una mayor concienciación y apreciación por la necesidad de preservar el medioambiente (Var y Kim, 1990).

La percepción de los impactos suele verse afectada por diferentes factores. Algunos autores han demostrado que los residentes involucrados en la industria turística perciben un mayor nivel de ganancia o beneficio personal y que tienden a tener percepciones de impacto más positivas que otros que no lo están (Brunt y Courtney, 1999; Haralambopoulos y Pizam, 1996; Jurowski et al, 1997; Lanford y Howard, 1994; McGehee y Andereck, 2004; Sirakaya, Teye y Sönmez, 2002).

## **2.2. Crisis económica y apoyo de los residentes hacia el turismo**

Los modelos que examinan la relación actitud-conducta tienen que tener en cuenta elementos del contexto en el que se producen las decisiones de comportamiento (Bagozzi, 1992), tales como el entorno económico. El estado de la economía local, y en particular la crisis económica, se considera un factor importante en la vida de las personas, por el efecto que provocan elevadas tasas de desempleo, la pérdida de ingresos y los recortes en las inversiones públicas y privadas (Stylidis y Terzidou 2014). Los estudios realizados en diversas disciplinas, sugieren que la crisis económica afecta negativamente a la salud pública (Levy y Sidel, 2009, Zavras, Tsiantou, Pavi y Mylona, 2013), al nivel de consumo (Hurd y Rohwedder, 2010, Voon y Voon, 2012), al estado de ánimo de las personas (Graham, Chattopadhyay y Picon, 2010) y a la ocupación hotelera (Song, Lin, Witt, y Zhang, 2011), entre otros.

El complejo fenómeno de la crisis económica no puede ser completamente comprendido sólo con indicadores objetivos de la situación económica, tales como el PIB y los datos de desempleo disponibles (Hayo, 2005). En un estudio realizado en USA por Campbell y Converse (1972) identificaron que aunque el ingreso nacional había aumentado, las personas no percibían una mejoría en su situación socioeconómica. Una comprensión más amplia de la crisis sólo puede tenerse cuando se considera también la percepción de la vida económica de los individuos (Stokes, 2001). Gabel y Whitten (1997) sugieren que son más bien las percepciones de los habitantes (economía subjetiva) y no tanto los indicadores de la economía “objetiva”, las que influyen en las actitudes de los residentes.

En las comunidades que experimentan recesión económica severa se producen importantes cambios como el cierre de empresas, reducción del ingreso disponible, reducción del empleo, etc. (Stylidis y Terzidou 2014). Fenómenos similares han sido descritos en estudios de turismo que examinaron la etapa de transición de los destinos urbanos rurales y pequeños, como antiguas comunidades mineras (Vargas-Sánchez et al., 2009), comunidades agrícolas (Byrd et al., 2009, Lee, 2013) y comunidades de pescadores (Trakolis, 2001). Teniendo en cuenta que estas comunidades se enfrentan al declive de los sectores tradicionales (la agricultura, la minería, etc.), las autoridades locales exploran estrategias alternativas de desarrollo para evitar la recesión, incluido el turismo (Andereck y Vogt, 2000), que a menudo sirve como un medio para el rejuvenecimiento de su economía (Latkova y Vogt, 2012, Vargas-Sánchez et al., 2009).

Por otra parte, la literatura sobre la actitud de los residentes hacia la actividad turística sostiene que el estado percibido de la economía local influye significativamente en los impactos percibidos de desarrollo turístico (Gursoy y Rutherford, 2004, Gursoy, Chi, y Dyer, 2010, Nunkoo y Ramkissoon, 2010). Los residentes, en particular, tienden a sobreestimar los beneficios (económicos) y subestiman los costos (el medio ambiente) en los que se incurre por el desarrollo turístico (Gursoy et al., 2002, Nunkoo y Ramkissoon, 2010).

Por tanto, es de esperar que el estado percibido de la economía local afecte a la percepción de los impactos del turismo de los residentes. En concreto, en época de crisis económica, los residentes a priori son más favorables a la actividad turística, sobrevaloran los beneficios y subestiman los costes de los impactos del turismo (Stylidis y Terzidou 2014).

En el presente estudio se plantea como objetivo determinar si es posible contrastar en un enfoque longitudinal si efectivamente una situación de crisis provoca los cambios en la percepción de los residentes de los impactos del turismo y en su actitud hacia su desarrollo sugeridos en la literatura. Específicamente las hipótesis que se pretende contrastar son:

H1: En una situación de crisis económica la actitud de los residentes hacia la actividad turística mejora.

H2: En una situación de crisis económica la percepción de los beneficios económicos del impacto de la actividad turística es mayor.

H3: En una situación de crisis económica la percepción de los beneficios sociales del impacto de la actividad turística es mayor.

H4: En una situación de crisis económica la percepción de los beneficios culturales del impacto de la actividad turística es mayor.

H5: En una situación de crisis económica la percepción de los beneficios medioambientales del impacto de la actividad turística es mayor.

H6: En una situación de crisis económica la percepción de los costes económicos del impacto de la actividad turística disminuye.

H7: En una situación de crisis económica la percepción de los costes sociales del impacto de la actividad turística disminuye.

H8: En una situación de crisis económica la percepción de los costes culturales del impacto de la actividad turística disminuye.

H9: En una situación de crisis económica la percepción de los costes medioambientales del impacto de la actividad turística disminuye.

### 3. Metodología

#### 3.1. Instrumento de medida

Para la medición de la actitud y de la percepción de los impactos del turismo se utilizó una adaptación de la escala propuesta y testada por Díaz y Gutiérrez (2010), Gutiérrez (2010), que cubren la mayor parte de las percepciones de beneficios y costes en las cuatro dimensiones analizadas: económica, social, cultural y medioambiental.

La siguiente tabla recoge los 24 ítems utilizados en la escala de medida. Las respuestas se midieron en una escala Likert de cinco puntos que van desde Muy en desacuerdo (1) a Muy de acuerdo (5).

TABLA 1  
Dimensiones e impactos del turismo

	<b>Costes económicos percibidos</b>
P6x1	La actividad turística produce mayor precariedad en el empleo y empleos poco deseados
P6x2	El turismo ha hecho que suban los precios en las islas y que se incremente el coste de la vida
P6x3	La actividad turística de la isla ha provocado un incremento del coste de la vivienda y del suelo.
	<b>Beneficios económicos percibidos</b>
P6x4	El sector turístico genera grandes oportunidades de empleo y desarrollo profesional para los residentes
P6x5	El turismo contribuye de manera relevante a elevar los niveles de renta y el salario de los residentes.
P6x6	El turismo genera importantes ingresos por impuestos para las administraciones y atrae inversiones
	<b>Costes sociales percibidos del turismo</b>
P6x7	La actividad turística favorece que se creen problemas de inseguridad ciudadana en la isla (más delitos, más robos, vandalismo, ...)
P6x8	En la isla el turismo es causa importante de la congestión del tráfico.
P6x9	El desarrollo del turismo ha hecho que se pierda la tranquilidad y la calidad de vida que antes existía
	<b>Beneficios sociales percibidos del turismo</b>
P6x10	Gracias al turismo hay más parques, áreas para nadar, caminar, practicar deportes, más oferta de ocio y entretenimiento

P6x11	El turismo favorece la mejora en los servicios básicos útiles en la vida cotidiana (agua, luz, centros civiles...)
P6x12	Gracias al turismo se producen mejoras en sanidad, educación, ... en general en aspectos sociales
	<b>Costes culturales percibidos del turismo</b>
P6x13	El turista cuando están en la isla, afecta negativamente a tu vida cotidiana
P6x14	El turismo está provocando la pérdida de la identidad y cultura canaria
P6x15	En la isla se siente uno extraño por causa del turismo
	<b>Beneficios culturales percibidos del turismo</b>
P6x16	El turismo ayuda a crear y mantener exhibiciones culturales e históricas, favoreciendo nuestras tradiciones
P6x17	El turismo favorece en el tinerfeño el conocimiento y comprensión de culturas diferentes
P6x18	El turismo favorece en el tinerfeño la valoración de la identidad cultural canaria
	<b>Costes medioambientales percibidos del turismo</b>
P6x19	En la isla el turismo causa problemas importantes de contaminación y polución (basura, ruido, ...).
P6x20	El turismo provoca erosión y destrucción en los ecosistemas locales, de interior, medianías y monte, y litoral.
P6x21	El turismo consume en exceso recursos naturales como el agua y hace peligrar la disponibilidad de estos recursos
	<b>Beneficios medioambientales percibidos del turismo</b>
P6x22	En las zonas en desarrollo turístico se mantiene una estructura urbana armónica y regular.
P6x23	Gracias al turismo se han mantenido y protegido espacios naturales
P6x24	Frente a otras actividades económicas, el turismo es menos contaminante y más respetuoso con el medio

Por otra parte, la medición del apoyo de los residentes hacia la actividad turística se construyó a partir de tres ítems extraídos de la revisión de la literatura y se recogen en la siguiente tabla. Igualmente, las respuestas a estas declaraciones fueron medidos en una escala Likert de cinco puntos que van desde Muy en desacuerdo (1) a Muy de acuerdo (5).

TABLA 2  
**Ítems de la escala de apoyo de la comunidad a la actividad turística**

	<b>Apoyo de la comunidad al desarrollo turístico</b>
P7x1	El desarrollo turístico ha permitido el desarrollo global de Tenerife y sus habitantes
P7x2	Se debe potenciar al turismo como uno de los motores básicos de la economía de Tenerife.
P7x3	Para mi vida cotidiana, la actividad turística es beneficiosa
P7x4	El comportamiento del turista durante la visita es correcto, normal

### **3.2. *Ámbito de aplicación***

Con objeto de poder generalizar los resultados dentro de una tipología de destinos similares, se ha realizado el estudio simultáneamente en dos destinos turísticos. Para ello, el estudio se basa



en los datos de dos encuestas administradas, una en 2004 antes de la crisis y otra en 2014 en una fase avanzada de la misma. Los datos se han obtenido en dos destinos turísticos maduros tradicionales de primer orden, Tenerife y Mallorca.

### *Tenerife*

Tenerife es una de las 7 islas Canarias, que con una superficie de 2.034 km<sup>2</sup>, es la mayor de todo el archipiélago. Es un territorio insular que concentra la mayor parte de su actividad turística en dos zonas: los municipios de Puerto de la Cruz-La Orotava, en el norte de la isla, y los municipios de Arona-Adeje, en el sur. Aunque el residente percibe la actividad turística en todo el territorio insular en su vida cotidiana.

La economía Canaria se encuentra en un mal estado, similar al resto del territorio nacional. Una lectura de los datos del PIB y empleo así lo indican. El PIB, a precios constantes, a partir de 2007 muestra descensos hasta del 2012, aunque el 2011 mostraba un leve dato positivo de recuperación. En cuanto al empleo en 2012 en Canarias aún continuaba con la tendencia negativa observada en años anteriores, desde 2007, alcanzando elevados niveles de paro superiores al 30% (Consejo Económico y Social de Canarias, 2013).

En cuanto a la actividad turística, del total de turistas recibidos en Canarias, Tenerife ostenta aproximadamente el 38% de cuota (Turismo de Tenerife, 2013). Y su actividad turística representa casi el 30% del PIB en 2012, participación que ha aumentado en los últimos años desde el 27% en 2009. En cuanto al empleo turístico, en este momento representa el 34,7% del total en Canarias, cuota que también ha ido creciendo cada año con la evolución del mercado (Exceltur, 2012).

La evolución del número de turistas alojados en Tenerife, a diferencia que los datos macroeconómicos, ha mejorado desde 2007, hasta llegar al total de 4.973.047 turistas alojados en 2013 (Turismo de Tenerife, 2013). En 2009 el mercado extranjero alcanzó la cifra de turistas alojados más baja de los últimos 13 años (3.257.638), mientras que el nacional ha ido cayendo consecutivamente desde 2008 hasta 2013, donde se ha llegado a niveles de 2003 (1.161.922), mostrando una cierta estabilidad en el decrecimiento.

Por tanto la actividad turística se ha visto afectada en parte por la crisis, pero la pronta recuperación, al menos en el mercado extranjero, ha permitido incluso aumentar la demanda turística en los últimos años y las posibilidades económicas que el turismo representa para una sociedad que supera ya el 30% de tasa de desempleo. De hecho según Exceltur (2012), a pesar del mal escenario nacional, el PIB turístico ha experimentado un avance interanual del 0,5%, llegando a ese 30% en su contribución al PIB total directa, donde no se han considerado las contribuciones indirectas de otros sectores de actividad.

### *Mallorca*

Mallorca es la mayor de las cuatro islas habitadas que conforman el archipiélago Balear y la que atrae el mayor número de visitantes. Desde 2006 la llegada de turistas se ha mantenido estable, desde los 9,6 millones de turistas de 2006 a los aproximadamente 9,5 millones en 2013. Mallorca posee al menos cinco zonas de actividad turística a lo largo de toda la costa perimetral y otra situada en el interior. La isla tiene 3.625 km<sup>2</sup> y ha aumentado su población desde los 790.763 habitantes en 2006 a los 864.763 de 2013 (INE, 2013, IBSTAT, 2013).

En Baleares, desde el inicio de la crisis en 2008 se han observado crecimientos negativos del Valor Añadido Bruto hasta 2010, con tasas interanuales de -2,7% en 2009 y -0,9% en 2010 y a partir de esa fecha se ha producido un estancamiento técnico con crecimientos inferiores al 0,6% (IBSTAT, 2013), consecuencia de decrecimientos significativos en todos los sectores económicos, excepto a partir de 2011 del sector servicios, debido a la importancia en el de la actividad turística.

Esta situación de crisis económica se ve especialmente reflejada en los índices de paro de la comunidad que ha pasado de aproximadamente de un 7% en 2007 a más de un 26% en 2013 (EPA, 2013). En este entorno tan desolador, el sector turístico, que genera más del 25% del total

del empleo turístico ha sido el que menos puestos de trabajo ha perdido, incluso en determinados momentos ha generado ocupación (IET, 2013).

### 3.3. Muestra

Para la obtención de los datos necesarios para el contraste de diferencias en los impactos y actitud de los residentes en ambos destinos se ha utilizado como instrumento de recogida un cuestionario estructurado, diseñado específicamente para el trabajo. La recogida de información se realizó a través de entrevistadores en las zonas de residencia de la población y con cuestionarios autoadministrados seleccionando a cada unidad muestral estratificando por zona geográfica, sexo y edad, de cada destino, para cumplir las cuotas de la población. Tras la recogida de información se determinó una muestra válida de 115 personas en 2014 y 225 en 2005 para el análisis en el caso de Tenerife y de 419 en 2014 y 221 en 2005 para Mallorca (tabla 3).

TABLA 3  
Ficha técnica de la muestra

	2014	2005
Universo	Residentes permanentes	
Tipo de entrevista	Encuesta autoadministrada, en el hogar y por interceptación	
Procedimiento de muestreo	Aleatorio	
Muestra Tenerife	115	225
Muestra Mallorca	419	221
Total Muestra	534	476
Error muestral	+4,33%	+4,58%

## 4. Resultados

### *Fiabilidad y validez de la escala*

En primer lugar, se evalúa el modelo de medida asegurando la fiabilidad de cada ítem, la fiabilidad del constructo, la varianza media extraída (AVE) y la validez discriminante de los indicadores que son medida de las variables latentes.

Se comienza el análisis valorando la fiabilidad individual de los constructos, examinando su carga factorial, fiabilidad compuesta (FC) y varianza media extraída (AVE) (Chin, 1998; Fornell y Larcker, 1981). En la Tabla 4 se presentan estas medidas así como cada uno de los ítems utilizados. Las cargas factoriales son todas superiores o muy próximas a 0,7 indicando que, al menos el 50% de la varianza del constructo se ve reflejada en el indicador (Chin, 1998). La FC es siempre mayor que 0,7, que es lo que exigido en la investigación básica (Nunnally, 1978).

En cuanto a la varianza media extraída (AVE) por cada constructo de sus indicadores, esta es mayor o muy próxima a 0,5, indicando que se explica el 50% o más de la varianza del indicador (Fornell y Larcker, 1981).

TABLA 4  
Fiabilidad individual, fiabilidad compuesta y varianza extraída de los factores

Constructo	Ítem	2005			2014		
		Loading	AVE	CR	Loading	AVE	CR
Costes Económicos	P6x1	0,75021	0,47363	0,67528	0,71837	0,5498	0,7848
	P6x2	0,54589			0,80809		
	P6x3	0,61652			0,69300		
Beneficios Económicos	P6x4	0,93203	0,48668	0,65958	0,84404	0,5506	0,7790

	P6x5	0,52482			0,82133		
	P6x6	0,36865			0,51449		
Costes Sociales	P6x7	0,64298	0,47743	0,67617	0,75307	0,5888	0,8096
	P6x8	0,49991			0,67470		
	P6x9	0,76742			0,86266		
	P6x10	0,74236			0,73082		
Beneficios Sociales	P6x11	0,61387	0,52388	0,72070	0,81788	0,5597	0,7914
	P6x12	0,68094			0,69000		
	P6x13	0,64393			0,50688		
P6x15	0,68626	0,74384					
P6x19	0,62387	0,66491					
P6x20	0,71605	0,64456					
Beneficios Culturales-MA	P6x16	0,77937	0,57202	0,75814	0,83010	0,5193	0,7595
	P6x17	0,68104			0,74864		
	P6x22	0,68177			0,55518		
Actitud hacia turismo	P7x1	0,78036	0,53028	0,77847	0,77158	0,5984	0,8561
	P7x2	0,68011			0,80126		
	P7x3	0,58192			0,80422		
	P7x4	0,68630			0,71380		

Para garantizar la validez discriminante, hemos comparado la raíz cuadrada de las AVE con las correlaciones entre constructos (Tabla 5). Todos los constructos se relacionan en mayor medida con sus propias medidas que con otros constructos. Adicionalmente, se han analizado las cargas factoriales cruzadas y se ha comprobado que no son significativas en relación con las cargas factoriales (Chin, 1998).

TABLA 5  
Validez discriminante

	Costes Económicos	Beneficios Económicos	Costes Sociales	Beneficios Sociales	Costes Culturales-MA	Beneficios Culturales-MA	Actitud hacia turismo
2005							
Costes Económicos	<b>0,6431</b>						
Beneficios Económicos	-0,4346	<b>0,6532</b>					
Costes Sociales	-0,2603	-0,2603	<b>0,6461</b>				
Beneficios Sociales	-0,1764	0,3434	-0,2457	<b>0,6811</b>			
Costes Culturales-MA	0,3269	-0,3056	0,4811	-0,2067	<b>0,6685</b>		
Beneficios Culturales-MA	-0,3062	0,4180	-0,3724	0,4890	-0,4227	<b>0,7156</b>	
Actitud hacia turismo	-0,3002	0,5095	-0,4321	0,3255	-0,4050	0,4096	<b>0,6858</b>
2014							
Costes Económicos	<b>0,7415</b>						
Beneficios Económicos	-0,5284	<b>0,7420</b>					
Costes Sociales	-0,3282	-0,3282	<b>0,7674</b>				
Beneficios Sociales	-0,3582	0,4245	-0,4473	<b>0,7481</b>			
Costes Culturales-MA	0,5308	-0,4245	0,6326	-0,4162	<b>0,7230</b>		
Beneficios Culturales-MA	-0,4500	0,3930	-0,4674	0,3914	-0,6021	<b>0,7206</b>	

Actitud hacia turismo	-0,4407	0,5380	-0,4557	0,4345	-0,5882	0,5240	<b>0,7736</b>
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### Análisis ANOVA

Para conocer el efecto de la crisis en la actitud de los residentes hacia la actividad turística y en los impactos percibidos en los dos destinos analizados, Tenerife y Mallorca, se ha realizado un análisis de la varianza (ANOVA) utilizando como variable independiente el año de recogida de la información (2005 y 2014) y como variables dependientes, por un lado, el constructo de “Apoyo de la comunidad al desarrollo turístico”, y por otro lado, los constructos de la escala de beneficios y costes separados en sus cuatro componentes económicos, sociales, culturales y medioambientales.

En la tabla 6 se recogen los resultados agregados del análisis de la varianza para los constructos de análisis.

**TABLA 6**  
**Influencia de la crisis en la actitud del residente hacia la actividad turística**

		TENERIFE			MALLORCA		
		2014	2005	Sig.	2014	2005	Sig.
H1	APOYO HACIA TURISMO	3,94	3,83	0,064 *	3,55	3,44	0,072 *
H2	COSTES ECONÓMICOS	2,79	3,34	0,000 ***	3,31	3,44	0,020 **
H3	BENEFICIOS ECONÓMICOS	3,57	3,66	0,266	3,53	3,49	0,436
H4	COSTES SOCIALES	2,30	3,27	0,000 ***	3,18	3,44	0,000 ***
H5	BENEFICIOS SOCIALES	3,06	2,89	0,020 **	2,91	2,97	0,284
H6	COSTES CULTURALES	1,91	2,81	0,000 ***	2,61	3,01	0,000 ***
H7	BENEFICIOS CULTURALES	3,56	3,27	0,002 **	3,06	2,96	0,166
H8	COSTES MEDIOAMBIENTALES	3,16	3,48	0,001 **	3,47	3,72	0,001 ***
H9	BENEFICIOS MEDIOAMBIENTALES	2,60	2,58	0,882	2,71	2,44	0,001 ***

Significación: \*\*\* nivel  $p < 0,001$ ; \*\* nivel  $p < 0,01$ ; \* nivel  $p < 0,05$ .

En primer lugar se destaca que la actitud de los locales hacia el turismo ha mejorado de forma significativa en 2014 frente a 2005 tanto en Tenerife como en Mallorca, por lo que se confirma la hipótesis H1.

Con respecto a los impactos de la actividad, en general, se puede observar que los residente perciben que los beneficios son mayores en la época de crisis, mientras que los costes percibidos son menores, tal y como cabía esperar según el análisis de la literatura existente.

Este comportamiento general presenta diferencias significativas en los costes económicos, sociales, culturales y medioambientales. Sin embargo, no presenta diferencias significativas en la percepción de los impactos de los beneficios económicos. Por otra parte, tampoco es significativa la diferencia en Mallorca de los beneficios sociales y culturales y en Tenerife no es significativa la diferencia de los beneficios medioambientales.

Por tanto se pueden contrastar las hipótesis H6, H7 y H8 y no se puede contrastar la hipótesis H2, aunque sí parcialmente las hipótesis H3, H4, H5.

## 5. Conclusiones e implicaciones

Teniendo en cuenta los factores que determinan la percepción de los impactos del turismo de los residentes, se ha comprobado a través de este estudio longitudinal y contemplando dos destinos diferentes, que la crisis económica parece influir en la forma en que los residentes perciben los cambios (impactos) que se producen como consecuencia del turismo. Esto corrobora los resultados del estudio de Lau y Heldman de (2009), que sugieren que la recesión económica puede maximizar sustancialmente los efectos en las actitudes de la gente hacia la formulación de políticas. También confirma los resultados de Styliadis y Terzidou (2014) del estudio llevado a cabo en Kavala, una ciudad en el norte de Grecia gravemente afectada por la crisis económica,

en el que observaron el efecto de la situación económica en la percepción de los impactos y de la actitud hacia el desarrollo turístico.

Los residentes en esta nueva situación en la que se enfrentan al desempleo y a la austeridad financiera, parecen subestimar los costes económicos de los impactos de la actividad turística (Hipótesis H2). Esto está en consonancia con estudios llevados a cabo en regiones económicamente deprimidas (Aref, Redzuan y Gill, 2009 y Lepp, 2007), donde se observó que los residentes tienden a sobreestimar los logros económicos y subestiman los costos del desarrollo del turismo (Gursoy y Rutherford, 2004 y Nunkoo y Ramkissoon, 2010).

Igualmente, los residentes en esta situación valoran en mayor medida los beneficios socio-culturales (Hipótesis H5 y H7) y subestiman sus costes (Hipótesis H4 y H6). Esto está plenamente alineado con la teoría del intercambio social y muchos estudios (Chhabra y Gürsoy, 2011 y Jurowski et al., 1997), que observaron que los residentes locales que perciben los beneficios económicos del turismo son más propensos a reconocer los aspectos positivos del desarrollo del turismo que los que perciben menos o ningún beneficio.

Parece que la crisis económica crea un cambio en las prioridades de las personas. Mientras que la sociedad moderna es propensa a valores conservacionistas y de respeto al medioambiente (Huber, 2000), que busca patrones ambientalmente adecuados para la producción y el consumo, al mismo tiempo, el entorno económico complejo, inestable y de riesgo obliga a las personas a luchar por un medio alternativo de supervivencia en un mundo económicamente impredecible. Por lo tanto, en este entorno se tiende a subestimar los costes de los impactos medioambientales (Hipótesis H8) y a sobreestimar los beneficios colaterales sobre el medioambiente que genera la actividad turística (Hipótesis H9). Algunos estudios han revelado cómo los residentes llegan a adaptarse a los cambios generados por el turismo, incluso en los impactos negativos percibidos (contaminación, congestión) Kayat (2002). Otros estudios no turísticos también han verificado que las personas suelen sacrificar el medioambiente en favor de su propio beneficio económico (Harris, 2006).

Como consecuencia, cabía esperar, y en efecto se confirma, que la actitud de los residentes hacia la actividad turística en épocas de crisis e incertidumbre económica es aún más positiva (Hipótesis H1). El apoyo comunitario al turismo puede entenderse en la creencia general de que el turismo puede crear oportunidades para que las personas que ayuden a escapar de las dificultades (Kayat, 2002). Tales preocupaciones de los residentes se pueden explicar teniendo en cuenta el concepto de la “dependencia local” desarrollado por Cox y Mair (1988).

Según Cox y Mair (1988), muchos de los residentes tienden a favorecer el desarrollo económico local (es decir, el turismo), debido a su dependencia directa o indirecta de la actividad. En la misma línea Wyllie (1998) identificó que incluso algunos residentes que no se benefician directamente del turismo, apoyan su desarrollo por temor a que una crisis económica tendría un efecto negativo en la comunidad en su conjunto.

En general, esta investigación contribuye a la comprensión del papel crucial que desempeña el contexto económico para influir en la percepción del desarrollo del turismo de los residentes. En concreto, la actual crisis económica está llevando a los residentes de Tenerife y Mallorca a adoptar una actitud en general más positiva hacia el turismo.

Los resultados, sin embargo, no sugieren que los residentes apoyen cualquier política que pueda tener efectos e impactos negativos, sino que están en necesidad de mejorar sus condiciones de vida (Prentice, 1997). Esto se ha puesto de manifiesto en la intensa oposición mostrada por grupos locales a determinadas políticas como el caso de la ecotasa (Holden, 2009), por ser percibida como una reducción de la competitividad, o también en el caso del rechazo a las prospecciones petrolíferas por el impacto negativo que puede tener para la actividad turística.

Dado que el turismo depende en gran medida del apoyo de la comunidad local, los planificadores de la comunidad se enfrentan al reto de ajustar sus estrategias a las necesidades de los residentes locales, sin comprometer la sostenibilidad (Stylidis y Terzidou 2014). De lo contrario, los efectos negativos sobre el entorno sociocultural y natural pueden socavar la

viabilidad económica del turismo en el largo plazo (Jamal y Getz, 1995). Por tanto, los planificadores locales deben hacer hincapié en la contribución del turismo al empleo y al bienestar económico, debiendo transmitir que no se puede hacer a cualquier costo que pueda comprometer el futuro.

A pesar de sus efectos devastadores, la crisis económica también puede ser considerado como una oportunidad para reestructurar el sector turístico y aumentar su competitividad (O'Brien, 2012). Los resultados del estudio sugieren que se deben implementar metodologías de planificación colaborativa y estrategias cuidadosamente diseñados que satisfagan las necesidades de sus residentes, del sector y de los turistas, dado que los resultados de este estudio es inequívoco en cuanto a la intensidad del apoyo de los residentes hacia el turismo y la voluntad de superar la crisis.

## 6. Limitaciones

Este estudio, al igual que cualquier otra investigación, presenta algunas limitaciones. Las principales aportaciones se derivan de que el modelo utiliza datos longitudinales (2005 vs. 2014) y una comparación cruzada de casos (Tenerife vs. Mallorca). Por lo tanto, los resultados se pueden generalizar para destinos de tipología similar y además el modelo se puso a prueba en dos momentos diferentes (en momento de auge económico y durante la crisis económica). No obstante, alguna de las muestras obtenidas puede resultar algo escasa. Por otra parte, en 2005 no se incluyeron algunos factores exógenos que también podrían explicar parte de la variación en la percepción y el apoyo del turismo de los residentes y que en el modelo podrían haber sido relevantes como puede ser la percepción del estado de la economía local. Finalmente sería interesante investigar las percepciones y el apoyo de los residentes en otros destinos de tipología de desarrollo turístico diferentes.

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# EL IMPACTO DE LA MOTIVACIÓN EN LA IMAGEN PERCIBIDA, LA SATISFACCIÓN Y LA LEALTAD DE LOS TURISTAS

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## RESUMEN

*El presente trabajo trata de analizar la influencia de la motivación en el comportamiento del consumidor turístico. Partiendo de la relación entre imagen-satisfacción-lealtad se establecen dos tipologías de visitantes en base a factores motivacionales y se estudia la forma en qué varía en ellos la relación entre los tres constructos. El análisis efectuado para una muestra de 350 turistas de una ciudad histórica con un claro posicionamiento de destino cultural, permite concluir que la imagen del destino influye de forma significativa en la satisfacción de la visita con independencia de la motivación y que el peso de la satisfacción en las intenciones futuras de los visitantes es mayor cuando éstos viajan por motivos externos vinculados a los atributos y atractivos del destino.*

## Palabras clave:

Perfiles motivacionales, imagen percibida, satisfacción, lealtad al destino

## 1. Introducción

La trascendencia que en términos económicos tiene comprender por qué los visitantes vuelven a un destino ya conocido ha hecho que la lealtad se convierta en el objetivo de numerosos estudios e investigaciones. En este sentido, gran parte de los trabajos realizados se han centrado en identificar sus antecedentes –como la satisfacción, el valor percibido, la imagen- así como sus factores condicionantes, produciéndose en las últimas décadas avances muy destacados en la comprensión de este fenómeno. No obstante, como evidencia la revisión de la literatura aún hay ciertas cuestiones abiertas al debate que exigen avanzar y profundizar en la comprensión de la repetición de la visita y por, extensión, en el comportamiento futuro de los visitantes.

En el ámbito turístico, la particularidad y naturaleza única del producto turístico hace que la lealtad sea un objetivo que no resulta fácil de conseguir (Olivier, 1999). En este sentido, algunos autores han apuntado que los visitantes son básicamente desleales (Bowen y Shoemaker, 1998). Esto se debe, en gran medida, a la importancia que tiene la búsqueda de nuevas experiencias y el deseo de conocer nuevos lugares en el comportamiento de gran parte de los turistas. Este junto a otros factores motivacionales -como el deseo de relajarse, salir de la monotonía, aumentar su cultura, etc- juegan un rol fundamental en las elecciones y decisiones de los individuos (Alegre y Juaneda, 2006; Jang y Feng, 2007)

La influencia de la motivación en la imagen percibida y en la satisfacción ha sido ampliamente aludida en la literatura turística. La motivación como factor que impulsa a los individuos a actuar y antecedente de la conducta viajera se configura como un filtro a través del cual los individuos construyen su imagen del destino (Castaño, Moreno y Crego, 2006). Además, la motivación puede ejercer una influencia determinante en la satisfacción en la medida en que los turistas obtendrán un mayor o menor grado de satisfacción global en función de la evaluación que realicen de aquellos aspectos de su visita más relacionados con los motivos de su viaje.

Por otro lado, numerosos estudios han incidido en la influencia de la imagen en la satisfacción y la relación entre satisfacción-lealtad (Bigné, Mattila y Andreu, 2008; Hosany y Witha, 2010; Jang y Feng, 2007). En estos y otros estudios se concluye que una imagen favorable, derivada de su experiencia en el destino, determina una evaluación positiva que conducirá a la satisfacción de los visitantes; además, hay un cierto acuerdo en que cuánto más satisfechos estén los individuos más probable es que éstos generen una comunicación positiva y se incremente la probabilidad de que repitan su estancia en él mismo. La integración de ambas consideraciones ha abierto un nuevo campo de investigación que explora la relación imagen-satisfacción-intenciones futuras.

Dentro de este marco, el presente trabajo pretende avanzar en el conocimiento de la influencia que ejerce la motivación en la imagen percibida del visitante sobre el destino, su satisfacción y su comportamiento futuro.

Partiendo de la idea de que el mercado turístico es heterogéneo y que son múltiples y dinámicas las motivaciones que mueven a los individuos a viajar, hemos identificado dos grandes perfiles motivacionales de visitantes de un destino cultural. Con estas premisas nos planteamos el objetivo de explorar si la motivación establece o no cambios en la relación entre éstos tres constructos.

### **1.1. La relación satisfacción-lealtad**

La satisfacción puede considerarse como un juicio evaluativo postcompra, que incorpora elementos cognitivos y afectivos, y que realiza el consumidor sobre su experiencia (Olivier, 1999).

Desde la perspectiva de las empresas y destinos turísticos, el objetivo de conseguir que los individuos alcancen elevados niveles de satisfacción está ampliamente justificado en la medida en que esto se traduce en la generación de una comunicación positiva (*lealtad actitudinal*) y aumentan las posibilidades de que éstos repitan la visita al destino (*lealtad comportamental*).

En las últimas décadas se ha realizado un gran esfuerzo investigador orientado hacia la obtención de modelos generales que permitan explicar la satisfacción y la lealtad del consumidor. Muchos de estos

estudios han analizado los antecedentes de la satisfacción – como la experiencia, las emociones, la calidad y el valor percibido (De Rojas y Camarero, 2008; Hosany y Witham, 2010; Bigné et al. 2008; Gallarza y Saura, 2006)- y sus consecuencias.

Los resultados de gran parte de ellos establecen que la satisfacción es un antecedente de las intenciones futuras de los visitantes. Trabajo como los de Chi y Qu (2008), Chen y Tsai (2007), Yoon y Uysal, (2005), Bigné et al. (2008), Lee, Yoon y Lee (2007) Han, Kim y Kim, (2011); establecen el efecto directo y positivo de la satisfacción confirmando la idea de tener clientes satisfechos incrementan las posibilidades de que éstos aumenten el consumo del producto y generen una comunicación positiva del mismo. No obstante, algunos autores han matizado y cuestionado el efecto de la satisfacción (Agustin y Singh, 2005; Lee, Lee y Lee, 2005). Bigné, Sánchez y Sánchez (2001) se muestran cautos a la hora de establecer una relación directa entre ambas variables. Sus investigaciones para dos destinos españoles, sólo consiguen probar para uno sólo de ellos esta hipótesis. Basándonos en las consideraciones anteriores y al objeto de confirmar la validez de esta relación en destinos culturales establecemos la siguiente hipótesis:

*(H1): La satisfacción es un antecedente de las intenciones futuras del visitante*

### **1.2. La relación imagen-satisfacción-lealtad**

En el contexto actual, la idea de que la imagen percibida influye tanto en la elección del destino como en la evaluación que este realiza de su experiencia en él mismo y por extensión en su comportamiento futuro de los individuos es ampliamente asumida.

La imagen ha sido considerada como una representación mental de las creencias, sentimientos e impresión global que tienen los individuos hacia un objeto o destino (Baloglu y McCleary, 1999). Este constructo está integrado por una dimensión cognitiva o perceptual y una emocional; existiendo una estrecha relación entre ambos componentes que dan como resultado la imagen global que los individuos tienen de un producto (Stern y Krakover, 1993).

La imagen cognitiva ha sido medida tradicionalmente a través de un conjunto más o menos amplio y diverso de atributos caracterizadores de los destinos (Gartner, 1989, Beerli y Martín, 2004) con capacidad para atraer y persuadir a los individuos para visitar un lugar determinado. Por su parte, el aspecto emocional de la imagen está vinculado a los sentimientos que los visitantes pueden sentir y experimentar hacia el destino.

Distintas investigaciones han analizado el proceso de formación de la imagen probando empíricamente que la percepción cognitiva y la evaluación afectiva ejercen una influencia directa en la imagen percibida (Baloglu y McCleary, 1999; Rodríguez, Frías y Castañeda, 2013; Stern y Krakover, 1993). y será resultado tanto de la percepción subjetiva de los atributos y elementos del destino como de los sentimientos que despierte en el visitante. En consonancia con estas premisas establecemos la siguiente hipótesis:

*(H2): La imagen del destino es resultado de la evaluación de un componente cognitivo y afectivo que la determinan*

Numerosos estudios previos han propuesto un amplio abanico de atributos con capacidad para recoger la imagen percibida, basándose en la idea de que la imagen es una percepción subjetiva del destino que se deriva de la valoración que el individuo realiza de sus atributos y características (Hunt, 1975; Phelps, 1986; Stabler, 1995; Chen y Tsai, 2007). Una imagen positiva, originada por dicha valoración y la favorable experiencia vivida por los individuos en el destino, puede contribuir a la satisfacción de los visitantes.

El efecto directo y positivo de la imagen sobre la satisfacción ha sido probado en la literatura confirmándose la existencia de una relación causal entre ambos constructos (Bigné et al., 2001; Lee et al. 2005) y demostrando que existe una relación entre la imagen cognitiva y afectiva y la satisfacción experimentada por el visitante (Rodríguez et al, Frías y Castañeda, 2013). Prayag y Ryan (2012) confirman que cuanto más positiva es la imagen percibida más altos son los niveles de satisfacción. En este mismo sentido, los resultados de Chi y Qu, (2008) establecen que la imagen percibida influye

directamente en los atributos que utiliza el individuo para construir su satisfacción y que ambos son antecedentes directos de la satisfacción global.

*(H3): La imagen global es un antecedente de la satisfacción del visitante*

La revisión de la literatura evidencia un menor número de trabajos que analicen la influencia de la dimensión cognitiva y emocional de forma diferenciada en la satisfacción de los turistas y por extensión en la relación imagen global-satisfacción-lealtad. Algunos como los de Rodríguez et al, Frías y Castañeda (2013) revelan la influencia significativa de la imagen cognitiva en la imagen afectiva, la satisfacción y la imagen global. Otros como del Bosque y San Martín (2008) apuntan que cuanto más positiva es la imagen preconcebida del destino más alta es la lealtad al destino pero no sucede así en el caso de su impacto en la satisfacción experimentada después de la visita.

Por otro lado, aunque se ha demostrado la influencia de algunos factores motivacionales en el componente afectivo aún está prácticamente sin explorar la incidencia de éstos en la relación que guarda la imagen con la satisfacción y la lealtad. En la medida en que la evaluación que el individuo realiza del destino puede estar determinada por los criterios de evaluación derivados de la motivación que actúan como filtro a través de los cuáles los individuos elaboran su imagen del destino, resulta de interés analizar el papel que ambos componentes de la imagen pueden tener sobre la imagen global y en su relación con la satisfacción y la fidelidad del visitante. Estas consideraciones nos llevan a establecer la siguiente hipótesis:

*(H4): La motivación determina las relaciones que se establecen entre la imagen percibida, la-satisfacción y las intenciones futuras de los visitantes*

### **1.3. La motivación y su influencia en las decisiones de los turistas**

En el ámbito del turismo, la motivación se configura como un meta-concepto que actúa como detonante de la conducta viajera siendo un factor explicativo clave de las decisiones y comportamiento de los turistas. La motivación permite dar respuesta a tres cuestiones esenciales del ciclo turístico: (i) las razones por la que los individuos viajan, (ii) la elección concreta del lugar al que viajan; y (iii) los resultados obtenidos de su experiencia (Castaño, Moreno, García y Grego 2003).

Viajar cubre necesidades psicosociales muy amplias (Schmidhauser, 1989), lo que hace que la mayoría de las personas viajen por la confluencia de un conjunto más o menos variado de motivos aunque, en ocasiones, pueda identificarse un motivo principal sin el cual el viaje no se hubiera realizado. Estos motivos que mueven y dirigen la conducta de los individuos pueden tener causas muy diferentes y ser activados tanto por sensaciones internas como por estímulos externos (Gnoth, 1997; Goossens, 2000).

Numerosas investigaciones se han centrado en el análisis de la motivación turística lo que ha permitido avanzar en su comprensión como fenómeno psicosocial. Dentro de la multiplicidad de enfoques y teorías que han abordado su estudio uno de los más utilizados y aplicados en la literatura es el modelo de los factores de empuje y arrastre (Dann, 1977;1981; Goonssens, 2000; Jan y Wu, 2006; Iso-Ahola, 1982) . Los primeros (*push factors*) están relacionados con los deseos del turista y por tanto con aspectos más internos y emocionales. Dentro de esta tipología se incluye, entre otros, la necesidad del individuo de relajarse, escapar del estrés y de los patrones de vida cotidianos, buscar la interacción social y viajar con la familia. En cambio, los factores de arrastre (*pull factors*) o motivos externos están más conectados con aspectos cognitivos y se vinculan a los atractivos y atributos del destino (Crompton, 1979; Yoon y Uysal, 2005); aunque éstos también pueden reforzar a los motivos internos (Yoon y Uysal, 2005).

Otra de las teorías motivacionales de referencia es la formulada por Crompton (1979). En ella establece una doble clasificación diferenciando una primera tipología de “*motivos psicológicos*” en la que incluye siete factores de empuje (escape, exploración, relax, prestigio, regresión, mejora de relaciones familiares e interacción social) y una segunda clase denominada “*motivos culturales*” más orientados al destino (*pull factors*) e integrados por la novedad y las necesidades culturales.

En una línea complementaria e interrelacionada, otros autores han establecido la “necesidad de escape” – que puede concretarse en el deseo del individuo de dejar atrás su entorno cotidiano (push factor)- y la “necesidad de búsqueda” (pull factor) -asociada al deseo de conseguir una recompensa psicológica intrínseca-; como dos de las dimensiones fundamentales de la motivación turística (Iso-Ahola, 1982; Ross e Iso-Ahola,1991). Por su parte, Ryan y Glendon (1998) identifican cuatro grandes factores motivacionales: una *dimensión social* –relacionada con el aspecto relacional de los viajes y las vacaciones- una *dimensión de relax* –que combina las necesidades de búsqueda y escape-, una *dimensión intelectual* –referida al conocimiento y el descubrimiento- y una *dimensión de maestría o competencia* relacionada con el desarrollo de habilidades.

Estas aportaciones evidencian el carácter multidimensional y complejo de la motivación. Pero además, ponen de manifiesto que las motivaciones de los individuos son heterógenas y dinámicas (Pearce1988; 1993; Lee, Lee y Wicks, 2004). Distintos grupos de individuos pueden viajar al mismo destino por motivos diferentes. De hecho, estas razones pueden variar de una persona o segmento de mercado a otro y de un proceso de decisión al siguiente (Devesa, Laguna y Palacios, 2010, Kozac, 2002) lo que exige un análisis continuado de la evolución del mercado y la aplicación de estrategias de segmentación como pre-requisito para el diseño de estrategias de marketing efectivas.

La identificación de segmentos utilizando variables motivacionales permite la identificación de tipologías de visitantes que pueden presentar distintos niveles de atractivo para el destino en función de su tamaño, gasto o correspondencia con el posicionamiento del destino. Un destacado número de investigaciones han utilizado la motivación como criterio para identificar perfiles diferenciados de visitantes, estableciendo la pertinencia y utilidad de ésta como variable de segmentación (Barroso Castro et al., 2007; Beh y Bruyere, 2007; Devesa, Laguna y Palacios; 2010; Formica y Uysal, 1996; Lee et al., 2004; Molera y Albadarejo, 2007). Sin embargo, aún son escasos los trabajos centrados en estudiar si la heterogeneidad del mercado afecta a la relación entre el destino turístico y los visitantes (Barroso Castro et al, 2007).

Yoon y Uysal (2005) apuntan que una comprensión completa de la lealtad necesita considerar de forma simultánea la satisfacción y la motivación y señalan que la variación de las motivaciones puede hacer cambiar los estándares y niveles de satisfacción de los individuos. Sus resultados -además de confirmar que la satisfacción es un antecedente de la lealtad-, indican que los factores externos afectan a la satisfacción y que existe una relación significativa entre los factores internos y lealtad. Otros estudios como Schofield y Thomson (2007) también establecen la influencia de algunos factores push y pull en la satisfacción y en las intenciones de los visitantes. Por su parte, Jang y Feng (2007) se centran únicamente en el efecto de la búsqueda de novedad señalando que este motivo tiene un efecto directo en la satisfacción a corto plazo y en la intención de volver a visitar el destino a medio plazo.

Aunque estos estudios apuntan la existencia de una relación entre los constructos sus resultados apuntan desiguales resultados sobre el impacto de los factores motivacionales en la satisfacción y la lealtad. Ello unido a las cuestiones aún abiertas en torno a la relación satisfacción-lealtad parece indicar la necesidad de seguir investigando en esta línea al objeto de comprender mejor el papel que juega la motivación en la misma.

Teniendo en cuenta estas consideraciones, planteamos la existencia de distintos perfiles de visitantes usando como criterio de asignación variables motivacionales con el objetivo de analizar si el mayor o menor peso de determinados factores influyen en el comportamiento de los visitantes en términos de imagen percibida, satisfacción e intenciones futuras.

## **2. Metodología**

### **2.1. Muestra y procedimiento**

Los datos utilizados para el estudio fueron obtenidos a través de cuestionarios realizados a una muestra representativa de visitantes de un destino cultural. Se realizaron un total de 350 entrevistas, en diferentes lugares de la ciudad y en diferentes horarios del día. La muestra estaba equilibrada en

cuanto al sexo de los entrevistados, con un ligero predominio de las mujeres (53%), con una edad media de 49 años y con mayor presencia de estudios universitarios (62% de la muestra) y de trabajadores por cuenta ajena (31%). La inexistencia de diferencias estadísticamente significativas en todas las variables pertinentes para nuestra investigación, permiten considerar la muestra como una muestra única de turistas.

## 2.2. Escalas de medidas

Las motivaciones de los visitantes fueron medidas a partir de una escala en la que se incluyeron un total de 17 ítems iniciales de tipo Likert de 10 puntos que comprendían tanto factores de empuje (*pull factors*) como de arrastre (*push factors*). Con ellos se trató de recoger las razones de viaje más frecuentes y relevantes, y su elección se realizó de acuerdo con la revisión bibliográfica efectuada (Crompton, 1979; Crompton y McKay, 1997; Goossens, 2000; Lee et al., 2004; Ragheb y Beard, 1982).

Como paso previo a los cálculos posteriores, se realizó un análisis factorial de la escala de motivación del que se extrajeron cuatro factores. Aunque nuestro interés reside en las puntuaciones factoriales que se derivan de dichos componentes como instrumento para establecer la fuerza de las motivaciones en cada sujeto, resulta interesante caracterizar cada uno de los cuatro factores de la solución final, pues, sin duda, nos ayudará a comprender los resultados que de ellos se derivan (Tabla 1).

TABLA 1

**Matriz de componentes rotados del cuestionario de motivación de la visita**

	Componente			
	1	2	3	4
VISITAR MONUMENTOS Y PATRIMONIO	,857			
AUMENTAR CULTURA Y FORMACIÓN	,846			
VISITAR A FAMILIARES Y AMIGOS	-,557			
NUEVAS EXPERIENCIAS Y SITIOS NUEVOS	,444	-,619		
CERCANÍA AL LUGAR DE RESIDENCIA	-,410			
DISFRUTAR DE LA GASTRONOMÍA		,724		
CONOCER SITIO		-,508		
DISFRUTAR DE LAS VACACIONES Y TIEMPO LIBRE		,452		,402
DISFRUTAR DEL ENTORNO NATURAL		,440		
DESCANSAR, NO HACER NADA			,794	
ESCAPAR DE LAS TENSIONES			,629	
COMENTAR EXPERIENCIA VIAJE				,386
FAVORECER RELACIONES				,796

El primero de los factores tiene pesos importantes en motivos que tienen en común la visita monumental e histórica, el aumento de la cultura y la propia formación así como por la búsqueda de sitios nuevos y de nuevas experiencias. Un segundo factor tendría un fuerte contenido gastronómico, de un visitante de cercanía, así como del disfrute del entorno natural.

Un tercer factor, que podríamos denominar *Búsqueda del descanso y la tranquilidad*, estaría formado por un visitante que busca la tranquilidad y el descanso, como alternativa a la vida de la ciudad. El último de los factores tendría que ver con visitantes que encuentran en las relaciones interpersonales unos de los motivos principales de la visita siendo el viaje una buena manera de favorecer dichas relaciones interpersonales (con la familia, la pareja, los amigos, etc.).

El coeficiente Alpha de Cronbach de la escala alcanzó un valor de 0,85. Para el análisis de la validez se procedió a realizar un AFC con los 17 ítems del cuestionario, en un modelo de cuatro factores, obtenidos a partir del análisis factorial anterior. Dicho modelo presenta un ajuste razonable (Tabla 2).

TABLA 2



**Evaluación de modelos de 4 factores de las escalas de motivación (AFC)**

Modelo	S-B <sub>(Chi-cuadrado)</sub> (gl) (p)	GFI	RMSEA	NFI	NNFI	CFI	AGFI	AIC
<b>Factores Escala de motivaciones (4 factores)</b>	166.400 (76) (P = 0.000)	0.962	0.0686	1.000	1.074	1.000	0.940	254.400

En la construcción de la escala de satisfacción, se partió de una concepción multidimensional de la misma en la idea de que la evaluación que hace un individuo sobre su experiencia es resultado de un proceso complejo. De las diferentes metodologías utilizadas en el estudio y medición de la satisfacción (expectation-performance, importance-performance, disconfirmation approach) se optó por aquella en la que ésta es medida a través del resultado experimentado por los individuos (Devesa y Palacios, 2006; Truong y Foster 2006; Yu y Goulden, 2006). La escala final presentó un Alfa de Cronbach aceptable (Tabla 3).

TABLA 3

**Análisis de la fiabilidad de las diferentes subescalas**

Subescala	Alfa de Cronbach	Número de elementos
<b>Imagen cognitiva</b>	0'71	7
<b>Imagen afectiva</b>	0'72	3
<b>Satisfacción</b>	0'71	4
<b>Lealtad</b>	0'81	3

Por su parte, la escala para medir las intenciones futuras ha recogido tanto la dimensión actitudinal como comportamental de la lealtad. En consonancia con trabajos anteriores, ésta se ha operativizado mediante tres ítems que recogen tanto las intenciones de volver a visitar el destino como la intención de generar una comunicación positiva del mismo (Barroso Castro et al. (2007); Chen y Chen, 2010; Yoon y Uysal, 2005; Lee et al. 2007). La escala final presentó un Alfa de Cronbach elevado de 0'81 (Tabla 3).

En cuanto a la imagen, se partió de la consideración de ésta como la suma de creencias, ideas e impresiones que las personas tienen de un destino o lugar (Hunt, 1975; Crompton, 1979). La medición del componente cognoscitivo se realizó mediante una escala multi-ítems integrada por 24 atributos característicos del destino (Beerli and Martín, 2004, Chen and Tsai, 2007; Chi and Qu, 2008). Para medir el componente afectivo se utilizó una escala de diferencial semántico integrada por tres ítems que recogen la dimensión emocional de la imagen percibida del destino, basándonos en los trabajos de Balogly y McCleary, (1999); Beerli y Martín (2004), Bosque y San Martín (2008) y Russel y Snodgrass (1987). Por último, la imagen global, se operativizó a través de un único ítem pidiéndose a los entrevistados que la valorarán en una escala de diez posiciones. Tanto la escala de imagen cognitiva como la escala de imagen afectiva alcanzaron valores aceptables (Tabla 3).

**3. Resultados**

El análisis factorial de la escala de motivación de la visita analizada en el apartado anterior, además de establecer una distinción entre los diferentes motivos de los turistas y visitantes, nos permitió disponer de un conjunto de puntuaciones factoriales con las características que necesitamos para realizar un análisis de cluster. Pretendemos con ello, establecer el menor número posible de grupos motivacionales con significatividad lógica y estadística a partir de esas puntuaciones normalizadas con valores medios y desviaciones típicas iguales; la ausencia de correlaciones entre los factores está asegurada por haber sido obtenidos con rotación Oblimin. El método seleccionado para el análisis de cluster será el de clasificación no jerárquica bajo la premisa de maximizar la varianza entre tipologías y minimizar la varianza dentro de cada grupo.

De todas las soluciones posibles, la que mejor cumple estos requisitos es la que establece dos conglomerados que pasamos a identificar a partir de sus valores medios en las puntuaciones factoriales mencionadas (Tabla 4).

TABLA 4

<b>Tipologías motivacionales</b>			
<b>Conglomerado (Tamaño)</b>	<b>Valor medio en cada factor</b>	<b>Factores con los que se correlaciona</b>	<b>Nombre del conglomerado</b>
1 230 miembros (66%)	F1 = 0'46	F1 y F2	Visitante Cultural y gastronómico
	F2 = 0'24		
	F3 = -0'01		
	F4 = -0'32		
2 120 miembros (34%)	F1 = -0'88	F2 y F3	Visitante relacional y de relax
	F2 = -0'45		
	F3 = 0'17		
	F4 = 0'62		

El primero de los conglomerados tendría puntuaciones elevadas en los motivos relacionados con la visita cultural y monumental (factor F1) y que tiene en la gastronomía un motivo más de la visita (factor F2); este primer conglomerado estaría formado por el 66 % de la muestra.

El segundo conglomerado tiene valores medios elevados en el tercer factor, relacionado con los visitantes que buscan la tranquilidad y el descanso, así como con el factor cuatro, que hemos denominado visitante relacional. Este grupo lo compone el 34% de la muestra y, por razones evidentes, le hemos denominado visitante relacional y de relax.

Tras la determinación de las tipologías motivacionales, vamos a establecer los modelos en los que hacemos explícitas las relaciones de causalidad entre imagen, satisfacción y lealtad para cada uno de esos conglomerados así como para el total de la muestra. Estos modelos nos permitirán a aceptar o refutar cada una de las hipótesis planteadas. Para su cálculo se han utilizado la matriz de covarianza y el algoritmo de cálculo de los mínimos cuadrados no ponderados pues con dicha estrategia de cálculo, se realizan estimaciones consistentes sin necesidad de asumir multinormalidad de las variables (Ruiz 2000).

El path análisis de la relaciones entre la imagen, la satisfacción y la lealtad a partir de los datos del total de la muestra presenta un buen ajuste (Tabla 5). Además, la matriz landa X del modelo presenta todos los valores significativos con  $p > 0'05$ .

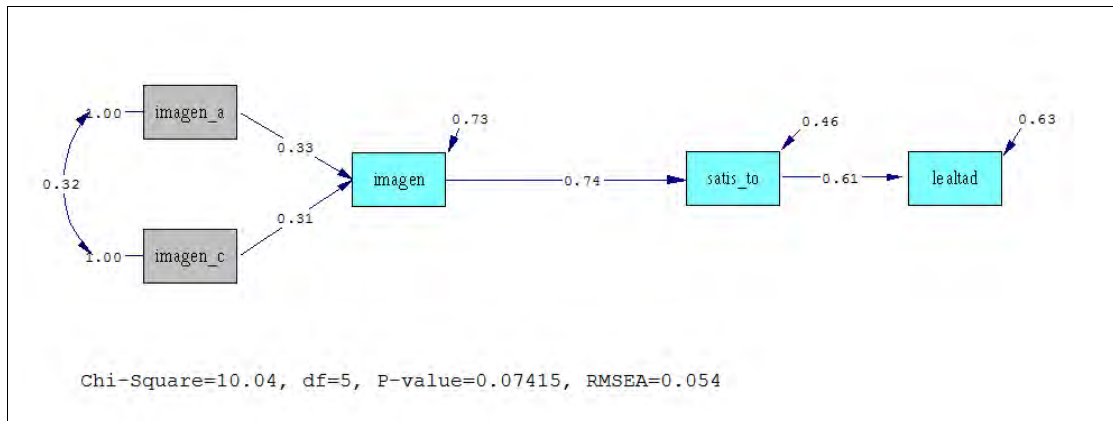
TABLA 5

<b>Ajustes del modelo general</b>								
<b>Modelo</b>	<b>S-B (Chi-cuadrado) (gl) (p)</b>	<b>GFI</b>	<b>RMSEA</b>	<b>NFI</b>	<b>NNFI</b>	<b>CFI</b>	<b>AGFI</b>	<b>AIC</b>
<b>Modelo general</b>	10.474 (5) (P = 0.074)	0.98	0.053	0'98	0'98	0'99	0.96	30.039

El modelo presenta relaciones directas y significativas entre la imagen afectiva y la imagen cognitiva con la imagen final. Concretamente, la imagen afectiva determinaría la imagen final con un peso de 0'33 y de 0'31 la imagen cognitiva. Existiría, además, una correlación significativa entre ambos componentes de la imagen del destino. (Figura 1).

FIGURA 1

**Modelo final del total de la muestra**



A su vez, la imagen del destino explicaría la varianza de la satisfacción final en un porcentaje del 54% (correlación de 0'74). (H3): La imagen global es un antecedente de la satisfacción del visitante. Por último, la satisfacción de la visita determinaría la lealtad al destino con un peso de 0'61; la satisfacción explicaría algo más del 37% de la lealtad al destino.

Para la comprobación de la H4, hemos elaborado los modelos correspondientes a cada uno de los dos conglomerados manteniendo de partida las mismas relaciones que en el modelo general que acabamos de analizar. Estos dos modelos presentan ajustes adecuados (Tabla 6).

TABLA 6

**Ajustes de los modelos por conglomerados**

Modelo	S-B <sup>(Chi-cuadrado)</sup> (g) (p)	GFI	RMSE A	NFI	NNFI	CFI	AGFI	AIC
Visitante cultural-gastronómico	8.765 (5) (P = 0.019)	0.99	0.0576	0.98	0.98	0.95	0.96	30.000
Visitante relacional y de relax	11.694 (5) (P = 0.039)	0.96	0.1070	0.94	0.92	0.99	0.88	30.000

El ajuste del modelo correspondiente a los visitantes culturales y gastronómicos es adecuado y parecido en su cuantía al obtenido en el modelo general. No así el obtenido con los visitantes relacionales y de relax, aunque el valor de Chi-Cuadrado nos permite considerar un ajuste correcto (Figuras 2 y 3).

FIGURA 2

**Estimación de modelos para los visitantes culturales-gastronómicos**

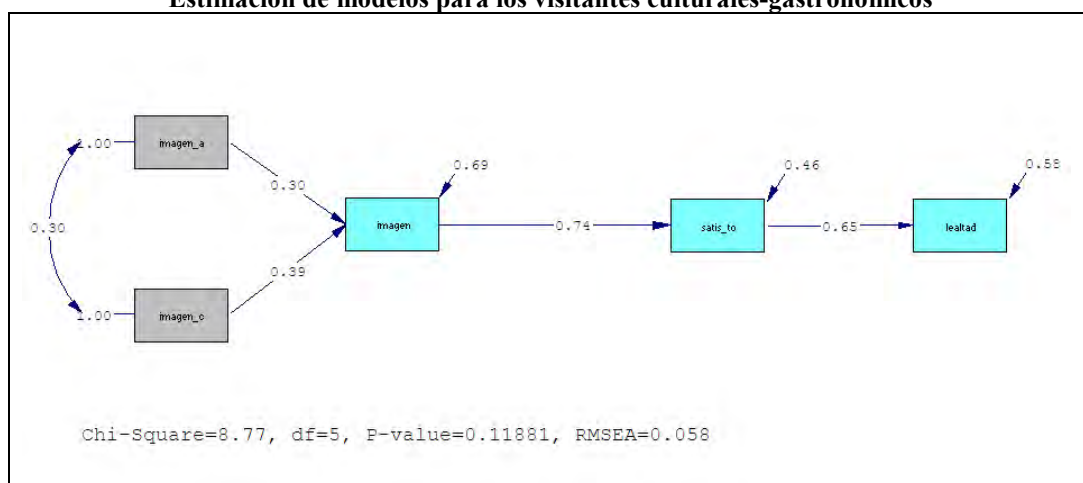
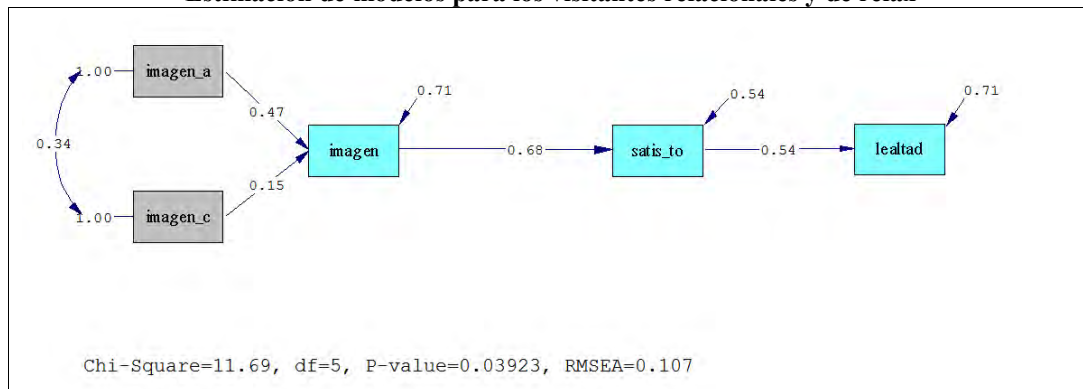


FIGURA 3  
Estimación de modelos para los visitantes relacionales y de relax



La imagen del destino en ambos segmentos motivacionales determina la satisfacción de la visita. Igualmente la satisfacción es un antecedente claro de la lealtad en ambos grupos; cabe considerar nos obstante, que el peso de la satisfacción como determinante de la lealtad es ostensible mayor en los visitantes culturales y gastronómicos. No obstante, la diferencia mayor se encuentra en el peso que la imagen afectiva y la imagen cognitiva tienen sobre la imagen general e, indirectamente, sobre la satisfacción y la lealtad. Concretamente, en el cluster de los visitantes culturales gastronómicos, el modelo ajusta de manera significativa con un peso mayor de la imagen cognitiva (correlación de 0'39) frente a la imagen afectiva (0'30). Por el contrario, en el grupo de los visitantes relacionales y de relax, la imagen cognitiva disminuye hasta un valor de 0'15 y aumenta, por el contrario, la afectiva (correlación de 0'47).

Con respecto al peso de la imagen general como determinante de la satisfacción, se obtienen pesos muy parecidos en ambos segmentos, lo que indicaría una clara dependencia de la satisfacción percibida de la imagen del destino.

En otro orden de cosas, la satisfacción general percibida como determinante de la lealtad presenta en ambos grupos motivacionales pesos elevados. No obstante, ahora el peso sobre la satisfacción es mayor en los visitantes culturales gastronómicos. Como en el caso anterior, los pesos obtenidos en los dos grupos son muy parecidos al alcanzado en el modelo general.

#### 4. Conclusiones

El mercado turístico posee particularidades que le convierten en un producto de naturaleza única en el que no siempre resulta fácil de conseguir los objetivos de venta propuestos. Se trata, además, de un mercado heterogéneo en el que las motivaciones que mueven a los individuos a viajar son múltiples y dinámicas. En la idea de que en el turismo querer contentar a todos es sinónimo de convencer a nadie, pronto surgieron propuestas en las que el establecimiento de perfiles o tipologías motivacionales mostraron su eficacia en dicho mercado turístico (Dann, 1977; Crompton, 1979; 1981; Goossens, 2000; Jan y Wu, 2006; Iso-Ahola, 1982).

En el presente trabajo indagamos en el efecto que estos perfiles motivacionales pudieran tener en las relaciones entre constructos sobradamente comprobados en la literatura al respecto. Concretamente, exploramos la posibilidad de que la motivación determine cambios en la relación entre la imagen del destino, la satisfacción y la lealtad.

En relación con la satisfacción, nuestros resultados confirman que la satisfacción experimentada por el visitante, independientemente de su perfil motivacional, tiene un efecto directo y positivo sobre sus intenciones futuras o sobre su lealtad. Podemos decir que la satisfacción es un buen predictor del comportamiento del consumidor, lo que explicaría que los visitantes más satisfechos tiendan a manifestar una mayor intención de volver al destino y de recomendarlo a personas de su entorno como

han confirmados estudios anteriores Chi y Qu, (2008); Chen y Tsai, (2007); Yoon y Uysal, (2005); Bigné et al., (2008); Lee, Yoon y Lee, (2007); Han, Kim y Kim, (2011).

Esta relación entre satisfacción y lealtad está presente también en los modelos correspondientes a las dos tipologías motivacionales que hemos establecido con nuestros datos (visitantes culturales-gastronómicos y visitantes relacionales y de relax) y apuntaría la validez de la relación satisfacción-lealtad con independencia de las causas que originan el viaje.

No obstante, la comparación de ambos modelos apunta la existencia de un peso mayor de la satisfacción como antecedente de la lealtad para los visitantes culturales-gastronómicos; aquellos con una motivación externa más clara. Dado que en el contexto actual, uno de los objetivos prioritarios para el desarrollo y potenciación de cualquier enclave turístico es conseguir altas tasas de repetición de la visita, desde una perspectiva estratégica y operativa, este resultado apuntaría la necesidad prioritaria de los destinos de estudiar y segmentar su mercado en base a criterios motivacionales, -sin perder de vista el carácter dinámico de la misma- con el fin de establecer targets prioritarios en los que la consecución de altos niveles de satisfacción conlleve en mayor medida la fidelidad de sus visitantes, diseñando una oferta adaptada a sus expectativas y necesidades.

Por otra parte, la imagen, además de tener una gran importancia en el contexto de pre-compra condicionando la elección del destino, también ejerce una influencia significativa en la valoración postconsumo que realiza el visitante. Los individuos tienden a realizar esta evaluación basándose en la experiencia vivida y la percepción subjetiva de los atributos que conforman el destino. Nuestros resultados demuestran esta directa relación entre la imagen del destino y la satisfacción sin considerar la motivación como variable interviniente. Resultados parecidos han sido presentados por Rodríguez et al, (2013) y Bosque y San Martín (2008). Pero además, los datos de los dos modelos correspondientes a los visitantes culturales-gastronómicos y a los visitantes relacionales y de relax también está presente esta relación causal de la imagen sobre la satisfacción.

En otro orden de cosas, en línea con lo expuesto en la literatura, hemos comprobado que la imagen que los turistas se construyen de nuestro destino tiene un doble componente cognitivo y emocional (Baloglu y McCleary, 1999). Tanto en el modelo general, sin considerar las diferentes tipologías motivacionales, como en los correspondientes a esos perfiles motivacionales, se han establecidos relaciones causales significativas estadísticamente entre un componente de la imagen relacionado con lo racional o cognitivo y otro componente más cercano a mundo de las emociones y los sentimientos.

Sin embargo, el peso de ambos elementos configuradores de la imagen general presenta algunas diferencias en los modelos estimados para las dos tipologías de visitantes establecidas. Así, observamos que el peso del componente cognitivo en la imagen global es mayor en el grupo de visitantes culturales y gastronómicos de lo que lo es en el grupo de turistas relaciones y de relax. Podemos decir pues que, en función de los motivos que empujan o arrastran a los individuos a realizar la visita, los atributos del destino jugarán un papel diferencial en la formación de su satisfacción y, consiguientemente, con su lealtad. Si, como es nuestro caso, el viaje se originó para buscar mejorar las relaciones con la gente que nos rodea y la tranquilidad, es muy probable que aspectos emocionales de la imagen del destino tenga un peso ostensiblemente mayor que otros; seguramente se valorará más como determinante de la imagen la paz, la tranquilidad o la calma que te ofrece el destino. Si, por el contrario, la visita se centra en la cultura, la visita a museos o espectáculos culturales, es más probable que sean otros indicadores como los horarios, la calidad de las exposiciones y el estado de los monumentos, los que adquieran importancia (más cercanos a un planteamiento racional y menos emocional). En resumen, nuestros datos sugieren que el impacto de la imagen sobre la satisfacción y de esta sobre la lealtad pudiera estar mediada por la motivación.

En base a ello, determinar cuáles son los atributos y elementos a partir de los cuales los turistas crean su impresión global del destino y tratar de potenciarlos para mejorar su imagen se configura como un factor clave para su desarrollo y crecimiento en la medida en que ello puede contribuir a la repetición de la visita y favorecer una comunicación positiva del destino. No obstante, antes de utilizar la imagen para tratar de influir en el comportamiento de los individuos es importante seguir avanzando en la comprensión la influencia que ejercen en ella algunos factores como la motivación.

En relación a las limitaciones del trabajo, señalar que el ámbito concreto en el que se ha realizado pueden limitar la extrapolación de los resultados obtenidos haciendo aconsejable su aplicación a otra tipologías de destino como los de sol y playa. También pensamos que la utilización de una muestra más amplia hubiera permitido establecer otros grupos motivacionales de turistas en los que testar la relación imagen-satisfacción-lealtad. En este sentido, el establecimiento dos tipologías motivacionales, no permitiría recoger del todo la heterogeneidad y complejidad del mercado turístico. Así mismo, convendría incluir en el modelo de relaciones causales de otras variables que pueden determinar el resultado final como pudiera ser la experiencia previa del turista en este tipo de visitas o la familiaridad con el destino. Estos aspectos constituyen las líneas de investigación futura que nos proponemos abordar en investigaciones posteriores.

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# EXAMINING THE HIERARCHY OF DESTINATION BRANDS AND THE EFFECTS BETWEEN THE DIMENSIONS OF BRAND EQUITY OF A REGIONAL DESTINATION

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## RESUMEN

*The present paper focuses on the customer-based brand equity of a tourist destination, and analyzes empirically the causal relationships existing between its dimensions in the case of a regional destination in Spain. Furthermore, we analyze the effect of the country's destination image (country as umbrella brand) on the region's destination image (region as sub-brand), as well as the moderating effect of country familiarity on the relationship between both constructs of image. The results obtained of a sample of 253 international tourists show that the country's destination image influences the region's destination image, as well as the existence of a chain of effects between brand awareness, image, perceived quality, and loyalty toward the regional destination.*

## Palabras clave:

Place branding, equity brand, country image, regional image, brand awareness

## 1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the main industries contributing to the development of the countries. In this sense, a tourist destination can be considered as a product (Yoon and Uysal, 2005; Boo et al. 2009), and territories, through Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs), must struggle for attracting visitors and building loyalty. To that end, in a global and competitive environment, such as the current one, having a strong brand may be a good strategy for achieving positive returns, providing the differentiation needed from competitor territories and gaining competitive advantage (Hanna and Rowley, 2007; Pike, 2009). Despite its interest, “place branding” is one of the newest research areas (Cai, 2002), and it is still considered to be in its infancy (Konecnik, 2006; Pike, Bianchi and Kerr 2010). Up to now, the literature available is highly fragmented (Gertner, 2011), and concepts like “brand loyalty”, “brand equity” or “brand architecture”, with an extensive background in the marketing literature (Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1996; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000), have been very little explored in the field of tourist destinations (Dooley and Bowie, 2005; Konecnik, 2006; Pike, 2007; Harish, 2010).

Taking into account its potential, the present paper tries to contribute to the literature with a study, focuses on international tourists, that take as a starting point the dimensions of the customer-based brand equity of a regional tourist destination, and analyses empirically the causal relationships or chain effects existing between them, considering the loyalty toward the regional destination as the main outcome variable to explain. Furthermore, taking into account the hierarchy of destination brands, the paper analyses the influence of country’s destination image on a region’s destination image in the case of Spain, a country with a “house of brands” strategy in touristic terms (Dooley and Bowie, 2005; Harish, 2010).

## 2. Literature review and research hypothesis

### 2.1. Customer-based brand equity of a place

“Place branding” is becoming a focal area for marketers, with a growing number of academic works, particularly in the field of destination and tourism marketing (Kaplan, Yurt, Guneri and Kurtulus, 2010). So far, the topic has been partly covered with studies about destination image (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Pike and Ryan, 2004; San Martín and Rodríguez del Bosque, 2008), but place branding is a complex and extensive field of research, and it cannot be limited to destination image studies only (Kaplan, Yurt, Guneri and Kurtulus, 2010). Specifically, the effectiveness of place brands can be measured by customer-based brand equity (CBBE) (Konecnik, 2006; Konecnik and Gartner, 2007; Pike, Bianchi and Kerr, 2010; Im, Kim, Ellio and Han, 2012), a multidimensional construct initially proposed by Keller (1993) and Aaker (1996) in the field of goods and services, and now extended to the territories.

Despite its potential for tourist destinations, the study of brand equity has only recently attracted the attention of academic researchers (Boo, Busser and Baloglu, 2009). Following the previous works, we accept that the customer-based brand equity features four dimensions: brand awareness, brand image, brand quality and loyalty. According to these authors, *brand awareness* is the presence of a destination in the mind of the people when a given travel context is considered; *brand image* represents the set of associations or impressions attached to the destination, composed of a variety of individual perceptions relating to various product/service attributes (Konecnik, 2004); *brand quality* is concerned with perceptions about the way in which the destination attempts to meet tourists’ functional needs (Keller, 2003), a holistic judgment made on the basis of the excellence or overall superiority of the service (Bigné, Sánchez and Sanz, 2005); and *brand loyalty*, that represents the core dimension of the CBBE concept (Aaker, 1996) and the main source of customer-based brand equity (Keller, 2003), is measured by intention to return to the destination and the willingness to recommend it (Pike, 2007; Chen and Myagmarsuren, 2010; Prayag, 2012).

Therefore, destination image is central to brand evaluation and brand equity, but other dimensions are also necessary to truly measure customer-based brand equity (Konecnik and Gartner, 2007; Boo, Busser and Baloglu, 2009).

## ***2.2. Loyalty toward a regional tourist destination: causal relationships between the dimensions of customer-based brand equity***

Different models of consumer behavior establish that awareness is a first and necessary step to loyalty (Konecnik 2006), the foundation of the hierarchy of brands (Pike et al. 2010) and “the ticket to enter the market” (Pike 2007). In general, it is accepted that the higher the level of awareness the more dominant is the brand, which will increase the probability of the brand being considered (Yasin, Noor and Mohamad 2007). According to the associative network model, memory consists of nodes, defined as stored information connected by links that vary in strength (Anderson, 1993; Keller, 1993). A destination brand represents a potential node, to which a variety of associations are linked (Pike, Bianchi and Kerr, 2010). Brand awareness reflects the strength of the brand node in the minds of consumers, so it is to be expected that a greater awareness of a destination will enhance the associations linked to it, both those that compose the brand image (Bigné, Andreu and Zanfardini, 2013) and perceptions relating to quality (Pike, Bianchi and Kerr). Few empirical studies have been conducted in this field, but we support in the theory and previous works to propose the following hypotheses in the context of a regional tourist destination:

H1. The awareness of the regional destination will have a direct and positive influence on the region’s destination image.

H2. The awareness of the regional destination will have a direct and positive influence on the perceived quality of the regional destination.

In research on consumer behavior, it has been widely recognized that the quality perceptions are influenced by the image of the product or service as perceived by consumers (Bloemer, de Ruyter and Peeters, 1998). In tourism, image plays an important role in evaluations and behavioral intentions of tourists (Lee, Lee and Lee, 2005). In particular, the relationship between image and perceived quality has been confirmed in several works focused on tourist destinations (Bigné, Sánchez and Sánchez, 2001; Bigné, Sánchez and Sanz, 2005; Hankinson, 2005; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Kim, Holland and Han, 2013). The image that tourists form of the destination influences on how they perceive the destination quality. In particular, given that the destination image is formed on the bases of tourist’s perceptions about the destination resources and attractions, a better destination image will reinforce the quality perceived in the destination as a whole. With this in mind, we establish the third hypothesis:

H3. The region’s destination image will have a direct and positive influence on the perceived quality of the regional destination.

In tourism, quality is very important to destination success because it influences on tourist behavior (Kim, Holland and Han, 2013). In this sense, Baker and Crompton (2000) establish that the primary motivation among tourism providers for investing effort in evaluating and improving their quality of performance is that such improvements will result in increased visitation. Since perceived quality is a destination’s offerings evaluation made by tourists (Zabkar, Brencic and Dmitrovic, 2010), it is reasonable to propose a positive relationship between perceived quality and loyalty toward the destination. This causal relationship, which is supported by previous studies in tourism (Pike, Bianchi and Kerr, 2010; Zabkar, Brencic and Dmitrovic, 2010; Jin, Lee and Lee, 2013; Kim, Holland and Han, 2013; Moon et al., 2013), represents the fourth hypothesis of this research:

H4. The perceived quality of the regional destination will have a direct and positive influence on loyalty toward the regional destination.

### ***2.3. Influence of the country's destination image***

“Place” construct is multidimensional, because it may refer to various geographical entities: countries, regions, cities and towns (Hanna and Rowley, 2007). Many studies on place branding concentrate on initiatives in one of these units adopting a monolithic understanding of space (Syssner, 2009), but we must not forget that cities, regions and nations are interrelated. In this sense, it is interesting to take into account the hierarchies of territories and brand architecture strategy adopted. This theory belongs to conventional branding, and describes a process of managing and designing a portfolio of brands (Kapferer, 2000). Extending the strategies proposed by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) to the context of place branding, Dooley and Bowie (2005) propose the following: branded house (e.g. Egypt), sub-brands (Scandinavia), endorsed brands (Western Australia) and house of brands (Spain).

Taking into account the context of the present research, we would be studying the case of “house of brands” strategy, defined as the one that includes a portfolio of sub-brands that act independently of each other and the master brand (Kapferer, 2000). In the case of Spain, the country is divided into seventeen autonomous regions, each of which promotes its own destination brand, independently of the umbrella brand (Gilmore, 2002; Dooley and Bowie, 2005). However, and despite this strategy, it is accepted that people will have more concrete and relevant perceptions about countries, while their beliefs about regions or cities are usually less clear (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2007). Consequently, the image of a country will condition the image of the cities (or regions) located in that country (Cubillo, Sánchez and Cerviño, 2006).

Most papers related to the influence of country image are focused on the evaluations of products or services (Javalgi, Cutler and Winans, 2001; Ahmed, et al. 2002; Yasin, Noor and Mohamad, 2007). They show that country image has a great impact on consumer evaluations, since it includes stereotypes, perceptions about the country that, above all when the consumers are unfamiliar with the product, serve as a "halo effect", by which consumers infer product attributes (Ahmed et al. 2002). In the same line we postulate that, in the tourism field, the country's destination image (the umbrella brand) will influence on a region's destination image (a sub-brand), a theoretical relationship established by Cubillo, Sánchez and Cerviño (2006) in the field of academic programs but not proven empirically. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis is:

H5. The country's destination image will have a direct and positive influence on the region's destination image.

### ***2.4. The moderating effect of country familiarity***

In order to better understand the formation of the region's destination image, the concept of country familiarity is considered in this paper since it has been found to affect attitudes and preferences of individuals. In the literature on consumer behavior, familiarity has been defined as the consumer experience with a product and it reflects the direct and indirect knowledge available to the individual (Alba and Hutchinson, 1987). Therefore, familiarity goes beyond the mere experience of the individual (Cordell, 1997) and it is based on advertising exposure, information search and, of course, product use. In our context, country familiarity can be defined as the direct and indirect knowledge about a country based on the previous experience and information available to the individual.

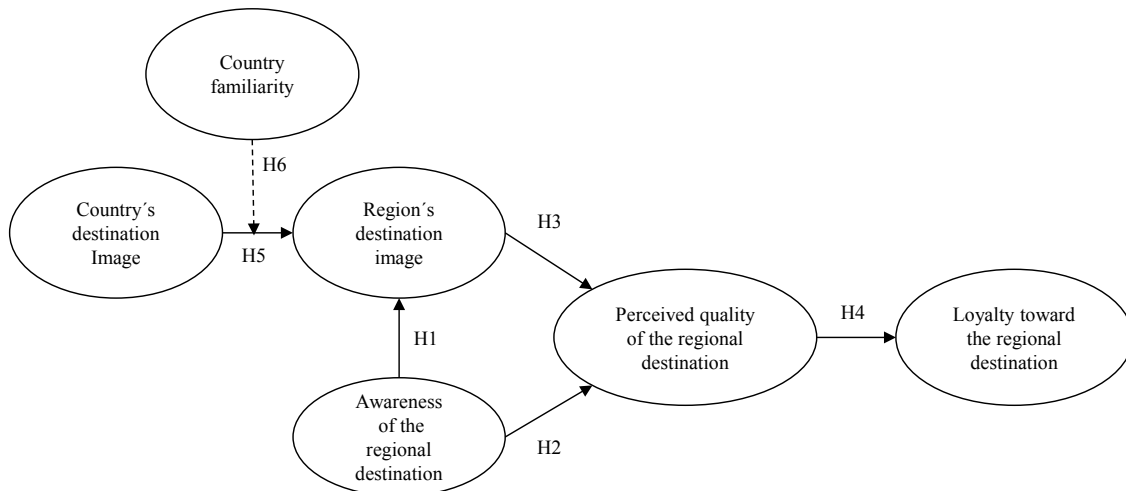
In relation to the moderating effect of country familiarity, it is necessary to emphasize that the level of contact with a country influences consumer perceptions (Balabanis et al., 2002). More concretely, the higher the familiarity with a country, more elaborated the information and the images about that country (Han, 1989). Especially in the case of international tourists, a deeper knowledge of the country as a whole would imply that they have more information about the country as a tourist destination. Therefore, in a context of high familiarity with the country, individuals will rely more on their images of the country destination (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991) to construct their perceptions about a regional tourist destination located in that country. Consequently, the hypothesis 6 is established:

H6. The higher the familiarity with a country, the higher the influence of the country's destination image on the region's destination image.

Figure 1 summarizes the hypotheses of this research.

FIGURE 1

**Theoretical model**



**3. Methodology**

A quantitative research was carried out to test the hypotheses. In particular, data was collected using a questionnaire that included questions about: 1) international tourists' beliefs about the brand of Cantabria as destination, a region in the north of Spain; 2) Spain's destination image as (i.e. the country as an "umbrella brand"); and 3) the characteristics of respondents. All the variables of the model were measured using multi-attributes instruments (ten-point Likert scales) adapted from previous works, in order to assure the content validity. Destination awareness was measured with three items, taking as a basis the work of Boo et al. (2009) and Pike et al. (2010); the scale used to measure destination image was adapted from San Martín and Rodríguez del Bosque (2008); perceived quality was measured by a scale adapted from Boo et al. (2009); and the scale of loyalty is derived from Konecnik and Gartner (2007), Boo et al. (2009) and Pike et al. (2010). Finally, country familiarity was measured in line with the bidimensional approach (i.e. informational and experiential dimensions) proposed by Baloglu (2001) –see appendix–.

The target population of quantitative research was international tourists above 18 years old. In relation to the sampling, the quota method (i.e. a non-probabilistic procedure) was used in this research. In particular, the characteristics of the population with regard to gender and age (information provided by the Spanish Institute of Tourism Studies) were used as a reference to select the individuals in the sample (table 1). Data collection was conducted through a personal survey to international tourists visiting a Spanish region (Cantabria) during the summer of 2013. More concretely, international tourists were approached in the international airport and several tourist attractions such as Cabárceno Park or Sardinero beach. Finally, a total of 253 valid responses were obtained (several socio-demographic characteristics of the sample are indicated in table 2).

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Estimation of the model

Before estimating the Structural Equation Model (SEM) and testing the research hypotheses, the reliability and validity of the measurement scales were checked by means of a confirmatory factor analysis, using EQS 6.1 software. The results confirm the reliability and convergent validity of the scales jointly studied (see table 3). The fit criteria indicate to what extent the factorial model fits the empirical data. In particular, three main classes of fit criteria are indicated: measures of absolute fit (BBNNFI is near to the 0.90 threshold and RMSA is below 0.08); measures of incremental fit (IFI and CFI are equal to 0.90); and measures of parsimonious fit (normed  $\chi^2$  is below 5). Additionally, none of the confidence intervals for pairs of latent constructs include 1.0 (Anderson and Gerbin, 1998), thus supporting discriminant validity of the model (table 4).

TABLE 1  
Population vs. Sample

	Population (%)	Sample (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	52.0	52.6
Female	48.0	47.4
<b>Age</b>		
15-24 years	12.6	13.8
25-44 years	44.2	44.7
45-64 years	33.7	33.2
64 or more years	9.5	8.3

TABLE 2  
Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Education level	%	Country of origin	%
Less than primary	3.6	United Kingdom	23.3
Primary	6.0	Germany	15.0
Secondary	21.5	Ireland	14.6
University	68.9	Netherlands	9.1
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>%</b>	France	6.7
Worker	65.1	Italy	5.1
Student	17.5	Belgium	3.6
Housewife	5.2	United States	2.8
Unemployed/retired	12.2	Other countries	19.8

TABLE 3  
Confirmatory factor analysis

Factor	Variable	Standard Coefficient	R <sup>2</sup>	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Composite Reliability	Goodness of fit indices
Loyalty toward	BELoy1	0.634	0.401	0.834	0.870	Normed $\chi^2 = 2.02$

the regional destination	BELOY2	0.926	0.858			BBNNFI = 0.88 IFI = 0.90 CFI = 0.90 RMSEA = 0.06
	BELOY3	0.911	0.829			
Perceived quality of the regional destination	BEQua1	0.736	0.541	0.829	0.832	
	BEQua2	0.828	0.685			
	BEQua3	0.803	0.645			
Awareness of the regional destination	BEAwa1	0.833	0.694	0.910	0.912	
	BEAwa2	0.894	0.798			
	BEAwa3	0.912	0.831			
Region's destination image	DICan1	0.420	0.176	0.703	0.716	
	DICan2	0.467	0.219			
	DICan3	0.698	0.488			
	DICan4	0.633	0.400			
	DICan5	0.564	0.319			
	DICan6	0.465	0.216			
Country's destination image	DISpa1	0.629	0.396	0.836	0.836	
	DISpa2	0.733	0.537			
	DISpa3	0.763	0.582			
	DISpa4	0.668	0.446			
	DISpa5	0.672	0.452			
	DISpa6	0.599	0.359			

TABLE 4

**Confidence intervals for the correlations between pairs of latent variables**

	<b>Loyalty</b>	<b>Perceived quality</b>	<b>Awareness</b>	<b>Region's destination image</b>
<b>Perceived quality</b>	0.540 <sup>a</sup> (0.408 ; 0.672) <sup>b</sup>			

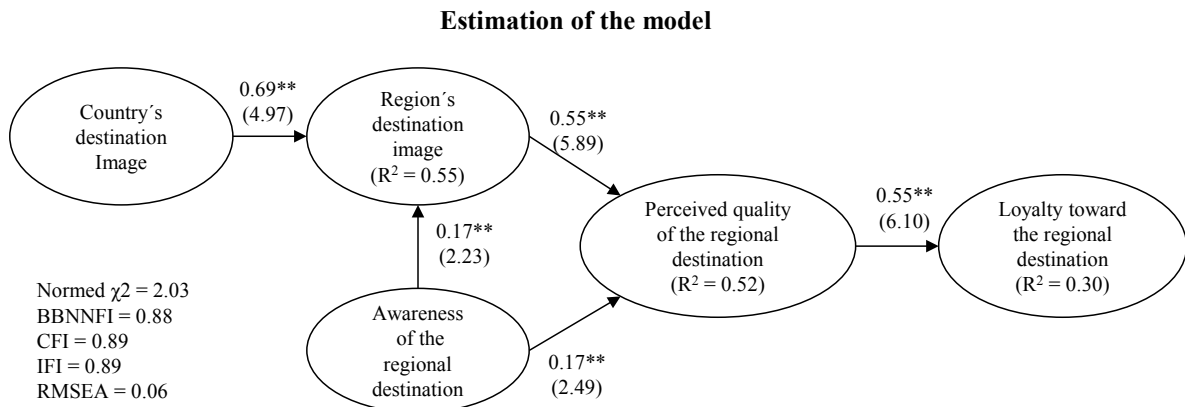
<b>Awareness</b>	0.086 (-0.050 ; 0.222)	0.373 (0.241 ; 0.505)		
<b>Region's destination image</b>	0.419 (0.273 ; 0.565)	0.638 (0.508 ; 0.768)	0.275 (0.109 ; 0.441)	
<b>Country's destination image</b>	0.359 (0.217 ; 0.501)	0.565 (0.431 ; 0.699)	0.153 (-0.013 ; 0.319)	0.673 (0.545 ; 0.801)

<sup>a</sup> Correlation among variables; <sup>b</sup> Confidence interval for high correlations

Subsequently, the research model was estimated following a SEM approach, to test the research hypotheses (Figure 2). The analyses were run using a robust maximum-likelihood estimation procedure in order to avoid problems of non-normality with the data. The goodness-of-fit indexes obtained were within the recommended intervals, thus confirming that the research model adequately fits to the data. All the causal relationships between variables were found statistically significant and in the direction postulated in this study.

In particular, tourists' loyalty towards the regional destination was positively influenced by the perceived quality of the destination, which in turn was directly influenced by image and awareness. Accordingly, the better the image and awareness attributed by tourists to the regional destination, the better its perceived quality will be and, therefore, tourists will be more loyal to the destination in terms of intention to return and recommend. Additionally, the region's destination image was significantly influenced by the country's destination image. In consequence, country destination acts as an "umbrella brand" that contributes to form the image of the regional destinations in the tourist's mind.

FIGURE 2



#### 4.2. Analysis of the moderating effect of familiarity

The analysis is based on a regression model with interactive effects, which include the direct effect of the country's destination image on the region's destination image, as well as the interactive effect (i.e. the moderating influence) of country familiarity on the relationship between country's destination image and region's destination image (Equation (1)):

$$\text{Region's destination image} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{ country's destination image} + \beta_2 \text{ country's destination image} * \text{country familiarity}$$



It is necessary to indicate that each variable is based on the average of its items. In addition, before the estimation of the model, multicollinearity was eliminated by the residual-centring procedure (Lance, 1988). The interaction effect is replaced by a new variable resulting from the comparison between the interaction and the expression extracted from the regression of the two variables on the interactive effect. The results of the estimates are summarized in Table 5. The model explains a significant percentage of the observed variance, but H6 is rejected because the interaction between the “country’s destination image” and “country familiarity” does not significantly influence the region’s destination image.

TABLE 5

**Regression model with interactive effects**

	<b>Region's destination image</b>
<b>Country’s destination image</b>	0.54 <sup>a***</sup>
<b>Country’s destination image * Country familiarity</b>	0.05 (n.s)
<b>Adjusted R-square</b>	0.29

<sup>a</sup> Standardized coefficients; \*\*\* p< 0.01; (n.s.) not significant

## 5. Conclusions

The present paper examines the causal relationships or chain effects existing between the dimensions of the customer-based brand equity of a regional tourist destination, considering the loyalty of tourists as the main outcome variable to explain in the theoretical model. In addition, the paper takes into account the hierarchy of destination brands and analyses the influence of country’s destination image on a region’s destination image in the case of Spain, a country with a “house of brands” strategy in tourism (Dooley and Bowie, 2005; Harish, 2010). Finally, the moderating effect of country familiarity on the relationship between the two image constructs is also examined in this research.

The empirical evidence obtained from a sample of 253 international tourists visiting a regional destination supports that its loyalty towards the destination is positively influenced by the perceived quality of the destination which in turn is directly influenced by the destination's image and awareness. Accordingly, the influence of destination’s awareness and image on international tourists' intentions to return and recommend the destination (in this case, Cantabria) is mediated by its global perceived quality. In this sense, destination’s image (in terms of customers’ perceptions about its tourism resources) is the main determinant of perceived quality of the tourist destination, exerting through this variable an indirect effect on tourist’s loyalty. Moreover, the results obtained show that more recognizable or renowned destinations will be perceived as being of more quality, which intuitively show that tourists use the destination's “fame” as a signal of its quality. This way, destination's awareness indirectly influences tourists’ loyalty towards the destination.

Additionally, this research considers the hierarchy of destination brands and examines the influence that the country’s destination image exerts on the region’s destination image. In this sense, empirical evidence obtained supports that tourists’ perceptions of the regional destination are positively influenced by their perceptions of the country destination where the region is located. Therefore, the country’s brand acts as an “umbrella brand” of the region’s brand. However, this research doesn’t support the moderating effect of country familiarity on the relationship between both constructs of image. It is may be due to that, in a context where there

are a lot of destination brands (i.e. regional destinations) in the country, being familiar with the country does not necessarily imply a more elaborate and precise knowledge of the different regions located in that country. In addition, this result could also have an explanation in the distinctive characteristics of Cantabria as a tourist destination, which are mostly related to nature and “green” tourism and no so much to the sun and beach tourism, predominant in Spain. Therefore, tourists with a higher familiarity with the country will not necessarily make a stronger association between country and region in their minds.

These results have relevant implications for the management of regional destinations, and especially for the attraction and fidelization of international tourists. First, regional DMO (Destination Marketing Organizations) should focus marketing efforts on fostering the destination brand awareness for international tourist, with a strong stress in communication and promotion campaigns. Thus, a higher renown of the destination will be associated to higher perceptions of quality, which will lead to stronger intentions of return and recommendation. Additionally, these promotion and communication campaigns should also be designed to build a destination image (brand associations) based on the main resources of the destination demanded by tourists and in which the destination has competitive advantages. Moreover, given the tight relationship between national and regional destination brands, regional DMO should try to take advantage of the national destination image to reinforce the regional brand. In particular, this is especially recommendable in the case of regions that are not very renowned as tourist destinations, but that are located in countries with a well-known tourism brand, as is the case of Cantabria and Spain. Moreover, if it is possible to undertake a coordinated or even joint promotion of the country and region brands, would be have a relevant impact for the building of the region's destination brand, which in turn would strengthen the national touristic demand.

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APPENDIX

<p>Destination image (for the country and the region)</p> <p><i>Natural environment (landscape, beaches, natural parks, ...)</i></p> <p><i>Cultural heritage (monuments, museums, folklore, ...)</i></p> <p><i>Tourist infrastructure (accommodation, restaurants, shopping, ...)</i></p> <p><i>Leisure and recreation activities (sport, adventure, ...)</i></p> <p><i>Local cuisine</i></p> <p><i>Hospitality</i></p>
<p>Awareness of the regional destination</p> <p><i>Cantabria is a clearly recognizable tourist destination</i></p> <p><i>Cantabria is a famous tourist destination</i></p> <p><i>Cantabria is a well-known tourist destination</i></p>
<p>Perceived quality of the regional destination</p> <p><i>Tourist resources in Cantabria are attractive</i></p> <p><i>Tourist products and services in Cantabria are excellent</i></p> <p><i>Cantabria is a quality tourist destination</i></p>
<p>Loyalty toward the regional destination</p> <p><i>I will try to come back to Cantabria</i></p> <p><i>I will encourage my family and friends to visit Cantabria</i></p> <p><i>I would recommend Cantabria if someone asked me</i></p>
<p>Country familiarity</p> <p><i>I have high knowledge about Spain</i></p> <p><i>I have a precise vision of the characteristics of Spain</i></p> <p><i>I'm very familiar with Spain</i></p>

# Fuentes de información e imagen del destino: Análisis de la valoración atendiendo al segmento

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La información obtenida a través de canales de comunicación tradicionales y Web, junto con la generada por los usuarios y residentes, contribuye a la percepción de la imagen del destino turístico. La imagen ejerce una influencia sobre la intención de visita y de repetición. No obstante, las fuentes utilizadas así como su valoración suelen ser diferentes en función de las características del propio individuo. Partiendo de estas ideas, este trabajo pretende conocer el modo en que el lugar de residencia del turista, su nivel de conocimiento del destino, y la existencia de una experiencia ligada a visitas previas al destino, influyen en el tipo de fuente y valoración realizada sobre la misma. Los resultados obtenidos permiten señalar cómo determinados canales de comunicación resultan ser más efectivos para conseguir un primer impacto y fomentar el interés de nuevos visitantes, así como para lograr la implicación de los residentes y los viajeros en la difusión del destino.

## PALABRAS CLAVE:

*Fuentes de información, Web 2.0, UGC (User Generated Content), imagen del destino, visitantes, residentes, segmentos*

## Introducción

Turistas, viajeros y residentes utilizan diferentes fuentes de consulta para informarse sobre los destinos turísticos y la oferta de servicios disponibles. Sobre este particular, conviene resaltar cómo Internet se ha convertido en una fuente más de información, junto con las tradicionales fuentes habitualmente consideradas en la literatura relevante (e.g., Gunn y Gartner, 1993): (i) fuentes orgánicas, entre las que se encuentran amigos y conocidos; (ii) fuentes inducidas, en las que cabe mencionar los agentes comerciales, los proveedores, las Organizaciones de Marketing del Destino (en adelante, OMD) y la publicidad; y (iii) fuentes autónomas o independientes, entre las que es posible destacar los medios de comunicación, las guías de viajes, los libros y los documentales.

Con la proliferación de los medios sociales en Internet y, más concretamente, de las redes sociales, cualquier persona puede publicar contenidos sobre el destino, los cuales pueden ser fácilmente consultados por otros individuos. Además de las personas, también pueden publicar contenidos turísticos los propios proveedores y las OMDs, llegando directamente a los turistas sin tener que utilizar intermediarios (WTT, 2011).

En la última década, diferentes estudios (e.g. Litvin, Goldsmith y Pan, 2006; Xiang y Gretzel, 2010, Munar, 2011; Lookinside Travel, 2012), han analizado cómo los turistas, junto con los proveedores de servicios turísticos, utilizan cada tipo de canal de comunicación en Internet (buscadores, Web de reservas de hoteles con referencias de los propios usuarios, redes sociales, blogs). En especial, se ha prestado especial atención al grupo de variables que conforman el denominado Contenido Generado por el Usuario (en adelante, UGC, procedente de la terminología más habitualmente utilizada en este contexto, User Generated Content) (Berthon, Pitt y Campbell, 2008).

Las diferentes plataformas Web consultadas a través de Internet (cuya información ha podido ser publicada por la propia OMD, los proveedores, los intermediarios, los medios de comunicación o los propios turistas o residentes), es susceptible de influir en la formación de la imagen del destino. De este modo, conviene considerar Internet en la gestión del destino por poder contribuir a conformar la imagen del destino al igual que las fuentes tradicionales.

Junto con los factores personales, las fuentes de información son las variables que explican la formación de las imágenes cognitiva, afectiva (e.g., Echtner y Ritchie, 2003; Beerli y Martin, 2004) y única del destino (e.g., Qu, Kim e Im, 2011), así como el punto de partida para analizar el comportamiento del usuario respecto a su fidelidad hacia el destino o intención de primera visita. A modo de ejemplo, resulta de interés mencionar el trabajo de Beerli y Martin (2004), que analizaron las relaciones entre diferentes componentes de la imagen percibida y los factores que influyen en su formación. En particular, incluyeron en su trabajo las siguientes variables: fuentes de información primarias y secundarias, la evaluación de la información en la pre-visita y la post-visita, la motivación, las experiencias turísticas acumuladas y las características sociodemográficas. En esta línea, también conviene señalar el trabajo de Baloglu y McCleary (1999), que habían propuesto una metodología similar.

Partiendo de estas ideas, este trabajo pretende analizar la utilidad de las diferentes fuentes de información (tanto las tradicionales como las procedentes de Internet), en la formación de la imagen de un destino turístico. Con objeto de ahondar en esta línea de investigación, se llevará a cabo este análisis para diferentes segmentos. En concreto, los segmentos de turistas que se tienen en cuenta han sido definidos en función de diversas variables: a) su lugar de residencia; b) si han visitado o no el destino; y c) si conocen o no a residentes. Este último criterio de segmentación ha sido escogido teniendo en cuenta la importancia que Schroeder (1996) confiere a los residentes, al sugerir que la imagen de los residentes puede tener un impacto en las imágenes orgánicas e inducidas de los no residentes.

Para lograr este propósito, se ha llevado a cabo un estudio empírico empleando una muestra de 541 individuos, entre turistas reales y potenciales y residentes, recogida en el segundo trimestre del año 2013. Los resultados obtenidos permiten poner de manifiesto la relevancia de Internet

como fuente de información y comunicación, ya que influye –junto a las fuentes tradicionales de comunicación– en la generación de la imagen cognitiva y afectiva, así como en las motivaciones para visitar un destino.

A continuación, la siguiente sección abordará el marco conceptual de la presente investigación, donde se muestra cómo el perfil del individuo influye en el tipo de fuente y valor que le ofrece a la misma en el proceso de formación de la imagen de marca. Una vez establecidas las hipótesis de trabajo, se procede a describir la investigación realizada partiendo de una muestra de 541 turistas nacionales e internacionales. Los resultados alcanzados señalan que existen algunas diferencias significativas entre el tipo de segmento del turista, en función de aspectos tales como por ejemplo, si ha visitado Mallorca con anterioridad, si conoce a residentes o el lugar de residencia, y la valoración de las fuentes de información consultadas.

## **Marco conceptual y planteamiento de hipótesis**

### ***La formación de la imagen de marca del destino turístico***

La formación de la imagen se describe por el proceso por el cual una representación mental del destino surge a través de informaciones enviadas por los agentes y seleccionadas por los receptores (Gartner, 1993). La cantidad y el tipo de fuentes de información sobre los destinos y las características sociodemográficas de los turistas influyen sobre las percepciones y cogniciones de los atributos del destino (Baloglu y McCleary, 1999). Gartner (1993) se refería a imágenes orgánicas e inducidas para distinguir entre fuentes no comerciales de aquella información controlada por los mercados de los destinos. Beerli y Martin (2004) y Seabra, Abrantes y Lages (2007) incorporan las fuentes de información como variable en la formación de la imagen del destino.

La variedad de fuentes de información consideradas es extensa. Sin embargo, son escasos los estudios precedentes que han tenido en cuenta la variedad de plataformas Web a la hora de tratarla como una fuente de información de la cual se pueden extraer dimensiones.

### ***El proceso de búsqueda de información***

Antes de decidir realizar un viaje o planificarlo, se efectúa una búsqueda de información, lo que conforma el proceso por el cual se va formando la imagen del destino turístico. La búsqueda de información es dinámica (Seabra et al., 2007). El proceso comienza mediante la consulta de fuentes internas procedentes de la memoria. Posteriormente, se busca información en fuentes externas, que pueden ser fuentes personales (amigos y familiares), fuentes comerciales (folletos y publicidad), fuentes no comerciales (comunidades de viajeros virtuales) y fuentes experienciales (inspecciones y visitas precompra). Antes de decidir el destino, resulta más importante la información procedente de conocidos y familiares; esta relevancia es incluso mayor que cuando se ha decidido.

Generalmente, los promotores del destino no tienen el control sobre la información aportada por las fuentes orgánicas y autónomas en la . La información recibida por amigos y conocidos a través del proceso de comunicación boca oreja ejerce una gran influencia sobre la formación de la imagen del destino, que es de alta credibilidad si ha sido solicitada de forma expresa, y de credibilidad media si no lo ha sido (Gartner, 1993).

La imagen proyectada a través de las diferentes fuentes de información puede que no coincida con la imagen deseada por el destino turístico o con su imagen real, ni con la imagen percibida por los consumidores. La imagen proyectada y la imagen percibida normalmente no coinciden debido a la falta de coordinación entre el punto de vista de la oferta del proveedor y de la demanda. Por ejemplo, los operadores turísticos han resultado fundamentales en la distribución de información, y han contribuido a la proyección de las imágenes que la gente percibe de ciertos destinos, emitiendo imágenes que ellos han seleccionado con intereses comerciales. Esto puede dar lugar a interpretaciones poco realistas de un lugar, que no coinciden con las imágenes del destino que desea su sociedad anfitriona (Van't Klooster, Go y Van Baalen, 2004).



### ***Fuentes de información***

Gunn (1988) distingue dos tipos de imágenes: (i) la imagen orgánica se basa en fuentes no comerciales de información, tales como noticias sobre el destino en los medios de comunicación de masas, la información recibida y las opiniones de amigos y parientes; (ii) la imagen inducida se basa en fuentes de información comercial, tales como las diferentes formas de la publicidad y la información de las agencias de viajes y los operadores turísticos. Los mayores índices de credibilidad y, de mayor influencia sobre la formación de la imagen, corresponden a las fuentes autónomas y orgánicas que, por otra parte, son las que representan menores costes para el destino turístico. Por tanto, no siempre la acción de mayor coste es la más efectiva en la generación o modificación de una determinada imagen (Serra et al., 2002).

Los turistas conforman las imágenes del destino a partir de la información adquirida desde las diferentes fuentes (Gartner, 1993). El resultado de las imágenes influyen las expectativas percibidas. Las expectativas están asociadas con lo que los consumidores sienten o desean de un servicio (Parasuraman, Zeithaml y Berry, 1988). Los turistas intentan completar sus expectativas cuando visitan el destino. Una vez allí, comparan la información recibida en la fase de planificación con sus propias experiencias. Los turistas que recolectan información completa y variada estarán bien informados sobre el destino específico que visitan, tendrán pocas sorpresas y completarán sus expectativas fácilmente (Echtner y Ritchie, 2003).

La imagen formada por las fuentes orgánicas, inducidas y autónomas se percibe antes de visitar el destino, Phelps (1986) la llama imagen secundaria. En contraste, la imagen primaria es la que se conforma al visitar el sitio. Mansfeld (1992) demuestra que existe un acuerdo general, aunque no esté basado en evidencias empíricas, de que las fuentes de información secundarias tienen tres funciones básicas en la elección del destino: minimizar el riesgo de la decisión, crear una imagen del destino y servir de mecanismo para justificar más tarde esa elección.

Zins (2009) analiza la influencia de las diferentes fuentes de información en la elección de un destino turístico. La principal fuente de información para decidirse por un destino turístico es la propia experiencia (40%), seguido por amigos y conocidos (31%). En cuanto a las fuentes de información de Internet los operadores turísticos tienen mucho más influencia para decidir el destino (20%) que las páginas oficiales del destino (11%) y las comunidades virtuales (5%).

### ***Internet y medios sociales como fuentes de información en la formación de la imagen de destino***

Internet se ha convertido en una de las principales fuentes de información turística (Buhalis y Licata, 2002; Pan y Fesenmaier, 2006; Wu, Wey y Chen, 2008). De forma global se estima que más del 50% de viajes de ocio y el 40% de viajes de negocios se reserva a través de Internet (WTT, 2011). Los datos publicados por Eurostat (2012) señalan que un 36% de la población de la Unión Europea (UE) utilizó durante el año 2012 la Red para informarse sobre viajes y servicios de alojamiento.

Gracias a Internet, en la última década se ha producido una explosión de plataformas Web y de medios sociales a disposición de cualquier persona y organización para publicar contenidos de cualquier índole, también turísticos. El auge en el uso de medios sociales, ha implicado un cambio en la experiencia virtual, tanto en la búsqueda y el consumo de información, como en la creación, conexión e intercambio de información. Los anteriormente consumidores pasivos, actualmente están generando contenidos, colaborando y emitiendo comentarios gracias a la Red. Las referencias de viajes, las fotografías y los planes de viajes se comparten y se bloggean, lo que contribuye a influir sobre turistas de todas las edades, conectándolos e interactuando con los proveedores de productos y servicios. Las descripciones oficiales del destino, el hotel o el producto ya no son la única fuente de información sobre el destino. No cabe duda de que la repercusión de todos estos hechos llegará a ser significativa (WTT, 2011). Munar (2011) analiza la relación entre los contenidos creados por los turistas (TCC – Tourist Created Content) y la marca de destino. El análisis del uso de marcas del destino en el TCC muestra que los turistas no incorporan los elementos formales de las marcas, como lemas o logotipo, en su narración al explicar sus experiencias. Para ilustrar este particular, es posible mencionar cómo un 26% de

la población de la UE (Unión Europea) señala haber publicado contenidos de propia creación en Web para ser compartidos. Asimismo, el 40% de esta población publicó en 2012 algún mensaje en medios sociales o en plataformas de mensajes instantáneos (Eurostat 2012).

Internet influye sobre el proceso de desarrollo de la imagen de marca del destino, por lo que la imagen afectiva y cognitiva se ve afectada por las búsquedas *online* (Biswas 2004). Choi, Lehto y Morrison (2006) señalan que, aunque la formación de la imagen ha sido muy examinada en la literatura, la investigación sobre la formación de la imagen en Internet está aún en un estadio temprano. Por eso es necesario plantear complementar la variable de fuentes de información con las diferentes plataformas Web, ya que éstas, según la bibliografía revisada, también pueden influir en la formación de la imagen del destino turístico.

La formación de la imagen ya no es un proceso de “empuje” de la comunicación de masas, sino una dinámica de selección, de reflexión, de compartir y de experimentar (Govers, Go y Kuman, 2007; Mackay y Vogt, 2012). La búsqueda de información es una parte significativa del proceso de decisión de compra, y ésta ha evolucionado gracias a Internet. No sólo se ha reducido la incertidumbre y los riesgos percibidos al acceder a más información, sino que también ha mejorado la calidad de los viajes (Gretzel y Yoo, 2008; Mackay y Vogt, 2012). Los servicios intangibles como el turismo no pueden ser evaluados antes de ser consumidos, por lo que comprarlos lleva asociado un alto riesgo; esto hace que los consumidores sean más dependientes a la influencia interpersonal a través del WOM (Word-Of-Mouth) electrónico (Lewis y Chambers, 2000). Además, Internet permite a los consumidores conectar directamente con los proveedores, transformando de este modo el rol de los intermediarios (Buhalis y Law, 2008).

### ***Formulación de hipótesis***

En la bibliografía consultada sobre el proceso de formación de la imagen de un destino normalmente se analiza atendiendo a la opinión de los que han visitado el destino, no se analiza la imagen de los turistas potenciales. Govers et al. (2007) cuestionan el hecho de que en los estudios realizados no se distinguen los diferentes grupos de consumidores. En relación a este fenómeno, en este trabajo se pretende analizar si existen diferencias significativas entre segmentos en la utilidad de las fuentes de información consultadas.

Atendiendo al trabajo de Gunn (1988), los turistas se forman una imagen de un destino turístico después de someterse a un proceso que consta de las siguientes etapas: (1) acumulación mental de imágenes del destino, formando así una imagen orgánica; (2) la modificación de la imagen inicial después de incorporar más información, formándose así una imagen inducida; (3) la decisión de visitar el destino; (4) la visita del destino; (5) el compartir información en el destino; (6) el regreso a casa, y (7) la alteración de la imagen en función a su experiencia en el destino.

A través de diversas acciones, la OMD proyecta una imagen del destino. Esta imagen proyectada, influye en la imagen que los consumidores forman en su mente. Pero además, en el proceso de formación de la imagen del destino, también participan otros elementos internos del individuo, entre los que cabe destacar, sus necesidades, motivaciones, conocimientos anteriores, preferencias y otros aspectos de carácter personal. De esta manera, los individuos construyen su propia imagen mental del destino turístico que da lugar a sus propias imágenes personales percibidas (Gartner, 1993; Bramwell y Rawding, 1996).

Algunas investigaciones han indicado que la imagen de los turistas tiende a ser más realista, compleja y diferenciada después de haber visitado un destino (e. g., Chon, 1991). De acuerdo con Selby y Morgan (1996), la comprensión de las diferentes imágenes que los visitantes y no visitantes tienen es muy valiosa, lo que permite tener en cuenta los atributos más destacados y volver a evaluar las imágenes para ser incorporadas en la planificación de marketing del turismo. La experiencia pasada puede ser más importante que la información obtenida de fuentes externas, porque cuando hay experiencia pasada, la necesidad de recibir la información de fuentes externas se torna más débil. En este sentido, Hsu, Wolfe y Kang (2004) concluyen que la imagen de un mismo destino es diferente en función de si el individuo lo ha visitado. Atendiendo a estas premisas se formulan las siguientes hipótesis:

*H1. La utilidad de las fuentes de información varía en función de si los visitantes han visitado el destino turístico previamente.*

*H2. La utilidad de las plataformas Web varía en función de si los visitantes han visitado el destino turístico previamente.*

Asimismo, se ha examinado la relación entre la ubicación geográfica de los turistas y su imagen del destino de vacaciones (e.g., Ahmed, 1996). Aunque otros estudios han revelado que la relación entre la ubicación geográfica y la imagen de destino no fue tan consistente como la relación de las visitas anteriores y la imagen del destino (Hsu et al., 2004). En relación a estas ideas se formulan las siguientes hipótesis:

*H3. La utilidad de las fuentes de información varía en función de la ubicación geográfica de los visitantes.*

*H4. La utilidad de las plataformas Web varía en función de la ubicación geográfica de los visitantes.*

Schroeder (1996) argumentó que la imagen de los residentes podría tener un impacto en las imágenes orgánicas e inducidas de los no residentes de los destinos. La imagen orgánica se define como la imagen formada a través de la experiencia directa o a través de la información que no es turística. La imagen orgánica en poder de no residentes podría verse afectada en general por las comunicaciones con los residentes. En relación a esta argumentación, se proponen las siguientes hipótesis:

*H5 La utilidad de las fuentes de información varía en función de si los visitantes conocen a residentes.*

*H6 La utilidad de las plataformas Web varía en función de si los visitantes conocen a residentes.*

## **Investigación**

### ***Diseño y metodología***

Con objeto de contrastar las hipótesis propuestas, se ha diseñado un cuestionario para analizar las variables fuentes de información y plataformas Web. La encuesta se ha lanzado a través de Internet utilizando la plataforma GoogleForms. Se ha definido un rango de variables con sus correspondientes indicadores para evaluar la formación de la imagen de Mallorca como destino turístico. En esta investigación se considera de forma detallada y pormenorizada la variable fuentes de información y plataformas Web. Esto ha permitido constatar la existencia de diferencias significativas entre segmentos de población a la hora de puntuar la utilidad de las fuentes, tanto tradicionales como a través de Internet.

### ***Variables y escalas de medida***

Todas las escalas utilizadas son de tipo Likert de 5 puntos, tal y como se proponen en los trabajos de Gartner (1989) y Baloglu y McCleary (1999), entre otros. Los ítems utilizados para medir las variables se han elaborado a partir de la bibliografía expuesta en la introducción y el marco teórico de esta investigación. Las fuentes de información tradicionales se han analizado a través de 14 ítems: fuentes oficiales de información turística de organismos de promoción del destino, proveedores (transportes, alojamiento, oferta complementaria), intermediarios (agencias de viajes o operadores turísticos), medios de comunicación especializados en turismo, medios de comunicación especializados en áreas de interés temático (deportes, vinos, espeleología, cine,...), libros, guías de viajes, documentales, películas y series TV, publicidad, ferias, amigos y conocidos, líderes de opinión e Internet.

Para profundizar en las diferentes plataformas Web se ha analizado la utilidad de la siguiente tipología de Web que son susceptibles de presentar contenido turístico (19 en total): buscadores (por ejemplo Google), Web de información turística oficiales (por ejemplo Illesbalears, Infomallorca, Spain), Web de información turística no oficiales (por ejemplo Teleweb-mallorca,

Seemallorca), Web de intermediarios (por ejemplo Lastminute, Thomson, Tui, Auf-nach-mallorca), Web de proveedores (por ejemplo de alojamiento Melià, Protur-hotels, oferta complementaria, Bcmplanetdance), Web con valoraciones de usuarios (por ejemplo Tripadvisor), blogs especializados en turismo (por ejemplo Blog.minube., Diariodelviajero), redes sociales generales (por ejemplo Facebook, Twitter), redes sociales especializadas en turismo (por ejemplo Travellerspoint, Viajeros), portales de intercambio de casas (por ejemplo Homeforexchange), portales de alquiler de alojamientos turísticos (por ejemplo Ownersdirect), portales de reservas hoteleras (por ejemplo Booking), portales de actividades y recursos turísticos (por ejemplo Wikitravel, Travelandleisure, Travel.yahoo/), aplicaciones donde compartir imágenes (por ejemplo Flickr, Picassa, Pinterest, Instagram), aplicaciones donde compartir vídeos (por ejemplo Youtube, Vimeo), foros (por ejemplo Lonelyplanet thortree), portales de viajeros hospitalitarios (por ejemplo Couchsurfing), portales de alquiler de casas propias o habitaciones (por ejemplo Airbnb), mapas (por ejemplo Maps.google)

### **Composición de la muestra**

La muestra final resultante asciende a 541 encuestas válidas, que se recogieron a través de un formulario *online* en 2013. El universo es de turistas internacionales, nacionales y residentes en Mallorca y la unidad muestral de una población mayor de 18 años internautas. El nivel de confianza es del 95% para un error muestral de 4,21% (véase Tabla 1).

Tabla 1: Ficha técnica de la investigación

<b>Universo</b>	Turistas internacionales, nacionales y residentes en Mallorca
<b>Unidad muestral</b>	Personas mayores de 18 años que utilicen Internet
<b>Método de recogida de información</b>	Cuestionario <i>online</i>
<b>Error muestral</b>	4,21%
<b>Nivel de confianza</b>	p=q=0.5 al 95%
<b>Procedimiento de muestreo</b>	Método probabilístico
<b>Diseño muestral</b>	La información fue recogida a través de una Web a través de un cuestionario <i>online</i> . El enlace se enviaba por correo electrónico y se publicaba en medios sociales.
<b>Número de encuestas</b>	541 encuestas válidas, sobre un total de 543 cuestionarios recogidos
<b>Periodo de recogida de información</b>	19 marzo a 2 de mayo 2013

Aunque llegaron respuestas de todas partes del mundo, se consideran los segmentos de personas que residen en Mallorca (23,8%), en España pero fuera de Mallorca (34,4%), y fuera de España (41,8%). De la muestra considerada, el 28,7% no conoce a residentes en Mallorca, mientras que el 71,3% conoce al menos algún residente. El 46% vive fuera de Mallorca y conoce a residentes. Un 68,25% ha visitado Mallorca y un 31,75% no la ha visitado nunca. Si se agrupa la muestra por edades el 13,3% tiene de 18 a 24 años, el 61,9% entre 24 y 44 años, el 20,9% entre 45 y 64 años y el 3,9% tiene más de 65 años. El 46% de los encuestados son hombres y el 54%, mujeres. En cuanto a los ingresos brutos familiares, la muestra está bastante repartida. De este modo, un 20,9% de menos de 15.000 €, un 27,7% de 15.001 a 30.000 €, un 21,3% de 30.001 a 45.000, un 13,9% de 45.001 a 60.000 €, y el resto (16,3%) más de 60.000 €.

## **Resultados**

### **Fuentes de información y Web más útiles en general**

La Tabla 2 ofrece las puntuaciones dadas a las fuentes de información inducidas, definidas por Gartner (1993) como aquéllas que pueden ser controladas por las autoridades del destino y los

intermediarios, los encuestados consideran que la publicidad y las ferias son las menos útiles. En una escala de 5 puntos, las puntuaciones medias obtenidas son respectivamente de 2,77 y 2,3. Para el resto de fuentes de información, las puntuaciones obtenidas en ningún caso supera el valor medio de 3. Ello hace considerar que las fuentes de información inducidas no son muy útiles a la hora de buscar información sobre Mallorca.

Tabla 2: Puntuaciones medias fuentes de información inducidas

	OMD	Proveedores	Intermediarios	Publicidad	Ferías
Media Total	3,03	3,11	2,76	2,77	2,3
Mediana Total	3	3	3	3	2
Moda Total	3	3	3	3	1

Por lo que respecta a las fuentes de información autónomas (Tabla 3 y 4), es decir, aquéllas que según Gartner (1993) no son controladas por las autoridades del destino, las medias toman una posición ligeramente superior al valor 3. Tan sólo los líderes de opinión y los films y la TV, con unas medias de 2,57 y 2,44 son valoradas como fuentes de baja utilidad. En el extremo contrario se encuentran las guías de viajes, que con una puntuación media de 3,47, puede ser considerada como la fuente de información más útil. De hecho, en relación a esta última fuente se observa cómo el 50% de los encuestados le confieren una puntuación media de 4.

Tabla 3: Puntuaciones medias fuentes de información autónomas

	Medios de turismo	Medios temáticos	Libros	Guías viaje
Media Total	3,17	3,07	3,01	3,47
Mediana Total	3	3	3	4
Moda Total	4	3	4	4

Finalmente, y en relación a las fuentes orgánicas, los encuestados señalan que los amigos y conocidos son las fuentes más útiles. Con una puntuación media de 4,19, esta fuente presenta un valor muy superior a todas las fuentes de información utilizadas en la formación de la imagen del destino, incluidas las fuentes inducidas y las autónomas, como ya pusieron de manifiesto Gartner (1993), Beerli y Martín (2004) y Zins (2009), entre otros.

Por lo que respecta a Internet, es la fuente de información que obtiene una puntuación media más elevada de todas, con un valor medio de 4,39, es considerada como la fuente más útil para obtener información sobre Mallorca, seguida de los amigos y conocidos. En ninguna investigación previa consultada se consideraba Internet el medio de información más útil. En esta investigación Internet ha sido clasificada como una fuente inducida y orgánica (Tabla 4).

Tabla 4: Puntuaciones medias fuentes de información autónomas y orgánicas

	Autónomas			Orgánicas	
	Documentales	Film y TV	Líderes de opinión	Amigos y conocidos	Internet
Media Total	3,06	2,44	2,57	4,19	4,34
Mediana Total	3	2	3	5	5
Moda Total	4	1	1	5	5

Uno de los objetivos de esta investigación, a diferencia de otras que tratan Internet como un canal general, es conocer cuál de las plataformas Web existentes en Internet es más útil para personas que buscan información sobre Mallorca. Los buscadores (puntuación media de 4,47) son considerados como los más importantes y útiles por los encuestados. Las páginas Web procedentes de fuentes inducidas, autoridades de destino y Web de intermediarios y

proveedores, tienen una puntuación media relativamente baja, no llegando a superar el valor de 3, excepto las Web de las OMD, cuya puntuación media es de 3,46 (ver Tabla 5).

Tabla 5: Puntuaciones medias plataformas Web: buscadores, Web OMD, Web Turísticas no oficiales, Web intermediarios, Web proveedores

	Buscadores	Web OMD	Web turísticas no oficiales	Web intermediarios	Web proveedores
Media Total	4,47	3,46	2,9	2,8	2,8
Mediana Total	5	4	3	3	3
Moda Total	5	5	4	1	3

Las páginas Web cuya información es generada por los propios usuarios que obtienen mayor puntuación en cuanto a utilidad percibida son las que contienen valoraciones de los usuarios, como por ejemplo Tripadvisor. La puntuación media obtenida, en una escala de 5 puntos, es de 3,55, mientras que la moda y la mediana obtenida son de 4. Por su parte los blogs de turismo y las redes sociales especializadas en turismo tienen una puntuación más bien baja, 2,91 y 2,53 respectivamente. Sin embargo las redes sociales generales tienen una puntuación un poco más alta, llegando a una utilidad media de 3,18 (Tabla 6).

Tabla 6: Puntuaciones medias plataformas Web: Web de valoraciones de usuarios, blogs y redes sociales

	Web Valoraciones usuarios	Blogs turismo	Redes sociales generales	Redes sociales turismo
Media Total	3,55	2,91	3,18	2,53
Mediana Total	4	3	3	2
Moda Total	4	1	4	1

Las plataformas Web para compartir imágenes, vídeos y opiniones -a través de foros-, y cuyo contenido lo generan los propios usuarios, no reciben una buena puntuación en cuanto a utilidad percibida como herramienta para obtener información de Mallorca como destino turístico. En cambio, los mapas en Internet, tipo Google Maps, es una de las herramientas más útiles para buscar información con una puntuación media de 3,82 (véase Tabla 7).

Tabla 7: Puntuaciones medias plataformas Web: compartir imágenes, compartir vídeos, foros, actividades y recursos turísticos, mapas

	Compartir imágenes	Compartir vídeos	Foros	Actividades y recursos turísticos	Mapas
Media Total	2,65	2,72	2,51	2,73	3,82
Mediana Total	3	3	2	3	4
Moda Total	1	1	1	1	5

Las páginas Web sobre alojamiento, no son señaladas como una fuente de información excesivamente útil. La excepción la encontramos con las Web de reservas hoteleras, como Booking, que llega a una puntuación media de utilidad de un 3,26, con una moda de 4 (Tabla 8).

Tabla 8: Puntuaciones medias utilidad plataformas Web: intercambio de casas, alquiler de alojamientos turísticos, reservas hoteleras, alquiler de casas y habitaciones, viajeros hospitalarios

	Intercambio casas	Alquiler alojamientos turísticos	Reservas hoteleras	Alquiler casas y habitaciones propias	Viajeros hospitalarios
No conoce residentes	2,42	2,57	3,29	2,63	2,5
Media Total	2,29	2,37	3,26	2,44	2,28
Mediana Total	2	2	3	2	2
Moda Total	1	1	4	1	1

***Puntuaciones significativamente distintas de fuentes de información y Web según segmentos***

Antes de comparar las medias mediante el test ANOVA, se han calculado los test de Levene y de Kolmogorov y Smirnov. En particular, para evaluar la homogeneidad de varianzas se realiza el test de Levene. Para la muestra de si se ha visitado Mallorca con anterioridad, el nivel de significación estadística cumple que  $p > 0,05$  en todos los casos, excepto en las fuentes OMD. Para la muestra de lugar de residencia, el nivel de significación estadística es  $p > 0,05$  en todos los casos, excepto en las fuentes Film, TV e Internet, buscadores y redes sociales de turismo, Web de intercambio de casas, foros, Web de viajeros hospitalarios, Web de alquiler de casas y habitaciones propias, y mapas. Para la muestra de si conoce a residentes, el nivel de significación estadística también cumple que  $p > 0,05$  en todos los casos, excepto en OMD, amigos y conocidos, buscadores y mapas. De este modo, se ha puesto de manifiesto cómo en la mayoría de los casos se puede asumir la homogeneidad de varianzas. Las pruebas de normalidad de Kolmogorov y Smirnov muestran que en los grupos “conoce a residentes”, “lugar de residencia” y “ha visitado Mallorca” ninguna de las variables se distribuye normalmente, ya que el nivel de significación  $p$  asociado a los contrastes de K-S (0,000) resulta en todos los casos inferior al nivel de significación alfa prefijado ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Tras comprobar los requisitos previos del ANOVA, se puede concluir que los resultados obtenidos no son totalmente fiables, puesto que los datos no siguen una distribución normal, por lo que resulta conveniente aplicar otro tipo de test. Para ello, se recurre al contraste de hipótesis utilizando un método no paramétrico, basado en el análisis de Kruskal-Wallis.

En cuanto a si se ha visitado Mallorca anteriormente, las diferencias significativas tras la prueba de Kruskal-Wallis (Tabla 9) se encuentran en medios de turismo, documentales y rodajes de cine y televisión y ferias. En los cuatro casos, los que no han visitado Mallorca le confieren más utilidad como canal de información. La H1 sólo se puede contrastar en tres de los catorce ítems medidos, uno es inducido y los otros dos son autónomos.

Tabla 9: Diferencias significativas según si ha visitado Mallorca. Fuentes inducidas y autónomas

	Ferias	Medios turismo	Documentales	Film y TV
Medias visitantes	2,2	3,06	2,92	2,31
Medias no visitantes	2,49	3,4	3,36	2,72
Prueba de Kruskal-Wallis (Sig.)	0,005	0,005	0,00	0,001

El hecho de haber visitado Mallorca con anterioridad hace que se presenten diferencias significativas, según la prueba de Kruskal-Wallis (Tabla 10), en las Web de las OMD, las Web de alquileres de alojamiento turístico, las Web de viajeros hospitalarios, y en los foros. En los cuatro casos existe una mejor valoración por parte de aquellos que no han visitado Mallorca. De este modo, es posible contrastar 4 ítems de los 19 que contiene la hipótesis H2; se trataría de

una fuente inducida y tres de orgánicas, según la clasificación de Gartner (1993), adaptada a quien crea el contenido en las plataformas Web.

Tabla 10: Diferencias significativas sobre la utilidad de las Web en función de si ha visitado el destino

	Web OMD	Alquiler alojamientos turísticos	Viajeros hospitalarios	Foros
Medias visitantes	3,38	2,28	2,15	2,41
Medias no visitantes	3,63	2,55	2,58	2,72
Prueba de Kruskal-Wallis (Sig.)	0,016	0,018	0,000	0,009

Así como argumentaban Chon (1991), Selby y Morgan (1996) y Hsu et al. (2004) que la imagen de un destino tiende a ser más compleja, realista y completa al haber visitado un destino, se deduce que la utilidad de las fuentes de información difieren en algunos casos. La información controlada por las autoridades tiende a ser mejor considerada por los no visitantes en las ferias y en las Web de las OMD, así como las fuentes autónomas tradicionales y algunas fuentes orgánicas a través de la Web 2.0.

Atendiendo a los diferentes segmentos de individuos por lugar de residencia que conforman la muestra, se observa cómo los valores medios presentados sólo por las fuentes de información autónomas, difieren ligeramente de los presentados para la muestra total. Los resultados presentados por el la prueba de Kruskal-Wallis permiten observar cómo según el lugar de residencia del individuo algunos de los valores medios son significativamente distintos ( $p < 0,05$ ). En función de si el encuestado reside en Mallorca, en el resto de España, o fuera del territorio nacional, percibe diferente nivel de utilidad en las siguientes fuentes de información: medios de turismo, medios temáticos, libros, guías de viajes, documentales, film y TV e Internet (Ver Tabla 11). El resto de fuentes de información no presentan diferencias entre segmentos

Tabla 11: Diferencias significativas según el lugar de residencia. Fuentes autónomas

	Medios turismo	Medios temáticos	Libros	Guías viaje	Documentales	Film y TV	Internet
Medias Mallorca	3,2	3,37	3,38	3,63	3,28	2,53	4,53
Medias España	2,9	2,75	2,6	3,25	2,76	2,2	4,18
Medias extranjeros	3,37	3,17	3,14	3,57	3,18	2,58	4,36
Prueba de Kruskal-Wallis (Sig.)	0,001	0,00	0,00	0,007	0,001	0,016	0,020

Por tanto, se puede contrastar en parte la H3. Sólo las fuentes de información autónomas muestran diferencias significativas por lugar de residencia. Las fuentes de información inducida y orgánica no son significativamente distintas. Los medios especializados en turismo y los rodajes de televisión y cine son mejor puntuados por los extranjeros; los medios temáticos, los libros, las guías de viajes, los documentales y los líderes de opinión son mejor puntuados por los mallorquines, seguido de los extranjeros.

Atendiendo a los resultados de la prueba de Kruskal-Wallis, las variables que quedan con puntuaciones medias significativamente diferentes según el lugar de residencia (Tabla 12) son redes sociales generales, sitios Web de actividades y recursos turísticos, sitios Web para compartir imágenes, Websites de viajeros hospitalarios y mapas Websites de alquiler de alojamientos turísticos y Websites de intercambio de casas. La mayoría están enmarcadas en el grupo UGC. Los individuos residentes en España son los que ofrecen unas puntuaciones medias más bajas para estas fuentes de información. Las Web que reciben unas puntuaciones más elevadas son las redes sociales y los mapas. En el caso de las redes sociales, la puntuación media recibida por los residentes en Mallorca es de 3,4 y la recibida por los extranjeros de 3,33.



Mientras, en el caso de los mapas, la puntuación media ofrecida por los mallorquines asciende hasta 4,16. Estos resultados demuestran que la H4 sólo se puede contrastar en parte, y principalmente por la tipología de Web cuyos contenidos son generados por los usuarios.

Tabla 12: Diferencias significativas sobre la utilidad de las Web en función de la residencia

	Redes sociales generales	Actividades y recursos turísticos	Alquiler alojamientos turísticos	Intercambio casas
Medias Mallorca	3,4	2,65	2,22	2,22
Medias España	2,83	2,44	2,23	2,13
Medias Extranjeros	3,33	3,03	2,56	2,45
Prueba de Kruskal-Wallis (Sig.)	0,000	0,000	0,007	0,036
	Compartir imágenes	Foros	Viajeros hospitalarios	Mapas
Medias Mallorca	2,81	2,56	2,24	4,16
Medias España	2,31	2,31	1,95	3,64
Medias Extranjeros	2,84	2,65	2,59	3,78
Prueba de Kruskal-Wallis (Sig.)	0,000	0,040	0,000	0,002

Analizando los segmentos por lugar de residencia como proponían Ahmed (1996) y Hsu et al. (2004) las fuentes de información clásica inducidas y las UGC son, en general, mejor valoradas por los residentes fuera de España.

Tabla 13: Diferencias significativas según si conoce a residentes. Fuentes autónomas y orgánicas

	Film y TV	Amigos y conocidos	Internet
Medias conoce residentes	2,35	4,33	4,4
Medias fuera Mallorca conoce residentes	2,27	4,35	4,32
Medias no conoce residentes	2,65	3,86	4,2
Prueba de Kruskal-Wallis (Sig.)	0,025	0,000	0,018

La H5 se puede contrastar en parte. Las fuentes de información orgánica (amigos y conocidos e Internet) presentan diferencias significativas. Conocer a residentes hace que sea mucho más útil la fuente de información de amigos y conocidos a la hora de obtener información sobre Mallorca. Según se muestra en la Tabla 13, la fuente orgánica de amigos y conocidos resulta más útil por la gente de fuera de Mallorca que conoce a residentes llegando a una media de 4,35. Las fuentes inducidas y autónomas no presentan diferencias significativas a excepción de los rodajes. No conocer a residentes hace que se puntúe mejor la utilidad de los films y TV para informarse sobre Mallorca.

En cuanto a si el encuestado conoce o no a residentes, las diferencias encontradas según en la prueba de Kruskal-Wallis (Tabla 14) se presentan en los buscadores, Web de las OMD, Web de alquiler de alojamientos turísticos y Web de viajeros hospitalarios. Sólo 4 de los 19 ítems se pueden contrastar en la H6. Los buscadores son más útiles para los que conocen a residentes, las Web de las OMD. Una explicación sobre este hecho podría ser que se necesita un conocimiento previo para saber lo que buscar. Las Web de alquiler de alojamientos y de viajeros hospitalarios son más útiles para los que no conocen a residentes.

Así se pone de manifiesto otra vez lo que predijo Schroeder (1996), conocer a residentes impacta en la formación de la imagen, del destino, ya que como se ha comprobado el hecho de conocer a residentes hace que se valore mejor la fuente de información de amigos y conocidos.

Por otra parte, en esta investigación se añade que el hecho de no conocer a residentes hace que se valore mejor las plataformas Web de viajeros hospitalarios, que permiten entrar en contacto con residentes.

Tabla 14: Diferencias significativas sobre la utilidad de las Web en función de si conoce a residentes

	Buscadores	Web OMD	Alquiler alojamientos turísticos	Viajeros hospitalarios
Medias conoce residentes	4,55	3,39	2,28	2,2
Medias fuera Mallorca conoce residentes	4,48	3,39	2,32	2,19
Medias no conoce residentes	4,25	3,65	2,57	2,5
Prueba de Kruskal-Wallis (Sig.)	0,041	0,021	0,016	0,010

El hecho de que el turista conozca, o no, personas que residen en el destino puede influir en la utilidad percibida en las fuentes de información. Los resultados ofrecidos tras el desarrollo de un la prueba de Kruskal-Wallis evidencian algunas diferencias significativas sólo en las fuentes film y TV, amigos y conocidos e Internet.

## Conclusiones

En general, la mayoría de fuentes de información y plataformas Web no presentan diferencias significativas en cuanto a la utilidad que representan para los segmentos analizados. De forma global, las fuentes orgánicas y autónomas adquieren una mejor valoración que las inducidas. Aunque si se desea llegar a potenciales visitantes que nunca han estado en Mallorca y que tampoco conocen a residentes y viven en el extranjero, se deben seleccionar los mejores y más rentables canales de comunicación. Por este motivo, hay que tener en cuenta una serie de pequeñas diferencias a la hora de planificar las acciones de comunicación de un destino turístico. Se observan algunas fuentes de información y plataformas Web más idóneas según los segmentos de población en tipos de comunicación tradicionales y emergentes. El grueso de diferencias más relevantes se da en las fuentes de información autónoma, que son mejor valoradas por los residentes fuera de España.

Atendiendo a la ubicación geográfica, cuando se trata de impactar a residentes fuera de España para darles a conocer Mallorca, hay que tener en cuenta, además de las fuentes mejor puntuadas en general, los medios especializados en turismo y los rodajes de cine y televisión como soportes de gran impacto para dar visibilidad a la isla. El resto de fuentes de información autónoma también son mejor valoradas por parte de los residentes extranjeros. Por tanto, cuando se plantea el dar a conocer el destino en mercados emergentes, resulta de gran interés analizar las fuentes autónomas de más impacto entre la población de un país concreto para intentar difundir el destino en dicho país. Por otro lado, el hecho de conocer a residentes hace que se valore mejor la fuente orgánica de amigos y conocidos. En este sentido, resulta interesante implicar a los propios residentes en las campañas de comunicación del destino.

En cuanto a las plataformas Web, la mayor parte de las que recibe unas medias significativas diferentes se concentra en las que el contenido es generado por los propios usuarios. Es en este grupo donde existe más variabilidad en las puntuaciones. Cabe destacar que cuanto más se conoce el destino, mejor se valoran los mapas tipo Google; esto puede deberse a que se tiene acceso a un mejor conocimiento del territorio. Por otro lado, es importante señalar que está incrementando el auge de una nueva modalidad turística que sigue las pautas de los modelos de negocio de consumidor a consumidor (C2C). En el caso del turismo, se trata de ofrecer servicios turísticos de viajero a viajero, o de residente a viajero, como intercambio de casas para pasar las vacaciones, el alquiler de habitaciones o casas particulares para turismo o foros. El tipo de plataformas que permiten esta modalidad de turismo se valora más positivamente por parte de los residentes fuera de España.

Se ha constatado que conocer a residentes ofrece un conocimiento del destino también mayor, lo cual proporciona una utilidad superior a los buscadores, al conocerse de antemano lo que se está buscando. En cambio, no conocer a residentes proporciona más valor, tanto a la información oficial publicada en la Web de las OMD cómo a la información de tipo informal sobre turismo publicada por los UGC, en concreto por los propios residentes. Destacan las Web de alquiler propio y la de viajeros hospitalarios que acogen a turistas en sus casas.

No haber visitado Mallorca con anterioridad sólo presenta ligeras diferencias en las Web de viajeros hospitalarios, foros y Web de alojamientos turísticos, que son mejor valoradas por los no visitantes. En este sentido, se recomienda a las OMD seguir publicando información turística y útil en sus Web e implicar a residentes y viajeros en las campañas de comunicación para llegar de una forma más orgánica a futuros viajeros potenciales.

Este estudio tiene la limitación que sólo se consideran a usuarios de Internet para realizar la encuesta, sin embargo hay que tomar en consideración que según datos de la Encuesta de Gasto Turístico (EGATUR, 2013) del Instituto de Estudios Turísticos, el 63,3% de los turistas que visitaron las Islas Baleares en 2011 utilizan Internet en la preparación de sus viajes.

Como futuras investigaciones, se propone tomar en consideración el uso de los dispositivos móviles a la hora de consultar información turística y en concreto de las Apps y su tipología. Por ejemplo, en este estudio no se han tenido en cuenta aplicaciones tipo Forsquare o Pinterest que en el último año se han puesto tan de moda entre los usuarios de “smartphones”. Otra línea de investigación que se recomienda desarrollar es examinar si la proyección de la imagen deseada de un territorio explicada en el plan de marketing de la OMD se ajusta a la imagen proyectada en la Web de la OMD. Además, también se propone analizar si la imagen proyectada por la OMD se ajusta a la imagen compartida por los UGC.

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# LA RELACIÓN ENTRE SATISFACCIÓN Y LEALTAD EN EL TURISMO RURAL

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## RESUMEN

*El turismo rural se muestra como un campo multidisciplinar de investigación de gran interés, donde todavía se echa en falta un salto hacia estudios causales relacionados con el marketing. El presente trabajo pretende testar la relación causal entre satisfacción y lealtad al destino de turismo rural, introduciendo como novedad un papel más destacado para las relaciones que surgen entre los turistas y los proveedores de servicios turísticos y los residentes. Para ello se ha recogido una muestra de 464 turistas rurales a través de encuesta on-line. La evaluación del modelo a través de la técnica PLS, muestra una alta capacidad explicativa de los constructos endógenos satisfacción global y lealtad. Destaca el papel de la satisfacción con los atributos del destino y de las relaciones con los residentes como antecedentes de la satisfacción global, no siendo significativo el impacto de la satisfacción con las relaciones con los proveedores de servicios turísticos.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE:

*Marketing turístico, satisfacción, lealtad, turismo rural, modelos de ecuaciones estructurales, técnica PLS*

## 1. Introducción

El turismo rural como fenómeno turístico ha sido muy estudiado tanto a nivel nacional como internacional, atendiendo a aspectos como su concepto, su evolución o su desarrollo en zonas del globo muy diversas. Se trata de un campo multidisciplinar de investigación de gran interés, que ha experimentado un aumento cuantitativo en la literatura tanto a nivel nacional como internacional. Lo que se echa en falta es un salto hacia los estudios causales relacionados con el marketing para la mejor planificación, gestión y comercialización de destinos y empresas de turismo rural, así como sucede en otros subsectores turísticos.

En este trabajo se cuestiona si la satisfacción tiene efectos sobre la lealtad a los destinos de turismo rural, pues parece que las diferentes particularidades que posee cada sector pueden llegar a definir la lealtad con matices diferentes, así como también los diferentes patrones de consumo. El sector turístico incluye servicios muy heterogéneos, pero fundamentales para la misma actividad que es viajar. Se podría definir al cliente fiel como aquel que elige la misma cadena hotelera cada vez que emprende un viaje vacacional, que siempre que visita la misma ciudad por cuestiones de trabajo y se aloja en el mismo hotel, el turista que continuamente elige volar con la misma compañía aérea, o que siempre requiere los servicios de la misma agencia de viajes, aunque la frecuencia sea muy irregular. El problema que subyace, a criterio de Oppermann (1999), es que la duración del período de compra en el sector turístico es muy variable. Según Oliver (1999), en el caso de los bienes de consumo la preferencia continuada del producto de una marca sobre otra podría ser un indicador de la lealtad de un cliente. Sin embargo, Bigné *et al.* (2005) afirman que medir la lealtad como la repetición de compras en el turismo es difícil, dado que el consumo es infrecuente y se prefiere visitar lugares nuevos. Por tanto, las características específicas del turismo rural hacen necesaria la investigación sobre la lealtad de estos clientes, pues la multiplicidad de destinos y tipos de alojamientos que ofrece esta modalidad turística es tan amplia y variada que la probabilidad de repetición de la visita puede ser baja. Resultaría relevante entonces poner de manifiesto la capacidad que tiene el turismo rural de fidelizar a sus clientes a través de la satisfacción, lo cual tiene repercusiones tanto teóricas como prácticas para una mejor planificación, gestión y comercialización de destinos y empresas de turismo rural.

Frecuentemente en la literatura, el estudio de la satisfacción se ha abordado desde los atributos del destino, mientras que otros aspectos como las relaciones con los proveedores de servicios y los propios residentes del destino no son tenidos en cuenta. En el caso del turismo rural, existe facilidad para desarrollar una relación próxima con el proveedor de servicios turísticos, mientras que también suele desarrollarse una relación particular con los residentes de estos destinos turísticos, convirtiéndose en parte fundamental del producto de turismo rural. Por ello, parece interesante estudiar la satisfacción no sólo haciendo referencia los elementos que posee el destino, sino también a las relaciones que el turista establece con las persona del lugar, tratando de entender cómo influyen en la satisfacción global y ésta en sus intenciones de volver y de recomendar el destino. Palmer y Mayer (1996) subrayan la facilidad que tienen los pequeños negocios locales y familiares a la hora de desarrollar relaciones con sus clientes, escenario que se reproduce en el turismo rural. Alegre y Cladera (2009) aseguran la importancia de la relación entre satisfacción con la hospitalidad y la satisfacción global.

Por tanto, el objetivo de esta investigación se define como conocer la relación que existe entre la satisfacción y la lealtad hacia los destinos de turismo rural, debido a sus particularidades, introduciendo como novedad un papel más destacado para las relaciones que surgen entre los proveedores de servicios turísticos y los residentes del lugar con los turistas.

El presente trabajo se estructura en cinco apartados. El primero de ellos aborda algunas cuestiones introductorias sobre el tema objeto de estudio, plantea su justificación y objetivos. El siguiente, recopila las cuestiones teóricas relacionadas con la satisfacción y la lealtad en turismo, con aplicación a las características particulares del turismo rural, planteando además las hipótesis de investigación y el modelo teórico que se pretende testar. Después se presentan las cuestiones metodológicas para pasar, a continuación, a la exposición de los resultados. Se finaliza con las conclusiones de este trabajo.

## 2. Las relaciones causales entre satisfacción y lealtad en el ámbito del turismo rural

### 2.1. La satisfacción en el turismo rural: la propuesta de tres dimensiones

Dentro del estudio del comportamiento del turista, la satisfacción es un concepto central (Kozak, 2001), siendo el conocimiento de la psicología del consumidor de vital importancia para el éxito de los destinos turísticos. Por ello, es necesario realizar un gran esfuerzo en la investigación del proceso de satisfacción (Rodríguez del Bosque y San Martín, 2008), pues fallos en la satisfacción de los turistas puede afectar a la probabilidad de su regreso al destino o en la recomendación del mismo (Rivera y Croes, 2010). Además, el concepto juega un importante papel en la planificación y comercialización de productos y servicios turísticos (Yoon y Uysal, 2005), por lo que su estudio tiene una trascendental doble implicación, tanto teórica como práctica en el ámbito de los destinos turísticos.

A pesar de la profusión de conceptualizaciones generalistas, la literatura sobre satisfacción manifiesta la necesidad de tratar el concepto bajo un enfoque dependiente del contexto en el que surge. Por tanto, hay que tener presente que las características del sector turístico ejercen un notable impacto en el concepto (Bowen y Clarke, 2002). La satisfacción en el ámbito turístico ha sido estudiada con gran profusión (Kim *et al.*, 2012), aplicándose a diversos contextos como agencias de viajes, alojamientos y destinos (Rodríguez del Bosque y San Martín, 2008), y habiéndose utilizado varias perspectivas y teorías (Yoon y Uysal, 2005), siendo el enfoque dominante el utilizado en esta literatura el de la disconfirmación de expectativas promovido por Oliver (1980), que dentro del turismo ha sido utilizado en un amplio abanico de contextos (productos turísticos en relación a la naturaleza, destinos, agencias de viajes, etc.) (Petrick *et al.*, 2001; Jang y Feng, 2007; Lee *et al.*, 2012).

En el caso concreto de la satisfacción con el destino turístico, Hernández *et al.* (2006) conceptualizan la satisfacción con el destino como la valoración del grado de cumplimiento de las necesidades y deseos de los turistas, en cuanto al gran abanico de servicios y actividades que ofrece el destino. De una forma muy sencilla y basándose en la perspectiva de Oliver (1980), Wang y Hsu (2010) definen la satisfacción aplicada al ámbito de los destinos como la evaluación postcompra del destino. Por su parte Phillips *et al.* (2013: 15), en términos generales, entienden la satisfacción con el destino turístico como “la sensación general de contento que un turista siente al visitar un destino que cumple sus expectativas y necesidades de viaje”. Sin embargo, las definiciones de satisfacción pueden diferir en cuanto a su nivel de especificidad (Yi, 1990), incluyendo el hecho de que la satisfacción pueda ser estudiada a nivel de transacciones específicas o de forma global (Johnson *et al.*, 1995). La satisfacción puede abordarse a nivel global (Oliver, 1980) o a nivel de atributos en cuanto a los antecedentes de la satisfacción (Oliver, 1993). Según Oliver (1993), existe una dualidad entre influencias afectivas positivas y negativas en la experiencia de consumo, que puede proceder de experiencias positivas o negativas del nivel de atributos. Por tanto, según el autor, la satisfacción con los atributos, puede concebirse como el juicio subjetivo del consumidor como resultado de las observaciones del desempeño de los atributos, mientras que la satisfacción global se configuraría como una función de las evaluaciones a nivel de atributos. De este modo, la satisfacción global y la satisfacción con los atributos se entienden como constructos distintos pero relacionados. La satisfacción con los atributos tiene un impacto positivo y directo en la satisfacción global y captura buena parte de la variación de la satisfacción global.

En la aplicación de estas cuestiones al sector turístico y, en concreto, a los destinos, Kozak y Rimmington (2000) aseveran que las diferencias entre los productos turísticos hacen difícil la medición de la satisfacción del cliente. Por ello, es importante identificar y medir la satisfacción con cada componente del destino porque cada uno dirige a la satisfacción global con el mismo. Ozdemir *et al.* (2012b) destacan que la revisión de la literatura revela que hay algunos atributos que podrían hacer que los turistas se sientan satisfechos o insatisfechos con un destino. Ozdemir *et al.* (2012a) afirman que en sus vacaciones en un destino los turistas experimentan una amplia gama de atributos como hoteles, restaurantes, tiendas, playas, recursos naturales, culturales e históricos, y que se evalúan cada uno por separado. Consecuentemente, es lógico pensar que la satisfacción global es una función de la satisfacción con atributos específicos del destino. Según Ozdemir *et al.* (2012b), estudios recientes han intentado identificar los atributos del destino que generan satisfacción o no durante las estancias de los turistas.

Por su parte, la satisfacción global en el caso específico de los destinos puede entenderse como la definen Chen y Tsai (2007: 1116), que sería como “el grado de placer o contento sentido por el visitante, resultado de la habilidad de la experiencia de viaje de cumplir los deseos del visitante, expectativas y necesidades en relación al viaje”. Por su parte Phillips *et al.* (2013: 95) la conciben como “la evaluación subjetiva de consumo basada en todos los elementos asociados a las experiencias”, de modo que el concepto se compondría de las experiencias de cada uno de los encuentros con el servicio durante el viaje. Prayag y Ryan (2012: 348) se refieren a ella simplemente como “un constructo acumulativo que suma la satisfacción con las varias facetas del destino”.

Kim y Brown (2012) están de acuerdo en la diferencia conceptual entre el desempeño de cada atributo y de la satisfacción global, indicando una relación causal entre ambos conceptos. La relación entre la satisfacción con los atributos del destino y satisfacción global ha sido probada en la literatura (Alegre y Cladera, 2006, 2009; Chi y Qu, 2008; Eusébio y Vieira, 2013; Maroofi y Dehghan, 2012; Ozdemir *et al.*, 2012b; Phillips *et al.*, 2013), pero es necesario testar tal relación en el ámbito de los destinos de turismo rural, de modo que la  $H_1$  se enunciaría de la siguiente forma.

*H<sub>1</sub>: La satisfacción con los atributos del destino tiene efectos sobre la satisfacción global con el destino de turismo rural.*

Estudios recientes sugieren que es necesaria más investigación para comprender mejor otros aspectos experienciales de la satisfacción del turista hacia un destino particular y sus relaciones con la satisfacción global (Kim y Brown, 2012). Por este motivo, se ha tratado de estudiar la satisfacción con un enfoque innovador en el contexto del turismo rural, tratando de involucrar, además de la satisfacción con los atributos del destino, la satisfacción que se produce en cuanto a las relaciones que se desarrollan con los proveedores de servicios turísticos y con los propios residentes del destino.

Según Choo y Petrick (2012), pocos estudios han examinado las relaciones interpersonales que los clientes perciben y experimentan en el encuentro con el servicio. Este hecho tiene importantes implicaciones en marketing, y por consiguiente en las relaciones que afectan a la experiencia turística, pues desde el punto de vista del visitante, hay una serie de relaciones que pueden influenciar experiencias agradables durante el encuentro con el servicio. Los resultados del trabajo de estos autores apuntan a la necesidad de extender el enfoque del marketing relacional enfocado en el cliente al resto de relaciones que se producen con otras partes involucradas en la prestación del servicio, como son los prestadores de servicios y los acompañantes. Desarrollaron su investigación en el ámbito del agroturismo, tipología turística encuadrada dentro del turismo rural, lo cual supone otro incentivo para introducir este constructo en el modelo de estudio de este trabajo. Por otra parte, según Bigné *et al.* (2005: 30) “un adecuado desarrollo del turismo implica que todos los agentes del destino, y no sólo aquellos que pertenecen al sector turístico, estén involucrados en la gestión y la planificación del turismo. Consecuentemente, la comunidad de acogida es otro elemento a considerar en la competitividad de un destino”. De modo que también es necesario incorporar al estudio la importancia de las relaciones que se establecen entre los turistas y los residentes. Choo y Petrick (2012) se propusieron testar las relaciones que ejerce la satisfacción con las relaciones con los proveedores en la satisfacción en general, consiguiendo comprobar esta relación. Alegre y Cladera (2009) aseguran la significación de la relación entre satisfacción con la hospitalidad y satisfacción global. A partir de estos antecedentes se formulan las  $H_2$  y  $H_3$ .

*H<sub>2</sub>: La satisfacción con las relaciones con los proveedores de servicios turísticos tiene efectos sobre la satisfacción global con el destino de turismo rural.*

*H<sub>3</sub>: La satisfacción con las relaciones con los residentes tiene efectos sobre la satisfacción global con el destino de turismo rural.*

## **2.2. La lealtad en el turismo rural y su relación con la satisfacción global**

A pesar de que la lealtad ha sido ampliamente estudiada en el sector turístico, sigue siendo un concepto esquivo tanto para la teoría como para la práctica (McKercher *et al.*, 2012). El concepto de lealtad al destino ha recibido poca atención en la literatura (Oppermann, 1999, 2000; Yoon y Uysal, 2005). A juicio de McKercher *et al.* (2012) esto podría deberse a que el turista parece ser



inherentemente desleal y que los modelos de lealtad existentes producen resultados pobres en su aplicación al turismo.

El hecho de que los destinos operen en un mercado globalizado y altamente competitivo, les fuerza a buscar estrategias innovadoras y ventajas competitivas, como es en la búsqueda de la lealtad, estimulando así los lucros que surgen a partir de la repetición de la visita sobre la base de clientes actuales y sus recomendaciones (Fyall *et al.*, 2003; Shirazi y Som, 2011), así como comprender por qué los turistas son fieles a los destinos y qué determina su lealtad (Chen y Gursoy, 2001). Una cuestión empírica clave a responder en este contexto es qué pauta de comportamiento en el consumo turístico puede ser interpretado como indicador de lealtad (Riley *et al.*, 2001).

Yoon y Uysal (2005) señalan que los destinos turísticos pueden ser considerados productos, y los turistas pueden volver a visitarlos o recomendarlos a otros turistas potenciales como familiares o amigos. Chen y Gursoy (2001) definen operacionalmente la lealtad al destino como el nivel de percepciones de los turistas de un destino como un lugar recomendable, destacando que los estudios que sólo consideran la repetición de visitas como un indicador de la lealtad al destino son deficientes. Esto se debe a que los que no regresan a un destino particular podrían simplemente buscar experiencias de viaje diferentes en nuevos lugares, aun manteniendo la lealtad al destino visitado anteriormente. Por ello, estos autores defienden la intención de recomendar el destino como un indicador de la lealtad. McKercher y Guillet (2011) también defienden este indicador de la lealtad, dado que ante la poca probabilidad de la intención de visitar el destino, el turista tendría un papel importante como su defensor, incluso más que su propia intención de repetir.

Sin embargo, el debate sobre la gradación que puede darse en cuanto a la lealtad hacia un destino, así como la probabilidad de que un turista nunca se convierta en fiel es un debate abierto. Los turistas podrían mostrar una alta propensión a ser leales, debido a las características inherentes a los servicios turísticos. Los servicios turísticos se pagan a distancia, sin tener la posibilidad de realizar una prueba antes de la compra. El turista soporta un alto nivel de incertidumbre y riesgo ante una posible mala experiencia en un nuevo destino, mientras que éste se reduce al volver a un destino conocido (McKercher y Guillet, 2011). En este sentido, Alegre y Juaneda (2006: 686) señalan que “algunas motivaciones turísticas podrían inhibir la lealtad al destino” como, por ejemplo, el deseo de romper con la monotonía de la vida cotidiana, conocer nuevos lugares, personas y culturas, o buscar nuevas experiencias. Sin embargo, las personas con aversión al riesgo podrían sentirse impulsadas a visitar un destino familiar.

Apoyándose en diversos autores, Pearce y Kang (2009) destacan que hay tres dificultades en la transferencia del concepto de lealtad al turismo: (a) un amplio consenso entre los teóricos sobre el hecho de que la búsqueda de la novedad es un componente básico del comportamiento del turista, (b) las características propias de los diferentes productos turísticos, de modo que los viajes de placer son de poca frecuencia, y (3) la duda sobre en qué base se asienta la lealtad del turista, pues la lealtad del cliente puede desarrollarse en cualquiera de los elementos que lo componen.

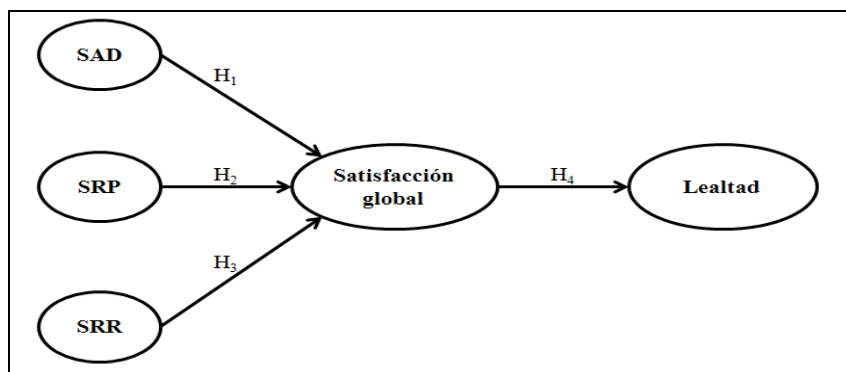
Loureiro (2010) destaca que el turismo rural debe enfrentarse a los retos de un mercado cada vez más competitivo, por lo que es interesante mantener visitantes leales con el fin de garantizar el éxito a largo plazo de los destinos y organizaciones turísticas que operan en ellos, así como su sostenibilidad. Phillips *et al.* (2013) destacan que la repetición de la visita es el mayor desafío al que se enfrentan los destinos de turismo rural, y que la recomendación es una de las herramientas de marketing más importante para atraer nuevos clientes, especialmente en estos destinos.

La relación entre satisfacción global y lealtad ha sido relación ampliamente verificada en la teoría (eg. Bigné *et al.*, 2005; Yoon y Uysal, 2005; Hernández *et al.*, 2006; Hui *et al.*, 2007; Matzler *et al.*, 2007; Chi y Qu, 2008; Rodríguez del Bosque y San Martín, 2008; Mechinda *et al.*, 2009; Williams y Soutar, 2009; Rivera y Croes, 2010; Wang y Hsu, 2010; Yüksel *et al.*, 2010; Žabkar *et al.*, 2010; Chen y Tsai, 2012; Forgas *et al.*, 2012; Kim y Brown, 2012; Kim *et al.*, 2012; Maroofi y Dehghan, 2012; Prayag y Ryan, 2012), aunque resulta interesante comprobar también su relevancia en el contexto del turismo rural, así se enuncia la H<sub>4</sub>.

*H<sub>4</sub>: La satisfacción global afecta a la lealtad hacia el destino de turismo rural.*

La FIGURA 1 representa el modelo teórico que se testa en la presente investigación.

FIGURA 1  
Modelo teórico



### 3. Metodología

#### 3.1. Escalas de medición

La satisfacción con los atributos del destino se ha venido utilizando en varios trabajos proponiendo varias escalas que miden múltiples elementos de un destino con especificaciones diferentes (eg. Alegre y Cladera, 2006, 2009; Matzler *et al.*, 2007; Chi y Qu, 2008; Chi, 2011, 2012; Maroofi y Dehghan, 2012; Ozdemir *et al.*, 2012a, b; Phillips *et al.*, 2013). En este trabajo, para medir este constructo se ha recurrido a la construcción de indicadores globalizados, tratando de simplificar la escala para poder ser aplicada a cualquier destino de turismo rural. A partir de una escala aplicada al turismo rural propuesta por Campón *et al.* (2010), se han planteado los ítems para esta escala. En cuanto a la satisfacción con las relaciones con los proveedores de servicios turísticos, se han utilizado como base la escala propuesta por De Wulf *et al.* (2001). Escasos son los resultados que aporta la revisión de la literatura realizada sobre la medición de la satisfacción con las relaciones con los residentes de los destinos, que conducen a los trabajos de Alegre y Cladera (2006, 2009), que en su constructo satisfacción con los atributos del destino, utilizan una dimensión relacionada con estas cuestiones. Campo y Garau (2010), tras un análisis factorial sobre atributos del destino encuentran un factor que denominan satisfacción con la hospitalidad. Sobre las bases de los indicadores propuestos por estos autores se ha construido la escala propuesta para este estudio. Se han incluido además dos indicadores que tendrían relación con la función que muchas veces cumplen los residentes de un destino, de ayuda en la resolución de problemas que pueden darse durante la estancia y ofrecer informaciones sobre el lugar.

A pesar de que el constructo satisfacción global frecuentemente se ha estudiado a través de un único indicador (eg. Bigné *et al.* 2005; Alegre y Cladera, 2006, 2009; Chen y Tsai, 2007; Jang y Feng, 2007; Chi y Qu, 2008; Rivera y Croes, 2010; Maroofi y Dehghan, 2012; Prayag y Ryan, 2012; Eusébio y Vieira, 2013; Phillips *et al.*, 2013), a partir de las recomendaciones de MacKenzie *et al.* (2005) sobre los riesgos de utilizar un único ítem, se ha apostado por una escala multi-ítem.

Para la identificación de los indicadores que formen parte de la escala para la medición de la satisfacción global se han tenido en cuenta las de Rodríguez del Bosque y San Martín (2008), Williams y Soutar (2009), Wang y Hsu (2010), Yüksel *et al.* (2010), Žabkar *et al.* (2010) y Forgas *et al.* (2012), que tienen como denominador común que han basado sus escalas en las propuestas por Oliver (1980, 1997, 1999). Se ha enriquecido la escala con un indicador propuesto por Tse y Wilton (1988) y Oliver (1997) que observan la distancia al punto ideal como una medida de la satisfacción que refleja cómo debería ser el desempeño del servicio.

Para el estudio de la lealtad se ha estimado interesante la escala utilizada por Mechinda *et al.* (2009), pues se ha tenido en cuenta que tanto la revisita como la recomendación aparecieran, puesto que son indicadores clave para el estudio de la lealtad.

Las escalas utilizadas en este trabajo han sido validadas por especialistas: profesores e investigadores de diversas universidades españolas y profesionales del sector del turismo rural, del turismo en general y del marketing.

### 3.2. Muestra, trabajo de campo y análisis de los datos

El presente estudio se ha desarrollado en España, país donde el turismo rural ha tenido una excepcional expansión en los últimos años, tanto desde el punto de vista de la oferta como de la demanda (Hernández *et al.*, 2011), recurriendo a la utilización de una metodología cuantitativa a través de encuesta on-line, haciendo difusión de la misma a través de *e-mailing*, redes sociales, página web y blog, tratando de conseguir además un efecto bola de nieve en la obtención de respuestas. El universo de esta investigación estaría compuesto por todas aquellas personas que practican turismo rural al menos una vez cada dos o tres años, cuestión que constituía la primera pregunta del cuestionario. Antes del lanzamiento final del mismo, se desarrolló un pilotaje, seleccionando una pequeña submuestra de la población objeto de estudio para comprobar de forma definitiva la corrección del mismo (Miquel *et al.*, 2000). El trabajo de campo se llevó a cabo entre abril y junio de 2013, obteniendo una muestra no probabilística de conveniencia de 464 turistas rurales.

TABLA 1  
Ficha técnica del estudio

<i>Universo</i>	Personas que practican turismo rural con cierta frecuencia (al menos una vez cada dos o tres años)
<i>Ámbito</i>	España
<i>Método de recogida de información</i>	Encuesta <i>on line</i>
<i>Base de datos</i>	No existe
<i>Unidad muestral</i>	Personas que practican turismo rural con cierta frecuencia (al menos una vez cada dos o tres años)
<i>Tamaño de la población</i>	Indefinido
<i>Muestreo</i>	Muestra no probabilística de conveniencia
<i>Trabajo de campo</i>	Del 22 de abril al 18 de junio de 2013
<i>Número de encuestas realizadas</i>	567 (103 finalizaron en la primera pregunta)
<i>Respuestas válidas</i>	464 (cuestionarios completos)

Por lo que respecta a los procedimientos y técnicas de análisis, para el análisis descriptivo de los datos se ha utilizado el programa estadístico IBM SPSS Statistics Version 21. El grueso del análisis estadístico se localiza en la evaluación de modelos de ecuaciones estructurales (*Structural Equation Modelling*, SEM). Los SEM se configuran como los únicos métodos de estadística multivariante que permiten testar relaciones causales entre variables dependientes e independientes simultáneamente (Martínez-López *et al.*, 2009). Para testar el modelo teórico propuesto, se ha escogido la técnica *Partial Least Squares* (PLS), dado que es especialmente apropiada para estudios exploratorios con fines predictivos, objetivos de la presente investigación (Hair *et al.*, 2011). Aunque PLS estima los parámetros de media y estructurales a la vez, los modelos de medida y estructural han de ser analizados e interpretados en dos fases. Esta secuencia asegura que se han obtenido medidas válidas y fiables de los constructos, antes de adoptar conclusiones sobre las relaciones entre los mismos (Barclay *et al.*, 1995). A continuación se exponen los resultados obtenidos de la aplicación de estas técnicas de análisis.

## 4. Resultados

Por lo que respecta a la caracterización demográfica de la muestra, se puede afirmar que es bastante similar en cuanto al sexo, con una participación de un 41,2% de hombres, y un 58,8% de mujeres. El grupo con mayor representatividad es el “de 26 a 35 años” (53,9%). Destacar que entre los 26 y 55 años suman el 85,6% de la muestra, lo cual responde aproximadamente al perfil clásico por edad del turista rural (Mediano, 2004; García, 2005; López y López, 2005).

Por lo que respecta al perfil de estos encuestados como turistas rurales, en cuanto a la frecuencia con la que realizan turismo rural, el 49,8% de los encuestados lo practican “una o dos veces al año”, es decir, la mitad de la muestra realiza turismo rural con regularidad, por lo que esta muestra se podría calificar como adecuada por su nivel de interés y conocimiento del turismo rural.

A continuación se exponen los resultados de la evaluación del modelo teórico.

### 4.1. Evaluación del modelo de medida

Según Hair *et al.* (2011) los modelos que utilizan constructos cuyos indicadores son reflectivos, como sucede con los constructos en causa, deben ser evaluados en cuanto a su fiabilidad y validez. La evaluación del modelo de medida involucra cuatro pasos: la evaluación individual de los indicadores, la consistencia interna del constructo, la validez convergente y la validez discriminante.

La evaluación individual de los indicadores requiere la observación de los *loadings* o correlaciones simples de cada indicador con su respectivo constructo. Para que el indicador sea aceptado en su constructo ha de poseer una carga igual o superior a 0,707 (Hair *et al.*, 2011; Barclay *et al.*, 1995), aunque esta regla no debe ser tan rígida en etapas iniciales de desarrollos de escalas o cuando éstas se aplican a diferentes contextos, de modo que *loadings* de 0,50 o 0,60 pueden ser aceptados (Barclay *et al.*, 1995). Se comprueba que todos los indicadores poseen valores superiores 0,707, a excepción de SGL6 (0,6351), LEA1 (0,5004) y LEA2 (0,5227), si bien se encuentran en el umbral crítico de tolerancia. La consistencia interna del constructo se verifica a través de la fiabilidad compuesta. Su valor ha de estar comprendido entre 0,60 y 0,70 en estudios exploratorios, y entre 0,70 y 0,90 para estadios más avanzados de investigación (Nunnally y Bernstein, 1994). Sus valores oscilan entre 0,85 y 0,94, siendo por tanto, adecuados. La evaluación de la validez convergente se estudia a través del *Average Variance Extracted* (AVE). Un AVE por encima de 0,5 indica un grado suficiente de validez convergente, lo que significa que más de la mitad de la varianza de la variable latente es explicada por sus indicadores (Hair *et al.*, 2011). Todos los valores del AVE para cada uno de los constructos se encuentran por encima del nivel crítico propuesto. La exposición de estos resultados se recoge en la TABLA 2.

TABLA 2  
Evaluación del modelo de medida

	Media	Desviación típica	Cargas	Estadístico $t^*$	Fiabilidad compuesta	AVE
<b>Satisfacción con los atributos del destino</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>0,9336</b>	<b>0,7786</b>
[SAD1] Encuentro todos los servicios necesarios para mi estancia.	5,08	1,238	0,8656	44,2419	-	-
[SAD2] Encuentro todo lo que necesito para tener una experiencia satisfactoria.	5,22	1,154	0,9145	62,8539	-	-
[SAD3] Consigo satisfacer mis motivaciones como turista rural.	5,29	1,172	0,8894	70,0724	-	-
[SAD4] Recibo los servicios que esperaba recibir.	5,22	1,143	0,8589	46,3574	-	-
<b>Satisfacción con las relaciones con los proveedores turísticos</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>0,9356</b>	<b>0,7842</b>
[SRP1] Tengo una buena relación con las empresas turísticas.	4,95	1,313	0,8834	52,5251	-	-
[SRP2] Las empresas turísticas tratan de forma especial a los clientes habituales.	4,88	1,323	0,8368	37,2391	-	-
[SRP3] Estoy satisfecho con mi relación con las empresas turísticas.	4,97	1,278	0,9136	82,2014	-	-
<b>Satisfacción con las relaciones con los residentes</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>0,9102</b>	<b>0,7718</b>
[SRR1] Recibo un trato amable como turista por parte de los residentes.	5,55	1,130	0,889	63,5387	-	-
[SRR2] Estoy satisfecho con la hospitalidad de sus gentes.	5,61	1,106	0,8989	66,8513	-	-
[SRR3] Estoy satisfecho con la disposición de los residentes a resolver problemas, incidencias o contratiempos que pueda tener.	5,38	1,197	0,8822	57,2349	-	-
[SRR4] Estoy satisfecho con la disposición de los residentes a ofrecer información.	5,49	1,172	0,8719	48,8258	-	-
<b>Satisfacción global</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>0,9403</b>	<b>0,7267</b>
[SGL1] He tenido una buena experiencia.	5,77	1,051	0,8726	59,5415	-	-
[SGL2] Hice una buena elección.	5,73	1,105	0,9114	90,0228	-	-
[SGL3] Encontré exactamente el destino de turismo rural que buscaba.	5,44	1,191	0,8799	49,9814	-	-
[SGL4] Me siento satisfecho con la decisión de haberlo visitado.	5,74	1,093	0,9008	69,2124	-	-
[SGL5] Mis expectativas se han cumplido en todo momento.	5,50	1,146	0,8825	52,541	-	-
[SGL6] Me siento próximo a un destino ideal.	4,88	1,348	0,6351	15,1272	-	-
<b>Lealtad</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>0,8536</b>	<b>0,5525</b>
[LEA1] Me considero un visitante fiel.	4,70	1,625	0,5004	8,6451	-	-
[LEA2] Lo volveré a visitar en mi próximo viaje de turismo rural.	4,58	1,736	0,5227	9,9678	-	-
[LEA3] Lo visitaré otra vez en el futuro.	5,43	1,390	0,8039	35,723	-	-
[LEA4] Lo recomendaré a las personas que me pidan consejo.	5,94	1,159	0,8983	84,4984	-	-
[LEA5] Contaré a otras personas cosas positivas de él.	5,99	1,112	0,8864	74,8433	-	-
*El valor crítico de <i>t-test</i> de dos colas es de 1,65 para un nivel de significación del 10%, 1,96 para un nivel de significación de 5% y 2,58 para un nivel de significación del 1% (Hair <i>et al.</i> , 2011).						

La evaluación de la validez discriminante se ha llevado a cabo a través de la demostración de que las correlaciones entre los constructos son más bajas que la raíz cuadrada del AVE (Barclay *et al.*, 1995).

En la TABLA 3 la raíz cuadrada del AVE se presenta en la diagonal y en negrita. A la luz de la citada tabla se comprueba que el modelo posee validez discriminante.

TABLA 3  
Análisis de la validez discriminante

	<i>Lealtad</i>	<i>Satisfacción con los atributos del destino</i>	<i>Satisfacción global</i>	<i>Satisfacción con las relaciones con los proveedores de servicios turísticos</i>	<i>Satisfacción con las relaciones con los residentes</i>
<i>Lealtad</i>	<b>0,7433</b>	0	0	0	0
<i>Satisfacción con los atributos del destino</i>	0,6373	<b>0,8824</b>	0	0	0
<i>Satisfacción global</i>	0,7143	0,7697	<b>0,8525</b>	0	0
<i>Satisfacción con las relaciones con los proveedores de servicios turísticos</i>	0,5667	0,6867	0,7402	<b>0,8856</b>	0
<i>Satisfacción con las relaciones con los residentes</i>	0,4498	0,6343	0,5677	0,5692	<b>0,8785</b>

Una vez desarrollados los análisis anteriores, puede asegurarse que el modelo de medida es fiable y válido, de modo que se puede continuar con la evaluación del modelo estructural.

#### 4.2. Evaluación del modelo estructural

Según Hair *et al.* (2011), los pasos para evaluar el modelo estructural serían los siguientes: análisis de  $R^2$  para cada constructo dependiente; análisis de la significación de los *paths*, a través del procedimiento *bootstrapping*; y análisis de la relevancia predictiva ( $Q^2$ ), a través del procedimiento *blindfolding*.

Dado que el objetivo del análisis de modelos de ecuaciones estructurales con PLS es la predicción, es necesario explicar la varianza de las variables latentes endógenas, es decir, el nivel de  $R^2$ . En los estudios de investigación de marketing un valor de  $R^2$  de 0,75, 0,5 o 0,25 para las variables latentes endógenas en el modelo estructural pueden ser descritos como sustancial, moderado o débil respectivamente (Hair *et al.*, 2011). El modelo posee una capacidad explicativa de sus variables latentes endógenas moderada-sustancial para la satisfacción global, puesto que viene a ser explicada en un 67,8% por sus predictores, mientras que la de la lealtad es moderada, dado que su varianza explicada asciende al 51,0% por el impacto directo de la satisfacción global. Es necesario explicar en qué medida las variables predictoras contribuyen a la varianza explicada de las variables endógenas, lo cual viene a ser representado por el coeficiente  $\beta$ , que recoge los coeficientes de los *paths* o pesos de regresión estandarizados de los mismos. La varianza explicada de un constructo endógeno por otra variable latente viene dado por el valor absoluto del resultado de multiplicar el coeficiente *path* ( $\beta$ ) por el correspondiente coeficiente de correlación entre ambas variables (Falk y Miller, 1992). El factor más influyente en la satisfacción global es la satisfacción con los atributos del destino, que consigue explicar el 36,4% de la misma, seguido de la satisfacción con las relaciones con los residentes con un 28,8%. Las relaciones con los proveedores de servicios turísticos apenas tienen influencia en la satisfacción global (2,6%). El test de Stone-Geisser ( $Q^2$ ) está destinado a estudiar la capacidad del modelo de predecir. El valor de  $Q^2$  se obtiene usando el procedimiento *blindfolding*, que es solamente aplicable a constructos latentes endógenos que posean modelo de medida reflectivo. Si  $Q^2$  para cierta variable latente endógena es mayor que cero, el constructo latente posee relevancia predictiva (Hair *et al.*, 2011). Los resultados de este test indican que el modelo posee capacidad de predecir en cuanto a la satisfacción global y la lealtad. La TABLA 4 detalla pormenorizadamente los resultados comentados.

TABLA 4

### Efectos en las variables endógenas

	$R^2$	$Q^2$	Efecto directo ( $\beta$ )	Correlación	Varianza explicada
<b>Satisfacción global</b>	<b>0,6784</b>	<b>0,4906</b>	-	-	-
H <sub>1</sub> : SAD → SATISGLO	-	-	0,4734	0,7697	36,4%
H <sub>2</sub> : SRP → SATISGLO	-	-	0,046	0,5677	2,6%
H <sub>3</sub> : SRR → SATISGLO	-	-	0,3889	0,7402	28,8%
<b>Lealtad</b>	<b>0,5102</b>	<b>0,2738</b>	-	-	-
H <sub>4</sub> : SATISGLO → LEA	-	-	0,7143	0,7143	51,0%

El análisis de la significación de los caminos o *paths*, a través del procedimiento *bootstrapping* revela que las hipótesis enumeradas son soportadas empíricamente a través de los resultados obtenidos para un nivel de confianza del 99%, a excepción de la H<sub>3</sub>, que no encuentra apoyo empírico.

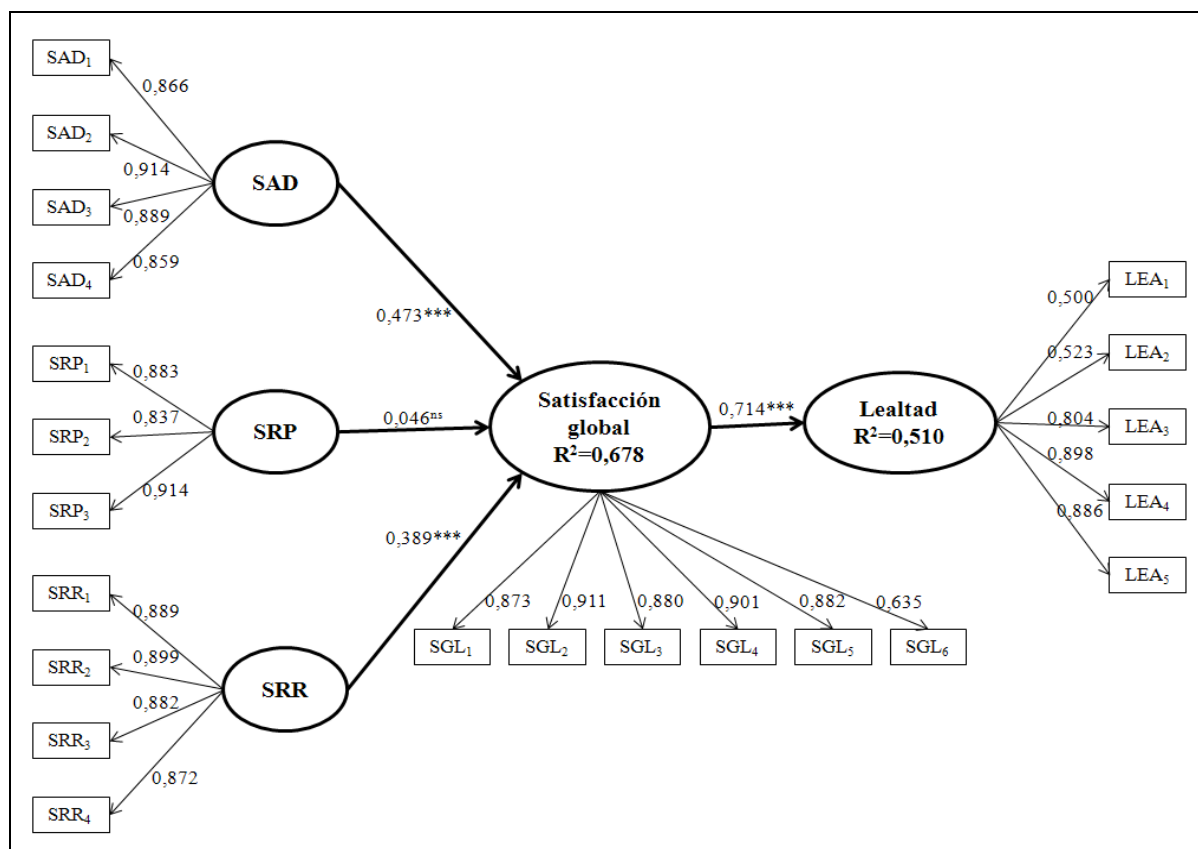
TABLA 5  
Resultados del modelo estructural

Hipótesis	Coefficientes path ( $\beta$ )	Estadístico <i>t</i> (bootstrap)
H <sub>1</sub> : SAD → SATISGLO	0,4734***	9,9005
H <sub>2</sub> : SRP → SATISGLO	0,046 <sup>ns</sup>	1,142
H <sub>3</sub> : SRR → SATISGLO	0,3889***	8,5855
H <sub>4</sub> : SATISGLO → LEA	0,7143***	24,8768

\*El valor crítico de *t-test* de dos colas es de 1,65 para un nivel de significación del 10%, 1,96 para un nivel de significación de 5% y 2,58 para un nivel de significación de 1%.

El resumen gráfico de la evaluación del modelo propuesto puede observarse en la FIGURA 2.

FIGURA 2  
Resultados gráficos de la evaluación del modelo



### 4.3. Discusión de los resultados

El modelo teórico propuesto para esta investigación ha encontrado un buen ajuste del modelo de medida y ha encontrado apoyo empírico para las hipótesis establecidas excepto para la hipótesis H<sub>2</sub>,

que vincula satisfacción con las relaciones de los proveedores de servicios turísticos y satisfacción global.

La satisfacción con los atributos del destino sería el factor que más contribuye a la satisfacción global (36,4%), seguida de la satisfacción con las relaciones con los residentes (28,8%). A pesar de que los estudios anteriores no introducen la satisfacción con las relaciones con los residentes como antecedente de la satisfacción global, o lo hacen de una forma muy parcializada, parece ser una acertada elección a la hora de explicar la satisfacción de los turistas con el destino de turismo rural, pues se constituye como un elemento interesante en la configuración de la satisfacción global. La satisfacción con las relaciones con los proveedores de servicios turísticos es el factor con menor relevancia en la construcción de esta variable (2,6%), mostrándose incluso como una relación no significativa. Entre las posibles razones que justificarían este resultado podría aludirse al hecho de que el turismo rural se instala en un entorno que desconoce el sector turístico como negocio, lo que deriva en problemas en su profesionalización (Millán, 1999), cuestión que pudiera ser percibida por los clientes. Sin embargo, en los últimos años se puede hablar de un sector especializado, más profesionalizado, que apuesta por altos parámetros de calidad y, que como apuntan Polo *et al.* (2012), las empresas de turismo rural tienden a enfocarse en la orientación al cliente, debido a su estrategia de especialización en un nicho de mercado. Sin embargo, lo que podría subyacer a la discusión de la hipótesis H<sub>2</sub> es una posible carencia en orientación a la relación. Por tanto, los aspectos relacionales en la satisfacción con el turismo rural tienen una repercusión parcial, en comparación con la especial influencia de la satisfacción con los atributos del destino. Su explicación probablemente se encuentre en el hecho de que la satisfacción con los atributos del destino es un constructo que frecuentemente ha avalado su importancia como antecedente de la satisfacción global, actuando como mediadora ante la lealtad hacia el destino o las intenciones de comportamiento hacia el mismo (Alegre y Cladera, 2006, 2009; Chi y Qu, 2008; Eusébio y Vieira, 2013; Maroofi y Dehghan, 2012).

Por lo que respecta a la relación entre satisfacción global y lealtad a los destinos de turismo rural, la hipótesis H<sub>4</sub> encuentra apoyo empírico en el contexto del turismo rural, siendo este resultado consistente con un amplio elenco de estudios (eg. Bigné *et al.*, 2005; Yoon y Uysal, 2005; Hernández *et al.*, 2006; Matzler *et al.*, 2007; Chi y Qu, 2008; Rodríguez del Bosque y San Martín, 2008; Mechinda *et al.*, 2009, Williams y Soutar, 2009; Rivera y Croes, 2010; Wang y Hsu, 2010; Yüksel *et al.*, 2010; Žabkar *et al.*, 2010; Chen y Tsai, 2012; Forgas *et al.*, 2012; Kim y Brown, 2012; Kim *et al.*, 2012; Maroofi y Dehghan, 2012; Prayag y Ryan, 2012). Los resultados obtenidos dan soporte a la estructura del modelo teórico que se ha presentado donde las tres dimensiones propuestas de la satisfacción en el ámbito de los destinos de turismo rural consiguen explicar el 67,8% de la variación de la satisfacción global, mientras que ésta consigue explicar el 51,0% de la varianza de la lealtad, arrojando resultados moderados-sustanciales de la capacidad explicativa de este modelo que relaciona la satisfacción y la lealtad en el contexto del turismo rural.

## 5. Conclusiones

El turismo rural como fenómeno turístico ha sido muy estudiado tanto a nivel nacional como internacional, fruto del fuerte desarrollo que ha tenido como es el caso de países como España, sin embargo, el sector se enfrenta a diversos desafíos que es necesario afrontar para su mejor planificación, gestión y comercialización de destinos y empresas de turismo rural. Resulta relevante estudiar cómo la satisfacción con los destinos de turismo rural ejerce influencia sobre la lealtad hacia éstos, debido a la intención de estos turistas de volver o recomendar el destino, lo que permite rentabilizar el valor que éstos ofrecen a lo largo del tiempo. Además, parece necesario estudiar la influencia que ejercen los elementos del destino en la satisfacción con el mismo, sino también las posibles relaciones que pueden establecerse durante la visita con los proveedores de servicios turísticos y con los propios residentes, lo que se hace aún más palpable en estos destinos, donde el trato directo del turista con estos agentes es muy frecuente y característico. Por tanto, se ha planteado un modelo teórico que introduce la satisfacción con los atributos del destino, la satisfacción con las relaciones con los proveedores de servicios turísticos y la satisfacción con las relaciones con los residentes del destino como predictores de la satisfacción global, y ésta como antecesora de la lealtad.

Tras la evaluación del modelo a través de la técnica PLS, puede afirmarse que el modelo posee una alta capacidad explicativa de los constructos endógenos satisfacción global y lealtad. Se destaca el importante papel de la satisfacción con los atributos del destino como principal predictor de la satisfacción global, mientras que la satisfacción con las relaciones con los residentes también posee un papel destacado, no siendo significativo el papel de la satisfacción con las relaciones con los proveedores. Es de destacar que las relaciones que se establecen con los residentes en los destinos de turismo rural tienen una importancia relevante en la satisfacción global del turista con el destino, importancia que frecuentemente queda diluida en los constructos de satisfacción con los atributos del destino. La relación entre la satisfacción global y la lealtad se hace patente en este estudio en el ámbito del turismo rural.

Por lo que respecta a las implicaciones prácticas de estos resultados, puede afirmarse que en lo referente a la satisfacción con los atributos del destino los gestores de destinos de turismo rural han de tener presente una fuerte orientación al mercado, para ofrecer a los clientes unos servicios que conformen una experiencia satisfactoria dando respuesta a las necesidades y motivaciones manifestadas por los clientes. Si bien la satisfacción con los atributos del destino se centra en la orientación al cliente, la satisfacción con las relaciones con los proveedores de servicios turísticos se centraría en una fuerte orientación a la relación por parte de los empresarios de turismo rural. Éstos deberían preocuparse por incorporar una fuerte orientación a la relación en sus actividades, promoviendo aspectos como el trato especial a clientes habituales. Según Yen *et al.* (2009), el trato preferencial, las comunicaciones personalizadas, el fomento de las habilidades de comunicación interpersonal y premiar a los clientes por un comportamiento relacional pueden incrementar la posibilidad de que los visitantes consigan una evaluación positiva del proveedor de servicios turísticos. Por lo que respecta a la satisfacción con las relaciones con los residentes, ésta se revela como un factor importante y valorado por los turistas rurales, de modo que los gestores han de involucrar a los residentes en los programas de desarrollo turístico. Contar con la colaboración de los residentes es fundamental para el éxito de los destinos, puesto que forman parte del propio producto turístico.

Por tanto, los programas de desarrollo turístico en el ámbito del turismo rural, su planificación y elaboración de productos han de contar no sólo con un ente que coordine las acciones a nivel de destino y estrategias de marketing, sino que involucre la preocupación por mantener la autenticidad del entorno y atributos físicos propios del medio rural, a los empresarios y a los residentes, conformado así una unión de esfuerzos que deberían desembocar en una alta satisfacción global para el turista rural en estos destinos, con las repercusiones que ello tiene en la lealtad y en el comportamiento de revisita y recomendación. Según Eusébio y Vieira (2013), la satisfacción y la lealtad son vitales para mantener la ventaja competitiva del destino, lo que redundará en estabilidad económica y empleo para la comunidad local.

Aunque se ha querido hacer un estudio centrado únicamente en la relación entre satisfacción y lealtad en el turismo rural, las limitaciones más importantes de este trabajo podrían proceder del hecho de no haber tenido en cuenta otras variables de interés y que se estiman como relevantes en el ámbito del turismo rural como las emociones (eg. Petrick, 2004; Yüksel y Yüksel, 2007; Rodríguez del Bosque y San Martín, 2008), la autenticidad (eg. Kolar y Žabkar, 2010; Ramkissoon y Uysal, 2011; Zhou *et al.*, 2013), la familiaridad (eg. Mechinda *et al.*, 2009), la búsqueda de la novedad (eg. Jang y Feng, 2007; Bigné *et al.*, 2009; Assaker *et al.*, 2011) o la autenticidad (Ramkissoon y Uysal, 2011; Cho, 2012; Kolar y Žabkar, 2010; Zhou *et al.*, 2013). En definitiva se trata de seguir profundizando en el conocimiento de los factores que generan satisfacción y lealtad hacia los destinos de turismo rural, por las importantes repercusiones socioeconómicas que el turismo genera en estas áreas.

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# THE EFFECTS OF ASSURANCE ON TRUST ANTECEDENTS IN TOURISM PRODUCT AND SERVICE ONLINE PURCHASE INTENTION

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper proposes a model of the formation of tourism product and service online purchase intention based on the antecedents of perceived privacy and security from the model proposed by Ray et al. (2011), extended to third-party assurance seals and related constructs. A total of 451 individuals participated in an experiment in which they were instructed to visit tourism product and service websites for shopping and compare them. The results indicate that perceived trust depends on perceived information quality and perceived security. The main predictors of consumers' perceived privacy and security are, respectively: Internet privacy concern, and vendor reputation.*

## Keywords:

E-commerce; trust; assurance, concerns privacy; security; online purchase intention

## 1. Introduction

The number of Internet users has experienced a substantial increase but many users do not make purchases online because they are reluctant to provide personal information and/or transactional information for electronic payment online because they do not trust e-commerce (Kim, Ferrin, and Rao, 2008a; Kim et al., 2011). A study of e-commerce showed that more than 87% of users were concerned about security and privacy protection in online shopping (Ray, Ow, and Kim, 2011). In addition, the lack of perceived privacy and security protection is a major reason why many consumers choose not to shop online; therefore, trust plays a relevant role in online transactions (Kim et al., 2011; Wu and Chang, 2006). Trust has been proved in the tourism context to be one of the most relevant variables that makes e-business successful in the accommodation industry, specifically hotels and resorts (Fam, Foscht, and Collins, 2004) and the air travel industry, namely low-cost carriers (LCCs) (Escobar-Rodríguez and Carvajal-Trujillo, 2014; Kim et al., 2009, 2011). In this study, we analyze the antecedents of perceived security and privacy, extending the model proposed by Ray et al. (2011) by adding a new factor, consumers' perception of third-party assurance seals, and two constructs related to it, the disposition to third-party certification and the understanding of third-party seals. In addition, we examine the influence of trust on perceived value and the influence of these two factors on purchase intention (Kim, Xu, and Gupta, 2012). We extend the antecedents of perceived privacy and security by including, according to signaling theory, third-party assurance seals and two personal predispositions related to them, the disposition to third-party certification and the understanding of third-party seals. We have extended the model, including third-party assurance seals and the related constructs, because there are very few studies examining the role of third-party mechanisms in helping to increase trust in e-commerce, unlike third-party certification mechanisms as they exist in offline settings (Özpolat et al., 2013). Among the few studies addressing that issue, Lee and Cranage (2011) concluded that the use of privacy seals, such as TRUSTe, increases reliability in privacy protection and information disclosure.. Although some studies have examined consumers' perceived value and purchase intentions (Llach et al., 2013) and trust and purchase intentions (Kim et al., 2011), no one has examined the effect of perceived trust on perceived value in the field of e-commerce and tourism. Furthermore, research regarding online consumers' perceived trust in tourism products and services (Kim et al., 2011) has been very scarce. With this in mind, this study aims 1) to examine the influence of perceived trust and perceived value on the intention to use e-commerce websites in shopping for tourism products and services; 2) to assess the effect of the factors information quality, perceived security, and perceived privacy on consumer trust in the website; and 3) to analyze the influence of privacy and security signals and personal predispositions of consumers on the perceived privacy and perceived security.

## 2. Review of the related literature and theoretical background

### 2.1. *Perceived trust, perceived privacy, perceived security, information quality, and their relationships*

Trust in websites plays an important role in e-commerce because consumers are unlikely to shop online if they do not trust the online seller website on which they are shopping (Gefen, 2002; Jarvenpaa et al., 1999; Kim et al., 2008a, 2011). Hence, it is relevant for online sellers to establish trusted transaction processes so that consumers place trust in them and consequently form an online purchase intention (Grabosky, 2001). In the field of e-commerce, Pavlou (2003) defined trust as the belief that renders consumers vulnerable to the good faith of online sellers after learning of their characteristics (Liao et al., 2006). Kim et al. (2008a) defined information quality as the consumers' general perception of how complete and accurate the information on the website is, concerning both the services offered and the procedure for carrying out the online purchase transaction. Perceived security can be defined as the perception by consumers that the online seller has included the antecedents of security, such as verification, authentication, encryption, protection, and non-repudiation (Kim et al., 2008a). Perceived privacy protection can be conceptualized as the probability that the online seller will assure that the confidential information on the consumer acquired during the online transaction is protected against

unauthorized disclosure or use (Kim et al., 2008a). Based on the previous evidence, we formulate the following hypotheses:

H01. The consumers' perception of the quality of website information has a positive effect on trust.

H02. The consumers' perception of website security protection has a positive effect on trust.

H03. The consumers' perception of website protection of privacy has a positive influence on trust.

## ***2.2. Antecedents of perceived privacy and perceived security***

Although Ray et al. (2011) examined the factors influencing perceived privacy and perceived security, these factors have not been analyzed in the field of tourism. We decided to explore the antecedents of perceived privacy and perceived security because of their great influence on trust in the online seller website (Kim et al., 2009). Accordingly, we extend the model proposed by Ray et al. (2011) by incorporating third-party assurance seals and a couple of related constructs. Ray et al. (2011) differentiated antecedents of privacy and security in response to the five sources that confer trust: 1) consumers' personality; 2) knowledge based on consumers' prior experiences; 3) institutional assurances from the online seller; 4) calculative assurances from the online seller; and 5) cognitive assurances from third parties (Gefen et al., 2003; Kim and Benbasat, 2003). These five sources are grouped into two broad components: first, the consumers' individual predispositions regarding privacy and security signals; and second, privacy and security signals according to signaling theory (Figure 1; Table 1).

The first component, consumers' personal predispositions, refers to the factors that might predispose users to perceive privacy and security measures on the website of the online seller. Within the first component, we added to the two variables considered by Ray et al. (2011), Internet privacy and security concerns and familiarity with the website, two others, disposition to third-party certification and understanding of third-party assurance seals. The factors Internet privacy concerns and disposition to third-party certification represent consumers' personality-based trust sources because they refer to consumers' predisposition to trust others and believe in their good intentions (Gefen et al., 2003; Ray et al., 2011). On the other hand, familiarity with the website and understanding of third-party assurance seals are consumers' knowledge-based trust sources (Table 1), the former because consumers' familiarity with the seller website reduces uncertainty (Gefen et al., 2003; Kim et al., 2008a) and the latter because consumers' understanding of seals displayed on the seller's website increases their trust. Internet privacy concerns refer to the propensity to be generally concerned about threats to personal information submitted over the Internet (Dinev and Hart, 2006; Malhotra et al., 2004; Ray et al., 2011; Sheehan and Hoy, 2000; Smith et al., 1996). Familiarity with the website includes the predisposition of consumers to trust online sellers based on their prior knowledge of them (Ray et al., 2011).

The second component proposed by Ray et al. (2011), security/privacy signals, is based on signaling theory. Within this component, they include the factors used by online sellers to increase trust by providing institutional, calculative, and cognitive assurances (Gefen et al., 2003; Ray et al., 2011) (Table 1). These signals cannot directly influence the perceptions of consumers because the quality of security and privacy is difficult for consumers to appreciate (Ray et al., 2011). Ray et al. (2011) included three signals from online sellers that could affect perceived privacy and security: privacy and security policies, perceived website investment, and the reputation of the online seller. In our model, we add a fourth signal, third-party assurance seals. Privacy and security policies are statements provided by online sellers that supply argumentation and claim that privacy and security are assured (Kim and Bembasat, 2003; Lowry et al., 2011; Ray et al., 2011). Schlosser et al. (2006) refer to the website investment made by the online seller in terms of the effort, time, and money spent on developing the website. This investment signals the importance of security and privacy protection for the online seller because the physical appearance of products has always been a signal of quality (Dawar and Parker, 1994; Ray et al., 2011). Privacy and security policies as website investments are

first-hand quality information sources about the online seller website, provided directly by the online seller (Özpolat et al., 2013). Regarding the reputation of the online seller, Ray et al. (2011) considered that second-party information on sellers is a signal of quality, indicating privacy and security protection to consumers (Duncan and Moriarty, 1998; Gefen et al., 2003). The reputation of the online seller provides quality information on the online seller’s website based on the experience of previous shoppers, that is, a second-party information source (Özpolat et al., 2013).

In accordance with the constructs and relationships of the model proposed by Ray et al. (2011), as well as the previous evidence, we suggest the following hypotheses regarding consumers’ perceived privacy and security:

H04: The Internet privacy concern negatively influences the consumers’ perception of website security protection.

H05: The Internet privacy concern negatively influences the consumers’ perception of website privacy protection.

H06: Familiarity with the online seller’s website positively influences the consumers’ perception of website security protection.

H07: Familiarity with the online seller’s website positively influences the consumers’ perception of website privacy protection.

H08: Privacy and security policies positively influence the consumers’ perception of website security protection.

H09: Privacy and security policies positively influence the consumers’ perception of website privacy protection.

H10: Perceived website investments positively influence the consumers’ perception of website security protection.

H11: Perceived website investments positively influence the consumers’ perception of website privacy protection.

H12: The online seller’s reputation positively influences the consumers’ perception of website security protection.

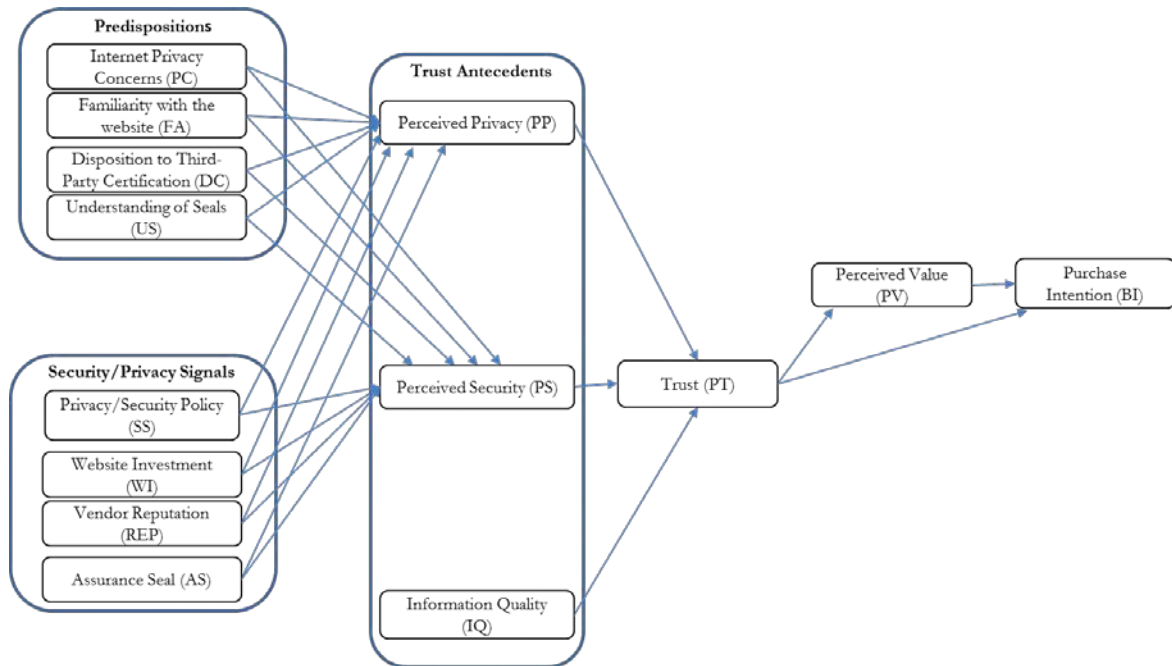
H13: The online seller’s reputation positively influences the consumers’ perception of website privacy protection.

TABLE 1  
**Antecedents of consumers’ perceived privacy and security**

	<b>Factors</b>	<b>Source of trust</b>	<b>Origin</b>
<b>Predispositions</b>	Internet privacy concern	Personality	NA
	Familiarity with the website	Knowledge	NA
	Disposition to third-party certification	Personality	NA
	Understanding of third-party assurance seals	Knowledge	NA
<b>Security signals</b>	Privacy and security policies	Institution	First-party
	Website investment	Calculative	First-party
	Vendor reputation	Cognitive	Second-party
	Third-party assurance seals	Institution	Third-party

NA = not available

FIGURE 1  
**Proposed model**



### 2.2.1. Third-party assurance seals

Third-party assurance seals (e.g., TRUSTe, VeriSign, BBBOnline) provide assurance to consumers that a website follows operating practices, the payments are secure, and/or the privacy policy indicates what it can and cannot do with personal data collected online (Kim et al., 2004, 2008a; Shapiro, 1987). The companies that provide assurance seals examine the website's security, privacy, and service quality and if it meets a number of quality standards it is allowed to display the assurance seal (Özpolat et al., 2013). Third-party seals are sources of trust based on institutional assurances (McKnight and Chervany, 2001) (Table 1) and they might increase consumers' perceived security and privacy (Jiang et al., 2008; Kimery and McCord, 2002).

A number of studies have analyzed the influence of third-party assurance seals on trust but there is a lack of consensus (Özpolat et al., 2013). If consumers perceive that the online seller provides security and privacy protection in online transactions by means of signals such as third-party assurance seals, their perceived uncertainty and online shopping risk should tend to be reduced (Kim and Benbasat, 2003; Wu et al., 2010). In fact, seals should contribute to increasing consumers' privacy protection (Hoffman et al., 1999) and/or security protection (Udo, 2001). Thus, if third-party assurance seals are cues for security and privacy protection on the website of online sellers, it can be hypothesized that displaying assurance seals will positively influence consumers' perception of website privacy and security protection. Thus, this study suggests the following research hypotheses:

H14: The presence of a third-party assurance seal positively influences the consumers' perception of website privacy protection.

H15: The presence of a third-party assurance seal positively influences the consumers' perception of website security protection.

### 2.2.2. Disposition toward third-party certificates

With this construct, we refer to the disposition to trust third-party certification, such as seals. The influence of the disposition to trust on trust has been studied in the literature in general (Kim et al., 2008a; Kimery and McCord, 2002; Mayer et al., 1995; Wu et al., 2010). Jiang et al. (2008) proposed the influence of the disposition to trust third-party certification on the perception of third-party certification identifying logos and the influence of this factor on online seller trust. The disposition to trust third-party certification is defined as the tendency to depend on third parties for trustworthy information during online transactions (Jiang et al., 2008). In



this study, it is hypothesized that security and privacy protection will be related to the disposition to third-party certification in tourism e-commerce products, as follows:

H16: Consumers' disposition to third-party certification positively affects their perception of website security protection.

H17: Consumers' disposition to third-party certification positively affects their perception of website privacy protection.

### ***2.2.3. Understanding of third-party assurance seals***

The understanding of third-party assurance seals indicates that the consumer knows that his/her data are protected (Lowry et al., 2011). Online sellers display third-party assurance seals on their websites to increase consumers' perception of website security and privacy protection; however, if the consumers do not understand them, they are useless. This factor was analyzed by Lowry et al. (2011), who also considered that the use of a third-party privacy assurance seal will not be effective if the consumers do not understand them. In accordance with that, we propose the following research hypotheses:

H18: Consumers' understanding of third-party assurance seals positively influences their perception of website security protection.

H19: Consumers' understanding of third-party assurance seals positively influences their perception of website privacy protection.

### ***2.3. Perceived value, perceived trust, purchase intention, and their relationships***

Based on prospect theory (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979; Wang and Wang, 2010), in this research, we assume that an overall judgment of value influences the online purchase intention. In the e-commerce context, perceived value can be defined as the consumer's assessment of benefits against costs when shopping with an online seller (Zeithaml, 1988). Consequently, the perceived value from a transaction with an online seller is a net benefit (Kim et al., 2012; Seddon, 1997). Obviously, consumers wish to shop for products with the vendors that offer maximal value (Kim et al., 2012; Wang and Wang, 2010; Zeithaml, 1988). In the e-commerce context, studies have confirmed the relationship between perceived value and purchase intention (Chang and Wang, 2011; Fuentes-Blasco et al., 2010; Kim et al., 2012; Wu et al., 2014). Thus, this study proposes the following hypothesis regarding tourism product and service shopping online:

H20: Perceived value on a website positively influences the online purchase intention.

According to Kim et al. (2012), if consumers perceive trust in an online seller, they expend less effort on searching for information about the online seller and on executing the online transaction. Then, perceived trust can decrease the transaction's non-monetary cost, which incorporates variables such as the time and effort required to choose an online seller (Chiles and McMackin, 1996) and the perceived risk of online shopping (Jarvenpaa et al., 2000; Kim et al., 2012). As perceived trust reduces the non-monetary cost, it raises the perceived value when shopping online on a seller website (Kim et al., 2012). Only Kim et al. (2012), in the e-commerce context, have examined the influence of perceived trust on perceived value and they confirmed this influence. In our research, we hypothesize the influence of perceived trust on perceived value as follows:

H21: Trust in an online seller positively affects the perceived value for customers.

In previous studies, the influence of trust on the intention to purchase online has been confirmed (Kim et al., 2008a, 2012; Wen, 2009). It has also been analyzed in the field of tourism and e-commerce (Kim et al., 2009, 2011). Thus, we hypothesize:

H22: Trust positively affects the online purchase intention.

## **3. Methodology**

### ***3.1. Measurements***

A set of measurement items was adapted to the specific context of this research and a total of 55 items was obtained. In Table 3, we present the complete list of items that were measured by means of multi-item scales ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 7 (“strongly agree”) for the constructs taken into account in this research. It can be seen that the third-party assurance seal construct is composed of four items (Cyr, 2013; Kim et al., 2008a). The purchase intention and perceived value constructs are measured by four items each (Kim et al., 2012). The disposition to third-party certification construct comprises three items (Jiang et al., 2008), and the familiarity with the website construct (Chiu et al., 2012) also comprises three items. The Internet privacy concerns, privacy and security policy, website investment, and vendor reputation constructs are composed of three items each (Ray et al., 2011). The information quality construct consists of six items (Kuan et al., 2008). The perceived security and perceived privacy constructs are composed of five and six items, respectively (Kim et al., 2008a) and the consumer trust construct is measured by three items (Kim et al., 2011). The understanding of seals construct is measured by five items (Lowry et al., 2011).

The items in the questionnaire were validated based on the opinions of a focus group of e-commerce and e-tourism academics and professionals, who were asked whether the items were appropriate for the purpose of evaluating e-commerce and trust. Some modifications were made to the items to make the meanings clearer, based on the focus group’s opinions. A pre-test was carried out on 40 individuals of different ages and genders selected by quota and convenience sampling, who had purchased tourism products and services on a website in the last year. This ensured that those individuals who had not previously purchased tourism products and services in the last year were dropped from the pre-test. Based on the feedback of this pre-test, only minor modifications were made to the wording of some items to increase the clarity further. A final questionnaire was realized and administered to 30 individuals of different genders and ages selected by quota and convenience sampling, who had purchased tourism products and services on a website in the last year. Thus, the clarity of the questionnaire was confirmed, and no changes were made to the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was originally drafted in English, but it was intended for use in Spanish for consumers from Spain who had experience of purchasing tourism products on websites. Therefore, the English questionnaire was translated into Spanish by a professional native English translator and researchers, who independently translated the English questionnaire into Spanish. After a careful analysis of the differences between these independently translated questionnaires in Spanish, a definitive version of the Spanish questionnaire was agreed. This final version was then translated back into English by another native English professional translator to ensure consistency between the English and the Spanish version of the questionnaire (Brislin, 1970).

### ***3.2. Sample and data collection***

This study used quota and convenience sampling. The convenience sampling method was utilized because the population size is unknown for this study (San Martín and Herrero, 2012). The quota sampling method was employed to match the target population structure in both age and gender (Kim et al., 2009, 2011; San Martín and Herrero, 2012). To calculate the number of participants that would be sufficient in each age and gender category, population data were obtained from the “15th Internet users survey” (AIMC, 2013), a study carried out by the “Asociación para la Investigación de Medios de Comunicación” (Table 2). Afterwards, to combine the diverse quotas, convenience sampling was carried out (San Martín and Herrero, 2012).

The participants were recruited by email among the community of our university. We e-mailed an invitation to participate in our research to current students, alumni, faculty, and staff and they were also asked to forward the invitation to their friends and colleagues. An appointment for the computer lab was given to the participants who answered our email. Additionally, we invited people randomly selected outside the university to participate. Those who agreed to participate were given a pen drive with the university seal. In the computer room, the participants were

instructed to visit at least two or three tourism product and service websites for shopping and compare them with a tourism product and service of their choice. We gave them this instruction because, according to Ahuja et al. (2003) and Kim et al. (2008a), individuals visit one to three websites prior to their online purchase. The tourism products and services included hotel bookings, airlines tickets, and transportation reservations. Cruise purchases were excluded (Kim et al., 2011). The participants were instructed to go through the online purchasing process up to the clicking of the purchase button (this step was excluded) (Kim et al., 2008a). After surfing the websites, they were randomly assigned to one of two questionnaires: one questionnaire asked items about the website from which the participant was less inclined to make a purchase; the other questionnaire asked the same items but about the website from which the user was more inclined to make a purchase (Kim et al., 2008a). Accordingly, we could ensure that the purchase intention construct had adequate variance, because we had data to predict both purchases and non-purchases (Kim et al., 2008a). We checked that all the participants followed the instructions given in the computer room with respect to viewing the websites and clicking each button up to the purchase button (Hu et al., 2010). We excluded questionnaires filled out in less than eight minutes because we felt it was not possible considering the length of the questionnaire (Ray et al., 2011).

The data collection was conducted from November 2013 to January 2014 within a computer room under the supervision of two members of the research team and one graduate student. A total of 451 usable questionnaires were obtained. The characteristics of the participants are very similar to those of the population (Table 2).

TABLE 2  
Quota sampling method in terms of gender and age

		Sampling (n= 451)	
		Population <sup>a</sup> (%)	Sample (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	74.1	67.8
	Female	25.7	32.2
	No answer	0.2	0
	Total	100	100
<b>Age in years</b>	<20	3.4	5.8
	20-24	9.2	13.7
	25-34	28.5	31.7
	35-44	31.4	36.4
	45-54	16.6	8,9
	55-64	6.3	3.1
	≥65	1.7	0.4
	No answer	3.0	0
	Total	100	100

<sup>a</sup>AIMC (2013)

TABLE 3  
Gender and age characteristics of the respondents

	Characteristics	Frequency	%
<b>Gender</b>	Male	306	67.85
	Female	145	32.15
	Total	451	
<b>Age</b>	<20	26	5.77
	20-24	62	13.75
	25-34	143	31.71
	35-44	164	36.36
	45-54	40	8,87
	55-64	14	3.10
	≥65	2	0.44
	Total	451	100

#### 4. Data analysis and results

A regression analysis of latent variables is used in this study, based on the partial least squares (PLS) optimization technique, to elaborate a model that represents the relationships between the

fourteen proposed constructs measured by many items. The PLS is a multivariate technique to test structural models (Wold, 1985), which estimates the model parameters that minimize the residual variance of the whole model's dependent variables (Hsu et al., 2006), does not require any parametric conditions (Chin, 1998), and is recommended for small samples (Hulland, 1999).

The data analysis took place through a two-stage methodology, in which the first stage was to develop and evaluate the measurement model and the stage second was to develop the full structural equation model (Gerbing and Anderson, 1988).

#### 4.1. Measurement model evaluation

The first step involved establishing the convergent and discriminate validity of the constructs and the individual reliability for each item.

The convergent validity of each construct is acceptable for a loading higher than 0.505 (Falk and Miller, 1992). The individual reliability for each item is given by loadings or correlations between the item and the construct. Table 4 indicates the loadings for each item and the t-values that are significant. They all comply with the established conditions.

To measure the internal coherence of all the indicators in relation to the constructs, the reliability was calculated, and to verify the reliability of the indicators, Dillon–Goldstein's rho, also referred to as the composite reliability coefficient (Werts et al., 1974), and the Cronbach coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1970) were utilized, which range from 0 (no similarities) to 1 (maximum similarities). Both parameters are taken into account, as the first concerns the respective indicators while the second considers the contribution made by each indicator to be similar. Table 5 represents the values of each coefficient. The composite reliabilities are over the minimum acceptable limit of 0.70 (Gefen et al., 2000; Nunnally, 1978). The Cronbach coefficient alpha levels are also shown in Table 5. They are all above 0.70, which is recommended for confirmatory research (Churchill, 1979).

TABLE 4  
Items loading

Scale items	Loadings	t-values <sup>a</sup>
AS1. The third-party assurance seals on this website make me feel more comfortable.	0.892	124.72
AS2. The third-party assurance seals on this website make me feel more secure in terms of privacy.	0.928	146.47
AS3. Third-party assurance seals on this website make me feel safer in terms of the transaction.	0.934	175.74
AS4. The third party assurance seals on this website make me feel this website is secure.	0.931	200.02
BI1. The probability that I would consider to purchase a tourism product from this website is high.	0.904	122.57
BI2. If I were to purchase a tourism product, I would consider purchasing it from this website.	0.929	164.66
BI3. The likelihood of my purchasing a tourism product from this website is high.	0.944	233.45
BI4. My willingness to purchase a tourism product from this website is high.	0.941	240.89
DC1. I specifically look for third-party certification symbols.	0.627	9.19
DC2. I generally have faith in third-party certification.	0.944	135.21
DC3. I generally trust third parties.	0.944	46.49
FA1. I am familiar with this tourism product shopping website.	0.953	239.80
FA2. I am familiar with the processes of purchasing products from this tourism product shopping website.	0.959	266.69
FA3. I am familiar with searching for products at this tourism product shopping website.	0.952	261.99
IQ1. The tourism product website provides accurate information about the tourism product that I want to purchase.	0.848	81.94
IQ2. The tourism product website provides sufficient information when I try to make a transaction.	0.867	87.98
IQ3. The tourism product website provides enough depth of information about its products.	0.878	104.96
IQ4. The information provided by tourism product website is helpful to me in	0.868	106.68

purchasing tourism products.		
IQ5. The information in the tourism product website is clear for me to make a purchase.	0.876	122.30
IQ6. The tourism product website provides up-to-date information.	0.834	78.11
PC1. Compared with other subjects on my mind, online privacy/security is very important.	0.862	23.71
PC2. I am concerned about threats to online privacy/security today.	0.861	51.68
PC3. The greater my interest to obtain a certain service or product from the Internet, the more I tend to suppress my privacy/security concerns.	0.575	9.60
PP1. I am concerned that tourism product website collects too much personal information from me.	0.819	60.62
PP2. I am concerned that the tourism product website will use my personal information for other purposes without my authorization.	0.921	198.85
PP3. I am concerned the tourism product website will share my personal information with other entities without my authorization.	0.912	167.73
PP4. I am concerned that unauthorized persons (i.e. hackers) have access to my personal information.	0.820	54.00
PP5. I am concerned about the privacy of my personal information during a transaction.	0.815	47.39
PP6. I am concerned that the tourism product website will sell my personal information to others without my permission.	0.848	60.08
PS1. The tourism product website implements security measures to protect users.	0.813	82.23
PS2. The tourism product website usually ensures that transactional information is protected from accidentally being altered or destroyed during a transmission on the Internet.	0.787	59.16
PS3. I feel secure about the electronic payment system of the tourism product website.	0.883	129.22
PS4. I am willing to use my credit card on this website to make a purchase.	0.873	113.34
PS5. I feel safe in making transactions on this website.	0.880	114.31
PT1. This tourism product website has integrity.	0.914	154.70
PT2. This tourism product website is reliable.	0.958	330.96
PT3. This tourism product website is trustworthy.	0.937	170.82
PV1. Considering the money I pay to purchase tourism products on this website, online shopping here is a good deal.	0.859	96.99
PV2. Considering the effort I make in shopping on this website, online shopping here is worthwhile.	0.925	173.05
PV3. Considering the risk involved in shopping on this website, online shopping here is of value.	0.898	140.36
PV4. Overall, online shopping on this website delivers me good value.	0.920	209.63
REP1. This company is well known.	0.827	59.92
REP2. This company has a good reputation.	0.939	239.25
REP3. This company has a good reputation in its market.	0.921	142.04
SS1. The availability of a privacy or a security statement was easily seen on the tourism product website.	0.843	77.52
SS2. This tourism product website has a policy on privacy or security.	0.877	122.48
SS3. I am aware of the details of this tourism product website's privacy or security policy.	0.781	47.780
US1. Website assurance seals are designed to increase the privacy/security a customer has for a website.	0.717	31.15
US2. Websites must state how they collect and share data in order to be awarded a website assurance seal.	0.737	27.05
US3. Third-party organizations assess the business practices of a website before awarding a seal.	0.784	49.24
US4. You can click on the seal to verify that the website is entitled to display the seal.	0.740	27.84
US5. A website must display a data privacy and security statement in order to get a seal	0.701	29.08
WI1. A lot of time seems to have been invested in developing this website.	0.907	119.82
WI2. A lot of effort seems to have been invested in developing this website.	0.936	182.14
WI3. A lot of money seems to have been invested in developing this website.	0.898	126.55

<sup>a</sup>All tests were significant at p-value <0.001

Convergent validity indicates the common variance between the indicators and their construct. This validity is measured by the average variance extracted (AVE), and the acceptable threshold should be higher than 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Table 5 represents the AVE scores

achieved for each of the fourteen constructs employed, which in all cases surpasses the minimum desirable value.

TABLE 5.  
Composite reliability, AVE and Cronbach alpha coefficient

Construct	Composite reliability	AVE	Cronbach alpha
Assurance seal (AS)	0.957	0.849	0.941
Purchase intention (BI)	0.9621	0.864	0.947
Disposition to third-party certification (DC)	0.885	0.726	0.824
Familiarity with website (FA)	0.969	0.911	0.951
Information quality (IQ)	0.945	0.743	0.931
Internet privacy concerns (PC)	0.834	0.605	0.729
Perceived privacy (PP)	0.943	0.734	0.927
Perceived security (PS)	0.927	0.719	0.902
Trust (PT)	0.955	0.877	0.930
Perceived value (PV)	0.945	0.812	0.922
Vendor reputation (REP)	0.925	0.804	0.877
Privacy/security statement (SS)	0.873	0.697	0.784
Understanding of privacy seals (US)	0.855	0.542	0.796
Web site investment (WI)	0.938	0.835	0.901

In order to confirm the discriminant validity among the constructs, the AVE square root was superior to the correlation between the constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Following the establishment of the individual reliability for each item and the convergent and discriminant validity of the constructs, the structural model was examined.

#### 4.2. Structural model

A PLS analysis was performed to test H1 through H22. The regression parameters are based on bootstrapping of 100 samples and not on a sample estimator. This facilitates the computation of the t-student test for each hypothesis and the generalization of the results (Lévy et al., 2009). The results represented in Table 6 indicate the relationship between the different constructs. All the r-squares are higher than 0.10, which indicates that the predictive capability of the model is satisfactory (Falk and Miller, 1992).

TABLE 6  
Summary of test results for the structural model

Hypothesis	Path	Standardized path coefficient	t-values	Supported?	Construct	R-squared
H14	AS→PP	0.028	0.736	No	Perceived privacy	0.139
H17	DC→PP	0.067	2.006	Yes (p<0.05)		
H07	FA→PP	-0.014	0.420	No		
H05	PC→PP	0.245	6.330	Yes (p<0.001)		
H13	REP→PP	-0.191	3.830	Yes (p<0.001)		
H19	US→PP	-0.064	1.696	No		
H11	WI→PP	-0.140	3.156	Yes (p<0.01)		
H09	SS→PP	-0.064	1.475	No		
H15	AS→PS	0.213	7.162	Yes (p<0.001)		
H16	DC→PS	-0.055	2.384	Yes (p<0.05%)		
H06	FA→PS	0.089	3.691	Yes (p<0.001)		
H04	PC→PS	-0.075	3.095	Yes (p<0.01)		
H12	REP→PS	0.325	10.120	Yes (p<0.001)		
H08	SS→PS	0.089	3.090	Yes (p<0.01)		
H18	US→PS	0.096	4.316	Yes (p<0.001)		
H10	WI→PS	0.303	8.696	Yes (p <0.001)		
H01	IQ→PT	0.598	23.305	Yes (p<0.001)	Trust	0.729
H03	PP→PT	0.012	0.800	No		
H02	PS→PT	0.319	12.087	Yes (p<0.001)		
H21	PT→PV	0.810	65.977	Yes (p<0.001)	Perceived value	0.656

H22	PT→BI	0.299	8.918	Yes (p<0.001)	Purchase intention	0.677
H20	PV→BI	0.561	17.847	Yes (p<0.001)		

## 5. Conclusions and implications for future research

Online transactions represent a new stage for the tourism industry, which is working to develop better commercial practices (Kim et al., 2011). Few studies have analyzed trust in online shopping (Kim et al., 2011) and its antecedents, and no study has analyzed the antecedents of perceived privacy and/or perceived security or the effect of perceived trust on perceived value. To fill this gap, we propose a model of the formation of online purchase intention based on the antecedents of perceived privacy and security from Ray et al. (2011) and extended to third-party assurance seals and related constructs, such as the disposition to third-party certification and the understanding of seals.

Our findings indicate that the main predictors of consumers' perceived privacy, in order of relevance, are: Internet privacy concern; vendor reputation; website investment; and disposition to third-party certification. The consumers' perceived privacy depends on the levels of general concerns about Internet privacy; the provider's reputation; the consumers' perceived shopping investment in the tourism product and service website; and the general disposition to trust the perception of third-party certification. On the other hand, there is no significant influence of third-party assurance seals, familiarity with the website, understanding of third-party seals, and privacy and security policies on the consumers' perceived privacy. Secondly, the empirical evidence of this study suggests that the main predictors of consumers' perceived security, in order of impact, are: vendor reputation; website investment; third-party assurance seals; understanding of third-party seals; privacy and security policy and familiarity with the website; Internet privacy concerns; and disposition to third-party certification. Thus, based on these findings, consumers' perceived security of websites for shopping for tourism products and services depends on eight variables: providers' reputation, consumers' perceived investment in the online shopping website, the display of third-party assurance seals on those websites, the understanding of the seals, the privacy and security policies available, consumers' familiarity with the providers or prior knowledge of these providers, the levels of general concerns about Internet privacy, and the general disposition to trust the perception of third-party certification. Thirdly, the findings indicate that the antecedents of consumers' perceived trust, in order of impact, are information quality and perceived security. Thus, consumers' perceived trust depends on the perception of the quality of the information on the website and the security measures that consumers perceive on the websites of tourism products and services. In contrast, the hypothesis of the influence of consumers' perceived privacy on consumers' perceived trust was not significant. Fourth, the empirical evidence of this research suggests that the main drivers of the online purchase intention of tourism products and services are, in order of relevance, perceived value and trust. Lastly, consumers' perceived trust influences the perceived value of online shopping.

The contribution of this study to the literature is the new knowledge about the factors that influence consumers' perceived security and privacy regarding tourism product and service websites. Additionally, this is one of the first studies to analyze, in the context of e-commerce and tourism, the influence of third-party assurance seals and two related constructs, the disposition to third-party certification and the understanding of privacy seals. Furthermore, this paper analyzes the factors that influence consumers' perceived trust in these websites once the perceived security and privacy are known. Finally, this is one of the first studies to analyze the effect of consumers' perceived trust on the perceived value of websites for online purchasing of tourism products and services.

Finally, we propose some ideas for future work in relation to the formation of perceived security and privacy, trust, perceived value, and online purchase intention. It would be interesting to replicate this research for different specific tourism products and services to reach more insightful conclusions. This study is cross-sectional, that is, it measures the variables at a single point in time; therefore, future studies should examine the validity of the proposed model by a longitudinal analysis. It would also be of interest to replicate this research in different countries and examine the possible cross-cultural differences. Another future research line is to include

other variables, such as user experience with the Internet, user experience of purchasing tourism products, consumer personality traits, the influence of price in the perceived value, and socio-demographic characteristics.

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# EL ASTROTURISMO COMO ATRACTIVO PRIMARIO DE UN DESTINO RURAL

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## RESUMEN

*El astroturismo es un recurso cada vez más explotado por los destinos turísticos, especialmente en entornos rurales y con escasa población ya que, la baja contaminación lumínica de dichos lugares, hace que la calidad del cielo sea mayor. No obstante, resulta difícil determinar si el éxito de este reclamo es un atractivo primario por sí mismo o puede ser secundario. Asimismo el astroturismo puede estar unido a una gran cantidad de aspectos diferentes como tradiciones de antiguas poblaciones (íberos, etc), astrología, astronomía y conocimiento del universo, naturaleza, entre otros. Así, el objetivo del presente trabajo en curso sería abordar este fenómeno estudiando cuáles podrían ser los principales factores que podrían determinar el diseño de un producto turístico basado en el astroturismo, de forma que pudiera convertirse en un atractivo primario con entidad propia. Así, este trabajo pretende contribuir a una corriente de investigación embrionaria basada en el interés que la astronomía despierta entre la población, de forma que pueda convertirse en una realidad para la potenciación de determinados destinos rurales*

### **Palabras clave:**

Astroturismo, destinos rurales, producto turístico

## 1. Introducción

Los turistas son cada vez más selectivos y en sus viajes no sólo quieren conocer nuevos destinos sino también vivir experiencias diferentes. El entorno rural permite ofrecer productos turísticos que compiten con el turismo más convencional. En los últimos años surgen diversos tipos de turismo como el turismo de niños o turismo de interés especial que surge como consecuencia lógica de la evolución de la sociedad en contrapunto al antiguo turismo de masas, Robinson y Novelli (2005).

No obstante, la oferta de la mayoría de estos destinos es muy similar y poco diferenciada entre sí. Con el objetivo de buscar nuevos atractivos, algunas zonas de la geografía han buscado en el cielo un recurso natural a explotar y son muchos los que han apostado por el astroturismo. Destaca como principal motor del astroturismo la Fundación Starlight, una entidad creada para la defensa del cielo como patrimonio de la humanidad. Avalada por la UNESCO, la Organización Mundial del Turismo (OMT), la Unión Astronómica Internacional (AUI) y diversas convenciones internacionales, la fundación trabaja para unificar naturaleza, ciencia, cultura, educación y turismo.

En la actualidad no hay literatura acerca del turismo astronómico pero empieza a surgir un gran interés por este fenómeno al que quieren sumarse distintos territorios para hacer del cielo uno de sus principales atractivos. Existen distintos artículos de opinión que por no estar sustentados en métodos de investigación sistemáticos pueden ser poco precisos.

La Comarca de Gúdar Javalambre, en Teruel, cuenta con una excelente calidad del cielo sin apenas contaminación lumínica, prueba de ello es la reciente instalación de un observatorio que, entre sus telescopios contará con uno pionero de nueva generación con un campo de visión de 3 grados, lo que lo convierte en único en el mundo. Gracias a su cámara panorámica podrá cubrir un área del espacio nunca antes conseguida por un equipo de observación astronómica.

Este observatorio está gestionado por la fundación CEFCA, Centro de Estudios de Física del Cosmos de Aragón y completará su infraestructura con la construcción en la localidad de Arcos de las Salinas de Galáctica, un centro de difusión y práctica de la astronomía como proyecto de ocio y turismo paralelo a las instalaciones científicas del observatorio

Asimismo se está trabajando para que el cielo de una zona de la comarca sea declarado como reserva starlight, es decir, un espacio en donde se establece un compromiso por la defensa de la calidad del cielo nocturno y el acceso a la luz de las estrellas. Tiene como función la preservación de la calidad del cielo nocturno y de los diferentes valores asociados, ya sean culturales, científicos, astronómicos, paisajísticos o naturales Iniciativa StarLight, 2007.

Tal y como cita la propia iniciativa, la Certificación Starlight permite por primera vez aunar la ciencia y el turismo, basando en la astronomía y la visión del firmamento una nueva forma de turismo inteligente que aporta criterios innovadores para el desarrollo responsable de la actividad. En la base del desarrollo del estándar se encuentra el reconocimiento de la ciencia como producto turístico y, al mismo tiempo, de la ciencia como metodología de trabajo en turismo.

Tanto en la Comarca de Gúdar Javalambre como en otras zonas, se han puesto en marcha distintas iniciativas para ofrecer productos turísticos diferenciados que han contado con gran participación e interés mediáticos pero siempre se ha tratado de un atractivo complementaria que, por tanto, impide conocer si el turista se ha desplazado con la intención primaria o secundaria de conocer el cielo o las actividades programadas en torno a la astronomía.

Asimismo, este tipo de turismo cuenta con gran apoyo institucional y social puesto que permiten un desarrollo local sostenible, tal y como indican Soria y Lludrés (2013), este tipo de turismo que van unidos a conceptos de “desarrollo local” o “endógeno” como modelo de crecimiento integral de un territorio, son actividades que pueden aprovechar al máximo de forma respetuosa con el entorno y la población residente los recursos presentes en el territorio.

El objetivo del presente trabajo en curso sería abordar este fenómeno estudiando cuáles podrían ser los principales factores que podrían determinar el diseño de un producto

turístico basado en el astroturismo, de forma que pudiera convertirse en un atractivo primario con entidad propia. Así, este trabajo pretende contribuir a una corriente de investigación embrionaria basada en el interés que la astronomía despierta entre la población, de forma que pueda convertirse en una realidad para la potenciación de determinados destinos rurales

## ***2. Revisión de la literatura y planteamiento de hipótesis***

El principal objetivo de este trabajo en curso será comprender mejor el fenómeno del turismo astronómico y valorar si puede ser un atractivo primario por sí mismo analizando el caso de la Comarca Gúdar Javalambre.

Para conseguir este objetivo se estudiarán las motivaciones de las personas interesadas por este tipo de turismo, realizar una segmentación del mercado de turistas interesados por la astronomía, analizar los distintos atractivos para conocer las posibilidades de productos turísticos realizables y valorar la importancia de los marchamos de calidad establecidos.

### ***2.1. Motivaciones en el turismo astronómico***

Las motivaciones turísticas suponen un concepto clave para el diseño y la creación de productos y servicios que aporten valor añadido a los turistas, Fandos y Puyuelo (2011), Las motivaciones suponen un componente fundamental en el proceso de toma de decisiones de los visitantes (Crompton y McKay, 1997). Así, diversos autores sostienen que en las motivaciones pueden influir necesidades físicas o fisiológicas (percepción sensorial y hedonismo), de seguridad, culturales, sociales, de pertenencia o interpersonales, de prestigio (delicias locales) y de status o autorrealización (McIntosh, Goeldner y Ritchie, 1995; Fields, 2002).

Según De la Poza (1993), la motivación turística es la razón que impulsa al turista para la realización del viaje. Son muchas las motivaciones que se han señalado como desencadenantes del deseo de viajar pero todas ellas se pueden ser agrupadas en cuatro categorías como clasifican Tocquer y Zins:

1. Motivaciones físicas: relacionadas con la salud física y mental del individuo, necesidad de distracción, relajación, actividades de esparcimiento, etc.
2. Motivaciones culturales; conciben el turismo como un factor de evolución personal a través del conocimiento de otras culturas y países o la ampliación del conocimiento artístico e histórico.
3. Motivaciones interpersonales: el turismo es concebido como un instrumento de desarrollo emocional, que se satisface visitando a familiares, amigos o estableciendo nuevas relaciones.
4. Motivaciones Sociales o de Prestigio: el turismo permite alcanzar ciertos logros sociales, como ser reconocido, apreciado y proyectar una buena imagen

Habrá que profundizar en aquellos estímulos que hacen que el turista se sienta atraído para desplazarse a un lugar concreto y, si las motivaciones relacionadas con la astronomía, resultan un atractivo primario por sí mismo para un destino de turismo rural.

Será objeto de estudio también el comportamiento del turista, desde el punto de vista del subconjunto del comportamiento del consumidor que tiene lugar en el proceso de adquisición del producto turístico, así como la participación en la experiencia de turismo y que se ve influenciado por factores de situación internos y externos(Valls, 1996):

H1 Los turistas ven en la astronomía un atractivo turístico por sí mismo en un destino rural

### ***2.2. Segmentos de consumidores diferenciados atraídos por turismo astronómico.***

La fuerte competencia de los destinos rurales y la existencia de una demanda muy heterogénea con relación a las motivaciones hace difícil que los destinos turísticos puedan satisfacer a todos los consumidores, pues cuando adquieren un producto no siempre buscan lo mismo ni reaccionan de igual manera (Ailwad, Gedenk y Neslin, 1999). Esta heterogeneidad se da en mayor medida en el mercado turístico, ya que existen diferentes tipos de visitantes (Sanchez, 2000) y los destinos, con los recursos y atractivos que poseen, no son capaces de ofrecer atractivo para todo tipo de públicos (Kotler, Bowen y Makens, 2003).

Por tanto, para conseguir lanzar un destino rural que tenga como principal recurso el astroturismo habrá que dirigirse hacia los clientes más idóneos, que son aquellos a los que se puede satisfacer mejor que los competidores (Lovelock, 1997) y que merecen una atención diferente y una respuesta organizada por parte de las empresas o del destino (Reichhel, 2004), con el objetivo de atraerlo.

Así, la segmentación se convierte en un elemento importante para la estrategia de marketing de los gestores turísticos (Nicolau, 2002), estrategia que contribuye al desarrollo y gestión de los destinos, por tanto, será objeto de estudio conocer los diferentes segmentos de consumidores que se sienten atraídos por este tipo de turismo; científicos, aficionados a la astronomía, amantes de la naturaleza, familias, profesionales.. así como la forma en que se demandan estos tipos de producto turístico.

El diseño del producto adecuado es, sin duda, la actividad más importante del marketing. Si disoñamos de un producto turístico que el mercado no desea, ni las mejores campañas promocionales, por muy brillantes que sean, ni los correctos ajustes de precios, ni la distribución perfecta, conseguirán que los consumidores lo adquieran, al menos, de forma repetitiva. Por el contrario, si el producto satisface al consumidor, lo único que necesitamos es que el resto de acciones de marketing sean correctas y coherentes para garantizar el éxito en el mercado (Serra, 2002).

H2 Existen distintos segmentos de la población interesados en realizar turismo astronómico.

### ***2.3. Atractivos astronómicos para el turismo***

El turismo sostenible aparece como la solución a los desastres del turismo convencional o turismo de masas. Implica nuevas relaciones entre la actividad turística y el entorno natural y socio cultural de las comunidades receptoras. Relaciones capaces de minimizar los impactos ya que precisa de un cambio de actitud en los turistas, no se trata de tropas hedonistas, ahora son ciudadanos preocupados por el medio ambiente, interesados por las culturas anfitrionas, y que demandan otras actividades (

Surge de esta forma el turismo alternativo, formas de turismo que son consecuentes con los valores naturales, sociales y comunitario, que permiten disfrutar positivamente tanto a anfitriones como a invitados y hacen que merezca la pena compartir experiencias (Smith y Eadington, 1994). Estas nuevas formas de turismo son el ecoturismo, el turismo rural, el turismo y podría ser también el astroturismo.

El cielo y la astronomía ofrecen distintos atractivos para la creación de productos turísticos. Para Swarbrooke (2002), las atracciones son el componente más importante del sistema turístico, siendo las que motivan el viaje de los turistas y el centro del producto turístico. Asimismo, Leiper (1990) indica que los visitantes se desplazan desde su lugar de residencia hacia un destino turístico sabiendo que allí encontrarán los atractivos que desean conocer.

El avance conceptual experimentado por el término patrimonio, el lento —aunque progresivo— reconocimiento de la riqueza y especificidad de los bienes patrimoniales que albergan el campo y la montaña así como la creciente revalorización turística de estos espacios permiten concebir el patrimonio rural como recurso turístico (Porcal, 2011)

Como expresan Cánoves y Villarino, el turismo como bien de consumo en las sociedades postindustriales se está tematizando, la experiencia turística toma valor en relación con el

contenido de la misma, así asistimos a las tematizaciones turísticas del territorio, ya no basta con el turismo rural, hay que vestirlo en relación con un producto temático, como pueden ser las rutas de senderos, la gastronomía del lugar, la observación de la fauna y la flora. El consumo del turismo ya no es solo la recreación sino que pasa por la lematización del producto.

H3 El cielo y la astronomía tiene variados atractivos turísticos que dan lugar a la creación de distintos productos en entornos rurales.

H4 El entorno rural permite distinguir el producto turístico con marchamos de calidad del cielo que no serían posibles en lugares con mayor población.

### **3. Metodología**

Se pretenden llevar a cabo tanto estudios de carácter exploratorio como descriptivo en función de los objetivos concretos de cada análisis desarrollando tres fases diferenciadas:

1º) Analizar el sector: mediante un estudio de carácter exploratorio se pretende conocer las diferentes ofertas turísticas y productos que se están comercializando en torno al turismo astronómico.

2º) Entrevistas en profundidad a expertos como metodología cualitativa con una finalidad también exploratoria de forma que ayuden a perfilar las encuestas a consumidores. También se realizarán entrevistas en profundidad con agentes sociales que puedan aportar luz al tema como científicos, responsables del observatorio de Teruel, hosteleros de la zona. Asimismo se desarrollarán estas entrevistas con profesionales que ya tengan experiencia en turismo astronómico astronómico en la isla de La Palma y dentro de la iniciativa starlight.

3º) Encuestas a clientes. Con carácter descriptivo se realizarán encuestas personales que aporten resultados cuantitativos que permitan definir segmentos de clientes así como las características de cada uno de ellos, estilos de vida, comportamiento en el consumo de productos turísticos, preferencias, etc.

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# ¿EXISTE ALGO MÁS ALLÁ DE HOFSTEDE? INFLUENCIA DE LOS CAMBIOS CULTURALES EN LA CREACIÓN DE SEGMENTOS TURÍSTICOS <sup>1</sup>

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## RESUMEN

*En momentos de cambios económicos, sociales y tecnológicos como los actuales y en un mundo cada vez más globalizado y fragmentado, seguir utilizando el concepto de cultura desde una perspectiva de nacionalidad como variable de segmentación, no parece adecuado ya que la cultura es algo más que un país de origen, es “el conjunto de normas, valores, creencias, costumbres y conocimiento que incide en cómo piensa, siente y se comporta un individuo, definiéndole como más afín a un grupo de personas o colectivo, que a otro. La cultura es la lente a través de la cual los consumidores ven los productos o servicios” (Solomon 2008, p. 542). La presente investigación tiene por objeto profundizar en el concepto de cultura como variable que influye en el comportamiento del turista que visita una región como destino cultural de interior. Determinar y caracterizar distintas tipologías de turistas con el fin de diseñar productos turísticos personalizados e innovadores. Y orientar adecuadamente las estrategias turísticas hacia su público objetivo.*

## Palabras clave:

CULTURA, TURISMO CULTURAL, HOFSTEDE

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## 1. Revisión de la literatura sobre el constructo cultura

El término “cultura” ha suscitado el interés en diversas disciplinas desde hace más de un siglo, siendo considerado desde una perspectiva de investigación vinculada a la nacionalidad (Pizam y Sussmann, 1995). Esto es debido a que se trata de un concepto difuso, del que no existe una definición comúnmente aceptada, ni tampoco unos indicadores que permitan medirla y analizarla de forma precisa (Groeschl y Doherty, 2000). A continuación se recogen algunas definiciones de cultura a lo largo de estos años.

TABLA 1.  
Definiciones de cultura

Autor y Año	Definición
Tylor (1871, p. 1)	“ese todo complejo que incluye conocimiento, creencia, arte, moral, derecho, costumbres y cualesquiera otras habilidades y hábitos adquiridos por el hombre como miembro de una sociedad”.
Kluckhohn (1951, p. 86)	“formada por los patrones, explícitos e implícitos, de un comportamiento adquirido y transmitido por símbolos que constituyen la realización distintiva de los grupos humanos, incluyendo su personificación en artefactos; el núcleo esencial de la cultura está formado por ideas tradicionales y especialmente por los valores que conlleva. Por otro lado, los sistemas de cultura pueden considerarse como productos de acción y como elementos condicionantes de acciones futuras”.
Hofstede (1980, p. 25)	“la programación colectiva de la mente que distingue los miembros de un grupo o categoría de los miembros de otro”.
Nakata y Sivakumar (2001, p. 257)	“patrón de pensamiento, sentimiento y acción arraigados a los valores comunes y convencionalismos de una sociedad”.
House et al. (2004, p. 15)	“motivos, valores, creencias, identidades e interpretaciones o significados de eventos significativos que se derivan de las experiencias comunes compartidas por los miembros del colectivo y que son transmitidos de generación en generación”.
Leung et al. (2005, p. 357)	“valores, creencias, normas y patrones de comportamiento de un grupo nacional”.
Ferraro (2010, p. 20)	“es todo aquello que la gente posee, piensa y hace como miembro de su sociedad”.

Sin embargo, aunque la cultura es abstracta, presenta características definidas: (1) no es un fenómeno individual, sino que es compartido por varios individuos de una sociedad y (2) es un fenómeno aprendido, adquirido a través de la socialización. Por tanto, la cultura es observable en la conducta, en las tendencias generales de las personas y susceptible de descripción empírica (Gong, 2009), como lo demuestran las distintas dimensiones culturales analizadas por diferentes autores (tabla 2).

A pesar de la popularidad del modelo de Hofstede (1980) actualizado en Hofstede (2011) mediante la inclusión de dos nuevas dimensiones denominadas indulgencia vs restricción y monumentalismo, su origen deriva de un contexto considerablemente restrictivo relacionado con la dirección de recursos humanos, que se ha ido aplicando a otros ámbitos, entre los que se incluye el marketing y comportamiento del consumidor (Soares *et al.*, 2007; De Mooij, 2011).

Por este motivo y una vez revisada la literatura se llega a la conclusión que las investigaciones llevadas a cabo han identificado excesivamente el concepto de cultura con el de nacionalidad, descartando la posibilidad de diferenciar distintas culturas dentro de un mismo país, independientemente de la procedencia de los individuos, por lo que la presente investigación propone tener en cuenta un concepto más amplio de cultura, considerando que es “*el conjunto de normas, valores, creencias, costumbres y conocimiento que incide en cómo piensa, siente y se comporta un individuo, definiéndole como más afín a un grupo de personas o colectivo, que a otro. La cultura es la lente a través de la cual los consumidores ven los productos o servicios*” (Solomon 2008, p. 542).

TABLA 2.  
Dimensiones de cultura

Autor	Dimensiones
Kluckhohn y Strodtbeck (1961)	Relación con el entorno;Orientación temporal;Naturaleza de las personas;Orientación de la actividad;Enfoque en la responsabilidad;Concepción del espacio
Hall, 1976	Alto contexto vs Bajo contexto;Policrónico vs Mono crónico
Hofstede, 1980	Individualismo vs Colectivismo; Distancia al poder; Masculinidad vs Femenidad; Aversión a la incertidumbre Orientación a corto vs largo plazo
Schwartz, 1994	Autonomía (Intelectual y Afectiva) vs Conservación;Jerarquía vs Igualitarismo;Armonía vs Competencia
Triandis, 1996	Individualismo horizontal;Individualismo vertical Colectivismo horizontal;Colectivismo vertical
Trompenaars y Hampden-Turner (1998)	Universalismo vs Particularismo;Comunismo vs Individualismo Neutral vs Emocional;Cultura específica vs difusa;Logro vs adscripción;Relación hombre-tiempo;Relación hombre-naturaleza
Inglehart, 1998	Materialismo–Postmaterialismo;Modernización– Postmodernización
House <i>et al</i> , 2004	Orientación al futuro;Igualdad de género;Asertividad;Orientación al hombre;Colectivismo dentro del grupo;Colectivismo institucional;Orientación al rendimiento Distancia al poder;Aversión a la incertidumbre
Hofstede, 2011	Respecto al modelo Hofstede (1980) añade dos dimensiones: indulgencia vs restricción y monumentalismo

Desde esta perspectiva, se incorporan otros constructos relacionados con la cultura, como son los valores y los estilos de vida. La revisión de la literatura pone de manifiesto la existencia de diferencias en los valores de los consumidores debidas a razones culturales, que a su vez provocan diferentes comportamientos entre distintos grupos de consumidores (Valencia, 1989; Wood y Howel, 1991, De Juan, 2004, De Juan y Sarabia, 2003). Dicha revisión permite profundizar en la metodología de medición de los valores tanto desde una perspectiva académica como empresarial, donde destacan los macroestudios académicos y sociocientíficos *European Values Study* y *World Values Survey*, las aportaciones de Milton Rokeach –*Rokeach Value Survey*–, de Lynn R. Kahle –*List of Values*– y de Shalom H. Schwartz –*Schwartz Value Inventory*–. Y, respecto a las metodologías aplicadas por empresas, las aportaciones de ValueScope, Cofremca, Taylor Nelson Sofres, Environics, Yankelovich Group y SRIntrenational. La metodología que finalmente se decide utilizar en la presente investigación será la versión revisada y adaptada del *Schwartz Value Inventory*.

Respecto a los estilos de vida vienen determinados por los elementos distintivos y particularidades que describen la forma de ser de un grupo cultural y permite distinguirlo de otros grupos culturales, comprendiendo las estructuras que se desarrollan y emergen de la dinámica de la vida en sociedad. Revisando las diversas definiciones que hasta el momento se han difundido, así como la aplicabilidad de las mismas, se llega a la siguiente conclusión: *los estilos de vida abarcan diferentes aspectos vinculados a la forma de vivir del individuo, lo que le gusta, aquello que le interesa, cómo siente, con quién se relaciona, qué actividades realiza, incluso los productos/servicios y marcas que compra y dónde las adquiere*. Por lo tanto, los individuos que muestren comportamientos análogos constituirán un grupo homogéneo con un "estilo de vida" determinado, que se pondrá de manifiesto cada vez que los individuos realicen alguna actividad relacionada con el uso y consumo de productos y marcas, constituyendo éstas el reflejo del estilo de vida que tengan o quieran transmitir. Las corrientes metodológicas revisadas son las siguientes: Corriente psicográfica (metodología IPSOS y VALS), la corriente comportamental (A.I.O., CREDOC, PRIZM, BSBW, TNS y MOSAIC) y la corriente sociocultural (Monitor, Eurosocioestilos y, Sinus-Milieus) (Sarabia, de Juan y González, 2009). En el presente estudio se opta por aplicar la metodología A.I.O. por estar más próxima a la realidad comportamental del individuo

Respecto al ámbito de aplicación, durante la última década ha surgido un creciente interés por el análisis de la cultura en el sector turístico, considerando ésta como una herramienta eficaz para una mejor comprensión del turista que ayuda a identificar similitudes y diferencias entre los turistas y contribuye así al desarrollo de servicios más adecuados a las necesidades de los mismos y a una estrategia de gestión y marketing más efectiva (García y Gil, 2005; Reisinger y Turner, 2003).

## 2. Trabajo empírico

### 2.1. Objetivos

Se plantea como **primer objetivo** de esta investigación profundizar en el concepto de cultura, ampliando las aportaciones de Hofstede, como el conjunto de valores, ideas, actitudes y estilos de vida que dirigen el comportamiento del consumidor y subyacen en su toma de decisiones.

El **segundo objetivo** del presente estudio es desarrollar una metodología que permita comprender e investigar el concepto de cultura en turismo. Bajo estas premisas, la presente investigación se propone profundizar en el concepto de cultura como variable que influye en el comportamiento del turista de destinos culturales, dado que se trata de una tipología de creciente interés especialmente para las ciudades pequeñas de interior con recursos patrimoniales con el objetivo de ofrecer productos turísticos segmentados y orientar adecuadamente las estrategias turísticas hacia este público objetivo.

### 2.2. Metodología

La investigación se centra en una encuesta on line dirigida a viajeros de destinos culturales de interior. Aunque en un primer momento se elabora un solo cuestionario, más tarde se opta por dividirlo en dos partes con la finalidad de que la tasa de respuesta sea mayor y facilitar al encuestado la concluir del cuestionario. El criterio empleado para decidir las preguntas a incluir en una u otra parte se basa principalmente en la temática de las cuestiones.

Así, el primer cuestionario lanzado contiene preguntas relacionadas con el turismo e Internet, que analizan (1) los hábitos del turista en los viajes culturales (lugares visitados, alojamiento y transporte empleados, compañía en el viaje, organización y motivos del mismo, comportamiento y actividades en destino), (2) las fuentes de información consultadas (haciendo especial hincapié en canales online), y (3) aspectos relativos a las Tecnologías de la Información y las Comunicaciones (TIC's) ya que se ha detectado un gran potencial en su uso como fuentes de información turística.

El segundo cuestionario incluye las preguntas relacionadas con el constructo de cultura, incorporando cuestiones sobre estilos de vida, con la metodología A.I.O. (Actividades, Intereses y Opiniones), los valores con la metodología de Schwartz y las dimensiones de Hofstede. De esta manera, se hace mención a (1) temas sobre hábitos en el tiempo de ocio, y a (2) aspectos de índole personal, social, familiar y profesional donde se ve reflejada la cultura de los individuos.

Además, ambos cuestionarios incluyen la misma batería de cuestiones para describir el perfil socio-económico de los encuestados, con la finalidad de poder relacionar los hábitos en viajes culturales con la cultura. Una vez diseñado el cuestionario, se envía a un panel on line de encuestados en dos olas con las siguientes características.

TABLA 3  
Ficha técnica de la investigación

<b>Población:</b>	Turistas residentes en España mayores de 15 años que han realizado viajes de ocio a ciudades nacionales durante el último año, pernoctando de una a tres noches en alojamientos de pago.
<b>Tipo de encuesta:</b>	Por internet
<b>Número de encuestas:</b>	1ª ola: 727 recibidas, 640 encuestas válidas 2ª ola: 579 recibidas, 512 encuestas válidas
<b>Nivel de confianza:</b>	95,5% para valores de heterogeneidad = 50%
<b>Error muestral:</b>	3,8% para el conjunto de la población objeto de estudio

Sistema de muestreo:	Base de datos de panelistas on line de la empresa Toluna Selección por cuotas geográficas Nielsen, sexo y edad.
Ámbito geográfico:	Capitales de provincia/ciudades con más de 100.000 habitantes de España.
Período del trabajo de campo:	Abril a Septiembre 2013

### 3. Conclusiones

En épocas de cambio económico, social y tecnológico, como los actuales, se pretende obtener con la investigación realizada, dimensiones culturales que influyen en el comportamiento de turistas en destinos culturales, caracterizar segmentos de mercado diferenciados a partir de las dimensiones obtenidas y comparar los resultados en función de las diferentes metodologías de investigación de manera independiente: A.I.O., Schwartz y Hofstede.

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**Trabajo en curso**

**LA CALIDAD DEL SERVICIO ONLINE Y DE  
SU RECUPERACIÓN A TRAVÉS DE  
DISPOSITIVOS FIJOS Y MÓVILES: UNA  
COMPARACIÓN ENTRE PORTUGAL Y  
ESPAÑA**

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**RESUMEN**

*La existencia de un cliente selectivo y conocedor de las nuevas tecnologías que brinda el sector turístico en el entorno online conlleva una necesaria evolución de las empresas para incrementar su competitividad. En este trabajo en curso se analiza la calidad del servicio online y la calidad de recuperación del servicio online ofertadas por las agencias de viajes. También se investiga la incidencia que tienen estas dos variables sobre la lealtad y la retención de clientes, profundizando de manera especial entre las posibles diferencias existentes entre ellas en función del tipo de dispositivo que se emplee: fijo y/o móvil. Además, se verifica si existen diferencias estadísticamente significativas en relación a la calidad del servicio online, la calidad de recuperación del servicio online, el valor percibido, la satisfacción y la lealtad, entre los usuarios de agencias de viajes online de España y Portugal.*

**Palabras clave:**

Calidad, servicio online, valor percibido, satisfacción, lealtad, dispositivos fijos y móviles, agencias de viajes.

## 1. Introducción

Una de las principales características del sector turismo es su dinamismo producido, en gran parte, por la rápida y constante evolución de las TIC (*e-commerce*, agencias online, compra mediante dispositivos móviles, etc.). A esta circunstancia se une la aparición de un consumidor formado en el uso de las nuevas tecnologías y, por tanto, más selectivo y conocedor de los diferentes servicios que ofrece el sector en el entorno online.

La introducción de las nuevas tecnologías en la empresa modifican su proceso de servicio y este cambio puede aprovecharse para lograr un mejor posicionamiento, pues proporcionan nuevas interacciones con el usuario (Padgett y Mulvey, 2007). Por otra parte, los datos del segundo trimestre de 2013 publicados por la Comisión del Mercado de Telecomunicaciones, sitúan al sector turístico (agencias de viajes y touroperadores), como la rama de actividad con mayor peso en las cifras de facturación mediante comercio electrónico, con un crecimiento del 16,4% (CMT, 2013).

Por lo tanto, el objetivo de este artículo es profundizar en la relación causal de la calidad percibida del e-servicio, el valor percibido, la satisfacción y la lealtad del consumidor en la contratación *online* del servicio turístico, analizando las posibles diferencias entre dispositivos fijos y móviles y contrastando los resultados obtenidos entre los países incorporados al estudio, España y Portugal.

El trabajo en curso se está aplicando en el contexto de los sitios webs a través de los cuales se contratan los productos turísticos. De esta manera, las empresas turísticas podrán identificar las fortalezas y oportunidades de sus sitios web para fidelizar a sus clientes.

### 1. Revisión de la literatura

Analizando la literatura, observamos la importancia que ha ido adquiriendo el marketing relacional en los últimos años, convirtiéndose en un elemento clave para el fortalecimiento de las relaciones entre las empresas y los clientes. Los clientes fieles a las empresas suponen un importante activo para las mismas, ya que su compra y gasto son más frecuentes (DeWulf *et al.*, 2001).

La fidelización de clientes está muy vinculada con las ideas de calidad y servicio, pues mediante su combinación se genera un círculo en el que la satisfacción crea fidelidad. A su vez, la fidelidad produce nuevas ventas a un menor coste, lo que incrementa la rentabilidad de la empresa, mejorando así el servicio (Guijarro, 2009).

La calidad del servicio se define como el juicio global del consumidor o usuario sobre la superioridad del servicio (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988).

Según el estudio realizado por Vázquez *et al.*, (2009) la calidad percibida del servicio electrónico no puede reflejarse en una valoración unidimensional, debido a las particularidades que presenta el entorno online. Este hecho hace necesario adaptar las tradicionales escalas para medir la calidad del servicio.

Con la finalidad de compensar el inconveniente que genera la intangibilidad e impersonalidad de los servicios online -a la hora de definir indicadores que permitan evaluar la calidad percibida del servicio-, Parasuraman *et al.* (2005), apoyándose en Zeithaml *et al.* (2002), desarrollan una escala multidimensional destinada a medir la calidad online. Su elaboración está basada en la utilización de dos escalas para evaluar la calidad de e-servicio. La primera, denominada E-S-QUAL, tiene en cuenta aspectos vinculados al servicio básico o principal y distingue cuatro dimensiones: eficiencia, fiabilidad, disponibilidad del sistema y privacidad. La otra escala que propone la escuela de Parasuraman se utiliza para evaluar la calidad de recuperación del servicio: E-RecS-QUAL, compuesta por tres dimensiones: responsabilidad, compensación y contacto (Fuentes *et al.*, 2011).

Zeithaml (1988) considera el valor percibido como una evaluación global que el cliente desarrolla de la utilidad de un producto o servicio, basado en las percepciones de lo que ha recibido frente a lo que ha dado. Se trata de un constructo subjetivo en diversos sentidos: varía entre clientes, entre culturas y en diferentes situaciones temporales (Holbrook, 1994; Ravald y Grönroos, 1996; Woodruff, 1997). En esta última apreciación se concibe el valor percibido

como una variable dinámica, que se experimenta antes de la compra, en el momento de la compra, en el momento de su uso, y tras su utilización. Para cada intervalo la valoración es diferente (Gardial *et al.*, 1994). Por lo tanto, se trata de un concepto de elevada subjetividad, ya que depende esencialmente del juicio del cliente y dicho juicio depende, a su vez, de una serie de factores como son la información con la que cuenta el cliente, el contexto en el que se realiza la valoración y del momento en el que dicha valoración tiene lugar.

Los diferentes estudios orientados a la consecución de un modelo de valor percibido no se han materializado en un consenso único (Gallarza y Gil, 2006). Este hecho no ha impedido que la literatura turística afronte este constructo desde una perspectiva multidimensional. En esta línea, se han realizado investigaciones que han demostrado la validación de una escala de medición del valor percibido para obtener la identificación de las dimensiones que conforman el concepto. De este modo, se ha constatado la multidimensionalidad del valor percibido y su efectividad para emplearse como factor ponderador en la segmentación del mercado (Sales y Gil, 2007).

La revisión de la literatura muestra que el valor es la consecuencia de la calidad (Grewal *et al.*, 1998; Sirio *et al.*, 2008; Oh, 1999, 2000; Caruana *et al.*, 2000; Kashyap y Bojanic, 2000; Cronin *et al.*, 2000), entendiendo el valor como una construcción de orden superior.

La satisfacción es reconocida como el factor determinante del éxito en los mercados (Reichheld y Sasser, 1990; Teye y Leclerc, 1998). Se trata de un concepto ampliamente debatido y sobre el que se han propuesto múltiples definiciones, sin que exista un consenso en torno a las mismas (Oliver, 1980; Vanhamme, 2000). Entre todas ellas destaca la de Santos (1999), que define la satisfacción como un estado emocional susceptible de ser medido y que surge del acto de comparar las expectativas con los resultados.

Actualmente, la mayoría de los autores sugieren que la calidad de servicio y la satisfacción son constructos distintos (Bansal y Taylor, 1999; Bolton y Drew, 1991; Boulding *et al.*, 1993; Carman, 1990; Oliver, 1980; Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988), aunque relacionados.

La principal razón que justifica esta diferenciación es que la satisfacción representa una evaluación del consumidor ante una situación específica, vinculándose al corto plazo, ya que es susceptible de ser cambiada en cada transacción. En cambio, la calidad del servicio percibida representa un juicio más global y duradero a través de múltiples encuentros de servicios, vinculándose al largo plazo (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988).

Algunos autores defienden que la satisfacción es un antecedente de la calidad percibida del servicio (Parasuraman, *et al.*, 1988; Grönroos, 1994; Bolton y Drew, 1991; Bitner, *et al.*, 1994). El argumento principal es que a través de la acumulación de evaluaciones específicas (satisfacción) se crea una valoración global (calidad percibida).

En la literatura existe un consenso generalizado acerca de que la satisfacción del cliente tiene una influencia positiva en la lealtad del mismo (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988; Johnson y Fornell, 1991; Cronin y Taylor, 1992; Rust y Zahorik, 1993, entre otros). En el ámbito empresarial, y concretamente en el sector servicios, la lealtad de los clientes es considerada como una de las mayores fuentes de ventaja competitiva (Bharadwaj *et al.*, 1993). La lealtad del cliente se define como la conducta repetida de adquisición de un bien o servicio, debido a actitudes favorables o a la toma de decisiones de un proceso evaluativo (Jacoby y Kyner, 1973).

En resumen, la revisión de la literatura muestra que la calidad percibida del servicio y su recuperación, el valor percibido y la satisfacción influyen de manera significativa en las intenciones de compra de los consumidores y, por lo tanto en su lealtad (Zeithaml, Berry y Parasuraman, 1996).

## **2. Objetivos e hipótesis**

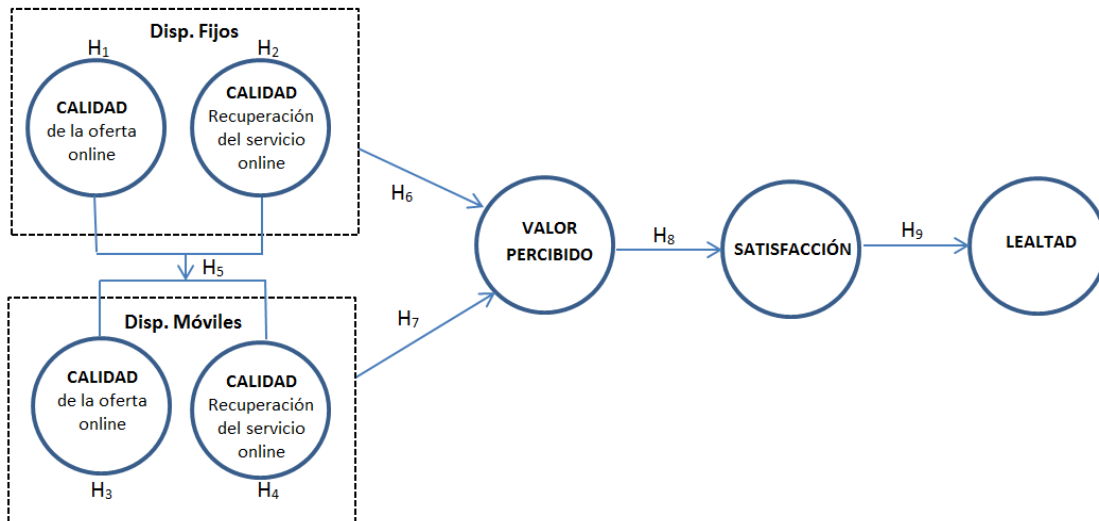
La investigación en curso que se plantea tiene como principal objetivo contribuir al estudio de la calidad del servicio online y la recuperación del servicio online ofertadas por las agencias de viajes, así como la incidencia que tienen estas dos variables sobre la lealtad y la retención de clientes.

A través de esta investigación queremos articular una línea de trabajo en torno a la influencia de la calidad del servicio online y su recuperación sobre la lealtad del cliente, en el contexto de las agencias de viajes, analizando la posible existencia de diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los constructos analizados anteriormente, en relación a los dispositivos fijos



y dispositivos móviles. El objetivo es determinar si es necesario establecer dos estrategias diferentes en función del dispositivo empleado para acceder al sitio web de la agencia de viajes. Según este propósito, y teniendo en cuenta las variables más importantes de la literatura identificadas anteriormente, se plantea el siguiente modelo con sus respectivas hipótesis:

**IMAGEN 1**  
Modelo teórico propuesto



**Fuente:** *Elaboración propia.*

**H1:** La calidad del servicio online ofrecido por las agencias de viajes a través de dispositivos fijos es un constructo multidimensional.

H1<sub>b</sub>: No existen diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los usuarios de España y Portugal.

**H2:** La calidad de recuperación del servicio online ofrecida por las agencias de viajes a través de dispositivos fijos es un constructo multidimensional.

H2<sub>b</sub>: No existen diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los usuarios de España y Portugal.

**H3:** La calidad del servicio online ofrecido por las agencias de viajes a través de dispositivos móviles es un constructo multidimensional.

H3<sub>b</sub>: No existen diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los usuarios de España y Portugal.

**H4:** La calidad de recuperación del servicio online ofrecida por las agencias de viajes a través de dispositivos móviles es un constructo multidimensional.

H4<sub>b</sub>: No existen diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los usuarios de España y Portugal.

**H5:** A mayor calidad del servicio online y de su recuperación desde un dispositivo fijo mayor será la calidad del servicio online y de su recuperación desde un dispositivo móvil, y viceversa.

H5<sub>b</sub>: No existen diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los usuarios de España y Portugal.

**H6:** A mayor calidad del servicio online y de su recuperación desde un dispositivos fijo mayor será el valor percibido por el cliente.

H6<sub>b</sub>: No existen diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los usuarios de España y Portugal.

**H7:** A mayor calidad del servicio online y de su recuperación desde un dispositivos móvil mayor será el valor percibido por el cliente.

H7<sub>b</sub>: No existen diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los usuarios de España y Portugal.

**H8:** A mayor valor percibido por el cliente mayor será su satisfacción.

H8<sub>b</sub>: No existen diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los usuarios de España y Portugal.

**H9:** A mayor satisfacción del cliente mayor será su lealtad hacia la agencia de viajes.

H9<sub>b</sub>: No existen diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los usuarios de España y Portugal.

### **3. Metodología**

Con el fin de alcanzar los objetivos mencionados y contrastar las hipótesis planteadas se ha diseñado una investigación cuantitativa mediante una encuesta personal ad-hoc con cuestionario estructurado.

En cuanto al contexto de aplicación, la muestra objeto de estudio estará formada por personas que hayan tenido en el último año experiencias de compra y/o búsqueda de información de productos turísticos en los sitios web de las diferentes agencias de viajes, tanto portugueses como españoles, con el fin de comparar posteriormente los resultados en función del país de origen.

El cuestionario se ha elaborado a partir de las escalas más relevantes de la literatura y se han adaptado a nuestro contexto con la finalidad de poder medir las variables objeto de estudio. Tras la adaptación, se han realizado varias pruebas tanto en Portugal como España, con expertos en la materia para depurar el contenido y los ítems del cuestionario y, de ese modo, verificar su funcionamiento antes de iniciar el trabajo de campo.

La muestra estará formada por 200 españoles y 200 portugueses de ambos géneros y diferentes edades, que hayan contratado o buscado información en una agencia de viajes online, en el último año. Con el objetivo de lograr la mayor representatividad posible, se realizará el muestreo por cuotas de edad, sexo y diferentes regiones de cada país.

### **4. Conclusiones**

Se espera que los resultados que se obtengan tras la realización de la investigación permitan identificar las variables de la calidad del servicio online y de su recuperación que tienen mayor incidencia sobre la lealtad posterior del cliente. A partir de las conclusiones que se obtengan, se extraerán importantes implicaciones para la gestión empresarial en el sector de las agencias de viajes que emplean un canal de distribución online.

Además, se podrán establecer los aspectos más importantes a tener en cuenta a la hora de definir la estrategia de marketing online; si es necesario establecer dos estrategias distintas en función del tipo de dispositivo o no, así como si son necesarias distintas estrategias en función del país desde el que se acceda al sitio web de la agencia de viajes.

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# USER-GENERATED CONTENT AND TOURISM DESTINATION IMAGE THROUGH EMOTIONS AND COGNITIONS

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## ABSTRACT

*Internet has changed tourism consumer behavior dramatically. Technological advancement and increased international competition thus affect the way in which tourism destinations are imagined, perceived and consumed. In this study we show how content generated by other users in a destination website generates emotions and thoughts that contribute to the destination image formation. Our results suggest that a correspondence exists between consumers' thoughts and the cognitive dimension of image, as well as between the emotions expressed by subjects and the affective dimension of image. Results also confirm that the image of a destination is an important predictor of destination preferences. While contributing to the body of knowledge of tourism destination image, our results are also relevant for Public Policy and tourism managers.*

## Keywords:

*User-Generated Content, Emotions, Cognitions, Destination Image, Cognitive Image, Affective Image, Tourist Destination.*

## 1. Introduction

The tourism industry has witnessed fundamental changes in the last years (Buhalis and Law, 2008; Minghetti and Buhalis, 2010). An increasing number of travelers are using the Internet for travel planning (Sigala *et al.*, 2001; Litvin *et al.*, 2008). Tourists have nowadays online resources that enable them searching for possible destinations, transportation, accommodation and leisure activities, as well as the purchase of these services (Akehurst, 2009). Online customer reviews are an important form of user-generated content (hereafter UGC). Consumers share their experiences with products and services in order to help others make informed purchase decisions. UGC includes online information sources that are created, initiated, circulated and used by consumers who intend to educate each other and share information about products, brands, services, personalities and other issues (Blackshaw and Nazzaro, 2006). Each year, hundreds of millions of potential visitors consult online reviews (Tripadvisor, 2013).

Image is also very relevant for tourism research, since the services associated to this industry are mainly intangible and cannot be tried before consumption. Previous research has shown online browsing influences both the cognitive and the affective dimensions of image, although most of that research has focused just on the cognitive component (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991; Walmsley and Young, 1998; Chen and Uysal, 2002). This lack of research is especially visible in the tourism sector, where the influence of Internet on destination image is yet to be fully revealed as the virtual environment is broad and boasts different platforms, such as blogs and web forums that might have differential effects on the images held by tourists (Jani and Hwang, 2011).

Destination and travel marketers are interested in influencing tourists' behavior to encourage them to favor and purchase their products and services, including destinations. However, despite the crucial role they play in the modern tourism industry, little work has been done on how web forums and blogs are used to build a destination image (Wenger, 2008), particularly those capturing destination image in a holistic manner (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003; Carson, 2008). To the best of our knowledge, no previous research has studied the relationship between perceived usefulness of UGC on a web destination and the emotional and cognitive responses evoked by such content.

In this study we propose that emotional and cognitive responses evoked by UGC may influence the affective and cognitive dimensions of the destination image, respectively. Following previous literature, we analyze the contribution of affective and cognitive components to the overall image. Finally, the effect of overall image on purchase intention and recommendation is also evaluated. According to these objectives, we first review the literature and propose a set of hypotheses, then describe the methodology and present the preliminary results. We end with a short comment about the implications derived from this research.

## 2. Literature review and hypotheses development

### 2.1 *User-generated content (UGC) in tourism*

The decision to research opinions of those who have visited and those who are planning to visit seems logical as the method captures both modified holistic images held by experienced tourists and the baseline and enhanced images held by potential tourists (Jani and Hwang, 2011). Liu *et al.* (2011) identified four objectives of online consumer reviews: (1) to assist consumers in making accurate choices, (2) to reduce the cognitive costs of making such choices, (3) to help consumers form an unbiased understanding of the product, and (4) to construct a set of evaluative criteria.

UGC is an electronic communication phenomenon enabled by Web 2.0, the second generation of web-based services, which allows people to collaborate and share information online (Cox *et al.*, 2009). Because of the experiential nature of tourism services for which previous quality cannot be ascertained, WOM and, more recently, e-WOM are much relied on by potential tourists in forming images (Gretzel *et al.*, 2007; Pan *et al.*, 2007; Cox *et al.*, 2009). Consequently, UGC much serves as an information source for potential tourists (Ye *et al.*, 2009).

Previous studies have shown that online travel reviews may influence the decisions of travelers (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008; Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009). Vermeulen and Seegers (2009) studied the

impact of online reviews on the attitudes of travelers to hotels, and found that exposure to online reviews enhanced hotel awareness, and that positive reviews improved the attitudes of travelers toward hotels. Gretzel and Yoo (2008) also examined the role of travel reviews in trip planning processes, and demonstrated the importance of online consumer reviews at an individual level. However, the influence of online user-generated reviews in the tourism industry is still largely unknown both to tourism researchers and practitioners (Ye *et al.*, 2011).

There are no published articles that have studied the direct relationship between perceived usefulness of UGC and cognitive-emotional responses generated by the receiver. However, recent literature on UGC (Dufresne *et al.*, 2010; Volo, 2010; Jani and Hwang, 2011) may be used to infer these effects. Given their importance as an information source (Ye *et al.*, 2009), UGC can help tourists and travelers develop emotions and cognitions about a destination before visiting it. Consumer's access to information related to attributes, experiences and feelings shared by other tourists might help them to form an impression about the destination. Therefore, based on that information, potential tourists can generate a series of cognitions and emotions, respectively, related to the tourism destination. We, thus propose:

**H1:** The usefulness of exposure to UGC on a web destination positively influences the emotions associated by that destination.

**H2:** The usefulness of exposure to UGC on a web destination positively influences the cognitions associated by that destination.

## ***2.2 Emotions and cognitions as antecedents of the affective and cognitive dimensions of destination image***

Emotions are now recognized to have a critical role in the consumption experience (Mora and Moscarola, 2010; Li *et al.*, 2012). Zajonc (1980) challenged us to consider more than cognition in our attempts to understand human behavior, while Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) have led the change to consider consumers "feelings, fantasies, and fun" as part of the overall consumption experience. Cognitive responses to a stimulus are an important antecedent of attitudes (Sicilia *et al.*, 2005; López and Ruiz, 2011). The cognitive approach has dominated persuasion research, whereas the affective processes have been given a relatively minor role, in spite of the wide use of emotional appeals in advertising (Morris *et al.*, 2002).

There are increasing attempts to understand the role of emotions in the context of tourism and hospitality. For example, past studies investigated the determinants of post- consumption emotions (Muller *et al.*, 1991), or the relationship between emotions and key consumer behavior constructs such as overall satisfaction (de Rojas and Camarero, 2008; del Bosque and San Martin, 2008), customer loyalty (Barsky and Nash, 2002), behavioral intentions (Bigné *et al.*, 2005; Jang and Namkung, 2009) and decisions to purchase tourism and leisure services (Chuang, 2007; Kwortnik and Ross, 2007). Emotions have been also used as a segmentation variable for leisure and tourism services (Bigné and Andreu, 2004). This paper is in line with Kwortnik and Ross (2007), who found that tourists experience a variety of positive emotions as they plan their vacations, such as comfort and pleasure. However, empirical studies that consider the role of emotions in the context of tourist destinations remain sparse.

Additionally, destination image is also viewed in this paper as an attitudinal construct that consists of cognitive and affective evaluations (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999a, b). The proposed model considers that the affective component, also known as hedonic dimension (Batra and Ahtola, 1990), is associated with the emotions generated by the stimulus or by the product displayed in the stimulus, while the cognitive or utilitarian component is related to the beliefs and perceived attributes about the stimulus or about the product. In a tourist context, where the product may be equivalent to the destination, the cognitive component refers to the beliefs or knowledge a person has of the characteristics or attributes of a tourist destination (Baloglu, 1999; Pike and Ryan, 2004), while the affective dimension is represented by the individual's feelings toward the tourist destination (Chen and Uysal, 2002; Kim and Richardson, 2003).

As our goal is to demonstrate the influence of consumers' responses on the two dimensions of destination image (cognitive and affective dimensions), these constructs should intervene in the model. Due to the convenience of incorporating emotions and the bi-dimensional perspective of the destination image, we will (a) use cognitive and affective dimensions of the destination image, and (b) use cognitions and emotions as antecedents of the two dimensions of image. Thus, in an attempt to reach a more favorable image, individuals who produce a higher number of net emotions (obtained by subtracting the number of negative emotions from the number of positive emotions) will generate a more favorable affective destination image. Similarly, individuals who produce a higher number of net thoughts will generate a more favorable cognitive destination image. As such, cognitions and emotions generated by a destination website (including UGC) will directly impact on the cognitive and affective dimensions of image towards the destination, respectively. Formally, we propose:

**H3:** Evoked emotions by potential tourists will have a positive influence on the affective dimension of a tourism destination image.

**H4:** Evoked cognitions by potential tourists will have a positive influence on the cognitive dimension of a tourism destination image.

### **2.3 Overall destination image**

As affirmed by Gartner (1993), people's perceptions of various attributes within a destination will interact to form a composite or overall image of that destination. The combination of cognitive and affective evaluations gives rise to an overall or composite destination image that is greater than the sum of the parts (Phelps, 1986; Calantone *et al.*, 1989; Fakeye and Crompton, 1991).

Recently, several studies have included cognitive and affective attributes in the measurement of destination image (Baloglu, 2001; Kim and Richardson, 2003; Beerli and Martín, 2004; Wang and Hsu, 2010). In line with this approach, destination image should be considered a multi-dimensional phenomenon that includes not only beliefs or knowledge about the place's attributes, but also the individual's feelings toward the tourist destination. Consequently, we also propose in our context that the cognitive and affective components would be positively related to the overall image of a destination. As such, we propose:

**H5:** The affective dimension of a tourism destination image positively influences the overall destination image.

**H6:** The cognitive dimension of a tourism destination image positively influences the overall destination image.

### **2.4 Destination image and tourist behaviors**

The tourist behaviors include the choice of a destination to visit and subsequent evaluations and future behavioral intentions (Chen and Tsai, 2007); including destination recommendation (Kneesel *et al.*, 2010). A positive WOM is not only an indicator of a tourist's intention to continue the relationship with the destination, but also a reliable source of information for potential tourists (Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Thus, the diffusion of the destination may be enhanced. Behavioral intentions have therefore become a fundamental strategic metric to evaluate the success of a tourism destination (Chen and Tsai, 2007; Wang and Hsu, 2010).

Similarly, intention to recommend the destination has been also considered as a good indicator of behavior in this context because most tourist decisions are based on WOM (Kneesel *et al.*, 2010). Word-of-mouth (WOM) is defined as "informal, person-to-person communication between a perceived noncommercial communicator and a receiver regarding a brand, a product, an organization, or a service" (Harrison-Walker, 2001, p. 63).

A positive overall assessment of the image of a tourism destination contributes to positive visit intentions (Bigné *et al.*, 2008; Prayag, 2009). Similarly, Lee *et al.* (2005) argued that individuals having a favorable destination image would lead to greater levels behavioral intentions. In summary, the intentions to visit the destination and to spread a positive WOM may be considered the two most important behavioral consequences of destination image (Qu *et al.*, 2011). Thus, we expect that if a



person holds a positive overall image of a particular destination, s/he would be more likely to visit the destination. Therefore, we propose:

**H7:** Overall tourism destination image positively influences intention to visit that destination.

Regarding the intention to recommend the destination, previous research has shown that destination image may condition the after-decision-making behaviors including the willingness to recommend (Ashworth and Goodall, 1988; Mansfield, 1992; Cooper *et al.*, 1993; Bigne *et al.*, 2001; Lee *et al.*, 2005). Therefore, research has established a positive influence of destination image on tourists' intention to recommend behavior (Ashworth and Goodall, 1988; Mansfield, 1992; Milman and Pizam, 1995; Bigné *et al.*, 2001). According to Bigné *et al.* (2001) a person with a perceived positive image of a destination is more likely to recommend it. Thus, we expect that if a person holds a positive overall image of a particular destination, s/he would be more likely to recommend the destination to others. Therefore, we propose:

**H8:** Overall tourism destination image positively influences intention to recommend that destination.

### 3. Methodology

The survey population consisted of individuals over the age of 18 who had not previously visited the destination and who did not belong to that area. We collected 242 valid questionnaires. The sample average age was 22 years (ranging from 18 to 28) and 51.7% of the participants were women. The main dependent variables such as destination image and intention to visit and recommend the destination were not significantly affected by these variables.

We used a real website of a rural destination as a contextual stimulus in this study. The selection of rural tourism services was motivated by the fact that image formation process mainly occurs through destination websites in this type of small touristic services.

On arrival at the computer lab, subjects were informed about the procedure. A pretest was run to ensure the statements were understood. Participants were instructed to freely visit the website of the rural destination as if they were looking for a weekend trip. After website exposure, individuals responded to the questionnaire which contained the variables of the proposed model. Among other questions, we asked participants whether they had accessed the online opinions section or not. This was a yes/no question. 66.1 % of the participants indicated that they had accessed online opinions generated by other users, which involved 160 individuals of the total sample. Since our independent variable is the usefulness of exposure to UGC for the next results we used only those 160 individuals who have accessed others' opinions regarding the destination.

Firstly, participants wrote down all the thoughts that came into their minds while they were on the destination website. Similarly, they were instructed to write down all the feelings and emotions they experienced during exposure (Coulter, 1998; López *et al.*, 2008).

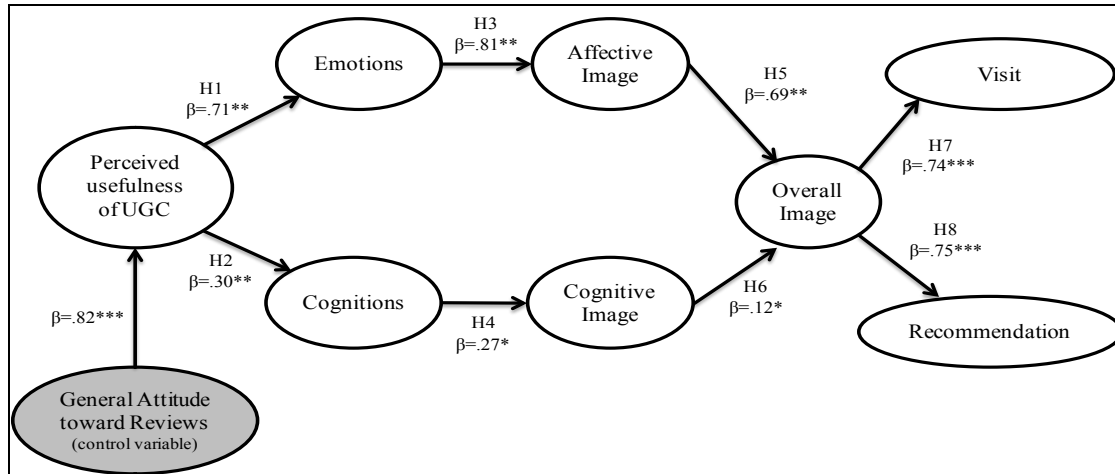
In order to ensure content validity, selected items for the constructs were primarily revised from prior studies in the tourism context. Image scales were based on 10-point semantic differential scales. Affective image was measured through Russell's (1980) four bipolar affective items. For the cognitive image dimension, items were borrowed from Ong and Horbunluekit (1997). Respondents also rated their overall image of the accommodation by three bipolar items (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999a). Behavioral intention was measured on a 10-points Likert scale. We used four items adapted from Kneesel *et al.* (2010). We used previously established scales to measure perceived usefulness of UGC (Mishra *et al.*, 1993; Gilly *et al.*, 1998). Moreover, in order to control for possible confounding effects, we also measured general attitudes toward reviews (Park *et al.*, 2007). At the end of the questionnaire, individuals provided some demographic information, including gender, age and city of residence.

### 4. Preliminary results

Results of the CFA (N=160) suggest that our measurement model provides a good fit to the data on the basis of a number of fit statistics (S-B  $\chi^2$  (df=216)=300.95,  $p < .01$ ; NNFI= .90; CFI= .92; IFI= .92; RMSEA= .050).

Once measurement has been checked, we tested the proposed conceptual model using structural equation modeling. Preliminary results indicate that the data fit our conceptual model acceptably. The empirical estimates for the main-effects model are shown in Figure 1. All the paths proposed in the hypotheses were statistically significant and in the expected positive direction.

FIGURE 1  
Results obtained for the structural model



S-B  $\chi^2$  (df=236) =349.33,  $p < .01$ ; NNFI=.89; CFI=.90; IFI=.90; RMSEA=.055

N=160. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

## 5. Conclusions

Our results suggest that cognitive and affective image components are significant antecedents of overall image. In this sense, the mental representation of a tourist destination is formed on the basis of individuals' beliefs about the place (cognitive image), as well as their feelings toward it (affective image). Tourists will use these image dimensions to form their impressions and evaluate the considered destinations in their choice processes. Thus, as expected, cognitive image positively influences overall image. This result confirms the results of previous studies (Stern and Krakover, 1993; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999), arguing for the positive effect of cognitive image on overall image. This study also supports the results of Baloglu and McCleary's (1999) regarding the impact of the affective image on overall image. Moreover, contrary to others' research findings, which found the stronger impact of cognitive evaluation on overall image than that of affective evaluation (Qu *et al.*, 2011), this study shows that affective image is the most influential dimension of destination image.

In this study overall image stands out as an important predictor of destination preferences. Results confirm the previous argument that the image of a destination directly influences intentions to visit and recommend the destination to others (Tapachai and Waryszak, 2000; Bigné *et al.*, 2001; Lee *et al.*, 2005). Another contribution concerns the correspondence that exists between thoughts and the cognitive dimension of image, as well as the emotions expressed by subjects and the affective dimension of image. To the best of our knowledge, both links have been not empirically tested before in image literature.

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# ANÁLISIS DE LA INTERACCIÓN ENTRE REPORTING A GRUPOS DE INTERÉS E INDUSTRIA PARA EXPLICAR LA REPUTACIÓN CORPORATIVA EN ESPAÑA

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## RESUMEN

*Los autores describen la intensidad y orientación del reporting a grupos de interés (o reporting de Responsabilidad Social Corporativa, RSC) realizado por las empresas de cuatro industrias españolas y exploran la relación que existe entre ambos conceptos y una medición independiente de la reputación de RSC (CSRR). Los resultados demuestran que la presentación de informes de RSC es especialmente relevante y útil en la industria financiera. Las empresas financieras reportan mucha más información a sus grupos de interés que la mayoría de empresas en otras industrias en España y esta información está más estrechamente vinculada a su CSRR que la presentada en las industrias básica, de bienes de consumo y de servicios.*

## Palabras clave:

*Responsabilidad social corporativa, reputación, reporting, industria, grupos de interés*

## 1. Introducción

La reputación corporativa, entendida como “la percepción de cómo la empresa se comporta con sus grupos de interés y el grado de transparencia informativa con el que desarrolla sus relaciones con ellos” (de la Fuente y de Quevedo, 2003, p. 280), está ganando cada vez más atención por parte de las empresas (Brammer y Pavelin, 2006). Esta tendencia se justifica por las características competitivas de los mercados actuales. Se cree que los atributos intangibles e institucionales de las empresas son más perdurables y resistentes a las presiones competitivas que los atributos del producto y de servicio, que tienden a estar altamente estandarizado en la mayoría de las industrias. En esta línea, la creación, refinamiento o incluso la reparación de la reputación corporativa entre los grupos de interés es esencial para el éxito. Diversos autores explican cómo los activos reputacionales, aunque no están legalmente protegidos por derechos de propiedad, se consideran activos específicos que se caracterizan por altos niveles de complejidad y especificidad, creando así una fuerte barrera competitiva.

En su búsqueda de nuevos caminos para explicar la reputación, los investigadores han centrado recientemente su atención en el reporting a grupos de interés (o reporting de responsabilidad social corporativa o RSC) (de los Ríos et al., 2012). El reporting a grupos de interés se define como la presentación a los diversos grupos de interés de “la información financiera y no financiera en relación con la interacción de la empresa con su entorno físico y social, como se indica en los informes anuales o de RSC de las empresas” (Hackston y Milne, 1996, p. 78). Esta información incluye detalles sobre medioambiente, energía, recursos humanos, productos y asuntos de participación comunitaria. Los investigadores han considerado el reporting a grupos de interés como una herramienta de valor agregado, que no sólo indica la transparencia de una empresa, sino que también se considera cada vez más como un medio para mejorar la reputación de la empresa (Cormier y Magnan, 2003). De acuerdo con la teoría institucional (o de legitimidad), muchos investigadores consideran que la presentación de la información financiera, social y medioambiental es parte del diálogo entre la empresa y sus grupos de interés, que ofrece información sobre actividades corporativas que ayudan a legitimar la conducta de la empresa y está, pues, estrechamente relacionada con la gestión de la reputación (Bebbington et al, 2008; Michelon, 2011). En consecuencia, se ha producido un rápido crecimiento en el número de informes de RSC publicados en los últimos años, tanto en el plano internacional como en el contexto español, donde se lleva a cabo la presente investigación (Adams et al., 1998; Cormier y Magnan, 2003).

Diversos investigadores han considerado también que un tema crítico en el análisis de la reputación corporativa de RSC (CSRR) es el efecto de la variable industria (Melo y Garrido, 2012). Se ha demostrado que las industrias están sujetas a presiones específicas de diferentes grupos de interés y que la industria actúa como una variable de mediación entre la RSC y la reputación (Brammer y Pavelin, 2006). Así, es bien sabido que el reporting da grupos de interés no es homogéneo entre las industrias (Adams et al., 1998; Holder- Webb et al., 2009; Gamerschlag et al., 2011). Por ejemplo, los bancos “no producen sustancias químicas peligrosas ni vierten contaminantes tóxicos en el aire, la tierra o el agua” (Thompson y Cowton, 2004, p. 199) y, como tal, generalmente revelan poca información medioambiental en sus informes de sostenibilidad y RSC (Gamerschlag et al., 2011). Por el contrario, las empresas de las industrias contaminantes (tales como la automoción, productos químicos, construcción o las industrias de transporte y logística) proporcionan más información sobre cuestiones ambientales. Estas empresas tienen una larga tradición en la presentación de informes de RSC, ya que se han enfrentado a los actores poderosos del movimiento ecologista desde principios de 1980 (Gamerschlag et al., 2011). En consecuencia, de manera proactiva revelan mucha información sobre su desempeño ambiental para reducir los posibles costes políticos derivados de sus actividades contaminantes.

No obstante, y a pesar de todo el apoyo teórico para la relación entre el reporting a grupos de interés y la CSRR, los investigadores han reconocido que todavía hay poca evidencia empírica con respecto a cómo la información contenida en los informes de RSC influye en los procesos

por los que la reputación se construye o destruye. Se necesita específicamente nueva investigación sobre cómo se vinculan la comunicación de RSC y la CSRR en diferentes industrias. Sobre la base de las ideas previas, los autores de este artículo proponen que los efectos de la industria influyen en el reporting de RSC y en su relación con la CSRR, de tal manera que existen diferencias significativas en la intensidad de reporting de las empresas, los tipos de información sobre RSC contenidos en dicho reporting (orientación del reporting a grupos de interés) y el efecto del reporting a grupos de interés en la CSRR. El resto del trabajo está estructurado de la siguiente manera. En las secciones segunda y tercera se discute una visión teórica de la relación entre el reporting a grupos de interés y la CSRR y se presentan tres hipótesis de investigación. Los autores también presentan el método aplicado al estudio, discuten los resultados del trabajo y, por último, resumen las conclusiones, limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación más relevantes.

## **2. Reporting a grupos de interés y reputación corporativa**

Aunque varias teorías han vinculado tradicionalmente el reporting a grupos de interés con la reputación corporativa, el enfoque más ampliamente aceptado para entender dicha conexión es el proporcionado por la teoría institucional (de legitimidad) (Patten, 1992). Esta teoría se utiliza con frecuencia para entender la adopción voluntaria por parte de las empresas de normas específicas para la presentación de información de RSC (Michelon, 2011). Desde esta perspectiva, los investigadores ven en el reporting de RSC una herramienta de gestión de la reputación que permite responder a las presiones de los grupos de interés a través de la comunicación de la identidad corporativa (Rodríguez et al., 2013). Diversos investigadores consideran que existe una considerable superposición entre la legitimidad y reputación corporativas, en el sentido de que una empresa no puede tener una buena reputación sin obtener antes la aprobación de sus grupos de interés a través de la comunicación corporativa y la presentación de informes (King y Whetten, 2008). Por lo tanto, el logro de la legitimidad es esencial para las empresas y es un requisito previo para la gestión de la reputación corporativa.

Los investigadores consideran que la legitimación social es un proceso que traduce los resultados pasados en una expectativa para el futuro. Así, la legitimación transforma el reporting de RSC, una variable de flujo objetiva, en reputación corporativa, una variable perceptual de stock. Los investigadores que se alinean con esta corriente de investigación consideran que las inversiones y comunicaciones homogéneas de RSC en diversos períodos sucesivos, y frente al cambio de los contextos institucionales, consolidan la reputación, porque los grupos de interés traducen los resultados anteriores de la empresa en expectativas respecto al desempeño futuro de la misma. En esta línea, King y Whetten (2008) creen que el vínculo que proporciona una base común para el tratamiento de la legitimidad y la reputación como conceptos complementarios es la noción de la identidad corporativa, que se refleja comúnmente en los informes de sostenibilidad y RSC (Pérez y Rodríguez del Bosque, 2012). Esta perspectiva se explica por las ideas de la teoría de las señales (Toms, 2002), que sostiene que las empresas presentan informes de RSC como una manera de proyectar su reputación hacia los grupos de interés (Michelon, 2011).

Sobre la base de las propuestas de esta teoría institucional, las últimas aportaciones en este campo de estudio han entendido el efecto del nivel de industria como un factor determinante en el reporting a grupos de interés (Adams et al., 1998; Ghazali, 2007; Holder-Webb et al., 2009; Gamerschlag et al., 2011). En concreto, se cree que la industria en la que se inscribe una empresa determina la intensidad (Reverte, 2009; Gamerschlag et al., 2011) y la orientación del reporting a grupos de interés (Ghazali, 2007), porque las presiones de los grupos de interés difieren significativamente de unas industrias a otras (Brammer y Pavelin, 2006). En este trabajo, los autores ya han puesto de manifiesto las diferencias que existen en las demandas de los grupos de interés para que las empresas informen sobre su impacto ambiental en función de que trabajen en industrias contaminantes o no contaminantes (Gamerschlag et al., 2011). Sobre la base de estas ideas, los autores proponen que la teoría institucional también proporciona los fundamentos para identificar diferencias significativas en la influencia del reporting a grupos de



interés sobre la CSRR en diferentes industrias. Sin embargo, esta idea no ha sido explorada empíricamente en estudios previos y este hecho contribuye a la originalidad del presente trabajo.

### **3. Hipótesis de investigación**

#### ***3.1. Industria e intensidad del reporting a grupos de interés***

Los investigadores han demostrado que la pertenencia a una determinada industria afecta a la intensidad del reporting a grupos de interés de las empresas (Gamershlag et al., 2011). Por ejemplo, las diferencias más significativas en la cantidad de información de RSC aportada en los informes de sostenibilidad y RSC se manifiestan entre las industrias de perfil alto y bajo (Hackston y Milne, 1996). A diferencia de las industrias de bajo perfil, las industrias de alto perfil son las que tienen mayor visibilidad en el mercado, alto nivel de riesgo político, y una competencia intensa y altamente concentrada (Roberts, 1992). Aunque las clasificaciones son en cierta medida subjetivas, la mayoría de los investigadores identifican el petróleo, la química, y la papelera como las industrias de alto perfil (Reverte, 2009). Éstas son todas industrias básicas de acuerdo con la Clasificación Nacional de Actividades Económicas disponibles en España. Las empresas de alto perfil tienen un mayor incentivo para proyectar identidades de RSC positivas a través del reporting a grupos de interés y, como tal, reportan significativamente más información sobre RSC que las compañías de bajo perfil (Hackston y Milne, 1996), ya que estas últimas no sufren de altas presiones por parte de sus grupos de interés para comportarse de manera ética y de conformidad con los principios de la RSC (Ghazali, 2007). Estas ideas están estrechamente relacionados con la teoría institucional, que según Reverte (2009) es la teoría más relevante para explicar las prácticas de reporting de RSC de las empresas españolas.

Por contra de las clasificaciones propuestas con anterioridad en contextos internacionales (Day y Woodward, 2009), en este trabajo los autores consideran que la industria financiera también puede ser considerada de alto perfil en España. En este sentido, una nueva corriente de investigación relacionada con la teoría institucional examina el papel que la cobertura de los medios de comunicación juega en el aumento de las presiones políticas a las que se enfrentan las empresas. El alcance de la cobertura de los medios de comunicación aumenta la visibilidad corporativa, invitando a una mayor atención y vigilancia del público (Greening y Gray, 1994). Del mismo modo, los medios de comunicación juegan un papel importante en la conformación o la erosión de la legitimidad de las empresas: los medios de comunicación pueden influir en la reputación corporativa y, al hacerlo, ejercer presión para que las empresas informen de forma más intensa sobre sus actividades de RSC (Cormier y Magnan, 2003). En esta línea, la industria financiera española ha recibido recientemente una gran cobertura mediática debido a la recesión económica que ha sacudido especialmente esta industria. Esta circunstancia genera nuevas formas de presiones coercitiva a cambio de una continua legitimidad para operar en el mercado y puede llevar a las empresas financieras a aumentar su intensidad de reporting a grupos de interés (Ghazali, 2007). Sobre la base de estas ideas se propone la primera hipótesis de investigación de la ponencia:

***H1: La intensidad del reporting a grupos de interés varía entre industrias. Las empresas de las industrias básica y financiera aportan significativamente más información sobre su RSC que las empresas en otras industrias.***

#### ***3.2. Industria y orientación del reporting a grupos de interés***

El tipo de información que se incluye en los informes de RSC también viene influido por la industria (Adams et al., 1998). En este sentido, la teoría institucional apoya la idea de que las empresas son recompensadas si desarrollan un reporting a grupos de interés “isomórfico”, es decir, que preste atención a las presiones institucionales externas de cada industria (Greening y Gray, 1994). El reporting a grupos de interés en las empresas con entornos altamente institucionalizados está formado por las respuestas a las presiones formales de otras organizaciones (isomorfismo coercitivo), por imitación de las estructuras adoptadas por otros en respuesta a las presiones (isomorfismo mimético), o por la conformidad con los estándares normativos establecidos por instituciones externas (isomorfismo normativo) (DiMaggio y

Powell, 1983). Por lo tanto, las empresas que se enfrentan al mismo entorno institucional proporcionado por su industria tendrán estructuras de informes de RSC similares, que difieren significativamente de los informes de RSC en otras industrias, ya que lo que es legítimo en un contexto no tiene por qué serlo en otro (Greening y Gray, 1994).

Por ejemplo, se ha demostrado que las empresas en industrias cuyo proceso de fabricación tiene una influencia negativa sobre el medio ambiente, tales como la industria básica, revelan y comunican mucha más información medioambiental y social que las empresas de otras industrias (Reverte, 2009). Por el contrario, la industria terciaria es donde se produce la mayor creación de empleo y es también la más intensiva en mano de obra. En consecuencia, cabe esperar que las empresas de la industria terciaria presenten una mayor preocupación por demostrar su responsabilidad social a los empleados, ya que es probable que dichas actividades mejoren la imagen corporativa e influyan en las ventas (Jones, 1999). Por último, las empresas de la industria de bienes de consumo son las más grandes e intensivas en capital y, como tal, también tienden a interactuar con la más amplia gama de grupos de interés (Jones, 1999). Sobre la base de estas ideas se propone la segunda hipótesis de investigación de la ponencia:

***H2: La orientación del reporting a grupos de interés varía entre industrias:***

***H2a: Las empresas de la industria básica aportan significativamente más información sobre su RSC para la comunidad (incluido el medioambiente) que las empresas en otras industrias.***

***H2b: Las empresas de la industria de bienes de consumo aportan significativamente más información sobre su RSC para clientes, inversores, socios, reguladores, activistas y medios de comunicación que las empresas en otras industrias.***

***H2c: Las empresas de las industrias financiera y de servicios aportan significativamente más información sobre su RSC para empleados que las empresas en otras industrias.***

### ***3.3. Efectos de la industria en la relación entre la intensidad y la orientación del reporting a grupos de interés y la reputación corporativa***

Por último, la industria en la que operan las empresas determina la forma en que la intensidad y la orientación del reporting a grupos de interés influye en la CSRR. En primer lugar, y de acuerdo con las ideas del enfoque de visibilidad de la teoría institucional, se cree que en aquellas industrias en las que la visibilidad corporativa y exposición a los medios son más altas el reporting a grupos de interés es más relevante y, consecuentemente, las empresas aportan más información (Brammer y Pavelin, 2006). Este reporting a grupos de interés influiría en la CSRR en mayor medida.

Del mismo modo, la teoría del coste político se basa en la premisa de que las empresas tienen visibilidad política y un incentivo para utilizar métodos contables y el reporting a grupos de interés para influir en su visibilidad política y reducir las presiones públicas (Ghazali, 2007). En línea con esta perspectiva, Patten (1992) argumenta que la industria influye en la visibilidad política y esto impulsa el reporting a grupos de interés para evitar una presión excesiva y las críticas de los activistas sociales. Se cree que debido a la industria en la que operan, las empresas tienen que hacer frente a grupos de interés más o menos potentes y, por lo tanto, están expuestas a diferentes niveles de costes políticos y sociales (Gamerschlag et al., 2011). Siguiendo esta línea de argumentación, las empresas de determinados tipos de industrias también pueden enfrentarse a distintos grados de presión para reportar ciertos tipos de información, debido a razones de competencia. En este sentido, los especialistas consideran que las empresas con un reporte más extenso en algunas industrias lo hacen así para gestionar su exposición a los costes regulatorios futuros que podrían ser perjudiciales para su reputación corporativa. Por ejemplo, se espera que las empresas de algunas industrias sean objeto de menores presiones por parte de los grupos de interés en relación a su comportamiento medioambiental o social y, como tal, el reporting a grupos de interés sobre aquellas cuestiones

que no son tan relevantes para ellos no afectaría a la CSRR tanto como en aquellas industrias en las que las presiones ambientales o sociales son más altas (Reverte, 2009).

Los autores de este artículo consideran que, si los diversos grupos de interés tienen diferentes expectativas puestas en las empresas en función de la industria en la que éstas se encuentran, no sólo la información proporcionada por las empresas en su reporting a grupos de interés puede ser diferente, sino que también el efecto de dicho reporting y de sus dimensiones en la CSRR será distinto. Sobre la base de esta idea se propone la tercera hipótesis de investigación:

**H3: La interacción entre la industria y el reporting a grupos de interés influye de manera significativa en la relación entre (a) la intensidad y (b) la orientación del reporting a grupos de interés y la CSRR.**

#### 4. Metodología

La muestra del estudio está compuesta por las empresas incluidas en el índice “MercoEmpresas Responsables”. Merco clasifica a las empresas españolas en función de su reputación después de ser evaluadas por más de 1.500 altos ejecutivos, analistas financieros, ONGs, sindicatos, asociaciones de consumidores y líderes de opinión. El cuestionario consta de tres ítems relacionados con la RSC y la ética empresarial, que se utilizan para construir el índice “MercoEmpresas Responsables”. Estos ítems son los siguientes: (1) Comportamiento Ético Empresarial; (2) Compromiso con la Comunidad y (3) Responsabilidad Social y Ambiental. En 2013, Merco ha clasificado a las 100 mejores empresas españolas en función de su desempeño en RSC. Sin embargo, para el propósito de este estudio se suprimen 16 empresas, ya que no publican informes de sostenibilidad o RSC de manera periódica. De forma similar a la clasificación propuesta por Melo y Garrido (2012), las empresas de la muestra se asignan a una de las siguientes industrias<sup>1</sup>: 1) básica, 2) de bienes de consumo, 3) financiera o 4) de servicios. El perfil de las industrias analizadas en este estudio se presenta en la Tabla 1.

TABLA 1  
Perfil de la muestra

Industrias	Muestra	Variables de control	Media	D.T.	Min.	Max.
<b>Básica</b>	21	Edad	53.90	31.46	5	111
	21	Tamaño (empleados)	30,566	41,138	378	164,923
	21	Performance financiera (ROA)	3.26	3.49	-2.53	11.69
	21	Riesgo (Ratio de deuda)	75.70	11.74	55.77	94.15
<b>Bienes de consumo</b>	26	Edad	44.12	24.60	20	103
	26	Tamaño (empleados)	5,963	19,412	64	100,138
	26	Performance financiera (ROA)	11.68	12.72	0.58	49.37
	26	Riesgo (Ratio de deuda)	67.04	17.20	34.63	96.11
<b>Finanzas</b>	13	Edad	49.69	39.26	9	131
	13	Tamaño (empleados)	22,886	51,542	107	190,604
	13	Performance financiera (ROA)	1.13	1.24	0.12	3.77
	13	Riesgo (Ratio de deuda)	86.99	15.85	37.36	99.73
<b>Servicios</b>	24	Edad	34.54	24.37	3	102
	24	Tamaño (empleados)	30,352	59,449	131	286,144
	24	Performance financiera (ROA)	4.49	7.77	-13.26	22.58
	24	Riesgo (Ratio de deuda)	69.23	17.57	29.03	97.28

Para medir el reporting a grupos de interés, los autores realizan un análisis de contenidos de los informes de sostenibilidad y RSC referentes al ejercicio 2011 (Gamerschlag et al., 2011; de los Ríos et al., 2012). Los autores utilizan la categorización de Fombrun et al. (2000) para definir las ocho dimensiones del reporting a grupos de interés de las empresas del índice “MercoEmpresas Responsables”: (1) empleados, (2) clientes, (3) inversores, (4) comunidad, (5) reguladores, (6) socios, (7) activistas y (8) medios de comunicación. Los ítems de cada dimensión son tomados de trabajos anteriores que han tratado de medir las actividades de RSC en diferentes industrias (Brammer y Pavelin, 2006; Michelon, 2011; Melo y Garrido, 2012; de

los Ríos et al., 2012). Cada ítem se evalúa en función de si la empresa trabaja en él (1) o no (0). La valoración de cada ítem responde a la frase “Esta empresa informa de importantes actividades implementadas (o resultados logrados) en este dominio de la RSC”. La puntuación final de una empresa en una dimensión de reporting a grupos de interés es la media ponderada de las evaluaciones obtenidas en cada uno de los ítems que forman la dimensión. Los autores también calculan la puntuación global de reporting a grupos de interés de cada empresa. Esta variable representa la suma de los resultados que cada empresa obtiene en todas las dimensiones de reporting<sup>ii</sup>. Cada informe es revisado por dos jueces de forma independiente y el coeficiente de concordancia entre jueces, calculado de acuerdo con Perrault y Leigh (1989), reporta un nivel de acuerdo del 99.6%, notablemente por encima del valor mínimo recomendado del 90%. En el apéndice se muestra información adicional con respecto a los ítems del reporting.

Para probar las hipótesis H1 y H2, primero se realizan análisis univariantes que permiten a los autores determinar la intensidad y orientación del reporting a grupos de interés en cada industria. También se calculan varios estadísticos F (ANOVA) para analizar si existen diferencias significativas entre las industrias relativas a la intensidad y orientación de su reporting a grupos de interés. Para testar la hipótesis H3, se realizan análisis multivariantes. En este sentido, se implementan dos análisis de regresión donde la CSRR es la variable dependiente. Las estimaciones se realizan aplicando mínimos cuadrados ordinarios (MCO) a través del estimador robusto. Este estimador utiliza la corrección de White con el fin de controlar los problemas de heterocedasticidad que suelen aparecer en este tipo de análisis. El primer modelo (1) incluye una medida global de reporting a grupos de interés como factor independiente que ayuda a explicar las puntuaciones de CSRR. Además, la muestra se divide en cuatro grupos, de acuerdo a cada industria de pertenencia de las empresas del índice “MercoEmpresas Responsables”. La regresión utilizada se muestra en el modelo (1) .

$$CSRR_i = \beta_0 + (\beta_1 + \beta_2 Consumo + \beta_3 Finanzas + \beta_4 Servicios) Reporting_i + \beta_5 Edad_i + \beta_6 Tama\tilde{n}o_i + \beta_7 ROA_i + \beta_8 Riesgo_i + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

Para llevar a cabo la prueba empírica, junto a la variable de reporting a grupos de interés en el modelo se incluyen tres variables de interacción. La incorporación de estas variables en el modelo permite a los autores obtener evidencia de la hipótesis H3. Para aquellas empresas que forman parte de la industria básica, se testa la hipótesis nula  $H_0: \beta_1=0$ . Si esta hipótesis nula es rechazada, entonces el coeficiente  $\beta_1$  es estadísticamente distinto de cero y mide la sensibilidad de la CSRR al reporting a grupos de interés para el caso de aquellas empresas que pertenecen a dicha industria. Con el fin de interpretar correctamente las variables de interacción, es necesario realizar una prueba de restricción lineal. Así, los autores ponen a prueba la hipótesis nula  $H_0: \beta_1 + \beta_2 = 0$  para la industria de bienes de consumo,  $H_0: \beta_1 + \beta_3 = 0$  para la industria financiera y  $H_0: \beta_1 + \beta_4 = 0$  para la industria de servicios. Si se rechazan estas hipótesis nulas, las sumas de los coeficientes son estadísticamente diferentes de cero y capturan la estimación de la sensibilidad de la CSRR al reporting a grupos de interés para cada industria.

El segundo modelo (2) incluye todas las dimensiones del reporting a grupos de interés como variables independientes, que interactúan con las variables ficticias de industria. Con el fin de interpretar correctamente las variables de interacción, es necesario realizar también pruebas de restricción lineales, como se ha comentado en la interpretación del modelo (1) .

$$CSRR_i = \beta_0 + (\beta_1 + \beta_2 Consumo + \beta_3 Finanzas + \beta_4 Servicios) Empleados_i + (\beta_5 + \beta_6 Consumo + \beta_7 Finanzas + \beta_8 Servicios) Clientes_i + (\beta_9 + \beta_{10} Consumo + \beta_{11} Finanzas + \beta_{12} Servicios) Inversores_i + (\beta_{13} + \beta_{14} Consumo + \beta_{15} Finanzas + \beta_{16} Servicios) Socios_i + (\beta_{17} + \beta_{18} Consumo + \beta_{19} Finanzas + \beta_{20} Servicios) Comunidad_i + (\beta_{21} + \beta_{22} Consumo + \beta_{23} Finanzas + \beta_{24} Servicios) Reguladores_i + (\beta_{25} + \beta_{26} Consumo + \beta_{27} Finanzas + \beta_{28} Servicios) Activistas_i + (\beta_{29} + \beta_{30} Consumo + \beta_{31} Finanzas + \beta_{32} Servicios) Medios_i + \beta_{33} Edad_i + \beta_{34} Tama\tilde{n}o_i + \beta_{35} ROA_i + \beta_{36} Riesgo_i + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (2)$$

Como se muestra en las ecuaciones (1) y (2), en los análisis también se incluyen variables de control para evitar cualquier sesgo en los resultados. En primer lugar, los autores controlan la edad de la empresa, diferenciando entre empresas “jóvenes” (10 años o menos) y “consolidadas” (más de 10 años). También se controla el tamaño corporativo, medido como el logaritmo del número de empleados (Gamerschlag et al., 2011). La tercera variable de control es el desempeño financiero, medido por la relación entre el beneficio antes de impuestos y los activos totales de la empresa (ROA) (Melo y Garrido, 2012). Por último, el ratio de deuda de las empresas se utiliza para controlar el riesgo corporativo.

## 5. Resultados

### 5.1. Análisis empíricos univariantes

Las Tablas 2 y 3 presentan los resultados de las estadísticas univariantes de CSRR e intensidad de reporting a grupos de interés. En primer lugar, se observa que no existen diferencias significativas en el índice de CSRR de las industrias básica, de bienes de consumo, finanzas y servicios ( $F=0.88$ ;  $p>0.1$ ), aunque sí que existen diferencias significativas en la intensidad del reporting ( $F=5.48$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). En concreto, las empresas financieras (media=0.53) y las empresas de la industria básica (media=0.48) aportan significativamente más información sobre su RSC que las empresas de bienes de consumo (media=0.38) y de servicios (media=0.39). Sin embargo, no se observan diferencias significativas entre la intensidad del reporting a grupos de interés de las empresas en las industrias de bienes de consumo y de servicios (dif.=|0.09|;  $p>0.1$ ) ni en las industrias financiera y básica (dif.=|0.43|;  $p>0.1$ ). Debido a que se esperaba que las empresas de las industrias básica y financiera aportasen significativamente más información a sus grupos de interés que cualquier otro tipo de empresas, la hipótesis H1 se acepta.

TABLA 2

#### Puntuaciones de CSRR

Industrias	Media	D.T.	Mín.	Max.	Estadístico F
Básica	0.46	0.16	0.30	0.91	0.88
Bienes de consumo	0.40	0.15	0.30	1.00	
Finanzas	0.48	0.15	0.31	0.82	
Servicios	0.44	0.15	0.30	0.98	

TABLA 3

#### Intensidad del reporting a grupos de interés

Industrias	Media	D.T.	Mín.	Max.	F	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Básica	0.48	0.18	0.19	0.77	5.48***	-	0.78*	-0.43	0.68*
Bienes de consumo	0.38	0.11	0.11	0.60		-	-1.20***	-0.09	
Finanzas	0.53	0.09	0.33	0.67		-	1.11**		
Servicios	0.39	0.12	0.15	0.61		-			

\*, \*\*, \*\*\* representan significatividad al 90%, 95% y 99%, respectivamente

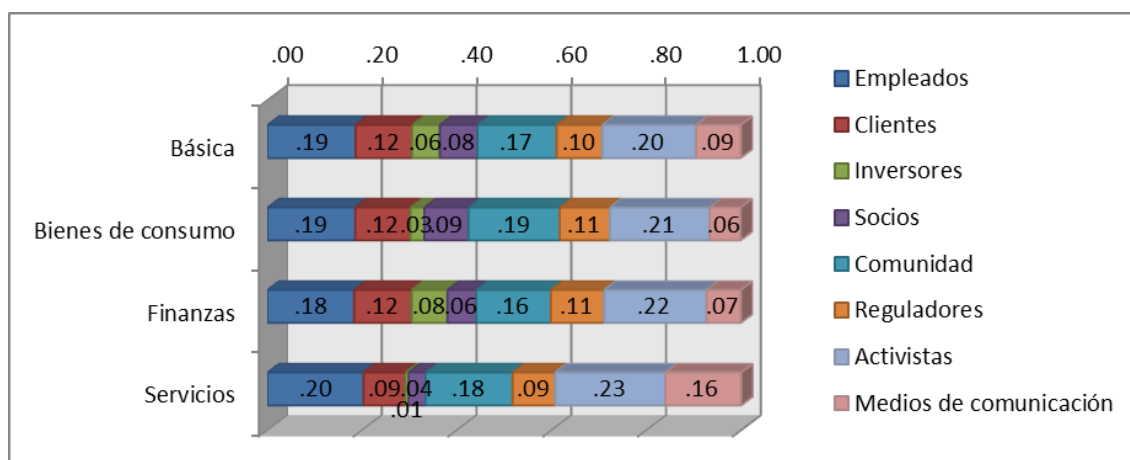
(1) Industria básica; (2) bienes de consumo; (3) finanzas; (4) servicio

La Figura 1 presenta los resultados relativos a la orientación del reporting a grupos de interés en cada industria. Los resultados muestran que en todas las industrias las empresas aportan la mayor cantidad de información a sus activistas ( $0.20 < \text{media} < 0.23$ ), empleados ( $0.18 < \text{media} < 0.20$ ) y a la comunidad ( $0.16 < \text{media} < 0.19$ ). En este sentido, la mayoría de las empresas en todas las industrias implementan actividades de voluntariado, participan en actividades de protección del medioambiente y se ocupan de las preocupaciones de sus empleados, como la diversidad, la formación, el desarrollo profesional, la igualdad de oportunidades o la prevención de riesgos. Por el contrario, la menor cantidad de información es la referida a los inversores ( $0.01 < \text{media} < 0.08$ ) y los socios, tales como proveedores y distribuidores ( $0.04 < \text{media} < 0.09$ ). Este tipo de información se refiere principalmente a resultados económicos que ya están incluidos en los informes financieros de las empresas o a

actividades realizadas por las empresas para garantizar que los proveedores y distribuidores se alinean con sus principios y objetivos en materia de RSC.

FIGURA 1

**Orientación del reporting a grupos de interés**



Al comparar las dimensiones del reporting a grupos de interés entre industrias (Tabla 4), se observa en primer lugar que no existen diferencias significativas en la cantidad de información aportada a la comunidad ( $F=1.68$ ;  $p>0.1$ ) y, como tal, se rechaza la hipótesis H2a. Por otra parte, tampoco existen diferencias significativas entre las industrias con respecto al reporting a clientes ( $F=1.28$ ;  $p>0.1$ ), socios ( $F=0.48$ ;  $p>0.1$ ) y activistas ( $F=2.05$ ;  $p>0.1$ ). No obstante, se observan diferencias significativas en el reporting a inversores ( $F=0.71$ ;  $p>0.01$ ), reguladores ( $F=3.07$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) y medios de comunicación ( $F=3.55$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Sin embargo, los resultados son contrarios a las expectativas de los autores. Las empresas de bienes de consumo siempre aportan menos información en estas dimensiones que las empresas en las industrias básica y de finanzas. Con base en estos resultados, se rechaza la hipótesis H2b. Por último, no se observan diferencias significativas entre las industrias en el reporting a empleados ( $F=4.00$ ;  $p>0.01$ ). En concreto, las empresas financieras reportan significativamente más información a los empleados que las empresas de las industrias básica (dif.=|0.12|;  $p<0.1$ ), de bienes de consumo (dif.=|0.16|;  $p<0.1$ ) y de servicios (dif.=|0.22|;  $p<0.01$ ). Los autores esperaban que, junto con la industria financiera, las empresas de servicios también informasen notablemente más a sus empleados que el resto de las industrias. No obstante, se observa que las empresas de servicios reportan la menor cantidad de información a sus empleados (media=0.57) y, como tal, la hipótesis H2c sólo se acepta parcialmente.

TABLA 4

**Orientación del reporting a grupos de interés**

Industrias	Media	D.T.	F	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<b>Empleados:</b>							
Básica	0.67	0.24	4.00***	-	0.04	-0.12*	0.10
Bienes de consumo	0.63	0.16		-	-	-0.16*	0.06
Finanzas	0.78	0.12		-	-	-	0.22***
Servicios	0.57	0.19		-	-	-	-
<b>Clientes:</b>							
Básica	0.42	0.22	1.28	-	-	-	-
Bienes de consumo	0.38	0.20		-	-	-	-
Finanzas	0.52	0.17		-	-	-	-
Servicios	0.41	0.23		-	-	-	-
<b>Inversores:</b>							
Básica	0.29	0.22	7.17***	-	0.20**	-0.04	0.22***
Bienes de consumo	0.08	0.23		-	-	-0.24***	0.02
Finanzas	0.32	0.28		-	-	-	0.26***

Servicios	0.07	0.15		-	-	-	-
<b>Socios:</b>							
Básica	0.30	0.24		-	-	-	-
Bienes de consumo	0.26	0.19	0.48	-	-	-	-
Finanzas	0.26	0.19		-	-	-	-
Servicios	0.23	0.15		-	-	-	-
<b>Comunidad:</b>							
Básica	0.63	0.20		-	-	-	-
Bienes de consumo	0.58	0.14	1.68	-	-	-	-
Finanzas	0.67	0.10		-	-	-	-
Servicios	0.58	0.20		-	-	-	-
<b>Reguladores:</b>							
Básica	0.39	0.30	3.07**	-	0.12	-0.09	0.15
Bienes de consumo	0.27	0.27		-	-	0.21	-0.03
Finanzas	0.48	0.22		-	-	-	0.24*
Servicios	0.24	0.26		-	-	-	-
<b>Activistas:</b>							
Básica	0.67	0.33		-	-	-	-
Bienes de consumo	0.73	0.32	2.05	-	-	-	-
Finanzas	0.92	0.19		-	-	-	-
Servicios	0.73	0.29		-	-	-	-
<b>Medios de comunicación:</b>							
Básica	0.48	0.43		-	0.32**	0.17	0.14
Bienes de consumo	0.15	0.24	3.55**	-	-	-0.15	-0.18
Finanzas	0.31	0.25		-	-	-	-0.03
Servicios	0.33	0.38		-	-	-	-

\*, \*\*, \*\*\* representan significatividad al 90%, 95% y 99%, respectivamente

(1) Industria básica; (2) bienes de consumo; (3) finanzas; (4) servicio

## 5.2. Análisis empíricos multivariantes

Las Tablas 5 y 6 muestran los resultados de las dos regresiones aplicadas para testar la hipótesis H3. En primer lugar, se observa que la intensidad del reporting a grupos de interés influye positivamente en la CSRR de la industria financiera ( $\beta=0.07$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Sin embargo, la intensidad del reporting no afecta significativamente a la CSRR en las industrias básica ( $\beta=0.05$ ;  $p>0.1$ ), de bienes de consumo ( $\beta=0.02$ ;  $p>0.1$ ) y de servicios ( $\beta=0.02$ ;  $p>0.1$ ). Cuando se analiza el papel de las dimensiones del reporting a grupos de interés sobre la CSRR, los resultados muestran que en la industria básica solamente el reporting a socios influye positivamente en la CSRR ( $\beta=0.83$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). En la industria de bienes de consumo sólo el reporting a clientes es importante para la CSRR, afectándola de manera negativa ( $\beta=-0.43$ ;  $p<0.1$ ). En las empresas de servicios, la CSRR viene influida positivamente por el reporting a empleados ( $\beta=0.94$ ;  $p<0.1$ ), pero está afectada negativamente por el reporting a reguladores ( $\beta=-0.82$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). Por último, hasta cuatro tipos de información a grupos de interés influyen en la CSRR en la industria financiera. En esta industria, la CSRR se ve afectada positivamente por el reporting a inversores ( $\beta=0.58$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) y activistas ( $\beta=0.58$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), pero se ve influida negativamente por la información a clientes ( $\beta=-1.04$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) y medios de comunicación ( $\beta=-0.78$ ;  $p<0.1$ ). Sobre la base de todos estos resultados, la hipótesis H3 es aceptada porque la influencia de (a) la intensidad y (b) la orientación del reporting a grupos de interés sobre la CSRR varía significativamente entre industrias.

En cuanto a las variables de control, se observa que las puntuaciones de la CSRR varían significativamente de acuerdo al tamaño de las empresas en las especificaciones I ( $\beta=0.05$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) y II ( $\beta=0.07$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). La CSRR también está influenciada significativamente por el riesgo corporativo en la especificación I ( $\beta=0.39$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). La edad y los resultados financieros son insignificantes al explicar cómo se construye la CSRR en las diferentes industrias.

TABLA 5  
Resultados de la regresión: Especificación I

Variables	Coeficientes
<b>Reporting a grupos de interés:</b>	
† Básica	0.05
† Bienes de consumo	0.02
† Finanzas	0.07**
† Servicios	0.02
<b>Edad</b>	-0.13
<b>Tamaño</b>	0.05**
<b>ROA</b>	0.45
<b>Riesgo</b>	-0.39**
<b>Constante</b>	8.01***
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.28
<b>Test de Wald</b>	3.60***

\*, \*\*, \*\*\* representan significatividad al 90%, 95% y 99%, respectivamente

† indica pruebas de restricción lineal para las interacciones entre el reporting a grupos de interés y cada dummy de industria

TABLA 6  
Resultados de la regresión: Especificación II

Variables	Coeficientes	Variables	Coeficientes
<b>Empleados:</b>		<b>Reguladores:</b>	
†† Básica	-0.08	†† Básica	0.39
†† Bienes de consumo	0.13	†† Bienes de consumo	-0.06
†† Finanzas	0.66	†† Finanzas	0.09
†† Servicios	0.94*	†† Servicios	-0.82***
<b>Clientes:</b>		<b>Activistas:</b>	
†† Básica	0.14	†† Básica	0.01
†† Bienes de consumo	-0.43*	†† Bienes de consumo	0.17
†† Finanzas	-1.04**	†† Finanzas	0.58***
†† Servicios	-0.20	†† Servicios	-0.08
<b>Inversores:</b>		<b>Medios de comunicación:</b>	
†† Básica	-0.03	†† Básica	-0.19
†† Bienes de consumo	0.37	†† Bienes de consumo	0.11
†† Finanzas	0.58***	†† Finanzas	-0.78*
†† Servicios	0.42	†† Servicios	-0.16
<b>Socios:</b>		<b>Edad</b>	
†† Básica	0.83**		0.12
†† Bienes de consumo	-0.23	<b>Tamaño</b>	
†† Finanzas	0.52		0.07***
†† Servicios	-0.16	<b>ROA</b>	
			0.31
		<b>Riesgo</b>	
			-0.14
		<b>Constante</b>	
			7.77***
<b>Comunidad:</b>		<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	
†† Básica	-0.42		0.66
†† Bienes de consumo	0.05	<b>Test de Wald</b>	
†† Finanzas	-0.68		6.49***
†† Servicios	-0.20		

\*, \*\*, \*\*\* representan significatividad al 90%, 95% y 99%, respectivamente

†† indica pruebas de restricción lineal para las interacciones entre el reporting a grupos de interés y cada dummy de industria

## 6. Discusión

La mayoría de los resultados de este trabajo son de alguna manera consistente con los hallazgos previos en la literatura académica, lo que demuestra que el reporting a grupos de interés de las empresas en España es acorde a las tendencias internacionales de información de RSC. Por ejemplo, las empresas de todas las industrias comunican sobretodo acerca de sus recursos



humanos, la comunidad y el medioambiente (Ghazali, 2007; Holder-Webb et al., 2009). También se demuestra que las empresas de la industria básica aportan significativamente más información a sus grupos de interés que las empresas en la mayoría de las otras industrias analizadas, debido a las fuertes presiones sociales derivadas de su visibilidad, el riesgo político y la intensa competencia (Gamerschlag et al., 2011). Además, las empresas de la industria básica aportan más información en casi todas las dimensiones de reporting consideradas en este trabajo (sólo igualadas por las empresas financieras). Por el contrario, las empresas en las industrias de bienes de consumo y servicios reportan significativamente menos información a grupos de interés debido a su bajo impacto medioambiental y social (Adams et al., 1998; Gamerschlag et al., 2011). Por último, las empresas financieras, que forman parte de una industria altamente intensiva en mano de obra, aportan significativamente más información sobre su RSC a empleados que las empresas del resto de industrias (Melo y Garrido, 2012).

No obstante, se observan también algunas características distintivas con respecto a los tipos de información reportada a los grupos de interés por parte de las empresas españolas de diferentes sectores de actividad. Por ejemplo se observa que, contrariamente a los resultados de investigadores previos, las empresas de la industria básica no reportan significativamente más información medioambiental y/o social que otras industrias (Reverte, 2009). Los autores justifican este resultado recurriendo a las crecientes presiones sufridas por casi todo tipo de empresas para incorporar consideraciones sociales y medioambientales en sus actividades empresariales. Por ejemplo, los minoristas se ven cada vez más criticados por diversos grupos de interés debido a su creciente peso económico y la importancia de las externalidades generadas por sus actividades en la sociedad y el medioambiente (Mejri y de Wolf, 2012). También las decisiones de préstamos de las empresas financieras tienen un impacto en el medioambiente (Day y Woodward, 2009) y este hecho justifica la gran cantidad de información presentada a la comunidad en esta industria. Por otra parte, si bien se espera que las empresas de bienes de consumo reporten significativamente más información que otras industrias en la mayoría de las dimensiones de reporting a grupos de interés (debido a la gran cantidad de agentes económicos a los que tienen que satisfacer), se ha demostrado que esta hipótesis no se cumple en el contexto español. Una vez más, este resultado puede ser justificado por las crecientes presiones que los grupos de interés ponen en las empresas de todos los sectores de actividad para que éstas adopten una planificación integral de sus actividades de RSC.

Los resultados que contradicen las expectativas de los autores son en su mayoría justificados por el reporting a grupos de interés de las empresas financieras. En este sentido, los resultados del trabajo demuestran que el reporting a grupos de interés es una herramienta de gestión especialmente relevante en la industria financiera española. Contrariamente a los hallazgos previos en otros países (por ejemplo, Day y Woodward, 2009), no sólo las empresas financieras reportan significativamente más información sobre su RSC que la mayoría de las industrias en el país, sino que también la presentación de este tipo de informes está vinculada de manera más estrecha a la reputación de RSC que la presentación de informes de RSC en las industrias básica, de bienes de consumo y de servicios. Estos resultados concuerdan con las teorías institucional y del coste político. En este sentido, aunque los investigadores no han considerado tradicionalmente la industria financiera como un sector de alto perfil, los recientes acontecimientos en España demuestran que las empresas financieras tienen la mayoría de las características identificadas en las industrias de alto perfil en diversos países (Roberts, 1992). Por ejemplo, la industria financiera se enfrenta actualmente a una grave crisis de confianza muy relacionada con la recesión económica en España. Los investigadores consideran que las crisis crean una forma de presión institucional que refleja los males sociales, constituye una amenaza a la legitimidad de las empresas y genera presiones institucionales por parte de los grupos de interés (Greening y Gray, 1994). De este modo, la crisis ha llevado a la industria financiera a ser altamente visible y sus costes políticos han aumentado de manera significativa. Estas circunstancias generan demandas de rendición de cuentas que se traducen en nuevas formas de presión coercitiva a cambio de una continua legitimidad en el mercado (Ghazali, 2007). En resumen, por tanto, las crisis pueden incrementar las presiones institucionales e influir claramente en las percepciones de reputación corporativa de los grupos de interés. Este hecho

lleva a las empresas financieras a reportar mucho más que cualquier otra industria en el país, siendo este reporting altamente relevante para mantener su reputación.

Por último, se observa que la intensidad de reporting a grupos de interés no influye significativamente en la CSRR en tres de las cuatro industrias analizadas en este trabajo (básica, de bienes de consumo y de servicios). En algunas de estas industrias hay algunos efectos de las dimensiones específicas de reporting, tales como empleados, clientes, reguladores y socios, pero estos resultados se encuentran sin duda muy lejos de las expectativas de los directivos en estas industrias. En el caso de las industrias de bienes de consumo y servicios, los resultados podrían estar estrechamente relacionados con la baja intensidad de su reporting. En cuanto a la industria básica, los autores creen que las empresas no están enfocando correctamente sus informes de RSC. Por ejemplo, los resultados del estudio de Holder-Webb et al. (2009) demuestran que, en un contexto de recuperación de legitimidad, la única área importante para la industria básica se encuentra en la categoría de asuntos medioambientales. Sin embargo, este no es el caso en España, donde el reporting de información a la comunidad (incluyendo la información medioambiental) no es el más extenso. Las empresas aportan significativamente más información a otros colectivos, como los empleados. Al mismo tiempo, no existen diferencias significativas en el reporting a la comunidad entre la industria básica y el resto de industrias.

## **7. Conclusiones, limitaciones y líneas futuras de investigación**

En esta ponencia los autores describen las prácticas de reporting empresarial a grupos de interés en España y establecen la relación que existe entre este reporting y la reputación de RSC de las empresas. Los resultados demuestran que la presentación de informes de RSC es especialmente relevante y útil en la industria financiera, que recientemente ha sido acusada de ser el principal culpable de la actual recesión económica (de los Ríos et al., 2012; Rodríguez et al., 2013). Aun cuando es cierto que la industria financiera no tiene significativamente mejor reputación que otras industrias en España, los resultados del trabajo sugieren que si las empresas financieras no reportasen tanta y tan variada cantidad de información sobre su RSC como hacen, su reputación sería notablemente menor de lo que es. La crisis económica ha afectado seriamente a esta industria y el hecho de que el reporting a grupos de interés esté influyendo positivamente en su reputación implica que menos comunicación tendría efectos perjudiciales en su posicionamiento e imagen. Estos resultados son de gran interés para los directivos de la industria financiera porque justifican la utilidad y pertinencia de los informes de sostenibilidad y RSC que se están desarrollando en este contexto. Algunas otras consecuencias son también relevantes para el resto de industrias en España porque se ofrecen ideas interesantes sobre cómo las empresas pueden mejorar sus informes de RSC y su impacto en la reputación corporativa.

De todos modos, este estudio no está exento de limitaciones. En primer lugar, los investigadores han confirmado recientemente que hay un problema de endogeneidad en la relación entre la comunicación y la reputación de RSC. Esta relación es bidireccional, de tal manera que no sólo la presentación de informes de RSC influye en cómo la sociedad percibe la reputación corporativa, sino que también esta percepción determina las actividades adoptadas y comunicadas por las empresas en el dominio de la RSC (Michelon, 2011). En consecuencia, los investigadores futuros deben dedicar atención a la dirección de la relación entre la comunicación y la reputación de RSC con el fin de desarrollar modelos que puedan promover un conocimiento académico más profundo sobre la relación RSC-reputación. Además, los autores eligen una categorización de reporting a grupos de interés que sólo tiene en cuenta los elementos más generales de la RSC. El objetivo es tener una herramienta de medición que puedan aplicarse al análisis de diversas industrias. Sin embargo, los autores consideran que los futuros investigadores que estén interesados en profundizar en el estudio de una sola industria puede ser que necesiten desarrollar temas específicos que añadan a esta clasificación con el fin de captar todo el significado del reporting en cada industria. Por ejemplo, las microfinanzas son especialmente relevante en la industria financiera y nuevos ítems podrían ser considerados en la evaluación de los informes de RSC en este contexto. Por último, la calidad de la información proporcionada por las empresas es también relevante (de los Ríos et al., 2012). Futuras líneas de

investigación deberían buscar formas más sofisticadas de evaluación del reporting a grupos de interés, teniendo también en cuenta la calidad de los informes de RSC.

## 8. Notas

i **Industria básica** (productos químicos, materiales de construcción, silvicultura, papel y siderurgia); **Bienes de consumo** (automóviles y piezas, ropa y calzado, textiles, electrodomésticos, mobiliario y revestimientos de suelo, procesadores de bebidas, procesadores de alimentos y agricultura, mantenimiento de la salud, gestión de hospitales, equipos médicos, productos para el hogar, productos personales, productos farmacéuticos, biotecnología, tabaco); **Finanzas** (servicios bancarios, aseguradoras); **Servicios** (minoristas, ocio y entretenimiento, medios de comunicación y fotografía, servicios de apoyo, transporte, distribución de alimentos y medicamentos, telecomunicaciones fijas, telecomunicaciones inalámbricas).

ii Con el propósito de simplificar la interpretación de los resultados, todos los índices que se discuten en la sección de resultados se convierten a una escala de 0-1.

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## 10. Apéndice

TABLA 7

### Ítems y dimensiones del reporting a grupos de interés

<p><b>EMPLEADOS:</b> (1) Formación y desarrollo; (2) Salud y seguridad; (3) Igualdad de oportunidades; (4) Diversidad; (5) Conciliación de la vida laboral y familiar; (6) Prestaciones sociales (buenas prestaciones de jubilación, participación en las ganancias y participación en la propiedad de la empresa, entre otros); (7) Libertad sindical, negociación colectiva y procedimientos de quejas colectivas; (8) Representación formal en la toma de decisiones; (9) Mecanismos comunicación y diálogo con los empleados; (10) Evaluación periódica de la satisfacción del empleado; (11) Política de retribuciones, indemnizaciones y recompensas; (12) Creación de empleo estable</p>
<p><b>CLIENTES:</b> (1) Precios competitivos y condiciones de pago; (2) Alta calidad del producto; (3) Alta innovación y accesibilidad; (4) Salud y seguridad del producto; (5) Desarrollo de productos para satisfacer las necesidades especiales de los clientes desventajados; (6) Confidencialidad; (7) Estándares y códigos voluntarios de prácticas de publicidad y marketing; (8) Transparencia en las prácticas de publicidad y marketing; (9) Mecanismos de comunicación y diálogo con los clientes; (10) Evaluación periódica de la satisfacción del cliente; (11) Iniciativas de RSC en colaboración con los clientes</p>
<p><b>INVERSORES:</b> (1) Derechos de los accionistas; (2) Representación formal en la toma de decisiones; (3) Mecanismos de comunicación y diálogo con los inversores; (4) Mecanismos de regulación para prohibir el uso de información privilegiada; (5) Reglas para fortalecer la independencia de los auditores; (6) Provisión de toda la información requerida a las agencias de calificación crediticia</p>
<p><b>SOCIOS:</b> (1) Política para garantizar la contratación ética en las instalaciones asociadas; (2) Política de restricciones en el uso del trabajo infantil y violación de los derechos humanos en los establecimientos asociados; (3) Inspección de las instalaciones de los socios en temas de salud, seguridad y aspectos medioambientales; (4) Política para la presentación de informes de RSC por parte de los socios; (5) Igualdad de oportunidades al establecer alianzas; (6) Política de pagos de precios competitivos a socios; (7) Iniciativas de RSC en colaboración con los socios</p>
<p><b>COMUNIDAD:</b> (1) Política, sistemas y rendimiento medioambiental; (2) Contribución social y caritativa; (3) Contribución educativa y cultural; (4) Programas de desarrollo económico; (5) Derechos humanos; (6) Contribución a las generaciones futuras; (7) Tener una fundación; (8) Consulta con los líderes de la comunidad para identificar temas emergentes</p>
<p><b>REGULADORES:</b> (1) Pago de los impuestos de forma regular y continua; (2) Cumplimiento de las leyes y regulaciones locales; (3) Programas anticorrupción y de denuncia de irregularidades; (4) Descripción de las políticas de lobbying</p>
<p><b>ACTIVISTAS:</b> (1) Actividades de voluntariado y programas de donaciones; (2) Asociaciones con organizaciones no gubernamentales y comunitarias, agencias gubernamentales y otros grupos de la industria dedicados a iniciativas de RSC</p>
<p><b>MEDIOS DE COMUNICACIÓN:</b> (1) Publicación periódica de información financiera y no financiera; (2) Gestión de las relaciones con los medios de comunicación</p>

LA COMPLEJA CONCEPTUALIZACIÓN DEL VOLUNTARIO Y LA RIQUEZA DE LA  
DIMENSIONALIDAD DE SU EXPERIENCIA: UNA APLICACIÓN EN EL ÁMBITO DE LOS  
EVENTOS

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## RESUMEN

*De la compleja conceptualización del voluntariado, proponemos tres dimensiones que definen al voluntario: la no remuneración, la estructura y la temporalidad. Un ejemplo que reúne las tres condiciones es el voluntario en mega-eventos, ámbito de nuestro estudio empírico. Basándonos en la conceptualización del valor percibido, proponemos dos objetivos: la creación de un índice compuesto a partir de las diferentes dimensiones de valor de la experiencia de voluntariado, y estudiar si existen diferencias significativas en el valor del índice en función de factores socio-demográficos. Las escalas son testadas y el índice propuesto con técnicas multivariantes sobre una muestra de 1427 voluntarios.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE:

Voluntariado, valor percibido, índice, mega-eventos

## 1. Introducción

Son múltiples las manifestaciones reales que del fenómeno del voluntariado se pueden observar en nuestras sociedades contemporáneas. En este sentido, a lo largo del último siglo, diferentes actividades y situaciones se han ido agregando al concepto y lo van construyendo y completando (Handy et al., 2000). Así, en lo que respecta a la evaluación estadística del voluntariado por países, las diferentes formas culturales que, como fenómeno social, éste puede adoptar, dificultan considerablemente su medición y su comparación. En un nivel macroeconómico, existen por tanto notables dificultades para encontrar criterios uniformes para determinar qué es y qué no es voluntariado (García-Mainar y Marcuello, 2007; Rotolo y Wilson, 2012)

En un análisis micro, sin embargo, existe abundante investigación sobre la riqueza psicológica y social de este comportamiento, siendo explicado a través de diferentes variables sociodemográficas como la edad (e.g. Callow, 2004; Handy et al., 2006), lugar de residencia (e.g. Handy et al., 2006; Rotolo and Wilson, 2012), y la religión (e.g. García-Mainar y Marcuello, 2007; Tao y Yeh, 2007; Rotolo y Wilson, 2012; van Ingen y Dekker, 2011; van Tienen et al., 2011),

Esta doble realidad, a saber por un lado, una notable dificultad para delimitar conceptualmente el voluntariado, y por otro, el interés por comprenderlo y explicarlo mediante la existencia de diferencias personales en el comportamiento del voluntario es la que ha impulsado este trabajo. En él proponemos, a imagen de otros trabajos anteriores (Gallarza et al. 2009; 2010; 2013) que la actividad del voluntario sea concebida como una experiencia de consumo que puede ser analizada a través de una variable endémica en el estudio del comportamiento del consumidor: el valor percibido. Ésta es considerada por muchos estudiosos como la piedra angular del estudio del marketing y de la gestión estratégica de los mercados (Nilson, 1992; Band, 1994; Heskett *et al.*, 1997; Woodruff, 1997).

Dedicar tiempo y esfuerzo a una actividad de voluntariado es una opción personal de uso de nuestros recursos en el mercado del tiempo libre, y por ello puede entenderse como un tipo de “consumo”, y ser analizado a partir del valor percibido derivado de la experiencia. Así, bajo este prisma disciplinar (comportamiento del consumidor) y metodológico (valor percibido) en este trabajo buscamos aportar mayor conocimiento sobre el fenómeno del voluntariado, en primer lugar de manera teórica, al ofrecer una visión de la gran variedad de conceptualizaciones del voluntariado y profundizar en los ejes conceptuales que lo delimitan, y en segundo lugar con una aproximación aplicada, al ofrecer un estudio empírico realizado sobre una de las expresiones más recientes y completas del voluntariado: la participación de voluntarios en la organización de mega-eventos turísticos.

Para ello, en primer lugar, en el marco conceptual se aborda la complejidad de la conceptualización del voluntariado y se proponen, de acuerdo con la literatura, tres ejes o dimensiones básicas que definen al voluntario las cuales se consideraran para la elección del ámbito y universo a estudiar. A continuación, se plantean los objetivos del estudio empírico y la metodología utilizada para conseguirlos. Basándonos en la conceptualización del valor percibido, se propone como primer objetivo la creación de un índice compuesto a partir de las diferentes dimensiones de valor de la experiencia de voluntariado, siendo el segundo objetivo estudiar si existen diferencias significativas en el valor medio del índice en función cuatro diferentes factores socio-demográficos. Para la consecución de los objetivos se utilizarán dimensiones y escalas recogidas de la literatura académica y se tratará la información obtenida de una muestra de 1427 voluntarios con técnicas multivariantes y univariantes. Se presentarán los resultados obtenidos, y por último las conclusiones, limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación.

## 2. Marco conceptual

En la actualidad, las acciones de voluntariado se orientan mayoritariamente no sólo a cubrir las necesidades básicas del entorno, sino a satisfacer intereses creados mucho más variados y heterogéneos, alcanzando sus intervenciones espacios más complejos e interactivos con otros agentes de la sociedad (García et al., 2011). El resultado es un sector heterogéneo y una realidad compleja en la que no sólo entran en juego diferentes instituciones (la empresa, la administración pública, etc.), sino que aparecen nuevas formas de hacer voluntariado, que necesitan de un reconocimiento y

reflexión por parte del sector: entre ellos por ejemplo, el microvoluntariado, el voluntariado cívico, o el voluntariado corporativo (Garrido, 2011). Como reflejo de esta realidad, institucionalmente Naciones Unidas reconoce cuatro tipos diferentes de actividad voluntaria: la ayuda mutua o autoayuda, la filantropía o el servicio a los demás, el compromiso de participación cívica, y la promoción o campaña (United Nations, 2011). Como señalan Mc Curley y Vesuvio (1985:14) “la única cosa que puede ser dicha con cierto nivel de certeza acerca del voluntariado es que éste no puede describirse como un algo monolítico”.

## 2.1. Difícil delimitación conceptual del voluntariado

De manera general, voluntariado es el conjunto de todas aquellas actividades realizadas sobre la base de un trabajo no remunerado y llevado a cabo tanto en un contexto de una empresa pública o privada, o de una asociación (Gallarza, 2000). No obstante, esta primera aproximación genérica, no siempre resulta ser coincidente con otras acepciones del término voluntario que encontramos tanto en la literatura científica, como en las expresiones más coloquiales. Es un concepto relativamente polisémico, y por tanto de difícil concreción.

Por todo ello, la delimitación conceptual de lo que es un voluntario, y por ende, del fenómeno del voluntariado no es siempre fácil y nítida. Muchas veces, incluso a nivel personal, es difícil definirse incluso a uno mismo en términos de voluntario porque no se sabe si las actividades que se realizan se pueden considerar realmente voluntariado o no (Cnaan, Handy y Wadsworth, 1996).

Las aproximaciones más normativas, como el diccionario María Moliner define voluntario como: “Persona que se presta voluntariamente a realizar un acto”. La Real Academia establece que voluntario es, “persona que, por su propia voluntad se presta a hacer un servicio o trabajo” (2011, XXII Edición); sin embargo, esta es sólo la cuarta de cinco acepciones que recoge el DRAE, lo que ilustra la complejidad y riqueza del concepto.

La perspectiva institucional tampoco es unívoca: el voluntariado se ha definido desde distintos organismos tanto internacionales (Naciones Unidas, La Declaración Universal sobre voluntariado de la Asociación Internacional por el Esfuerzo Voluntario, etc.), como nacionales (Ley española sobre voluntariado) o autonómicas (por ejemplo Ley autonómica de la Comunidad Valenciana sobre Voluntariado). Estas aproximaciones no son todas coincidentes, por lo que las hemos listado en forma de cuadro (Cuadro 1), junto con otras definiciones halladas en la literatura, con objeto de ilustrar nuestro objetivo de ofrecer una visión de esta variedad de conceptualizaciones del voluntariado.

Cuadro 1  
Distintas conceptualizaciones de voluntario y voluntariado

<i>Definición</i>	<i>Fuente</i>
Una persona voluntaria es aquella que, sensibilizada por la situación social de los colectivos desfavorecidos, excluidos o marginados, decide, de manera altruista y solidaria participar, junto con otras, en diferentes proyectos dentro de una organización de voluntariado, dedicando parte de su tiempo en beneficio de una acción enmarcada en proyectos concretos.	Plataforma del Voluntariado en España (2011) <sup>1</sup>
Se define voluntariado como el conjunto de actividades de interés general, desarrolladas por personas físicas, siempre que las mismas no se realicen en virtud de una relación laboral, funcionarial, mercantil o cualquier otra retribuida y reúna los siguientes requisitos.	Ley de voluntariado de 15 de enero de 1996
Aquella persona que se compromete (noción de compromiso), por iniciativa propia (noción de libertad), de manera desinteresada (noción de acto sin finalidad lucrativa) en una acción organizada (noción de pertenencia a un grupo o una estructura) al servicio de la comunidad (noción de interés común).	Ariño (1999)
Tres características clave definen el voluntariado. 1. No debe llevarse a cabo principalmente por una compensación económica, aunque el reembolso de gastos puede permitirse. 2. Debe llevarse a cabo de forma voluntaria, por propia voluntad individual. 3. Debe ser de beneficio para alguien que no sea el voluntario, o para la sociedad en general, aunque se reconoce que el voluntariado también aporta un	United Nations Volunteers Report, Geneva, February 2001

<sup>1</sup> Además de esta definición disponible en el glosario, en la dirección <http://www.plataformavoluntariado.org/web/s/6-voluntariado/9-guia-sobre-el-voluntariado>, se pueden encontrar otras 12 definiciones de voluntariado de distintos autores e instituciones

beneficio significativo para el voluntario.	
Voluntariado en sentido amplio: Todo aquel que dedica una hora al mes, como mínimo, a una organización no lucrativa. Voluntariado en sentido estricto: todo aquel que dedica más de 16 horas mensuales a una de estas organizaciones.	Ruiz de Olabuénaga (2001)
El concepto de voluntariado del VNU (Programa de Voluntarios de las Naciones Unidas, basado principalmente en trabajar por solidaridad, sin sentirse obligado y sin que la remuneración económica sea el principal estímulo.	SLE Centros de Estudios Avanzados para el Desarrollo Rural (2001)
Consideramos como persona voluntaria aquella que ofrece colaboración (tiempo u otro tipo de recursos) a una Institución sin fines de lucro con el propósito de producir un bien colectivo. Se trata pues de una acción libre, altruista, sin contraprestación económica, orientada al compromiso comunitario.	Ariño, Cuco y Giner (2001: 9)
El prototipo de voluntariado se identifica con una persona que elige libremente prestar algún tipo de ayuda o servicio a otros, que en principio son desconocidos, sin recibir ni esperar recompensa económica alguna por ello y que trabaja en el contexto de una organización formalmente constituida sin ánimo de lucro (o en una Administración).	Chacón y Vecina (2002:29)
Voluntario es aquella persona que ejerce una actividad que consiste en pasar un tiempo, no remunerado (a excepción de los viajes y el otro medio autorizado a los gastos de bolsillo), haciendo algo que tiene como objetivo beneficiar a un tercero que no sea un pariente cercano, o además de él.	The 1997 Police Act (Criminal Records Regulations, 2002) <sup>2</sup>
Voluntario es un individuo que ofrece su servicio o trabajo sin esperar una compensación monetaria a cambio, aunque el servicio prestado origina beneficios tanto al propio individuo como a terceros.	Shim y Kleiner (2003:69)
El voluntariado es la entrega de tiempo y energía a través de un tercero, que puede aportar beneficios cuantificables a los voluntarios, a beneficiarios individuales, grupos y organizaciones, comunidades, medio ambiente y la sociedad en general. Es una elección realizada por propia y libre voluntad, y no está motivada principalmente por fines de lucro o por un sueldo o salario.	Scottish Government – (Volunteering Strategy May 2004) <sup>3</sup>
Cualquier actividad no obligatoria que consiste en pasar el tiempo, no remunerado, haciendo algo en beneficio de los demás (con exclusión de los familiares), la sociedad o el medio ambiente.	(UK Government, 2007)
El voluntariado es una forma de participación de la ciudadanía en la sociedad a través de las organizaciones del tercer sector. De forma libre y por voluntad propia, estas personas deciden participar en la mejora de su entorno implicándose en diferentes causas a través de las entidades sin ánimo de lucro.	García et al. (2011)

## 2.2. Dimensiones definatorias del voluntariado

De la revisión de la literatura y del análisis del Cuadro 1, se pueden proponer una serie de dimensiones comunes a todas estas definiciones. Así, entendemos que las dimensiones definatorias de las actividades de voluntariado son: que tengan carácter altruista y solidario; que su realización sea libre, sin que tengan su causa en una obligación personal o deber jurídico; que se lleven a cabo sin contraprestación económica, sin perjuicio del derecho al reembolso de los gastos que el desempeño de la actividad voluntaria ocasione; y que se desarrollen a través de organizaciones privadas o públicas y con arreglo a programas y proyectos concretos.

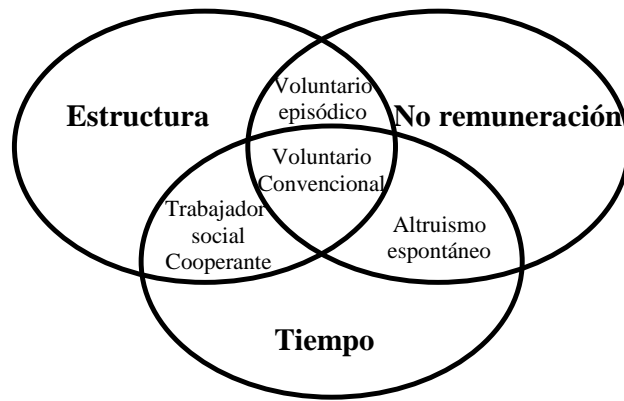
Como paso final en la progresión de nuestro propósito de describir la morfología dispar del concepto y fenómeno del voluntariado, proponemos la Figura 1: un diagrama de Venn construido a la luz de los diferentes criterios definatorios de la actividad de voluntariado revisados hasta ahora. Este diagrama busca evidenciar la existencia de una situación que llamaremos “convencional” cuando coinciden los tres ejes definatorios del voluntariado, y de tres situaciones afines, definidas por los tres círculos y por sus solapamientos. Con el siguiente diagrama buscamos explorar el amplio espectro de actividades relacionadas con el voluntariado con el fin de proporcionar una mejor comprensión de su idiosincrasia.

Figura 1.  
Ejes definatorios del voluntariado

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/233/contents/made>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/05/19348/36996>





Del análisis del contenido de las definiciones de voluntariado recogidas, inicialmente dos dimensiones: la *necesidad de estructura* y la ausencia de *remuneración*, pueden ser consideradas como ejes conceptuales básicos del voluntariado. Una tercera dimensión, el *marco temporal*, es propuesta en varias de las definiciones contenidas en el Cuadro 1, además de en los trabajos de Handy et al. (2006), Smith et al. (2010) y Holmes et al. (2010).

De acuerdo con estos tres ejes, un voluntario "convencional" puede ser definido como una persona que ejerce una actividad no remunerada, dentro de una estructura formal (pública, privada o sin fines de lucro), y que implica algún tipo de compromiso de tiempo, es decir, una actividad que abarca las tres dimensiones de forma simultánea.

Si esta actividad es **remunerada**, teóricamente no puede considerarse como voluntariado, aunque la tarea emprendida sea exactamente la misma: estaríamos por tanto en la situación híbrida que refleja nuestro diagrama como es por ejemplo, la actividad de un cooperante o la de un asalariado de ONG. Es muy habitual que entre los recursos humanos de las organizaciones pertenecientes a la economía social cohabiten estos tipos de trabajadores con voluntarios. Cabe resaltar, que investigaciones tanto clásicas como muy recientes han destacado diferencias de percepción entre, las organizaciones con voluntarios, y las que disponen de personal remunerado (Kreutzer y Jäger, 2011; Pearce, 1980).

Por otra parte, si la actividad que realiza una persona consiste en llevar a cabo acciones no **estructuradas** se trata de un comportamiento altruista individual a menudo llamado "ayuda espontánea" (Clary y Snyder, 1991, p. 120). Es un cierto "voluntariado informal" que recoge acciones puntuales de solidaridad: ayudar a cruzar a un invidente o socorrer a un vecino en un momento dado pueden ser ejemplos de estas situaciones, que en nuestro diagrama hemos llamado "altruismo espontáneo". Se trata de un comportamiento no planificado que aparecen en entornos privados (Van Tienen et al., 2011). Académicamente estaríamos dentro del espectro de la llamada "generosidad conspicua" (Ellingsen y Johannesson, 2011, p. 1131). Este tipo de situación puede ser denominado un servicio *amateur* o "de aficionados", frente a una misma actividad más estructurada, llevada a cabo por voluntarios.

El origen de ambos comportamientos "amateur y más profesionalizado como es el del voluntario dentro de una estructura) es el mismo: expresiones de un comportamiento pro-social. En este sentido, algunos autores apuntan como ejemplo de la raíz de este comportamiento pro-social del voluntariado la parábola bíblica del buen samaritano (e.g. Clary y Snyder, 1991). No obstante, queda claro que esta ayuda espontánea no es considerada voluntariado por carecer de estructura. La ley del Voluntariado deja claro que quedan excluidas como voluntariado "las actuaciones voluntarias aisladas, esporádicas o prestadas al margen de organizaciones públicas o privadas sin ánimo de lucro, ejecutadas por razones familiares, de amistad o buena vecindad".

En nuestra opinión, esta delimitación entre ayuda "estructurada" o "no estructurada" es una zona gris en la conceptualización del voluntariado: es necesaria para la contabilización del fenómeno pero es la que está en la raíz de las manifestaciones tautológicas culturales que describíamos en el primer epígrafe, y que dejan a España en peor lugar que otros países en su comportamiento solidario. Tradicionalmente en España, el voluntariado se relacionaba con servicios sociales en aquellas áreas a

las que los gobiernos e instituciones públicas no llegaban (García-Mainar y Marcuello, 2007). En la actualidad, creemos que muchos ciudadanos no se consideran “voluntarios” y por ende no son contabilizados en las estadísticas oficiales, porque desempeñen actividades de carácter “amateur” (por ejemplo participaciones en asociaciones de padres de colegios, o asociaciones de barrio, culturales, religiosas u otras). Además, la ayuda a familiares o a vecinos es también una actividad que carece de estructura, pero la misma actividad en otros países como Australia, Reino Unido o EE.UU, puede pertenecer a estructuras gubernamentales de carácter más local, y por tanto si comprender a voluntarios convencionales. Este análisis pone en evidencia el juego que provocan las restricciones culturales y sociológicas en la definición y la medición de voluntariado.

En cuanto al tercer eje, en términos de **compromiso de tiempo**, no existe una delimitación unívoca de la necesaria dedicación temporal para ser considerado voluntario; aunque algunas instituciones y autores sí tratan de cifrarlo. Esta situación en la conceptualización del voluntariado se ha discutido en la literatura, diferenciando entre "voluntario regular" y "voluntario episódico" (Holmes et al., 2010, p. 265). Este último identifica a las personas que sólo desean ayudar en tareas cortas y bien definidas. Las diferencias específicas en el comportamiento episódico de voluntariado se han encontrado en términos de edad, lugar de nacimiento y de residencia (Handy et al., 2006).

**En definitiva**, cuanto más tratamos de delimitar el fenómeno, más situaciones híbridas escapan y más se empobrece la verdadera naturaleza del voluntariado. Ante estos debates, un cínico podría preguntar: ¿qué grado de consanguinidad debe alcanzar la persona receptora de nuestra solidaridad, y con qué frecuencia horaria debemos dispensarla para poder ser considerados formablemente voluntarios? Por ello consideramos que la necesidad de estadísticas, nacionales o transaccionales, no debe coartarnos en la descripción y análisis de la experiencia psicológica, social y económica del voluntariado.

Por todo ello, dada la amplitud (normativa y positiva) de comportamientos posibles de voluntariado, creemos que el investigador interesado en su comprensión debe adoptar una óptica subjetivista y fenomenológica: es voluntario, el individuo que se siente voluntario en algún momento, en la medida en que destina unos recursos personales a una actividad no remunerada. En este sentido, basándonos en algunos trabajos recientes que han estudiado el voluntariado desde el prisma disciplinar del comportamiento del consumidor (Gallarza et al., 2009; 2010; 2013), proponemos a continuación un estudio empírico que ilustre este fenómeno como comportamiento rico y complejo en una de sus manifestaciones particulares, el voluntariado en mega-eventos. En correspondencia con nuestro marco teórico, el perfil del voluntario elegido para la aproximación empírica reúne las siguientes características: actividad no remunerada, estructurada (la organización de un evento), y con duración temporal o voluntario episódico (cf. Figura 1). Este último rasgo definitorio de la actividad de voluntariado resulta de especial relevancia para el caso concreto investigado, como veremos más adelante, puesto que muchos de los voluntarios que participan en eventos son episódicos en un evento determinado evento (con duración obviamente limitada) pero también son voluntarios regulares en otras actividades, e incluso otros eventos similares. Las diferencias entre unos y otros en la evaluación de su experiencia resulta de interés. Metodológicamente, para el caso específico del tipo de voluntariado investigado, será la naturaleza multidimensional del valor la que nos permitirá, mediante la creación de un índice compuesto a partir de las diferentes dimensiones de valor de la experiencia de voluntariado, conocer mejor la particularidad de este comportamiento de voluntariado.

### **3. Objetivos y metodología del estudio empírico**

#### ***3.1. Ámbito elegido: la participación de voluntarios en mega-eventos***

Los mega-eventos y con ellos la necesaria y masiva participación de individuos como voluntarios en su organización y desarrollo, son expresiones, cada vez más complejas y espectaculares, del potencial de organización y gestión que poseen ciudades, países y administraciones públicas de todos los niveles (Ritchie, 1994; Elstad, 1996; Fayos-Sola, 1997). Además, desde el punto de vista del individuo son ocasiones de expresar un orgullo cívico y una voluntad de participación activa o pasiva como un rasgo de personalidad colectiva de nuestras sociedades modernas (Kemp, 2002; Gursoy y Kendall, 2006; García-Mainar y Marcuello, 2007). Constituyen por tanto un interesante campo de estudio de la riqueza del voluntariado como comportamiento humano descrita anteriormente, y nos permiten ilustrar

dicha riqueza en la medición de percepciones y evaluaciones que difieran por individuos.

La Jornada Mundial de la Juventud (JMJ) es un gran evento religioso y cultural que desde 1985 y cada tres años reúne a jóvenes de todo el mundo durante una semana. Es el evento más internacional y multitudinario que organiza la Iglesia Católica en todo el mundo.

En agosto de 2011, la JMJ congregó en Madrid a más de un millón de jóvenes procedentes de 139 países de los cinco continentes (Europa Press (14/08/2011)). Según datos de la organización de la JMJ Madrid 2011, siguiendo los porcentajes de otras JMJ, aproximadamente un tercio es del área metropolitana de la ciudad donde se celebra, otro tercio del país organizador, y el resto peregrinos de todos los países del mundo; la edad de los jóvenes oscila entre los 15-30 años, con media de edad de 23,9 años, de los cuales 43% son mujeres y 57% hombres. Según los organizadores, cerca de 22.400 voluntarios participaron en el evento; y también citando a Europa Press (14/08/2011) su edad está entre 20 y 23 años, y el país que más voluntarios aporta después de España (12.185), es Polonia (1.048) seguido de Italia (182), México (91), Francia (81), República Democrática del Congo (67), Eslovaquia (53), Croacia (52), Brasil (48), Portugal (40), y Estados Unidos (37). Los voluntarios se responsabilizaron de funciones de atención a los participantes y su acogida en estaciones de tren, autobús y aeropuerto; información a los peregrinos en puntos de la ciudad; gestión de plataformas y redes sociales; colaboración en el centro de prensa, traducción e interpretación; y en la logística de los eventos, así como en el servicio de orden de los actos, el acompañamiento de las autoridades y la coordinación de grupos.

### *3.2. Objetivos del estudio empírico*

El objetivo genérico del estudio empírico es el de mejorar nuestro conocimiento de la morfología del voluntariado, aproximándonos a una de sus manifestaciones más ricas como es el voluntariado en eventos. Este objetivo genérico, metodológicamente se subdivide en dos objetivos específicos:

- a) construir un índice del valor de la experiencia del voluntario, que refleje la naturaleza multidimensional de la actividad desarrollada
- b) estudiar si existen diferencias significativas en el valor medio del índice en función de determinados factores socio-demográficos: edad, género, nivel de estudios y experiencia previa como voluntario.

### *3.3. Elección de dimensiones y escalas de valor*

La revisión de la literatura sobre voluntariado y grandes eventos permitió hallar múltiples trabajos anteriores, centrados principalmente en la motivación (e.g. Callow, 2004; Monga, 2006; Farrell et al., 1998; Strigas y Newton-Jackson, 2003; Saleh y Wood, 1998; Hibbert, Piacentini y Al Dajani, 2003; Handy et al., 2006). Son más escasos aquellos que analizan percepciones posteriores al evento, como la satisfacción o el valor percibido. Entre estos últimos, se retuvieron los trabajos de Gallarza y colegas (2009; 2010; 2013), que proponen escalas de valor percibido de la experiencia de voluntariado en eventos religiosos, construidas ad-hoc sobre la base de la propuesta conceptual de valor de Holbrook, y se decidió replicar la misma escala sobre una nueva experiencia de voluntariado: las Jornadas Mundiales de la Juventud.

Dentro de la amplia línea de investigación conceptual sobre valor, Holbrook es reconocido como pionero en la exploración de la dimensionalidad hedonista en el consumo (Holbrook y Hirschman, 1982; Holbrook y Corfman, 1985), y su posterior tipología (Holbrook, 1999) ha sido alabada porque *“permite una adaptación más sencilla a otra serie de experiencias de consumo como la religión, los artes y las experiencias de ocio”* (Day y Crask, 2000), lo que la hace muy atractiva para el tipo de experiencia que investigamos: ser voluntario en un evento religioso.

Esta tipología contempla ocho diferentes valores sobre la base de una matriz 2\*2\*2 de tres ejes conceptuales (extrínseco vs. intrínseco, orientado hacia sí mismo vs. hacia otros, y activo vs. reactivo), lo que genera ocho tipos diferentes de valor: eficiencia, excelencia, entretenimiento, estética, estatus, estima, ética y espiritualidad. De manera más simplificada (eludiendo el eje activo vs. reactivo) esta estructura, engloba cuatro facetas del comportamiento humano: funcional, social, hedonista y altruista:

- a) En la dimensión altruista, es decir, orientada a los otros, se consideró la espiritualidad para analizar la implicación en un evento religioso: se consideraron 3 indicadores relacionados con el apoyo dado a las familias y a la Iglesia Católica, junto con el orgullo cívico de ayudar a los otros y a la ciudad.
- b) En la dimensión social, puesto que el voluntariado tiene mucho que ver con la interacción social y el “servir a otros” frente a “servirse a uno mismo” (Handy et al., 2006), se contempla una escala de 9 indicadores relacionados con el conocimiento de nuevas personas, enriquecimiento por el reconocimiento de otras personas, familiares y amigos, felicidad de la gente alrededor, relación con los peregrinos, relación entre voluntarios, personas felices por intereses similares, el grupo es más importante que la tarea.
- c) Respecto a la dimensión hedonista, esto es de disfrute (extrínseca y personal en la tipología de Holbrook) se consideró el entretenimiento o diversión (6 ítems) para recoger la vertiente lúdica o de disfrute personal que conlleva una actividad por definición voluntaria: vivir una experiencia única, intensidad de la experiencia, entretenimiento y diversión, experiencia excitante, buen ambiente y carácter universal del evento.
- d) En la dimensión funcional se escogió la variable activa (eficiencia) frente a la reactiva (calidad como excelencia) puesto que ser voluntario es una experiencia de carácter activo más que reactivo; se concibe la percepción de eficiencia como medida de utilidad, y se propone para su evaluación una escala de 4 ítems sobre la organización del evento: las tareas asignadas, la obtención de experiencia laboral, gestión del tiempo, información dada y trabajo en grupo.

Excepto para la espiritualidad, variable demasiado contextualizada en los eventos religiosos, esta estructura de cuatro dimensiones es consistente con las investigaciones previas sobre la experiencia de voluntariado en eventos especiales que también miden aspectos funcionales, sociales y de disfrute (e.g., Strigas y Newton-Jackson, 2003; Farrell et al., 1998; Handy et al., 2006).

Por último, a imagen de los trabajos anteriores de Gallarza et al. (2009; 2010; 2013) y siguiendo algunas conceptualizaciones del valor llamadas *trade-off*, esto es, como balance entre sacrificios y costes (Zeithaml, 1988) se introdujo el coste del esfuerzo y el tiempo realizado (3 indicadores), por ser un sacrificio o coste habitual en la literatura de valor (Berry y Yadav, 1997), y por ser éste aplicable a la experiencia investigada como el coste de oportunidad de dedicar tiempo al servicio de voluntariado en lugar de a cualquier otra actividad: de este modo el tiempo es considerado como el único precio pagado por consumir voluntariado.

### 3.4. Construcción del índice

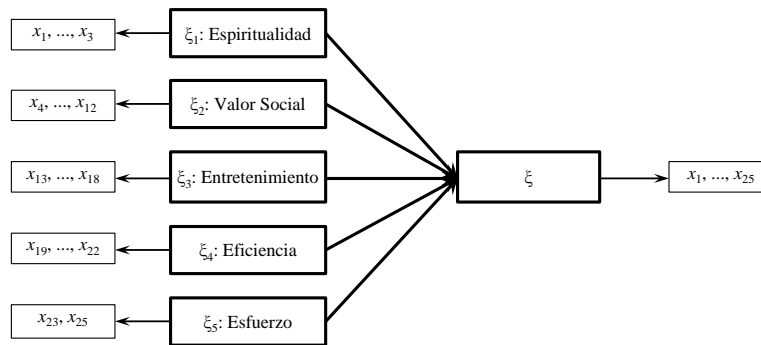
El cuestionario final contiene 25 indicadores que recogen, como describíamos anteriormente, los diferentes niveles de la experiencia de voluntariado: altruismo -espiritualidad- (comportamientos éticos, motivaciones religiosas); social -valor social- (conocer otra gente, establecer relaciones, amigos); hedonismo (diversión, entretenimiento); funcional -eficiencia- (hacer cosas útiles, ser útiles para otra gente); y sacrificio (costes de tiempo y esfuerzo realizados). Todos los indicadores, excepto en la dimensión de coste, fueron expresados positivamente con una escala Likert de 5 puntos. El cuestionario se envió por correo electrónico a todos los voluntarios de la base de datos de la organización de la JMJ (muestra de conveniencia), obteniéndose 1427 cuestionarios útiles.

El índice se ha creado especialmente para describir la auto-valoración de los voluntarios siguiendo el esquema de Guinot et al. (2001). El método se denomina Análisis Multi-Tabla y consiste en crear un modelo estructural en el que se agrupan los datos en varios bloques de indicadores, estando los indicadores incluidos en cada bloque relacionados entre sí de manera que cada bloque es, en esencia, unidimensional. El modelo estructural crea una variable latente para cada bloque y une todos los bloques, con el bloque resultante de la concatenación de todos los bloques.

En este caso los datos se disponen en 5 bloques, en consonancia con la dimensionalidad de valor propuesta: “espiritualidad”, “valor social”, “entretenimiento”, “eficiencia” y “esfuerzo”. En la Figura 2 se muestra el diagrama correspondiente al modelo estructural propuesto para la elaboración del índice.

Figura 2.

### Modelo estructural para el Análisis Multi-Tabla



Las variables latentes  $\xi_1$  a  $\xi_5$  representan un índice parcial (asociado a cada bloque de variables), de manera que  $\xi_1$  resume las variables asociadas a la espiritualidad,  $\xi_2$  resume las variables asociadas al valor social,  $\xi_3$  resume las variables asociadas al entretenimiento,  $\xi_4$  resume las variables asociadas a la eficiencia y  $\xi_5$  resume las variables asociadas al esfuerzo. La variable latente  $\xi$  representa un índice global de la percepción del gestor del valor entregado y se construye a partir de los 25 indicadores.

La forma de obtener el índice (su expresión explícita a partir de los indicadores) es estimar el modelo anterior, para lo cual emplearemos el método PLS, que nos proporciona el peso de los indicadores en la elaboración del índice. Para facilitar la lectura del índice, se ha normalizado a media 0 y varianza 1, de manera que, para calcular el valor del índice correspondiente a un individuo cuyas respuestas a las 25 preguntas son  $\{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_{25}\}$  se emplea la expresión:

$$t = Cte + \sum_{i=1}^{25} w_i x_i$$

Siendo  $Cte$  una constante y  $\{w_i\}_{i=1}^{25}$  los pesos de los 25 indicadores.

Los pesos  $w_i$  obtenidos nos permiten obtener, a partir de las respuestas originales a las 25 preguntas, el valor del índice, ya normalizado.

El índice se ha construido a partir de la valoración que hace el voluntario de su propia experiencia. Por consiguiente, el objetivo del índice es el de constituirse como una medida objetiva del valor de la experiencia, que de alguna manera, se mide a partir de los 25 indicadores. A mayor valor del índice, más altas (en cuanto al grado de acuerdo) son las valoraciones del voluntario.

La constante vale  $Cte = -7.0144$  y los pesos se muestran en la siguiente tabla:

Tabla 1.  
Pesos de los 25 indicadores

Espiritualidad	$w_1$	$w_2$	$w_3$							
	0.0360	0.0452	0.0367							
Valor Social	$w_4$	$w_5$	$w_6$	$w_7$	$w_8$	$w_9$	$w_{10}$	$w_{11}$	$w_{12}$	
	0.0313	0.0462	0.0258	0.0304	0.0456	0.0481	0.0422	0.0251	0.0555	
Entretenimiento	$w_{13}$	$w_{14}$	$w_{15}$	$w_{16}$	$w_{17}$	$w_{18}$				
	0.0564	0.0275	0.0384	0.0433	0.0464	0.0391				
Eficiencia	$w_{19}$	$w_{20}$	$w_{21}$	$w_{22}$						
	0.0245	0.0270	0.0292	0.0338						
Esfuerzo	$w_{23}$	$w_{24}$	$w_{25}$							
	0.0138	0.0142	0.0109							

## 4. Análisis y Resultados

Para dar respuesta al segundo de los objetivos específicos anunciados, se ha utilizado el análisis de la varianza (ANOVA) para estudiar qué factores (edad, sexo, nivel de estudios y experiencia) tienen un efecto significativo sobre el valor medio del índice, y se han representado los intervalos LSD (Least-

Significant Differences) para mostrar en qué consisten las eventuales diferencias significativas encontradas.

#### 4.1. Estudio multivariante

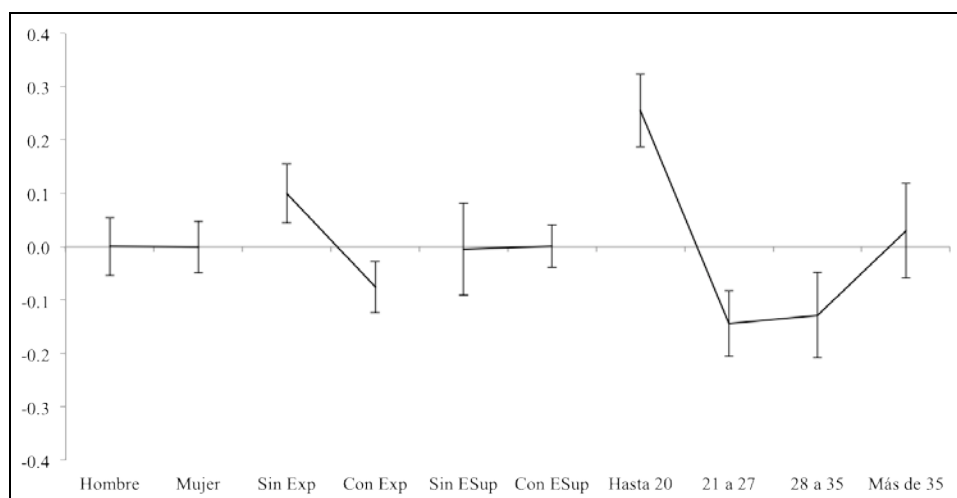
Tal y como se aprecia en la tabla 2 no se ha encontrado una evidencia lo suficientemente fuerte para rechazar la igualdad de medias. El valor medio del índice es significativamente mayor tanto para los individuos sin experiencia previa de voluntariado, como para los individuos con estudios superiores. Respecto a la edad, el valor medio del índice es significativamente mayor, para el grupo de los individuos de hasta 20 años que para el resto de los grupos. Por otra parte, el valor medio del índice para los mayores de 35 años es significativamente mayor que para los grupos de 21 a 27 años y de 28 a 35 años; mientras que no hay diferencia significativa de medias entre los grupos de 21 a 27 y de 28 a 35 años.

Tabla 2.  
Descripción de la muestra y significatividad de las medias.

<i>n</i>		<i>Media</i>	<i>p-value</i>
635	Hombre	0.0005	0.7767
729	Mujer	-0.0004	
616	Sin Experiencia previa	0.0998	0.0097
811	Con Experiencia previa	-0.0758	
251	Sin Estudios superiores	-0.0046	0.0032
1176	Con Estudios superiores	0.0010	
399	Hasta 20	0.2555	<0.0001
498	21 a 27	-0.1440	
291	28 a 35	-0.1285	
239	Más de 35	0.0299	

En la Figura 3 se muestra el gráfico de medias del valor del índice, con los intervalos LSD (Least Significant Differences), para cada segmento. La significatividad de la diferencia de medias se aprecia cuando los intervalos LSD correspondientes no se solapan.

Figura 3.  
Gráficos de medias e intervalos LSD para apreciar visualmente la significatividad de las diferencias de medias en los diferentes segmentos.



#### 4.2. Estudio univariante

Como un paso más en la consecución de nuestro objetivo, se realizó un estudio univariante, cuyo objetivo es estudiar el efecto de las variables de segmentación una a una, de forma que al estudiar, por ejemplo, el efecto del sexo, se agrupa a los individuos en hombres y mujeres, sin tener en cuenta la

edad, el nivel de estudios ni la experiencia previa. La diferencia con el estudio multivariante es que este último estudia el efecto de cada variable bloqueando el de las demás variables, es decir, como cambia el valor medio del índice con la variable de interés, fijando el valor de las demás variables. La diferencia es sutil, ya que en el estudio univariante se ignora el valor de las demás variables, mientras que en el multivariante se mantiene constante (se bloquea el efecto de las demás variables, para aislar el efecto de la que interesa estudiar).

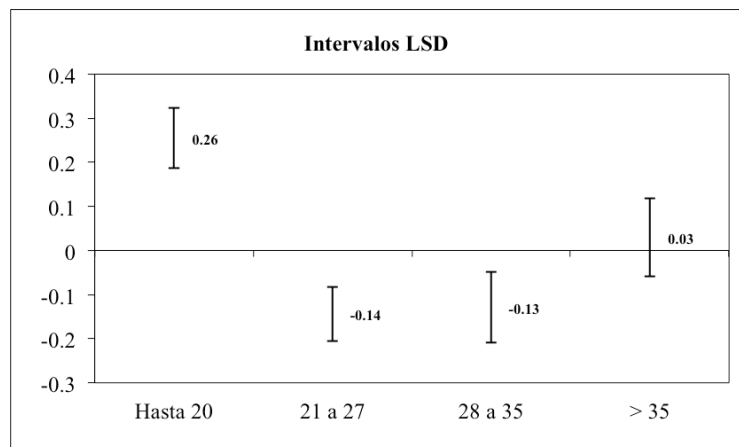
**Edad.** En la tabla 2 se recoge la distribución de la muestra por edades, mientras que la tabla 3 refleja que la edad tiene un efecto significativo sobre el valor medio del índice ( $p\text{-value} < 0,0001$ ).

Tabla 3.  
Efecto de la edad sobre el valor medio del índice (análisis univariante)

Fuente	SC	gl	CM	F-ratio	F-crítica	p-value
<b>Factor</b>	41.39	3	13.796	14.18	2.61	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>
<b>Residual</b>	1384.61	1423	0.973			
<b>Total</b>	1426	1426				

En la figura 4, se aprecia nítidamente que el valor medio del índice es significativamente mayor en el grupo de hasta 20 años que en los demás grupos. Para el grupo de mayores de 35 años el valor medio del índice es significativamente mayor que para los de los grupos entre 21 y 27 años y 28 a 35 años.

Figura 4.  
Gráfico de medias e intervalos LSD para el índice según la edad del voluntario



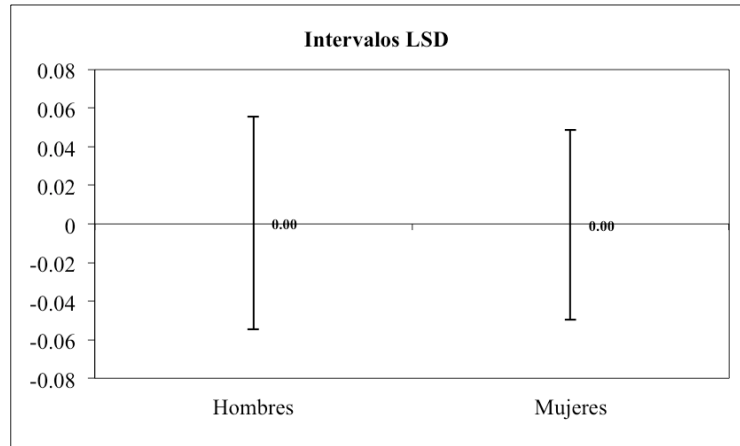
**Género.** El sexo no tiene un efecto significativo sobre el valor medio del índice ( $p\text{-value} = 0,9874$ ) tal y como se desprende de la tabla 4.

Tabla 4.  
Efecto del género sobre el valor medio del índice (análisis univariante)

Fuente	SC	gl	CM	F-ratio	F-crítica	p-value
<b>Factor</b>	0	1	0.000	0.00	3.85	<b>0.9874</b>
<b>Residual</b>	1426	1425	1.001			
<b>Total</b>	1426	1426				

Aceptamos que el valor medio del índice es el mismo en el grupo de los hombres y en de las mujeres, lo que se aprecia también claramente en la figura 5.

Figura 5.  
Gráfico de medias e intervalos LSD para el índice según el sexo del voluntario



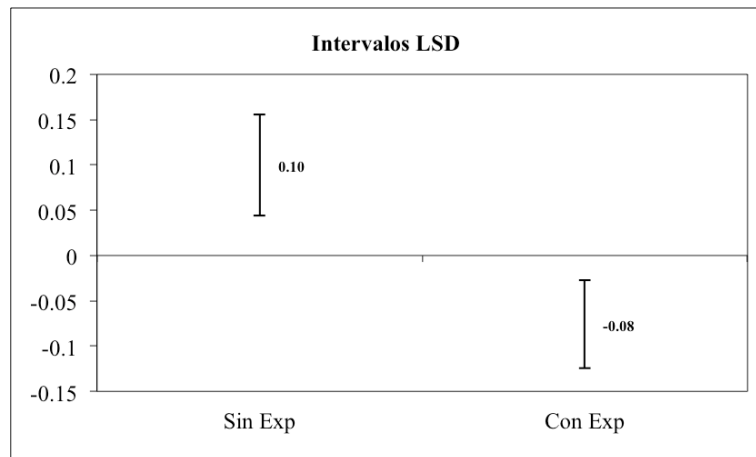
**Experiencia previa.** Tal y como se aprecia en la Tabla 5, la experiencia previa en cambio, sí tiene un efecto significativo sobre el valor medio del índice ( $p\text{-value}=0,0010$ ).

Tabla 5.  
Efecto de la experiencia previa sobre el valor medio del índice (análisis univariante)

Fuente	SC	gl	CM	F-ratio	F-crítica	p-value
<b>Factor</b>	10.8	1	10.800	10.87	3.85	0.0010
<b>Residual</b>	1415.2	1425	0.993			
<b>Total</b>	1426	1426				

En la figura siguiente (figura 6), se constata que el valor medio del índice es significativamente mayor en el grupo de voluntarios sin experiencia previa.

Figura 6.  
Gráfico de medias e intervalos LSD para el índice según la experiencia previa del voluntario



**Estudios Superiores.** El número de voluntarios en el grupo “sin estudios o estudios primarios” era muy escaso, por lo que se procedió a unir con el grupo de estudios secundarios tal y como se recogió en la Tabla 2.

Tabla 6.  
Efecto del nivel de estudios sobre el valor medio del índice (análisis univariante)

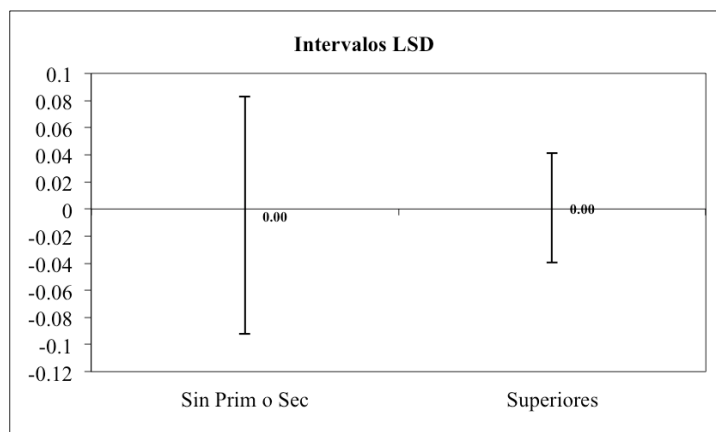
Fuente	SC	gl	CM	F-ratio	F-crítica	p-value
<b>Factor</b>	0.01	1	0.007	0.01	3.85	0.9355
<b>Residual</b>	1425.99	1425	1.001			



En la tabla 6 se aprecia que el nivel de estudios no tiene un efecto significativo sobre el valor medio del índice ( $p\text{-value}=0,9355$ ). Aceptamos que el valor medio del índice es el mismo independientemente del nivel de estudios tal y como se aprecia en la Figura 7.

Figura 7.

Gráfico de medias e intervalos LSD para el índice según el nivel de estudios del voluntario



## 5. Conclusiones

Este trabajo ha puesto de manifiesto como existen dificultades para normar y delimitar conceptualmente la actividad del voluntariado, actividad que por tanto resulta interesante analizar bajo el prisma del comportamiento del consumidor, y más concretamente a través del concepto de valor percibido. Así, nos hemos planteado, por una parte, el primer objetivo de construir un índice de valor percibido como medida objetiva de la auto-valoración de la experiencia de voluntario en un mega-evento religioso. Este índice se ha construido con una metodología particular que ha permitido agregar cinco dimensiones de la experiencia, combinando tanto valores positivos como negativos: eficiencia, espiritualidad, valor social, entretenimiento y esfuerzo realizado.

Por otra parte, en cuanto al segundo objetivo, al analizar los resultados sobre la valoración de la experiencia por diferentes variables sociodemográficas, hemos comprobado que no se aprecian diferencias por género o por edad entre los grupos, aunque los mayores de 50 años son los más positivos a la hora de valorar la experiencia. En cambio, si se aprecian diferencias significativas en el grupo de voluntarios con poca o nula experiencia, ya que este grupo valora la actividad de haber sido voluntario en este evento mucho más positivamente que el grupo con amplia experiencia en acciones de voluntariado. Este resultado es interesante en la medida en que la percepción de la tarea encomendada parece depender del carácter episódico o no del tipo de voluntariado: si la experiencia es repetida (voluntarios con experiencia en otros eventos), la valoración es menor, quizá por la pérdida de un efecto “novedad” que evidencia la diferente morfología del comportamiento del voluntario, que evidenciábamos en el marco teórico. En este caso, el estudio empírico ha refrendado la dimensión temporal en la medida en que hemos hallado diferencias significativas entre los voluntarios más episódicos, respecto de los más convencionales (que realizan la actividad con mayor frecuencia).

En lo que respecta a la gestión de los voluntarios, este resultado anima a plantearse cuál es el grado óptimo de rotación del personal voluntario, en la medida en que los que poseen experiencia pueden ser más críticos en su autovaloración, mientras que los menos experimentados pueden suplir su falta de conocimiento con una predisposición e ilusión mayores. De manera más generalizada, las diferencias significativas halladas en este estudio son de interés para la motivación y adiestramiento de voluntarios, en donde por ejemplo la eficiencia en los tiempos y tareas resulta un elemento importante, así como el componente de sociabilidad que este tipo de experiencia conlleva.

Apuntamos como limitaciones del trabajo, en primer lugar, la circunscripción del estudio empírico a un único evento, la JMJ, que además por su carácter religioso posee una idiosincrasia muy particular,

que hace difícil la extrapolación de una de las dimensiones del índice de valor (a saber, la espiritualidad) . En este sentido, en otros trabajos, esta dimensión podría sustituirse por un sentimiento de ética y/o de orgullo cívico, que podría encajar en la llamada dimensión altruista del valor. Además, aunque el tamaño de la muestra es importante, el tipo de muestreo es de conveniencia, lo que se añade a la dificultad de extrapolación de alguno de los resultados.

Las futuras líneas de investigación de este trabajo pueden venir de la explotación de la noción valor percibido, que se sabe crucial para la comprensión del comportamiento humano, en el mercado y también fuera de él. En este sentido, la estructura de valor de Holbrook, como argumentábamos más arriba, se elige como la más apropiada para la investigación en una experiencia de voluntariado religioso, puesto que engloba las facetas funcionales, sociales, hedonista y altruista del comportamiento humano. Pero entendiendo las múltiples morfologías que el fenómeno puede adoptar, tal y como se ha descrito en el marco conceptual, una tipología de valor tan amplia y rica permitiría estudiar también otras formas de voluntariado diferentes, en donde la relevancia de una u otra de las dimensiones, medidas también en forma de índice, podrían ilustrar la diversidad de valores derivados de este comportamiento. Un voluntariado corporativo, por ejemplo, conceptualizado dentro de una estructura, no remunerado y con una secuencia generalmente temporalizada, se espera que presente mejores puntuaciones en la dimensión funcional (eficiencia) y menos en las más sociales. Y otro tipo de acción voluntaria, de carácter más lúdico, como la de los grupos juveniles, o también el llamado turismo voluntario, debería puntuar mejor en las dimensiones hedonistas y sociales que en las funcionales y altruistas. Todas estas posibles adaptaciones de un índice de valor como el utilizado en este trabajo, que considera la multidimensionalidad de la actividad (con sus facetas funcionales, altruistas, sociales y hedonistas, además del coste esfuerzo asociados), se apuntan como futuras líneas de investigación en las que, a partir de una misma metodología (construcción de índices de valor, y búsqueda de diferencias sociodemográficas en las puntuaciones) se pudiera ilustrar y conocer mejor las diferentes manifestaciones de voluntariado.

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# LA INNOVACIÓN SOCIAL COMO RESULTADO DE LOS ACUERDOS DE COOPERACIÓN EMPRESA-ORGANIZACIÓN NO LUCRATIVA

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## RESUMEN

*Este trabajo proporciona evidencias sobre los mecanismos a través de los cuales los acuerdos de cooperación empresa-organización no lucrativa pueden dar origen a actividades de innovación social. En concreto, el estudio analiza el grado en que los acuerdos caracterizados por la presencia de confianza y compromiso fomentan un proceso de aprendizaje organizativo en la organización no lucrativa y promueven un conjunto de proyectos conjuntos de innovación social. La investigación empírica se basa en una encuesta realizada en dos etapas a una muestra representativa de fundaciones españolas. Los datos se han analizado a través de la técnica de los modelos de ecuaciones estructurales. Los resultados confirman la existencia de un vínculo positivo entre el grado de desarrollo relacional de la alianza y el nivel de aprendizaje organizativo sobre técnicas de gestión que tiene lugar en la fundación, así como el efecto positivo de este proceso de transferencia de conocimiento en las prácticas de innovación social.*

## Palabras clave:

*Acuerdos de cooperación empresa-ONG, proyectos colaborativos de valor añadido, aprendizaje organizativo, innovación social, fundaciones*

## 1. Introducción

La innovación social, entendida como “el desarrollo e implementación de nuevas ideas (productos, servicios y modelos) con el objetivo de satisfacer necesidades sociales” (Howaldt y Schwarz, 2010, p. 25), se ha convertido en una fuente de bienestar social y crecimiento económico. Como consecuencia, y a la luz de la evolución del concepto de Responsabilidad Social Corporativa (RSC) (Halme y Laurila, 2009; Porter y Kramer, 2011), representa un resultado crítico dentro de los enfoques que buscan generar valor económico para la empresa a través de su mejora competitiva, pero a la vez crear valor para las comunidades en las que opera la organización, a través del desarrollo de nuevos productos/servicios o modelos de negocio orientados a solucionar problemas sociales o medioambientales.

Aunque el término “innovación social” tiene varios significados, estos tipos de innovaciones comparten dos características básicas. La primera es que “para los emprendedores sociales, la misión social es explícita y central” (Gawel, 2013, p. 1076) y, tanto si se trata de organizaciones lucrativas que persiguen también un beneficio con estas iniciativas como de organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro (ONGs), su objetivo es desarrollar innovaciones que provoquen un cambio social. Por su parte, la segunda de las características comunes es que las prácticas de innovación social suponen la existencia de nuevas formas de colaboración entre las empresas, gobiernos, ONGs, ciudadanos, redes sociales, empleados y/o consumidores con relación a la innovación.

En general, se pueden distinguir tres grandes dimensiones en el concepto de “innovación social” (Moulaert et al., 2005): (1) la satisfacción de necesidades humanas que no están siendo cubiertas actualmente; (2) los cambios en las relaciones sociales (especialmente con relación a los sistemas de gobernanza) que incrementan el nivel de participación de todos, pero particularmente de los grupos más desfavorecidos de la sociedad; y (3) el incremento de la capacidad y el acceso a los recursos para mejorar los derechos a satisfacer las necesidades humanas y a la participación (empoderamiento). Estas dimensiones se vuelven más importantes en áreas en las que las empresas y las instituciones públicas presentan fallos (Howaldt y Schwarz, 2010) y es precisamente aquí donde el sector no lucrativo aparece como una fuente básica de innovación social. Sin embargo, no todas las ONGs son emprendedores sociales (Weerawardena y Sullivan Mort, 2006). Por lo tanto, analizar cómo las ONGs pueden incrementar su capacidad de innovación representa un tema de investigación relevante, no sólo para la literatura centrada en la gestión de estas organizaciones, sino también dentro de la llamada *Transformative Service Research* (TSR), una de las principales prioridades de investigación en el ámbito de los servicios (Anderson et al., 2013; Ostrom et al., 2010).

Las crecientes necesidades de los grupos a los que atienden las ONGs, la complicada situación financiera, y el mayor nivel de competencia intra- e inter-sectorial, están forzando a estas entidades a “buscar formas innovadoras de proporcionar mayor valor a sus públicos para obtener una ventaja competitiva para la organización social” (Weerawardena y Sullivan Mort, 2006, p. 21). Ante este tipo de entorno competitivo, la capacidad de las ONGs (y también de las empresas) para innovar y enfrentarse a los complejos problemas sociales no depende sólo de sus propios recursos y capacidades, y las alianzas con otras organizaciones, particularmente los acuerdos de cooperación con empresas, se están convirtiendo en una tendencia significativa (Austin y Seitanidi, 2012a, 2012b).

Las interacciones entre las empresas y las ONGs están generando modelos de relación que combinan la imitación, la cooperación y la competencia. La consecuencia es que están emergiendo nuevas formas de colaboración que van más allá de los meros roles de “donante” y “beneficiario”, tradicionalmente adoptados por las empresas y las ONGs, respectivamente, en sus relaciones. En este nuevo contexto, las alianzas pueden generar distintas clases de valor a la ONG (Austin y Seitanidi, 2012b), incluyendo no sólo el tradicional valor “asociativo” (mayor visibilidad, credibilidad, notoriedad pública de la causa social) o de “transferencia” (apoyo financiero, donaciones en especie, voluntariado, etc.), sino también otras clases de valor de mayor nivel, tales como valor de “interacción” (oportunidades de aprendizaje, desarrollo de capacidades únicas, acceso de redes, etc.) o valor de “sinergia” (innovación, liderazgo

compartido, etc.). Otro tanto cabría decir por lo que respecta al valor de la alianza para la empresa. Sin embargo, estas nuevas relaciones generan también desconfianza, especialmente dentro del sector no lucrativo (Reed y Reed, 2009), debido al temor a desvirtuar los objetivos sociales de la ONG o a que la empresa utilice la alianza exclusivamente para sus propios objetivos de marketing, con escasa contribución a la causa social.

Bajo este escenario global, el objetivo principal de la presente investigación es determinar si la colaboración entre empresas y ONGs da lugar a un proceso de transferencia de conocimiento y aprendizaje organizativo, favoreciendo el desarrollo de un abanico de actividades conjuntas de innovación social como resultado. Se trata de determinar qué características deben presentar los acuerdos para que se generen los tipos de valor de alto nivel (de “interacción” y de “sinergia”). Ambas clases de valor son importantes en tanto en cuanto “se deben únicamente a la existencia de la alianza y, por tanto, no son replicables” (Austin, 2000, p. 79). La investigación trata de proporcionar dos contribuciones a la literatura sobre RSC, gestión de ONGs y TSR.

La primera se centra en analizar si los efectos del desarrollo relacional de los acuerdos de colaboración se extienden más allá de los roles de donante y receptor asumidos habitualmente por las empresas y las ONGs. La mayoría de las investigaciones empíricas previas se han basado en estudios de casos, por lo que puede resultar interesante ampliar las evidencias con un enfoque diferente. Para ello, se parte del modelo de “Creación de Valor Colaborativo” (CVC) de Austin y Seitanidi (2012a, 2012b) y de su “continuo de colaboración” para caracterizar cómo evoluciona la alianza y sus efectos. La investigación analiza el grado en que un mayor desarrollo relacional favorece un proceso de aprendizaje organizativo en la ONG. El aprendizaje organizativo es una de las capacidades generadoras de ventajas competitivas más importantes y los estudios sobre “cómo las partes superan (o explotan) las diferencias sectoriales para aprender sobre la causa social, aprender de cada uno, o promover el aprendizaje de los grupos de interés serían contribuciones valiosas” (Selsky y Parker, 2005, p. 866). Según Prugsamatz (2010, p. 245), “queda aún mucho por investigar para comprender mejor lo que afecta al aprendizaje en las organizaciones y ayuda a mantenerlo a largo plazo dentro del contexto del sector no lucrativo”.

La segunda aportación consiste en evaluar la influencia del proceso de aprendizaje organizativo resultado de la colaboración en el nivel en que el acuerdo ha originado una serie de actividades de innovación social. El estudio de la innovación como consecuencia de las alianzas empresa-ONG es un tema escasamente estudiado, y tan sólo unos pocos trabajos fundamentalmente de corte conceptual o basados en estudios de casos se han centrado en el mismo (Brunner y Marxt, 2013; Dahan et al, 2010; Holmes y Moir, 2007; Holmes y Smart, 2009; Jamali et al., 2011; Ljung y Bengtson, 2012; Luxmore y Hull, 2011). Concretamente, la investigación actual contempla cinco clases de iniciativas conjuntas derivadas exclusivamente del acuerdo y, como tales, activos específicos de la colaboración.

El resto del trabajo se estructura del siguiente modo. En el siguiente epígrafe se propone el marco teórico. Seguidamente se explica la metodología seguida para desarrollar la parte empírica del estudio, para pasar después a presentar los resultados alcanzados, así como las principales aportaciones e implicaciones derivadas de los mismos. El trabajo finaliza con una relación de las limitaciones y de las líneas para futuras investigaciones

## **2. Marco teórico e hipótesis**

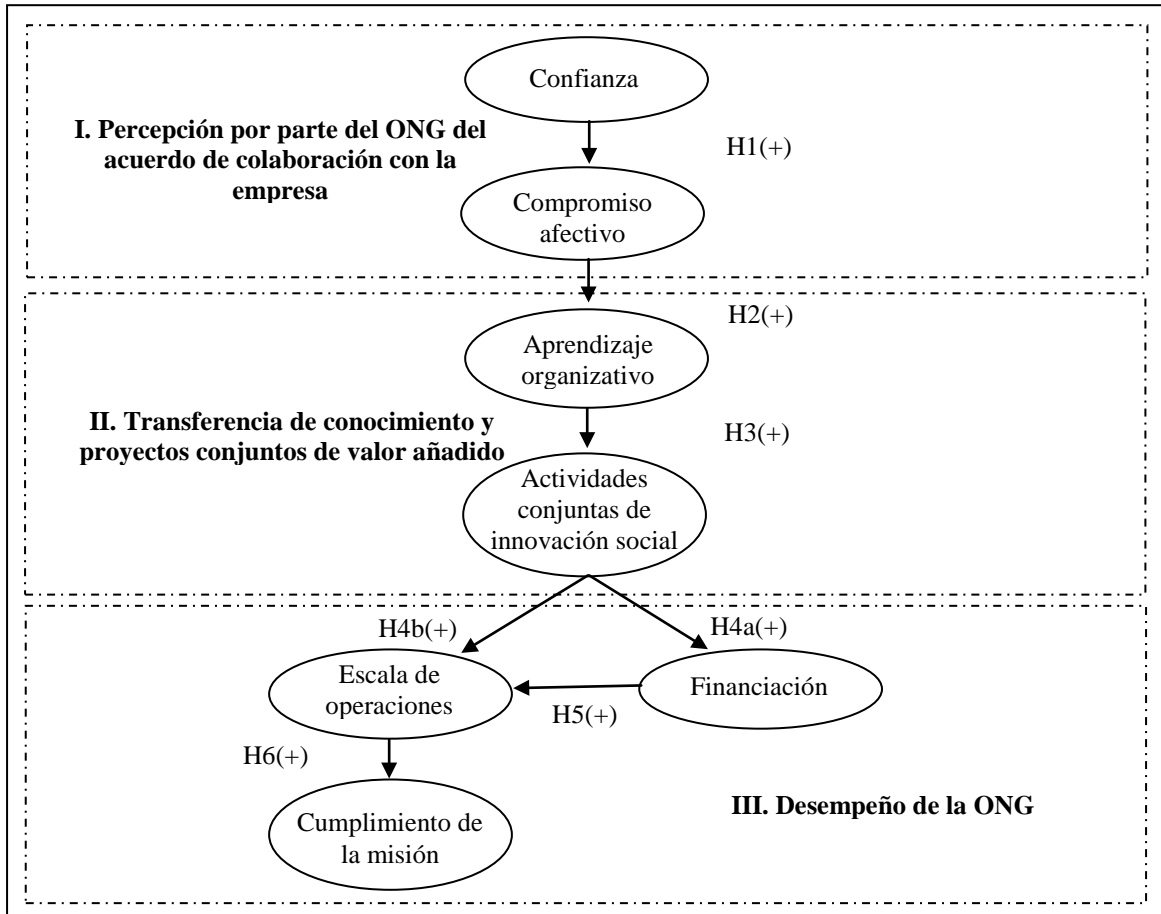
El modelo del trabajo aparece recogido en la Figura 1.

### ***2.1. El “continuo de colaboración” en los acuerdos empresa-ONG***

La tipología de acuerdos de colaboración empresa-ONG incluye diferentes alternativas, como la filantropía corporativa, las licencias, la esponsorización, las actividades de marketing con causa, las campañas de promoción conjuntas o las joint ventures (Wymer y Samu, 2003), entre otras. Cada una de ellas implica distintos niveles de compromiso y creación de valor, de forma que es posible distinguir un continuo integrado por cuatro etapas básicas: filantrópica, transaccional,

integrativa y transformadora (Austin y Seitanidi, 2012a). A medida que la relación se mueve a lo largo de este continuo, sus características cambian en términos de incremento del nivel de involucración/compromiso, importancia de la colaboración para la misión de las partes, magnitud de los recursos implicados, tipo de recursos (de dinero a competencias críticas), alcance de las actividades, confianza, intensidad de la interacción, cambio interno, complejidad de gestión, valor estratégico, co-creación de valor, sinergias e innovación.

FIGURA 1  
Modelo conceptual



Un gran número de investigaciones de marketing ha analizado los condicionantes y facilitadores de los intercambios relacionales exitosos, hasta llegar al reciente enfoque de *stakeholder marketing* (Grinstein y Goldman, 2011). Si bien la literatura de marketing de relaciones identifica diversas variables que interaccionan dentro del contexto colaborativo, dos de ellas sobresalen de forma esencial como factores que marcan la posición dentro del continuo relacional: la confianza y el compromiso (MacMillan et al., 2005; Morgan y Hunt, 1994).

La confianza integra tres dimensiones (Bakker et al., 2006, Bryson et al., 2006): *capacidad*, referida a la creencia en que la otra parte posee la experiencia necesaria para desarrollar su trabajo de manera efectiva; *honestidad*, o la creencia en que la otra parte cumplirá sus promesas y asumirá un conjunto de principios considerados aceptables; y *benevolencia*, o la creencia de que la otra parte está interesada en el bienestar del socio. La literatura sobre acuerdos de colaboración empresa-ONG ha resaltado el papel absolutamente primordial que juega la confianza en el éxito de los mismos (Bryson et al., 2006, p. 47-48). Por su parte, existen dos tipos básicos de compromiso, *calculado* y *afectivo*. El primero se basa en la evaluación racional de los beneficios y de los costes derivados de una determinada relación, mientras que el segundo se sustenta en una predisposición afectiva a mantener la relación resultado de la existencia de una identificación con los valores de la otra parte. La mayoría de los investigadores reconoce el papel preponderante que tiene el compromiso afectivo para mantener la relación, también en el



ámbito de las alianzas entre sectores (Berger et al., 2006). Consiguientemente, se usará este constructo en la presente investigación.

La literatura de marketing de relaciones y de alianzas inter-sectoriales asume ampliamente que la confianza es el principal condicionante del compromiso afectivo, puesto que “cuando los individuos desarrollan una relación personal de confianza dentro de la colaboración, entonces el nivel de integración de la relación se hace más evidente” (Seitanidi y Crane, 2009, p. 422). La primera hipótesis establece que:

**H1: La confianza de la ONG en el comportamiento de la empresa está asociada positivamente con el compromiso afectivo que manifiesta la ONG con la empresa.**

## ***2.2. Las consecuencias de los acuerdos empresa-ONG***

El objetivo (y consecuencia) de las colaboraciones empresa-ONG de alto nivel es “crear innovaciones sociales rompedoras” (Austin y Seitanidi, 2012a, p. 743). Múltiples trabajos han puesto de manifiesto los efectos positivos derivados de la existencia de una buena relación entre los participantes en un determinado proyecto sobre los intercambios y flujos de conocimiento y, en último término, sobre la innovación (Nygaard y Russo, 2008). En la fase “transformadora” de una colaboración se comparte conocimiento sobre las necesidades sociales y los roles de cada una de las partes en la satisfacción de esas necesidades. Por medio de ese clase de colaboración, las ONG pueden beneficiarse no sólo del apoyo directo a la causa social que le preste la empresa, sino también del “acceso a experiencia técnica, gerencial y/o de marketing, ampliación de redes, mayor ventaja y visibilidad, y desarrollo profesional y oportunidades de aprendizaje para los empleados y voluntarios actuales y futuros” (Van Tulder y Fortanier, 2009, p. 227). Por lo tanto, es probable que la traslación de los acuerdos de cooperación empresa-ONG en innovaciones sociales se realice como consecuencia de la existencia de un proceso de aprendizaje organizativo en ambas partes.

El aprendizaje organizativo es el proceso dinámico de creación, adquisición e integración de conocimiento con el objetivo de desarrollar recursos y capacidades que permitan a la organización lograr un resultado mejor (Rebelo y Gomes, 2008). El aprendizaje organizativo ocurre cuando se transfiere el conocimiento individual como consecuencia de las interacciones sociales que tienen lugar dentro de la organización y es resultado de la existencia de una interpretación compartida entre los distintos grupos de individuos. De tal forma, el aprendizaje implica un proceso con varias etapas principales. Aunque el mayor o menor desglose de estas fases depende de la investigación concreta, cabe destacar tres procesos básicos: adquisición de información, diseminación de esa información, e integración/institucionalización/interpretación compartida (Dixon, 1992; Huber, 1991; Senge, 1990; Weerawardena et al., 2006). En este sentido, los acuerdos de cooperación empresa-ONG pueden representar una fuente de conocimiento para ambas organizaciones sobre targets potenciales, habilidades específicas o actividades de innovación (Austin y Seitanidi, 2012b).

En el caso concreto de la ONG, la necesidad de ese proceso global de aprendizaje parece ser especialmente importante con relación a la adquisición de competencias de gestión en ámbitos como la administración, las finanzas, el marketing y los recursos humanos, ámbitos en los que estas organizaciones se encuentran en desventaja frente a las organizaciones lucrativas y en los que existe una demanda creciente de profesionalización dentro del sector (Hurrell et al., 2011).

La literatura previa defiende que el proceso de aprendizaje se ve intensificado a medida que el continuo de colaboración pasa de la etapa “filantrópica” a la etapa “transformadora” (Austin 2000; Austin y Seitanidi, 2012a, 2012b; Bennett et al., 2008), por lo que es de esperar que el grado de desarrollo relacional del acuerdo favorezca la existencia de aprendizaje. La confianza y el compromiso constituyen dos elementos básicos de una cultura que fomenta el conocimiento (Conner y Clawson, 2004; Nonaka, 1994; Prugsamatz, 2010). La existencia de confianza y compromiso incentiva la actitud de los participantes hacia la colaboración, el intercambio de información y la creatividad (Strätling et al., 2012; Swift y Hwang, 2008). Un buen clima de trabajo (dentro y entre organizaciones) hace que los empleados/voluntarios estén más comprometidos con el proceso y más dispuestos a aceptar los fallos y riesgos inherentes a los

entornos inciertos y turbulentos que suelen ir ligados a la innovación (Bstieler, 2006). Por el contrario, sin la existencia de confianza y compromiso mutuo, la otra parte se volverá escéptica sobre las intenciones del socio y probablemente retendrá y no compartirá su información.

En el contexto específico de los acuerdos de cooperación empresa-ONG, Bennett et al. (2008) destaca los factores que favorecen y/o impiden la efectiva transmisión de conocimiento, siendo la credibilidad de la fuente (es decir, el grado en que la fuente es percibida como experta y confiable) uno de ellos. Por su parte, Foster et al. (2009) identifican tres clases de empresas según cómo se relacionan con el sector no lucrativo, a las que denominan “donantes”, “sponsors” y “socios”. La involucración de las empresas del tipo “donante”, categoría similar a la “filantropía periférica” de Bruch y Walter (2005) y a la etapa “filantrópica” de Austin y Seitanidi (2012a), es meramente marginal con respecto a su negocio clave y “el conocimiento que se comparte entre las ONGs y las empresas es escaso, porque normalmente el apoyo consiste únicamente en dinero” (Foster et al. 2009, p. 452). Las dos restantes categorías implican un mayor esfuerzo por integrar la RSC dentro de la cultura y las estrategias de la empresa, y esta involucración se traduce en mayores flujos de comunicación y en la provisión de otros tipos de recursos más especializados, aparte de dinero.

En función de los argumentos anteriores, y considerando que el compromiso afectivo supone una consecuencia de la confianza, la segunda hipótesis de la investigación establece que:

**H2: El compromiso afectivo que manifieste la ONG hacia la empresa está asociado positivamente con la existencia de un aprendizaje organizativo sobre técnicas de gestión en la ONG.**

A su vez, el aprendizaje organizativo debería incentivar el desarrollo de iniciativas de innovación social entre ambas organizaciones, puesto que uno de los beneficios del aprendizaje es “la habilidad de las organizaciones no lucrativas para desarrollar la capacidad emprendedora que es importante para los procesos de innovación emprendidos con el fin de reaccionar ante oportunidades que ayudan a construir y a hacer crecer la organización. A través del aprendizaje, las organizaciones no lucrativas son capaces de reunir los recursos que son vitales para la implementación de los nuevos conceptos que crean” (Prugsamatz, 2010, p. 244).

La innovación social es un concepto amplio y fragmentado (Weerawardena y Sullivan Mort, 2006). Bouchard (2012) propone un marco básico que distingue dos aproximaciones principales. La primera “está interesada en las soluciones a los principales problemas sociales, basadas en las iniciativas emprendedoras que ponen énfasis en la filantropía, la responsabilidad individual, y en el mercado más que en el Estado” (Bouchard, 2012, p. 49). La segunda “pone mayor énfasis en la naturaleza colectiva de los procesos y productos de la innovación social. Ve las innovaciones como etapas que llevan al cambio social, es decir, a la transformación de las relaciones sociales que están en el origen de los problemas sociales” (Bouchard, 2012, p. 49). Este segundo enfoque se centra en la participación de los distintos actores sociales (los “usuarios”) en acciones cooperativas dirigidas a implantar nuevos valores, reglas y normas con relación a las condiciones de vida, los lugares de trabajo, el desarrollo local, etc.

La presente investigación analiza una serie de actividades de innovación social seleccionadas considerando las conclusiones del informe elaborado por el Comité para Fomentar la Filantropía Corporativa (Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy’s, 2010, p. 26), basado a su vez en un estudio de McKinsey & Company, en el que se insiste en la necesidad de colaboraciones más sofisticadas “con un enfoque en la resolución de problemas, incluyendo el desarrollo conjunto de productos, estructuras de financiación conjuntas, creación de estándares voluntarios, y compartir activos”. Concretamente, en el trabajo actual se incluye el co-desarrollo de proyectos específicos entre la empresa y la ONG para (1) ofrecer nuevos productos y/o servicios con impacto social (que ayuden a resolver problemas sociales o medioambientales), (2) co-invertir en infraestructuras, (3) crear o adoptar estándares sectoriales voluntarios, (4) abogar y luchar por un cambio político o normativo, y (5) influir en grupos de interés clave. La tercera hipótesis del trabajo prevé una asociación positiva entre el grado en que dentro de la

ONG se genera un proceso de aprendizaje organizativo y el grado en que el acuerdo contribuye a desarrollar cada una de las actividades previamente señaladas.

**H3: El grado de aprendizaje sobre técnicas de gestión que se produce en la ONG está asociado positivamente con el grado en que el acuerdo contribuye al desarrollo de proyectos conjuntos de valor añadido para satisfacer necesidades sociales.**

Finalmente, en el modelo se espera que el desarrollo de los distintos tipos de proyectos conjuntos de valor añadido permita incrementar el desempeño de la ONG. La medición del desempeño de las ONGs no es una tarea sencilla. El indicador último de rendimiento es el grado en que la organización ha conseguido cumplir con su misión social (McDonald, 2007). No obstante, este objetivo depende de otras posibles variables de resultado intermedias. Si bien a partir de la literatura especializada se pueden identificar un gran número de indicadores (Sowa et al., 2004), considerando el reto actual que la crisis económica está suponiendo para las ONGs en términos de acceso a la financiación e incremento del alcance de sus operaciones (mayor número de beneficiarios y desarrollo de un mayor número actividades), en la presente investigación se han incluido dos indicadores que recogen estos resultados. Adicionalmente, también se ha contemplado el grado en que la ONG percibe que ha alcanzado su misión y satisfecho las expectativas de beneficiarios y donantes como medida de desempeño último.

La cuarta hipótesis establece que tanto la obtención de fondos como la escala de las operaciones se ven favorecidas por el desarrollo de proyectos colaborativos entre la ONG y la empresa. Estos proyectos permiten a ambas organizaciones combinar recursos financieros y no financieros y obtener acceso a las redes de los socios (Austin y Seitanidi, 2012b), por lo que es previsible que la ONG pueda tener acceso a nuevos grupos de stakeholders. Por tanto,

**H4: El desarrollo de proyectos conjuntos de valor añadido entre la empresa y la ONG está asociado positivamente con (a) la obtención de fondos por parte de la ONG, y (b) la escala de sus operaciones (número de beneficiarios y/o actividades).**

También se prevé que un mayor nivel de recursos financieros debería ayudar a la ONG a incrementar la escala de sus actividades, y que, a su vez, este incremento de la escala debería contribuir a mejorar las percepciones de cumplimiento de su misión social. Consiguientemente:

**H5: El incremento de fondos por parte de la ONG está asociado positivamente con la escala de sus operaciones (número de beneficiarios y/o actividades).**

**H6: La escala de las operaciones (número de beneficiarios y/o actividades) de la ONG está asociada positivamente con la percepción del cumplimiento de su misión social.**

### **3. Metodología**

#### **3.1. Recogida de datos y descripción de la muestra**

Se utilizó la encuesta como metodología básica. Para testar las hipótesis, la investigación se centró en las fundaciones como tipo particular de ONG (Hopt, et al., 2006) que se encuentra en rápido crecimiento (European Foundation Centre, 2013). Con el propósito de aminorar el sesgo debido al procedimiento (Podsakoff et al., 2003), se llevó a cabo un proceso de encuesta en dos etapas. Los datos sobre las partes 1 y 3 del modelo se recopilaron en una primera fase, mientras que la información detallada referida al grado de aprendizaje organizativo en la fundación sobre técnicas de gestión resultante del acuerdo y el grado en que el acuerdo había generado distintos tipos de proyectos colaborativos (parte 2 del modelo) se recopiló un año más tarde.

La primera de las encuestas se realizó entre septiembre y diciembre de 2011. En esta etapa se seleccionaron de forma aleatoria 525 fundaciones a partir del censo global de 9.050 fundaciones españolas identificadas por el Instituto de Análisis Estratégico de Fundaciones (INAEF). Para garantizar que esta muestra inicial fuera representativa del sector fundacional español, las fundaciones se seleccionaron proporcionalmente teniendo en cuenta la descripción del sector elaborada por el INAEF (tipo de actividades, tipo de beneficiarios, tamaño, antigüedad, etc.). A las fundaciones seleccionadas se les envió el cuestionario vía correo electrónico, previo contacto

telefónico. El cuestionario fue contestado por la persona que en cada fundación se encargaba de la gestión diaria. En esta etapa se obtuvieron un total de 325 respuestas válidas (error del  $\pm 5.34\%$  para un nivel de confianza del 95%). A las fundaciones se les preguntaba si habían colaborado con alguna empresa en algún momento a lo largo de los últimos tres años con el objetivo de cumplir su misión social. Si contestaban de forma afirmativa (185 fundaciones), se les pedía que evaluaran las características de la relación (confianza y compromiso).

Para valorar la posible existencia del sesgo de la no respuesta se comparó el perfil de la muestra de 325 fundaciones con los descriptores del sector fundacional español proporcionados por el INAEF (Tabla 1). No existen diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre la muestra y la población. Adicionalmente, también se compararon las respuestas de los encuestados que habían enviado el cuestionario al principio, sin necesidad de un esfuerzo adicional de refuerzo, y aquellos otros que sólo contestaron después de insistir con este refuerzo, evidenciándose que tampoco existían diferencias entre estos grupos de encuestados por lo que se refiere a las variables de modelo disponibles en esta fase.

TABLA 1  
Descripción de las muestras

Descriptores		Sector fundacional español (N=9,050)	Muestra (1ª fase) (N=325)	Acuerdos (1ª fase) (N=185)	Acuerdos (2ª fase) (N=104)
<b>Año de constitución<sup>a</sup></b>	Hasta 1994	34.7%	31.6%	27.0%	25.9%
	Entre 1995 y 2002	31.5	34.8	37.8	42.3
	Después de 2002	33.8	33.5	35.1	31.7
<b>Registro administrativo</b>	Nacional	29.2	32.9	36.8	32.7
	Autonómico	70.8	67.1	63.2	67.3
<b>Iniciativa públicae</b>	Sí	9.2	12.6	15.1	12.5
<b>Fundadores</b>	Personas físicas	52.6	45.9	45.4	49.5
	Personas jurídicas públicas	31.3	31.3	31.6	29.0
	Personas jurídicas privadas	55.3	55.3	58.2	59.0
<b>Ámbito geográfico de actividad</b>	Local-provincial	28.3	24.9	17.9	23.1
	Autonómico	34.7	35.4	37.8	36.5
	Nacional	23.3	24.9	25.9	23.1
	Internacional	13.6	14.8	18.4	17.3
<b>Grupos ICNPO (International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations)</b>	Cultura/ocio	46.5	42.9	44.9	43.3
	Educación e investigación	52.0	54.9	56.8	49.0
	Salud	21.0	24.7	23.2	21.2
	Servicios sociales	35.3	36.1	33.5	41.3
	Medioambiente	13.5	12.7	13.5	18.3
	Desarrollo y vivienda	27.7	31.8	35.1	33.7
	Derecho, defensa y política	6.2	8.0	9.2	12.5
	Internacional	12.7	18.2	21.1	23.1
	Religión	3.7	2.8	1.1	1.0
<b>Modelo de actividad</b>	Asociaciones empresariales y profesionales, sindicatos	1.6	3.4	5.4	5.8
	Ayudas a terceros	31.9	33.1	28.8	30.8
	Actividades, proyectos o programas propios	74.6	78.6	84.8	86.5
	Sensibilización social o movilización cívica	18.6	18.0	20.7	22.1
	Gestión de entidades o centros propios	15.3	18.6	17.4	19.2
<b>Tipo of beneficiario</b>	Personas jurídicas	54.2	57.4	62.7	62.5
	Personas físicas	96.0	96.6	96.8	96.2
<b>Tamaño</b>	Pequeñas y medianas (< 2,400,000 €)	88.4	83.1	79.0	78.3
	Grandes y mega (> 2,400,000 €)	11.6	16.9	21.0	21.7

a Estos límites corresponden a la primera Ley Española de Fundaciones (Ley 30/1994, de 24 de noviembre) y a la actual Ley Española de Fundaciones (Ley 50/2002, de 26 de diciembre).

La segunda encuesta se llevó a cabo un año más tarde. Se envió un segundo cuestionario a las 185 fundaciones que habían indicado que habían participado en un acuerdo de colaboración con una empresa para preguntarles sobre un conjunto de 15 aspectos relativos al proceso de aprendizaje organizativo resultado de la relación, y a su percepción sobre el grado en que el acuerdo de colaboración había contribuido a desarrollar cinco tipos de proyectos colaborativos con un enfoque concreto en la solución de un problema. De la muestra de 185 fundaciones, un total de 104 accedieron a participar en esta segunda etapa (ver Tabla 1).

### 3.2. Medición de las variables

En el Anexo se recogen las variables con detalle. En el caso de escalas multi-item, se han empleado constructos reflectivos, por medio de escalas Likert de siete puntos. Las escalas para medir la confianza y el compromiso se fundamentan en la literatura sobre marketing de relaciones y sobre alianzas empresa-ONG. La escala de aprendizaje organizativo incluye los tres procesos básicos que se utilizan para describir este constructo: adquisición, diseminación e integración (Jerez-Gómez et al., 2005). Para medir las actividades de innovación social, se preguntó a los encuestados su percepción sobre la intensidad con la que el acuerdo había contribuido a desarrollar las cinco clases anteriormente mencionadas de proyectos conjuntos (Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy, 2010). Por último, el desempeño de la fundación se evaluó preguntando a los encuestados sobre el nivel en que ellos consideraban que se habían alcanzado en el último año los objetivos establecidos para un conjunto de indicadores (Carman y Fredericks, 2008). Para valorar la posible existencia de un sesgo debido al procedimiento, se calculó el test de Harman. La realización de un análisis factorial exploratorio con todas las escalas del modelo dio origen a una estructura de seis factores, con el factor principal suponiendo el 25% del total de la varianza. Por tanto, este sesgo no constituye un problema en esta investigación.

## 4. Resultados

Se evaluó la fiabilidad y validez de las escalas por medio de un análisis factorial confirmatorio (Tablas 2 y 3). Dado que la escala de aprendizaje organizativo era multidimensional, se calculó la media de cada una de las tres dimensiones para obtener un factor de tres ítems, que fue el que se utilizó en la estimación del modelo de ecuaciones estructurales.

TABLA 2

### Fiabilidad y validez de las escalas

Factor	Item	Carga factorial	Coficiente de fiabilidad compuesta	AVE
Compromiso afectivo (CAF)	CAF1	0,65***	0,83	0,63
	CAF2	0,89***		
	CAF3	0,81***		
Confianza (CONF)	CONF3	0,71***	0,85	0,65
	CONF4	0,93***		
	CONF5	0,77***		
Aprendizaje organizativo (APREN)	ADQ	0,75***	0,86	0,67
	DIS	0,72***		
	INT	0,96***		
Financiación (FUND)	FUND1	0,90***	0,92	0,80
	FUND2	0,84***		
	FUND3	0,94***		
Escala de operaciones (ESC)	ESC1	0,86***	0,89	0,80
	ESC2	0,93***		
Cumplimiento de la misión (MIS)	MIS1	0,72***	0,78	0,54
	MIS2	0,85***		
	MIS3	0,62***		
<i>Bondad del ajuste</i>				
S-B $\chi^2 = 137,35$ ( $p = 0,016$ ); S-B $\chi^2/df = 1,32$ BBNNFI = 0,947    CFI = 0,960    RMSEA = 0,057				

\*\*\*  $p < 0,01$

TABLA 3  
Validez discriminante

	CAF	CONF	APREN	FUND	ESC	MIS
CAF	<b>0,79</b>					
CONF	0,28**	<b>0,81</b>				
APREN	0,25**	-0,02	<b>0,82</b>			
FUND	0,03	0,06	0,24**	<b>0,89</b>		
ESC	0,09	0,01	0,34***	0,64***	<b>0,89</b>	
MIS	0,09	0,04	0,33***	0,42***	0,64***	<b>0,73</b>

Notas: Los valores que aparecen en la diagonal son las raíces cuadradas de los coeficientes AVE. Los valores que aparecen fuera de la diagonal son las correlaciones entre cada par de constructos.

\*\*\*  $p < 0,01$ . \*\*  $p < 0,05$

En la Tabla 4 aparecen los resultados de la estimación del modelo casual empleando el programa EQS 6.2 para Windows. Puesto que se analizan cinco tipos de proyectos conjuntos entre la empresa y la ONG (INNSOC1, INNSOC2, INNSOC3, INNSOC4, INNSOC5), la H3 se ha dividido en cinco sub-hipótesis (H3.1, H3.2, H3.3, H3.4 y H3.5). Se ha hecho lo mismo para las hipótesis H4a y H4b.

TABLA 4  
Los efectos del de los acuerdos de colaboración empresa-fundación en la innovación social

Relaciones causales	Coefficientes estandarizados	Relaciones causales	Coefficientes estandarizados
H1: CONF→CAF	<b>0,27**</b>	H4.2b: INNSOC2→ESC	<b>0,13**</b>
H2: CAF→APREN	<b>0,28***</b>	H4.3a: INNSOC3→FUND	<b>0,06</b>
H3.1: APREN→INNSOC1	<b>0,47***</b>	H4.3b: INNSOC3→ESC	<b>0,02</b>
H3.2: APREN→INNSOC2	<b>0,38***</b>	H4.4a: INNSOC4→FUND	<b>0,10</b>
H3.3: APREN→INNSOC3	<b>0,57***</b>	H4.4b: INNSOC4→ESC	<b>-0,24***</b>
H3.4: APREN→INNSOC4	<b>0,26**</b>	H4.5a: INNSOC5→FUND	<b>0,08</b>
H3.5: APREN→INNSOC5	<b>0,48***</b>	H4.5b: INNSOC5→ESC	<b>0,24***</b>
H4.1a: INNSOC1→FUND	<b>-0,07</b>	H5: FUND→ESC	<b>0,59***</b>
H4.1b: INNSOC1→ESC	<b>0,14*</b>	H6: ESC→MIS	<b>0,66***</b>
H4.2a: INNSOC2→FUND	<b>0,17*</b>	---	---
<b>Bondad del ajuste: S-B<math>\chi^2</math>=261.50 (p=0.001); S-B<math>\chi^2</math>/df=1.34; BBNFI=0.91; CFI=0.93; RMSEA=0.06</b>			

\*\*\*  $p < 0,01$ . \*\*  $p < 0,05$ . \*  $p < 0,1$

La confianza está asociada de forma significativa con el compromiso afectivo, en línea con lo previsto por la hipótesis H1 ( $p < 0,05$ ). Por su parte, el grado de compromiso afectivo favorece el aprendizaje de la fundación sobre técnicas de gestión, tal y como establecía la hipótesis H2 ( $p < 0,01$ ). A su vez, este proceso de aprendizaje muestra un vínculo positivo y significativo con el desarrollo de las cinco clases de proyectos colaborativos, en apoyo de las sub-hipótesis H3.1 ( $p < 0,01$ ), H3.2 ( $p < 0,01$ ), H3.3 ( $p < 0,01$ ), H3.4 ( $p < 0,05$ ) y H3.5 ( $p < 0,01$ ).

Por lo que respecta al impacto de estos proyectos en los resultados de la fundación, sólo un tipo de proyecto, la inversión conjunta en infraestructuras (INNSOC2) tiene un efecto significativo (positivo) en la obtención de fondos (H4.2a,  $p < 0,10$ ). Todos los tipos de actividades, con la excepción de la creación de estándares sectoriales voluntarios (INNSOC3) impactan significativamente en la escala de operaciones de la fundación; tres de ellos de forma positiva, el co-desarrollo de productos y servicios destinados a solventar problemas sociales (INNSOC1,  $p < 0,1$ ), la co-inversión en infraestructuras (INNSOC2,  $p < 0,05$ ) y las actividades conjuntas para influenciar a *stakeholders* clave (INNSOC5,  $p < 0,01$ ), mientras que abogar por nuevas regulaciones (INNSOC4,  $p < 0,01$ ) aparece con un signo negativo. Es posible que este tipo de práctica centre la actividad de la ONG en ciertos lobbies o reguladores, lo que implica que la

escala de operaciones se vuelve más especializada y estrecha (al menos a corto plazo). Por último, tal y como se esperaba, los resultados ponen de manifiesto la fuerte relación que existe entre la obtención de fondos y la escala de operaciones ( $H5, p < 0,01$ ), y esa escala y el cumplimiento de la misión ( $H6, p < 0,01$ ).

## 5. Conclusiones

Este estudio ha examinado el grado en que las características de la colaboración entre las empresas y un tipo particular de ONG, las fundaciones, promueven el aprendizaje en la ONG, y, en último término, el desarrollo de una variedad de actividades colaborativas enfocadas a la solución de problemas sociales. Los resultados evidencian que cuanto mejor sea la relación en términos de confianza y compromiso, mayor es el nivel en que la ONG aprende sobre técnicas de gestión y mayor también el grado en que la colaboración da lugar a diferentes proyectos conjuntos de valor añadido. Son varias las contribuciones que se derivan de estos resultados.

Primero, los estudios que previamente se habían realizado sobre los acuerdos de colaboración empresa-ONG habían empleado mayoritariamente la metodología de los estudios de casos, por lo que la utilización de otras metodologías de carácter cuantitativo puede servir para hacer avanzar el estado de la cuestión.

Segundo, la investigación permite aportar varias sugerencias sobre cómo las empresas pueden extender sus esfuerzos de RSC más allá de las meras donaciones. El grado de implicación en el acuerdo favorece la transferencia de conocimiento a la ONG. El dinero suele constituir el tipo de contribución predominante, pero los resultados evidencian que la puesta en marcha de proyectos conjuntos de valor añadido depende de la intensidad con la que la ONG aprende sobre técnicas de gestión. Consiguientemente, y aparte de dinero, el acuerdo debe implicar otra clase de recursos y contactos que ayuden a ambas organizaciones a promover intercambios más profundos de información y vínculos más estrechos.

En este sentido, la gestión del conflicto surge también como un tema prioritario. En las alianzas empresa-ONG el conflicto potencial suele ser mayor que en las alianzas entre organizaciones dentro de un mismo sector, ya que las partes que proceden de diferentes sectores (en ocasiones, claramente adversarios) se enfrentan a contradicciones derivadas de las misiones, valores, motivaciones, estilos de gestión y características incompatibles. La existencia de estas diferencias normalmente supone falta de entendimiento y desconfianza. Para tratar de superar estos problemas y promover la confianza y el compromiso ambas partes deberían plantear desde el comienzo de las relaciones cuestiones como qué motivaciones tiene la otra parte, qué “lenguaje” utiliza, qué tipo de recursos puede aportar cada uno (superando la idea de que sólo la empresa es el “donante” y la ONG el “receptor”), cuál va a ser el objetivo y alcance del acuerdo, qué mecanismos de gobernanza se van a establecer, cuál va a ser el proceso de rendición de cuentas a seguir, etc. Además, iniciativas como la celebración de reuniones periódicas y el mantenimiento de contactos personales, formales e informales, o la rotación de personal entre ambas organizaciones, pueden favorecer también el entendimiento y la generación de confianza.

El análisis de las consecuencias de los acuerdos desde el punto de vista de la ONG representa la tercera contribución del estudio, puesto que dentro del sector no lucrativo existe un debate abierto sobre la conveniencia de mantener relaciones con empresas. Sin negar la posibilidad de posibles consecuencias negativas, los resultados del presente estudio muestran la existencia de una conexión positiva entre el desarrollo relacional de la colaboración y resultados deseables para la ONG como el aprendizaje organizativo o la innovación social.

Cuarto, otra contribución significativa se refiere al impacto positivo que ejerce el aprendizaje sobre técnicas de gestión en la ONG y el desarrollo de proyectos de valor añadido. De forma similar a la controversia existente en el sector no lucrativo sobre las ventajas y desventajas de colaborar con empresas, también existe un fuerte debate sobre los efectos de la profesionalización (Kreutzer y Jäger, 2011). Por un lado, la recesión económica y el incremento de la competencia intra- e inter-sectorial lleva a que las ONG necesiten incrementar sus capacidades y eficiencia para sobrevivir y cumplir su misión social. Estos esfuerzos requieren la

introducción de herramientas de gestión procedentes del sector lucrativo y la contratación de un mayor número de profesionales pagados. Por otro lado, la profesionalización en las ONG puede ocasionar externalidades negativas como la aparición de conflicto entre el personal remunerado (profesional) y los voluntarios o que los objetivos sociales pasen a segundo término. En general, los resultados del trabajo revelan que la profesionalización por medio de un proceso de transferencia de conocimiento sobre técnicas de gestión de la empresa a la ONG genera resultados positivos para la ONG, específicamente el desarrollo de actividades de valor añadido dirigidas al bien común.

## 6. Limitaciones y líneas para futuras investigaciones

La principal limitación de la investigación es que ha centrado el análisis en los efectos de los acuerdos empresa-ONG en la ONG. Sería interesante, consiguientemente, estudiar el impacto para las empresas involucradas. Adicionalmente, futuras investigaciones podrían también evaluar el efecto de posibles variables moderadoras, otros tipos de actividades de innovación social, o la influencia de los acuerdos de cooperación en otras clases de indicadores de desempeño (medidas de productividad y/o transparencia).

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### ANEXO: Escalas de medida (escalas Likert de 7 puntos)

	Compromiso afectivo de la fundación hacia la empresa	Media	S.D
CAF1	Tenemos un fuerte sentido de lealtad hacia esa empresa	5.40	1.76
CAF2	Deseamos seguir colaborando indefinidamente porque nos agrada la relación	5.99	1.53
CAF3	Estamos dispuestos invertir a largo plazo en esa relación porque es un placer trabajar con esa empresa	5.56	1.73

	<b>Confianza de la fundación</b>	<b>Media</b>	<b>S.D</b>
CONF1	<i>Creemos que esta empresa está sinceramente preocupada por nuestros intereses y objetivos</i>	5.67	1.31
CONF2	<i>No necesitamos supervisor detenidamente las actividades con esta empresa</i>	4.83	1.85
CONF3	Tenemos seguridad en que esa empresa mantendrá sus promesas	5.78	1.21
CONF4	Esa empresa merece toda nuestra confianza	6.01	1.09
CONF5	La gestión de la empresa es transparente en lo tocante a nuestra relación con ella	6.24	1.04

	<b>Aprendizaje organizativo de técnicas de gestión</b>	<b>Media</b>	<b>S.D</b>
<b>Adquisición</b> (Grado en que el acuerdo ha permitido a la fundación obtener información sobre ...)		<b>Media</b>	<b>S.D</b>
ADQ1	Estrategias y técnicas de gestión organizativa	2.60	1.67
ADQ2	Gestión de marketing/comunicación/relaciones públicas	2.84	1.85
ADQ3	Gestión de recursos humanos	2.37	1.55
ADQ4	Gestión financiera	2.54	1.76
ADQ5	Gestión de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación	2.86	1.94
ADQ6	Obtener acceso a (y/o información sobre) potenciales beneficiarios, aportantes de recursos u otros grupos de interés	3.21	1.97
ADQ7	Nuevas tendencias del entorno en innovación social	2.81	1.76
ADQ8	Sistemas de gestión de la calidad	2.14	1.48
ADQ9	Técnicas de medida de los resultados	2.44	1.73
<b>Diseminación de la información</b>		<b>Media</b>	<b>S.D</b>
DIS1	La información que hemos adquirido se ha difundido a través de toda la fundación	4.46	2.11
DIS2	Consideramos que el conocimiento obtenido ya forma parte de nuestra organización	4.35	2.07
<b>Integración de la información</b>		<b>Media</b>	<b>S.D</b>
INT1	Nuestra organización ha aplicado esa información a sus actividades y rutinas	4.01	1.91
INT2	El acuerdo nos ha permitido mejorar nuestras prestaciones	4.37	1.85
INT3	El acuerdo nos ha permitido ser más eficientes	3.99	1.94
INT4	A partir del acuerdo se han introducido cambios en la gestión de la fundación	2.87	1.90

	<b>Innovación social</b> (Grado en que el acuerdo de cooperación ha consistido en ...)	<b>Media</b>	<b>S.D</b>
INNSOC1	Co-desarrollar nuevos productos y/o servicios con impacto social (que ayuden a resolver problemas sociales y/o medioambientales)	3.66	2.32
INNSOC2	Co-invertir en infraestructuras	2.14	1.87
INNSOC3	Crear o adoptar estándares sectoriales voluntarios	1.79	1.37
INNSOC4	Abogar y luchar por nuevas regulaciones o un cambio político	1.87	1.62
INNSOC5	Influir en stakeholders clave	2.85	1.88

	<b>Cumplimiento de la misión</b>	<b>Media</b>	<b>S.D</b>
MIS1	Cumplimiento de la misión y de los objetivos fundacionales	5.78	1.13
MIS2	Satisfacción de las necesidades, demandas y/o expectativas de los beneficiarios	5.40	1.24
MIS3	Satisfacción de las expectativas de los aportantes de fondos por el uso de sus aportaciones	5.67	1.08

	<b>Financiación</b>	<b>Media</b>	<b>S.D</b>
FUND1	Crecimiento del presupuesto destinado a las actividades de la fundación	4.24	1.92
FUND2	Crecimiento del número de aportantes de recursos a la fundación	3.82	1.81
FUND3	Crecimiento del volumen de ingresos obtenidos por la fundación	3.88	1.87

	<b>Escala de operaciones</b>	<b>Media</b>	<b>S.D</b>
ESC1	Crecimiento del número de actividades desarrolladas por la fundación	5.22	1.63
ESC2	Crecimiento del número de beneficiarios de la fundación	5.20	1.52

Nota: Los ítems en cursiva fueron eliminados durante el proceso de validación de la escala.

# ¿QUÉ ES UN CONSUMIDOR RESPONSABLE Y SUSTENTABLE? REFLEXIONES Y CONSIDERACIONES PARA COMO MEDIRLO

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## RESUMEN

*Esta investigación tiene por objetivo contribuir a esclarecer el alcance del término consumidor responsable y sustentable (CRS) con vista a la generación futura de un nuevo instrumento a partir de una revisión de la literatura.*

*Por ello, en primer lugar se examina los antecedentes los estudios y el estado de situación actual.*

*Luego, se debaten los alcances, similitudes y diferencias de los términos consumidor “verde”, “ético”, “ecológico”, “responsable” y “sustentable”. Seguidamente se presentan los instrumentos de medición utilizados en el pasado desde la dimensión ética, ecológica y social que conforman el constructo.*

*Finalmente, se detallan una serie de consideraciones para la construcción de una nueva escala de medición integral y holística y los pasos para futuras investigaciones.*

## Palabras clave:

Consumidor Responsable, Consumidor sustentable, Consumidor verde, Marketing social,

## 1. Introducción

La **problemática ecológica ha sido estudiada por el marketing** desde la década de 1970 cuando el problema de la contaminación en las grandes ciudades junto con la posterior crisis petrolera pone en el tapete el tema de la escasez de recursos y obliga al mundo al ahorro de la energía y del petróleo.

Los investigadores de marketing han encontrado en estos temas una línea de investigación iniciadas hace ya más de 40 años (Chamorro et al., 2006). Esta ha ido tomando diferentes denominaciones (conciencia ambiental, marketing ecológico, verde, ecomarketing, marketing responsable y sostenibilidad, entre otras). Su objetivo es el estudio del impacto de las actividades de marketing en el entorno. En qué medida los consumidores son conscientes, están preocupados, qué motivaciones y actitudes asumen frente a la problemática ambiental y cuáles son las acciones de las empresas.

En nuestros días, estas temáticas se analizan según el paradigma de la sustentabilidad bajo denominaciones tales como: Responsabilidad Social Corporativa (RSC), donde las empresas han sabido conjugar sustentabilidad y negocio, haciendo de ello un eje fundamental de su estrategia y su ventaja competitiva. O desde la perspectiva del estudio de Consumidor Responsable y Sustentable (CRS), pues entendemos que son “los consumidores lo que han quedado en un segundo plano, dejando a ellos y a la demanda como elementos pasivos en la ecuación de concientizar y persuadir de adoptar un nuevo sistema de valores” (Havas Media y Fundación Entorno, 2013).

En concreto, pensamos a CRS en término de tres dimensiones claves que son: la conciencia ética, la acción pro-ambiente o ecológica y la acción solidaria. Un consumo responsable se centra en un consumo ético y solidario, no solo como respuesta ecológica, y no en un consumo por el consumo (MolledoPerfetti, 2007).

Teniendo en cuenta esta perspectiva, el objetivo del presente trabajo es profundizar en los antecedentes de la literatura académica para poder delimitar conceptualmente el alcance de lo que denominamos Consumidor Responsable y Sustentable (CRS). Todo esto a la luz de los acontecimientos pasados y recientes, así como reflexionar sobre un marco de referencia más general de la temática que implica los valores, la conceptualización de la sociedad y del mundo en que vivimos (Gilg, Barr y Ford, 2005)

Partiendo de la falta de estudios sobre el particular, encontrar fuentes de fundamentación para una posterior propuesta de una escala de medición del consumidor responsable y sustentable, (constructo diferente al que tiene por objeto medir solamente la percepción de las acciones de RSC) (Caruana y Chatzidakis, 2013; Oberseder et. al.,2013), queremos ver donde se sitúa el consumidor en este renovado escenario como actor “activo”, en lo que creemos como novedad que es la construcción de una “ciudadanía del consumo” (Cortina, 2002 y 2003). Es nuestra hipótesis que el denominado “marketing verde” y el “marketing social” fueron propuestas innovadoras de diferenciación competitiva que corrían en forma paralela en respuestas a los movimientos sociales denominados “consumidorismos”, “ambientalismo”, “el tercer sector”. Estas ideas hoy confluyen como nunca antes, en un movimiento más fuerte frente a la globalización y plantean un paso desde la sola mirada de un “green consumption” hacia “estilos de vidas sostenibles y saludables” (Gilg, Barr y Ford, 2005), más acorde a la necesidades del planeta.

Así también, el marketing se redefine como sustentable o responsable, satisfaciendo las necesidades actuales y futuras de los consumidores y de los negocios y al mismo tiempo conserva y respeta los derechos y las opciones de las generaciones futuras. (Kotler y Armstrong, 2012).

El artículo se estructura de la siguiente manera: en el epígrafe 2, en primer lugar se examina los antecedentes del los estudios sobre el “consumidor responsable y sustentable”. Luego, se describen los antecedentes de estudios más importantes desde los inicios hasta la última década. Posteriormente, se presenta un intento de clarificación conceptual de los alcances, similitudes y diferencias de los términos consumidor “verde”, “ético”, “responsable” y “sustentable”.

Seguidamente se presentan los instrumentos de medición utilizados en el pasado desde la dimensión de la actitud: cognitiva, afectiva y conativa. Posteriormente en el epígrafe 3, se analizan las consideraciones para la construcción de una nueva escala de medición integral y holística y se presentan las conclusiones, limitaciones del estudio y las implicaciones para futuras investigaciones.

## **2. Revisión de la literatura**

### **2.1. Antecedentes de estudios**

Inicialmente, los trabajos académicos se centraron en la “preocupación ambiental o ecológica” y su relación con el comportamiento: Kilbourne y Beckmann, (1998). Kassrajain (1971), Fisk (1973) y Kinnear (1974), son los pioneros. Nació así el marketing ecológico como “el estudio de los aspectos positivos y negativos de las actividades de marketing en la contaminación, el agotamiento de la energía y no energéticos y el agotamiento de los recursos” (Henion y Kinnear, 1976), en el contexto de la crisis del petróleo mundial. Fue un período de intensa actividad académica centrada en el medio ambiente que se produjo hasta la segunda mitad de la década de 1970, donde creció la conciencia en la problemática ambiental (Kilbourne y Beckmann, 1998) y se estudiaron las primeras conductas de reciclado y de compra verde. Se habla de un “nuevo segmento verde” (green segment) al cual se busca medir y definir su perfil.

Luego de un lapso, los gobiernos reaccionaron con una serie de regulaciones contra la contaminación y la protección ambiental (leyes ambientales, códigos de comunicación ecológica, etiquetado, etc.) hacia fines de los 70 e inicios de los 80. Los estudios fueron más focalizados en cuestiones de conservación de energía, las investigaciones prosiguieron centrándose en los mismos tópicos: preocupación ambiental, conocimiento del daño ambiental, creencias, actitudes, comportamientos, y la relación entre la intención y el comportamiento desde un punto de vista individual (Balderjahn, 1988). No obstante, los sociólogos Dunlap y VanLiere (1978) ya abogaron por una mirada más amplia y abarcadora del fenómeno social a través de lo que denominaron el “New Environmental Paradigm” (NEP).

La década de los 90 se ha identificado como la “década del medio ambiente” o “la década de la Tierra” con un énfasis en los programas de reciclado, conservación de energía y la publicidad verde. Se estudian nuevos tópicos como la efectividad percibida de los consumidores (Ellen, et al., 1991), los comportamientos cooperativos (Wiener and Doescher, 1994) y estrategias de alianzas (Milne et al., 1996) y se expande a nuevos conceptos a mediados de la misma: creencias ambientales, valores verdes, y factores institucionales como los sistemas de sustentabilidad (Van Dam and Apeldoorn, 1996; O’Hara, 1995). Se percibe un cambio desde la perspectiva micro a la macro en términos ambientales (Stern et al., 1995).

Sin embargo, la mayoría de los trabajos siguieron la línea de los estudios individuales centrados en las características demográficas, actitudes e intención que se derivan del grado de preocupación o conciencia ambiental, a los fines de poder segmentar el mercado (Kilbourne y Beckmann, 1998).

Las palabras claves que describen las primeras dos décadas fueron: conciencia ambiental, publicidad verde, reciclado y perfil socio-demográfico del consumidor verde. Creencias ecológicas, valores ambientales, paradigmas y la conciencia de un sistema de consumo en crisis en occidente y el análisis de la relación entre economía, ambiente e instituciones fueron expuestos por muy pocos. Fisk (1973) fue el pionero y junto con Antil (1984) se centró en el estudio de los perfiles de los consumidores “Socialmente Responsables” (Antil y Bennett, 1979) y sus implicaciones para el éxito de las políticas públicas y los programas de conservación. Por otra parte, la mayor conciencia, involucramiento en cuestiones ecológicas y ambientales fueron incentivos claves para la adopción de nuevas iniciativas de marketing y nuevas prácticas directivas (Finisterra do Paco et al., 2010).

En los países centrales de productos verdes, se produjo una proliferación creciente de los consumidores para apoyar a las empresas verdes. Un mayor compromiso con las acciones de

reciclado y de productos reciclados, la aparición de las primeras etiquetas que señalaban “amigable con el ambiente” y una fuerte presencia en los medios y en la agenda pública (Roberts, 1996). A pesar del fuerte movimiento verde, y la voluntad de los consumidores de seguir gastando en ellos, las góndolas de los supermercados británicos estaban sobre stockeadas de productos verdes (Pearce, 1990).

Desde la academia se comienza a revisar los trabajos de las dos décadas anteriores con la meta de actualizarlas al nuevo contexto social y con los objetivos de: a) **pulir los instrumentos de medición** intentando clarificar la relación entre intención y comportamiento o lo que se denominó la relación entre “EC- Environmental Concern” y “ECCB –Ecologically Conscious Consumer Behaviour” (Schwepke y Cornwell, 1991; Roberts, 1996; Roberts y Bacon, 1997; Bohlen, Schlegelmilch y Diamantopoulos, 1993; Schlegelmilch y Diamantopoulos, 1996; Kilbourne y Beckmann, 1998; Webb, Mohr y Harris, 2007); b) **clarificar el perfil del consumidor verde** desde los sencillos criterios socio-demográficos (Diamantopoulos, Schlegelmilch, Sinkovics y Bohlen, 2003; Shrum, McCarty and Lowrey, 1995; Roberts, 1996); y c) el intento por encontrar **un marco conceptual general para entender los avances y los campos de investigación aún no explorados** (Tilikidou y Zotos, 1999; Tilikidou, Andamson y Sarmaniotis, 2002; Stern et al., 1995; Kilbourne y Beckmann, 1998)

En el nuevo milenio, resurge el tema ambiental como problemática pero bajo el paradigma de las “sustentabilidad” por un lado, y de la “conciencia ética”, y un intento por generar modelos más holísticos e integrales respecto del comportamiento del consumidor que contemplen no solo la dimensión ambiental o ecológica, sino también lo social y lo ética. Algunos trabajos replican estudios y escalas anteriores en otros contextos (Hosta et al., 2010), mientras que la mayoría amplían la mirada hacia visiones más holísticas dentro de una concepción mayor a partir de la influencia de los valores sociales y la estructura social (Gilg et al., 2005), comparan la relación de valores de la economía tradicional versus la economía ecológica y los vínculos con la esfera política, cuestionando la lógica del marketing en la nueva sociedad sustentable (Varey, 2011)

## **2.2. El consumidor “ético”, “verde”, “responsable” o “sustentable”**

El consumidor que se podría llamar responsable es una persona consciente de que detrás de cada acto de consumo que realiza se pone en marcha una maquinaria compleja y que, precisamente con ese consumir, puede estar favoreciendo o bien ahondando más en determinadas desigualdades. El consumidor responsable es aquella persona que ante una determinada elección de compra se plantea una serie de criterios éticos que le hacen inclinarse su elección.

Es posible hablar de “consumo y consumidor responsable, crítico, ético, político, consciente y transformador, ciudadano de mercado, etc., y aunque no existe unanimidad dentro de la comunidad científica sobre su significado”, interpela Díaz (2011). Así, podríamos entender por consumidor responsable a aquella persona que, siendo consciente de sus hábitos de consumo, conoce y exige sus derechos como consumidor y además busca y elige (o reclama o propone a las empresas) opciones que tienen un menor impacto negativo y un mayor efecto positivo en la sociedad, el medioambiente y los animales no humanos.

Consumir en forma responsable y sustentable no se limita a reducir los deseos, sino a poder dominarlos, de manera tal que haya lugar para el placer, pero con mesura y conciencia ambiental y social sobre nuestro actuar (Cortes Funes, 2011). La persona ética pone su acento, fundamentalmente, en su bienestar moral. Se trata de solucionar situaciones muy claras de disonancia entre lo que se espera de una persona y lo que realmente le apetece, coherencia entre lo que uno piensa y como actúa. No es sino desde los valores desde donde se pueden plantear modelos de consumo y estilos de vida acordes como expresión más acabada de la democracia económica, sostiene Ballesteros (2011).

Antes de presentar, lo que entendemos por consumidor responsable y sustentable y cómo se puede operacionalizar, debemos clarificar los términos “ético”, “verde”, “responsable” y “sustentable”, pues aportan matices y perspectivas comunes y diferentes desde lo teórico, más allá que en la práctica se los usa muchas veces en forma indistinta.

Los Consumidores éticos se definen como "aquellos consumidores que consideran cuestiones ambientales, asuntos de animales y otras cuestiones éticas, como el origen del producto - países regímenes opresivos y armamentos - cuando compran" (Shaw et al., 2005). El consumo ético, implica la toma de decisiones, las compras, u otras experiencias de consumo que son afectados por las preocupaciones éticas de los consumidores (Cooper- Martin y Holbrook, 1993), o como define Carrigan et al. (2004) no es más que "la elección consciente y deliberada de tomar ciertas decisiones de consumo debido a las creencias personales y morales". Son ejemplos de prácticas comerciales que efectúan los consumidores éticos: los productos orgánicos, la inversión o banca ética, productos de comercio justo; y acciones como el "boicott", evitando comprar bienes con características poco éticas. La acción de los consumidores está asociada con actividades como lobby y acción directa sobre un tema (Tallontire et al. 2000). La ética ambiental en el consumo, se traduce en tener un mínimo impacto basado en una reducción en el uso de materiales y recursos naturales, y se ha llevado campañas de marketing social para reducir el consumo de energía y agua, entre otros.

El concepto de "sostenibilidad" o "sustentabilidad" proviene de la Brundtland Comisión (1987), que hace hincapié en la necesidad de comportamientos sostenibles para satisfacer las necesidades de las generaciones actuales sin comprometer la capacidad de las generaciones futuras, para satisfacer sus necesidades. Implica adoptar un estilo de vida sostenible es decir, un proceso gradual que es parte de un enfoque holístico (Gilg et al. 2005). Mientras que el consumo sostenible puede ser visto como una forma de "consumo ético". Por ejemplo, el boicot a una marca, ya que utilizar mano de obra barata es una decisión ética, más que una opción sostenible. Por lo tanto, el consumo sostenible se considera que es uno de los posibles resultados de una decisión ética, pero no conduce necesariamente al consumo ético. (Rex, 2008) Tales comportamientos se puede aplicar a las soluciones a corto plazo, tales como el reciclaje o la compra de alimentos orgánicos, así como para soluciones a largo plazo, tales como la construcción de nuevas represas (Routhe et al. 2005) y la instalación de paneles solares y la reducción de emisiones de efecto invernadero (Jackson, 2005).

Tabla 1  
Consumidor Responsable, ético, Sustentable

Características	Consumidor Responsable (y/o crítico)	Consumidor Ético (y/o verde)	Consumidor Sustentable
Impacto ambiental	✓	✓	✓
Huella ecológica			✓
Es crítico del consumo	✓		
Evita modalidades de producción y consumo	✓		✓
Cambio de estilo de vida	✓		✓
Reducir el consumo	✓		✓
Preservar recursos para generaciones futuras			✓
Mejora la calidad de vida	✓	✓	✓
Estilos saludables			✓
Compartir recursos entre ricos y pobres			✓
Minizar el uso recursos	✓		✓
Evitar la contaminación	✓	✓	✓
Compras en comercio Justo	✓		✓
Compras de Productos "verdes"		✓	✓
Agroecología	✓	✓	✓
Participar activamente de movimientos sociales	✓	✓	✓
Efectuar acciones de boicot a empresas	✓	✓	✓
Elegir productos por la conducta de las empresas	✓	✓	✓
Garantías laborales	✓	✓	
Respeto de la dignidad de las personas	✓	✓	✓
Busca la igualdad social			✓
Organizar boicot a empresas por uso de trabajo infantil o esclavo	✓	✓	



Opuesta al consumismo			✓
Busca la igualdad social			✓

Podemos decir que el consumo sustentable es, entonces, una nueva forma de consumir, que se opone al consumismo. Esto implica un nuevo consumidor: responsable, solidario y consciente de sus acciones y de la posibilidad de incidir en los hábitos sociales, económicos y ambientales. El consumo sustentable es a la vez un consumo crítico y un consumo ético. El consumidor crítico es aquel que se pregunta por las condiciones sociales y ecológicas en las que ha sido elaborado un bien o servicio, y exige calidad al mismo tiempo. Necesita ser incorporado como una actitud diaria, de modo de elegir y utilizar lo que se adquiere sobre la base de ciertos criterios, como la historia del producto, la conducta de la empresa productora, señalándole al mercado los métodos productivos que se aprueban y los que se condenan. Este mecanismo es un ejercicio de reflexión, que, formando un pensamiento crítico, permite tomar partido frente al consumo, erigirse como un consumidor activo, responsable e informado (Almiron et al., 2011). La Tabla 1, muestra a partir de esta reflexión, las temáticas, actitudes y comportamientos que implican cada uno de estos conceptos.

### **2.3. El consumidor socialmente responsable y sustentable**

Luego, de la aclaración de los términos descriptos, proponemos la conceptualización del término Consumidor Responsable y Sustentable como lo es la propia actividad de consumir. Tiene los siguientes rasgos según diversos autores (Carrero Bosch, I; Martínez, C; Rosa Duran, J., 2010): a) es un consumo consciente y deliberado (Szmigin, 2009), b) de forma rutinaria, siendo un hábito, c) se actúa buscando el interés externo, centrado en otros y d) se busca, como fin último, modificar el contexto o las estructuras de mercado (Micheletti, 2003). Puede sintetizarse en tres ejes: ético o consciente, ecológico y solidario (Iglesias, 2009):

- Un Consumo Ético, basado en valores, deliberado, consciente, en el que se introduzcan valores como una variante importante a la hora de consumir o de optar por un producto. Con especial énfasis en la austeridad como un valor en relación con la reducción para un consumo ecológico, pero también frente al crecimiento económico desenfrenado y al consumismo como forma de alcanzar el bienestar y la felicidad.
- Un Consumo Ecológico (3R's), que incluye, por este orden, las famosas "erres" del movimiento ecologista: Reducir, Reutilizar y Reciclar, pero en el que también se incluyan la agricultura y ganadería ecológicas y la opción por la producción artesanal, entre otros.
- Un Consumo Social o Solidario, en el que entraría también el Comercio Justo, es decir, el consumo en lo que se refiere a las relaciones sociales y condiciones laborales en las que se ha elaborado un producto o producido un servicio. Se trata de pagar lo justo por el trabajo realizado, a los trabajadores de cualquier país. Se intenta eliminar la discriminación, potenciar alternativas sociales y de integración y procurar un nuevo orden económico internacional.

En suma, el consumo responsable y sustentable es un término sombrilla, para el mejoramiento de la calidad de vida y la eficiencia de los recursos - energéticos renovables, reducción de desperdicios; respeto del ciclo de vida- y considerando la dimensión de equidad - para satisfacer las necesidades básicas de la vida y las aspiraciones de mejoras de las generaciones presentes y futuras, reduciendo el daño ambiental y el riesgo de la salud humana" (Lechner, 2002).

### **2.4. Principales escalas de medidas desarrolladas**

En este apartado, describimos las fuentes encontradas en la revisión de la literatura se efectuó principalmente a partir de los trabajos revisores de Webster (1975), Schwepker (1991), Tilikido y Zotos (1999), Kilbourne y Beckman (1998), Roberts (1996), Chamoro Mera et al. (2006), Webb et al. (2007) entre otros, y que se exponen a continuación en función de las dimensiones conceptuales del CRS descrita en el punto anterior.

### 2.4.1 Dimensión ética

En esta dimensión ética-consciente, los estudios revisados se desglosan en cuatro temáticas a saber: la conciencia o preocupación y las creencias, el conocimiento y la notoriedad de los problemas ecológicos, los valores personales y por último, los tipos de conducta de compra (conscientes- inconscientes, impulsivos-compulsivo, estilo frugal).

En la primera sub-dimensión, se destacan los trabajos iniciales para medir la conciencia y, creencias y de Tucker (1978), Van Liere y Dunlap (1981), Buttel y Flinn Murphy (1978), Gill, Lawrrence y Crosby (1983), la preocupación por la contaminación de Kassarjian (1971), y la preocupación ambiental, la conciencia de la gravedad en los estudios de Bohlen, Schlegelmilch y Diamantopoulos (1993), Belch (1979), Anderson and Cunningham (1972).

En la segunda, dos trabajos se destacan en medir el grado de conocimiento y notoriedad de problemas particulares respecto a la contaminación Bohlen, Schlegelmilch y Diamantopoulos (1993) y Buttel y Flinn (1978).

En la tercera, se destacan como valores pro-ambientales a) la escala de “Green Consumer Values” de Haws, Winterich, and Naylor (2010) donde definen a los consumidores verdes como aquellos que tienen una tendencia a considerar el impacto ambiental en sus comportamientos de consumo, y b) las escalas referidas al consumidor en sí mismo, como la de Bearden, Hardesty, and Rose (2001) que mide el grado en que un individuo se siente capaz y seguro en lo que respecta a sus decisiones de compra. Aparecen como valores contrarios, las escalas referidas a medir las tendencias a la valorización de lo material, que explica una vida consumista y hedonista, como el trabajo de Richins (1987) que describe el materialismo en cuanto a su papel en la cultura de consumo y la escalas de materialismo de Belk (1984, 1985)

Tabla 2

Revisión de Escalas de la literatura – Dimensión ética

Sub-dimension	Escala	Autores
Conciencia y creencia	Environmental Responsibility	Tucker, (1978)
	Environmental Concern	Van Liere y Dunlap (1981); Buttel y Flinn Murphy (1978); Gill, Lawrrence y Crosby (1983)
	Ecological Concern Index	Kinnear y Taylor (1973); Henion y Wilson (1976); Crosby an Taylor (1983)
	Concern for air pollution	Kassarjian (1971)
	Environmental Attitudes Scale	Bohlen, Schlegelmilch yDiamantopoulos (1993)
	Social-environmentally concerned consumers	Belch (1979)
	Social Responsibility scale	Anderson and Cunningham (1972)
Conocimiento y notoriedad de los problemas ecológicos	Environmental knowledge scale	Bohlen, Schlegelmilch y Diamantopoulos (1993)
	Awareness environmental problems	Buttel y Flinn (1978)
Valores personales	Green consumer values	Haws, Winterichan y Naylor, (2010)
	Consumer self-confidence	Bearden, Harvesty y Rose
	Consumer's need for uniqueness	Tian, Bearden y Hunter, (2001)
	Materialism Scales	Belck (1984 , 1985)
	Material values	Richins y Dawson (1992)
Tipo de compra y de conducta expresada	Frugal Scale	Lastovicka et al. (1999)
	Compulsive Buying Index (CBI)	Ridgway, Kukar-Kinney, y Monroe (2008)
	Compulsive Consumption	Faber yO'Guinn (1989, 1992)
	Buying Impulsiveness Scale	Rook y Fisher (1995)
	Impulsiveness: Consumer Impulsiveness Scale: CIS	Puri (1996)
	Consumer Spending Self-Control: CSSC	Haws y Bearden (2010)

En la cuarta, respecto de las conductas, tipo de consumo y estilos de vida que se desprenden de los valores personales, se encuentra el concepto de frugalidad, medido por Lastovicka et al. (1999), que se define como un estilo de vida no consumista y se caracteriza por el grado en que los consumidores son a la vez sobrios en la adquisición y hábiles con los bienes y servicios para

lograr objetivos a largo plazo. Como valores y actitudes personales, contrarios a que el consumidor sea responsable y consciente, encontramos los tipos de compras compulsivas e impulsivas, escalas desarrolladas por autores como Ridgway, Kukar-Kinney, y Monroe (2008), Rook and Fisher (1995) y Puri (1996), que estudian la tendencia a comprar de forma espontánea, irreflexiva, inmediata, y otras veces hedonista, sin considerar las consecuencias graves para el largo plazo.

#### 2.4.2 Dimensión ecológica

Esta dimensión ecológica se refiere a las acciones concretas para evitar el daño ambiental que se dividen en dos: acciones de reciclado y comportamientos de compra, véase la Tabla 3 modificando los ítems pertinentes según la época y la realidad del contexto (Vinning y Ebreo, 1990; Hopper y Nielsen, 1991; Bohlen, Schlegelmilch y Diamantopoulos, 1993).

En lo que se refiere a los comportamientos de compra se destacan varias escalas que además de la conciencia y la actitud, miden comportamientos concretos. La escala de Antil and Bennett (1979) sobre el “Comportamiento de Consumo Socialmente Responsable” (SRCB) integra aquellos comportamientos y decisiones de compra de los consumidores que están relacionados con los problemas ambientales y relacionados con los recursos y están motivados no sólo por el deseo de satisfacer las necesidades personales, sino también por la preocupación por el bienestar de la sociedad en general, considerando tanto la dimensión ecológica como la dimensión ética.

Tabla 3  
Revisión de Escalas de la literatura – Dimensión ecológica (3 R’s)

Dimension	Escala	Autores
Acciones de reciclado	Recycling	Webster (1975)
	Recycling	Vinning y Ebreo (1990)
	Recycling	Hopper y Nielsen (1991)
	Recycling Behaviour Scale	Bohlen, Schlegelmilch y Diamantopoulos (1993)
Comportamiento de compras	Ecologically Conscious Consumer Behaviour	Roberts (1996)
	Ecologically Responsible buying	Balderjahn (1988)
	Socially Responsible Consumption Behaviour	Antil y Bennett (1979), Antil (1994)
	Environmentally Responsible Consumer – ECOSCALE	Stone, Barnes, y Montgomery (1995)
	Ecologically Conscious Consumer Behaviour revisada	Tilikidou, Adamson y Sarmaniotis (2002)

Respecto del reciclado, son varios quienes lo han medido desde el trabajo de Webster (1975), Stone, Barnes, and Montgomery (1995) y desarrollaron la escala “Environmentally Responsible Consumers” o “ECOSCALE” donde postulan cinco dimensiones de la responsabilidad ecológica de los consumidores: (a) el conocimiento del consumidor y de la conciencia, (b) el deseo y la voluntad de actuar de los consumidores, (c) las opiniones de los consumidores y las actitudes relativas al medio ambiente, (d) la capacidad de los consumidores para actuar, y (e) el comportamiento del consumidor hacia el medio ambiente.

Tilikidou, Adamson y Sarmaniotis (2002) propone un marco conceptual más amplio y extensivo al que denomina “Ecological Conscious”, perfecciona la escala de “Ecological Conscious Consumer Behaviour” (ECCB) teóricamente presentada por primera vez por Roberts (1996). Sugiere agrupar las escalas revisadas en el punto anterior de la siguiente manera (Tilikidou, 2001). En la dimensión cognitiva consigna a) Environmental Knowledge y awareness b) Ethical and values c) Beliefs. En la dimensión afectiva a) las actitudes Pro-ambiente y b) las actitudes hacia el reciclado. Y por último, en la dimensión Conativa a) el comportamiento de compra pro-ambiente, b) el comportamiento de post-compra pro-ambiente y c) las actividades pro-ambiente. Tilikidou, Adamson y Sarmaniotis (2002) hacen un esfuerzo por validar el instrumento ECCB pero tan solo efectúan un análisis exploratorio y de la fiabilidad inicial de las escalas, sin avanzar en la confirmación.

### 2.4.3 Dimensión social

En los trabajos pioneros no se ha encontrado rastros de medir esta dimensión pues surge de la evolución de la temática desde la preocupación inicial por la contaminación ecológica, la producción “verde” hasta el concepto más evolucionado e integrador de sustentabilidad como señalamos en el punto 2, véase la Tabla 4.

Dos trabajos se encontraron respecto de la actitud del consumidor y la influencia de las Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil (OSC) como de las intenciones de hacer donaciones monetarias. Webb, Green, and Brashear (2000) trabajaron sobre las actitudes para ayudar a los demás y las actitudes hacia las organizaciones de la OSC, como determinantes relacionados del comportamiento de donación: a) actitudes hacia la ayuda a los demás (AHO) se define como las evaluaciones globales y relativamente duraderas con respecto a ayudar a otras personas, b) actitudes hacia las OSC se definen como las evaluaciones globales y relativamente duraderas con respecto a las OSC, que ayudan a los individuos.

Respecto de la percepción de las conductas de las empresas, los trabajos son más recientes y vinculados al desarrollo de la RSC (Caruana y Chatzidakis, 2013; Oberseder et. al., 2013).

Sobre el grado de participación o de apoyo del consumidor a las propuestas de reformas y acciones regulatorias, encontramos solo menciones en dos trabajos de la época, de fuerte debate en este sentido (Buttel and Flinn, 1978; Sambahl and Robertson, 1989).

Respecto de la pertenencia, participación y apoyo a los movimientos de consumerismo y ecológico ambiental, no se encontraron trabajos.

Tabla 4  
Revisión de Escalas de la literatura – Dimensión social

Dimensión	Escala	Autores
Actitud ante las OSC	Attitudes Influencing Monetary Donations to Charitable Organizations	Webb, Green, and Brashear (2000)
	Attitudes to Charitable Organizations	Webb, Green, and Brashear (2000)
Percepción de las conductas de las empresa	Percepción de acciones de RSE Reacción ante la RSE	Alcami et. al.(2013), Almiron et. al. (2013), Bigne et. al.(2011), Caruana y Chatzidakis, (2013); Fernandez Kranz y Marino Castello (2005); Oberseder et. al., (2013), Vila y Gimeno-Martínez (2011)
Actitud ante el gobierno	Support for environmental reform	Buttel and Flinn (1978)
	Support for environmental regulations	Sambahl and Robertson (1989)
Acciones referidas al movimiento ecológico y del consumidorismo	Participación en acciones concretas Pertenencia a movimientos Financiamiento	No encontrado escalas específicas.

### 3. Conclusión y implicancias gerenciales

Este estudio se propuso clarificar el concepto de consumidor responsable y sustentable (CRS) con miras al desarrollo a futuro de una escala de medición. Esto es de vital importancia para el mundo académico, y no así para el mundo empresarial donde estos términos de “verde” “responsable”, “ético” o “sustentable” son intercambiables, pues el “verde” sigue siendo el color y la bandera que identifica al movimiento ecológico y al del consumerismo.

La revisión de los trabajos efectuada ha permitido visualizar como las temáticas señaladas han ido respondiendo a las necesidades del contexto: primero, la conciencia del daño de la contaminación, luego el involucramiento con los programas de reciclaje, posteriormente la necesidad de comprender la relación entre la intención y la conducta, más tarde, medir la actitud hacia la ecología, los productos verdes, el comercio justo, para finalmente, en esta última etapa, aparece la necesidad de un instrumento para medir la relación del consumidor con otros actores, como la empresa, las OSC, los movimientos sociales y los entes gubernamentales. El mundo académico está respondiendo a esta demanda de evaluar el impacto de la RSE sobre el consumidor abandonando la caracterización del consumidor como un ser social, independiente, inserto en una sociedad con un nuevo desafío la sustentabilidad.

Hemos presentado el concepto de consumidor socialmente responsable y sustentable (CSR) como las dimensiones que la componen. Se desprende de allí que la dimensión social necesita de profundizarse en sus sub-dimensiones y pensar en nuevos instrumentos de medida que le den forma.

Otra limitación de esta propuesta es que no hemos avanzado en una propuesta concreta. Sin embargo, podemos decir que nuestro objetivo fue abrir el debate sobre el alcance del concepto, destacando que desde las posturas éticas parece exigírsele, ya no solo reciclar, comprar verde, comprar justo sino también ayudar a otros, participar activamente en boicot, educar al consumidor, y otra serie de acciones que llevan a un cambio en el estilo de vida saludable y sostenible.

Ya hay proyectos que están avanzando fuertemente en la creación de estos nuevos estilos de vida saludables que se proponen a los más jóvenes (Youthxchange, 2005). Por ello, una línea de investigación futura podrá trabajar desde lo normativo, definiendo cuál debería ser el consumidor del futuro en una sociedad sustentable y cuál es el proceso social de su construcción y medición. Otra línea que se abre es comparar los consumidores de hoy con los “verdes” de antaño tanto en cuanto a sus características socio-demográficas, psicográficas como actitudinales.

La recomendación para el mundo empresarial es que los tiempos por venir, el consumidor va a jugar un rol cada vez más activo en la construcción de este mundo.

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# EXPECTATIVAS Y PERCEPCIONES DEL CONSUMIDOR ESPAÑOL RESPECTO A LA RESPONSABILIDAD SOCIAL: DIFERENCIAS SOCIODEMOGRÁFICAS

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## RESUMEN

¿Los consumidores tienen las mismas expectativas y perciben de igual modo los esfuerzos realizados por las empresas socialmente responsables? Investigaciones previas se han interesado por estudiar cómo la RSC influye en el comportamiento de los consumidores. La mayoría de estudios se han centrado en antecedentes relacionados con las características de las empresas. Sin embargo, la diferencia en las expectativas y percepciones de los consumidores frente a la RSC puede venir determinada por las características intrínsecas de los individuos. En el ámbito español, este trabajo en curso analiza cómo el perfil sociodemográfico influye en la respuesta del consumidor ante la RSC.

## PALABRAS CLAVE

*Responsabilidad Social; características sociodemográficas; comportamiento del consumidor*

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## 1. Introducción

En los últimos años, la investigación académica se ha interesado en conocer cómo las iniciativas de Responsabilidad Social Corporativa (i.e., RSC) de las empresas son aceptadas por el consumidor e influyen en sus respuestas emocionales y comportamentales. Sin embargo, la mayoría de trabajos en esta línea (eg. Du, Bhattacharya y Sen, 2011; Lichtenstein, Drumwright y Braig, 2004; Mohr, Webb y Harris, 2001; Sen y Bhattacharya, 2001) se han centrado en analizar antecedentes que tienen que ver con características propias de la organización empresarial (su reputación, credibilidad, motivaciones, confianza, etc.) sin prestar demasiada atención a la influencia de las propias características intrínsecas del consumidor en el mecanismo de respuesta de este a las iniciativas de RSC. La propia noción de RSC, inherentemente cultural y ligado a las especificidades de los sujetos (Boxenbaum, 2006; Carroll, 1991), invita a proponer que las diferencias personales de los sujetos deberían influir en qué se espera y cómo son percibidas las iniciativas de RSC de las empresas (García de los Salmones, Herrero y Rodríguez del Bosque, 2005; Maignan, 2001).

Por ello, el objetivo general de este trabajo en curso es analizar un conjunto de antecedentes intrínsecos al individuo de carácter sociodemográfico que influyen las respuestas del consumidor a las iniciativas de RSC, en un estudio contextualizado en España. En concreto, se pretende estudiar cómo varían las expectativas y percepciones de las iniciativas RSC en función de tres características sociodemográficas del consumidor: (i) sexo, (ii) edad, y (iii) nivel de estudios.

## 2. Revisión de la literatura y cuestiones a investigar

A lo largo de las últimas décadas se han desarrollado varias aproximaciones conceptuales (Brown y Dacin, 1997; Carroll, 1991), surgidas de distintos enfoques, para intentar capturar la noción de la RSC (las dimensiones que lo componen) y su relación con el comportamiento del consumidor. Una de estas aproximaciones es la basada en el modelo del Desarrollo Sostenible (Choi y Ng, 2011; Chow y Chen, 2011; van Marrewijk, 2003). El enfoque apoyado en la perspectiva del Desarrollo Sostenible se fundamenta en los ejes que componen la triple línea base de la misma, es decir, el eje económico, el social y el medioambiental (van Marrewijk, 2003; Chow y Chen, 2011). Esta es la perspectiva que ha sido adoptada en este trabajo. Tal y como se desprende de la conceptualización basada en el Desarrollo Sostenible, la RSC es un concepto maleable, inherentemente cultural y ligado a las especificidades de cada sujeto (y cada sociedad): lo que las personas y sociedades “esperan” o “les preocupa” de la actividad de las empresas en materia económica, social y medioambiental varía a lo largo del tiempo, y difiere de un contexto cultural a otro (Boxenbaum, 2006). Y esta diferente *expectativa social* fruto de las diferencias personales debería influir en cómo *son percibidas* las iniciativas de RSC por el sujetos (García de los Salmones et al., 2005; Maignan, 2001; Maignan y Ferrell, 2003).

En este sentido, tal y como es concebida la RSC, las respuestas del consumidor ante la misma deben de seguir la lógica de la disconfirmación de expectativas (Parasuraman, Zeithaml y Berry, 1985): el común denominador de las dimensiones de la RSC es la congruencia entre las expectativas que el individuo tiene sobre el comportamiento de la empresa y el resultado real o percibido de esta. La idea de comparar las expectativas de los consumidores sobre la RSC respecto a sus percepciones de RSC ha sido escasamente estudiado en la literatura en marketing (Alvarado et al., 2010; Swaen, 2003). Así, en este aspecto, la primera cuestión a investigar de este trabajo en curso sería:

**CII.** ¿Qué relación se establece entre las expectativas del comportamiento RSC de la empresas y lo que perciben los consumidores españoles?

En segundo lugar, es razonable pensar que los consumidores en España tendrán distinto nivel de expectativa y percepción de la RSC en función de sus características sociodemográficas. Apenas existen estudios en esta línea que permitan plantear hipótesis de partida. En otros trabajos se ha demostrado que las mujeres tienden a aceptar mejor las iniciativas de RSC que los hombres

(Valor, 2005), y que estos esperan mejores comportamientos responsables de las empresas (Webb y Mohr, 1998). Por otro lado, parece razonable esperar que las personas con mayor nivel de estudios, más formadas e informadas, esperen comportamientos más responsables de las empresas. En resumen, en este trabajo en curso se plantean las siguientes cuestiones a investigar:

**CI2abc.** ¿Cómo son las expectativas y percepciones de RSC de los consumidores españoles en función de su (a) sexo, (b), edad y (c) nivel de estudios?

### 3. Metodología de la investigación

Este trabajo se basa en una investigación cuantitativa online, con cuestionario estructurado, en base a una muestra de consumidores reales a nivel nacional. Se han seleccionado actividades de RSC de dos compañías, de dos ámbitos distintos, como estímulos para elicitación de la percepción de imagen de RSC en la encuesta: Inditex (sector textil) y Danone (sector alimentación). Ambas son compañías que realizan habitualmente iniciativas de RSC (con experiencias positivas y negativas) y de sectores no estigmatizados socialmente. El cuestionario online ha sido distribuido a un panel de consumidores residentes en España, mayores de 16 años, y que han comprado/consumido algún producto de Inditex o Danone en el último año. El tamaño muestral final es de 661 casos, lo que implica trabajar con un  $e = 3,38\%$  para la situación de máxima incertidumbre ( $p = q = 0,5$ ) y un nivel de confianza del 95%. En relación a las características de la muestra, el 50,4% son hombres y el 49,6% mujeres; la edad media es de 41,85 años y un 45,6% posee estudios universitarios.

Las expectativas (“*Las empresas deberían de...*”) y percepciones (“*La empresa X intenta...*”) de las iniciativas de RSC se han medido siguiendo el modelo del Desarrollo Sostenible, diferenciando por tanto las dimensiones económica, social y medioambiental de la RSC. Para su medición, se ha utilizado una batería de ítems en base a los trabajos de Alvarado y Schlesinger (2008), Brown y Dacin (2007) y Lichtenstein et al. (2004), distinguiendo 5 ítems para la dimensión económica ( $\alpha = 0,92$ ), 4 para la dimensión social ( $\alpha = 0,95$ ), y otros 4 para la medioambiental ( $\alpha = 0,94$ ).

### 4. Primeros resultados

Cada una de las dimensiones de la RSC, tanto en lo relativo a las expectativas como a las percepciones, se sintetizó en un único indicador, calculado como el promedio de los ítems de la escala. Hecho esto, se calculó la disconfirmación respecto a cada dimensión, restandose para ello al valor de las expectativas sobre la RSC de la empresa en sus tres dimensiones, la valoración de las percepciones (ver tabla 1).

**Tabla 1. Valores medios de las dimensiones de la RSC (1=bajo a 7=alto)**

	Percepciones (P)	Expectativas (E)	Disconfirmación (P-E)
Social	4,80	5,43	-0,63
Medioambiental	4,79	5,63	-0,84
Económica	5,19	5,73	-0,53

El primer resultado que merece ser destacado es que la disconfirmación es negativa, es decir, los consumidores españoles tienen unas expectativas sobre las acciones de RSC de las empresas superiores a lo que perciben. En la tabla 1 se observa que los individuos españoles esperan más en el ámbito económico de la RSC, seguido de las cuestiones medioambientales y en menor nivel, de las sociales. En el caso de las percepciones, reconocen que las empresas llevan a cabo en mayor medida acciones de ámbito económico, por delante de medidas medioambientales y sociales, que las perciben de manera similar. En esta línea, donde más discrepancia se produce entre lo que se percibe de la empresa y lo que se espera de ella en materia de RSC es en la dimensión medioambiental, mientras que en la dimensión económica esta disconfirmación es la que menor valor refleja.

Si analizamos estos mismos resultados considerando el sexo del encuestado (tabla 2), constatamos que las mujeres perciben pero también esperan significativamente más que los hombres en materia de RSC en sus tres dimensiones.

**Tabla 2. Valores medios de las dimensiones de la RSC según el sexo**

	PERCEPCIONES (P)			EXPECTATIVAS (E)		
	Hombre	Mujer	Prueba t	Hombre	Mujer	Prueba t
Social	4,66	4,93	-2,969**	5,31	5,56	-2.628**
Medioambiental	4,64	4,94	-3,094**	5,50	5,76	-2.518*
Económica	5,11	5,29	-1,972*	5,58	5,87	-2.864**

\*\*Sig. ≤0.01; \* Sig. ≤0.05

En relación a la edad del individuo (tabla 3), son los mayores de 40 años los que significativamente perciben y también esperan más de la empresa en relación a las acciones de RSC. Además, la dimensión económica de la RSC es la que más protagonismo cobra, dado que es la dimensión de la que más se espera y de la que más se percibe.

**Tabla 3. Valores medios de las dimensiones de la RSC según la edad**

	PERCEPCIONES (P)			EXPECTATIVAS (E)		
	<40	≥40	Prueba t	<40	≥40	Prueba t
Social	4,59	4,97	4,230**	5,29	5,55	2,679**
Medioambiental	4,52	5,01	5,180**	5,49	5,75	2,406*
Económica	4,95	5,40	5,477**	5,57	5,86	2,862**

\*\*Sig. ≤0.01; \* Sig. ≤0.05

Por último, tal y como se observa en la tabla 4, el nivel de estudios del individuo no determina las expectativas que éste tiene en materia de RSC, pero sí algunas de las percepciones; en concreto, se tengan o no estudios universitarios, el individuo percibe al mismo nivel las acciones de ámbito económico, pero no las de carácter medioambiental o social, que son significativamente más percibidas por los individuos con menor nivel de estudios.

**Tabla 4. Valores medios de las dimensiones de la RSC según el nivel de estudios finalizado**

	PERCEPCIONES (P)			EXPECTATIVAS (E)		
	No universitarios	Universitarios	Prueba t	No universitarios	Universitarios	Prueba t
Social	4,90	4,67	-2,509*	5,37	5,51	1,519 <sup>ns</sup>
Medioambiental	4,92	4,63	-3,003**	5,57	5,70	1,286 <sup>ns</sup>
Económica	5,24	5,14	-1,142 <sup>ns</sup>	5,72	5,74	,283 <sup>ns</sup>

\*\*Sig. ≤0.01; \* Sig. ≤0.05; ns No significativo

## 5. Conclusiones y resultados esperados

Los primeros resultados de este trabajo ponen en evidencia que, para el caso español, parece existir una disconfirmación negativa entre lo que se espera y lo que se percibe en el comportamiento socialmente responsable de las empresas. Además, estas expectativas y percepciones en material social, medioambiental y económico varían según el sexo, edad y nivel de estudios del consumidor. Este trabajo en curso tiene su continuación natural en la profundización del papel moderador de las características sociodemográficas en la relación establecida entre la disconfirmación de expectativas de RSC y posteriores respuestas emocionales (por ejemplo, actitud hacia la marca o compromiso con la marca) y comportamentales (intención de compra o intención de recomendar) del sujeto. Estos efectos de moderación se testarán mediante modelos Finite Mixture Partial Least Squares (SmartPLS).

Se espera que, mediante los resultados posteriores de este trabajo en curso, se puedan ofrecer explicaciones alternativas o más sofisticadas a investigaciones previas sobre la influencia de antecedentes de la propia empresa en la influencia de la RSC sobre el comportamiento del consumidor: estos responden más negativa o positivamente a las iniciativas de RSC en función de sus propias características sociodemográficas, y lo que esperan y perciben de las propias

iniciativas de RSC. Desde la óptica de la gestión, los resultados tendrán implicaciones para las empresas en lo que a la toma de decisiones de segmentación se refiere, enfocando sus comunicaciones de RSC hacia el segmento de consumidores más afines con su responsabilidad social.

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# MEDIA EFFECTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM: THE MODERATING ROLE OF OPTIMISTIC BIAS

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This paper adopts a novel optimistic bias-based approach to improve understanding of media effects on environmental activism. The main research question here concerns ‘if and how’ optimistic bias moderates media effects on environmental activist behavior. A complementary question is whether optimistic bias sheds light onto the differential effectiveness of some media, relative to others, in influencing environmental activism. Consequently, the authors postulate that optimistic bias moderates the effect of perceived media influence (on self) on environmental activism—so that media influence on environmental activism will be less intense for individuals ‘high’ in optimistic bias. Personal interviews will be conducted to gather quantitative data from a sample based on designated age and gender quotas. Most measurement items are drawn or adapted from validated scales. Hierarchical regression analysis will be used to test the relationships of the study. Important implications for theory, policy, and practice will be drawn.*

## **Keywords:**

Media effects, optimistic bias, environmental activism, hierarchical regression

## 1. Introduction

Engaging the public in environmental activism is recognized as an essential step in the move towards the sustainability goals of industrialized countries. Increased media coverage has substantially raised public awareness and concern about environmental issues, but has typically failed to induce effective and persistent behavioral changes (e.g., Whitmarsh, 2009). Thus, public and private organizations continue to face the challenge of effectively using media and communication technology to promote more environmentally significant behavior.

Although the above arguments question the validity of media as a method of effecting large-scale pro-environmental behavior change, this study asserts that not only the type of media used to deliver pro-environmental messages but also the psychological mechanisms that emerge when people receive the communication stimuli may account for people's behavioral reactions. Specifically, scholars have argued that there is a tendency of people to underestimate their likelihood of suffering from environmental risks, which is called optimistic bias (e.g., Hatfield and Job, 2001; Pahl et al., 2005). This psychological mechanism leads a person to judge one's own risk as less than the risk of others and, thus, reinforces self-esteem in evaluating external negative stimuli such as media messages of negative events (e.g., environmental hazards) in such a way that inhibit the adoption of protective actions. Accordingly, optimistic bias regarding environmental hazards may hinder the adoption of pro-environmental behaviors, such as environmental activism, and can enlighten why a commensurate public involvement in pro-environmental behavior is lacking (Hatfield and Job, 2001). Yet, empirical evidence suggests that optimistic bias does not directly relate to intended or actual pro-environmental behavior (Pahl et al., 2005).

A novel optimistic bias-based approach is adopted in this study to explain how media effects are linked to environmental activism. On the one hand, and consistent with prior findings in communication research, perceived media influence (on self) is considered to be a direct predictor of environmental activism behavior. On the other hand, this relationship between media and activism is argued to be contingent on people's optimistic bias. The view of optimistic bias as a moderator moves away from its traditional, controversial conception as a direct predictor of pro-environmental behavior, and delves into the idea that the optimistic bias mechanism acts as a psychological barrier that may attenuate or annul media effects on pro-environmental behavior change.

Considering also that some media are more effective than others in influencing pro-environmental perceptions and behaviors (e.g., Nixon and Saphores, 2009; Nonami et al., 1997), a complementary research question is whether optimistic bias is a factor that helps better understand these differential media effects. Although the analysis of different media sources of information is lacking in studies on optimistic bias for environmental risks, the importance of understanding the interplay between media, optimistic bias, and pro-environmental activism is valuable not only from a scientific but also from a practical point of view (e.g., efficient resource allocation in environmental communication campaigns).

## 2. Background

### 2.1. Media effects on pro-environmental behavior

The importance of media effects largely stems from the view of environmental awareness and knowledge as necessary preconditions for most pro-environmental actions (Mobley et al., 2010). However, 'information deficit' approaches to behavior change—depicted largely as linear-sequential models [environmental knowledge → awareness and concern (environmental attitude) → pro-environmental behavior]—have been criticized as being too simplistic or ineffective (Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002). Thus, communication efforts to promote voluntary, public engagement in pro-environmental actions appear to have had limited success (Howell, 2011; Poortinga et al., 2011). A review of the literature uncovers that most of environmental 'media effects' studies have focused on analyzing how media *coverage* and *exposure* to environmental issues and problems affect public awareness and pro-environmental action (e.g., Sampei and Aoyagi-Usui, 2009). Alternatively, other authors have examined how media *usage* relates to individual-level pro-environmental outcomes (e.g., Arlt et al., 2011). It is the authors' contention that measures of media coverage, exposure and usage

fail to account for the actual influence of media environmental messages on the public, and is partly responsible for the inconsistency of the results regarding the influence of media on pro-environmental behavior. *Perceived media influence* should be more strongly associated to the various outcomes considered in environmental studies. In particular, the presumed effect of media coverage on self has been shown to directly elicit pro-environmental behavior changes (e.g., Jensen and Hurley, 2005). Therefore, it is argued that measures of perceived media influence on self allow researchers to more fully account for the strength and actual efficacy of environmental messages and campaigns.

## **2.2. The optimistic bias**

Optimistic bias regarding environmental hazards (i.e., environmental optimistic bias) has received little direct theoretical and empirical consideration in comparison to other personal risks such as contracting AIDS, smoking risks, suffering accidents, the Y2K problem, etc. Optimistic bias has been defined as a psychological tendency that leads people to think they are less likely to experience negative future events but more likely to experience positive future events as compared to others (Gifford et al., 2009). According to this definition, though beneficial messages such as pro-environmental messages might gear actions toward personal protection from (environmental) risk perceptions, the optimistic bias would make people believe that the risk is higher for others than for oneself, which could lead to human inaction. Despite the importance of this phenomenon, it is significant that the influence of media variables has been neglected in environmental optimistic bias research, even though communication processes have been commonly linked to self-other differences in the risk perception domain (see, e.g., Chapin, 2000; Morton and Duck, 2001).

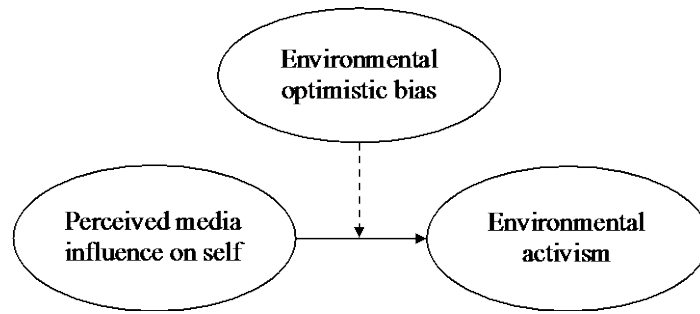
Considering the above arguments, two questions that arise from studies that show that media effects are not enough for environmental behavior change to occur are (1) whether the optimistic bias may be acting as an inhibitor of these effects and (2) whether this mechanism holds this power regardless of the type of media used to deliver an environmental message. Regarding the first concern, Gifford (2011) stressed that optimistic bias, as a psychological barrier, has become a contingency factor that may hinder pro-environmental behaviors. Accordingly, the cognitive underestimation of the likelihood of suffering from environmental risks can lead people to reject the behavioral changes that environmental media messages encourage. This view reflects the idea that there is “a human tendency to see the world through optimistic or self-serving lenses” (Gunther and Mundy, 1993: 58). This study follows this conception that considers optimistic bias as a contingency to claim that the interplay of this mechanism with media influences would determine environmental activism. Regarding the second concern, it seems logical to believe that the effect of environmental optimistic bias on the relationship between perceived media influence on self and environmental activism will be more or less intense depending on the message delivery channel. This assumption can be supported by results that show that social judgment biases can be interrelated to the characteristics of the source of communication (e.g., Morton and Duck, 2001) and also by studies that show differential effects of media on people’s environmental knowledge, attitudes and/or behavior (e.g., Corral-Verdugo, 2003; Nixon and Saphores, 2009).

## **3. The current study**

Based on the above discussion, in the current study it is proposed an interactive fit argument or moderating view that argues that environmental activism behavior is attributable to a match between the psychological mechanism of optimistic bias and media influences. In particular, it is suggested that the optimistic bias moderates the effect of perceived media influence (on self) on environmental activism. Given the focus on environmental hazards, it is postulated that media influence on environmental activism will be less intense in those individuals whose optimistic bias is greater. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual model.



FIGURE 1  
Research model



#### 4. Method and expected contributions of the study

Next, the methodology that will be used in this research is explained and the expected contributions of the study are discussed.

To test the research model, we will utilize the questionnaire survey method. Personal interviews will be conducted to gather quantitative data from a sample based on designated age and gender quotas. For the measurement of the variables in the model, adapted scales of prior studies are used. The scale of *environmental activism* comprises six statements relating to individual-level activism actions (e.g., participation in environmental demonstrations); environmental activism items will be adapted from key environmental studies (i.e., Stern et al., 1999; Whitmarsh and O'Neill, 2010) and rate on 7-point scales from 1 to 7—where 1 denotes 'never' and 7 denotes 'always'. A composite index of environmental activism—the outcome (dependent) variable of interest here—will be constructed by computing factor scores from a principal components analysis of the six activism items. The *perceived influence of media on self* is measured with 26 ratings, on a 1 to 7 scale, of the extent to which different communication formats (e.g., campaigns, news, ads, series, documentaries, or interviews)—conveyed by different media and communication technology (i.e., television, radio, print media, and the Internet)—influenced participants to adopt pro-environmental actions (1 = 'no influence'; 7 = 'extreme influence'). A separate composite index of perceived influence of media will be created from principal components analysis of communication items. The procedure performed by Pahl et al. (2005) to develop a measurement instrument for *environmental optimistic bias* or comparative optimism is going to be followed in this study. Participants will be asked to rate 19 environmental risks (e.g., pollution, genetically modified food, pesticides and herbicides, water shortage) for the self, followed by ratings of the same risks for a typical person of the same background as respondents. Respondents will be asked "How much at risk do you think you [a typical person (of your age, sex and background)] are [is] of experiencing harmful effects of each of the following hazards sometime in the future?" Again, responses will be given on 7-point scales ranging from 'not at risk at all' (1) to 'strongly at risk' (7). Comparative optimism (i.e., the difference score between self and other-rating) will be computed for the 19 environmental risks. Additionally, a composite index of optimistic bias will be constructed by computing factor scores from a principal components analysis of the 19 comparative optimism items. The questionnaire will also comprise questions on socio-demographic information that will be used as covariates in the empirical analysis.

A hierarchical regression analysis procedure will be performed to test the proposed relationships. Specifically, this technique will allow to assess the magnitude and significance of the interactions involving perceived media influence on self (differentiating among distinct media) and optimistic bias. From this analysis, the study attempts to provide valuable insights into how optimistic bias determines the strength of the effect of different media on pro-environmental activism or, in other words, to shed light onto the effectiveness of different media under different levels of biased optimism. In this sense, it is expected that the findings lead to improve the theoretical understanding of the process of media influence on environmental activism. The study can also have useful practical implications because those in governments, businesses and environmental organizations could use the findings for designing ambitious environmental campaigning.

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# RESPONSABILIDAD SOCIAL DEL CONSUMIDOR: DESARROLLO DE UNA ESCALA

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## RESUMEN

*El objetivo de este estudio de investigación es el desarrollo de una nueva escala para medir la Responsabilidad Social del Consumidor (RSCn), una escala que incluye no sólo lo que otros autores han aceptado previamente sino que incorpora nuevas actitudes alineadas con la evolución del sistema económico y social. El concepto se ha desarrollado a partir del establecido en la literatura para la Responsabilidad Social Corporativa (RSC) de las empresas. Se ha seguido la metodología para el desarrollo de escalas y, posteriormente, se ha procedido a su contraste mediante un modelo de antecedentes y consecuencias. En este documento se describe la metodología utilizada y se muestran los primeros resultados del estudio, correspondientes a las primeras fases de investigación.*

## Palabras clave:

Responsabilidad Social del Consumidor, Responsabilidad Social Corporativa, desarrollo de escala.

## 1. Introducción

El comportamiento responsable de los consumidores se ha estudiado en la literatura durante las últimas décadas desde distintas perspectivas, tales como consumo ético, responsable, consciente, sostenible o verde. Sin embargo, aunque el análisis del perfil de un consumidor responsable ya se ha hecho en relación a sus características demográficas y personales, ninguno de los trabajos anteriores ha analizado el comportamiento del consumidor socialmente responsable desde la perspectiva de la Responsabilidad Social Corporativa (RSC) de las empresas. De hecho, Öberseder et al (2011) indican que el enfoque más valioso, aunque difícil, sería la de segmentar a los consumidores de acuerdo con sus intereses personales y comunicar diferentes esfuerzos de RSC a diferentes grupos objetivo.

Por esta razón, en el presente trabajo se desarrolla una nueva escala para medir la Responsabilidad Social del Consumidor (RSCn) a través de la traslación de las dimensiones establecidas por Carroll (1979) para la RSC de las empresas, incluyendo el análisis del comportamiento responsable del consumidor en sus dimensiones *económica, legal, ética, filantrópica o discrecional, y medioambiental*. Además, plantea un modelo de antecedentes y consecuencias que hasta ahora no se ha desarrollado en la literatura, permitiendo una comprensión más global del comportamiento del consumidor y una mejora de la identificación entre éste y la empresa. De esta forma las empresas serán capaces de conocer mejor el comportamiento socialmente responsable de sus consumidores y podrán no sólo de elegir, sino comunicar mejor sus acciones de RSC.

## 2. Revisión de la literatura

Existen numerosas definiciones y términos relativos al comportamiento responsable de los consumidores como consumo responsable (Fisk, 1973), consumidor socialmente consciente (Webster, 1975); consumo socialmente responsable (Antil, 1984; Antil y Bennet, 1979; Mohr et al, 2001); consumo ecológicamente consciente (Straughan y Roberts, 1999); responsabilidad social del consumidor (Devinney et al, 2006) o consumo ético (Cooper-Martin y Holbrook, 1993; Fraj y Martínez, 2007). Aunque tradicionalmente se ha relacionado principalmente con cuestiones de respeto al medioambiente o filantrópicas, todas estas definiciones hacen referencia al comportamiento responsable de los consumidores desde otras perspectivas. Esta variedad de definiciones es un indicador de la falta de consenso sobre el concepto, situación que también podemos encontrar ante el término de la RSC y que responde a la continua evolución del papel del consumidor y de la empresa en su entorno económico y social.

Por su parte, la RSC ha sido ampliamente analizada y definida en la literatura previa. Desde la perspectiva de Bowen (1953) hasta la teoría de los grupos de interés, la definición que ha sido más ampliamente aceptada es la realizada por Carroll (1979), quien sostiene que para abordar plenamente toda la gama de obligaciones que una empresa tiene con la sociedad, debe incorporar las dimensiones económica, legal, ética y discrecional. En consonancia con ello, y al igual que la RSC se describe en cuanto a la relación que tienen las empresas con la sociedad en general, la responsabilidad social de los consumidores debe describir el comportamiento y la influencia de éstos hacia su entorno social y ecológico.

Por tanto, la Responsabilidad Social del Consumidor puede ser definida como toda decisión de consumo consciente, basada en las creencias éticas y morales del consumidor e impulsada por una respuesta a las actuaciones de la empresa, y que contribuye a minimizar sus impactos negativos sobre su entorno social y ecológico pudiendo inducir a un cambio social. Al igual que en las empresas, estas acciones de consumo deben incorporar las responsabilidades económicas, legales, éticas y discrecionales derivadas del papel que juega el consumidor en el mercado.

## 3. Metodología

Para el desarrollo de la escala de RSCn se ha seguido la metodología desarrollada por Churchill (1979), a través de los pasos que se muestran a continuación:

### **3.1. Especificación del dominio del constructo**

Esta fase se ha desarrollado a partir de la revisión de la literatura previa y entrevistas en profundidad a tres investigadores expertos en comportamiento del consumidor, que han contribuido a adaptar las dimensiones de Carroll de la empresa al consumidor y a incorporar ciertos matices en cada dimensión que no contemplaba éste. A través de estas entrevistas se ha decidido incorporar a las cuatro dimensiones planteadas por Carroll (*económica, legal, ética y filantrópica o discrecional*) una quinta dimensión (que en RSC se utiliza de forma transversal en todas las dimensiones) referida a la *responsabilidad social medioambiental*, dada la importancia de este aspecto en las decisiones de consumo.

### **3.2. Generación de ítems**

Un total de 232 ítems se identificaron en el primer paso correspondiente con la revisión de la literatura, relacionados con el consumidor socialmente responsable (Antil and Barnett, 1979; Antil, 1984; Durif et al, 2011; Roberts, 1996), justificaciones éticas del consumidor (D'Astous and Legendre, 2008), respuesta del consumidor al comportamiento ético de las empresas (Deng, 2011), ideologías éticas (Forsyth, 1992), ciudadanía corporativa (Maignan y Ferrell, 2001), percepción sobre ética y responsabilidad social (Singhapakdi et al, 1996), comportamiento “verde” del consumidor (Straughan y Roberts, 1999; Roberts, 1996), responsabilidad social corporativa (Turker, 2009; Boal and Peery, 1985) y consumidores medioambientalmente responsables (Stone, Barnes, and Montgomery, 1995).

Tras la revisión de la literatura, se realizaron entrevistas en profundidad a investigadores y consumidores para ayudar a la definición de las dimensiones del constructo, generar nuevos ítems, evaluar la comprensión de éstos y eliminar aquellos que resultaran redundantes o ambiguos. A partir de las entrevistas se incorporaron 14 ítems adicionales referentes a comportamientos del consumidor socialmente responsable que no estaban recogidos en la literatura previa.

Los 246 ítems se agruparon provisionalmente en las cinco dimensiones identificadas de la responsabilidad social del consumidor. Fueron analizados por un panel de expertos para comprobar su validez de contenido, considerando su ambigüedad, claridad, trivialidad y redundancia. Se eliminaron aquellos en los que al menos dos de los tres expertos estaban de acuerdo en que no representaban la dimensión indicada u otra, aquellos para los que no se ponían de acuerdo o aquellos que presentaban dudas. Además, se eliminaron los ítems redundantes, ambiguos o demasiado específicos. Tras este análisis, los expertos estuvieron de acuerdo en que los 66 ítems seleccionados representaban de forma adecuada las cinco dimensiones. La escala revisada se presentó en un cuestionario con los 66 ítems a los que los consumidores podían responder de 0 “totalmente en desacuerdo” a 10 “totalmente de acuerdo”.

### **3.3. Primer estudio**

#### *Muestra y recolección de datos*

La unidad de análisis de este primer estudio o pretest destinado a la eliminación de ítems y purificación de la escala es el consumidor individual, mayor de edad, con capacidad para tomar decisiones de consumo. La encuesta se diseñó con formato online y se distribuyó por correo electrónico a alumnos y profesores de una universidad española. Tras la eliminación de observaciones no válidas, se obtuvieron un total de 166 respuestas.

#### *Análisis factorial exploratorio*

La prueba de Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) para medir la adecuación del análisis factorial fue de 0,83, indicando que las variables presentan una estructura de correlaciones que permite la reducción eficiente de dimensiones. El análisis inicial exploratorio, correspondiente al análisis factorial de componentes principales usando rotación varimax, dio lugar a los cinco factores inicialmente propuestos en los objetivos del estudio: *responsabilidad económica, responsabilidad legal, responsabilidad ética, responsabilidad filantrópica o discrecional, y responsabilidad medioambiental*. Los ítems se mantuvieron siempre y cuando tuvieran una

carga de 0,48 o superior en un factor, no cargaran más de 0,50 en dos factores, y si el análisis de fiabilidad indica una correlación ítem-total mínima de 0,40. Sólo un ítem, correspondiente a la dimensión “responsabilidad económica” obtuvo una correlación ítem-total inferior a 0,40 (0,35), pero por no cumplir uno sólo de los criterios se decidió mantener.

En resumen, de todos los ítems utilizados en el cuestionario 47 fueron eliminados. Como se muestra en la Tabla 1, el análisis factorial exploratorio dio lugar efectivamente a los cinco factores que se habían previsto, con una varianza total explicada del 67,29%. La carga de los factores osciló entre 0,49 y 0,86. El coeficiente alfa varió de 0,91 a 0,65.

TABLA 1  
Dimensiones resultado del análisis factorial exploratorio (Estudio 1; n=166)

	FIL	MED	ETI	LEG	ECO
Colaboro con una ONG	,825				
Apoyo con dinero o tiempo a actividades sociales y culturales	,819				
Animo a mis amigos y familiares a que participen en actividades solidarias	,795				
Hago donaciones a organizaciones benéficas que apoyan causas sociales o medioambientales	,786				
Dedico esfuerzo y dinero a ayudar a los demás	,658				
Presto atención a la protección del medio ambiente en la vida diaria y en el consumo		,859			
Hago sacrificios personales para disminuir la contaminación		,846			
No compro productos que dañan potencialmente el medio ambiente		,806			
He dejado de comprar ciertos productos por razones ecológicas		,785			
La ética ha sido esencial para que me vaya bien en la vida			,824		
Educo a mis hijos (o los educaría si los tuviera) teniendo en cuenta la ética			,820		
En nuestra familia se educa a todos sus miembros a ser honestos con los demás			,595		
Nunca he hecho daño a los demás, aunque me pudiese haber beneficiado de ello			,487		
Cumplo con mis obligaciones legales				,815	
Siempre pago mis impuestos				,747	
Trato siempre de cumplir la ley				,710	
No consumo más de lo necesario					,838
Compro productos que sé que luego voy a utilizar					,738
No gasto más de lo que ingreso					,676

El primer factor que mide la RSCn es “responsabilidades filantrópicas” (FIL,  $\alpha=0,88$ ), y explica el 18,04% de la varianza. El segundo factor, “responsabilidades medioambientales” (MED,  $\alpha=0,91$ ), explica el 17,17% de la varianza. El tercer factor es “responsabilidades éticas” (ETI,  $\alpha=0,72$ ), y explica el 11,72% de la varianza. El cuarto factor que mide la RSCn es el de “responsabilidades legales” (LEG,  $\alpha=0,67$ ), y explica el 10,69% de la varianza. El quinto y último factor está compuesto por las “responsabilidades económicas” del consumidor (ECO,  $\alpha=0,65$ ), explicando el 9,67% de la varianza.

### 3.4. Segundo estudio

Una vez obtenidas las cinco dimensiones del constructo, se ha diseñado un nuevo cuestionario que incluye las medidas de las variables independientes (antecedentes de la RSCn) y de las dependientes (consecuencias de la RSCn). Estas variables se utilizarán para plantear y contrastar el modelo de investigación, fase que está actualmente en desarrollo.

## 4. Conclusiones y resultados esperados

Posibilitar a las empresas entender mejor el comportamiento socialmente responsable de los consumidores puede ayudar a mejorar los resultados de su desempeño de RSC y sus efectos en el consumidor. Como señala Roberts (1996), el éxito del marketing como respuesta social se basa en gran medida en una mejor comprensión del consumidor socialmente responsable. De

esta manera, las empresas no sólo lograrán que sus esfuerzos sean más eficaces y por lo tanto una posición más competitiva, sino que tendrá una mayor influencia en las decisiones de compra de sus consumidores.

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# THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN ANTI-CONSUMPTION, ORGANIZATIONS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This article details the purposes, scope, and structure of an “ongoing” literature review of anti-consumption for environmental sustainability, an overarching term that includes various forms of environmentally-orientated anti-consumption (EOA). The authors draw from the disciplines of marketing, management, environmental studies, and psychology to review EOA research at three levels (i.e., individual, organizational, and industry/national levels). First, the authors review the main manifestations and targets of EOA among citizens/consumers, and summarize research that has explored antecedents to individual EOA. Second, the authors analyze previous studies addressing the issue and present the potential of anti-consumption to advance knowledge in the field of organizations and the natural environment. Third, the article discusses studies focused on the consequences and reactions to EOA across industry, national levels (e.g., governments and policy). Additionally, this review explores how EOA has been conceptualized and operationalized in the literature. The authors finally outline fruitful avenues for future research.*

## **Keywords:**

Anti-consumption, environmental sustainability, literature review.



## **1. Anti-consumption for Environmental Sustainability**

Excessive consumption contributes to the depletion of natural resources and generates huge amounts of waste (Thøgersen & Grunert-Beckmann, 1997); in fact, unsustainable consumption patterns can be linked to both local and global environmental problems, such as climate change. Faced with this situation, more effective solutions to environmental degradation lie in changing the dominant lifestyles and (unsustainable) consumption patterns and levels (Peattie & Peattie, 2009). This has sparked interest in discovering and investigating alternative forms of consumption, as a means of achieving greater environmental sustainability—as exemplified by the publication of special issues devoted to ‘sustainability’ and ‘anti-consumption’, in leading business and marketing journals such as *Journal of Business Research* (2009), *International Journal of Consumer Studies* (2009), *Journal of Consumer Behavior* (2010), or *Journal of Macromarketing* (2010).

Anti-consumption has been defined as “phenomena that are against the acquisition, use and dispossession of certain goods” (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2013, pg 2.). A wide range of environmentally-orientated anti-consumerist practices is comprised under the overarching term of ‘anti-consumption’, such as environmental boycotts, green activism, or consumer resistance and avoidance actions (Iyer & Muncy, 2009). Anti-consumption practices can be targeted against consumption in general, or against specific products/brands, product categories, companies, industries or even countries (Lee et al., 2009). From a theoretical standpoint, the interest of analyzing anti-consumption stems from the idea that the drivers and motivations for anti-consumption behavior—the reasons for—are different from those influencing consumption—the reasons against (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2013). That is, an individual who decides not to perform certain consumption actions—e.g., not to purchase an environmentally harmful product—not only may lack sufficient motivation to do it (for consumption), but s/he may also hold additional and stronger motivations for not doing so (for anti-consumption) (Richetin et al., 2012). The above discussion highlights the importance of anti-consumption as a distinct perspective and worthy field of investigation that: first, pertains to a particular set of reasons against consumption; and second, can be approached at differing levels of aggregation—both in scope and targets of anti-consumption practices (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2013).

Following the conceptualization forwarded by Chatzidakis & Lee (2013), the authors review EOA in the areas of environmental boycotts, green activism, consumer resistance and avoidance, at three levels of analysis (i.e., individual, organizational, and industry/national levels).

## **2. Anti-consumption, organizations, and the natural environment**

A growing literature addresses the reasons why companies adopt proactive environmental strategies and how it relates to corporate performance (e.g., see Ambec & Lanoie, 2008; Berchicci & King, 2007; Eztion, 2007 for reviews on the topic). In general, this literature assumes a positive relationship between environmental responsiveness and economic performance via –among other advantages– differentiation advantages and better access to markets (e.g., Ambec & Lanoie, 2008). However, previous studies have focused on the positive edge of reputation and have mostly overlooked the phenomena of anti-consumption—i.e., customers avoiding a particular company or industry for its harmful behaviour—and how it affects the potential of a proactive environmental strategy to generate competitive advantages.

There is evidence in the field of marketing (Black & Cherrier, 2010; Cherrier et al., 2011) and recently also in management journals (Allen & Shonard, 2011; Flemmer, 2013) showing that external pressures towards environmental conforming have increased tremendously over the last decades, and that positive reactions to pro-environmental behaviours of firms are being attenuated while negative reactions to environmentally-harmful behaviours are being exacerbated over time. For example, Flemmer (2013) found that shareholder’s positive reactions to the announcement of eco-friendly corporate initiatives are decreasing over time while negative reactions to eco-harmful initiatives are increasing.

Anti-consumption phenomena relate very well and potentially extend theoretical approaches that are central in the field of organizations and the natural environment. The concept that companies react to external pressures (i.e., environmentally-orientated consumption avoidance) by implementing more

responsible environmental strategies is consistent with the institutional theory. Institutional scholars suggest that companies do what is legitimized in their field and institutional pressures may lead companies to be more environmentally responsible (e.g. Bansal, 2005; Bansal & Roth, 2000; Delmas & Toffel, 2004; Hoffman, 1999; Jennings & Zandbergen, 1995). Anti-consumption phenomena may constitute a significant part of the normative framework of environmental issues because it exerts strong pressures for companies going green. As Flemmer (2013) point, the more environmental responsiveness is institutionalized as a norm, the more environmentally damaging organizational behaviours have a negative effect on perceptions on the firm, because firms are punished for not following the norm.

Similarly, anti-consumption can be observed through the lenses of stakeholder theory applied to the field of environmental responsiveness (e.g., Kassinis & Vafeas, 2006; Sharma & Henriques, 2005). Customers are relevant stakeholders and, obviously, have the ability to drive companies to introduce environmental initiatives.

### **3. Purpose, Scope, and Structure of the *ongoing* Literature Review**

The purpose of the literature review detailed here is thus threefold: A first goal is to detail how EOA has been conceptualized. This is salient because there is still no settled idea of what anti-consumption for environmental sustainability (EOA) actually is. As shown in recent research (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2013; Cherrier et al., 2011), anti-consumption should be viewed as intentional or volitional (i.e., non-incident or unintended) individual decision not to consume. Arguably, EOA could be viewed as comprising broad, voluntary, and environmentally-significant responses, with impacts across multiple levels.

Another major purpose of the article is to review the antecedents of anti-consumption, as well as its effects at an individual (micro), organizational (meso) and industry/national (macro) levels. At the micro level, the review aims to cover the main manifestations and targets of EOA among citizens and consumers, synthesizing the research that has explored antecedents to individual environmentally-significant anti-consumption. At the meso and macro levels, the authors attempt to discuss studies that focused on the consequences and reactions to EOA across organizational, industry, national levels (e.g., governments and policy).

In addition to better understanding the implications of EOA, the third goal of this review is to present anti-consumerist phenomena to organizational scholars. Hence, the authors aim to relate the EOA phenomenon with current conversations in the management field. The goal in doing this is to identify what is known to date and, more importantly, to identify previously unexplored avenues and lay out a plan for future research in this domain.

With these goals in mind, the paper selectively reviews relevant works in the disciplines of marketing, management, environmental studies and psychology. The scholars and works presented in this review are chosen for their prominence in the four areas of anti-consumption being reviewed (i.e., environmental boycotts, green activism, or consumer resistance and avoidance actions). Specifically, the authors are conducting a comprehensive multilevel review of the body of knowledge on environmentally-significant and orientated anti-consumerism, resistance, and activism.

The review will be organized in the following preliminary sections:

#### 1. Introduction

2. Following the introduction of the literature review, the second section will clarify the concept of anti-consumption for environmental sustainability at the various levels addressed in this work, differentiating it from related and often overlapping phenomena such as consumer resistance, non-consumption or alternative consumption.

Given the multi-faceted nature of anti-consumption for environmental sustainability, the authors will determine the scope of such responses against consumption considering the environmental impact of different actions (i.e., private vs. public, stable vs. transitory, generalized vs. targeted) (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2013; Iyer & Muncy, 2009).

3. In the third section, the authors explore the antecedents of individual-level anti-consumption

practices. These include a variety of factors, ranging from socio-demographics, psychographics, to broader sociocultural processes (see Bamberg & Moser, 2007) that contribute to environmentally-significant anti-consumption phenomena. Importantly, the authors look at the antecedents of individual, micro-level anti-consumption through the lens of the ‘reasons for’ and ‘reasons against’ that, as recently advocated by Chatzidakis & Lee (2013), so as to provide fuller account of the drivers of anti-consumption for environmental sustainability.

4. Looking beyond the micro level of individual (consumer) decision making is particularly important in the analysis of the consequences and reactions of anti-consumption. Thus, in the fourth and fifth sections, the authors discuss studies that focused on the consequences and reactions to EOA across organizational, industry and national levels (e.g., governments and policy). Thus, the focus here is primarily on the meso and macro levels. As explained above, the goal of these sections is to relate EOA phenomena with current conversations in the field of organizations and the natural environment, specifically with institutional and stakeholder approaches.

5. In the fifth section, the authors suggest avenues for future research that are important to advancing current understanding of anti-consumption for environmental sustainability at various levels of analysis, which are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1.  
Summary of Future Research Opportunities

Micro-level	Meso	Macro	Multilevel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Examine the interactive effects of psychographic dimensions on specific EOA behaviors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Analyze best ways to use anti-consumption discourses to company advantage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explore nationally-activated EOA behaviors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Examine micro, meso, and macro antecedents of EOA within the nomological network of the behavior reasons theory (i.e., reasons for vs. reasons against).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Examine conspicuous EOA and its possible manifestations (i.e., activism, WOM...).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Determine the manner in which anti-consumption phenomena alters and evolve with the institutional framework.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Determine the evolution of EOA over time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interactions between micro, meso, and macro reasons for EOA.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Longevity of EOA motivations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Studying how the risk of anti-consumption is mitigated in firms by previous environmental legitimation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The role of anti-consumption in the rise of emerging sectors (e.g. renewable energies).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assess the role of culture (e.g., femininity, collectivistic, etc.) as a moderator of explanatory factors of micro- and meso-level EOA.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explore the differential effect of antecedents on affective, conative, and expectational EOA outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Anti-consumers as stakeholders, anti-consumer integration and environmental responsiveness,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assess the role of social norms in the adoption of anti-consumption.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consider moderators to increase understanding of the intention–behavior gap in EOA phenomena.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vicarious anti-consumption and its strategic implications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Industry associations as means to deal with industry avoidance.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Construct and validate constructs of actual behavior (and its consequences), in key areas of EOA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The role of media, NGO's and activist organizations as triggers of anti-consumption.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The role of anti-consumption in industry self-regulation (e.g., Responsible care program).</li> </ul>	

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# EL ESTILO DE LIDERAZGO COMO FACTOR MODERADOR EN LA GENERACIÓN DE CONFIANZA EN EQUIPOS DE TRABAJO VIRTUALES.

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## RESUMEN

*Las características propias de los equipos de trabajo virtuales representan un verdadero reto para el desarrollo de liderazgos confiables. En este sentido, la presente investigación considera diferentes factores antecedentes de la confianza hacia el líder de un equipo virtual agrupados en dos bloques: características físicas (atractivo) y comportamentales (justicia y empatía) del líder. Asimismo, se analiza como el estilo de liderazgo (transaccional o transformacional) puede moderar las relaciones anteriores. Entre otros, los resultados constatan la mayor capacidad de un líder empático para crear confianza así como que líderes más atractivos físicamente generan más confianza. Estos resultados tienen interesantes implicaciones para la gestión de equipos en el área de marketing, las cuales son discutidas junto con las principales líneas de investigación futuras.*

## Palabras clave:

*Equipos virtuales, liderazgo, atractivo, empatía, justicia.*

## **1. Introducción**

Los grandes avances tecnológicos que las sociedades modernas han experimentado en las últimas décadas han creado un nuevo paradigma de trabajo que hace posible trabajar en cualquier momento y en cualquier lugar, gracias a la comunicación mediada tecnológicamente (Cascio y Shurygailo, 2003). Las organizaciones han adoptado esta nueva forma de trabajo basada en la deslocalización de sus empleados de cara a crear equipos de trabajo más flexibles que les permitan competir en un entorno económico cada vez más complejo y competitivo. Nace pues una nueva forma organizativa, denominada equipo de trabajo virtual, caracterizada por la distribución temporal y espacial de sus miembros y con el uso de la tecnología como pilar fundamental en la comunicación (Jarvenpaa y Leidner, 1999). Estos equipos aportan a las organizaciones una gran flexibilidad, fomentando la creación de conocimiento y las habilidades en sus empleados. De hecho, es habitual el uso de equipos virtuales en proyectos de alto valor añadido como en el desarrollo de nuevos productos o en la gestión de la fuerza de ventas, ambas ligadas directamente al ámbito de la dirección de marketing.

El crecimiento de los equipos virtuales ha sido constante desde finales de la década de los '90, donde sólo en Estados Unidos se estimaba que unos 9,2 millones de empleados trabajaban desde el hogar en 1997, con un notable incremento hasta los 13,4 millones en 2010 (Mateyka *et al.*, 2012). Datos más recientes señalan que el 40% de las mayores empresas de Estados Unidos o pertenecientes al índice Fortune 500 tienen al 40% de sus empleados involucrados en equipos virtuales (Bullock y Tucker Klein, 2011), una tendencia que estas empresas pretenden fortalecer en el 61% de los casos.

Sin embargo, estos nuevos equipos traen consigo una serie de retos para la gestión. La literatura previa incide en que no es posible utilizar los patrones de liderazgo tradicionales en el nuevo entorno virtual (Santos, 2013; Cascio, 2000), siendo por tanto necesario adaptar la gestión del equipo a la nueva realidad virtual, donde el liderazgo del equipo tiene un papel clave en el éxito del mismo. En este sentido, la importancia de la confianza en el líder de un equipo, reconocida como clave en un entorno tradicional, cobra ahora una nueva dimensión, siendo necesario adaptar los patrones de liderazgo a un nuevo entorno donde la comunicación pasa a ser una importante barrera en el desarrollo de las relaciones entre los miembros de un equipo. De hecho, la confianza ha sido propuesta como el principal desafío al que se enfrentan los equipos virtuales en la actualidad (Bullock y Tucker Klein, 2011).

Si bien trabajos previos han analizado la confianza desde una perspectiva organizacional, así como el papel que juega el líder en la creación de un entorno confiable, todavía no existe un cuerpo teórico y empírico consistente en lo que se refiere al estudio de la confianza en el líder en entornos virtuales y en las variables que influyen en la misma (Zhang y Fjermestad, 2006). La confianza es uno de los factores más determinantes del desempeño dentro de una organización y, en especial, del éxito o fracaso de un equipo de trabajo. Según Mayer, Davis y Schoorman (1995), la confianza surge como consecuencia de tres tipos de percepciones: habilidad, benevolencia e integridad percibidas en la otra parte. Centrando la atención en la confianza hacia el líder de un equipo, cabe destacar que ésta puede depender de diferentes factores precursores, algunos de ellos tratados en profundidad por la literatura previa (e.g. integridad del líder). No obstante, existen otros factores que no han sido analizados con suficiente profundidad, algunos de los cuales son objeto de estudio en este trabajo.

El presente trabajo propone dos tipos de factores antecedentes de la confianza en el líder de un equipo virtual: las características físicas del líder (grado de atractivo) y el comportamiento del líder (grado de empatía y de justicia). Por otro lado, cabe señalar que algunas de las relaciones entre los factores antecedentes y la confianza pueden verse moderadas por la presencia de aspectos como el estilo de liderazgo. En este sentido, la teoría apunta a dos estilos de liderazgo fundamentales: líderes con estilo transformacional, que establecen una relación de intercambio social con sus subordinados (Pillai, Schriesheim y Williams, 1999), y líderes con un estilo transaccional, que dedican más esfuerzo a asegurarse de que los subordinados cumplen con sus tareas.

En definitiva, el presente trabajo pretende contribuir al desarrollo un modelo de gestión de la confianza en el líder dentro de un entorno de trabajo virtual. Desde un punto de vista práctico y de gestión, esta investigación pretende desarrollar una guía de gestión de la confianza para líderes de equipos virtuales, creando una base de conocimientos que permita a los líderes de equipos virtuales delimitar que acciones llevar a cabo para maximizar la confianza que generan en su equipo.

Para alcanzar los objetivos previamente establecidos, el trabajo se estructura de la siguiente forma. En primer lugar se realiza una revisión de la literatura relativa a las variables de estudio. En segundo lugar, se formulan las diferentes hipótesis de investigación. Más adelante, se explican los procesos de recogida de datos y validación de las escalas de medida utilizadas. Posteriormente, se realizan los contrastes de hipótesis. Finalmente, se presentan las conclusiones del estudio, así como las principales implicaciones para la gestión, limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación.

## **2. Revisión de la Literatura.**

### ***2.1. Confianza en el Líder.***

La confianza es uno de los pilares básicos de las relaciones entre las personas por lo que el análisis de la misma está tomando una importancia cada vez mayor dentro de los estudios orientados a las empresas (Mayer, Davis y Schoorman, 1995). En las últimas décadas, investigaciones de distintas disciplinas han llegado al consenso de que un nivel elevado de confianza en el líder de un equipo tiene una relación directa y positiva con los resultados del equipo, consiguiendo éste una mayor eficiencia (e.g., Bennis y Nanus, 1985; Fairholm, 1994).

Una de las definiciones más utilizadas en la literatura es la propuesta por Mayer *et al.* (1995), según la cual la confianza es el deseo de una parte de ser vulnerable a las acciones de otra, de acuerdo con la esperanza de que ésta última lleve a cabo una determinada acción relevante para la primera. Focalizándonos dentro del análisis de la confianza en el líder de un equipo, muchos estudios empíricos han conceptualizado y medido la confianza como la expectativa o creencia de que se pueden confiar en las acciones y palabras de otra persona y que esa persona tiene buenas intenciones hacia uno mismo (e.g., Cook y Wall, 1980; Cummings y Bromiley, 1996; Dirks, 1999). Adaptando esta definición al estudio de la confianza en el líder de un equipo, la conceptualización de confianza se definiría como la *expectativa o creencia de que el equipo puede confiar en las acciones y palabras del líder y que este último mantendrá en todo momento unas buenas intenciones hacia el equipo*. La confianza en el líder es un concepto muy significativo en los equipos de trabajo, dado que el líder ostenta el poder formal dentro del equipo (Bass, 1990), haciendo que los subordinados sean vulnerables a las acciones del líder.

El nivel de confianza en un líder se asocia con la percepción por parte de los subordinados de una serie de patrones de comportamiento (Whitener *et al.*, 1998; Dirks y Ferrin, 2002). Estos patrones corresponden a las diferentes dimensiones de la confianza: la benevolencia (Mayer *et al.*, 1995; Dirks y Ferrin, 2002), la competencia y la integridad (Whitener *et al.*, 1998; Palanski y Yammarino, 2007). La benevolencia es la percepción de que existe una orientación positiva hacia un individuo que es digno de confianza, es decir, una relación en la que hay buena fe entre ambas partes (Mayer *et al.*, 1995). La competencia se refiere a las habilidades personales de una persona para realizar una tarea específica de acuerdo a las expectativas de una tercera persona (Mayer *et al.*, 1995). La integridad es la percepción de que la persona de confianza se adhiere a los principios éticos que se consideran fundamentales para el establecimiento de una relación (Butler, 1991).

### ***2.2. Empatía.***

Afecto, estado de ánimo, emociones y todos los aspectos relacionados con la inteligencia emocional han suscitado un amplio debate en la literatura en lo que se refiere a su definición y componentes básicos (e.g. Barrett, 2006; Izard, 2009). El concepto de inteligencia emocional, introducido por Salovey y Mayer (1990), ha surgido unido al énfasis en las características interpersonales de las emociones (Frijda y Mesquita, 1994). La empatía, es decir, la habilidad para comprender los sentimientos de los demás e interiorizarlos como si fueran de uno propio, representa el concepto central del comportamiento de inteligencia emocional (Salovey y Mayer, 1990). Plutchik (1987) describe la empatía como un intercambio de emociones positivas y negativas que promueve la unión entre las personas. Investigaciones dentro del campo de la psicoterapia han demostrado la importancia de la empatía a la hora de establecer relaciones personales (Rogers, 1951), en la gestión del cambio y el aprendizaje (Rogers, 1975).

El concepto de empatía ha sido analizado también en la gestión empresarial. Así, Goleman, Boyatzis y McKee (2002) afirman que la empatía es la competencia fundamental de la conciencia social y la

condición *sine qua non* de toda eficacia dentro de la vida laboral en la empresa. Del mismo modo, argumentan que los líderes efectivos crean una repercusión en sus subordinados que los guía para tener una respuesta emocional más fuerte y una mayor eficiencia en su trabajo. Por otro lado, Bass (1998) sugiere que la empatía se asocia directamente con un liderazgo transformacional, por la consideración individualizada que un líder muestra a sus seguidores, lo cual es uno de los elementos del liderazgo transformacional (Avolio y Bass, 2002).

### **2.3. Justicia Percibida.**

La justicia organizacional y la confianza son dos focos importantes de investigación en la gestión de empresas. La popularidad en el estudio de la justicia organizacional ha aumentado de manera constante en los últimos 30 años (Wong, Ngo y Wong, 2006). Gran parte de este interés se debe a las importantes implicaciones en el ámbito laboral de la percepción de justicia organizacional por parte de los empleados (Cohen-Charash y Spector, 2001). Estas implicaciones de la justicia percibida incluyen la satisfacción con el trabajo y con el líder (Alexander y Ruderman, 1987), el compromiso organizacional (Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, y Taylor, 2000), el afecto del empleado (Cropanzano, Weiss, Suckow, y Grandey, 2000) y el rendimiento en el trabajo (Ball, Trevino, y Sims, 1994).

En general, la literatura sugiere que las personas desean ser tratadas de forma justa y consistente, y esto les lleva a confiar (Ambrose y Schminke, 2003).

### **2.4. Grado de Atractivo.**

La literatura señala que un mismo mensaje puede tener diferentes resultados en función de los atributos del emisor (e.g. Crano y Willian, 1970). En este sentido, los individuos más atractivos físicamente generalmente tienen más éxito que los poco atractivos. Existe la creencia de que personas más atractivas poseen una serie de características positivas (Riggio, 1986) que les conducen a disfrutar de una vida más satisfactoria (Feingold, 1992). Dion, Berscheid y Hatfield (1972) afirman que en la percepción de otras personas, “*lo que es bello es bueno*” es un estereotipo ampliamente exhibido en la vida cotidiana, como así lo documenta abundante investigación.

La percepción del grado de atractivo de un individuo ha sido utilizada en diferentes áreas de las ciencias sociales, como el marketing y la psicología (Mishra, Clark y Daly, 2007), con la finalidad de analizar en qué medida estas percepciones afectan a la conducta de los individuos, aunque es un aspecto escasamente estudiado en la gestión de equipos de trabajo y en la relación de confianza entre el líder y sus subordinados. En este sentido, la literatura ha estudiado el grado de atractivo de una persona para valorar la influencia de los agentes de ventas en la intención de compra (Ohanian, 1990), medir la influencia del uso de avatares dentro de una tienda online (Holzwarth, Janiszewski y Neumann, 2006) o incluso en mundos virtuales como *Second Life*, para medir el valor de la información que proporcionan los agentes.

### **2.5. Estilo de Liderazgo.**

La literatura en gestión de empresas ha centrado su atención en diferentes estilos de liderazgo (e.g. Bass, Jung, Avolio y Berson, 2003), sin embargo, dos de los paradigmas de estilo de gestión más destacados en la literatura son los enfoques de liderazgo transformacional y transaccional (Smith, Andras y Rosenbloom, 2012).

La teoría del *liderazgo transaccional* sostiene que los líderes se centran exclusivamente en el logro de sus metas a corto plazo y utilizan el sistema de recompensas para inducir en sus subordinados el comportamiento deseado para lograr esos objetivos. Por otra parte, la teoría del *liderazgo transformacional* sostiene que los líderes pueden motivar a los empleados considerando aspectos que van más allá del propio interés del empleado por el trabajo. Bass (1985) sugiere que el liderazgo transformacional es un enfoque más apropiado para liderar los recursos humanos de un equipo. Los líderes transformacionales son flexibles, entienden la necesidad de colaborar con sus empleados y se adaptan fácilmente a los cambios en el entorno.

Zaleznik (1977) distingue el enfoque transformacional del transaccional a través de una conceptualización diferente de la figura del gerente y del líder. Así, sostiene que los gerentes son más transaccionales mientras que los líderes tienden a ser más transformacionales. Avolio y Gibbons (1988)



sostienen que los líderes transformacionales van mucho más allá de una mera gestión del equipo y se implican en las necesidades y deseos de sus subordinados.

### **3. Formulación de las hipótesis de trabajo**

#### ***3.1. Efecto del grado de atractivo percibido en el líder en la confianza hacia el mismo.***

Los seres humanos frecuentemente atribuyen características positivas para el atractivo y las características negativas a la falta de atractivo (Eagly, Ashmore, Makhijani, y Longo, 1991), es lo que se conoce como el estereotipo “*lo que es bello es bueno*”. Este estereotipo conduce a sesgos sistemáticos de percepción y juicios erróneos y errores de atribución. Características fácilmente observables, como el atractivo, pueden ser utilizadas para categorizar a los individuos sobre la base de estereotipos (Jones, Moore, Stanaland, y Wyatt, 1998), y las percepciones de estas atribuciones son a menudo instantáneas, instintivas y automáticas (Willis y Todorov, 2006). Por todo lo anterior, es de esperar que líderes con un aspecto atractivo sean más capaces de generar confianza ante sus subordinados. De esta forma, se propone la siguiente hipótesis de trabajo:

***H1: Un mayor grado de atractivo físico percibido en el líder incidirá directa y positivamente sobre el nivel de confianza en el mismo.***

#### ***3.2. Efecto del grado de empatía percibida en el líder en la confianza inicial hacia el mismo.***

A pesar de que el liderazgo de equipos ha sido ampliamente estudiado en la literatura, los aspectos relacionados con las emociones hacia el líder no suelen ser incluidos en el estudio de los procesos de liderazgo (Gooty, Connelly, Griffith y Gupta, 2010). Los trabajos de Mayer, Caruso y Salovey (1999) han destacado la importancia de la inteligencia emocional y el liderazgo, siendo la empatía emocional uno de los componentes más importantes dentro de la inteligencia emocional y que muchos estudios asocian con el liderazgo transformacional. Varias perspectivas teóricas dentro del área del liderazgo han tomado las emociones en el curso de sus investigaciones. La importancia de las emociones en el marco de un liderazgo carismático y transformacional ha sido reconocida en trabajos teóricos y empíricos (e.g. Bono, Foldes, Vinson y Muros, 2007).

Dentro de la literatura referida a la gestión de equipos y liderazgo se reconoce que existe una relación entre la comunicación personal y la confianza que se percibe en otra persona (Zolin, Fruchter y Hinks, 2003). De hecho, Feng, Lazar y Price (2004), sostienen que desde la gestión del grupo se han de promover mecanismos para que sus integrantes se identifiquen con otros miembros de cara a tener una actitud empática que ayude a la construcción de la confianza. Por todo esto, líderes más empáticos con sus subordinados deberían ser capaces de generar mayor confianza. Por tanto, se propone la siguiente hipótesis de trabajo:

***H2: Un mayor grado de de empatía percibida en el líder incidirá directa y positivamente sobre el nivel de confianza en el mismo.***

#### ***3.3. Efecto del grado de justicia percibida en el líder en la confianza inicial hacia el mismo.***

La justicia está considerada como un juicio evaluativo acerca del trato que se le brinda a una persona (Furby, 1986). A nivel organizativo existen tres dimensiones de justicia organizacional (distributiva, procedural e interaccional), existiendo estudios que relacionan las dos primeras con la confianza en la propia organización y la interaccional con la confianza hacia el líder. Estudios previos han contrastado empíricamente que la justicia organizacional se encuentra positivamente relacionada con el compromiso y la confianza en la organización y los empleados (Sweeney y McFarlin, 1993).

La confianza y la justicia organizacional son focos de interés dentro de la investigación en gestión de empresas. La confianza activa los comportamientos cooperativos entre los trabajadores, reduce los conflictos y reduce los costes de transacción en el trabajo (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt y Camerer, 1998). La justicia organizacional también se relaciona positivamente con el compromiso y la confianza en la organización y entre sus empleados (Sweeney y McFarlin, 1993). De esta forma, es razonable pensar que una mayor justicia percibida redundará en un nivel de confianza hacia el líder mayor. En consecuencia se realiza la siguiente hipótesis de trabajo:

**H3:** *Un mayor grado de de justicia percibido en el líder incidirá directa y positivamente sobre el nivel de confianza en el mismo.*

### **3.4. Relación entre el grado de atractivo y la empatía percibida en el líder.**

Las personas físicamente atractivas tienden a generar una mejor respuesta ante otras personas que las menos atractivas físicamente (Shinners y Morgan, 2009). Este estereotipo viene determinado por el denominado “efecto halo” (*halo effect*). Este efecto halo se refiere a un sesgo cognitivo por el que la percepción de un rasgo concreto de una persona (en este caso el atractivo del líder) influye en la percepción del resto de rasgos del individuo. En términos del estereotipo “*lo que es bello es bueno*”, las personas frecuentemente otorgan atributos positivos a las personas atractivas y atributos negativos a personas menos atractivas (Eagly, Ashmore, Makhijani y Longo, 1991). En este sentido, Mathes y Kahn (1975) argumentan que las personas más atractivas físicamente tienen un mayor poder empático que las menos atractivas, precisamente por el efecto halo que desarrollan a su alrededor. De estos argumentos se desprende la siguiente hipótesis de trabajo.

**H4:** *Mayores niveles de atractivo percibidos en el líder incidirán directa y positivamente sobre el nivel empatía percibida.*

### **3.5. Efecto moderador del estilo de liderazgo sobre los antecedentes de la confianza en el líder.**

La apariencia personal y el atractivo físico influyen de manera especial en los juicios acerca de la personalidad de un individuo. Investigaciones previas muestran de forma consistente que las personas tienden a atribuir características de personalidad deseables a individuos atractivos físicamente, siendo percibidos como más sensibles, amables, agradables, simpáticos e interesantes que las personas menos atractivas (Dion, 1986). Las personas atractivas también son juzgadas como más competentes e inteligentes (Ross y Ferris, 1981). En un análisis realizado por Eagly, Ashmore, Makhijani y Longo (1991) se demostró que las personas atractivas estaban fuertemente correlacionadas con características como la competencia social y la capacidad intelectual, y negativamente con la modestia. Por estos argumentos el ser humano tiende a asociar en mayor medida una habilidad social como la empatía a individuos atractivos.

La literatura ha demostrado un gran interés por demostrar de manera empírica cuándo y cómo el efecto del atractivo se hace más fuerte o más débil (Ahearne *et al.*, 1999). De esta manera, investigaciones en el área de la dirección comercial proponen que el efecto del atractivo disminuye a medida que se desarrolla la relación entre ambas partes (Reingen y Kerman, 1993). En este sentido, el efecto del atractivo es especialmente relevante en los primeros estadios relacionales, en los que el individuo realiza valoraciones muy rápidas en base a los estereotipos y primeras impresiones. Una vez la relación avanza, el individuo utiliza otro tipo de señales para efectuar sus valoraciones, como por ejemplo el comportamiento de la otra persona con el propio individuo o con otras personas. Si nos centramos en las relaciones líder-subordinado podríamos esperar resultados similares.

Un resultado lógico del desarrollo de la relación entre líder y subordinado es que con el paso del tiempo y el mayor número de interacciones, el subordinado será capaz de definir con mayor claridad el estilo de liderazgo de su superior. Cuando el estilo de liderazgo esté bien definido, el subordinado dispondrá de señales más eficaces que el mero grado de atractivo, como por ejemplo si el líder es capaz de resolver los problemas o el tipo de trato que tiene con sus trabajadores. En consecuencia, es razonable pensar que cuando los estilos de liderazgo están más definidos el peso específico del grado de atractivo del líder en la formación de las percepciones entre sus subordinados será menor. Por otro lado, independientemente del grado de desarrollo de la relación entre líder y subordinado, el peso del atractivo en la formación de actitudes debe ser menor cuando los estilos de liderazgo son más extremos. Dicho de otra forma, el atractivo tendría mayor influencia cuando el subordinado no tiene señales claras del tipo de comportamiento de su líder. En base a estos argumentos se propone la siguiente hipótesis de trabajo:

**H5:** *Ante estilos de liderazgo bien definidos, la influencia del atractivo del líder sobre la confianza en el mismo será menor.*

Investigaciones recientes han estudiado el papel de la inteligencia emocional mostrando que existe una relación directa entre la inteligencia emocional y un liderazgo efectivo, especialmente cuando el líder

ejerce un liderazgo de estilo transformacional (e.g., Sunindijo, Hadikusumo y Ogunlana, 2007). Por el contrario, en un liderazgo de estilo transaccional, basado en un sistema de recompensas muy formalizado, la empatía es una cualidad mucho menos asociada.

Por otro lado, dentro del área de la Psicología las expectativas se asocian a la posibilidad razonable de que un determinado hecho ocurra. En el caso de que la expectativa no se cumpla es posible que se genere una decepción, mientras que si finalmente la realidad supera a las expectativas se genera una sorpresa. La Teoría de las Expectativas desarrollada por Vroom (1964) sostiene que los individuos tienen creencias y esperanzas sobre los sucesos futuros en su vida y que, por tanto, tienen una conducta resultado de la elección entre alternativas y elecciones basadas en creencias y actitudes, siendo el objetivo de estas elecciones maximizar las recompensas y minimizar las decepciones. Asimismo, Oliver (1980) propone a la satisfacción como resultado de una disconformidad positiva de expectativas que surge cuando el resultado de una situación es mejor de lo esperado.

En base a los argumentos anteriores, el hecho de que un subordinado tenga una percepción de empatía en su líder y además éste ejerza un liderazgo transaccional, podría reforzar la relación entre empatía y confianza. Esto se podría explicar por el hecho de que la empatía es una característica no esperada en un líder transaccional y por tanto se podría generar un efecto sorpresa que refuerce la mencionada relación. Por otro lado, ante la presencia de un líder muy transformacional las expectativas de sus subordinados en relación con el nivel de empatía del líder deberían de ser elevadas. Ello es debido a que la empatía es un rasgo claramente asociado a este estilo de liderazgo. De esta forma, el poder de la empatía como generador de confianza debería caer conforme aumente la percepción de un estilo de liderazgo transformacional. Dicho de otra forma, ante un líder transformacional la percepción de empatía no representa una señal especialmente valiosa ya que está implícita en el propio estilo de liderazgo. En base a estos argumentos se propone la siguiente hipótesis de trabajo.

**H6:** *La influencia de la empatía percibida en el líder sobre la confianza en el mismo será: (a) mayor cuando el líder ejerza un liderazgo de estilo más transaccional o (b) menor cuando el líder ejerza un liderazgo más transformacional.*

Una de las características fundamentales de un líder transaccional es su capacidad para clarificar los roles y los requerimientos de las tareas entre sus subordinados (Bass, 1998). En este sentido, mientras que el liderazgo transformacional da lugar a la identificación de los seguidores con las necesidades del líder, los líderes transaccionales dan a sus subordinados lo que quieren a cambio de lo que el líder quiere. La literatura argumenta que los líderes transaccionales son propensos a crear y fortalecer las percepciones de equidad compartida entre los miembros del equipo, gracias al establecimiento de reglas claras de intercambio que facilitan la consistencia y exactitud (Vroom, 1964). Este tipo de liderazgo aclara los requisitos de trabajo para que los subordinados sean capaces de alcanzar las expectativas de desempeño acordadas y administrar recompensas y reconocimiento (Bass, 1998). Por tanto, es de esperar que el comportamiento anteriormente descrito contribuya a fomentar la percepción de justicia entre los subordinados gracias al esfuerzo del líder por clarificar los requisitos, intercambios y premios que se dan en un equipo. En base a los argumentos anteriormente descritos, es razonable pensar que cuando un líder presente un estilo poco transaccional, la percepción de mayor justicia actúe con mayor intensidad como generador de confianza.

Por otro lado, el estilo de liderazgo transformacional implica que la atención del líder se focaliza en el interés colectivo y al mismo tiempo tiene que conseguir los objetivos propuestos por la organización (Bass, 1999; House y Shamir, 1993). Ello no quiere decir que un liderazgo transformacional no esté asociado a la idea de justicia. De hecho, son varios los trabajos que señalan como un líder transformacional puede actuar con justicia con sus subordinados (e.g., De Cremer, Van Dijke y Bos, 2007). Sin embargo, sí que es cierto que la justicia no es un rasgo tan definitorio del estilo transformacional como lo es en el estilo transaccional. Por este motivo, en la presente investigación se propone que la influencia de la percepción de justicia sobre la confianza en el líder no se vería afectada por el grado de liderazgo transformacional observado. En base a los anteriores argumentos se expone la última hipótesis de trabajo.

**H7:** La influencia de la justicia percibida en el líder sobre la confianza en el mismo será: (a) mayor cuando el líder ejerza un liderazgo de estilo menos transaccional o (b) no habrá diferencias cuando el líder ejerza un estilo más transformacional o menos transformacional.

#### 4. Proceso de recogida de información y validación de las escalas de medida.

La obtención de los datos necesarios para realizar este estudio se realizó a través de una encuesta autoadministrada a través de Internet hecha a personas que trabajaban habitualmente en equipos virtuales. La recogida de información se realizó entre los meses de noviembre y diciembre de 2013 y enero de 2014. En total se recibieron 248 cuestionarios, de los cuales, tras analizar casos ausentes y atípicos, se quedaron en 241 cuestionarios válidos. Se utilizó la metodología de ecuaciones estructurales para el análisis de los datos. Dado que esta técnica presenta una gran sensibilidad ante la presencia de casos ausentes y atípicos, fue necesario un profundo análisis previo de la base de datos antes de seguir con el proceso estadístico de análisis de los mismos.

El proceso de validación de las escalas propuestas para la medición de las variables componentes del modelo de investigación está compuesto por las siguientes fases:

##### 4.1. Validez de contenido y validez aparente.

El desarrollo de las escalas de medida se basó en una revisión de la literatura previamente realizada (ver Tabla 1). Gracias a esta revisión de la literatura fue posible realizar una primera propuesta de escalas. No obstante, las escalas debieron ser adaptadas al contexto de los equipos de trabajo virtuales.

TABLA 1. Validez de contenido

Variable	Adaptado de
Confianza en el líder	Roberts y O'really (1974); Korsgaard, Schweiger, y Sapienza (1995).
Grado de empatía percibida	Kellett, Humphrey y Sleeth (2006).
Grado de justicia percibida	Niehoff y Moorman (1993).
Estilo de liderazgo	Bass y Avolio (1990).
Grado de atractivo	Ohanian (1990).

El objetivo de esta adaptación era el de garantizar la validez aparente, que se define como el hecho por el cual la escala de medida refleja aquello que se pretende medir. La validez aparente se confunde en multitud de ocasiones con el concepto de validez de contenido. Sin embargo, la validez de contenido es el grado en el que los ítems representan correctamente el contenido teórico del constructo y que está garantizada gracias a la profunda revisión bibliográfica efectuada. El nivel de validez aparente fue contrastado a partir de una variación del modelo de Zaichkowsky (1985) en el que cada ítem es calificado por un grupo de expertos como “claramente representativo”, “algo representativo” o “no representativo”. Finalmente, de acuerdo con Lichtenstein *et al.* (1990) cada ítem era retenido si existía un alto grado de consenso entre los expertos.

##### 4.2. Análisis exploratorios de fiabilidad y dimensionalidad.

El proceso de validación incluyó un análisis exploratorio de la fiabilidad y la dimensionalidad de los instrumentos de medida. En primer lugar, el método de la alpha de Cronbach fue utilizado para valorar la fiabilidad de las escalas, considerando un valor mínimo de 0,7 (Nunnally, 1978). Las variables consideradas superaron con comodidad este umbral mínimo. Asimismo, se comprobó que la correlación ítem-total, que mide la correlación de cada ítem con la suma del resto de ítems de la escala, era superior al mínimo de 0,3 (Nurosis, 1993).

En segundo lugar, se procedió a valorar el grado de unidimensionalidad de las escalas consideradas mediante un análisis factorial. La extracción de factores se basó en la existencia de autovalores superiores a la unidad, a la vez que se exigía a cada ítem cargas superiores a 0,5 y que la varianza explicada por cada factor extraído fuera significativa. De esta forma, se extrajo un único factor correspondiente a cada una de las escalas propuestas.

##### 4.3. Análisis confirmatorios de dimensionalidad.

Con el fin de confirmar la estructura dimensional de la escala se recurrió al Análisis Factorial Confirmatorio. Para realizar los análisis se recurrió al software estadístico EQS 6.1, y como método de estimación se utilizó el de Máxima Verosimilitud Robusto debido a que permite operar con mayor seguridad en muestras que pudieran presentar algún tipo de anormalidad multivariante. Se diseñó un modelo factorial que incluía la totalidad de las variables consideradas y se siguieron los criterios propuestos por Jöreskog y Sörbom (1993):

El criterio de convergencia débil por el que se eliminan a los indicadores que no presenten coeficientes de regresión factorial significativos ( $t$ -student  $> 2,58$ ;  $p = 0,01$ ). El criterio de convergencia fuerte por el que se eliminan todos los indicadores cuyos coeficientes estandarizados sean inferiores a 0,5. Se eliminan aquellos indicadores que menos aporten a la explicación del modelo. En concreto, se excluyen aquellos indicadores cuya  $R^2$  sea inferior a 0,3.

En esta etapa fueron eliminados 8 items. El ajuste del modelo confirmatorio presentaba valores aceptables (Chi-square = 3385,039 325 d.f.  $p < 0,001$ ; Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square = 564,8194, 284 d.f.  $p < 0,001$ ; Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0,833; Bentler-Bonett Nonnormed Fit Index = 0,895; Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0,908; Bollen (IFI) Fit Index = 0,909; Root Mean Sq. Error of App. (RMSEA) = 0,064; 90% Confidence Interval of RMSEA (0,056, 0,072).

Por último, con el objeto de confirmar la existencia de multidimensionalidad en la variable confianza en el líder se desarrolló una Estrategia de Modelos Rivales (e.g. Anderson y Gerbing, 1988) según la cual se compara un modelo de segundo orden en el que varias dimensiones miden el constructo multidimensional considerado con otro modelo de primer orden en el que todos los ítems cargan sobre un único factor (Steenkamp y Van Trijp, 1991). Los resultados obtenidos corroboraron la estructura multidimensional de la variable confianza (integridad, benevolencia y habilidad) ya que el modelo de segundo orden se ajustaba mucho mejor que el modelo de primer orden alternativo.

#### 4.4. Fiabilidad de Constructo

Aunque el indicador generalmente aceptado para valorar la fiabilidad de las escalas es el estadístico alpha de Cronbach, algunos autores esgrimen que este indicador puede infravalorar la fiabilidad (e.g. Smith, 1974). Por ello, el uso de un estadístico adicional como la fiabilidad del constructo es recomendada por diversos autores como Jöreskog (1971). Tomando como valor mínimo 0,7 (Steenkamp y Geyskens, 2006), los resultados son positivos tal y como se observa en la tabla 2.

TABLA 2. Fiabilidad de constructo y análisis de la validez convergente

	Fiabilidad de Constructo (FCC)	Análisis de la varianza extraída (AVE)
Grado de atractivo del líder	0,93	0,74
Empatía percibida en el líder	0,88	0,72
Justicia percibida en el líder	0,90	0,74
Confianza - Integridad	0,94	0,72
Confianza - Benevolencia	0,92	0,70
Confianza - Habilidad	0,91	0,71

#### 4.5. Validez de Constructo

La validez de constructo se analizó utilizando dos criterios fundamentales de validez:

Validez convergente: Indica si los ítems que componen las escalas convergen hacia un único constructo. La validez convergente se constató al observar que la carga factorial de cada indicador era superior a 0,5 y significativas al nivel de 0,01 (Steenkamp y Geyskens, 2006). Además, se utilizó el Análisis de la Varianza extraída (Ping, 2004), siguiendo el criterio de Fornell y Larcker (1981) que exponen que las mediciones con un nivel adecuado de validez convergente deberían contener menos de un 50% de la varianza del error (lo que supone un valor del estadístico AVE superior al 0,5). Los resultados obtenidos fueron satisfactorios como se observa en la tabla 2.

Validez discriminante: Verifica si el constructo objeto de análisis está significativamente alejado de otros constructos con los que no se encuentra relacionado teóricamente. La validez discriminante se valoró mediante dos criterios: (1) comprobar que el valor 1 no se encontraba en el intervalo de

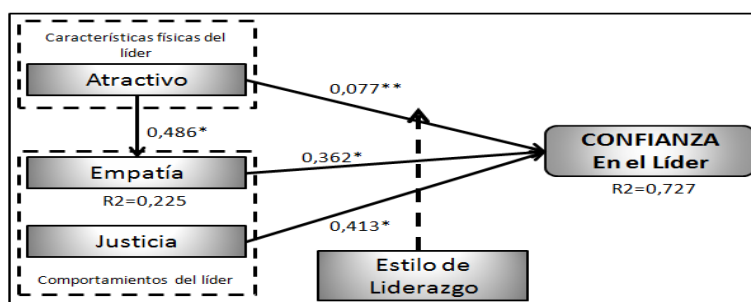
confianza de las correlaciones entre las distintas escalas, y (2) comprobar que la correlación entre cada par de escalas no era superior a 0,8 de forma significativa. Los resultados son satisfactorios ya que todos los pares de constructos cumplen los dos criterios mencionados.

## 5. Resultados.

Con el fin de contrastar las hipótesis anteriormente propuestas se desarrolló el modelo de ecuaciones estructurales que se refleja en la Figura 1. El ajuste del modelo presentaba valores aceptables (Chi-square = 2043,863, 91 d.f.  $p < 0,001$ ; Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square = 227,9545, 71 d.f.  $p < 0,001$ ; Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0,888; Bentler-Bonett Nonnormed Fit Index = 0,897; Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0,920; Bollen (IFI) Fit Index = 0,921; Root Mean Sq. Error of App. (RMESA) = 0,092; 90% Confidence Interval of RMESA (0,082, 0,110).

Centrándonos en los antecedentes de la confianza en el líder virtual, observamos que el atractivo físico ejerce un efecto positivo y significativo sobre la confianza en el líder ( $\beta = 0,077$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ) por lo que la hipótesis H1 queda aceptada. Del mismo modo, las características comportamentales del líder virtual como son la empatía ( $\beta = 0,362$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ) y la justicia percibida ( $\beta = 0,413$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ) ejercen un efecto positivo y significativo sobre la confianza, por tanto las hipótesis H2 y H3 son también aceptadas. Asimismo, los resultados obtenidos ponen de manifiesto la existencia de una relación positiva y significativa entre el grado de atractivo percibido en el líder y la empatía percibida en el mismo ( $\beta = 0,486$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ), lo que nos permite aceptar la hipótesis H4.

FIGURA 1. Modelo de Investigación.



Nota: (\*) Indica que los coeficientes son significativos a un nivel de 0,01.  
 (\*\*) Indican que los coeficientes son significativos a un nivel de 0,05.

Con la finalidad de contrastar el efecto moderador del estilo de liderazgo se llevó a cabo un análisis multimuestra. Para cada análisis, la muestra total de individuos se dividió en dos grupos. Para crear los grupos en cada caso se tomó la media del ítem correspondiente, y se eliminó alrededor de este valor una serie de casos ( $\pm \frac{1}{2}$  desviación estándar). En segundo lugar, se aplicó el análisis LM-Test para comprobar si existían diferencias entre los parámetros obtenidos en los dos grupos y si éstas eran significativas. En concreto, se analizó la variación experimentada por el estadístico Chi-cuadrado al eliminar la restricción relativa a igualar un determinado parámetro en ambos grupos en el modelo más restringido

La relación entre el grado de atractivo y la confianza en el líder se ve moderada en el caso de que el líder ejerza un liderazgo de estilo transformacional ( $p < 0,01$ ). Sin embargo, no se produce moderación cuando el líder ejerce un estilo transaccional, si bien el parámetro apunta en la dirección propuesta (ver Tabla 4). Por tanto, la hipótesis H5 es aceptada parcialmente. En lo que se refiere a la relación entre la empatía percibida en el líder sobre la confianza en el mismo, podemos observar como existe una débil moderación ( $p < 0,1$ ) en el caso del liderazgo transformacional pero en sentido contrario al esperado. En el caso del liderazgo transaccional no se observa moderación alguna. Por todo ello, la hipótesis H6 se acepta parcialmente. Por último, la relación entre justicia percibida en el líder y confianza en el mismo la modera un estilo de liderazgo transaccional ( $p = 0,053$ ), si bien se produce en sentido contrario al esperado. Por su parte, no existe moderación en el caso del liderazgo transformacional ( $p = 0,683$ ), tal y como se apuntaba (ver Tabla 4). De esta forma, la hipótesis H7 es aceptada parcialmente.

TABLA 4. Análisis multimuestra

Restricciones Propuestas TRANSFORMACIONAL	Coefficientes (Más Transformacional)	Coefficientes (Menos Transformacional)	gl	Diferencias Chi-square	Prob.
Atractivo -> Confianza	-0,031	0,303	1	11,209	0,001*
Empatía -> Confianza	0,110	0,391	1	3,223	0,073*
Justicia -> Confianza	0,284	0,211	1	0,167	0,683
Restricciones Propuestas TRANSACCIONAL	Coefficientes (Más Transaccional)	Coefficientes (Menos Transaccional)	gl	Diferencias Chi-square	Prob.
Atractivo -> Confianza	-0,003	0,131	1	1,524	0,217
Empatía -> Confianza	0,313	0,475	1	0,916	0,339
Justicia -> Confianza	0,772	0,358	1	3,730	0,053*

## 6. Conclusiones.

La confianza en el líder juega un papel determinante en el éxito de un equipo de trabajo (Kayworth y Leidner, 2000). Por este motivo, la construcción de relaciones basadas en la confianza entre los miembros del equipo debe ser una preocupación fundamental de los líderes. A pesar de que la literatura ha reconocido la importancia de la confianza en la labor realizada por el líder de un equipo virtual (e.g. Greenberg *et al.*, 2007), todavía es necesario profundizar en las características que ha de poseer un líder confiable. En este sentido, la literatura ha propuesto que ciertas características de un individuo pueden afectar a las actitudes hacia el mismo y por tanto al desarrollo de la confianza. El presente trabajo analiza cómo determinados aspectos físicos y comportamentales de un líder pueden afectar al desarrollo de la confianza hacia sus subordinados, así como el papel del estilo de liderazgo como factor que modera las relaciones propuestas.

En primer lugar, los resultados confirman la influencia que ejercen tanto las características físicas del líder como las características comportamentales del mismo en la confianza en el líder virtual. En concreto, el grado de atractivo percibido en el líder de un equipo virtual ejerce una influencia en la confianza que se genera hacia el mismo. Por otro lado, las características de comportamiento del líder hacia sus subordinados ejercen también un efecto positivo sobre la confianza. En concreto, la empatía que los subordinados perciben en su líder hace que estos últimos le otorguen más confianza. Del mismo modo, la justicia percibida en el líder ejerce un efecto positivo sobre la confianza. En este punto es interesante destacar como la comunicación electrónica es capaz de transmitir ciertos comportamientos que ejerce el líder hacia sus subordinados, por lo que el presente estudio valida la comunicación electrónica como vía para transmitir variables comportamentales. Asimismo, el grado de atractivo con que los subordinados valoran a su líder ejerce un efecto positivo sobre la empatía, este hecho demuestra que en un entorno virtual se siguen cumpliendo los estereotipos de atractivo que propone la literatura clásica.

La literatura reconoce el estilo de liderazgo como una de las variables que pueden moderar las relaciones que se dan dentro de un grupo de trabajo (Vries, Roe y Taillieu, 2002), por esto el presente trabajo pretende analizar si estas moderaciones también se dan dentro de un entorno virtual. En este sentido, el estilo de liderazgo transformacional y transaccional podría ejercer de efecto moderador entre la confianza y los antecedentes de la confianza en el líder. Más en concreto se ha analizado en qué medida un comportamiento inesperado del líder pueden ejercer una moderación precisamente por el efecto sorpresa que se genera. El estilo de liderazgo transformacional ejerce de moderador entre la relación confianza en el líder y empatía, siendo los líderes que ejercen un estilo transformacional bajo en los que la relación entre empatía y confianza es más fuerte. Por otro lado, son los líderes que ejercen un estilo más transaccional en los que ejercen la relación entre la confianza en el líder y la justicia percibida es más intensa. Finalmente, observamos como el peso de atractivo como generador de confianza disminuye en el supuesto de estilos de liderazgo transformacionales.

### 6.1. Implicaciones para la gestión.

El presente trabajo analiza en profundidad las relaciones entre el líder y subordinado que se dan en un entorno de trabajo virtual con el objetivo de crear confianza entre las partes, así como las consecuencias de esta relación en lo que a eficiencia organizativa se refiere. Las conclusiones derivadas de este trabajo

han de servir a los líderes de las organizaciones para mejorar la relación con sus subordinados en el sentido de que estos últimos sean capaces de establecer una relación de confianza con el líder. En este sentido, los resultados de este estudio se pueden interpretar como un punto de referencia para los líderes de equipos virtuales que pretendan construir un equipo de trabajo eficiente y comprometido.

Una primera implicación práctica se refiere a la imagen que el líder da a sus subordinados. Dado que el entorno de trabajo es virtual y la comunicación entre los miembros es mediada telemáticamente, es recomendable que el líder del equipo muestre a sus subordinados su forma más atractiva posible a través de los canales de comunicación del equipo (perfil de usuario, etc.). Asimismo, una actitud empática del líder hacia sus subordinados, así como que el líder sea justo con sus subordinados provocará una mayor confianza, por lo que se recomienda que el líder virtual tenga estas cualidades y que además sea capaz de transmitir las hacia sus subordinados.

Por último, el hecho de ejercer un liderazgo transformacional muy marcado puede disminuir el efecto del grado de atractivo del líder sobre la confianza, por lo que esta puede ser una herramienta que pueden utilizar los líderes que no deseen ser juzgados por sus características físicas. Asimismo, los líderes de equipos virtuales pueden ejercer un liderazgo menos transformacional de cara a reforzar la relación entre empatía y confianza; y un liderazgo más transaccional para reforzar la relación entre confianza y justicia.

### ***Futuras líneas de investigación.***

En primer lugar, sería una buena idea analizar en mayor detalle los factores determinantes de la confianza en el líder ya que es posible que analizando un modelo más complejo se pudiese incrementar el valor  $R^2$  de la principal variable endógena de nuestro estudio. De hecho, es razonable pensar que aspectos como las características personales de cada individuo afecten de manera significativa a la confianza que el subordinado otorga a su líder.

En segundo lugar, sería interesante replicar el estudio con una muestra que representase una mayor diversidad de nacionalidades. Dado que existen grandes diferencias en los comportamientos de los individuos de distintas zonas del mundo, sería interesante analizar posibles diferencias en los antecedentes de la confianza entre subordinados de diferentes entornos culturales.

Por último, también sería interesante analizar en el futuro no sólo los antecedentes de la confianza en el líder qué efectos se derivan del desarrollo de dicha confianza. En concreto, sería muy interesante analizar la relación entre la confianza en el líder y la eficiencia que alcanza un equipo a nivel social.

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# EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON SALESPERSON ADAPTIVE AND PROACTIVE PERFORMANCE

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## ABSTRACT

*Salesperson adaptivity and proactivity are two emergent forms of sales performance which are particularly important nowadays. This study explores the effect of Emotional intelligence (EI), an ability which is considered pivotal in customer interactions, on salesperson adaptive and proactive performance.*

*A dyadic sample of industrial salespeople and their direct supervisors reveals that EI has a positive influence on salesperson adaptivity and proactivity through the effect on perceived self-efficacy and salesperson intrinsic motivation. Additionally, the indirect effect of self-efficacy on adaptive and proactive sales performance depends on salesperson perceived organizational support and on his ability to bounce back. Certain implications of this study as well as suggestions for future research are also addressed.*

## Key words:

*Emotional intelligence, intrinsic motivation, adaptivity, proactivity, resilience, perceived organizational support*

## 1. Introduction

Much has been written over the past 50 years about the determinants of salespeople's performance. However, extant literature can explain a relatively small variance in sales performance, suggesting an opportunity for improving the understanding of sales performance and also a need for new theoretical models to advance marketers' understanding of the sales performance domain (Evans, McFarland, Dietz & Jaramillo, 2012).

Researchers in recent years are trying to identify behaviors that not only contribute to individual task performance but also enhance the effectiveness of groups and organizations over time (Griffin, Parker & Mason, 2010). In this vein, it has been suggested that as market dynamics become more complex, companies need employees that are adaptable and proactive and can, therefore, deal with complex situations (Baba, Tourigny, Wang & Liu, 2009; Griffin, Neal & Parker, 2007). In this study we focus on salesperson adaptivity and salesperson proactivity as two emergent forms of sales performance which are particularly important nowadays, when most organizations are facing an increasing interdependence and uncertainty of work systems (Howard, 1995).

Emotional intelligence (EI), conceptualized as the ability to acquire and apply knowledge from one's emotions and those of others to produce beneficial outcomes (Kidwell, Hardesty, Hurtha & Sheng, 2011), has been identified as especially important in those jobs where employees interact with customers as it happens with the sales positions (O'Boyle et al., 2010). Considered to be a skill possessed by successful leaders of organizations, EI has been identified as an important predictor of work-related outcomes (O'Boyle et al., 2010).

Despite past research has shown that employees with greater levels of EI perform better at work (e.g., Kidwell et al., 2011; O'Boyle et al., 2010), little is known about the influence of EI on adaptive and proactive sales behaviors and how employees, and, in particular, how salespeople translate their emotional intelligence into enhanced outcomes. Moreover, recent literature has highlighted the importance of considering context in relation to how useful EI might be given different situations (Jordan et al.; 2010; O'Boyle et al., 2010).

This study tries to contribute to the literature by exploring the underlying mechanism that links emotional intelligence and proactive and adaptive performance. We hypothesize that salespeople with higher emotional intelligence should perceived themselves as more self-confident which will increase their intrinsic motivation leading them to carry out more adaptive and proactive behaviors. We also propose that salespeople EI results in better adaptive and proactive performance under certain circumstances but not others.

Specifically, we theorize and test how perceived organizational support (POS) interacts with salesperson self-efficacy in order to increase salesperson intrinsic motivation. Sales force motivation is cited as a key issue managers have to deal with when directing salespeople (Brown, Evans, Mantrala & Challagalla, 2005; Miao, Evans & Shaoming, 2007). Intrinsic motivation might be particularly important for change-oriented behaviors as adapting to changing conditions and proactively acting to anticipate new challenges, as these behaviors are usually initiated by individuals rather than directed or imposed by others (Grant & Ashford, 2008). Further, salespeople's ability to bounce back can serve as a boundary condition that affects the relationship between intrinsic motivation and salespeople adaptivity and proactivity. Our study is consistent with the notion that, like most predictors of performance, the influence of EI may best be understood by examining the influence of potential moderators (Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004).

Researchers (e.g. Law, Wong & Song, 2004; Pettijohn, Rozell & Newman, 2010) have also suggested that despite IE being a universal construct, not culturally determined; individual behaviors resulting from it might vary depending on the distinct culture of the individual. Our study tries to address this issue by presenting a model (see figure 1) which is tested using dyadic data that matches survey responses from salespeople and their managers within the Spanish context, which culturally differs from the United States, that has been the context considered in most published studies.

Firstly, we offer a theoretical background and hypotheses. Secondly, we describe our research method. Finally, the study findings are presented, and the managerial and research implications are discussed.

## 2. Theoretical Background

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is defined as a “a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (Mayer & Salovey, 1993, p. 433). People high in EI display strong self-awareness and high levels of interpersonal skills. They are more grounded, better performers and they feel more satisfied at work (Allan, 2011).

Along with Mayer and Salovey (1997), EI represents a composite of emotional reasoning abilities: perceiving, understanding, and regulating emotions. *Perceiving emotions* relates to the capacity to recognize emotions in others’ facial and postural expressions. *Understanding emotions* involves the capacity to analyze emotions, appreciate their probable trends over time, and understand their outcomes. Finally, *regulating emotions* encompasses the control of emotions in oneself and in others.

According to the social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997), self-awareness, self-regulation and control of emotions are critical in the development of self-efficacy perceptions. EI refers to the ability to process information competently and to use it to focus energy on required behaviors (Salovey et al., 2002). EI, through its influence on the causal reasoning process and emotions involved in reacting to important workplace outcomes, might have an impact in the development of self-efficacy among individuals (Gundlach, Martinko & Douglas, 2003). Efficacy beliefs are the product of cognitive processing of diverse sources of information conveyed by physiological and emotional states, that is, referring to a person’s own perception of their emotional and psychological position (Bandura, 1997). The extent to which salespeople are able to deal effectively with their own and other emotions is a reflection of their EI. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

*H<sub>1</sub> : Salesperson EI is positively related to salesperson self-efficacy*

Intrinsic motivation is the motivation to do something for one’s own sake, for the pure enjoyment of a specific activity (Hennessey & Amabile, 2005). In accordance with the cognitive evaluation theory, feelings of competence while performing a certain task can increase intrinsic motivation for that specific task since such feelings satisfy the innate psychological need of humans to feel competent (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

High levels of self-efficacy boost individuals’ expectations of their potential, as well as their motivation to take action (Yang, Kim & McFarland, 2011). When individuals feel capable of carrying out a certain kind of behavior, they experience an intrinsic satisfaction resulting from their own judgments of competence, which promotes choice and the generalization of new behaviors and personal development (Taberner & Hernández, 2011; DeYoung, 2000). Empirical evidence has confirmed that salespeople are more willing to put in greater effort when they believe in their ability to perform their sales job (Jaramillo & Mulki, 2008). Accordingly, we put forward the following hypothesis:

*H<sub>2</sub>: Salesperson self-efficacy is positively related to salesperson intrinsic motivation*

According to the cognitive evaluation theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), feelings of competence will not enhance intrinsic motivation unless accompanied by a sense of autonomy, which requires immediate contextual supports for autonomy (Reeve, 1996). Social environments can facilitate intrinsic motivation by supporting people’s innate psychological needs. The salespeople perception of organizational support, that is, the perception that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being might constitute a secure relational base does, according to Ryan & Deci (2000), seem to be important for the expression of intrinsic motivation to be in evidence. POS, described as trusting employees, it is likely to make employees more autonomous (Mitchell et al., 2012).

POS can be defined as general beliefs developed by employees “concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being” (Eisenberger et al., 1986, p. 501). The literature has confirmed that POS is related to many positive employee outcomes, as job

satisfaction, affective commitment, loyalty, performance or organizational citizenship behaviors (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

If salespeople perceive the organization as providing them with a vehicle for developing personal skills and accomplishing personal goals, they will take personal interest in carrying out assigned tasks (Tyagi, 1982). POS might increase employees' interest in their work by enhancing employees' perceived competence (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Thus, we state the following hypothesis as follows:

*H<sub>3</sub>: POS moderates the influence of self-efficacy on salesperson intrinsic motivation, so that POS augments the positive effect of perceived self-efficacy on salesperson intrinsic motivation.*

The meta-analysis of Churchill et al. (1985) found motivation, as well as salesperson role perceptions (i.e., role conflict and role ambiguity), to be among the strongest determinants of sales performance. In comparison with extrinsic motivation, individuals who are intrinsically motivated have better initiative, concentration skills, learning abilities, cognitive flexibility and creativity than individuals who are extrinsically motivated (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The empirical evidence confirms that intrinsic motivation is a strong predictor of task performance (e.g. Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2009) and organizational citizenship behavior (e.g. Chiu & Chen, 2005), as well as a most important and powerful influence on employee creativity (Amabile et al., 1996).

Adaptivity refers to the extent to which an individual adapts to changes in a work system or work roles, while proactivity describes the degree to which the individual takes self-directed action to anticipate or initiate change in the work system or work roles (Griffin et al., 2007). Examples of adaptive performance are creative problem solving, coping with complex and unpredictable work situations, adjustment to technological innovations, and interpersonal adaptability (Jong & de Ruyter, 2004). On the contrary, proactive behavior involves "creating change, not merely anticipating it" (Bateman and Crant, 1999, p. 63). Proactive behavior involves behavioral initiative aimed at improving the current work circumstances in general or creating new ones (de Jong & de Ruyter, 2004).

Regarding the relationship between intrinsic motivation and proactive and adaptive behaviors, it has been suggested that individuals will be more likely to set and strive for proactive goals when they find their tasks enjoyable, and intrinsically interesting (Parker, Bindl & Strauss, 2010). In addition, people who are intrinsically oriented are interested in the work itself and try to be creative by looking for different and more adequate ways for achieving success (Weitz, Sujan & Sujan, 1986).

Accordingly, we put forward the following hypotheses:

*H<sub>4a</sub>: Salesperson intrinsic motivation is positively related to salesperson adaptive performance*

*H<sub>4b</sub>: Salesperson intrinsic motivation is positively related to salesperson proactive performance*

Resilience is defined as the ability to bounce back from hardship, recover, emerge stronger and successfully and develop social, academic and professional skills despite having been subjected to severe physiological stress (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). In this vein, resilience implies not only reactive recovery but also proactive learning and growth through successful challenges (Youseff & Luthans, 2007). Although resilience is just emerging in the organizational behavior literature (Youseff & Luthans, 2007) it has been shown to be related to important work outcomes (e.g. Harland, Harrison, Jones & Reiter-Palmon, 2005; Luthans et al., 2005; Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester, 2006; Youseff & Luthans, 2007).

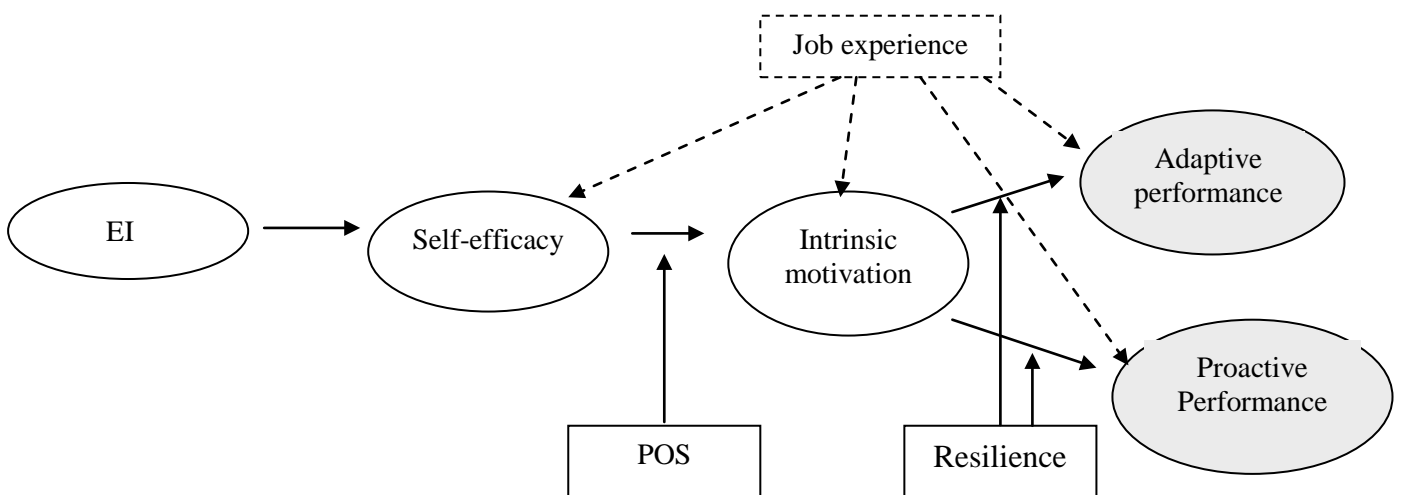
As a positive psychological resource capacity, resilience places a unique positive value on risk factors that may otherwise be viewed as threats that increase the probability of negative outcomes or decrease the probability of positive ones (Masten, 2001). In fact, resilience can lead to enhanced performance, adaptation, and wellbeing, even when adversities are encountered as it can have a positive impact on these outcomes by downfaling some of the destructive impact of negativity (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002). In relation to adaptive and proactive behaviors, it has been suggested that resilience recognizes the need for flexibility, adaptation, and even improvisation in situations predominantly characterized by change and uncertainty (Luthans et al., 2007).

Thus, we expect that salesperson resilience will act as a coping resource that augments the positive effect of intrinsic motivation on sales adaptive and proactive performance by neutralizing the negative impact of adversities and negativity that can be present when carrying out these change-orientated behaviors. As it has been suggested in an educational context, although motivation is critical to academic success, academic gains that students make can be lost if they are not resilient to setback, study pressure, and stress in the school setting (Martin, 2002). Accordingly, we put forward the following hypotheses:

*H<sub>5a</sub>*: Salesperson resilience augments the positive impact of salesperson intrinsic motivation on sales adaptive performance

*H<sub>5b</sub>*: Salesperson resilience augments the positive impact of salesperson intrinsic motivation on sales proactive performance

FIGURE 1  
EI and proactive/adaptive behavior model



- Information provided by the supervisor
- Information provided by the salesperson
- Control variable

### 3. Method

#### 3.1 Sample and survey procedure

Data were gathered from 145 salespeople and their respective supervisors. Participants worked at 145 different enterprises located in Spain. The study population comprised a list of large companies from the autonomous community of Galicia in Spain. The sample met the following criteria: (1) firms had commercial recognition and had been in business for at least ten years; (2) salespeople performed the sales activities described in Moncrief (1989) and Marshall, Moncrief & Lassk (1999), and (3) salespeople attended to business customers. This process rendered 151 firms from a variety of industries including manufacturing, technology, financial services, construction, wholesale or retail and insurance. A senior sales manager from each firm was contacted by one of the authors and only 6



(4 percent) refused to partake in the study. A researcher then approached the participating firms and personally gave the survey to a sales manager and a randomly selected salesperson. Of the participating salespeople, 72.4 percent were male and 27.6 percent were female. Their average age was 39.5 years old (S.D. =7.7) and average tenure was 8 years (S.D. =7.7). Of the participating supervisors, 88.3 percent were male and 11.7 percent were female, with an average age of 44.9 (S.D. = 9.3) and average tenure of 13.2 years (S.D. = 8.9).

The survey used in this study was originally written in English and then underwent a back-translation process. It was first translated into Spanish and then back-translated into English. This translation procedure is in compliance with the framework established by Brislin (1986) regarding the equivalence of language translations. Once the translation process was completed, pilot tests were carried out in order to ensure the survey had been accurately translated. Pre-test of all the measurement items were performed in two steps. Firstly, several experts were asked to examine the questionnaire in order to identify any questions that may have been confusing or difficult to answer; secondly, we conducted of content validity using salespeople belonging to enterprises from different sectors.

### 3.2 Measures and measure assessment

Appendix Table 1A describes the constructs used in this study. All the indicators of the self-report scales use a seven-point Likert scale (1=totally disagree; 7=totally agree). EI, intrinsic motivation and resilience were measured with information provided by the salespeople. Adaptive and proactive performance was measured with information provided by the direct supervisor.

We assessed salespeople's *emotional intelligence* with Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) (Wong and Law, 2002). The WLEIS represents one of the most stringently developed and validated self-report measures on EI available to date (Lievens, Klehe & Libbrecht, 2011). In line with Law et al. (2004), we considered EI as a second-order factor with four dimensions: self-emotions appraisal, regulation of emotion, use of emotion, and others-emotions appraisal. Cronbach's alpha for the self-emotions appraisal dimension was 0.80; for the others-emotions appraisal dimension it was 0.79; for the use of emotion dimension it was 0.80; and for the regulation of emotion dimension it was 0.79. Composite reliabilities were, respectively, 0.81, 0.80, 0.81 and 0.86.

*Intrinsic motivation* was measured with three items from Cravens, Ingram, LaForge & Young (1993), adapted from Tyagi (1985). Cronbach's alpha was 0.91 and composite reliability was 0.87. We assessed *self-efficacy* with a 4-item scale developed for a selling context by Krishnan, Netemeyer and Boles (2002). Cronbach's alpha was 0.86 and composite reliability was 0.84.

Salesperson *adaptive performance* was measured using a 3-item scale adapted from Griffin, Neal & Parker's (2007) scale. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability for individual task adaptivity were, respectively, 0.86 and 0.75. Griffin et al., (2007) 3-items scale for individual task proactiveness was used to assess salesperson *proactive performance*. Cronbach's alpha was 0.94 and composite reliability was 0.85.

Following Luthans et al., (2006) recommendation, we considered *resilience* as a unidimensional construct, assessing salesperson's perceived resilience with the six items Brief Resilience Scale developed by Smith et al., (2008). To refine the scales we eliminated items whose item total correlation was less than 0.3, the commonly accepted minimum value (Nurosis, 1993) or items whose elimination would lead to a substantially higher alpha being obtained. Following this criteria, three items from the measurement scale of resiliency were eliminated. Cronbach's alpha was 0.76 and composite reliability was 0.74.

Finally, *Perceived organizational support (POS)* was measured with 4-items adapted from Eisenberger et al., (1986) and used successfully in previous studies (e.g. DeConinck & Johnson, 2009). Cronbach's alpha was 0.85 and composite reliability was 0.90.

We used CFA<sup>1</sup> to assess the properties of the resulting latent variables (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). The parameters of the latent construct CFA model were estimated using the maximum likelihood method, AMOS 20.0. Results suggest a good fit:  $\chi^2 = 824.18$ ; d.f.= 559;  $\chi^2 /df = 1.47$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ; RMSEA=0.05; CFI = 0.90; IFI = 0.90.

In relation to the *convergent validity* of the scales, all indicators loadings were significant ( $p < 0.01$ ), thus providing validity evidence in favor of the items used to represent the constructs. As shown in Table 1 Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were both above 0.7, which provides evidence of adequate reliability (Gerbing and Anderson, 1988). In addition, average variance extracted statistics were above the desirable 0.5 level (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

To assess *discriminant validity*, Fornell and Larcker's (1981) approach was used. The confidence intervals for the correlations between pairs of variables were calculated. As none of the intervals included the value one, discriminant validity between constructs was assumed. Additionally, we compared the AVE for each construct with the shared variance between latent variables. The AVE for each construct was greater than its shared variance with any other construct.

### 3.3 Hypotheses testing

A structural equation model with AMOS was used to test the relationships described in Figure 1. Researchers have found that job tenure impact salesperson attitudes and behaviors (Flaherty and Pappas, 2002). In view of this, work experience with the firm was treated as a control variable to account for the variances on all endogenous latent variables.

The maximum likelihood structural estimates of the hypothetical model are presented in Figure 2. The proposed structural model had the following levels of fit:  $\chi^2 = 558.84$ ; d.f.= 385;  $\chi^2 /df = 1.45$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ; RMSEA=0.05; TLI = 0.90; CFI = 0.92; IFI = 0.92. The structural model exhibited acceptable levels of fit in terms of the sample size and model complexity (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). The squared multiple correlations were 0.56 for self-efficacy, 0.34 for intrinsic motivation, 0.15 for proactivity, and 0.17 for adaptivity.

As predicted, Emotional intelligence was positively related to salesperson perceived self-efficacy ( $H_1$ :  $\beta = 0.54$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The positive impact of self-efficacy on salesperson intrinsic motivation was also supported ( $H_2$ :  $\beta = 0.50$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Salesperson intrinsic motivation was hypothesized to have a direct impact on sales adaptivity and proactivity. As expected, intrinsic motivation had a positive influence on salesperson adaptive performance ( $H_{4a}$ :  $\beta = 0.40$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and on salesperson proactive performance ( $H_{4b}$ :  $\beta = 0.35$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), thereby confirming  $H_{4a}$  and  $H_{4b}$ .

### 3.4 Test of competing models

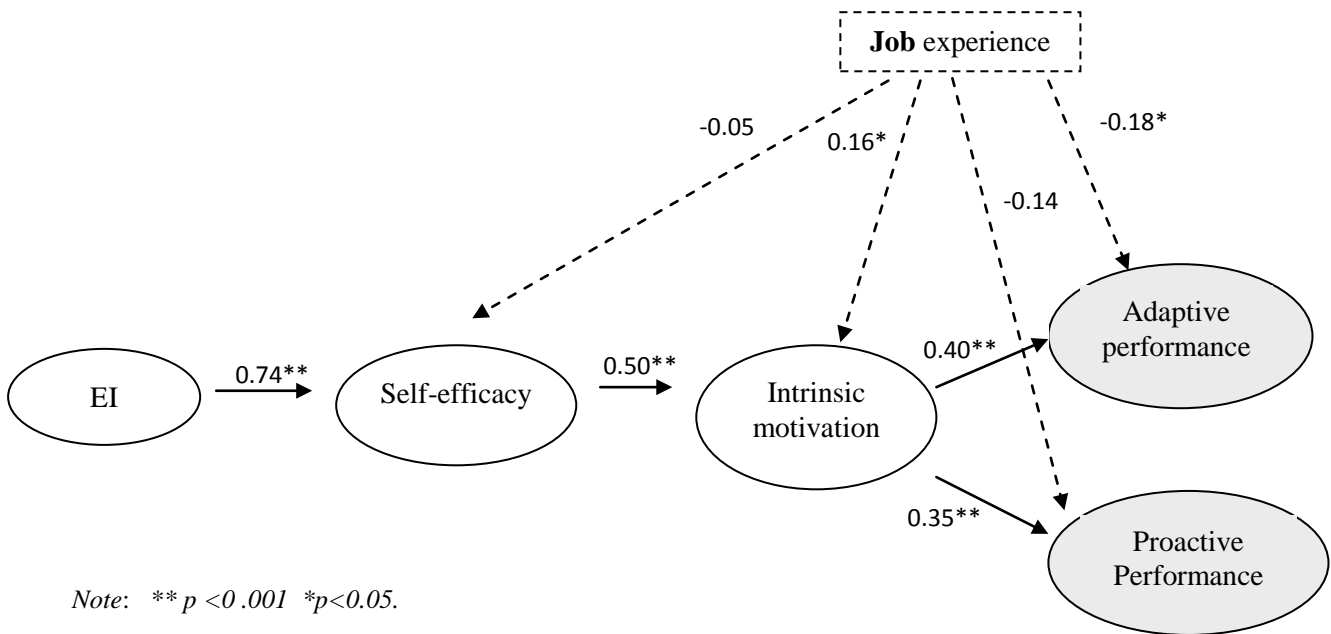
Test of competing models and the selection of a model which best fits that data is generally conducted if the competing models have theoretical support (Jöreskog, 1993). Previous research, although limited, has focused on "emotions as a consequence rather than an antecedent" of efficacy beliefs (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). For Saarni (2000), for example, emotional competence is the demonstration of self-efficacy in expressing emotions in social transactions. In fact, one might speculate that individuals' high self-efficacy beliefs might help promote and enhance the development of EI (Chan, 2004). In addition, EI might influence intrinsic motivation directly. With these considerations in mind, we tested an alternative model in which self-efficacy was positively related to EI and salesperson intrinsic motivation. In addition, salesperson EI was hypothesized to have a positive direct effect on salesperson intrinsic motivation. We found that this model, although presenting an adequate fit to the data ( $X^2 = 555.81$ ,  $df = 384$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $X^2/df = 1.45$ ; RMSEA = 0.06, CFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.90; IFI = 0.92), it had not a significantly better fit than our hypothesized model ( $\Delta\chi^2 [1] = 3.03$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and the direct path from EI to salesperson intrinsic motivation was not significant ( $\beta = 0.28$ ,  $CR = 1.72$ ,  $p = 0.08$ ).

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<sup>1</sup> In order to avoid problems due to possible non-fulfilment of the conditions of multivariate normality, the bootstrapping technique was used.

FIGURE 2

Structural estimates of the causal model



### 3.5 Moderating effects

SEM multigroup analysis has been widely used in the literature to compare moderator effects. However, this approach has been heavily criticized particularly in the last decade (Hayes, 2005; MacCallum et al., 2002; Preacher et al., 2005), especially when the moderating variable is numerical, as it is considered that the “artificial categorization of a continuum prior to analysis is almost always difficult to defend, for the splits point usually is determined arbitrarily and thus produces groups that are not psychometrically meaningful (e.g., why the mean or the median as opposed to some other number?), it throws out information by treating people who are nearly indistinguishable (i.e., those close to the mean or median) as if they are maximally distinct on the dimension measured, it reduces statistical power of tests, and it can increase Type I error rate in some circumstances” (Hayes, 2013, p. 299).

Therefore, testing hypotheses H3, H5a and H5b, which consider moderator effects in some of the relations of the model, will be jointly addressed using the methodology coined by Hayes (2013) as conditional process analysis or conditional process modeling. This methodology is suitable when the aim is to understand and describe the mechanisms where a variable transmits an effect to another variable, as well as when the aim is to test hypotheses on the variable nature of those effects.

In the model proposed in this paper, the self-efficacy variable affects the intrinsic motivation, and this in turn affects two performance measurements: the adaptive performance and the proactive performance, with it being recognized that the effect of the self-efficacy on the performance is indirect, and it is mediated by the intrinsic motivation. In other words, the intrinsic motivation acts as a transmitting variable of the effect of the self-efficacy on performance. However, as the two effects involved in this indirect relation are moderated in turn by the perceived organizational support (POS) and the resilience, we are assuming that those effects can be conditional and depend on those moderated variables. Thus, we argue that the effect of self-efficacy on intrinsic motivation is function of the POS degree and that the effect of the intrinsic motivation on performance is dependent on the degree of resilience.

In order to test these effects, a conditional process analysis is proposed, following Model No. 21 written by Hayes (2013) available at [www.afhayes.com](http://www.afhayes.com), where in this specific case variable X is self-efficacy, M intrinsic motivation, and Y adaptive performance (this same model will subsequently test for the proactive performance variables). Furthermore, W is the first moderating variable (POS) and V the second (degree of resilience of the seller). The job experience variable is likewise introduced to the model as a control variable. We used the PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Release 2.11 written by Andrew F. Hayes and available in [www.afhayes.com](http://www.afhayes.com), documented in Hayes (2013), to test these hypotheses.

This model matches the following system of equations:

### Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 5a

$$\text{INTRINSIC MOTIVATION} = a_0 + a_1 \text{ SELF-EFFICACY} + a_2 \text{ POS} + a_3 \text{ SELF-EFFICACY X POS} + a_4 \text{ JOB EXPERIENCE} + e_{IM}$$

$$\text{ADAPTIVE PERFORMANCE} = b_{01} + b_{11} \text{ INTRINSIC MOTIVATION} + b_{21} \text{ RESILIENCE} + b_{31} \text{ INTRINSIC MOTIVATION X RESILIENCE} + b_{41} \text{ JOB EXPERIENCE} + c'_1 \text{ SELF-EFFICACY} + e_{AP}$$

### Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 5b

$$\text{INTRINSIC MOTIVATION} = a_0 + a_1 \text{ SELF-EFFICACY} + a_2 \text{ POS} + a_3 \text{ SELF-EFFICACY X POS} + a_4 \text{ JOB EXPERIENCE} + e_{IM}$$

$$\text{PROACTIVE PERFORMANCE} = b_{02} + b_{12} \text{ INTRINSIC MOTIVATION} + b_{22} \text{ RESILIENCE} + b_{32} \text{ INTRINSIC MOTIVATION X RESILIENCE} + b_{42} \text{ JOB EXPERIENCE} + c'_2 \text{ SELF-EFFICACY} + e_{PP}$$

Although some authors recommend mean centering the predictor variables (Cohen et al., 2003; Dawson, 2013), others believe that it is not necessary to test the interaction and that such a practice is a myth in the literature, even though the X and M coefficients can be more easily interpreted if it is performed (Hayes, 2013). Therefore and in order for there to be no interpretation problems with some coefficients, given the measurement scales of the variables (which do not include a value of zero), the mean centering is performed of the SELF-EFFICACY, INTRINSIC MOTIVATION, POS, and RESILIENCE variables, which are precisely those that are involved in the SELF-EFFICACY X POS and INTRINSIC MOTIVATION X RESILIENCE interaction terms.

The results of the analysis by means of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) shows certain evidence of the moderator effect of the POS variable in the relation between self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation ( $a_3 = 0.117$ ,  $p = .086$ ). With some caution and assuming a level of significance of 10%, we can accept H3, which argues that the POS moderated the positive relation between self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation.

TABLE 1  
Model coefficients for the Conditional Process Model (adaptive performance)

Antecedent	Consequent						
	M (INTRINSIC MOTIVATION)			Y (ADAPTIVE PERFORMANCE)			
	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p	
Constant	-0.168	0.097	.084	5.665	0.118	<.001	
X (SELF-EFFICACY)	0.203	0.083	.016	0.107	0.113	.350	
M (INTRINSIC MOTIVATION)	----	----	----	0.286	0.095	.003	
W (POS)	0.482	0.079	<.001	----	----	----	
V (RESILIENCE)	----	----	----	0.338	0.101	.737	
C1 (JOB EXPERIENCE)	0.010	0.006	.086	-0.096	0.007	.018	
X x W	0.117	0.677	.087	----	----	----	
M x V	----	----	----	0.177	0.082	.033	
		R <sup>2</sup> = 0.419			R <sup>2</sup> = 0.157		
		F (4, 140) = 23.215, P < .001				F (5, 139) = 5.187, P < .001	

TABLE 2  
Model coefficients for the Conditional Process Model (proactive performance)

Antecedent	Consequent						
	M (INTRINSIC MOTIVATION)			Y (PROACTIVE PERFORMANCE)			
	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p	
Constant	-0.168	0.097	.084	5.393	0.137	<.001	
X (SELF-EFFICACY)	0.203	0.083	.016	-0.121	0.131	.358	
M (INTRINSIC MOTIVATION)	----	----	----	0.325	0.110	.004	
W (POS)	0.482	0.079	<.001	----	----	----	
V (RESILIENCE)	----	----	----	0.069	0.117	.552	
C1 (JOB EXPERIENCE)	0.010	0.006	.086	-0.012	0.008	.159	
X x W	0.117	0.677	.087	----	----	----	
M x V	----	----	----	0.440	0.095	<.001	
		R <sup>2</sup> = 0.419			R <sup>2</sup> = 0.208		
		F (4, 140) = 23.215, P < .001				F (5, 139) = 7.292, P < .001	

The results likewise supports the H5a and shows the existence of a moderator effect of the resilience of the salesperson in the relation between intrinsic motivation and adaptive performance ( $b_{31} = 0.177$ ,  $p = .033$ ). The effect of the intrinsic motivation in the adaptive performance, therefore, cannot be quantified with a fixed parameter, but is rather a function of the degree of resilience, as can be seen from the fact that the interaction between intrinsic motivation and resilience is statistically significant (See Table 1). Moreover, given that this coefficient is positive, we can anticipate that the positive effect of intrinsic motivation on the adaptive performance will be stronger among those salespeople with a greater degree of resilience.

The results likewise indicate that the positive effect of the intrinsic motivation on the proactive performance is contingent upon the degree of resilience, as can be seen from the fact that the interaction between intrinsic motivation and resilience is statistically significant ( $b_{32} = 0.440$ ,  $p < .001$ ) (See Table 2). These results support H5b and conclude that the positive effect of the intrinsic motivation on the proactive performance is more intense on salespeople with a greater degree of resilience.

The interest of the conditional process analysis is to be able perform statistical interference of the conditional indirect effects. Preacher et al. (2007) propose dos approaches, a normal theory-based approach, similar to the Sobel test (used in the mediation analysis) and an approach based on bootstrapping. Hayes (2013, p. 350), based on the results obtained by means of simulation by Preacher et al. (2007), advise the use of the normal theory approach, alleging that this method is lower in strength and that the distribution that uses normal distribution as the benchmark, is not appropriate.

The second approach consists of constructing bootstrap confidence intervals for the conditional indirect effects, obtaining numerous sub-samples of the original data sample and based on the distribution of the estimated indirect effects in those sub-samples to calculate the bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals. If those intervals do not include the value of zero, it can be assumed that the conditional indirect effects are different from zero. This second approach is used in this study.

Tables 3 and 4 include the estimates of the conditional indirect effects of self-efficacy on adaptive performance and on proactive performance by means of the intrinsic motivation variable and considering the POS moderator effect and resilience, along the ninety-five percent bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals (1000 bootstrap samples) for the 10th, 25th, 50th, 75th, and 90th the percentiles of the moderator variables (POS and resilience). Yet again, the PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Release 2.11. is used to perform those estimates.

As can be seen in Table 3, the conditional indirect effect of self-efficacy on adaptive performance is positive and can be considered to be different to zero when the salespeople have a POS level equal or higher to the median (50th percentile = 5.500) and in turn the degree of resilience is also equal or

superior to the median (50th percentile = 5.333)<sup>2</sup>. In other words, both moderator variables need to have a level equal or higher than the median for self-efficacy to positively affect the adaptive performance by means of the intrinsic motivation. However, when the seller has a high POS (for example in the 90th percentile) but low resilience level (for example, 25th percentile), it cannot be ruled out that the indirect effect is equal to zero. The same occurs for low POS and high resilience levels.

TABLE 3  
Conditional indirect effects of self-efficacy on adaptive performance (through intrinsic motivation) at values of POS and resilience

POS	Resilience	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
4.250	4.000	0.003	0.035	-0.052	0.092
4.250	4.667	0.010	0.029	-0.027	0.099
4.250	5.333	0.174	0.036	-0.045	0.103
4.250	6.000	0.245	0.051	-0.073	0.124
4.250	6.667	0.032	0.068	-0.095	0.177
5.000	4.000	0.007	0.041	-0.064	0.104
5.000	4.667	0.025	0.031	-0.012	0.128
<b>5.000</b>	<b>5.333</b>	<b>0.042</b>	<b>0.031</b>	<b>0.002</b>	<b>0.141</b>
5.000	6.000	0.060	0.041	0.000	0.172
5.000	6.667	0.077	0.056	-0.003	0.231
5.500	4.000	0.010	0.052	-0.094	0.123
5.500	4.667	0.034	0.038	-0.016	0.151
<b>5.500</b>	<b>5.333</b>	<b>0.059</b>	<b>0.036</b>	<b>0.012</b>	<b>0.178</b>
<b>5.500</b>	<b>6.000</b>	<b>0.083</b>	<b>0.046</b>	<b>0.017</b>	<b>0.211</b>
<b>5.500</b>	<b>6.667</b>	<b>0.108</b>	<b>0.063</b>	<b>0.016</b>	<b>0.293</b>
6.000	4.000	0.012	0.065	-0.115	0.142
6.000	4.667	0.044	0.048	-0.021	0.181
<b>6.000</b>	<b>5.333</b>	<b>0.075</b>	<b>0.045</b>	<b>0.176</b>	<b>0.220</b>
<b>6.000</b>	<b>6.000</b>	<b>0.106</b>	<b>0.057</b>	<b>0.281</b>	<b>0.286</b>
<b>6.000</b>	<b>6.667</b>	<b>0.138</b>	<b>0.079</b>	<b>0.030</b>	<b>0.374</b>
6.750	4.000	0.167	0.088	-0.153	0.204
6.750	4.667	0.058	0.065	-0.030	0.247
<b>6.750</b>	<b>5.333</b>	<b>0.100</b>	<b>0.062</b>	<b>0.216</b>	<b>0.296</b>
<b>6.750</b>	<b>6.000</b>	<b>0.142</b>	<b>0.080</b>	<b>0.031</b>	<b>0.398</b>
<b>6.750</b>	<b>6.667</b>	<b>0.183</b>	<b>0.111</b>	<b>0.036</b>	<b>0.539</b>

Estimating the conditional indirect effects of the self-efficacy variable on proactive performance is a means to check that those effects are different from zero when the first moderator variable (POS) is equal or higher than the median and in turn, the second moderator variable (resilience) is equal or superior to the median. Therefore, only positive and significantly different from zero effects can be expected on those sellers that show high POS and resilience values (see Table 4). Furthermore, it should be noted that when resilience has a very low value, in the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile, the conditional indirect effect is always negative, a result that supports the interpretations of Graph 3, that show a slightly negative slope of the function for low resilience values.

TABLE 4  
Conditional indirect effects of self-efficacy on proactive performance (through intrinsic motivation) at values of POS and resilience

POS	Resilience	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
4.250	4.000	-0.017	0.063	-0.285	0.044
4.250	4.667	0.001	0.034	-0.055	0.086
4.250	5.333	0.019	0.045	-0.050	0.143
4.250	6.000	0.037	0.082	-0.111	0.227
4.250	6.667	0.056	0.124	-0.175	0.328
5.000	4.000	-0.040	0.065	-0.265	0.034

<sup>2</sup> Estimating the ninety-five percent bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals from 1,000 bootstrap samples shows that the combination of 5,000 values in the POS variable and 5,333 in resilience variable, results in a confidence interval which excludes the value of zero. The conditional indirect effect could therefore be taken to be different from zero. However, we believe that it is an isolated case that does not determine the existence of a significant region.

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5.000	4.667	0.003	0.041	-0.058	0.118
5.000	5.333	0.047	0.040	-0.004	0.176
5.000	6.000	0.091	0.063	-0.012	0.243
5.000	6.667	0.135	0.093	-0.021	0.351
5.500	4.000	-0.056	0.076	-0.274	0.047
5.500	4.667	0.005	0.052	-0.084	0.133
<b>5.500</b>	<b>5.333</b>	<b>0.066</b>	<b>0.044</b>	<b>0.005</b>	<b>0.206</b>
<b>5.500</b>	<b>6.000</b>	<b>0.126</b>	<b>0.060</b>	<b>0.035</b>	<b>0.295</b>
<b>5.500</b>	<b>6.667</b>	<b>0.187</b>	<b>0.087</b>	<b>0.047</b>	<b>0.400</b>
6.000	4.000	-0.072	0.092	-0.330	0.064
6.000	4.667	0.006	0.064	-0.104	0.168
<b>6.000</b>	<b>5.333</b>	<b>0.084</b>	<b>0.053</b>	<b>0.010</b>	<b>0.249</b>
<b>6.000</b>	<b>6.000</b>	<b>0.162</b>	<b>0.067</b>	<b>0.063</b>	<b>0.355</b>
<b>6.000</b>	<b>6.667</b>	<b>0.240</b>	<b>0.096</b>	<b>0.098</b>	<b>0.500</b>
6.750	4.000	-0.095	0.121	-0.425	0.079
6.750	4.667	0.008	0.085	-0.138	0.234
<b>6.750</b>	<b>5.333</b>	<b>0.112</b>	<b>0.072</b>	<b>0.014</b>	<b>0.338</b>
<b>6.750</b>	<b>6.000</b>	<b>0.215</b>	<b>0.091</b>	<b>0.079</b>	<b>0.474</b>
<b>6.750</b>	<b>6.667</b>	<b>0.319</b>	<b>0.129</b>	<b>0.123</b>	<b>0.662</b>

#### 4. Discussion

Emotions and feelings constitute an essential component of social life in general and particularly in organizations. How people feel at work affects their motivation, creativity and performance (Furgas & George, 2001). Our results confirm that emotions not only influence what people think and how people think, but they also have a deep effect on what occurs at work and in other settings of life (McEnrue, Groves & Shen, 2010).

Emotional intelligence is an important factor that contributes to the development of self-efficacy beliefs among individuals. This is consistent with the idea that emotional states might influence salespeople judgments on their own competence (Salanova et al., 2005). Salespeople often face rejection, role conflict and role ambiguity; and frequently face these challenges without support groups that are common in other jobs. To succeed, salespeople need to have control of and self-awareness of their own feelings (Rozell et al., 2006). One's EI levels are open to measurement and change (Goleman, 1995); thus, salespeople can enhance their EI levels. Moreover, understanding what EI entails is a critical requirement for someone in a leadership position. Evaluation of applicant scores on EI might provide valid information for selection decisions and might yield information regarding training needs.

Our research supports the idea that a combination of self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation is needed to explain individual's adaptive and proactive performance. Adaptivity and proactivity become especially important whenever a work context involves uncertainty and some aspects of work roles cannot be formalized (Griffin et al., 2007); something that is common among the sales positions. Salespeople are more willing to put in greater effort when they believe they have the abilities needed to perform their jobs successfully, what leads them to carry out more adaptive and proactive behaviors.

Due the fact that salespeople are often directly unsupervised, self-motivation becomes a critical determinant of success (Rozell et al., 2006). However, our findings confirm that maintenance and enhancement of salespeople intrinsic motivation requires supportive conditions. As the cognitive evaluation theory states, self-determination, referring to the perception of choice when engaging in behavior, moderates the effects of perceived competence on intrinsic motivation. Perceived organizational support might act as a contextual support for autonomy factor which is essential for intrinsic motivation to be present (Deci & Ryan, 1985). POS interacts with salespeople feelings of competence increasing salespeople interest in carrying out assigned tasks. As Ryan & Deci (2000) state, "intrinsic motivation is more likely to flourish in contexts characterized by a sense of security and relatedness".

Our results are consistent with the notion that resilience forms a part of a workers' "psychological capital" which helps them adapt to the numerous changes that organizations typically undergo

(Luthans et al., 2006). The salesperson ability to bounce back augments the positive effect of salesperson intrinsic motivation on adaptive and proactive performance by contributing in a positive manner to adaptation and wellbeing, even when adversities are encountered. Resilience is considered an ability of an emotional nature, more of a state than a trait and, therefore, it is modifiable. In this respect, it has been suggested that resilience can be developed through asset-focused, risk-focused and process-focused strategies that are relevant and applicable to the workplace (Masten & Reed, 2002).

Our study also supports the notion that emotional competences do not act in isolation (Abraham, 1999). Adaptive and proactive sales performance might be enhanced with EI competencies. However, in order to obtain this result, a supportive context as well as the presence of resilient skills on the side of the salesperson need to be in evidence. The indirect effect of self-efficacy on adaptive and proactive sales performance cannot be calculated as the product of two fixed parameters, but rather it depends on the two moderating variables and is greater for the salespeople that present high POS and resilience values.

## 5. Limitations and directions for future research

This study is not free from limitations. First, it is of a cross-sectional nature and its data were collected at one point in time, making it difficult to arrive at any conclusions regarding the causal nature of the examined relationships. Second, it uses a convenience sample and while the response rate was fairly high, we were unable to determine whether or not those that responded provided an accurate representation of those that did not. Third, the sample size for this study was relatively small and focused only on Spanish salespeople. Any possible future studies using larger and more diverse samples would yield findings that are more representative of salespeople working in other countries.

As regards EI, future research should explore the relationship between EI and marketing exchange variables as adaptive selling or customer orientation. Everyone has resilience potential, but its level is determined by individual experiences, qualities, the environment and personal balance or risk and protective factors (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). Thus, it would be interesting to analyze what sales factors, influence salesperson resilience. Another potential line of future research would be to analyse the influence of self-efficacy overtime using a longitudinal study. In this respect, it has been noted that the perceived personal capability to do overtime can lead to overconfidence and, therefore, impede performance (Thompson, Kaslow, Short & Wyckoff, 2002).

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APPENDIX

Table 1A. Measure properties

Measure	Factor loading (*)	Cronbach Alpha	Composite reliability
<b>Emotional intelligence</b>			
- Self-Emotions appraisal	0.76	<b>0.80</b>	<b>0.81</b>
<i>I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time.</i>	0.56		
<i>I have good understanding of my own emotions.</i>	0.84		
<i>I really understand what I feel</i>	0.84		
<i>I always know whether or not I am happy</i>	0.59		
- Other-emotions appraisal	0.73	<b>0.79</b>	<b>0.80</b>
<i>I always know my friends' emotions from their behavior</i>	0.69		
<i>I am a good observer of others' emotions</i>	0.73		
<i>I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others.</i>	0.67		
<i>I have good understanding of the emotions of people around me.</i>	0.67		
- Use of emotion	0.81	<b>0.80</b>	<b>0.81</b>
<i>I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them</i>	0.63		
<i>I always tell myself I am a competent person.</i>	0.58		
<i>I am a self-motivating person</i>	0.83		
<i>I would always encourage myself to try my best.</i>	0.81		
- Regulation of emotion	0.67	<b>0.79</b>	<b>0.76</b>
<i>I am able to control my temper so that I can handle difficulties rationally</i>	0.64		
<i>I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions</i>			
<i>I can always calm down quickly after I get very angry</i>	0.80		
<i>I have a lot of control over my emotions</i>	0.56		
	0.66		
<b>Intrinsic motivation</b>		<b>0.91</b>	<b>0.87</b>
<i>Obtain a sense of accomplishment from your work.</i>	0.72		
<i>Feel a sense of personal growth and development when it comes to your work.</i>	0.93		
<i>Get a feeling of stimulation and challenging involvement in your work.</i>	0.84		
<b>Self-efficacy</b>		<b>0.86</b>	<b>0.84</b>
<i>I know the right thing to do in selling situations.</i>	0.80		
<i>Overall, I am confident about my ability to perform my job well.</i>	0.83		
<i>I feel I am very capable at the task of selling</i>	0.84		
<i>I feel I have the capabilities to successfully perform my job.</i>	0.51		
<b>Adaptive performance</b>		<b>0.86</b>	<b>0.75</b>
<i>Adapted well to changes in core tasks.</i>	0.70		
<i>Coped with changes to the way they have to perform core tasks.</i>	0.91		
<i>Learned new skills to help them adapt to changes in core tasks.</i>	0.75		
<b>Proactive performance</b>		<b>0.94</b>	<b>0.85</b>
<i>Initiated better ways of doing their core tasks.</i>	0.77		
<i>Came up with ideas to improve the way in which their core tasks are performed.</i>	0.88		
<i>Made changes to the way their core tasks are performed.</i>	0.79		
<b>Resilience</b>		<b>0.76</b>	<b>0.74</b>
<i>I have a hard time making it through stressful events (R)</i>	0.87		
<i>It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens (R)</i>	0.71		
<i>I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life (R)</i>	0.46		
<b>Perceived organizational support</b>		<b>0.85</b>	<b>0.90</b>
<i>The organization strongly considers my goals and values.</i>	0.82		
<i>The organization cares about my well-being.</i>	0.91		
<i>The organization is willing to help me when I need help.</i>	0.83		
<i>The organization takes pride in my accomplishments at work.</i>	0.79		

- Factor loadings from the measurement model are standardized and significant at  $p < 0.001$

# THE INFLUENCE OF ADAPTIVE SELLING ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

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## ABSTRACT

*Firm The first objective is to analyze the influence of adaptive selling, as perceived by customers, on customer satisfaction -both with the salesperson and the company- and loyalty to the supplier. In addition, this study aims to examine to what extent the organizational position occupied by the buyer (general manager or purchasing manager) moderates the results obtained (i.e., satisfaction and loyalty) as a consequence of a salesperson's adaptive selling behavior. Data obtained from a survey of organizational buyers from a wide range of industries is analyzed through structural equation modelling. Findings from the study indicate that adaptive selling significantly increases satisfaction with the salesperson, satisfaction with the supplier and loyalty to the supplier while controlling for length of the buyer-seller relationship. Also, these effects are stronger when the contact person at the buying company is the general manager as opposed to the purchasing manager.*

## KEYWORDS:

*Sales force, Adaptive selling, Relational outcomes, Hierarchical position of the buying person*

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## 1. Introduction.

Though business relationships are established between organizations, they are actually managed by individuals, and the salesperson is still the primary point of contact for the customer in industrial markets (Stock and Hoyer, 2005; Schwepker and Good, 2011). Academic and practitioner interest has long focused on understanding the adaptive nature of personal selling. Research stemming from the Adaptive Selling framework (Weitz et al., 1986) has paid a considerable amount of attention to study the relationship between adaptive selling and sales performance (e.g., Boorum et al., 1998; Porter et al., 2003; Franke and Park, 2006; McFarland et al., 2006). Results from the meta-analysis conducted by Franke and Park (2006) reveal that adaptive selling increases self-rated, manager-rated and objective measures of performance.

Because of its adaptive capability, personal selling has traditionally been the most effective communication vehicle (Spiro and Weitz, 1990). However, this effectiveness is achieved at significant costs. For example, the average cost of making a personal sales call ranges from \$250 to \$500 in the USA (Kotler, 2003, p.638). Hence, sales managers are putting renewed emphasis on optimizing the productivity of their salespeople. But more importantly, practitioners and scholars have increasingly focused their attention on understanding how salespeople's behavior contributes to the development of buyer-seller relationship (Jones et al., 2003). Despite today's emphasis on relationship selling, the research on the consequences of adaptive selling has employed primarily sales related criteria (e.g., sales, quota). As shown in the Appendix, only recently scholars have paid attention to the influence of adaptive selling on relational outcomes (Rapp et al., 2006; Román and Iacobucci, 2010; Evanschitzky et al., 2012; Wang, 2012). This stream of research represents a remarkable effort while offering interesting research opportunities to the field of industrial marketing since: (1) these studies have solely focused on customers' satisfaction with the sales interaction, the salesperson or the selling company, thus ignoring other stronger indicators of relationship quality such as customer loyalty (Palmatier et al., 2007); (2) adaptive selling is assessed through salespeople's own evaluations. Importantly, prior research has shown that industrial customers' assessment of the salespeople's behaviors in the sales interaction are more objective than self-assessment by salespeople (Michaels and Day, 1985); (3) salespeople surveyed in these studies belong to a limited number of selling companies (ranging from 1 to 12), which limits the generalizability of the findings, and (4) most of these studies have been conducted in business-to-consumers environments. From a management perspective, given the significant costs of the industrial salesforce mentioned earlier, industrial sales managers would like to have some evidence that adaptive selling not only leads to short-term sales and satisfaction, but also to building and maintaining relationships with customers through loyalty to the selling company. Therefore, our first objective is to analyze the influence of adaptive selling, as perceived by customers, on customer satisfaction -both with the salesperson and the company- and loyalty to the company in a business-to-business context.

Prior research has shown that buyers' expectations regarding salesperson's behaviors vary across functional areas (e.g., Qualls and Rosa, 1995; Germain and Droge, 1998; DeVecchio et al., 2003; Román and Martín, 2008). For example, findings from Qualls and Rosa (1995) showed that purchasing personnel and corporate management used different criteria to evaluate suppliers. Interestingly, DeVecchio et al. (2003) suggest that the buyers' level of authority within their firm has a direct influence over their expectations and evaluations of salespeople. Our second objective is to analyze to what extent the organizational position occupied by the buyer (general manager or purchasing manager) moderates the results obtained (i.e., satisfaction and loyalty) as a consequence of a salesperson's adaptive selling behavior. Such analysis may provide industrial marketers with valuable information on the effectiveness of adaptive selling behaviors in terms of relationship quality.

## 2. Research model

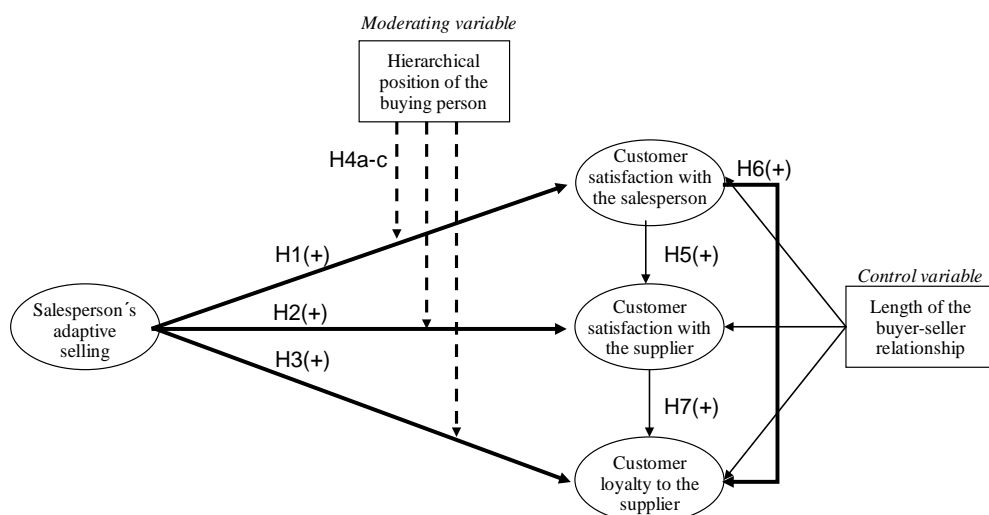
Salespeople exhibit a high level of adaptive selling behavior when they use different sales presentations across sales encounters and when they make adjustments during the encounter based on real-time feedback and perceived information about the nature of the selling situation (Weitz et al., 1986; Spiro and Weitz, 1990). Adaptive selling includes shaping the content and amount of

information shared with different customers who have different needs, e.g., a repeat customer does not need the background information required by a new purchaser (Román and Iacobucci, 2010). Salespeople also adapt their selling tactics to the buyer’s communication style (Williams and Spiro 1985; McFarland et al., 2006).

The above implies that the successful adaptation of a sales approach can be a difficult task that requires an extra effort on behalf of the salesperson (Weitz et al., 1986; Spiro and Weitz, 1990; Porter and Inks, 2000). More precisely, not only must the salesperson gather and analyze information from the customer, but he/she must then implement appropriate behaviors to match the characteristics of the sales situation.

As shown in Figure 1, our research model proposes that adaptive selling, as perceived by the customer, directly influences customer satisfaction, both with the salesperson and the company, and loyalty to the supplier (H1-H3). The hierarchical position of the buyer is hypothesized to moderate the influence of adaptive selling on these relational outcomes (H4a-c). As for the indirect effects of adaptive selling, it is suggested that satisfaction with the salesperson influences satisfaction with the company (H5) and loyalty to the company (H6). Satisfaction with the company in turn enhances loyalty to the company (H7). Consistent with prior research in industrial markets (Stock and Hoyer, 2005), the framework also includes the length of the buyer-seller relationship as a control variable. The reasoning for these hypotheses is explained below.

**Figure 1** Conceptual model



### 3. Hypotheses development

#### 3.1. Direct consequences of adaptive selling

Customer satisfaction with the salesperson reflects an emotional state that occurs in response to an evaluation of the interaction experience that the customer has with the salesperson (Crosby et al., 1990). It is hypothesized that adaptive selling increases customer satisfaction with the salesperson. As discussed earlier, adaptive selling not only entails adapting the content of the presentation, but also the sales tactics to the buyer’s communication style. For example, the adaptive salesperson may tailor a presentation to focus on the bottom-line when talking to a “task-oriented” buyer (Williams and Spiro, 1985). These adaptations are likely to improve communication between parties, which implies that problems are more easily and rapidly addressed (Mohr et al., 1996), and consequently customer satisfaction is likely to increase. Indeed, recent evidence from Román and Iacobucci (2010) and Wang

(2012) in the retail financial services industry shows that adaptive selling increases customer satisfaction with the salesperson. Accordingly:

H1. Adaptive selling behavior, as perceived by the customer, is positively related to customer satisfaction with the salesperson.

Satisfaction with the supplier is an overall evaluation of performance based on all prior experiences with the firm (Anderson et al., 1994). Preliminary evidence in a business-to-business context from Evanschitzky et al. (2012) shows that the adaptive selling behaviors of 18 salespeople of one financial service provider positively influenced customer satisfaction.

Industrial salespeople are the selling organization in the customer's eyes. Each of the salesperson-customer interactions has the potential of positively or negatively impacting customer's satisfaction with the company (Schwepker and Good, 2011). More specifically, research suggests that customer satisfaction with the selling company may be largely determined by the quality of the sales interaction since customer perceptions of salespeople will affect their perceptions of the company (Ganesh et al., 2000). The quality of the sales interaction, in turn, is likely to improve when the salesperson implements an adaptive selling approach because the salesperson's behaviors are modified with the goal of more exactly meeting customer needs related to the sales interaction (Weitz et al., 1986). Therefore, we propose that:

H2. Adaptive selling behavior, as perceived by the customer, is positively related to customer satisfaction with the supplier.

Customer loyalty refers to customer commitment to continue the relationship with the selling company (Ganesh et al., 2000). We expect a positive effect of adaptive selling on customer loyalty. This expectation is based on *equity theory*, which states that buyers compare their inputs/outcomes to those of the salesperson (cf. Oliver and Swan, 1989). In this vein, adaptive selling can be considered to be a salesperson's input in the equity formulation. This is because the adaptive salesperson has to conduct a "market research" on each customer by asking questions and listening carefully (Weitz et al., 1986). That is to say, when customers perceive that a salesperson is making an effort to adapt to their communication style and needs, customer's feelings of equity are likely to increase. Prior research has shown that buyer equity perceptions, in turn, increase the probability of dealing with the salesperson in the future (Swan and Oliver, 1991). Importantly, qualitative data from Brennan and Turnbull (1999) reveal that seller adaptation to the buyer contributes to the development of the relationship in industrial markets. Therefore, we propose that:

H3. Adaptive selling behavior, as perceived by the customer, is positively related to customer loyalty to the supplier.

### ***3.2. The moderating influence of the hierarchical position of the buying person***

As argued earlier, adaptive selling plays a major role in making the customer feel that the salesperson is willing to sacrifice short-term sales to maintain customer satisfaction and increase the probability of future sales (Weitz et al., 1986). That is to say, adaptive selling is a relationship signal that indicates to the buyer that he or she is important to the seller (Porter et al., 2003). We believe that the salesperson's effort in adapting to the buyer and the characteristics of the sales situation will be further valued in proportion to the hierarchical position of the buying person.

Findings from Qualls and Rosa (1995) revealed that functional areas (i.e., purchasing and corporate management) have different factors that determine their satisfaction with suppliers. In a similar fashion, Hayes and Hartley's (1989) results indicate that buyers in strategic positions (such as those who are at higher levels of authority) tend to take a "broader perspective" when interacting with salespeople. The broader perspective moves beyond the technical aspects of the product to a problem-solving approach that focuses on achieving the goals of the organization as a whole (DelVecchio et al., 2003). Román and Martín (2008) found that the effect of an increase in sales call frequency on customer satisfaction was stronger the higher the hierarchical position of the contact person in the buying company (general manager vs. purchasing manager). Overall, these studies suggest that a buyer who carries a high level of authority within the buying company may be more responsive (and consequently more satisfied and more loyal) to an extra effort on the part of the salesperson in terms of adaptive selling. Based on the above discussion, we propose that:

H4a-c: The higher the hierarchical position of the contact person in the buying company, the stronger the effect of adaptive selling behavior, as perceived by the customer, on (a) customer satisfaction with the salesperson, (b) customer satisfaction with the supplier and (c) customer loyalty to the supplier.

### ***3.3. Relationships among the relational outcome variables***

Perceived value is Prior evidence in retailing contexts has shown that satisfaction with the salesperson positively influences satisfaction and loyalty to the selling company (e.g., Goff et al., 1997; Reynolds and Beatty, 1999). We expect these relationships to hold in business-to-business settings because customers' positive feelings towards their salesperson (i.e., satisfaction with the salesperson) often "transfer" to the company given the crucial boundary-spanning role of industrial salespeople. Also, *associative learning theory* (Furedy and Riley, 1987) can provide an explanation of such relationships. Associative learning refers to the individuals' ability to make connections between temporally and/or propositionally contingent events. In particular, pairing of the unconditioned stimulus (e.g., positive experiences with the adaptive salesperson) with a conditioned stimulus (e.g., the supplier) create liking and positive attitudes towards the conditioned stimulus (the supplier), resulting in higher levels of satisfaction and loyalty to the company the salesperson represents. Accordingly:

H5. Customer satisfaction with the salesperson is positively related to customer satisfaction with the supplier.

H6. Customer satisfaction with the salesperson is positively related to customer loyalty to the supplier.

Based on extant research in business-to-business markets (e.g., Liu and Leach, 2001; Jeffrey and Johnston, 2008; Cater and Cater, 2009) we expect satisfaction with the company to have a positive influence on loyalty to the company. Satisfied customers are less sensitive to competitors' offers and are more likely to continue the relationship with the selling firm. Therefore:

H7. Customer satisfaction with the supplier is positively related to customer loyalty to the supplier.

### ***3.4. Length of relationship as a control variable***

Length of relationship refers to the amount of time that the buyer-seller business relationship has existed (Stock and Hoyer, 2005). As mentioned earlier, we include the length of relationship as a control variable. This variable has been identified as a key antecedent of customer satisfaction and loyalty in several studies (e.g., Dwyer et al., 1987; Ganesan, 1994). The inclusion of this control variable is particularly important because it is highly plausible that it is positively correlated with both the salespeople's adaptive selling behavior and customer satisfaction and loyalty. Including this construct as an additional predictor of the customer relational outcomes allows us to determine whether adaptive selling has a significant impact on satisfaction and loyalty after accounting for the variance explained by this control variable.



#### 4. Method

Most research on adaptive selling has been conducted from the salesperson's perspective. This study focuses on the relationship between a single buyer and a single seller from the buyer's perspective. The questionnaire was pre-tested in two stages. First, it was reviewed by six buyers through in-depth interviews. Each pretest subject in this stage was asked to evaluate the clarity, reveal any latent problems, and offer suggestions for improvements. Several modifications were made (particularly in the adaptive selling measure) to fit the measures to the context of the study (i.e., the buyer's point of view). In the second pretest thirty buyers were asked to first complete the survey, and then to note any problems found in the instrument. Two items from the adaptive selling measure were eliminated as they were found redundant.

From a mailing list (in SIC codes 33, 34, 35, and 36) purchased from a commercial list house, we randomly selected 1000 small and medium-sized firms located in a southeastern Region of Spain. We followed established literature in determining the industries (Colwell et al., 2011), respondents (Román and Martín, 2008) and requests of the respondents with respect to which salesperson they considered (Newell et al., 2011). More specifically, in the instructions of the survey, the respondents were asked to think of a salesperson selling industrial machinery and components with whom their company currently has a relationship (for a similar procedure see Newell et al., 2011). Particularly, it was specified that the salesperson had to call on the buyer at least once a month. This condition to facilitate buyer's evaluations of the salesperson's behavior.

A letter explaining the nature and purpose of the research as well as a copy of the questionnaire was sent to the firms. We then made telephone contact to confirm that the companies had received the questionnaire and were willing to participate. A follow up letter and survey were sent 2 weeks later to non-respondents. Discarding all incomplete and inconsistent responses (20), the final number of usable questionnaires was 264, representing an effective response rate of 26.4%. Non-response bias was assessed by comparing early and late respondents (Armstrong and Overton, 1977). No significant differences were found on any of the constructs ( $p > .10$ ).

The responding firms come from a wide range of industries, including mining, utilities, manufacturing (motor and generators, wood and metal products), construction, engineering, metal forgings and stampings. Sample profile is shown in Table I. 72% of the responding companies consisted of small firms (less than 50 employees). Most of the respondents were male (96.6%), had a mean age of 45 years and 36.4% of them had a college education. 52.7% of them were general managers and 47.3% were purchasing managers.

**Table I** Sample profile (Percentage)

Size of participating companies (number of employees)	
< 10	37.1
10 to 50	34.8
> 50 to 250	28
Profile of respondents	
Gender	
Male	96.6
Female	3.4
Age	
< 35	12.1
36-50	54.2
> 50	33.7
Mean = 45 years	
Education	
Low (primary school)	.04
Middle (high school)	63.2
College/University	36.4
Hierarchical position	
General manager	52.7
Purchasing manager	47.3

#### 4.1. Measures

When possible, validated existing scales were used (all items are presented in Table II). As argued earlier, we finally adapted 5 items from Spiro and Weitz's (1990) ADAPTS scale to assess customers' perceptions of the salesperson's adaptive selling behavior. Customer satisfaction with the salesperson was measured using a three-item scale adapted from Ramsey and Sohi (1997) and Reynolds and Beatty (1999). Three items from Liu and Leach (2001) were used to measure customer satisfaction with the supplier. Four items from Ramsey and Sohi (1997) and Palmatier et al. (2007) were used to capture customer loyalty to the supplier. Following Stock and Hoyer (2005), length of relationship was measured by one item that captured the age of relationship between the supplier and the customer company in years. In order to facilitate buyer's response, relationship length was measured through four intervals (less than 2 years, 2 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, more than 10 years).

#### 4.2. Data analysis

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) by means of LISREL 8.72 was conducted to assess measurement reliability, convergent and discriminant validity. The measurement model had a good fit ( $\chi^2(95)=215.83$   $p<.01$ ; GFI=.91; CFI=.98; RMSEA=.06; RMSR=03.; TLI (NNFI)=.98).

**Table II** Construct Measurement Summary: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Item Description and Source	Std. Loading
Salesperson's adaptive selling behavior as perceived by customers (adapted from Spiro and Weitz, 1990)	
This salesperson tailors the sales presentation to the nature of the selling situation.	.91
This salesperson adapts his/her communication style and approach to meet my needs.	.92
<i>This salesperson often uses the same sales techniques.</i> (r) <sup>a</sup>	.87
If necessary, this salesperson makes adjustments during the encounter to improve my level of understanding.	.95
This salesperson experiments with different sales approaches. (scale: 1 = "never" to 10 = "always").	.87
Customer satisfaction with the salesperson (Ramsey and Sohi, 1997; Reynolds and Beatty, 1999)	
I am pleased with this salesperson.	.91
I am satisfied with the level of service this person has provided.	.94
In general, I am pretty satisfied with my dealings with this salesperson.	.91
Customer satisfaction with the supplier (Liu and Leach, 2001)	
My company likes this supplier.	.93
My company is satisfied with this supplier.	.91
My company is pleased with this supplier.	.93
Customer's loyalty to the supplier (Ramsey and Sohi, 1997; Palmatier et al., 2007)	
It is probable that my company will contact this supplier again.	.94
My company is willing to discuss business with this supplier again.	.93
My company plans to continue doing business with this supplier.	.92
We will do more business with this supplier.	.91
Length of relationship (Stock and Hoyer, 2005)	
Number of years your company has been dealing with this supplier	-

Notes: <sup>a</sup> Reverse-scored item. <sup>b</sup> Unless indicated otherwise, scales are from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 10 = "strongly agree.";

Reliability of the measures was confirmed with composite reliability index higher than the recommended level of .60 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) and average variance extracted was higher than the recommended level of .50 (Hair et al., 1998) as shown in Table III. Following the procedures suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and Bagozzi and Yi (1988), convergent validity was assessed by verifying the significance of the *t*-values associated with the parameter estimates (the lowest *t*-value was 17.76). All *t*-values were positive and significant ( $p < .01$ ). Discriminant validity was tested by comparing the average variance extracted by each construct to the shared variance between the construct and all other variables. For each comparison, the explained variance exceeded all combinations of shared variance (see Table III).

**Table III** Means, standard deviations, scale reliability, AVE<sup>a</sup> and correlations

	Means	s.d.	AVE	1	2	3	4	5
1. Adaptive selling	6.5	1.36	.82	<b>.96</b>	.26	.18	.22	.06
2. Satisfaction with the salesperson	6.9	1.11	.84	.51	<b>.94</b>	.22	.26	.07
3. Satisfaction with the supplier	6.7	1.14	.85	.43	.47	<b>.95</b>	.44	.13
4. Loyalty to the supplier	7	1.15	.85	.47	.51	.67	<b>.96</b>	.18
5. Length of relationship	2	1.22	-	.25	.28	.36	.43	-

**Notes:** <sup>a</sup> Average variance extracted. Scale composite reliability (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) is reported along the diagonal. Correlations are reported in the lower half of the matrix Shared variances are reported in the upper half of the matrix. All correlations are significant at  $p < .01$ .

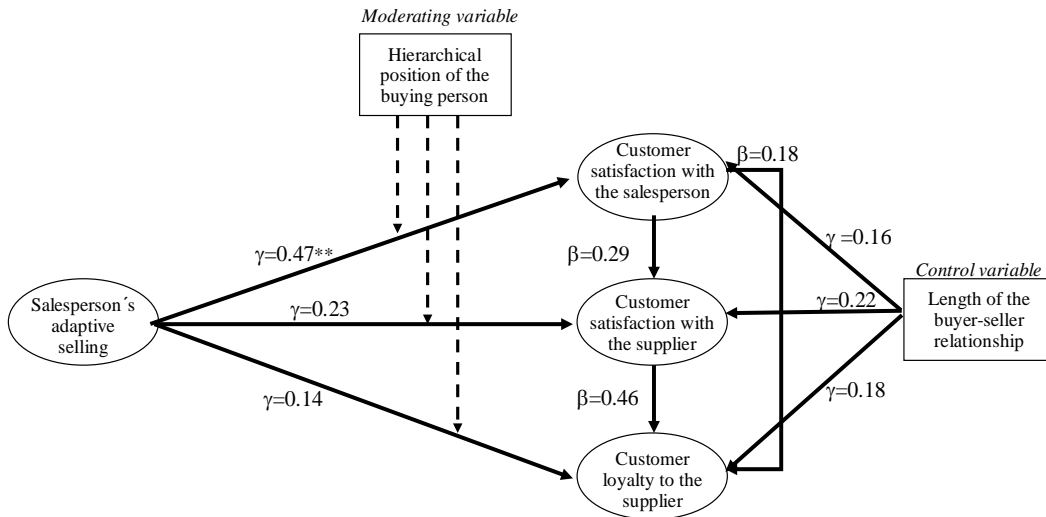
<sup>b</sup> Relationship length was measured through four intervals (1="less than 2 years", 2 ="from 2 to 5 years", 3 ="from 6 to 10 years", 4 = "more than 10 years").

## 5. Results

### 5.1. Direct and indirect effects

The hypothesized relationships were estimated via LISREL 8.72. The results indicated a good fit between the model and the observed data ( $\chi^2(95)=215.92$   $p < .01$ ; GFI=.91; CFI=.98; RMSEA=.06; RMSR=.03.; TLI (NNFI)=.98). The model explained 28% 25% and 32% of the variance in satisfaction with the salesperson, satisfaction with the supplier and loyalty to the supplier respectively. As shown in Figure 2, the analyses provided strong support for the direct positive effect of adaptive selling on the relational outcomes (H1-H3), as well as the relationships among the relational outcomes (H5-H7). In addition, the results indicated a significant and indirect influence of adaptive selling on supplier satisfaction (Std. coeff =.13; *t*-value=3.80) and on supplier loyalty (Std. coeff =.25; *t*-value=5.8).

### Figure 2 Results of main effects



**Note:** \*\*Fully standardized coefficients are reported (all significant at  $p < .01$ )

## 5.2. Moderating effects

We tested moderating effects through multigroup LISREL analyses. The sample was splitted into subsamples according to whether the contact person in the customer company was the general manager ( $n=139$ ) or the purchasing manager ( $n=125$ ). Then, two models that are different only with respect to the effect of adaptive selling on the dependent variable were compared. One model restricts this parameter to be equal across groups, whereas the more general model allows this parameter to vary across groups. The question is whether the improvement in chi-square when moving from the restricted to the more general is significant. Significance can be assessed on the basis of the chi-square difference between the two models with the use of a chi-square distribution with one degree of freedom.

The results of the multi-group LISREL analyses are shown in Table IV. As anticipated, the positive influence of adaptive selling on satisfaction with the salesperson, with the supplier and loyalty to the supplier was stronger among general managers as compared to purchasing managers. In all these cases the decrease in chi-square when moving from the restricted (equal) model to the more general model was significant, providing support for Hypothesis 4a-c.

**Table IV** Results of moderating effects

Relationship	Subsample		Chi-Square Difference (6df=1)
	General managers (n=139)	Purchasing managers (n=125)	
Adaptive selling → Satisfaction with the salesperson	$\gamma=.70$ ( $t=9.15$ )	$\gamma=.21$ ( $t=2.68$ )	$6\chi^2=8.93^{**}$
Adaptive selling → Satisfaction with the supplier	$\gamma=.46$ ( $t=3.63$ )	$\gamma=.15$ ( $t=2.01$ )	$6\chi^2=5.23^*$
Adaptive selling → Loyalty to the supplier	$\gamma=.32$ ( $t=2.99$ )	$\gamma=.06$ (n.s)	$6\chi^2=4.87^*$

**Notes:** ns=not significant \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

## 6. Discussion and managerial implications

In the light of the paradigm shift that has moved the field's focus from transactional-based selling to one focused on developing and maintaining relationships with customers, this study represents an initial step into the analysis of the consequences of adaptive selling behavior on customer's satisfaction and loyalty in a business-to-business context. Only Evanschitzky et al. (2012) have analyzed the influence of adaptive selling on satisfaction with the company in industrial markets. Yet they measured adaptive selling through the evaluations of eighteen salespeople from one single company and they did not control for the length of the buyer-seller relationship. They acknowledged that: "our findings might not be generalizable to all business-to-business settings" and encourage future research to control for the length of the buyer-seller relationship (Evanschitzky et al., 2012, p.502). In particular, our findings from a random sample of 264 organizational buyers from a wide range of industries, reveal that adaptive selling has positive relational outcomes at two levels, namely at the level of the individual salesperson (satisfaction with the salesperson), and at the level of the buyer-seller relationship (satisfaction and loyalty to the supplier) while controlling for length of the buyer-seller relationship.

Our study's results may help to explain the mixed findings of previous research regarding the effect of adaptive selling on satisfaction with the sales interaction. While Román and Iacobucci (2010) and Wang (2012) found a positive relationship between adaptive selling and satisfaction in the financial services industry, Rapp et al. (2006) failed to do so in the pharmaceutical industry. Importantly, early evidence in the services marketing literature has linked employee adaptability with customers' positive perceptions of the service encounter (Bitner, 1990). In a similar fashion, we found that adaptive selling significantly increased customer satisfaction in a business-to-business context. Taken together, all these results may suggest that adaptive selling is particularly relevant in contexts, such as services selling and industrial markets, where the salesperson is the primary –if not sole– contact point for the customer both before and after the purchase.

Another contribution of the study is related to the analysis of the moderating effects. Consistent with DelVecchio et al. (2003) and Román and Martín (2008), it seems that at higher levels of buying authority, buyers consider more issues and criteria than just product attributes and prices. Our findings suggest that buyers at higher levels of authority are more responsive to adaptive selling practices. In particular, general managers, as opposed to purchasing managers, seem to be more aware of the effort that implies adapting the sales strategy to the selling situation, and more willing to compensate such effort in terms of commitment to continue the relationship, for example.

Interestingly, the analysis of the moderating role of the hierarchical position occupied by the buying person also revealed that adaptive selling did not have a direct influence on loyalty when the contact person is the purchasing manager instead of the general manager. One possible reason is that purchasing managers, as opposed to general managers, may not realize that such adaptation implies an extra effort for the salesperson. Therefore, according to *equity theory*, the purchasing manager may have more difficulty in perceiving adaptive selling as a salesperson's input in the equity formulation. This may be particularly the case in small and medium sized companies where there are not that many management positions. In fact, it is quite common that the sales manager simply does not exist, and the general manager acts as the sales manager (Román et al., 2002). Consequently, the general manager (as compared to the purchasing manager) is more aware of the effort that implies adapting the sales strategy, and more willing to compensate such effort in terms of loyalty to the company the salesperson represents.

This research has several implications for practitioners. Our results show that adaptive selling has a major impact on the development and maintenance of the buyer-seller relationships. Therefore sales managers need to foster the adaptive selling behaviors of their salespeople. In doing so, we

recommend the following activities. First, salespeople need to be trained to categorize industrial customers, and to be sensitive and focused on their needs as well as their buying motive. These training programmes should take into account the knowledge structures of more experienced and better performing salespeople. The appropriate order of training should be formal classroom training to provide the necessary customer knowledge, followed by participative training that creates/reinforces the ability to use such knowledge. This participative training may take place in two steps. First, through role playing sessions where typically one trainee plays the role of the salesperson and another trainee acts as the buyer. Then, the knowledge and abilities learned in previous training sessions need to be consolidated through on-the-job training.

Second, adaptive selling is hard work and takes time, sales managers should not reward salespeople on a 100% commission based on the sales made. We do not imply that companies should avoid incentive programs, rather they could use a combination of base salary plus incentive pay in the form of commissions, bonuses or both based not only on the sales performance, but on how well long-term objectives such as customer satisfaction have been achieved. Third, we suggest that sales managers should take time to communicate with their salespeople, assisting and guiding them to effectively adapt their sales strategy, and include adaptive selling as a criterion in the performance evaluation process.

We also encourage sales managers to maximize the time their salespeople spend calling on customers. For example, this can be implemented by providing salespeople with company support to carry out the office work. The salesperson, then, may become the leader of a team in order to better serve customer needs through adaptive selling. Finally, our results suggest that salespeople have to make an extra effort to adapt the sales strategy the higher the hierarchical position of the customer in the buying organization.

## **7. Limitations and further research directions**

Despite insights gained through our results, future research should aim to overcome a number of limitations inherent to this study. First of all, since the data were collected cross-sectionally using self-report measures, the potential for common methods variance exists. Following Podsakoff and Organ (1986), we tested for this bias using Harman's one-factor approach. A principal components analysis (unconstrained number of factors with varimax rotation) on the 15-questionnaire items (variables measured with one item were not included) yielded four factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, accounting for 86% of the total variance. Given the emergence of several factors and given that the first factor accounted for only 27% of the total variance, common methods bias does not appear to be present in the dataset (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986).

This study represents an initial step into the analysis of the moderating variables on the consequences of adaptive selling on customer satisfaction and loyalty. Further research is needed to extend the conceptual model to examine other potential moderator variables such as the size of the buying company. Finally, to the best of our knowledge, the ADAPTS scale has always been used to assess adaptive selling from the sellers' point of view. In fact, this scale was developed to measure adaptability during a sales interaction or across sales interactions when adaptability is assessed from the salesperson's perspective. Through in-depth interviews with industrial buyers we modified the adaptive selling behavior items to reflect the customers' point of view. Additional research is needed to further assess the validity of this modified measure with other samples of industrial buyers.

Overall, the present study examines how the adaptive behaviors implemented by salespeople in the sales interaction contribute to the development of buyer-seller relationships in industrial markets. Importantly, Evans et al. (2012; p.93) have recently noted that: "despite a significant amount of influential research in this area, what happens within the buyer-seller interaction remains an underresearched area".

## Notes

[1] The higher proportion of corporate management respondents responsible for buying decisions was expected given the relatively small size of the surveyed companies as compared to large companies.

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THE INFLUENCE OF ADAPTIVE SELLING ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

WILLIAMS, K.C. AND SPIRO, R.L. (1985), "Communication style in the salesperson-customer dyad," *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 22 No. 4, pp. 434-442.

# ACEPTACIÓN DE SURTIDOS SIN MARCAS NACIONALES: ¿QUÉ PAPEL JUEGA LA ACTITUD DEL CONSUMIDOR HACIA LA SITUACIÓN ECONÓMICA?\*

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## RESUMEN

*Cada vez es más frecuente encontrar minoristas – especialmente en la distribución con base alimentaria – que han decidido eliminar la totalidad de las marcas nacionales de sus surtidos y ofrecer únicamente su marca propia. Parece que la aceptación de esta estrategia por parte de los consumidores se ha visto condicionada, en gran parte, por la situación de crisis económica que vivimos en los últimos años. Pero, ¿es esto realmente así?, ¿hasta qué punto la actitud del individuo hacia la crisis económica está influyendo en la aceptación de la estrategia de reducción de surtido desarrollada por muchos minoristas? En este trabajo analizamos el papel moderador que la actitud del individuo hacia el clima económico está jugando en las consecuencias que la estrategia de reducción del surtido de los minoristas están teniendo sobre el comportamiento de compra, en particular, sobre la intención de cambio de establecimiento del individuo. Para ello, en este trabajo mostramos los resultados obtenidos a partir de un experimento desarrollado con 1.400 individuos que pertenecen a un panel de consumidores existente en España en el ámbito de cuatro categorías de producto: yogur, pan de molde, papel higiénico y detergente de máquina en polvo*

## Palabras clave

Surtido, marcas nacionales, marca de distribuidor, crisis económica

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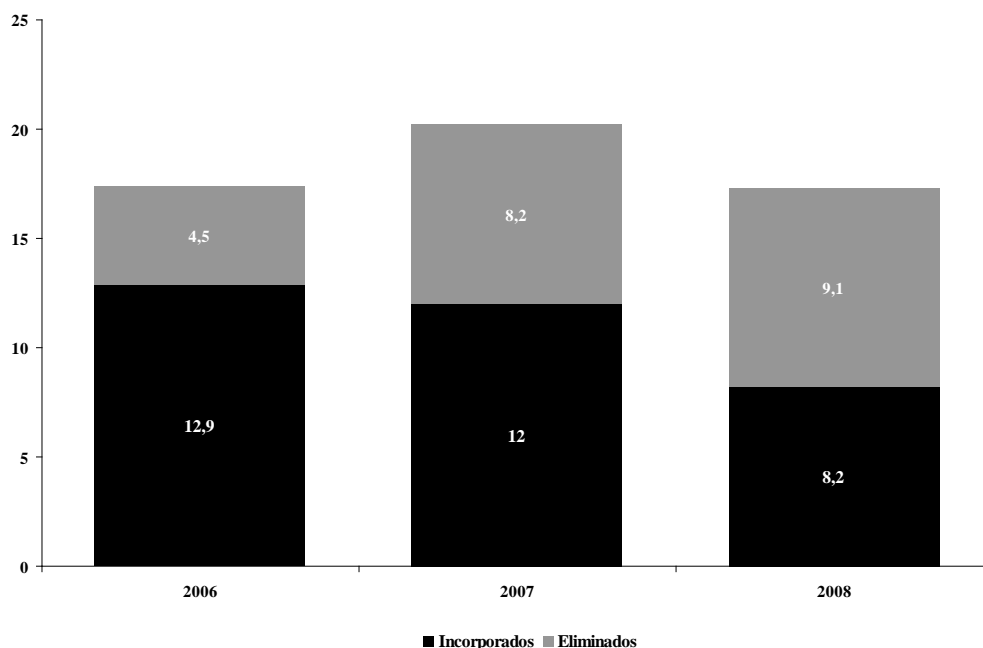
\* Agradecimientos: Este trabajo ha sido financiado por la **Fundación Ramón Areces**

## 1. Introducción

El surtido es, sin lugar a dudas, una de las herramientas competitivas más poderosas con las que cuenta el minorista para lograr diferenciarse de sus competidores (Stassen et al., 1999). De hecho, el surtido junto con la localización y el nivel de precios del establecimiento se configura como uno de los aspectos determinantes, no solo para atraer clientes al establecimiento (Kahn, 1999), sino también para lograr retenerlos (Grewal et al., 1999).

Después de varios años en los que la variedad y el número de ítems ofrecidos únicamente crecían, los minoristas han comenzado a entender que, muchas veces, “menos es más”. Tal y como podemos observar en la figura 1, y después de que en 2006 y 2007 los minoristas añadieran en sus lineales más productos de los que eliminaron, 2008 fue el primer año en que dicha tendencia se invirtió. Así, mientras los productos nuevos incorporados se incrementaron en un 8,2%, los productos eliminados se redujeron en un 9,1% (Rider, 2010:34).

FIGURA 1  
Ítems incorporados vs. Ítems eliminados (2006-2008)



Fuente: Rider (2010:36)

El tamaño del surtido no va a depender solo de la propia estrategia del distribuidor y del formato de la tienda, sino que existen, además, aspectos externos como la situación económica o los hábitos de consumo que son igualmente relevantes. En particular, la situación de crisis económica que llevamos sufriendo desde hace unos años ha provocado un cambio importante en los hábitos de compra del consumidor. Así, el consumidor se ha vuelto más sensible al precio, lo que ha favorecido – entre otras cosas – la consolidación de las marcas de distribuidor (MdD) y la reducción de la compra de productos y servicios innecesarios (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, 2011). Es lo que Granfield (2009) denomina “efecto Aldi”, referido a la búsqueda por parte del consumidor de los mismos productos a un precio más bajo.

Así, desde el inicio de la crisis económica el consumidor ha cambiado drásticamente sus hábitos de compra. El “nuevo” consumidor que ha surgido tras la crisis compra con mayor frecuencia cantidades menores, y tiene como principal objetivo ahorrar lo máximo en la compra de cada cesta (Vila y Giménez, 2012). En este contexto de ahorro, los minoristas están poniendo especial énfasis – junto con el desarrollo de promociones – en la revisión de sus surtidos y *portfolios*. El objetivo es lograr un mejor ajuste entre lo que busca el consumidor y lo que busca el establecimiento. Esto ha provocado una “guerra” intensa entre minoristas por ofrecer el precio más bajo posible en la cesta de la compra. Entre los elementos utilizados para lograr ese menor precio, el surtido se configura en el momento

actual como un elemento fundamental. En este sentido, gran parte de la reducción de precios se ha conseguido a través de la eliminación de referencias del lineal y la oferta de productos más básicos, provocando una disminución del surtido (Steenkamp y Kumar, 2009). Así, a nivel mundial, cadenas como *Wal-Mart* o *Tesco* han recurrido a estrategias de surtido basadas en una reducción del inventario y un incremento de la rotación, lo que les ha permitido incrementar sus ventas anuales (Banker, 2009). En España, *Mercadona* – diciembre de 2008 – decide retirar de sus lineales aquellas referencias que no tenían rotación diaria, que estaban duplicadas o que no respondían a las necesidades del consumidor.

Este proceso de “racionalización” del surtido parece haberse convertido en una de las principales prioridades de los minoristas líderes a nivel mundial (tabla 1).

TABLA 1  
Decisiones de racionalización del surtido tomadas por algunos de los principales minoristas mundiales

<b>Walmart</b>	Reducción del surtido global en el Reino Unido en un 30%. En EE.UU. se reduce el surtido en un 7,6% con un incremento de las ventas en un 1,1%, si bien se volvieron a incorporar los items con posterioridad
<b>Grupo Casino</b>	El proyecto ‘ADS 2’ ha provocado la expansión de las categorías más rentables (e.g., productos de maquillaje) a expensas de categorías más “deficitarias” (e.g., textil, perfumes)
<b>Supervalu</b>	El número total de SKUs se reducirá en un 25% en algunas categorías
<b>Mercadona</b>	Eliminación de más de 700 referencias “duplicadas” (MdD vs. marcas nacionales)
<b>Grupo Coles</b>	Mantenimiento del 50% de SKUs que supone el 90% de las ventas
<b>Grupo Carrefour</b>	El “programa de optimización de categorías” de Carrefour está dirigido a reducir el número de referencias en un 15%

Source: Berg y Queck (2010:31)

A partir de los argumentos anteriores, parece que la crisis económica y la actitud del consumidor hacia dicha crisis están siendo uno de los “aliados” que los minoristas han encontrado a la hora de implantar sus estrategias de eliminación de marcas nacionales (MNs); ¿es esto realmente así? ¿cómo influye la actitud del consumidor hacia la crisis en la aceptación de surtidos sin marcas nacionales (i.e., surtidos compuestos únicamente por la marca propia) por parte del mismo? La respuesta a estas preguntas es el objetivo de este trabajo. Para ello, se ha desarrollado un experimento online controlado en un panel de consumidores españoles propiedad de la consultora *IRI Worldwide*. El experimento analiza, entre otros aspectos, de qué manera la composición de los surtidos (surtidos compuestos únicamente por la marca de distribuidor vs. surtidos “mixtos” compuestos por la marca propia y las marcas nacionales) influye sobre la intención de cambio de establecimiento del consumidor, y el papel de la actitud del consumidor hacia la situación económica como moderadora de dicha influencia.

## 2. Revisión de la literatura

La ‘exclusión’ de una marca<sup>2</sup> es una modalidad de reducción del surtido que supone la eliminación de todas las referencias de la misma<sup>3</sup>, lo que va a provocar la imposibilidad para el comprador de encontrar dicha marca en el establecimiento (Sloot y Verhoef, 2008).

Desde hace unos años – fundamentalmente desde el comienzo del período de recesión económica – la “expulsión” de marcas nacionales o marcas de fabricante de los lineales de los minoristas es algo cada vez más frecuente, especialmente en el ámbito de los grupos de distribución con base alimentaria. Varios ejemplos. El antiguo minorista holandés *Edah* decidió eliminar 2.000 referencias de marcas de fabricante para introducir 1.000 referencias de su marca propia. Después de las múltiples consultas y quejas de sus clientes recibidas en los seis meses siguientes a la eliminación de las referencias, *Edah* tuvo que volver a “recuperar” aproximadamente 1.000 de esas referencias, fundamentalmente las que pertenecían a marcas de elevado valor y notoriedad (Sloot y Verhoef, 2008). El minorista británico *ASDA* renunció a vender la marca *Charmin* (*Procter & Gamble*), mientras que las cadenas alemanas *Edeka* y *Metro* excluyeron varias marcas de fabricante por su descontento con la política de precio y distribución de dichos fabricantes (Sloot y Verhoef, 2011). En España, *Mercadona* (diciembre de 2008) decidió “expulsar” casi 800 referencias de marcas de fabricante de elevado valor y notoriedad como *Nestlé*, *Sara Lee*, *Calvo*, *Pascual* o *Vileda*. Según la cadena valenciana, esta decisión fue

<sup>2</sup> *Brand delisting*

<sup>3</sup> Es necesario diferenciar entre una “no disponibilidad temporal”, i.e. cuando se produce una ‘rotura’ de stock y una “no disponibilidad definitiva”. La exclusión de una marca puede incluirse en este último grupo

consecuencia de la escasa rotación de estas referencias; sin embargo, parece que detrás de la exclusión de estas marcas del lineal de *Mercadona* se esconden múltiples conflictos con los fabricantes implicados.

La investigación previa en el ámbito de la reducción de surtido analiza el efecto de la exclusión permanente de una referencia a través del desarrollo de experimentos naturales que asumen un porcentaje importante de referencias eliminadas en una categoría de producto concreta. Broniarczyk et al. (1998) sugieren que los minoristas pueden hacer reducciones sustanciales en el número de referencias que ofrecen sin que ello afecte las intenciones de elección del establecimiento, siempre que las referencias eliminadas sean de marcas con una baja preferencia y se mantenga constante el espacio del lineal. Drèze et al. (1994) obtienen un incremento de las ventas del 4% en las ocho categorías analizadas una vez que se elimina un 10% de las referencias menos compradas. Los resultados de Boatwright y Nunes (2001) parecen indicar que los compradores dan la bienvenida a reducciones del número de referencias redundantes, si bien su reacción a la reducción en el tamaño de los surtidos es divergente. Los trabajos más recientes combinan la experimentación con otras fuentes de información (e.g., encuestas o datos de escáner) con el objetivo de analizar las consecuencias de la exclusión de una o más referencias (e.g., Borle et al., 2005; Sloot et al., 2006; Sloot y Verhoef, 2008). Borle et al. (2005), por ejemplo, obtienen una reducción global de las ventas del establecimiento, del número de visitas y del tamaño total de la cesta de la compra cuando el tamaño del surtido se reduce – resultado que contrasta con las conclusiones de la mayor parte de estudios previos. No obstante, esta reducción varía en función de la categoría, de modo que son aquellas categorías de producto compradas menos frecuentemente las que se ven más afectadas por la reducción de surtido. Sloot et al. (2006) obtienen como la reducción de tamaño de un surtido consecuencia de la exclusión de referencias pertenecientes a aquellas marcas menos vendidas tiene un efecto negativo sobre las ventas en el corto plazo; según estos autores, esto se debe al cambio de establecimiento de aquellos compradores que adquirirían dichas marcas. Sin embargo, en el largo plazo el efecto negativo se disipa de forma rápida.

Sloot y Verhoef (2008) sugieren que las reacciones del comprador a la exclusión de marcas de distribuidor difieren de las reacciones derivadas de la exclusión de marcas de fabricante; esta diferencia se debe al hecho de que las marcas de distribuidor están disponibles de forma exclusiva en un establecimiento concreto. Por lo tanto, si alguna referencia de una marca de distribuidor es excluida del surtido de una determinada categoría de producto, los consumidores no pueden cambiar de establecimiento para encontrar dicha referencia (cosa que sí es posible en el caso de la eliminación de referencias de una marca de fabricante). Por este motivo, estos autores asumen que la intención de cambio de establecimiento será menor en las situaciones de exclusión de referencias de marcas de distribuidor que en el caso de marcas de fabricante. Otro de los argumentos que ofrecen estos autores se relaciona con la percepción de lo que un surtido “completo” significa para el consumidor. En este sentido, Sloot y Verhoef (2008) sugieren que un surtido que no incluya varias marcas de valor y notoriedad elevados será considerado “incompleto” por parte del consumidor. Es por ello que cuando una marca de alto valor es excluida de un surtido y el número de marcas de similar notoriedad que permanecen en el surtido es relativamente pequeño, el número de alternativas consideradas como “aceptables” por parte del comprador será mucho menor que cuando permanecen un número mayor de referencias con alto valor de marca. En esta situación, por tanto, es probable que la intención del individuo de cambiar de establecimiento sea mucho menor.

Siguiendo este razonamiento, es de suponer que un consumidor considerará como incompleto un surtido en el que todas las marcas de fabricante (algunas de ellas con alto valor de marca) sean excluidas. Esta decisión debería llevar a una intención de cambio de establecimiento ciertamente elevada – al menos para aquellos consumidores que muestren una elevada preferencia por este tipo de marcas. Por el contrario, para aquellos consumidores que habitualmente adquieren la marca de distribuidor, tal decisión no debería tener influencia alguna en su comportamiento de compra, si bien es posible que su percepción de la variedad del surtido resultante cambiara. Además, la exclusión de todas las marcas nacionales del surtido de una categoría de producto específica podría tener consecuencias negativas para el surtido global del minorista. Esto se debe a la tendencia del consumidor de comprar el mismo tipo de marcas (e.g., marcas de distribuidor) en diferentes categorías (Batra y Sinha, 2000; Richardson et al., 1996).

### **2.1 La situación de crisis económica y el comportamiento del consumidor**

La literatura económica ha analizado la respuesta del consumidor a períodos de crisis. Así, los estudios previos sugieren que durante períodos de contracción económica los consumidores toman las decisiones con más cautela y de manera más cuidadosa (Cravens, 1974). En este sentido, McKenzie y Schargrodsky (2005) hallan como durante la crisis argentina de 2002, los consumidores empleaban más tiempo en sus actividades de compra; este incremento no era consecuencia de un mayor nivel de consumo, sino de una búsqueda intensa de los mejores precios y de los productos sustitutivos más baratos. Zurawicki y Nestor (2005) analizaron la misma crisis y encontraron un descenso gradual (en términos absolutos) en el consumo total, de modo que algunos de los productos menos esenciales fueron eliminados de la cesta de la compra de los argentinos. El análisis de estos autores se centraba en el comportamiento de las clases medias. Kang y Sawada (2008) muestran como los consumidores coreanos – en el contexto de la crisis asiática de 1997 – trataron de mantener su nivel de gasto en alimentación, educación y salud, reduciendo el gasto en productos de lujo.

Sin embargo, los trabajos en el ámbito del marketing centrados en el impacto de una crisis económica son muy escasos. Ang et al. (2000), en el contexto de la crisis asiática, concluyen que las estrategias más efectivas son la introducción de líneas de productos más “competitivas” que permitan mantener los precios bajos, el desarrollo de estrategias de posicionamiento adaptadas a la situación y la eliminación de los canales de distribución “marginales”. Estos autores hallan como los consumidores durante esta crisis incrementaron sus compras en los discounters. Fiszbein et al. (2003) identificaron tres estrategias de “supervivencia a la recesión”. Una de ellas – la denominada estrategia “adaptativa” – implica un cambio en los patrones de consumo de las familias. Este cambio es consecuencia de la frustración y la incertidumbre que los consumidores sienten y que les afecta psicológicamente (Shama, 1981). De manera más reciente, Kaytaz y Gul (2013) en su análisis de la respuesta de las familias turcas a la crisis económica global, descubren como la principal respuesta de los consumidores en Turquía ha sido la sustitución de los productos más caros por los más baratos, tanto en categorías de alimentación como en otras (e.g., higiene y cuidado personal o droguería).

En este contexto de mayor preferencia por los productos más económicos durante los períodos de crisis económica, las marcas propias parecen adaptarse mucho mejor que las marcas nacionales (Walsh y Mitchell, 2010). Algunos autores confirman que en períodos de recesión económica el consumidor está más preocupado por la adquisición de información sobre el precio, incrementando su conciencia por el precio (Estelami et al., 2001); esto va a influir de manera importante en su preferencia por las marcas propiedad del distribuidor (Lamey et al., 2007). De hecho, algunos trabajos previos han confirmado que la preocupación por el precio es un antecedente muy significativo del éxito de las marcas de distribuidor (Ailawadi et al., 2001). Consecuentemente, en contextos recesivos, la mayor importancia del atributo precio y la mayor necesidad del consumidor de reducir la frecuencia de compra y de ajustar el tamaño de la cesta de la compra afectan las preferencias por el surtido y la elección de establecimiento (Dekimpe et al., 2011). Incluso una vez que la situación económica mejora, muchos consumidores parecen mantener su “comportamiento de recesión”, en particular en lo que se refiere a la compra de productos de marca de distribuidor (Nielsen, 2010). De hecho, tal y como señala el informe de Nielsen “cerca del 88% de los compradores a nivel mundial manifiesta su intención de mantener la compra de productos de marca de distribuidor aún cuando la economía comience a mejorar”.

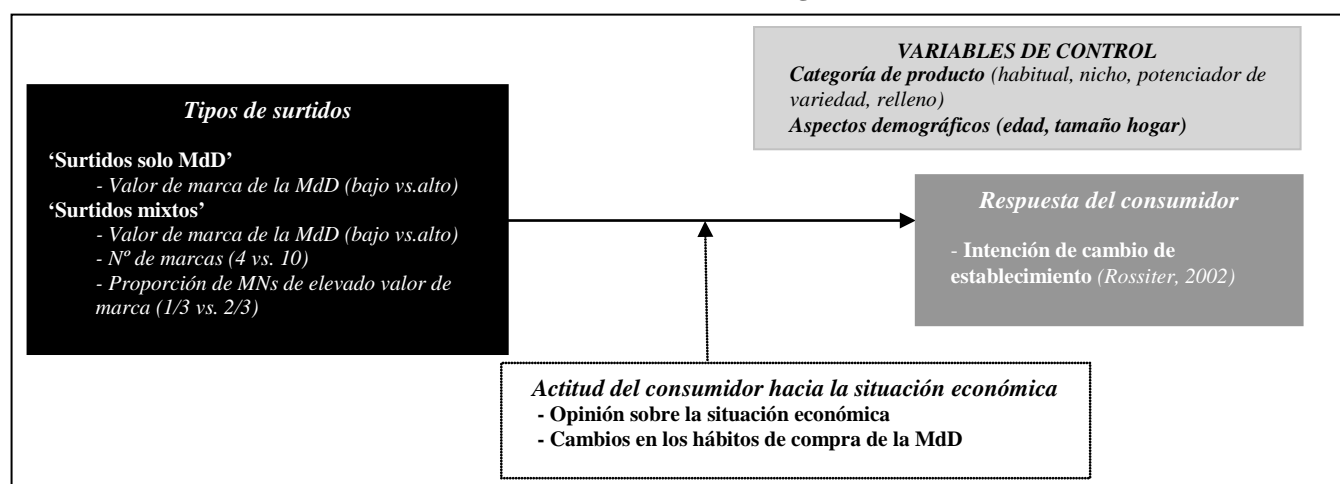
## **3. Metodología**

La figura 2 muestra el marco teórico que conduce nuestra investigación.

Mil cuatrocientos individuos pertenecientes a un panel de consumidores<sup>4</sup> existente en España y propiedad de *IRI Worldwide* han participado en un experimento online controlado. El 59,7% de los individuos participantes son mujeres, mientras que el 40,3% son hombres. La edad media es de 41,75 años, variando entre los 24 a los 70 años de edad.

<sup>4</sup> Mayor información y detalle sobre el panel utilizado está a disposición del lector mediante petición al autor de contacto de este trabajo

FIGURA 2  
Marco teórico de investigación



En el experimento controlado se han diseñado 10 surtidos diferentes, manipulándose, para ello, dos aspectos: (1) el tamaño del surtido, y (2) la composición del surtido. En relación al primero de los aspectos, existen tres tipos de surtidos: compuestos por una marca, i.e., solo la MdD, compuestos por 4 marcas y compuestos por 10 marcas. En relación a la composición del surtido, las condiciones experimentales incluían surtidos compuestos únicamente por la MdD (i.e., los surtidos de 1 marca), y surtidos “mixtos” (compuestos por la MdD y marcas nacionales, i.e., los surtidos de 4 y 10 marcas). Adicionalmente, tanto para los surtidos compuestos por una sola marca (MdD) como para los surtidos “mixtos”, se ha manipulado el valor de la MdD (alto vs. bajo). Finalmente, y en el caso de los surtidos “mixtos”, estos varían en cuanto a la proporción de MNs de alto valor que incluyen (un tercio vs. dos tercios). Por tanto, los diez surtidos mostrados a los individuos son los siguientes:

1. (1 marca) Marca de distribuidor (MdD) de alto valor
2. (1 marca) MdD de bajo valor
3. (4 marcas) MdD de alto valor + 3 marcas nacionales (MNs) (un tercio de alto valor)
4. (4 marcas) MdD de alto valor + 3 MNs (dos tercios de alto valor)
5. (4 marcas) MdD de bajo valor + 3 MNs (un tercio de alto valor)
6. (4 marcas) MdD de bajo valor + 3 MNs (dos tercios de alto valor)
7. (10 marcas) MdD de alto valor + 9 MNs (un tercio de alto valor)
8. (10 marcas) MdD de alto valor + 9 MNs (dos tercios de alto valor)
9. (10 marcas) MdD de bajo valor + 9 MNs (un tercio de alto valor)
10. (10 marcas) MdD de bajo valor + 3 MNs (dos tercios de alto valor)

El experimento ha sido desarrollado utilizando cuatro categorías de producto: (1) *yogur*; (2) *pan de molde*; (3) *detergente de máquina en polvo*, y (4) *papel higiénico*. Estas categorías se corresponden con la tipología desarrollada por Dhar et al. (2001), quienes establecen cuatro clases de categorías de producto en base a su frecuencia de compra (número medio de veces que la categoría es comprada en un período determinado de tiempo) y su penetración (porcentaje de individuos que compran la categoría). En particular, estos autores distinguen entre (1) *productos habituales* (elevada frecuencia y penetración; yogur en nuestro caso), (2) *productos nicho* (elevada frecuencia y baja penetración; pan de molde), (3) *productos potenciadores de variedad* (baja frecuencia y elevada penetración; papel higiénico), y (4) *productos de relleno* (baja frecuencia y baja penetración; detergente de máquina en polvo). La selección de las cuatro categorías (y su inclusión en cada una de las cuatro tipologías de Dhar et al., 2001) se ha realizado a partir de una muestra de 53 categorías que representan más del 60% de las ventas de bienes de consumo envasados en España. A partir de los datos de rotación y volumen de ventas del conjunto de las 53 categorías utilizadas, hemos establecido un ranking que nos

ha permitido clasificar cada categoría en función de su frecuencia de compra y su nivel de penetración. A partir de este *ranking* hemos seleccionado las cuatro categorías señaladas anteriormente (una por tipología), considerando la presencia de productos de alimentación (los más importantes en la cesta de la compra de los españoles) (*yogur y pan de molde*), pero también productos de higiene y cuidado personal (*papel higiénico*) y productos de limpieza/droguería (*detergente de máquina en polvo*). La consideración de una categoría por tipo de producto nos va a permitir, no solo conocer si la intención de cambio de establecimiento del individuo varía o no en función del tipo de categoría de producto, sino además, hacer extensibles los resultados a otras categorías de producto que comparten los mismos niveles de frecuencia y penetración que los utilizados en este trabajo.

Los 1.400 individuos han sido aleatoriamente asignados a cada uno de los diez surtidos; por tanto, 140 individuos han sido asignados a cada tratamiento experimental (35<sup>5</sup> por categoría). Dentro de cada categoría, las marcas utilizadas (tanto la MdD como las marcas nacionales) han sido seleccionadas y clasificadas en función de su cuota de mercado en España y de la valoración proporcionada por la consultora para cada marca. Las MdD utilizadas han sido comunes para las cuatro categorías utilizadas. En particular, y después de un análisis entre la consultora y los autores de este trabajo, se han utilizado *Mercadona* y *Auchan* como MdD de alto y bajo valor, respectivamente. Las MNs son, obviamente, diferentes en función de la categoría de producto. Así, las marcas de fabricante seleccionadas para cada categoría<sup>6</sup> han sido las siguientes (véase anexo 1):

1. Yogur: *Danone, Activia, Actimel, Kaiku, C.L.Asturiana y La Lechera* (alto valor de marca); *La Fageda, Nestlé, Sveltesse, Pascual, Hoya de la Iglesia y Feiraco* (bajo valor de marca)
2. Pan de molde: *Bimbo, Panrico, Silueta, Ortiz, Semilla de Oro y La Bella Easo* (alto valor); *Beiker, Dulcesol, Pasticely, Gotri, Ketlerer y Hornada Casera* (bajo valor)
3. Papel higiénico<sup>7</sup>: *Scottex, Colhogar, Foxy, Renova* (alto valor); *Dodot, Charmin, Moltex Soft y Hello Kitty* (bajo valor).
4. Detergente de máquina en polvo: *Ariel, Wips, Skip, Elena, Colón y Dixán* (alto valor); *Flota, Puntomatic, Luzil, Lord, Lagarto y Limpión* (bajo valor).

Mientras observan cada surtido (los surtidos están siempre presentes en la parte de arriba de la pantalla), los participantes van respondiendo a un cuestionario en el que se incluyen diferentes aspectos incluidos en el marco empírico de este trabajo y que, a continuación, pasamos a describir.

### **3.1. Variable dependiente: intención de cambio de establecimiento (ICE)**

Para el minorista, la ICE es uno de los principales aspectos, dado que si los consumidores visitan otro establecimiento para adquirir alguna de las marcas no incluidas en el surtido que ofrece, esto supone consecuencias negativas en términos de tráfico dentro de la tienda, y, por tanto, en términos de ventas y beneficios (Borle et al., 2005; Sloot y Verhoef, 2008). Dado que se trata de una variable relativamente sencilla, hemos utilizado un único ítem en el que los individuos indican (escala Likert de 5 puntos), la probabilidad de que cambien de establecimiento para las compras futuras de la categoría de producto (Rossiter, 2002). La tabla 2 muestra el valor medio de la ICE para cada uno de los diez surtidos utilizados. Cuanto mayor es el número de marcas (1, 4 ó 10 marcas) en un determinado surtido, menor es la intención del individuo de cambiar de establecimiento para la compra de la categoría de producto en cuestión ( $F=4,867$ ,  $p<0,000$ ).

<sup>5</sup> Cantidad considerada por la consultora como suficiente para que los resultados puedan ser generalizados para el conjunto de la población española

<sup>6</sup> En cada caso (excepto en el caso del papel higiénico en que se han seleccionado solo ocho marcas) se han seleccionado doce MNs (seis de alto valor y seis de bajo valor), con objeto de poder completar cada uno de los surtidos diseñados en función del porcentaje de marcas de alto y bajo valor que contienen (e.g., el surtido de diez marcas que contiene un tercio (tres) de marcas de alto valor tiene seis marcas de bajo valor (dos tercios de las nueve marcas de fabricante que el surtido contiene)

<sup>7</sup> En el caso del papel higiénico se ha sustituido el surtido de 10 marcas por uno de 7 marcas, como consecuencia de la estructura de mercado de esta categoría en España. Según datos de IRI, el 83% de cuota de mercado lo posee la MdD, siendo la primera marca de fabricante *Scottex* con un 11%, seguida de *Colhogar* (2,5%), *Foxy* (1,5%) y *Renova* (1,3%). A partir de ahí existen solo otras cuatro marcas más que tienen algo de cuota de mercado (siempre menor del 0,4%). Dada esta estructura, no es realista diseñar un surtido con diez referencias (nueve marcas de fabricante), dado que no existe un número suficiente de MNs en el mercado como para ello. Por esta razón, hemos optado por un surtido "largo" de siete referencias



TABLA 2  
Media (desv. estándar) de la ICE por tipo de surtido (datos agrupados)

Tipo de surtido		ICE categoría (escala 1-5 <sup>a</sup> )	
<b>'Sólo MdD' (1 marca)</b>	MdD alto valor	2,38 (1,153)	2,50 (1,170)
	MdD bajo valor	2,62 (1,178)	
<b>4 marcas</b>	MdD alto valor & 1/3 MNs alto valor	2,29 (1,141)	2,41 (1,120)
	MdD alto valor & 2/3 MNs alto valor	2,27 (1,105)	
	MdD bajo valor & 1/3 MNs alto valor	2,62 (1,122)	
	MdD bajo valor & 2/3 MNs alto valor	2,45 (1,088)	
<b>10 marcas</b>	MdD alto valor & 1/3 MNs alto valor	2,13 (1,180)	2,26 (1,125)
	MdD alto valor & 2/3 MNs alto valor	2,11 (1,093)	
	MdD bajo valor & 1/3 MNs alto valor	2,49 (1,141)	
	MdD bajo valor & 2/3 MNs alto valor	2,30 (1,051)	
<i>F-value (significatividad)</i>		3,584 (0,000)	4,867 (0,008)

<sup>a</sup>1=Definitivamente seguiré comprando en este establecimiento; 5=Definitivamente haré mi compra en otro establecimiento

### 3.2. Variables moderadoras: actitud del consumidor hacia el clima económico

Si bien existen varios trabajos que analizan el comportamiento del consumidor en situaciones de crisis (véase el punto 2.1.), ninguno de ellos ha desarrollado una escala que mida la actitud del consumidor hacia el clima económico o si las estrategias de reducción del surtido de los minoristas están relacionadas con el clima económico.

El desarrollo de estas escalas es una de las contribuciones originales de este trabajo. Después de un proceso de generación y validación de dieciséis ítems<sup>8</sup> obtuvimos dos escalas para medir la actitud del consumidor hacia el clima económico: (1) opinión del consumidor sobre la situación económica actual, y (2) cambio durante la situación económica del comportamiento de compra de la MdD por parte del consumidor. Las dos escalas fueron medidas a partir de escalas Likert de 7 puntos. Los ítems utilizados en cada caso fueron los siguientes:

#### Opinión del consumidor acerca de la situación económica actual (OCSE)

Por favor, señale su opinión (1=totalmente de acuerdo; 7=totalmente en desacuerdo) acerca de cada una de las siguientes afirmaciones en relación a la situación económica actual:

*OCSE 1: La situación económica actual es muy buena*

*OCSE 2: La situación económica actual es cada vez mejor*

*OCSE 3: La situación económica actual es muy positiva*

#### Cambio durante la situación económica actual del comportamiento de compra de la MdD (CCMD)

Por favor, señale su opinión (1=totalmente de acuerdo; 7=totalmente en desacuerdo) acerca de cada una de las siguientes afirmaciones en relación a la situación económica actual:

*CCMD 1: Ahora mismo las MdD son cada vez más importantes en mi cesta de la compra, principalmente como consecuencia de la situación económica*

*CCMD 2: Si la situación económica fuera favorable, los productos de MdD serían menos importantes en mi cesta de la compra de lo que lo son en la actualidad*

*CCMD 3: Ahora mismo compro más MdD debido a la situación económica actual*

### 3.3. Variables de control: variables sociodemográficas y categoría de producto

Se han incluido variables de control relacionadas con la categoría de producto (se ha utilizado el detergente de máquina en polvo como la categoría de referencia) y con los aspectos sociodemográficos del consumidor (edad y tamaño del hogar).

<sup>8</sup> La información detallada sobre el proceso de desarrollo y validación de ambas escalas está a disposición del lector previa petición al autor de contacto de este trabajo

### 3.4. Diseño experimental

Como se ha indicado anteriormente, se han manipulado tres tamaños de surtido diferentes (1, 4 y 10 marcas). Por tanto, podemos diferenciar dos grupos de surtidos: (a) surtidos ‘solo MdD’, y (b) surtidos ‘mixtos’. Mientras que en los primeros existe únicamente un atributo (valor de la MdD) de dos niveles (alto vs. bajo), en los surtidos mixtos existen tres atributos de dos niveles cada uno (valor de la MdD [alto vs. bajo], número de marcas [4 vs. 10] y proporción de marcas nacionales de alto valor (un tercio vs. dos tercios). Los atributos y sus niveles se muestran en la tabla 3.

TABLA 3  
Atributos y niveles experimentales

Atributo	Niveles
Nº de marcas <sup>a</sup> (C)	+1 Diez marcas -1 Cuatro marcas
Valor de la MdD (D)	+1 Alto valor -1 Bajo valor
Proporción de marcas nacionales de alto valor <sup>a</sup> (N)	+1 Dos tercios del nº total de marcas nacionales -1 Un tercio del nº total de marcas nacionales

<sup>a</sup> Solo para aquellos surtidos compuestos por la MdD y marcas nacionales

Para los surtidos compuestos sólo por la MdD existe un único atributo de dos niveles; por tanto, solo se definen dos escenarios ( $2^1=2$ ). Para los surtidos “mixtos” existen tres atributos con dos niveles cada uno, por lo que el número de posibles escenarios es igual a  $2^3=8$ . En este caso, hemos incluido, además, las interacciones dobles y triples (tabla 4).

TABLA 4  
Matriz de diseño experimental

Escenario	Nº de marcas(C)	Valor de la MdD (D)	Proporción de MNs de alto valor (N)	CD	CN	DN	CDN
(1)		-1					
(2)		+1					
(3)	+1	-1	-1	-1	+1	-1	+1
(4)	+1	-1	+1	-1	-1	+1	-1
(5)	-1	-1	-1	+1	+1	+1	-1
(6)	-1	-1	+1	+1	-1	-1	+1
(7)	+1	+1	-1	+1	-1	-1	-1
(8)	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1
(9)	-1	+1	-1	-1	-1	+1	+1
(10)	-1	+1	+1	-1	+1	-1	-1

De forma previa a la estimación de los modelos, se ha contrastado la posible existencia de multicolinealidad a partir de la correlación entre las variables independientes. Igualmente, hemos computado los *factores de inflación de la varianza (FIV)*. Todos los factores calculados se encuentran claramente por debajo del valor 10 señalado como límite para la existencia de problemas de multicolinealidad<sup>9</sup> (véase Hair et al., 1998), con la excepción de la variable edad para las dos regresiones de la categoría papel higiénico, que superaban el valor límite de 10. En estos dos casos, hemos optado por eliminar la variable edad del modelo y volver a estimarlo con el resto de variables consideradas. Igualmente, cabe destacar que se ha confirmado la consistencia interna de las dos escalas *multi-ítem* utilizadas (opinión sobre la situación económica actual,  $\alpha$  Cronbach= 0,919 y cambio en el comportamiento de compra de la MdD,  $\alpha$  Cronbach= 0,779).

## 4. Resultados

### 4.1. Surtidos “sólo MdD” (1 marca)

La tabla 5 muestra los resultados de la estimación del modelo de regresión para el caso de los surtidos compuestos exclusivamente por la MdD, cuya variable dependiente es la ICE para la categoría de producto.

Los resultados obtenidos muestran como el valor de marca de la MdD influye en la probabilidad de que el individuo cambie de establecimiento. Así, el parámetro negativo (-0,061,  $p=0,031$ ) indica que cuando la MdD que compone el surtido es de baja notoriedad o valor, la ICE del individuo es superior

<sup>9</sup> Información más detallada sobre los FIV está a disposición del lector previa petición al autor de contacto de este trabajo

(en un 6,1%) que en el caso de que la notoriedad de la MdD sea elevada. Respecto a los aspectos relacionados con la crisis, la opinión del consumidor sobre la crisis en términos generales no parece influir en su ICE cuando se enfrenta a estos surtidos. Sin embargo, el valor significativo y negativo (-0,052,  $p=0,066$ ) de la variable interactiva entre este aspecto y la notoriedad de la MdD indica que la opinión acerca de la situación económica influye en la compra de la MdD, cuando esta es de elevada notoriedad; es decir, la aceptación de los surtidos compuestos únicamente por la MdD cuando esta es de alta notoriedad es mayor como consecuencia de la opinión negativa que el individuo tiene acerca de la situación económica actual. En cuanto al cambio en el comportamiento de compra de la MdD, el valor negativo y significativo (-0,054,  $p=0,059$ ) sugiere que el consumidor está dispuesto a aceptar estos surtidos (la ICE es menor) como consecuencia de un cambio en los hábitos de compra de la MdD. Este resultado parece bastante lógico; ante un cambio en los hábitos de compra de estas marcas propias, la aceptación de un surtido en el que únicamente exista este tipo de marcas será mayor.

TABLA 5

**Resultados de la estimación del modelo para los surtidos compuestos por una marca**

Variables	Beta std.	<i>p</i> -value <sup>a</sup>
<i>Valor de la MdD (D)</i>	<b>-0,061</b>	<b>0,031</b>
<i>Opinión del consumidor sobre la situación económica (OCSE)</i>	0,006	0,840
<i>Cambio en el comportamiento de compra de la MdD (CCMD)</i>	<b>-0,054</b>	<b>0,059</b>
<i>D×OCSE</i>	<b>-0,052</b>	<b>0,066</b>
<i>D×CCMD</i>	0,017	0,555
<i>Yogurt</i>	-0,050	0,145
<i>Pan de molde</i>	0,036	0,296
<i>Papel higiénico</i>	0,001	0,973
<i>Edad</i>	<b>0,674</b>	<b>0,000</b>
<i>Tamaño hogar</i>	<b>0,228</b>	<b>0,000</b>
F-value (signif.)	<b>100,865 (0,000)</b>	
R <sup>2</sup> (ajustado)	<b>0,781</b>	

<sup>a</sup>Las relaciones significativas ( $p<0,1$ ) están marcadas en negrita

**4.2. Surtidos “mixtos” (MdD y marcas nacionales)**

La tabla 6 muestra los resultados de la estimación del modelo de regresión para el caso de los surtidos mixtos compuestos por ambos tipos de marcas, cuya variable dependiente es la ICE para la categoría de producto.

TABLA 6

**Resultados de la estimación del modelo para los surtidos compuestos por ambos tipos de marcas**

Variables	Beta std.	<i>p</i> -value <sup>a</sup>
<i>Número de marcas (C)</i>	<b>-0,039</b>	<b>0,005</b>
<i>Valor de la MdD (D)</i>	<b>-0,059</b>	<b>0,000</b>
<i>Proporción de marcas nacionales de alto valor (N)</i>	-0,019	0,177
<i>Opinión del consumidor sobre la situación económica (OCSE)</i>	<b>0,089</b>	<b>0,000</b>
<i>Cambio en el comportamiento de compra de la MdD (CCMD)</i>	<b>-0,027</b>	<b>0,055</b>
<i>C×OCSE</i>	-0,004	0,751
<i>D×OCSE</i>	0,014	0,313
<i>N×OCSE</i>	0,003	0,852
<i>C×CCMD</i>	0,015	0,286
<i>D×CCMD</i>	-0,007	0,624
<i>N×CCMD</i>	0,018	0,193
<i>Yogurt</i>	<b>-0,044</b>	<b>0,010</b>
<i>Pan de molde</i>	-0,009	0,602
<i>Papel higiénico</i>	0,020	0,246
<i>Edad</i>	<b>0,638</b>	<b>0,000</b>
<i>Tamaño hogar</i>	<b>0,262</b>	<b>0,000</b>
F-value (signif.)	<b>205,553 (0,000)</b>	
R <sup>2</sup> (ajustado)	<b>0,785</b>	

<sup>a</sup>Las relaciones significativas ( $p<0,1$ ) están marcadas en negrita

Los resultados obtenidos ponen de manifiesto la existencia de dos aspectos relevantes relacionados con el diseño de los surtidos “mixtos” que influyen sobre la ICE del individuo: el número de marcas y el valor de la marca propia presente en los mismos. Así, en relación al primero de los aspectos, el valor negativo y significativo del parámetro ( $-0,039$ ,  $p=0,005$ ) indica que los surtidos compuestos por 4 marcas generan mayor intención de cambiar de establecimiento que los surtidos compuestos por 10 marcas (un 3,9% más). En la misma línea, el valor del parámetro de la variable relacionada con la notoriedad de la MdD ( $-0,059$ ,  $p=0,000$ ) indica que aquellos surtidos mixtos en los que la marca propia es de elevada notoriedad generan una menor intención de cambiar de establecimiento en el consumidor. La proporción de marcas nacionales de alto valor no parece ejercer un efecto significativo en la intención de cambiar de establecimiento del consumidor. En cuanto a los aspectos relacionados con la actitud del individuo hacia la situación económica, las dos variables analizadas ejercen un efecto moderador directo en la ICE del individuo. Así, el parámetro relacionado con la opinión del consumidor sobre la situación económica muestra un valor positivo ( $0,089$ ,  $p=0,000$ ), lo que indica que una opinión negativa sobre la situación económica incrementa la intención de cambiar de establecimiento en este tipo de surtidos; dicho de otra manera, el hecho de que el individuo piense que la situación económica no es positiva provoca una menor aceptación de los surtidos compuestos por la marca propia y marcas nacionales, incrementando la intención de cambiar de establecimiento por parte del individuo. Parece, por tanto, que la situación económica provoca una menor aceptación de los surtidos compuestos por ambos tipos de marcas. No obstante, parece que el hecho de que el consumidor haya modificado sus hábitos de compra de la MdD lleva a aceptar estos surtidos mixtos. Eso sí, el valor absoluto del parámetro en estos surtidos mixtos es menor que en el caso de los surtidos formados solo por la marca propia ( $0,027$  vs.  $0,054$ , respectivamente), lo que sugiere que el hecho de que el consumidor se haya “habituado” a la compra de la MdD le lleva a aceptar en mayor proporción (el doble, exactamente) los surtidos formados únicamente por la marca propia que aquellos en los que existen, igualmente, marcas nacionales.

## 5. Conclusiones

La crisis ha modificado muchos hábitos de compra de los hogares españoles (Giménez y Vila, 2012). Los compradores pasan menos tiempo en la tienda y compran más frecuentemente menos productos. En este sentido, la cesta “típica” de la compra tiene un tamaño medio de 22 referencias. En esta cesta, la marca de distribuidor juega un papel cada vez más importante; para el resto de marcas, el precio, las promociones y los descuentos han ganado peso como factores de decisión. En el contexto actual, por tanto, la racionalización del surtido de los fabricantes y las cadenas de distribución es un paso lógico para reducir los costes de inventario, maximizar el (menor) espacio en el lineal y, por tanto, ofrecer precios más reducidos que satisfagan las necesidades de un comprador más preocupado por el precio. No obstante, cabe preguntarse si la actitud del individuo hacia la situación económica es un aspecto que va a condicionar el éxito de estas estrategias de racionalización.

Los resultados obtenidos ponen de manifiesto que la actitud del individuo hacia la situación económica actual sí que condiciona la aceptación de las estrategias que están desarrollando los minoristas y que, en muchos casos, supone, incluso, eliminar la totalidad de marcas nacionales y ofrecer, únicamente, su marca propia. En este sentido, parece que el cambio en los hábitos de compra de la marca propia son el elemento que más está “ayudando” a los minoristas a conseguir el éxito en sus estrategias de racionalización. Este hábito está provocando en el consumidor una mayor aceptación de los surtidos “monomarca”, compuestos únicamente por la marca propia que de los surtidos “mixtos” integrados, además, por marcas nacionales. Adicionalmente, la opinión negativa del individuo hacia la situación económica actual parece generar un mayor sentimiento de rechazo de los surtidos mixtos, independientemente de aspectos como el número de marcas, la notoriedad de la marca propia o la proporción de marcas nacionales de alto valor que componen dicho surtido. No obstante, el hecho de que esta variable no ejerza influencia significativa alguna en el caso de los surtidos “monomarca” nos lleva a pensar que la influencia no es tan intensa como se podría pensar, y que es más el cambio de hábito en el comportamiento de compra lo que lleva al consumidor a una mayor aceptación de los surtidos sin marcas nacionales, más allá de que el individuo piense realmente que la situación económica no es del todo positiva; dicho de otro modo, parece que el hecho de que el consumidor muestre un comportamiento de lealtad (hábito) frente a la compra de la marca propia

genera una actitud positiva hacia los surtidos que incluyen la marca propia y, si puede ser incluso, que no incluyan marcas nacionales. No es una cuestión de pesimismo acerca de la situación económica del país, es más una cuestión del valor que la marca propia parece tener para el individuo. Esto se confirma, incluso, con el hecho de que la notoriedad de la marca de distribuidor en el caso de los surtidos “monomarca” es un factor relevante a la hora de cambiar de establecimiento. Es decir, el comportamiento repetitivo de compra de la marca propia – y más aún si esta es de elevado valor – es el que lleva al consumidor a una mayor aceptación de la estrategia de racionalización del surtido y de eliminación de las marcas nacionales de los minoristas.

Por tanto, nuestra recomendación a los minoristas es clara: seguir trabajando la marca propia con objeto de conseguir afianzar la lealtad del consumidor, dado que ello va a permitir, no solo la aceptación por parte del consumidor de la reducción (e, incluso, eliminación) de marcas nacionales de sus surtidos, sino también, el mantener sus niveles de venta una vez que la situación económica – o, al menos, la opinión que el consumidor tenga de la misma – mejore.

## 6. Limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación

Como cualquier investigación, este trabajo no está exento de limitaciones. La primera de ellas es la derivada de la propia metodología utilizada. Si bien la experimentación es una técnica habitualmente utilizada en trabajos relacionados con el comportamiento del consumidor, no deja de ser una simplificación de la realidad a partir del control de determinados aspectos. En este sentido, y además de la composición del surtido, pueden existir ciertos aspectos relacionados con la localización o el ambiente físico de la propia tienda que pueden influir en intención del consumidor de cambiar de establecimiento y que en situaciones ‘reales’ pueden tener una influencia importante en la aceptación de los surtidos. Por tanto, creemos que en futuros trabajos sería interesante considerar otros aspectos relacionados con el minorista y que pueden determinar el comportamiento final del individuo. Otra de las limitaciones se deriva de la utilización de una única variable independiente (intención de cambio de establecimiento) como medida de “aceptación” de los surtidos. El análisis de otras variables (e.g., la intención de compra de la MdD o la imagen del establecimiento) que recojan la reacción del consumidor ante diferentes tipos de surtido puede ser también de mucho interés.

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ANEXO A.1. Representación gráfica de los surtidos utilizados en el experimento

Categoría de producto

	Yogurt	Pan de molde	Papel higiénico	Detergente de máquina en polvo
(1)				
(2)				
(3)				
(4)				
(5)				
(6)				
(7)				
(8)				
(9)				
(10)				

Tipo de surtido

# **EFFECTIVIDAD DE LAS TÉCNICAS DE MERCHANDISING PARA CATEGORÍAS HEDÓNICAS & UTILITARIAS**

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## **RESUMEN**

*Este trabajo analiza comparativamente la efectividad de diferentes técnicas de merchandising sobre las ventas de 22 categorías de producto de alimentación. En concreto se estudian las tres técnicas más habituales en el punto de venta: islas, cabeceras de lineal y carteles. Para analizar sus efectos sobre las categorías, éstas se clasifican en categorías de naturaleza hedónicas y categorías de naturaleza utilitarias. Se utilizan datos diarios recogidos en un establecimiento de una de las diez cadenas líderes en alimentación en Europa. Se combinan datos de escáner y datos de observación. Los resultados muestran que las tres técnicas analizadas pueden aumentar las ventas de cualquiera de las 22 categorías de producto, pero que su efectividad viene moderada por la motivación de compra hedónica o utilitaria. Para las categorías hedónicas son más efectivas las islas, mientras que para las categorías utilitarias lo son los carteles.*

## **PALABRAS CLAVE**

Retail, Merchandising, Hedónico y Utilitario



## 1. INTRODUCCIÓN

La importancia y la inversión de las técnicas de merchandising continúa creciendo año tras año (Bell et al. 2011; Infoadex 2014). Estas herramientas, que tienen por objeto aumentar la percepción y las ventas de los productos dentro del establecimiento, son cada vez más analizadas y estudiadas por los fabricantes y distribuidores (Chandon et al. 2009; Inman et al. 2009; Stilley et al. 2010). Este incremento de la inversión en las técnicas de merchandising llega a situarse en un 20% anual en estudios internacionales como el de Inman et al. (2009). No obstante en España, el aumento ha sido cifrado en un 1,2% en el último año (Infoadex 2014), lo que pone de manifiesto su importancia también en nuestro país al compararlo con la inversión general en comunicación, que por cuarto año consecutivo desciende, en este caso un 3,5% según la misma fuente.

Una de las principales causas de que se preste más atención al merchandising es el aumento de la compra no planificada o la toma de decisiones de compra en el interior del establecimiento, que ya representa alrededor del 70% de la totalidad de las compras realizadas (Stilley et al. 2010; Bell et al. 2011). De hecho, Bezawada et al. (2009) mantiene que la compra no planificada por sí misma representa un 46% y que son las técnicas utilizadas en el interior del establecimiento las que incrementan este porcentaje hasta el 70%. A este fenómeno se le une la proliferación de nuevas marcas, las restricciones en el consumo y el consecuente aumento de la competencia, lo que hace crucial para los fabricantes el ser percibidos por el consumidor en el momento de su decisión de compra (Valenzuela et al. 2013).

Diferentes estudios analizan cómo puede el fabricante ser mejor percibido y evaluado utilizando estas técnicas (Drèze et al. 1994; Chandon et al. 2009; Bezawada et al. 2009; Valenzuela et al. 2013), las cuales suponen un alto ratio beneficio coste, tanto para ellos como para los distribuidores (Buttle 1984). No obstante, la mayoría de estos trabajos se centran en el efecto de la posición que ocupa una marca en el lineal de una categoría respecto al resto (Chandon et al. 2009; Valenzuela et al. 2013), no ocupándose de analizar diferentes estímulos relacionados con la colocación del producto en un lugar diferente al habitual. De entre los trabajos más recientes sobre las técnicas de merchandising, destacan los trabajos de Inman et al. (2009) y Bezawada et al. (2009). Estos trabajos tratan de aportar conocimiento sobre estas técnicas analizando por un lado, que modificando el lugar donde se sitúa una categoría de productos se pueden obtener mayores rendimientos (Bezawada et al. 2009) y, por otro lado, que las técnicas de merchandising pueden variar su efectividad en función de ciertas características de la categoría de producto (Inman et al. 2009).

El objetivo de nuestro trabajo es aportar teórica y empíricamente a este campo incluyendo el análisis de diferentes técnicas de merchandising según su posición en el establecimiento, para el posterior análisis empírico comparado de la eficacia de cada una de ellas. Este análisis se realizará a un número considerado de categorías de productos con el fin de establecer cómo pueden matizar las características de las categorías la efectividad de cada una de las técnicas. Para finalmente, obtener conclusiones sobre la gestión de las diferentes técnicas de merchandising que nos permitan aconsejar a distribuidores y fabricantes sobre la utilización de las mencionadas técnicas.

## 2. LITERATURA PREVIA

### 2.1. *Merchandising*

Merchandising es definido por la American Marketing Association como cualquier técnica que toma lugar en el interior del establecimiento y que es llevada a cabo por los distribuidores o fabricantes para estimular la venta de un producto. Algunas de estas técnicas son definidas por trabajos académicos como Buttle (1984) o Varley (2006).

Estas técnicas pueden aumentar las ventas de un producto entre un 77 y un 400% en el corto plazo (Woodside y Waddle 1975; Wilkinson et al. 1982), mientras que las promociones lo hacen en alrededor de un 33% (Van Heerde et al. 2003; Ataman et al. 2010). Por tanto, pueden llegar a ser bastante más efectivas que las promociones. Por otro lado, pueden ser no sólo más efectivas, sino también más rentables ya que no tienen por qué suponer una disminución del margen obtenido por el distribuidor como las promociones en precio (Ailawadi et al. 2006; Ailawadi et al. 2007), sino todo lo

contrario, si se tiene en cuenta las aportaciones que hace el fabricante para conseguir que su marca sea estimulada a través de estas técnicas (Ailawadi et al. 2009; Valenzuela et al. 2013). Por ello, el merchandising se considera una herramienta con un elevado ratio beneficio-coste (Buttle 1984) que mejora los márgenes de los distribuidores y que debe ser analizado en mayor profundidad en futuras investigaciones (Ailawadi et al. 2009).

La eficacia de estas técnicas tiene su origen en que hacen más perceptible el producto por el consumidor (Yeung y Wyer 2004; Chandon et al. 2009), de tal manera que influyen en las primeras fases del proceso de elección como son la atención y la percepción (Evan et al. 2006). Esto cobra una especial importancia si tenemos en cuenta que los consumidores suelen tener un patrón de recorrido bastante fijo si conocen el establecimiento (Larson et al. 2005) y si se consigue llamar su atención puede lograrse que el producto pueda entrar a formar parte del conjunto considerado de opciones en la fase de evaluación o elección (Yeung y Wyer 2004; Chandon et al. 2009). El hecho de poder ser percibido y evaluado en el establecimiento cobra aún más importancia al conocer que la compra no planificada y decidida en el interior del establecimiento supone alrededor de un 70% del total de las compras (Bezawada et al. 2009; Bell et al. 2011).

La mayoría de los trabajos empíricos analizan la efectividad del merchandising utilizando una única variable dicotómica *display* que toma valor positivo si el producto está estimulado con alguna de las diferentes técnicas de merchandising (véase Woodside y Waddle 1975; Wilkinson et al. 1982; Little 1998; Van Heerde et al. 2000; Lemon y Nowlis 2002; Van Heerde et al. 2004; Ailawadi et al. 2006; Inman et al. 2009). Otros trabajos analizan una técnica de merchandising en concreto, como puede ser la ampliación de espacio en el lineal (Chandon et al. 2009; Valenzuela et al. 2013), el uso de cabeceras de lineal (Bemmaor y Mouchoux 1991) o el uso de apilamientos o islas en pasillos centrales (Smith y Burns 1996). No obstante ninguno de ellos compara la efectividad de varias de estas técnicas a pesar de que existen diferencias que provoca que éstas puedan influir de forma distinta al consumidor (Buttle 1984; Samson y Little 1988; Varley 2006).

Todas las técnicas de merchandising tienen el mismo objetivo: llamar la atención del consumidor acerca de un producto estimulado para, tras un proceso de elección, aumentar sus ventas (Varley 2006; Bezawada et al. 2009; Chandon et al. 2009). No obstante, las distintas técnicas pueden tener matices diferentes debido a sus características inherentes. Por ejemplo, la isla es definida como un apilamiento de un producto en el medio de un pasillo principal (Smith y Burns 1996; Varley 2006), por el que el tráfico de compradores es mayor (Larson et al. 2005). Esta presentación especial afecta principalmente a consumidores menos analíticos y más impulsivos que no sienten la necesidad de buscar información acerca de las otras opciones de la categoría (Bezawada et al. 2009). Otra de las técnicas de merchandising es la cabecera de lineal, la cual es una ubicación especial al inicio del pasillo donde se encuentran los productos de una determinada categoría de producto (Bemmaor y Mouchoux 1991; Samson y Little, 1988; Varley 2006). Esta presentación especial puede atraer a un consumidor que no tenía planificada la compra de un producto no habitual en su cesta de la compra, hacia el pasillo en el que se éste sitúa (Bezawada et al. 2009; Inman et al. 2009). Otra opción es que un producto esté situado en su ubicación habitual y esté estimulado con un cartel especial. Este producto será únicamente percibido por el consumidor que visite el área o pasillo del establecimiento donde se suele encontrar esa categoría de producto determinada, la cual él tenía pensado comprar. En la Tabla 1 se resumen las diferentes técnicas analizadas.

Tabla 1. Tipos de técnicas de merchandising analizadas

TIPO DE TÉCNICA	DESCRIPCIÓN
ISLA	Presentación especial que consiste en colocar el producto estimulado en el medio de un pasillo principal por donde el tráfico de compradores es mayor.
CABECERA	Presentación especial que consiste en colocar el producto estimulado en la entrada del pasillo donde se encuentra el resto de productos de la categoría de producto.
CARTEL	Presentación especial que consiste en una llamada de atención de un producto a través de un rótulo distinto al habitual. Tiene lugar en el lineal donde se encuentra el producto, por tanto no supone un cambio de ubicación.

Fuente: Elaboración propia

## 2.2. Promociones

Las promociones son los estímulos comerciales más utilizados por los distribuidores y fabricantes. La finalidad de las mismas es atraer a los consumidores a los establecimientos y aumentar las ventas de un producto estimulado e incluso de otros (Mulhern y Padgett 1995; Volle et al. 2001; Ailawadi et al. 2006). Diversos estudios previos tasan el crecimiento a corto plazo de las ventas de los productos estimulados por las promociones en alrededor de un 33% (Van Heerde et al. 2003; Ataman et al. 2010). Ante esta importancia han surgido un gran número de trabajos académicos que tratan de analizar claves para el uso óptimo de este recurso (Hardesty y Bearden 2003; Ailawadi et al. 2007; Ailawadi et al. 2009; Leeflang y Parreño-Selva 2012).

Podemos encontrar trabajos previos que clasifican las promociones de diferentes formas con el fin de analizar qué tipo es más aconsejable en función de otras variables como la categoría de producto, el tipo de establecimiento o el perfil del comprador (Inman et al. 1990; Narashiman et al. 1996; Ailawadi et al. 2006; Palazón y Delgado-Ballester 2009). Una de las clasificaciones más habitual e intuitiva habitual es la que distingue entre promociones monetarias como descuentos y reembolsos posteriores, y promociones no monetarias entre las que se encontrarían regalos o sorteos (Chandon et al. 2000). También se suelen clasificar diferenciando si la promoción conlleva un descuento en precio inmediato o, por el contrario, otra ventaja como puede ser una cantidad extra de producto, un 3x2, un regalo de otro producto, una devolución posterior de dinero, etc. (Hardesty y Bearden 2003). Nosotros trabajaremos con esta última clasificación al parecernos más intuitiva y, por tanto, distinguiremos entre promoción en precio (que supone descuento inmediato en el precio del producto) y promoción en producto (aquella que no representa un beneficio monetario inmediato, como una cantidad extra de producto, un 3x2, un regalo de otro producto, una devolución posterior de dinero o una acumulación de una cantidad de dinero en una cuenta utilizable en futuras compras). Puede observarse en la Tabla 2 un esquema sobre las promociones tenidas en cuenta.

Tabla 2. Tipos de promoción

TIPO DE PROMOCIÓN	DESCRIPCIÓN
PROMOCIÓN EN PRECIO	Se trata de un descuento inmediato del precio habitual del producto. De ella se obtiene un beneficio monetario inmediato, al ahorrar parte del presupuesto planificado de la compra.
PROMOCIÓN EN PRODUCTO	Se trata de opciones que permiten un aumento del beneficio sin modificar el precio del producto. Algunos ejemplos son: una cantidad extra de producto, una promoción del tipo "pague 2 y llévase 3", un regalo de otro producto, una devolución posterior de dinero o una acumulación de una cantidad de dinero para descontar en futuras compras.

Fuente: Elaboración propia

## 2.3. Categorías de producto

Las características propias de una categoría de producto pueden influir de forma determinante en la efectividad de un estímulo comercial (Narashiman et al. 1996; Ailawadi et al. 2006; Inman et al. 2009). En este aspecto son diversos los estudios que han concluido que las características del propio producto estimulado influyen en la efectividad de las promociones. Estas características pueden ser por ejemplo, su marca (Bemmaor y Mouchoux 1991; Lemon y Nowlis 2002; Van Heerde et al. 2004; Macé y Neslin 2004; Ailawadi et al. 2006) o su nivel de precios (Narashiman et al. 1996; Wakefield y Inman 2003; Macé y Neslin 2004).

Además, existen estudios que concluyen que otras características inherentes a la categoría de producto también matizan la efectividad de las promociones. Algunas de estas características son su frecuencia de compra (Macé y Neslin 2004, Inman et al. 2009), su facilidad de almacenaje (Raju 1992; Blattberg et al. 1995; Mela et al. 1998; Van Heerde et al. 2000; Pauwels et al. 2002; Ailawadi et al. 2007), su caducidad (Gupta 1988; Krishna 1994) o su nivel de competencia medido en número de marcas (Fader y Lodish 1990; Narashiman et al. 1996; Wakefield y Inman 2003) o cuota de mercado de las marcas de distribuidor (Fader y Lodish, 1990; Wakefield y Inman 2003; Bezawada et al., 2009).

Existen otras características basadas en la motivación o proceso de compra que también influyen en la efectividad de las promociones. Algunas de ellas son: la motivación hedónica o utilitaria

(Shiv y Fedorikhin 1999; Chandon et al., 2000; Wakefield y Inman 2003; Yeung y Wyer 2004; Sloot et al. 2005; Inman et al. 2009; Suh 2009; Palazón y Delgado-Ballester 2013), la compra planificada o impulsiva (Narashiman et al. 1996; Metcalfe y Mischel 1999; Jones et al. 2003; Inman et al. 2009; Bezawada et al. 2009) o la implicación del consumidor en la compra (Kapferer y Laurent 1985; Volle 2001; Park y Moon 2003).

### 3. HIPÓTESIS

Diversos estudios ponen de manifiesto que las características de una categoría de producto matizan los resultados o la efectividad de los estímulos comerciales utilizados para incrementar sus ventas (Narashiman et al. 1996; Ailawadi et al. 2006; Inman et al. 2009). Por esta razón, a la hora de analizar la efectividad de las técnicas de merchandising es importante tener en cuenta que las características de la categoría de producto pueden moderar la misma.

El merchandising tiene como objetivo aumentar la percepción de un producto estimulado, con el fin de que sea considerado para la compra y, tras un breve proceso de evaluación, sea adquirido por el comprador como resultado de una respuesta afectiva o cognitiva (Yeung y Wyer 2004; Inman et al. 2009). En este sentido, las características de las categorías de producto más relacionadas con el merchandising son la impulsividad y la motivación de compra hedónica o utilitaria. La impulsividad por su parte puede favorecer el rápido proceso de elección sin necesidad de contrastar información (Shiv y Fedorikhin 1999) y la motivación hedónica, la creación en la mente del comprador de la respuesta afectiva positiva (Kempf 1999; Suh 2009). Estas dos clasificaciones están muy ligadas entre sí hasta el punto que autores como Suh (2009) definen los productos hedónicos como los que se adquieren bajo la influencia de un proceso afectivo relacionado con sensaciones o factores emocionales, mientras que los productos utilitarios son aquellos que se adquieren buscando beneficios funcionales a través de un proceso analítico y sistemático que conlleva una mayor inversión de tiempo buscando información. Así, siguiendo a trabajos previos como el de Inman et al. (2009) nos centraremos en analizar cómo la característica hedónica o utilitaria de la categoría puede matizar la efectividad de las diferentes técnicas de merchandising analizadas (el cartel, la cabecera de lineal y la isla).

La efectividad de cada una de estas técnicas dependerá de su capacidad para influir en la fase de percepción del proceso de compra, lo cual facilitará su posterior evaluación y, finalmente, su elección si los beneficios aportados por el producto son acordes con los buscados por el consumidor. En este sentido, tanto las características de las distintas técnicas de merchandising como las de la categoría de producto son claves.

La isla, además de aumentar la percepción del producto estimulado, dificulta la búsqueda de información sobre alternativas al encontrarse más alejada de las mismas. Al limitar la información de alrededor del producto, esta técnica influirá a compradores más impulsivos que valoran el producto estimulado únicamente atendiendo a sensaciones afectivas (Shiv y Fedorikhin 1999), con lo que es más probable que elijan opciones que se adquieran por motivaciones de ocio, diversión o placer (Shiv y Fedorikhin 1999; Okada 2005). Así, la isla funcionará mejor para los productos hedónicos, los cuales son adquiridos buscando beneficios como el disfrute o el placer (Kempf 1999; Inman et al. 2009; Suh 2009).

La cabecera de lineal puede recordar la necesidad de compra de un producto no planificado y atraer al comprador hacia una zona del establecimiento. En este lugar, el comprador tiene fácil acceso a la información del resto de alternativas de compra de la misma categoría, pues se encuentra en el inicio del pasillo donde se localizan dichas alternativas (Samson y Little 1988; Varley 2006). Al facilitar el acceso a la información, los consumidores pueden optar por valorar el producto atendiendo no sólo a sensaciones afectivas, sino a aspectos cognitivos (Shiv y Fedorikhin 1999). Es decir, aumentan las posibilidades de valorar productos utilitarios en función de aspectos cognitivos, cuando el comprador busca un beneficio funcional (Suh 2009). Esto supondrá una mayor influencia sobre las categorías utilitarias que la ejercida por la isla. Respecto a las categorías hedónicas, al aumentar la disponibilidad de información, habrá consumidores que sientan la necesidad de justificar la adquisición de un producto cuya motivación de compra es la diversión o el placer (Okada 2005) y

opten por valorar otras opciones próximas. Así, la cabecera de lineal tendrá un menor impacto sobre los productos hedónicos y un impacto mayor sobre los utilitarios que la isla.

El cartel sólo aumenta la percepción del producto para el comprador que visite el área o pasillo del establecimiento donde se encuentra la categoría que él tenía pensado comprar (Samson y Little, 1988; Varley, 2006). Así, el cartel afecta a consumidores que ya tenían planificada la compra de la categoría de producto, por tanto, consumidores más analíticos y planificadores que suelen acudir con la lista de la compra (Inman et al. 2009). En esta situación, los compradores tienen plena disponibilidad de información, lo que les hará decantarse por opciones más utilitarias que le reporten beneficios funcionales (Shiv y Fedorikhin 1999; Suh 2009). Ante estos consumidores más analíticos, el cartel tiene más difícil crear esa sensación afectiva positiva que derive en el impulso de compra, por lo que esta técnica afectará en mayor medida a las categorías de producto utilitarias, es decir, categorías de compra más planificadas, más frecuentes, que suelen estar apuntadas en la lista del comprador y de la que se esperan beneficios más funcionales (Inman et al. 2009; Suh 2009).

Así, se proponen las siguientes hipótesis:

*H1: Para los productos HEDÓNICOS, la isla tendrá mayor efectividad que la cabecera y, ésta a su vez, mayor que el cartel.*

*H2: Para los productos UTILITARIOS, el cartel tendrá mayor efectividad que la cabecera y, ésta a su vez, mayor que la isla.*

La efectividad de las promociones también se ve matizada por las características de la categoría de producto. Tanto las características físicas como las relacionadas con el proceso de compra pueden hacer más aconsejable o efectiva un tipo de promoción u otra (Narashiman et al. 1996; Wakefield y Inman 2003; Ailawadi et al. 2006; Inman et al. 2009).

Recientemente, estudios como los de Chandon et al (2000) o Inman et al. (2009) han analizado la influencia de la motivación de compra, hedónica o utilitaria, de un producto sobre la efectividad de estímulos comerciales.

En concreto Chandon et al. (2000) propone un marco de congruencia en el que el tipo de promoción más adecuada para los productos considerados hedónicos es una promoción que conlleve los mismos beneficios afectivos por el que se adquiere el producto. La promoción relacionada con la motivación de placer que desencadena la compra de productos hedónicos, sería una promoción no monetaria como un regalo o una cantidad extra del mismo producto, pues una mayor cantidad supone un mayor disfrute. Sucede lo contrario para los productos utilitarios, en los que se priorizan los beneficios funcionales y, por tanto, la promoción adecuada sería aquella que tenga un carácter práctico, como puede ser el descuento en precio, ya que supone un ahorro económico con un matiz altamente funcional.

Por tanto, se proponen las siguientes hipótesis:

*H3: Para los productos HEDÓNICOS, la promoción en producto será más efectiva que la promoción en precio.*

*H4: Para los productos UTILITARIOS, la promoción en precio será más efectiva que la promoción en producto.*

## **4. METODOLOGÍA**

### **4.1. Datos**

Para realizar el estudio propuesto, seleccionamos 22 categorías de producto de entre las más estimuladas con técnicas de merchandising de acuerdo con una de las diez mayores cadenas de hipermercados en Europa (Retail-Index 2014). Estas categorías de producto son clasificadas en hedónicas o utilitarias según literatura previa, ya que la mayoría de ellas han sido utilizadas en estudios previos sobre promociones o motivaciones de compra tales como las tabletas de chocolate, el aceite para cocinar, las galletas, las bolsas de patatas fritas, la cerveza o la pizza (Batra y Ahtola 1990; Bezawada et al. 2009). Las categorías que no aparecen en la literatura específicamente han sido

clasificadas por los directores del establecimiento minorista donde se realiza el estudio. El resultado de esta clasificación puede observarse en la Tabla 3.

Tabla 3. Categorías del estudio

CATEGORÍAS HEDÓNICAS	NÚMERO DE PRODUCTOS	CATEGORÍAS UTILITARIAS	NÚMERO DE PRODUCTOS
ACEITE DE OLIVA VIRGEN EXTRA	89	ACEITE DE GIRASOL	22
ACEITE DE OLIVA	45	AGUA CON GAS	12
CEREALES INFANTIL DE CHOCOLATE	32	AGUA SIN GAS	84
CERVEZA CON ALCOHOL CORRIENTE	65	ARROZ	14
CERVEZA CON ALCOHOL EXTRA	142	CEREALES FAMILIAR DE MAÍZ	10
ESPARRAGOS ENVASADOS	91	CERVEZA SIN ALCOHOL	36
GALLETA MARIA	13	PAN DE MOLDE INTEGRAL	39
PAN DE MOLDE BLANCO	20	PASTA MACARRONES	19
PATATAS FRITAS	31	SAL	35
PIMIENTOS PIQUILLO	45		
PIZZAS REFRIGERADAS	62		
SALSA DE TOMATE FRITO	48		
TABLETA DE CHOCOLATE	29		
TOTAL DE PRODUCTOS ANALIZADOS = 983			

Fuente: Elaboración propia

Para conseguir la información necesaria para el estudio, hemos combinado dos fuentes de información: datos de escáner (para obtener el número de unidades vendidas) y datos de observación (para capturar los días que un producto está estimulado con alguna de las técnicas de merchandising analizadas).

#### Datos de escáner

Uno de los mayores minoristas del sector de la alimentación en Europa según el estudio de Retail-Index (2014), nos facilita datos diarios sobre las ventas de 983 productos pertenecientes a las 22 categorías de producto analizadas. Aunque este minorista está presente en 7 países europeos, estos datos son únicamente sobre los resultados de uno de sus establecimientos en España, concretamente en Salamanca durante el año 2012.

La causa de que sólo contemos con los datos de un único establecimiento es que para recoger la información sobre las diferentes técnicas de merchandising utilizadas en el interior del establecimiento, ya que ha sido necesario realizar visitas diariamente durante el periodo de estudio. No obstante, tenemos información diaria sobre los 983 productos de las 22 categorías seleccionadas que este minorista ha tenido en venta en algún momento del periodo de estudio. Esto supone un total de 282.242 observaciones. La tabla 4 presenta algunos estadísticos descriptivos de las observaciones.

Tabla 4. Estadísticos de las observaciones

REFERENCIAS DE PRODUCTO	CATEGORÍAS DE PRODUCTO	TOTAL DE OBSERVACIONES	OBS* CON CARTEL	OBS CON CABECERAS	OBS CON ISLAS	OBS CON PROMO DE PRODUCTO	OBS CON PROMO DE PRECIO
983	22	282.242	21.942	11.662	4.788	5.376	34.292

\*OBS: Observaciones

#### Datos de observación

Para recoger la información sobre la utilización de las diferentes técnicas de merchandising, hemos realizado visitas diarias al establecimiento analizado con el fin de comprobar si alguno de los

productos de las 22 categorías seleccionadas estaba situado en una isla en medio de un pasillo central, en una cabecera al principio del pasillo donde se encuentra el resto de productos de la categoría o si el producto estaba resaltado a través de un cartel. Además, en la visita también se recoge información sobre si el producto estaba promocionado en precio (con un descuento inmediato) o promocionado con otro tipo de promociones en producto tales como una cantidad extra de producto, un regalo de otro producto, un 3x2, una acumulación de un porcentaje del precio pagado en futuros cupones para clientes fidelizados, etc.

#### 4.2. Variables y modelo

Analizando los datos recogidos, creamos diversas variables dicotómicas, tanto para las técnicas de merchandising como para los tipos de promoción, que toman el valor 1 si el producto estaba estimulado de alguna de las formas anteriormente mencionadas o valor cero si no era así, al igual que trabajos como Van Heerde et al. (2000) o Inman et al. (2009). Estas variables dicotómicas son las variables independientes de nuestro modelo.

En cuanto a la variable dependiente, al utilizar un número tan elevado de referencias de producto para aumentar el potencial de generalización de los resultados obtenidos, debemos plantear esta variable en términos relativos y no absolutos. La intención es comparar ventas de muy diversas referencias, por lo que lo aconsejable es utilizar la variación de ventas que presenta la referencia de producto respecto a sus ventas medias cuando no está estimulado de ninguna manera, es decir, ni con técnicas de merchandising ni con promociones. Las principales variables del modelo se describen en la Tabla 4.

Tabla 4. Variables del estudio

VARIABLE	DESCRIPTION
VARIACIÓN DE VENTAS $VV_{it}$	Recoge la variación de ventas que presenta una referencia de producto $i$ durante el día $t$ respecto al nivel medio de ventas de este mismo producto en los días que no estaba estimulado.
CARTEL $CT_{it}$	Recoge si el producto $i$ estaba señalado con un cartel especial durante el día $t$ . La variable toma valor 1 si el producto estaba estimulado y cero en caso contrario.
CABECERA DE LINEAL $CB_{it}$	Recoge si el producto $i$ estaba localizado en una cabecera de lineal durante el día $t$ . La variable toma valor 1 si el producto estaba estimulado y cero en caso contrario.
ISLA $IS_{it}$	Recoge si el producto $i$ estaba localizado en una isla en medio de un pasillo principal durante el día $t$ . La variable toma valor 1 si el producto estaba estimulado y cero en caso contrario.
PROMOCIÓN EN PRODUCTO $PPRODUCTO_{it}$	Recoge si el producto $i$ presentaba una promoción del tipo 3x2, una cantidad extra, un regalo, etc. durante el día $t$ . La variable toma valor 1 si el producto estaba promocionado y cero en caso contrario.
PROMOCIÓN EN PRECIO $PPRECIO_{it}$	Recoge si el producto $i$ durante el día $t$ tenía un precio al menos un 15% más bajo que su precio regular. La variable toma valor 1 si el producto estaba promocionado y cero en caso contrario. Se escoge el 15% de descuento siguiendo trabajos como los de Narashiman et al. (1996) o Wakefield y Inman (2003).

*Nota:  $i$  es el producto sobre la que se recoge la información;  $t$  es el día en el que se recoge la información*

Utilizando estas variables proponemos un modelo de regresión lineal múltiple en el que analizamos los efectos directos de las diferentes técnicas de merchandising y los diferentes tipos de promociones sobre cada una de las categorías analizadas.

$$^{(1)}VV_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 CT_{it} + \beta_2 CB_{it} + \beta_3 IS_{it} + \beta_4 PPRODUCTO_{it} + \beta_5 PPRECIO_{it} + \varepsilon_i$$

## 5. DISCUSIÓN DE RESULTADOS

La Tabla 5 muestra los resultados de las estimaciones del modelo propuesto para cada una de las categorías de producto consideradas hedónicas por la literatura previa y la Tabla 6, los de las categorías consideradas utilitarias. Estas estimaciones han sido realizadas con el software Stata 13.

EFFECTIVIDAD DE LAS TÉCNICAS DE MERCHANDISING PARA CATEGORÍAS HEDÓNICAS & UTILITARIAS

Tabla 5. Resultados de estimación de categorías hedónicas

VARIABLES	TABLETA DE CHOCOLATE	CERVEZA EXTRA DE ALCOHOL	CERVEZA CON ALCOHOL	PATATAS FRITAS	PIZZA REFRIGERADA	CEREALES INFANTILES CHOCOLATE	ACEITE DE OLIVA VIRGEN EXTRA	SALSA DE TOMATE FRITO	PIMIENTO PIQUILLO	ESPÁRRAGO ENVASADO	PAN DE MOLDE BLANCO	ACEITE DE OLIVA	GALLETA MARÍA
CARTEL	-0.219 ns	0.902***	3.839***	1.626***	0.373*	1.510***	9.839***	0.976**	2.175***	7.949***	1.627***	4.033***	0.570*
CABECERA DE LIENAL	2.404***	7.798***	6.579***	2.522***	6.115***	4.372***	37.150***	3.105***	8.611***	18.017***	2.767***	10.720***	1.771***
ISLA	8.604***	13.200***	8.475***	3.755***	9.132***	9.654***	190.201***	9.639***	39.139***	24.002***	3.956***	19.331***	2.715***
PROMOCION EN PRODUCTO	7.493***	4.195***	8.099***	1.685***	0.987*	10.354***	61.722***	7.545***	13.260***	12.813***	4.423***	52.875***	4.404*
PROMOCION EN PRECIO	4.287***	1.565***	2.120***	1.039***	0.767*	6.685***	2.210***	1.071**	1.787***	7.155***	1.869***	3.044***	1.467***
CONSTANT	-0.073 ns	0.019 ns	-0.146 ns	0.035 ns	0.408***	-0.376*	-0.024 ns	0.029 ns	-0.006 ns	-0.292***	0.099 ns	0.085 ns	0.006 ns
OBSERVATIONS	8.817	43.408	21.477	8.325	18.761	8.853	24.400	14.737	11.291	23.153	5.583	11.380	4.758
ADJUSTED R2	0.250	0.067	0.027	0.044	0.016	0.265	0.275	0.056	0.306	0.155	0.103	0.170	0.045

\* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , ns: no significativo  $\rightarrow p > 0.10$

Tabla 6. Resultados de estimación de categorías utilitarias

VARIABLES	CERVEZA SIN ALCOHOL	PAN DE MOLDE INTEGRAL	AGUA CON GAS	AGUA SIN GAS	CEREALES DE MAIZ FAMILIAR	PASTA MACARRONES	ARROZ	ACEITE DE GIRASOL	SAL
CARTEL	10.471***	8.366***	21.481***	7.975***	7.302***	4.161***	4.345***	7.349***	11.603***
CABECERA DE LIENAL	3.288***	3.317***	6.445***	5.194***	3.205***	2.629***	3.836***	6.622***	1.119***
ISLA	9.051***	2.467***	4.524***	4.152***	Omit	1.119*	0.673 ns	1.086*	Omit
PROMOCION EN PRODUCTO	1.792***	0.454 ns	9.182***	3.238***	3.625***	-2.486**	0.940**	4.838***	Omit
PROMOCION EN PRECIO	-0.771***	0.789**	19.380***	4.868***	6.024***	0.218*	2.623***	5.227***	1.895***
CONSTANT	0.166***	0.277**	0.259 ns	-0.054 ns	-0.032 ns	-0.004 ns	-0.060 ns	-0.142*	-0.003 ns
OBSERVATIONS	12.138	11.770	3.507	24.863	3.354	5.190	4.270	6.103	10.367
ADJUSTED R2	0.164	0.102	0.153	0.037	0.349	0.194	0.186	0.218	0.038

\* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , ns: no significativo  $\rightarrow p > 0.10$ , Omit: variable omitida por falta de observaciones



En los resultados puede observarse que, tanto para las categorías hedónicas como para las utilitarias, las técnicas de merchandising son efectivas. En la mayoría de las categorías, cualquiera de las técnicas de merchandising sirve para aumentar las ventas de forma significativa. Lo mismo ocurre para las promociones. Esto es consistente con estudios previos sobre promociones, los cuales indican efectos positivos a corto plazo matizados por la categoría de producto (Narashiman et al. 1996; Ailawadi et al. 2006; Inman et al. 2009).

Respecto a las técnicas de merchandising, para la totalidad de las categorías hedónicas, la isla influye en mayor medida que la cabecera y, ésta a su vez, en mayor grado que el cartel. No obstante, las tres técnicas son significativamente positivas en todas las categorías, excepto en el caso del cartel para las tabletas de chocolate, en la que no es significativo su efecto. Estos resultados están línea con la hipótesis H1. En cambio, para las categorías utilitarias el efecto del cartel es mayor que el de la cabecera y, éste a su vez, mayor que el efecto de la isla, excepto para la cerveza sin alcohol. En esta categoría el efecto de la isla es mayor que el de la cabecera. Por lo tanto, la hipótesis H2 se cumple para 8 de las 9 categorías utilitarias analizadas. Así, H2 se confirma de forma parcial.

Respecto al tipo de promoción, se puede observar que las promociones en producto tienen un mayor efecto que las promociones en precio para las categorías hedónicas. Estos resultados que nos permite confirmar la hipótesis H3. En cambio, en las categorías utilitarias sucede lo contrario, la promoción en precio es la más efectiva en todos los casos, excepto para la cerveza sin alcohol. Por lo tanto, nuevamente la hipótesis que hace referencia a las categorías utilitarias se cumple para 8 de las 9 categorías clasificadas como tales, siendo la excepción la cerveza sin alcohol. Con estos resultados, en línea con el trabajo previo de Chandon et al. (2000), se puede confirmar parcialmente la hipótesis H4.

Los resultados nos permiten confirmar las hipótesis propuestas para prácticamente la totalidad de las 22 categorías analizadas (véase Tabla 7), pero hacen que nos preguntemos por qué el patrón no se cumple para la cerveza sin alcohol. Cabe la posibilidad de que la razón sea que no es un producto completamente utilitario. Este producto tiene un alto componente hedónico matizado, ya que está asociado a un consumo emocional aunque responsable, por tanto el consumidor busca el placer de una forma más prudente o saludable. Así, podría reunir características relacionadas con el consumo hedónico, como la compra menos planificada, la elección más impulsiva y emocional dejándose llevar por las sensaciones (Kempf 1999; Suh 2009) o que la promoción en producto, más asociada a prolongar el placer que al ahorro monetario, sea más efectiva que la promoción en precio (Chandon et al. 2000).

Tabla 7. Resumen de hipótesis

CATEGORÍAS DE PRODUCTO	H1. IS>CB>CT HEDÓNICOS	H2. CT>CB>IS UTILITARIOS	H3. PPROD>PPRECIO HEDÓNICOS	H4. PPRECIO>PPROD UTILITARIOS
<b>HEDÓNICAS</b>				
TABLETA DE CHOCOLATE	OK	-	OK	-
CERVEZA EXTRA ALCOHOL	OK	-	OK	-
CERVEZA CON ALCOHOL	OK	-	OK	-
PATATAS FRITAS	OK	-	OK	-
PIZZA REFRIGERADA	OK	-	OK	-
CEREALES CHOCOLATE	OK	-	OK	-
ACEITE OLIVA VIRGEN EXTRA	OK	-	OK	-
SALSA TOMATE FRITO	OK	-	OK	-
PIMIENTO PIQUILLO	OK	-	OK	-
ESPARRAGOS	OK	-	OK	-
PAN DE MOLDE BLANCO	OK	-	OK	-
ACEITE DE OLIVA	OK	-	OK	-
GALLETA MARIA	OK	-	OK	-
<b>UTILITARIAS</b>				

CERVEZA SIN ALCOHOL	-	NO	-	NO
PAN DE MOLDE INTEGRAL	-	OK	-	OK
AGUA CON GAS	-	OK	-	OK
AGUA SIN GAS	-	OK	-	OK
CEREALES DE MAÍZ FAMILIAR	-	OK	-	OK
PASTA MACARRONES	-	OK	-	OK
ARROZ	-	OK	-	OK
ACEITE DE GIRASOL	-	OK	-	OK
SAL	-	OK	-	OK
	Confirmada	Confirmada parcialmente	Confirmada	Confirmada parcialmente

## 6. CONCLUSIONES

Este trabajo partía con el objetivo de ampliar conocimiento sobre la efectividad del merchandising en función de las categorías de producto. En concreto, se pretendía contrastar la importancia de analizar las técnicas de merchandising de forma desagregada, distinguiendo entre las tres más habituales ya que los trabajos previos no lo hacen (Bemmaor y Mouchoux 1991; Little 1998; Van Heerde et al. 2000; Lemon y Nowlis 2002; Van Heerde et al. 2004; Ailawadi et al. 2006; Inman et al. 2009), y por sus características pueden influir de forma diferente en el aumento de las ventas de un producto (Buttle 1984; Varley 2006).

Los resultados muestran que las técnicas de merchandising aumentan las ventas de todas las categorías de producto analizadas, llegando a influir más que las propias promociones en muchos casos. Esto no sorprende teniendo en cuenta los resultados de trabajos previos que cuantifican el incremento de ventas provocado por el merchandising (Woodside y Waddle 1975; Wilkinson et al. 1982; Bemmaor y Mouchoux 1991) o por las promociones (Van Heerde et al. 2003; Ataman et al. 2010). No obstante, cada una de las tres técnicas de merchandising analizadas influye de forma diferente a la hora de aumentar las ventas de las categorías de productos. Los resultados confirman las hipótesis de partida planteadas. El éxito de la isla, al restringir la información sobre las alternativas, está más ligado a la decisión de compra impulsiva tomada atendiendo a sensaciones y motivos emocionales o afectivos, por tanto, es más coherente que tenga mayor efectividad sobre productos hedónicos, los cuales son elegidos por las mismas motivaciones (Kempf 1999; Suh 2009). Por el contrario, el cartel, por su ubicación es un estímulo que permite la comparación del producto con otras alternativas situadas al lado, favoreciendo así, las decisiones más racionales o reflexivas (Shiv y Fedorikhin 1999). De esta forma, el cartel es más coherente que tenga mayor efectividad sobre productos utilitarios que no se consumen atendiendo a sensaciones o emociones, sino buscando un beneficio más racional (Kempf 1999; Suh 2009).

Además, los resultados muestran que las promociones más adecuadas para los productos hedónicos son las promociones en producto que no representan un beneficio monetario inmediato (Chandon et al. 2000), tales como una cantidad extra de producto, un 3x2, un regalo de otro producto, una devolución posterior de dinero o una acumulación de una cantidad de dinero en una cuenta utilizable en futuras compras. Mientras que para las categorías utilitarias, las promociones más eficaces son las que conllevan un descuento en precio inmediato.

## 7. IMPLICACIONES PARA GESTORES

Teniendo en cuenta estos resultados, los minoristas deberán analizar por separado la efectividad de cada una de las diferentes técnicas de merchandising para poder sacar mayor provecho al espacio en tienda y, por tanto, optimizar sus beneficios. Deben tratarlas por separado a la hora de realizar la organización del establecimiento. En concreto, deben reservar los espacios en las islas situadas en pasillos principales, donde el tráfico de compradores es mayor, para categorías de naturaleza hedónica. Situando estas categorías en las islas obtendrán un mayor incremento de ventas que si colocan en ellas categorías utilitarias, para las que la técnica más efectiva es el cartel que lo resalta sobre el resto de las alternativas del pasillo.

Por otro lado, los minoristas y los fabricantes deben proponer promociones atendiendo a la motivación hedónica o utilitaria de la categoría de producto considerada, de tal manera que deben tratar de acompañar las categorías hedónicas con promociones en producto puesto que éstas aumentan las sensaciones afectivas que desencadenan la elección de estas categorías. Por el contrario, las promociones en precio que llevan asociadas beneficios racionales a través de un ahorro monetario, son las más efectivas para las categorías de producto utilitarias.

## **8. LIMITACIONES Y LÍNEAS FUTURAS DE INVESTIGACIÓN**

Este trabajo analiza los datos de 22 categorías de producto de alimentación de un establecimiento a través de los datos diarios de un año natural completo. El número de categorías es elevado comparado con otros trabajos sobre merchandising (véase Bezawada et al. 2009; Chandon et al. 2009; Inman et al. 2009; Valenzuela et al. 2013). No obstante, una de las principales limitaciones es que los datos provienen de un único establecimiento, lo que limita su poder de generalización. Una segunda limitación es que se han clasificado las categorías de producto en hedónicas o utilitarias siguiendo estudios previos en los que aparecieran las categorías analizadas, tales como Batra y Ahtola (1990) o Bezawada et al. (2009) y aceptando como correcta su clasificación. Una tercera limitación es que el análisis se ha realizado a nivel categoría y, aunque este tipo de análisis sea propuesto por trabajos como Ailawadi et al. (2009), es posible que para cada marca dentro de la categoría analizada los resultados puedan variar según trabajos como los de Bemmaor y Mouchoux (1991) o Lemon y Nowlis (2002).

Así, los futuros estudios podrían tratar de resolver estas limitaciones recogiendo datos sobre varios minoristas, realizando una encuesta a consumidores para clasificar las categorías e incluso comprobar si otras clasificaciones de categorías pueden ayudar a explicar los efectos del merchandising. Además, estos futuros estudios podrían incluir el análisis de las marcas dentro de las categorías de producto buscando matices a los efectos de las diferentes técnicas de merchandising.

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# EFFECTO DE LA CRISIS SOBRE EL SECTOR COMERCIAL ESPAÑOL

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## RESUMEN

*Como consecuencia de la crisis económica por la que está atravesando España en la actualidad, el sector comercial se encuentra en un profundo proceso de reestructuración que ha llevado a un descenso continuado en el volumen de negocio. Esto ha llevado a elevados índices de fracaso empresarial que se reflejan en un aumento de los concursos de acreedores en el sector, si bien no se han producido de forma homogénea a lo largo de todo el territorio nacional. En el presente estudio se analiza la distribución de los concursos de acreedores en el sector comercial a lo largo del territorio español a través de la aplicación del análisis exploratorio de datos espaciales (AEDE) con la aplicación GeoDa. Los resultados obtenidos muestran una incidencia muy desigual entre provincias y la inexistencia de un efecto contagio significativo entre las mismas.*

## Palabras clave:

Fracaso empresarial, concurso de acreedores, sector comercial

## 1. Introducción

El sector comercial representa una de las variables más importantes del marketing y uno de los sectores económicos más dinámicos y de mayor peso en la economía de un país (Sainz de Vicuña, 2001). En España representa en torno al 11% del PIB y el 17,2% del VAB del sector servicios (Conserjería de Turismo y Comercio de la Junta de Andalucía, 2013).

En la actualidad, el sector comercial se encuentra en un proceso de reestructuración debido, entre otros factores, a la situación económica de crisis (Sánchez y otros, 2011), que ha producido un descenso en su número de empresas y su volumen de negocio desde 2008 y, por consiguiente, un incremento de los concursos de acreedores en el sector (www.INE.es, 2013). Sin embargo, dicho descenso no se ha producido de forma homogénea a lo largo de todo el territorio nacional.

Para el análisis de la distribución de los mismos a nivel provincial se ha optado por la aplicación del análisis exploratorio de datos espaciales (AEDE), que es una disciplina de análisis diseñada para el tratamiento específico de los datos espaciales o geográficos, con la aplicación GeoDa. Los resultados obtenidos muestran una incidencia muy desigual a lo largo de todo el territorio así como la inexistencia de un efecto contagio significativo entre las diferentes provincias.

## 2. El Sector Comercial Español

Los datos del INE muestran que el número de empresas dedicadas al comercio, así como la actividad comercial medida en términos de la cifra de negocio, no ha dejado de descender desde 2008 y que este descenso ha sido, en la mayoría de los años, menor que con respecto al total de empresas no comerciales demostrando así una mayor capacidad de supervivencia. En la tabla 1 se muestra la evolución del número de empresas dedicadas al sector comercial así como su volumen de negocios a lo largo del periodo 2005 a 2012.

TABLA 1

**Empresas y Volumen de Negocio (millones de euros) del Sector Comercial Español**

Año	Comercio al por mayor		Comercio al por menor y vehículos		Total sector comercial	
	Nº empresas	Volumen negocio (millones de euros)	Nº empresas	Volumen negocio (millones de euros)	Nº empresas	Volumen negocio (millones de euros)
2012*	201.774	36.0416	53.4110	26.5288	735.884	625.704
2011*	204.507	37.1561	53.3285	28.2972	737.792	654.533
2010*	209.617	36.6570	55.3791	29.1758	763.408	658.328
2009*	211.521	35.5777	56.9205	28.9362	780.726	645.139
2008*	215.887	40.9292	58.3213	32.6034	799.101	735.326
2007**	212.749	42.3096	60.4840	34.9055	817.589	772.151
2006**	212.313	39.4372	60.4073	32.8128	816.386	722.510
2005**	206.612	36.8906	61.2325	30.9540	818.937	678.446

\* El comercio minorista está compuesto por las agrupaciones de actividad CNAE 47 (Comercio al por menor, excepto de vehículos de motor y motocicletas) y CNAE 45 (Venta y reparación de vehículos de motor y motocicletas) y el comercio al por mayor por la agrupación de actividad CNAE 46 (Comercio al por mayor e intermediarios del comercio excepto vehículos de motor y motocicletas)

\*\*El comercio minorista está compuesto por las agrupaciones de actividad CNAE 50 (Venta, mantenimiento y reparación de vehículos de motor y motocicletas y venta al por menor de combustible) y CNAE 52 (Comercio al por menor y reparaciones de efectos personales y enseres) y el comercio al por mayor por la agrupación de actividad CNAE 51 (Comercio al por mayor e intermediarios del comercio excepto vehículos de motor y motocicletas)

En 2011 se acusó el efecto de la caída del consumo de 2009 y 2010 y las continuadas dificultades de acceso a la financiación, teniendo que ajustarse a través de un mayor cierre de empresas (Conserjería de Turismo y Comercio de la Junta de Andalucía, 2013). En este contexto, tal y como se muestra en la tabla 2, el número de concursos de acreedores de las empresas del sector comercial al por mayor ha experimentado una fuerte evolución creciente desde el inicio de la crisis económica en 2008, salvo para el ejercicio 2010. El índice con base

en el ejercicio 2008 muestra que el crecimiento de este fenómeno ha sido muy intenso llegando en 2013 a ser casi 3,5 veces mayor que en el primer año de crisis con dos puntos de inflexión al alza muy claros 2008 y 2011. Para las empresas del sector del comercio al por menor y de vehículos la situación descrita es tanto peor que para el comercio al por mayor, teniendo la misma evolución y los mismos puntos de inflexión pero con más intensidad.

No obstante, este análisis descriptivo del comportamiento del fracaso en estos sectores no deja de ser incompleto si queremos conocer la realidad subyacente. Al obtener el peso de los concursos de acreedores en el sector del comercio al por mayor con respecto al total de concursos de acreedores declarados en España, se observa con claridad cómo ha ido disminuyendo desde el año de inicio del estudio, perdiendo peso en la globalidad del fenómeno pasando del 18,66% en 2005 al 15,88% en 2013, casi tres puntos porcentuales menos. Esto pone de manifiesto que el sector se ha ido adaptando a la situación de crisis mejor que el conjunto de la economía. Y que a pesar de experimentar el número de concursos de acreedores, en términos absolutos, un crecimiento explosivo, en términos relativos ha ido decreciendo, síntoma de mayor flexibilidad y adaptación al entorno.

Con respecto al comercio al por menor y de vehículos ocurre lo contrario, aunque en términos relativos ha ido experimentado mayor importancia en el peso del total de concursos en España, resulta claro que en términos absolutos se trata de un peso irrelevante, apenas un 2.60% del total en 2013, lo que pone de manifiesto que a pesar de su importancia en el PIB respecto al fracaso empresarial no lo es.

TABLA 2

**Empresas Concursadas en España**

Año	Total Empresas Concursadas	Comercio al por mayor				Comercio al por menor y vehículos			
		Nº empresas concursadas	% sobre el total de empresas concursadas	Tasa de variación interanual	Índice Base 2008	Nº empresas concursadas	% sobre el total de empresas concursadas	Tasa de variación interanual	Índice Base 2008
2013*	8.934	1.419	15,88%	6,69%	347,79%	232	2,60%	32,57%	644,44%
2012	8.095	1.330	16,43%	44,41%	325,98%	175	2,16%	36,72%	486,11%
2011	5910	921	15,58%	22,47%	225,74%	128	2,17%	100,00%	355,56%
2010	4990	752	15,07%	-6,70%	184,31%	64	1,28%	-24,71%	177,78%
2009	5175	806	15,57%	97,55%	197,55%	85	1,64%	136,11%	236,11%
2008	2894	408	14,10%	119,35%	100,00%	36	1,24%	100,00%	100,00%
2007	1033	186	18,01%	5,08%	45,59%	18	1,74%	20,00%	50,00%
2006	916	177	19,32%	2,31%	43,38%	15	1,64%	25,00%	41,67%
2005	927	173	18,66%	-	42,40%	12	1,29%	-	33,33%

Elaboración propia. Fuente: [www.ine.es](http://www.ine.es)

\* Los datos de 2013 son provisionales

### 3. Metodología del estudio

Para el análisis de la distribución del número de concursos de acreedores en el sector comercial en España se van a aplicar las técnicas de análisis exploratorio de datos espaciales (AEDE). Se trata de una disciplina del análisis exploratorio de datos, también denominado data mining, diseñada para el tratamiento específico de los datos espaciales o geográficos que relaciona el análisis estadístico con el gráfico, haciendo posible el estudio de las distribuciones espaciales y sus valores atípicos, esquemas de asociación espacial,



agrupamientos espaciales y puntos calientes/fríos de negocio (hot spot). Para la aplicación de dichas técnicas se va a utilizar el programa estadístico GeoDa.

### **3.1. Muestra**

Dada la naturaleza del análisis estadístico a desarrollar la muestra que se utiliza está formada por toda la población de empresas concursadas en el sector comercial en España durante el periodo 2005-2013, dado que la Ley 22/2003, de 9 de julio, Concursal entró en vigor el 1 de septiembre de 2004, no disponiendo de datos anuales comparables para 2004. Los datos se han obtenido del INE.

Otro aspecto importante a tener en cuenta antes de analizar los datos es que para una mayor potencia estadística en la aplicación del GeoDa se recomienda que los datos sean, al menos, provinciales. En nuestro caso, se comprueba que el INE suministra los datos anteriores por provincias para todo el periodo objeto de estudio.

### **3.2. Variable objeto de estudio**

Para un correcto análisis de la importancia de la incidencia de los concursos de acreedores en las diferentes provincias, resulta más apropiado analizar el impacto de los mismos en términos relativos sobre el total de empresas. Dado que para el sector comercial el INE ofrece los datos agrupados en “Comercio al por menor” y “Comercio al por mayor”, en nuestro estudio relacionaremos el número de concursos en cada caso para cada provincia dividido por el total de locales agrupados de la misma forma. Con esta otra ponderación seguimos manteniendo el objetivo de salvar el sesgo producido por la asimetría en la distribución de las empresas a lo largo del territorio nacional. Esta variable alternativa resulta igualmente útil para el análisis por el impacto que supone el cierre de dichos locales sobre la economía de cada provincia.

Para el cálculo del número de locales por subsectores, y teniendo en cuenta el cambio en la clasificación CNAE y que repercute en los datos aportados por el INE, el número total de locales por subsector se ha hallado de la siguiente forma:

Comercio al por menor:

- Años 2005-2009, CNAE93: Epígrafes 50 y 52
- Años 2010-2013, CNAE 2009: Epígrafes 45 y 47

Comercio al por mayor:

- Años 2005-2009, CNAE93: Epígrafe 51
- Años 2010-2013, CNAE 2009: Epígrafe 46

## **4. Técnicas de Análisis Exploratorio de Datos Espaciales (AEDE) con GeoDa**

El AEDE es capaz de analizar y representar dos características fundamentales en toda distribución espacial: tendencia y puntos atípicos. En nuestro estudio, al tratarse de un análisis longitudinal de nueve años, no resulta de interés el análisis de los datos atípicos, más propio de estudios ad-hoc. Así, nos centraremos en tres análisis: 1) Análisis Exploratorio, 2) Análisis de Dependencia o Autocorrelación Espacial y 3) Análisis de la Correlación Espacio-Temporal.

### **4.1. Análisis exploratorio**

Dada la naturaleza de la variable de estudio el análisis exploratorio se centra en dos de los métodos anteriores: el mapa temático y el histograma de frecuencias.

Los mapas temáticos consisten en la representación cartográfica de una variable geográfica. Esta representación puede realizarse mediante símbolos y colores que pongan de manifiesto el

valor de una variable en cada una de las unidades geográficas consideradas. Los mapas temáticos más importantes para la representación de la tendencia espacial de una variable son el mapa de cuartiles y el mapa de la desviación típica, si bien en nuestro caso y dado que el objetivo es en un primer momento realizar un análisis descriptivo del reparto del número de concursos de acreedores a lo largo del territorio nacional, nos centraremos en el mapa de cuartiles. Para el mapa de cuartiles las provincias con el color más oscuro representan a las que se encuentran en el primer cuartil y la más clara en el cuarto. Para una presentación más resumida se presentarán los gráficos del año 2005 (previo a la crisis), 2009 (en plena crisis) y 2013 (en la actualidad).

El análisis del comportamiento de los concursos de acreedores durante el periodo de estudio (2005-2013) muestra, para el comercio mayorista, que existe una mayor concentración de concursos en la parte superior de la diagonal marcada por el eje noroeste-sureste, con especial incidencia en provincias del este, noreste y norte del país. (ver figuras 1, 3 y 5). Así mismo, destaca el hecho de que provincias como Navarra o Barcelona permanecen en el cuarto cuartil (el de mayor número de concursos) durante todo el periodo. En el otro extremo se encuentran, entre otras, muchas de las provincias de Andalucía. Para el comercio al por menor y vehículos, se aprecia un cambio de tendencia muy importante con la entrada de la crisis. Mientras que en 2005 sólo unas cuantas provincias tenían un número importante de concursos, como Madrid o Baleares, con la entrada de la crisis se observa la misma tendencia que en el comercio al por mayor, esto es, el eje noroeste-sureste (ver figuras 2, 4 y 6).

FIGURA 1

Mapa Cuartiles comercio al por mayor 2013

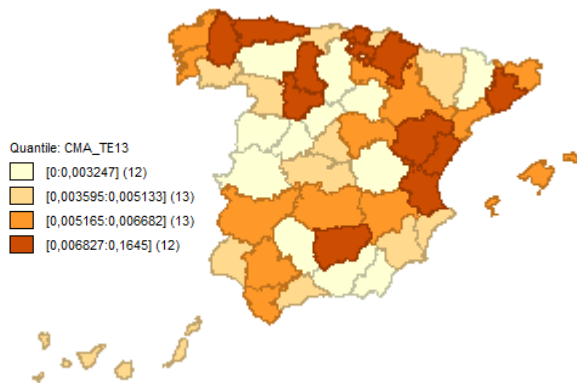


FIGURA 3

Mapa Cuartiles comercio al por mayor 2009

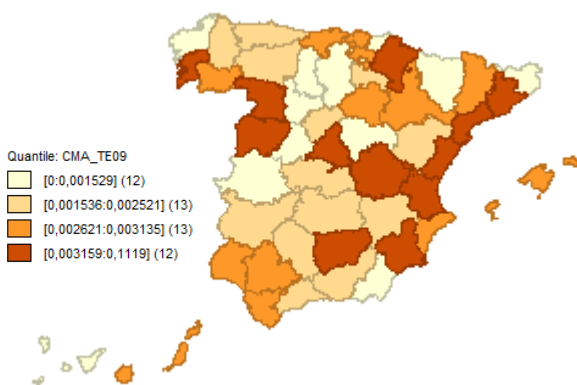


FIGURA 2

Mapa Cuartiles comercio al por menor y vehículos 2013

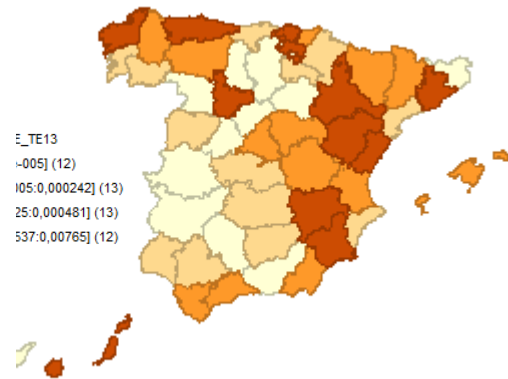


FIGURA 4

Mapa Cuartiles comercio al por menor y vehículos 2009

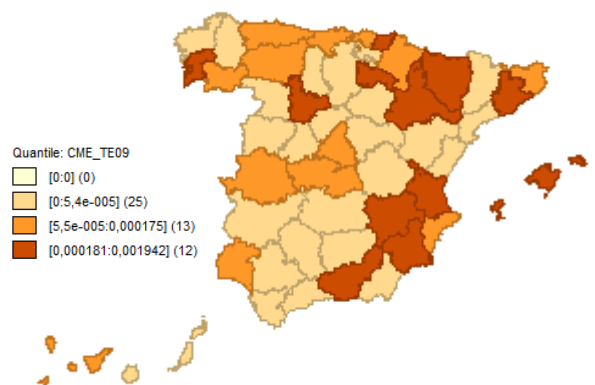


FIGURA 5

Mapa Cuartiles comercio al por mayor 2005

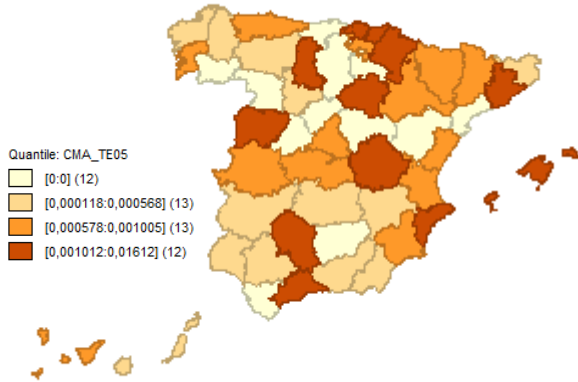
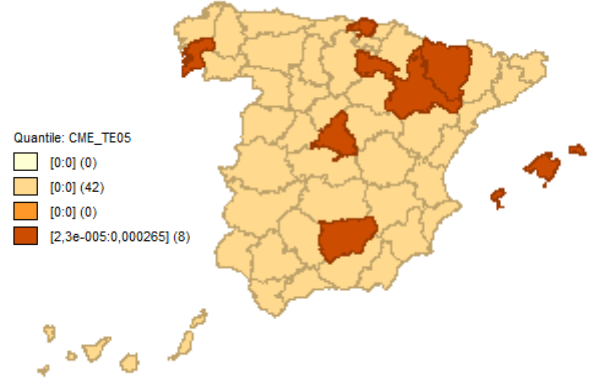


FIGURA 6

Mapa Cuartiles comercio al por menor y vehículos 2005



El histograma de frecuencias nos permite conocer la distribución no espacial de la variable objeto de estudio. Es una aproximación a la función de densidad de una variable aleatoria que resulta de utilidad para detectar asimetrías y otras peculiaridades de la distribución. En este caso, se observa para todos los años y para ambos sectores que la distribución no tiene un comportamiento semejante a la normal por lo que se puede afirmar que el comportamiento de los concursos de acreedores en el sector comercial se comporta de forma aleatoria (ver figuras 7 a 12).

FIGURA 7

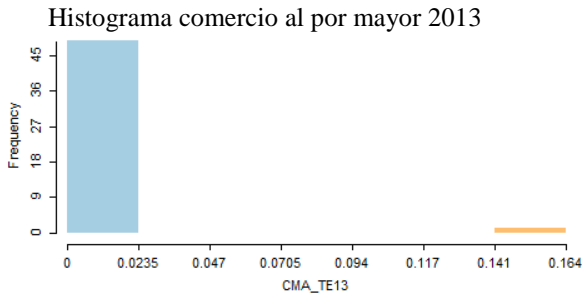


FIGURA 8

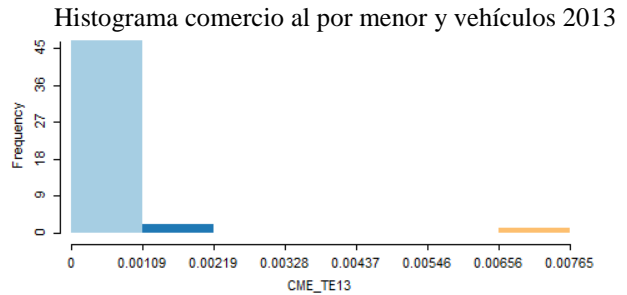


FIGURA 9

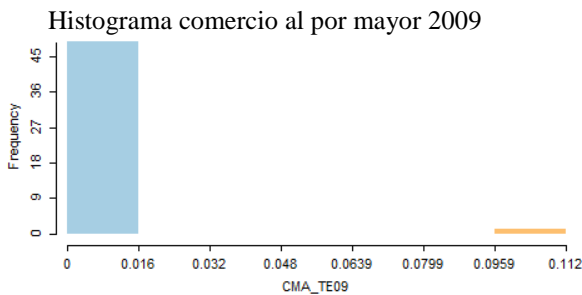


FIGURA 10

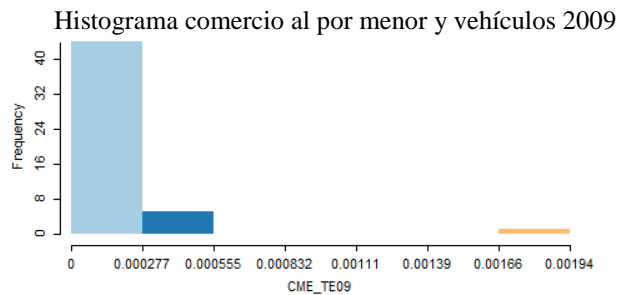


FIGURA 11

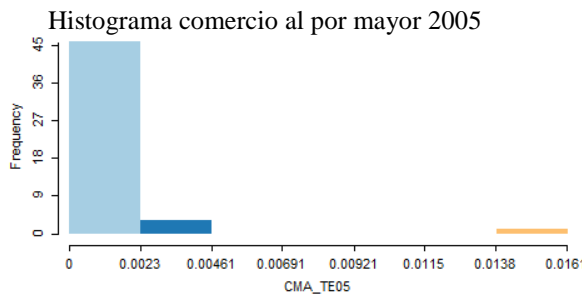
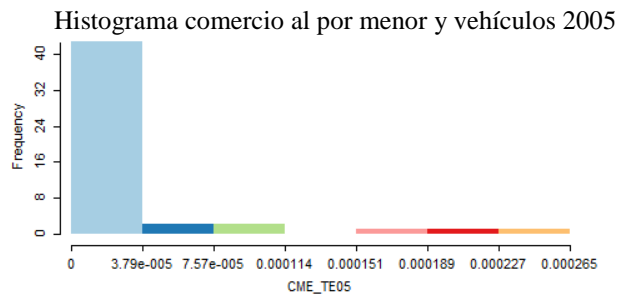


FIGURA 12



#### **4.2. Análisis de dependencia o autocorrelación espacial**

La autocorrelación espacial es la concentración o dispersión de los valores de una variable en un mapa. Refleja el grado en que la variable objeto de estudio de una unidad geográfica es similar a la de otras unidades geográficas próximas. Así, se puede afirmar que existe autocorrelación espacial en la medida en que existe una relación entre lo que sucede en un punto determinado del espacio y lo que acontece en otros puntos de ese mismo espacio (Sánchez, 2008). En el presente estudio la autocorrelación espacial determina si la ocurrencia de concursos de acreedores en el sector comercial en una determinada provincia española está relacionada con los concursos de acreedores acontecidos en otras provincias.

La autocorrelación puede ser positiva o negativa. La autocorrelación espacial positiva se produce cuando existe una relación directa entre valores similares de la variable en una provincia y las cercanas entre sí, de forma que las provincias con valores elevados de la variable se encuentran rodeadas de otras provincias en las que la variable arroja también valores elevados, y viceversa. En este caso en el que se produce una concentración del número de concursos en una zona geográfica concreta, se dice que existe “contagio” (Sánchez, 2008).

Por el contrario, existe autocorrelación espacial negativa cuando las provincias cercanas presentan valores muy diferentes de la variable analizada, de forma que aquellas provincias en las que se registra un valor elevado de la variable están rodeadas de otras en las que la variable toma valores reducidos, y viceversa (Sánchez, 2008).

Finalmente, es también posible la ausencia de autocorrelación espacial, la cual se producirá cuando los valores de la variable se distribuyan aleatoriamente en todo el territorio analizado (aleatoriedad espacial) (Sánchez, 2008).

Para verificar la existencia o ausencia de autocorrelación espacial, se pueden utilizar diferentes índices, siendo el I de Moran el más conocido y utilizado en la práctica (Sánchez, 2008). Éste índice (Moran, 1950) mide el grado de concentración de valores altos/bajos de una variable en el entorno geográfico de cada una de las observaciones de la muestra. Para cada valor del estadístico es posible realizar una inferencia para evaluar el nivel de significatividad estadística de rechazo de la hipótesis nula de ausencia de similitud o disimilitud de valores de una localización geográfica. De este modo, se pone de manifiesto la presencia de puntos calientes o atípicos espaciales, cuya mayor o menor intensidad dependerá de la significatividad asociada a dicho índice. Varía entre los valores -1 y +1, cuanto más cercano a 1 sea el indicador, mayor será el nivel de autocorrelación espacial (Sánchez, 2008).

En el cálculo del I de Moran resulta determinante la definición de vecindad de las unidades espaciales consideradas que se utilice, que en el caso del presente estudio se trata de las provincias españolas. Para ello, se utiliza un ponderador espacial que surge de una matriz de contigüidad que toma valores de uno para provincias adyacentes y de cero para los casos contrarios. Los principales criterios de vecindad son (Sánchez, 2004; Anselin, 2005; Sánchez, 2008):

- Contigüidad tipo Rook o Torre: una provincia será vecina de otra si comparte con ésta un lado o borde del cuadrado. Este criterio se conoce también con el nombre de criterio de la torre, en referencia al movimiento de esta pieza en el juego de ajedrez.
- Contigüidad tipo Queen o Reina: es aquella que considera vecinas a las provincias que comparten un borde o un vértice del cuadrado. También se conoce con el nombre de criterio de la reina.

- Contigüidad tipo Bishop o Alfil: es aquella que considera que dos provincias serán vecinas si comparten un vértice del cuadrado. Este criterio se conoce también con el nombre de criterio del alfil.

Los tres tipos de vecindad presentados reflejan vecindad de primer orden, pero es posible considerar también contigüidad de segundo orden (cuando se considera la influencia de los vecinos de los vecinos), de tercer orden, y así sucesivamente.

Tras una revisión de estudios en los que se aplica el I de Moran al estudio de la autocorrelación espacial en España se observa un uso mayoritario de la vecindad de primer orden tipo reina (Sánchez, 2004; Sánchez, 2008; Buendía et al., 2012), por lo que será la que se aplique en el presente estudio.

TABLA 3  
**Autocorrelación Espacial**

Año	ÍNDICE DE MORAN	
	Comercio al por mayor	Comercio al por menor y vehículos
2013	-0,0197	-0,0570
2012	-0,0249	-0,0351
2011	-0,0162	-0,0835**
2010	-0,0259	0,1034**
2009	-0,0214	-0,0485
2008	-0,0313	0,0117
2007	-0,0257	-0,0656
2006	-0,0129	0,0297
2005	-0,0481	0,0010

\*p<0,10; \*\*p<0,05; \*\*\*p<0,01

En la tabla 3 se presentan los valores del Índice de Moran que muestran, para el comercio al por mayor, que no existe autocorrelación espacial al no obtenerse datos significativos, esto es, los concursos de acreedores ocurridos en las diferentes provincias españolas no están en consonancia con lo que ocurre en sus vecinas. Para el comercio al por menor y vehículos sí se obtienen datos significativos para 2010 y 2011, por lo que podemos concluir que las reducciones en el consumo acumuladas durante los primeros años de crisis y los problemas de acceso al crédito mencionados anteriormente tiene un efecto “contagio” entre las provincias, si bien dicho nivel de autocorrelación espacial es muy reducido al estar muy lejos de 1.

El Índice de Moran representa una estadística resumen que indica la intensidad de autocorrelación entre las provincias, sin embargo, no identifica el patrón de estas relaciones espaciales, esto es, si el esquema de autocorrelación espacial detectado en todo el territorio en conjunto se mantiene también a nivel local. Para ello, debemos acudir a los indicadores de autocorrelación local como el índice Índice de Moran Local. En este sentido, para visualizar de forma clara y directa la presencia (o ausencia, según el caso) de autocorrelación espacial local el AEDE dispone de diversas herramientas, las más utilizada es la denominada mapa LISA.

Las letras LISA significan Local Indicator of Spatial Association. El mapa LISA es un mapa en el que se representan las localizaciones con valores significativos en determinados indicadores estadísticos de asociación espacial local. En concreto, los gráficos LISA incluidos en GeoDa se basan en el estadístico Índice de Moran de asociación local. La principal utilidad de este gráfico es que permite detectar la presencia de bolsas significativas de no-estacionalidad (zonas calientes/frías) que se desvían de la tendencia general de una variable. Para ello, localizan geográficamente los agrupamientos espaciales (que se producen cuando una unidad espacial que registra un valor alto (bajo) de la variable se encuentra rodeada de

unidades espaciales que también registran un valor alto (bajo) de dicha variable, esto es, alto-alto o bajo-bajo) y los atípicos espaciales (que son aquellos que surgen cuando una unidad espacial con un elevado valor de la variable se encuentran rodeada de unidades espaciales en las que la variable registra valores pequeños, o viceversa, es decir, alto-bajo o bajo-alto) (Sánchez, 2008; Naciones Unidas, 2012).

Las figuras 13 a 18 muestran los mapas LISA para los concursos de acreedores de las empresas del comercio al por mayor y al por menor y vehículos para los años 2005, 2009 y 2013.

FIGURA 13

Mapa LISA comercio al por mayor 2013

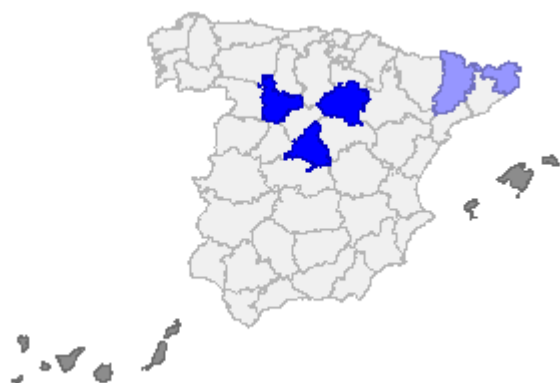


FIGURA 14

Mapa LISA comercio al por menor y vehículos 2013



FIGURA 15

Mapa LISA comercio al por mayor 2009



FIGURA 16

Mapa LISA comercio al por menor y vehículos 2009

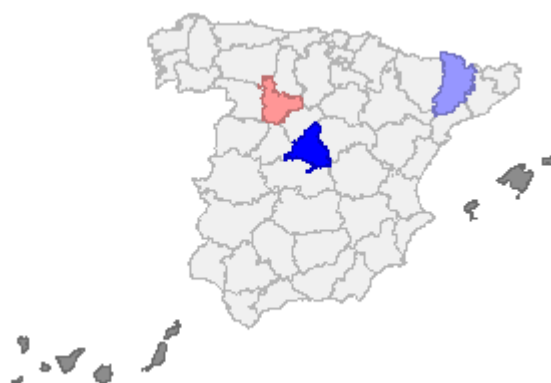


FIGURA 17

Mapa LISA comercio al por mayor 2005

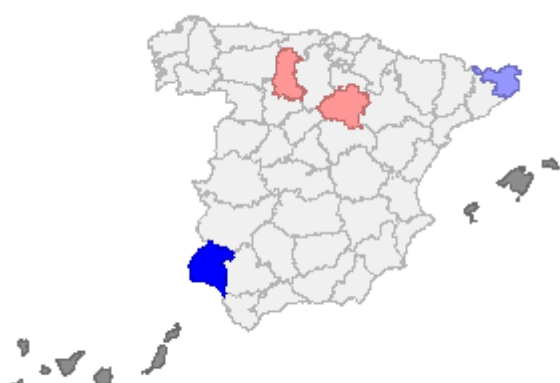
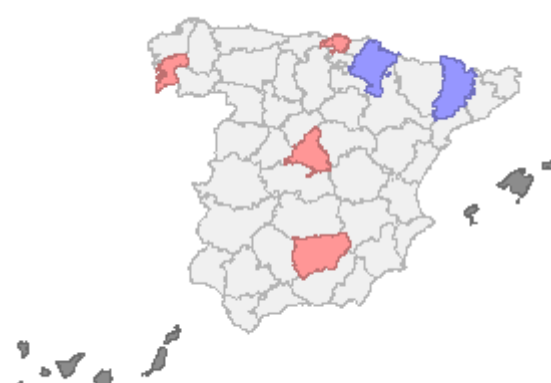


FIGURA 18

Mapa LISA comercio al por menor y vehículos 2005



Los resultados del Índice de Moran Local quedan reflejados en los mapas LISA en cinco tipos de conglomerados espaciales:

- Alto-Alto (Rojo oscuro): Una provincia con un valor de análisis por encima del promedio, rodeada significativamente por provincias vecinas que también se encuentran sobre la media con respecto a la variable de interés, en el presente trabajo, el número de concursos de acreedores. Estas provincias corresponden a los denominados conglomerados calientes (hot spots).
- Bajo-Bajo (Azul oscuro). Una provincia con un valor de análisis inferior al promedio, rodeada por provincias vecinas que también se encuentran bajo la media en relación con la variable de interés. Estas provincias corresponden a los denominados conglomerados fríos (cold spots).
- Bajo-Alto (Azul claro). Presencia de una provincia con un valor de análisis bajo, rodeada significativamente por provincias vecinas con valores que se encuentran sobre la media de la variable de interés.
- Alto-Bajo (Rojo claro). Presencia de una provincia con un valor de análisis alto, rodeada significativamente por provincias vecinas con valores que se encuentran bajo la media de la variable de interés.
- Relación no significativa (Gris). Presencia de unidades territoriales donde el valor de análisis de la variable de interés no se relaciona significativamente con los valores que presentan sus vecinos.

#### ***4.3. Análisis de correlación espacial-temporal***

En el análisis de la correlación espacio-temporal se analiza el número de concursos en una provincia determinada en dos momentos del tiempo (Anselin, 2003). La correlación espacio-temporal se considera así un caso especial de correlación espacial bivariante. El análisis espacio-temporal se puede realizar desde dos puntos de vista:

- Inward diffusion (Difusión interna): De los vecinos en el presente al núcleo en el futuro.
- Outward diffusion (Difusión externa): Del núcleo ahora a los vecinos en el futuro.

Cada una es un punto de vista ligeramente diferente de la correlación espacio-temporal. La más utilizada es la difusión interna (Anselin, 2003; Anselin, 2005) que mide cómo afectará en el futuro a una provincia determinada lo que ocurre en sus provincias vecinas hoy.

Los resultados de la correlación espacio-temporal son muy similares a los del análisis de la correlación espacial, no se observan resultados significativos para ningún momento del periodo analizado ni para el comercio al por mayor ni en el comercio al por menor y vehículos, por lo tanto, no se puede afirmar que se dé contagio del fenómeno concurso de acreedores por el hecho ocurrido en un periodo anterior en las provincias vecinas. Con respecto a la correlación entre dos periodos de tiempo, para el caso de los concursos en el comercio al por mayor se observan valores muy elevados desde 2010 con respecto al año anterior, adelantándose un año en el caso del comercio al por menor y vehículos. Estos resultados confirman el hecho de que en el análisis de la evolución de los concursos de acreedores en el sector comercial a lo largo del territorio nacional es determinante el efecto temporal, esto es, la acumulación de los problemas derivados de la crisis, reflejándose un año antes en el comercio al por menor (ver tabla 4).

TABLA 4

**Correlación Espacio-Temporal**

Año	Correlación espacio-temporal (I de Moran)		Correlación espacial entre dos periodos de tiempo (Slope)	
	Comercio al por mayor	Comercio al por menor y vehículos	Comercio al por mayor	Comercio al por menor y vehículos
2012-13	-0,0199	-0,0385	0,9668	0,6054
2011-12	-0,0207	-0,0674*	0,7544	0,7801
2010-11	-0,0194	-0,0065	0,8299	0,3795
2009-10	-0,0227	0,0321	1,0973	0,8515
2008-09	-0,0272	0,0269	0,4763	0,7567
2007-08	-0,0344	-0,0267	0,4735	0,3266
2006-07	-0,0206	-0,0024	0,6424	0,7883
2005-06	-0,0246	-0,0383	0,8913	0,1373

\*p&lt;0,10; \*\*p&lt;0,05; \*\*\*p&lt;0,01

**5. Conclusiones**

El análisis exploratorio muestra que, si bien la persistencia del fenómeno concursal en el sector comercial a nivel provincial en la parte superior de la diagonal noroeste-sureste del territorio es mayor, el reparto de los mismos no es homogéneo a lo largo del periodo estudiado. Tampoco se observó efecto contagio ni para el comercio al por mayor ni para el comercio al por menor y vehículos. En resumen, podemos decir que en la ocurrencia de los concursos de acreedores en el sector comercial español el efecto determinante es el temporal y, muy especialmente, la llegada de la crisis de 2008.

Con respecto a las limitaciones del estudio, la falta de información respecto al número de empresas del sector comercial por provincia ha condicionado el estudio al no poder ponderarse el número de concursos de las empresas de comercio al por mayor y al por menor y vehículos objeto de análisis por dicha cifra, sino por el número de locales de cada provincia, con el objeto de quitar el efecto del asimétrico reparto de empresas en el territorio nacional. Este hecho no ha impedido analizar la incidencia concursal en porcentaje con respecto al total de empresas en el análisis a nivel global.

Dentro de las futuras líneas de investigación se analizarán cómo la crisis y, como consecuencia de ella, la entrada en concurso de acreedores de las empresas del sector comercial ha influido en la adaptación de las acciones comerciales en dichas empresas.

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# EL CONOCIMIENTO DE LOS DISTRIBUIDORES Y SU INFLUENCIA EN LA ESTRATEGIA DE INNOVACIÓN DE LOS FABRICANTES<sup>1</sup>

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## RESUMEN

*La gestión del conocimiento y el aprendizaje derivado resultan críticos para el éxito de las innovaciones y la competitividad de los fabricantes en el canal de distribución. Considerando el nivel de importancia y poder alcanzado por la distribución en la estructura y organización del canal, este trabajo explora cómo las decisiones de innovación, tanto de explotación como de exploración, configuran la capacidad de gestión del conocimiento entre fabricantes y distribuidores, con el fin de mejorar los resultados de las decisiones de innovaciones de los fabricantes. Se contrata un modelo de estrategia-capacidades-resultados sobre una muestra de 201 fabricantes utilizando la metodología de los modelos de ecuaciones estructurales. Los resultados avalan el papel de la gestión del conocimiento con los distribuidores para el éxito de las innovaciones de los fabricantes.*

## Palabras clave:

Canales de distribución, Relaciones canal, Gestión conocimiento, Explotación, Exploración

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## 1. Introducción

Este trabajo tiene como objetivo analizar el papel que el conocimiento poseído por los distribuidores tiene en las decisiones de innovación de los fabricantes y en sus consecuentes resultados.

Sin duda, la innovación se ha convertido en una cuestión central de la dirección estratégica (Nag et al., 2007), y todo un principio de la creación de una ventaja competitiva (Adner y Kapoor, 2010). En el contexto de las cadenas de aprovisionamiento, fabricantes y distribuidores interactúan dentro de un sistema de interdependencias mutuas (Adner y Kapoor, 2010). De hecho, se constata que la influencia de los distribuidores en la innovación en productos y procesos se ha visto acrecentada en los últimos años, incorporándose incluso las marcas de distribuidor a esta tendencia, ya que han supuesto un 33% de toda la innovación en las distintas marcas de consumo lanzadas durante 2012 (Kantar Worldpanel, 2013). En concreto, del conjunto de lanzamientos de productos habidos en la distribución comercial durante 2012, el 75% son de imitación ('Me too's') y sólo el 25% son realmente innovaciones, estando lideradas por Mercadona, Lidl y Carrefour.

Las innovaciones pueden tener una naturaleza exploratoria, de variación y novedad en relación a lo existentes, o de explotación, de refinamiento, eficiencia y selección de lo ya existente (March, 1991). El dinamismo del mercado y la propia evolución de las cadenas de aprovisionamiento, hacen necesario reconfigurar las capacidades a través de la obtención de nuevo conocimiento, y así evitar caer en la rigidez de las capacidades (Leonard-Barton, 1992). Así, la habilidad de la empresa para aplicar el conocimiento obtenido al proceso de innovación puede ser una fuente decisiva de ventaja competitiva (Bierly et al., 2009), la Organizational learning theory (Hubert, 1991) and Knowledge-Based-View (Grant, 1996) constituyen marcos teóricos de interés para estudiar la contribución de la distribución a las innovaciones de los fabricantes.

La innovación puede ser una fuente relevante de ventaja competitiva, pero su éxito depende del entorno de la empresa, conocido como 'ecosistema de innovación' y de la capacidad de aprendizaje organizativo (Jiménez-Jiménez & San-Valle, 2011). El conocimiento es considerado como un antecedente clave del éxito en la innovación y el aprendizaje desde fuentes de conocimiento externo es considerado como un antecedente del desempeño de la empresa que proporcionar resultados de conocimiento y comerciales. Para ello, la empresa desarrolla y configura sus capacidades (Hart, 1995).

The relational view of the RBV calls attention to external knowledge as source of competitive advantage (Dwyer y Sing, 1998). Además, la literatura acknowledges the importance of relations between heterogeneous firms for the innovation novelty (Nieto and Santamaría, 2007). En general, en los contextos interorganizativos, el acceso al conocimiento proporcionado por distintos canales externos aumenta la intensidad de las innovaciones (Chiang y Hung, 2010). En particular, en la colaboración entre fabricantes y distribuidores permite mejorar las innovaciones radicales e incrementales (Ganesan et al., 2009). Más aún, considerando el reducido éxito de las innovaciones, el conocimiento en las relaciones interorganizativas es especialmente relevante al aumentar su viabilidad comercial (Hernández et al., 2012). De hecho, las relaciones verticales en el canal de distribución tienen. Por tanto, en las relaciones verticales entre fabricantes y distribuidores se extienden los límites convencionales de la actividad innovadora de la empresa al ecosistema empresarial de interdependencias entre fabricantes y distribuidores (Adner y Kapoor, 2010).

Si bien se han estudiado diversos problemas vinculados al fracaso de las decisiones de innovación, tanto desde la perspectiva de la oferta (p.e., Henderson, 2006), como de la demanda (Abernathy y Clark, 1985), un problema escasamente considerado es la incidencia que las relaciones fabricante-distribuidor tienen sobre las decisiones de innovación (Hernández et al. 2011).

El sector agroalimentario posee una elevada importancia socioeconómica, con más de 2 millones de empleos, supone casi un 9% del PIB. Se trata de un sector maduro, donde las

estrategias de innovación y la diferenciación juegan un papel esencial para El presente trabajo evaluamos la estrategia de innovación de exploración y explotación de los fabricantes de productos agroalimentarios a través de la configuración de las capacidades de conocimiento de los distribuidores.

## **2. Revisión de la literatura e hipótesis**

El marco de exploración-explotación fue introducido por March (1991) y ha sido adoptado en diversos campos de la investigación en dirección de empresas y del marketing (p.e., Kyriakopoulos y Moorman, 2004), y en particular, en el estudio de las relaciones interorganizativas en el canal de distribución (Hernández et al., 2011).

March (1991) define la explotación como “el refinamiento, elección, producción, eficiencia, selección, implementación y ejecución” y el segundo como “búsqueda, variación, toma de riesgos, experimentación, juego, flexibilidad, descubrimiento, e innovación” (p. 71), implicando “el uso y desarrollo de cosas ya conocidas” (p. 105). En esencia, la explotación es “el refinamiento y extensión de las competencias existentes, tecnologías, y paradigmas” y “sus resultados son positivos, próximos, y predecibles” (p. 85). En una definición más refinada del concepto, Levinthal y March (1993, p. 105) definen la explotación como “el uso y desarrollo de cosas ya conocidas”, de forma que las empresas que usan la explotación están actuando y buscando oportunidades en su entorno circundante (Armagan y Ferreira, 2005). La explotación está relacionada con sistemas rígidos, dependencias, rutinas, burocracias, control, y mercados y tecnologías estables (Lewin et al., 1999).

Por otro lado, la exploración está asociada a la experimentación con nuevas alternativas y, en consecuencia, “sus resultados son inciertos, distantes, y frecuentemente negativos” (March, 1991, p. 85). Implica “la búsqueda de conocimiento, de cosas que podrían llegar a ser conocidas” (Levinthal y March, 1993, p. 105). Por tanto, se vincula con estructuras orgánicas, sistemas flexibles, ruptura de los paradigmas existentes, improvisación, autonomía, caos, mercados y tecnologías emergentes (Lewin et al., 1999).

Frecuentemente las empresas se centran en explotar sus capacidades actuales dejando de desarrollar nuevas capacidades. La proactividad derivada del comportamiento estratégico conduce a que las capacidades necesarias para la implementación estratégica varíen (Hart, 1995). Así, la viabilidad a largo plazo se puede ver comprometida al no poseer capacidades para comercializar en nuevos mercados o innovaciones radicales que proporcionen una ventaja competitiva sostenible (Levinthal y March, 1993; Atuahene-Gima, 2005). A este fenómeno se la he denominado como paradoja de la rigidez de las capacidades (Leonard-Barton, 1992).

Las empresas pueden optar por explotar sus ámbitos de producto y mercado existentes, centrando sus esfuerzos en la eficiencia, o bien decidirse por explorar el desarrollo de nuevos productos y mercados al margen de los ya existentes (Anand y Singh, 1997; Kalafsky y MacPherson, 2002). Esta elección determina la búsqueda por equilibrar “las ganancias de hoy y la flexibilidad para adaptarse al mañana” (Volberda et al., 2001, p. 159).

Pero el desarrollo de las competencias correspondientes supone confrontar perspectivas que cabe considerar contradictorias. Así, en el ámbito de las relaciones interorganizativas, Hakansson y Ford (2002), las motivaciones, recursos y conocimientos de cada (fabricante/distribuidor) pueden ser muy diferentes, por lo que es necesario contar con la perspectiva de la otra parte (distribuidor/fabricante). De hecho, la naturaleza opuesta de las actividades de exploración y explotación deriva de varios hechos relacionados con las limitaciones en la asignación de recursos, la inercia organizacional y el desempeño organizacional deseable. En primer lugar, las organizaciones toman decisiones para apoyar las actividades de exploración o explotación cuando asignan recursos. Cuando deciden innovar buscando nuevo conocimiento y potenciales oportunidades a largo plazo en lugar de aprovechar los conocimientos disponibles para atender las necesidades inmediatas (March, 1991). Del mismo modo, cuando las organizaciones asignan recursos para el perfeccionamiento de las

tecnologías existentes y el aprovechamiento de las competencias existentes en lugar de desarrollar nuevas habilidades y capacidades, logran confiabilidad inmediata pero el riesgo de convertirse en obsoleta en el futuro (Holmqvist, 2004; Leonard-Barton, 1992).

También existe una relatividad en la exploración-explotación, ya que debe ser definida desde el punto de vista de una determinada organización o unidad. Determinado conocimiento, tecnología o mercados pueden ser nuevos para una organización, pero conocidos para otra. En consecuencia, lo que para una organización puede considerarse exploración, para otra es exploración (Lavie et al., 2010).

Según Koza y Lewin (1998), las empresas toman sus decisiones de colaboración con otras empresas en función de si su motivación es de explotar una capacidad existente o explotar nuevas oportunidades. A su vez, la colaboración entre empresas está relacionada por su dotación de recursos (Park et al., 2002). La insuficiencia de recursos y capacidades lleva a las empresas a colaborar con otras para acceder a los mercados y comercializar los productos (Hill y Rothaermel, 2003). Así, como los canales de distribución son necesarios para el éxito de las innovaciones de los productores, pero son difíciles de conocer, los fabricantes valoran incluso más la información procedente de los distribuidores que la propia (Menon y Pfeffer, 2003).

En las relaciones verticales entre fabricantes y distribuidores y, concretamente, desde la perspectiva de cómo los fabricantes obtienen e incorporan el conocimiento obtenido de los distribuidores, considerando el ámbito interorganizativo como una entidad de aprendizaje única (Holmqvist, 2009), en la literatura se identifican tres conceptos de conocimiento vinculados entre sí: (i) la adquisición de conocimiento de los distribuidores, (ii) el aprendizaje a colaborar con distribuidores y (iii) el conocimiento sobre la gestión de los distribuidores (Hernández et al., 2011).

La adquisición de conocimiento de los distribuidores hace referencia a la obtención del mismo desde los distribuidores por el fabricante, internalizándolo, diseminándolo y aplicándolo (Hubert, 1991). El desarrollo de actividades de I+D, en particular, con los distribuidores aumenta el aprendizaje de los fabricantes (Anad y Khanna, 2002). El aprendizaje sea el conocimiento de El aprendizaje será mayor a medida que se trata del conocimiento obtenido con objeto de comprender los cambios en el entorno, poder adaptarse a los mismos, así como desarrollar una base de conocimientos sobre las actividades de comercialización, complementando el poseído por el fabricante (Grant y Baden-Fuller, 2004). En consecuencia, proponemos las siguientes hipótesis:

H<sub>1</sub>: La innovación de explotación está positivamente relacionada con la adquisición de conocimiento de los distribuidores

H<sub>2</sub>: La innovación de explotación está positivamente relacionada con la adquisición de conocimiento de los distribuidores

La adquisición, interpretación y almacenamiento de información del mercado dependen de las necesidades de información (Sinkula, 1994). En la medida en que un fabricante colabora con un distribuidor, la proactividad en su estrategia innovadora conducirá a considerar prioritaria la obtención de conocimiento del distribuidor. El valor del conocimiento proporcionado por el distribuidor será mayor cuanto más complemente el poseído por el fabricante (Grant y Baden-Fuller, 2004). Por ello, establecemos la siguiente hipótesis:

H<sub>3</sub>: La adquisición de conocimiento de los distribuidores influye positivamente en el aprendizaje a colaborar con los distribuidores

Asimismo, la acumulación de experiencias favorece el desempeño de rutinas de relación interorganizativa entre fabricantes y distribuidores (Zollo et al., 2002). La adquisición de conocimiento permite desarrollar un aprendizaje a lo largo del tiempo sobre cómo llevar a cabo la relación interorganizativa fabricante-distribuidor (Kale et al., 2000). El establecimiento de procedimientos explícitos de acumulación y aumento del conocimiento de gestión interfirma

asociado con la experiencia relacional previa (Kale y Sing, 1999). Por tanto, proponemos la siguiente hipótesis:

H<sub>3</sub>: La adquisición de conocimiento de los distribuidores influye positivamente sobre el conocimiento sobre el aprendizaje de colaboración con los distribuidores

H<sub>4</sub>: La adquisición de conocimiento de los distribuidores influye positivamente sobre el conocimiento sobre la gestión de los distribuidores

Lukas et al. (1996) proponen un modelo de aprendizaje en el canal de distribución, en el que el aprendizaje a colaboración y el conocimiento generado en la colaboración determinan el desempeño. Asimismo, las organizaciones con más experiencia de interacción con distribuidores tienen mayor facilidad para responder a imprevistos (Anand y Khanna, 2000), aumentando así el desempeño de las decisiones de innovación. Zollo et al. (2002) establecen que aquellas empresas con mayor aprendizaje de colaboración obtienen mejor desempeño. Con objeto de explicar mejor cómo el conocimiento interorganizativo explica los resultados, distinguiremos entre resultados de eficacia y resultados de eficiencia. Por tanto, se proponen las siguientes hipótesis sobre el efecto del aprendizaje sobre el desempeño:

H<sub>5a</sub>: El aprendizaje a colaborar entre fabricante y distribuidor influye positivamente sobre los resultados organizativos de eficacia

H<sub>5b</sub>: El aprendizaje a colaborar entre fabricante y distribuidor influye positivamente sobre los resultados organizativos de eficiencia

H<sub>6a</sub>: El conocimiento de la gestión de los distribuidores influye positivamente sobre los resultados organizativos de eficacia

H<sub>6b</sub>: El conocimiento de la gestión de los distribuidores influye positivamente sobre los resultados organizativos de eficiencia

### **3. Metodología y análisis de datos**

#### ***3.1. Recogida de los datos, muestra y medición de las variables***

Para analizar las relaciones propuestas en el modelo teórico y contrastar las hipótesis de la investigación, se ha seleccionado como escenario empírico la industria productora española de alimentación y bebidas.

En particular, la muestra se compone de 201 empresas productoras españolas, distribuidas a lo largo de la geografía nacional, pertenecientes al sector de alimentación y bebidas. El método de recogida de la información ha sido la entrevista personal con un cuestionario estructurado, dirigido a informadores clave de cada empresa (directivos de marketing).

La Tabla 1 presenta el conjunto de ítems empleados para la medición de los distintos conceptos teóricos, así como las fuentes bibliográficas de las que han sido extraídos.

Para comprobar la unidimensionalidad de cada concepto se realizó un análisis factorial confirmatorio (Anderson y Gerbing, 1988), el cual muestra un ajuste razonable a los datos (Tabla 1). Los índices de ajuste tradicionalmente considerados se encuentran dentro de un rango aceptable. Además, todos los ítems cargan sobre sus respectivos factores (véase Tabla 1), y los parámetros estimados resultan positivos y significativos, lo que evidencia la presencia de validez convergente (Bagozzi y Yi, 1998). Para el análisis de la validez discriminante se calculó el intervalo de confianza al 99% para las correlaciones de cada par de constructos. Ninguno de ellos incluía el uno.

La fiabilidad de las escalas de medida se calculó a través del índice de fiabilidad compuesta de Bagozzi y Yi (1998) y la varianza media extraída de Fornell y Lacker (1981). En todos los casos fueron superiores a los valores mínimos recomendados (0,6 para la fiabilidad compuesta y 0,5 para la varianza media extraída) (Bagozzi y Yi, 1998).

TABLA 1

**Modelo de medida: análisis factorial confirmatorio y fiabilidad de las escalas**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Carga estandarizada</b>	<b>t-valor</b>	<b>Fiabilidad (SCR<sup>a</sup>, AVE<sup>b</sup>)</b>
<b>Estrategia de explotación</b> (Adaptada a partir de Atuahene-Gima, 2005) <sup>c</sup> 1. Explot1 (*) 2. Explot2 3. Explot3 4. Explot4 5. Explot5			SCR=0,865 AVE=0,617
	0,762 0,771 0,827 0,780	12,062 12,271 13,557 12,481	
<b>Estrategia de exploración</b> (Adaptada a partir de Atuahene-Gima, 2005) <sup>c</sup> 1. Explor1 2. Explor2 3. Explor3 4. Explor4 (*) 5. Explor5			SCR=0,923 AVE=0,750
	0,831 0,873 0,888 0,871	14,169 15,306 15,744 15,246	
<b>Adquisición de conocimiento de los distribuidores</b> (Adaptado a partir de Weerawardena et al., 2006 yKale et al., 2000) <sup>c</sup> 1. Adquis1 2. Adquis2 3. Adquis3 (*) 4. Adquis4 5. Adquis5			SCR=0,907 AVE=0,710
	0,831 0,935 0,886 0,701	14,234 17,265 15,770 11,152	
<b>Aprendizaje de colaboración con los distribuidores</b> (Inspirada en Doz, 1996) <sup>c</sup> 1. Aprend1 2. Aprend2 3. Aprend3 4. Aprend4 5. Aprend5 (*) 6. Aprend6 (*)			SCR=0,942 AVE=0,802
	0,935 0,927 0,887 0,830	17,453 17,169 15,938 14,299	
<b>Gestión de la relación con los distribuidores</b> (Adaptada a partir de Draulans et al., 2003) <sup>c</sup> 1. Gest1 2. Gest2 (*) 3. Gest3 4. Gest4 5. Gest5			SCR=0,898 AVE=0,689
	0,754 0,875 0,732 0,767	12,173 15,229 11,689 12,479	
<b>Eficacia</b> (Adaptado a partir de Kumar et al., 1992 y Quinn y Rohrbaugh, 1983) <sup>d</sup> 1. Eficac1 2. Eficac2 3. Eficac3			SCR=0,805 AVE=0,581
	0,804 0,808 0,666	13,094 13,174 10,126	
<b>Eficiencia</b> (Kandemir et al., 2006, Kumar et al., 1992 y Quinn y Rohrbaugh, 1983) <sup>d</sup> 1. Eficien1 2. Eficien2 3. Eficien3			SCR=0,817 AVE=0,616
	0,914 0,896 0,457	16,241 15,717 6,565	
Indicadores de ajuste del modelo de medida de 26 indicadores y 7 constructos: $\chi^2_{(278)}=633,415$ ; GFI=0,797; RMSEA=0,082; SRMR=0,066; CFI=0,967; TLI (NNFI)=0,961; NFI=0,942			

<sup>a</sup> Fiabilidad compuesta de la escala ( $\rho_c = (\sum \lambda_i)^2 \text{var}(\xi) / [(\sum \lambda_i)^2 \text{var}(\xi) + \sum \theta_{ii}]$ ; Bagozzi y Yi, 1998)).

<sup>b</sup> Average variance extracted ( $\rho_c = (\sum \lambda_i^2 \text{var}(\xi)) / [(\sum \lambda_i^2 \text{var}(\xi) + \sum \theta_{ii}]$ ; Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

<sup>c</sup> Escala: 0=fuerte desacuerdo; 10=fuerte acuerdo

<sup>d</sup> Escala: 1=en absoluto; 5=completamente

(\*) Item eliminado durante el proceso de validación de escalas

#### 4. Resultados

Para la estimación del modelo propuesto, utilizando la metodología de modelización a través de ecuaciones estructurales, se ha empleado el paquete estadístico LISREL en su versión 8.54, aplicando el método de máxima verosimilitud (Jöreskog y Sörbom, 1996) y utilizando como matriz de entrada la de varianzas-covarianzas. El ajuste del modelo es razonablemente aceptable.

TABLA 2  
Resultados del modelo estructural

Relaciones propuestas en el modelo	Parámetros estimados (estandarizados)	
	Parámetro	t-valor
H <sub>1</sub> . Explotación → Adquisición conocimiento	0,47	6,35***
H <sub>2</sub> . Exploration → Adquisición conocimiento	0,31	4,55***
H <sub>3</sub> . Adquisición conocimiento → Aprendizaje colaboración	0,82	12,38***
H <sub>4</sub> . Adquisición conocimiento → Gestión relación	0,83	10,06***
H <sub>5a</sub> . Aprendizaje colaboración → Eficacia	0,44	4,10***
H <sub>5b</sub> . Aprendizaje colaboración → Eficiencia	0,24	2,33**
H <sub>6a</sub> . Gestión relación → Eficacia	0,13	1,25
H <sub>6b</sub> . Gestión relación → Eficiencia	0,21	1,96*
Indicadores de ajuste: $\chi^2_{(290)}=885,28$ ; GFI=0,73 SRMR=0,12 RMSEA=0,11; CFI=0,94; NNFI=0,94		

\*p<0,01; \*\*p<0,05; \*\*\*p<0,01

Tanto las estrategias de explotación como las de exploración ejercen su influencia sobre la adquisición de conocimiento de los distribuidores por parte de las empresas fabricantes, confirmándose así H<sub>1</sub> y H<sub>2</sub>. El efecto de estas estrategias es en ambos casos positivo y significativo.

Se confirman también las hipótesis H<sub>3</sub> y H<sub>4</sub>, puesto que la adquisición de conocimiento procedente de los distribuidores ejerce una influencia positiva y significativa sobre el aprendizaje que las empresas productoras obtienen de la colaboración con sus distribuidores, y también sobre la gestión de dichas relaciones con la distribución.

En cuanto a las contribuciones realizadas al desempeño organizativo, se obtiene que, tanto el aprendizaje derivado de las relaciones entre fabricantes y distribuidores, como la adecuada gestión de esta colaboración, ejercen su influencia, de forma positiva y significativa, sobre los niveles de eficiencia de las empresas productoras (lo que confirma H<sub>5b</sub> y H<sub>6b</sub>). Sin embargo, la eficacia se ve influida tan sólo por el aprendizaje de colaboración (confirmando H<sub>5</sub>), no resultando significativa la aportación en este sentido realizada desde la gestión relacional (se rechaza H<sub>6a</sub>).

#### 5. Conclusiones

El presente estudio centra su atención en dos cuestiones claves en la gestión estratégica de los canales de distribución, como son la gestión del conocimiento externo como actividad esencial para las decisiones de innovación y la influencia de la distribución para el éxito de las decisiones de innovación de los distribuidores. Adoptando una perspectiva de proactividad (Hart, 1995), se plantea cómo la adopción por el fabricante de una estrategia de innovación, de

explotación o de exploración, configura el desarrollo de las capacidades de conocimiento interorganizativo y explica el desempeño organizativo. Previos estudios han considerado el papel de los competidores y los clientes en las decisiones de innovación (p.e., Atuahene-Gima, 2005), pero son escasos los trabajos en los que se identifica al distribuidor como grupo de interés influyente en las decisiones de innovación (excepto el trabajo de Hernández et al., 2011 y Song y Zhao, 2004, hasta lo que hemos encontrado). Los niveles de concentración, interdependencias y poder que los distribuidores han alcanzado en la mayoría de los canales de distribución le otorgan un papel clave con el ejercicio de poder coercitivo y experto por su conocimiento del mercado. Así, en sectores como el agroalimentario, resulta determinante la influencia de los distribuidores para el éxito de las innovaciones realizadas, siendo incluso muchas de ellas realizadas por los propios distribuidores.

A diferencia de la investigación realizada en Hernández *et al.* (2011), se adopta un enfoque proactivo de la estrategia de innovación que permite considerar la configuración de la capacidad relacional con los distribuidores y sus efectos sobre el desempeño. En este sentido, el trabajo presentado constituye una innovación teórica en la secuencia capacidades-estrategia-desempeño.

Los resultados obtenidos en el análisis avalan la influencia que la estrategia de innovación posee sobre la configuración de las capacidades de gestión del conocimiento interrelacional. En cuanto a las limitaciones, señalar la conveniencia de estudiar las relaciones propuestas en otros sectores y profundizar en su validación.

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# ESTIMACIÓN DE LOS EFECTOS DEL TAMAÑO DEL SURTIDO SOBRE LAS VENTAS DE LA CATEGORÍA: ANÁLISIS EMPÍRICO EN EL FORMATO HIPERMERCADO A PARTIR DE ELASTICIDADES\*

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## RESUMEN

*El surtido es una de las herramientas competitivas más importantes con las que cuenta el minorista para diferenciarse de sus competidores. La oferta de un mayor número de referencias puede ayudar al minorista a atraer a un mayor número de individuos al establecimiento y, por tanto, a incrementar las ventas de la categoría. Pero, ¿cuál es la relación entre el tamaño del surtido y el nivel de ventas de la categoría? En este trabajo se realiza una estimación empírica de las elasticidades tamaño de surtido-ventas para doce categorías de producto dentro del sector de los bienes de consumo masivo en el formato hipermercado. Los resultados obtenidos sugieren que la sensibilidad de las ventas a cambios en el número de referencias ofrecido es mayor para aquellas categorías adquiridas de forma menos frecuente y por un menor porcentaje de hogares/individuos.*

## Palabras clave

Surtido, Elasticidad tamaño de surtido-ventas, minorista, hipermercado

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## 1. Introducción

El surtido es, sin lugar a dudas, una de las herramientas competitivas más poderosas con las que cuenta el minorista para lograr diferenciarse de sus competidores (Simonson, 1999; Stassen et al., 1999). De hecho, el surtido junto con la localización y el nivel de precios del establecimiento se configura como uno de los aspectos determinantes, no solo para atraer clientes al establecimiento (Kahn, 1999), sino también para lograr retenerlos (Grewal et al., 1999).

La noción de variedad del surtido a nivel minorista puede ser analizada desde una perspectiva técnica y una perspectiva operativa o de medida. En base a la primera, la variedad de surtido se refiere al número de opciones disponibles dentro de una categoría específica de producto. A nivel operativo, la variedad de surtido puede ser analizada, a su vez, desde una perspectiva objetiva o perceptual en función de la medida utilizada (Peng, 2008). Desde el punto de vista objetivo, dos medidas son las tradicionalmente utilizadas: (1) tamaño del surtido – representado por el número total de *SKU*<sup>2</sup>'s – (Chiang y Wilcox, 1997), y (2) composición del surtido – representado, e.g., por diferentes atributos de la categoría como la marca o el sabor (Boatwright y Nunes, 2001). Las medidas perceptuales relacionadas con la variedad de surtido incluyen aspectos como la facilidad de compra (Broniarczyk y Hoyer, 2006), la disponibilidad de la marca preferida por el consumidor (Broniarczyk et al., 1998) o la congruencia entre la organización del surtido que tiene el consumidor en su mente y la que desarrolla el propio minorista (Morales et al., 2005). En este trabajo adoptaremos una perspectiva objetiva de variedad de surtido basada en el número total de referencias ofertadas dentro de una categoría de producto.

El tamaño del surtido parece tener una relación directa sobre la variedad percibida por parte del individuo (Chernev, 2011). Por ejemplo, Amine y Cadenat (2003) hallan como, más allá de la disponibilidad de las principales marcas nacionales y de las marcas preferidas, los individuos utilizan principalmente el número de *SKU*'s cuando evalúan un surtido determinado. En este contexto, la mayor o menor variedad de referencias ofertadas en un surtido parece influir en el tráfico del establecimiento y, por tanto, en el nivel de ventas. Así, múltiples autores (e.g., Arnold et al., 1978; Brown, 1978) hallan un efecto positivo de la variedad de surtido sobre la elección de establecimiento. Los surtidos más grandes tienden a ser percibidos como de mayor variedad, lo que se considera, tradicionalmente, que beneficia al consumidor (Chernev, 2006). Sin embargo, una corriente investigadora alternativa sugiere que los surtidos más grandes no siempre benefician la elección del consumidor (Chernev, 2003a), ya que crean confusión y pueden conducir, potencialmente, a una “saturación cognoscitiva” del individuo (Hauser y Wenerfelt, 1990), incrementando la probabilidad de retrasar la decisión de elección o de, incluso, no elegir nada (Chernev, 2003b). Teniendo en cuenta todos estos aspectos, los resultados de estos trabajos sugieren que en presencia de un nivel de incertidumbre acerca de la preferencia del individuo, las elecciones a realizar en un surtido de mayor tamaño pueden potencialmente provocar un descenso de la probabilidad de elección de cualquiera de las alternativas presentes, así como una menor preferencia por la opción finalmente seleccionada (Chernev, 2006:51).

Sin embargo, una corriente investigadora alternativa sugiere que los surtidos más grandes no siempre benefician la elección del consumidor (Chernev, 2003a), ya que crean confusión, incrementando la probabilidad de retrasar la decisión de elección o de, incluso, no elegir nada (Chernev, 2003a, 2003b; Dhar, 1997; Greenleaf and Lehmann, 1995; Schwartz et al., 2002). Además, los surtidos más grandes pueden conducir, igualmente, a una menor preferencia debido a la demanda creciente de recursos cognitivos del individuo que genera el hecho de tener que evaluar el atractivo de las distintas (muchas) opciones disponibles (Huffman y Kahn, 1998; Jacoby et al., 1974; Shugan, 1980). Este esfuerzo extra puede conducir potencialmente a una “saturación cognoscitiva” del individuo (Hauser y Wenerfelt, 1990; Malhotra, 1982). Teniendo en cuenta todos estos aspectos, los resultados de estos trabajos sugieren que en presencia de un nivel de incertidumbre acerca de la preferencia del individuo, las elecciones a realizar en un surtido de mayor tamaño pueden potencialmente provocar un descenso de la probabilidad de elección de cualquiera de las alternativas presentes, así como una menor preferencia por la opción finalmente seleccionada (Chernev, 2006:51). De hecho, varios autores (e.g., Boatwright

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<sup>2</sup> *Stock Keeping Unit*

y Nunes, 2001; Broniarczyk et al., 1998; Dreze et al., 1994) muestran como la reducción del tamaño de un surtido puede incrementar la probabilidad de compra de dicho surtido, conduciendo a un incremento en las ventas. Así, Iyengar y Lepper (2000), utilizando el jamón cocido como categoría, muestran que los consumidores mostraban mayor probabilidad de realizar una compra cuando se enfrentaban a un surtido compuesto por seis referencias que cuando el surtido estaba compuesto por 24 referencias (30% vs. 3%, respectivamente). Resultados similares han sido recogidos por múltiples autores en una variedad de categorías de producto, e.g., productos de electrónica (Chernev, 2003a), chocolate (Berger et al., 2007; Chernev, 2003b) o fondos de inversión (Iyengar et al., 2004; Huberman et al., 2007; Morrin et al., 2008, 2011).

Comprender la relación entre el tamaño del surtido y las ventas de la categoría es particularmente interesante para la gestión minorista. En este sentido, un conocimiento acerca de cómo las ventas reaccionan ante modificaciones en el número de referencias ofrecidas puede ser de ayuda para que el minorista organice sus surtidos. En este trabajo se desarrolla una estimación empírica de las elasticidades del tamaño del surtido para doce categorías de producto dentro del formato hipermercado (grande y pequeño). Si bien, y tal y como se ha señalado anteriormente, existen trabajos que han analizado la relación entre el tamaño del surtido y el nivel de ventas de la categoría, ninguno de ellos lo han hecho a través de la estimación de las elasticidades tamaño del surtido-nivel de ventas. Las categorías de producto utilizadas han sido caracterizadas a partir de la tipología desarrollada por Dhar et al. (2001) que utiliza la penetración y la frecuencia de compra como aspectos que permiten clasificar las categorías de producto ofrecidas en los lineales de los establecimientos.

## 2. Revisión de la literatura

Wroe Alderson acuñó el concepto de surtido en marketing a comienzos de los años 50 (Wind, 1977). Alderson (1957:195) definió el surtido como “una colección heterogénea de productos diseñados para servir las necesidades de algún sistema de comportamiento”. Hoy en día, y con la intensa competencia existente en el sector de la gran distribución (especialmente en el contexto de la distribución alimentaria), el surtido se ha convertido en uno de los elementos fundamentales para atraer nuevos consumidores al establecimiento (Kahn, 1999) y retener a los consumidores habituales (Grewal et al., 1999).

En general, y hasta hace relativamente poco, la literatura asumía la mayor preferencia del consumidor por aquellos surtidos con una mayor variedad. De hecho, en numerosas disciplinas (véase Chernev, 2003), como la psicología social, la economía o el comportamiento del consumidor, se asume que una mayor variedad beneficia al consumidor (Chernev, 2006). Así, desde el punto de vista de la economía, los surtidos de mayor tamaño ofrecen una mayor oportunidad para que el consumidor satisfaga sus preferencias (Kahneman et al., 1997). En este sentido, los consumidores tienen mayor confianza en la elección entre minoristas con surtidos de mayor tamaño, ya que es poco probable que no exista su “referencia preferida” (Chernev, 2011). Pero, además de la mayor probabilidad de que el consumidor encuentre su marca/alternativa preferida en aquellos surtidos de mayor tamaño, el hecho de contar con múltiples referencias en su conjunto de elección puede generar una utilidad adicional al individuo (Broniarczyk et al., 1998; Oppewal y Koelemeijer, 2005). En este sentido, cuanto menor es el número de limitaciones que puedan existir en el proceso de toma de decisiones, mayor es la libertad de decisión del individuo (Brehm, 1972) y el control que éste percibe sobre dicho proceso (Inesi et al., 2011). Además, los surtidos de mayor tamaño permiten mantener un mayor nivel de flexibilidad al individuo en sus procesos de elección (véase Kahn y Lehmann [1991] para una revisión en esta línea). Esta flexibilidad es muy importante, ya que permite al individuo mantener sus “opciones de elección abiertas” a la vista de la incertidumbre o la ambigüedad en relación a futuros gustos o situaciones particulares de compra (Kreps, 1979).

No obstante, una corriente investigadora alternativa parece sugerir que los surtidos más grandes no siempre benefician la elección del consumidor (Chernev, 2003), ya que crean confusión, incrementando la probabilidad de retrasar la decisión de elección o de, incluso, no elegir nada (Dhar, 1997; Schwartz et al., 2002). Además, los surtidos más grandes pueden conducir, igualmente, a una menor preferencia debido a la demanda creciente de recursos cognitivos del individuo que genera el hecho de tener que evaluar el atractivo de las distintas (muchas) opciones disponibles (Huffman y

Kahn, 1998; Shugan, 1980). Este esfuerzo extra puede conducir potencialmente a una “saturación cognoscitiva” del individuo (Hauser y Wernerfelt, 1990; Malhotra, 1982).

Desde la perspectiva del minorista, los surtidos de mayor tamaño son considerados menos deseables desde el punto de vista de los costes (Bayus and Putsis, Jr., 1999; Moorthy, 1984). Parece, por tanto, que desde la perspectiva de costes, para el distribuidor es mucho más beneficioso trabajar con surtidos reducidos, ya que se minimizan los costes de inventario, almacenamiento, logísticos, financieros, etc., lo que a su vez se puede traducir en un mayor poder de negociación frente a los proveedores.

Dados los resultados contradictorios anteriormente expuestos, el sentido de la relación causal entre tamaño del surtido y nivel de ventas no parece estar del todo clara. Aunque los trabajos anteriormente mencionados han examinado la relación entre ambos aspectos, la mayoría de ellos lo han hecho a través de la metodología experimental. Sin embargo, esta es una técnica que hace difícil el llegar a conclusiones definitivas dadas las propias características del diseño experimental (Corstjens y Doyle, 1981); además, aunque puede ser utilizada para detectar la existencia de correlación entre las diferencias entre el tamaño del surtido y las variaciones de la demanda, no permite conocer la existencia de causalidad entre ambas variables.

### 3. Metodología

Los datos utilizados en este trabajo han sido proporcionados por la empresa *IRI Worldwide*, a partir de su panel de detallistas *Infoscan*, el cual incluye información sobre los establecimientos de libre servicio de más de 100m<sup>2</sup> con tecnología escáner y ubicados en todo el territorio español. A enero de 2013 existían en España 17.496 establecimientos detallistas de alimentación con estas características. Estos establecimientos son los que conforman el universo de tiendas que el panel de detallistas de IRI utiliza. Según los responsables de *IRI*, aún cuando los establecimientos que conforman el panel suponen el 86,9% de la cuota de mercado a nivel nacional, las características del proceso de recogida de información<sup>3</sup> y los factores de proyección utilizados por la consultora, permiten afirmar que las cifras de surtido y ventas de este panel y, por tanto, de este trabajo, son totalmente representativos del 100% del universo de establecimientos existente en España. Es por ello que la consultora utiliza como dato de referencia de su panel el número total de establecimientos existentes en nuestro país. Estos establecimientos son agrupados por área geográfica y por formato. No obstante, y como hemos indicado con anterioridad, en este trabajo nos vamos a centrar en el formato hipermercado; la consultora *IRI* diferencia entre hipermercado grande (superficie de venta > 5.000m<sup>2</sup>) y pequeño (superficie de venta entre 2.501m<sup>2</sup> y 5.000m<sup>2</sup>). En España a 1 de enero de 2013 existían 424 hipermercados, de los que 131 eran considerados pequeños y 293 grandes.

La base de datos utilizada incluye información semanal de las ventas y el tamaño del surtido por categoría para un conjunto de cinco años (2008-2012). En particular, hemos utilizado doce categorías de producto, agrupándolas a partir de la clasificación desarrollada por Dhar et al. (2001), la cual es utilizada habitualmente en los trabajos que analizan el papel de la categoría de producto en los diversos aspectos relacionados con el establecimiento de venta y el comportamiento del consumidor<sup>4</sup>. Estos autores distinguen cuatro tipos de categorías de producto, en función de la frecuencia de compra (número medio de veces que la categoría es comprada en un período determinado de tiempo) y de la penetración (porcentaje de individuos que compran la categoría): (1) productos habituales (*staple*) (elevada frecuencia y penetración); (2) productos nicho (*niche*) (elevada frecuencia y baja penetración); (3) productos potenciadores de variedad (*variety enhancers*) (baja frecuencia y elevada penetración), y (4) productos de relleno (*fill-in*) (baja frecuencia y baja penetración). Para la selección de las categorías y la inclusión en cada una de los cuatro tipos definidos en la tipología de Dhar et al. (2001) se ha utilizado una muestra de 53 categorías que representan más del 60% de las ventas de

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<sup>3</sup> Según información de la propia consultora, el 100% de los establecimientos de las cadenas principales (que suponen casi el 77% de la cuota de mercado nacional) forman parte de manera “permanente” del panel. Además, en cada período se seleccionan aleatoriamente otros establecimientos (e.g., de grupos de distribución locales y de Euromadi) que suponen un 10% adicional de la cuota de mercado nacional recogida anualmente por el panel. Igualmente, hay que tener en cuenta que el 100% de los establecimientos existentes en Canarias forma parte del panel. Finalmente, cabe destacar que algunas cadenas de establecimientos aportan datos por provincia, de manera que la información incluye a todos los establecimientos situados en la misma

<sup>4</sup> Otra de las clasificaciones habitualmente utilizadas es la que diferencia entre categorías utilitarias y categorías hedónicas

bienes de consumo envasados en España, de modo que utilizando la información sobre la rotación y el volumen de ventas de cada categoría, hemos obtenido un ranking que nos ha permitido clasificar cada categoría en función de su frecuencia de compra y su nivel de penetración. A partir de dicho ranking hemos seleccionado doce categorías (3 por tipo) de modo que estuvieran incluidos productos de alimentación, higiene y cuidado personal, así como productos de limpieza. En particular, las ocho categorías utilizadas han sido las siguientes: *leche de larga duración*, *yogur* y *cerveza* (productos habituales), *pan de molde*, *bollería industrial* y *frutos secos* (productos nicho), *atún*, *café* y *papel higiénico* (productos potenciadores de variedad), y, finalmente, *desodorante*, *ambientador* y *detergente de máquina en polvo* (productos de relleno).

Las elasticidades tamaño del surtido-ventas han sido estimadas a partir de una función de demanda que relaciona ambas variables. Así, las ventas (en unidades físicas) han sido utilizadas como variable dependiente, mientras que el tamaño del surtido, así como una variable de retardo se han utilizado como variables explicativas. Cabe señalar que las ventas en unidades son la variable más utilizada en los modelos de respuesta de ventas que utilizan datos a nivel de establecimiento/categoría (Blattberg y George, 1991). El tamaño del surtido es medido como el número de SKUs por categoría. El uso de esta variable está en consonancia con lo que múltiples estudios previos de la literatura emplean (véase, e.g., Chiang y Wilcox, 1997). La variable de retardo se incluye con objeto de capturar el efecto dinámico de la respuesta de las ventas al tamaño del surtido y, adicionalmente, para eliminar la correlación residual de la serie de datos (véase Blattberg y George, 1991).

Para modelizar la relación entre tamaño del surtido y nivel de ventas hemos utilizado un modelo logarítmico por varias razones: (1) porque la elasticidad es obtenida directamente de los parámetros estimados; (2) porque proporciona mejores ajustes en términos de la suma de los errores cuadráticos para un mayor tamaño muestral, y (3) porque la ‘sobre-estimación’ de los valores de las elasticidades –en caso de que se produzcan– es menor que la obtenida en otras formas como la lineal (Bolton, 1989). Por tanto, el modelo utilizado para la función de respuesta de las ventas para cada uno de los dos formatos de hipermercado (grande vs. pequeño) y para cada una de las doce categorías de producto es el siguiente:

$$LS_{ijt} = \beta_{0ij} + \beta_{1ij}LAS_{ijt} + \beta_{2ij}LS_{ijt(t-1)} + \varepsilon_{ijt} \quad (1)$$

donde  $i = 1, 2, \dots, 12$  se refiere a la categoría de producto,  $j = 1, 2$  al formato de hipermercado,  $t$  (1, ... 260) a la semana de referencia, y

$LS_{ijt}$  = Logaritmo de las ventas (unidades físicas)

$LAS_{ijt}$  = Logaritmo del tamaño del surtido (nº de SKUs)

$\beta_{0ij}$  = Término constante

$\beta_{1ij}$  = Elasticidad tamaño del surtido-ventas para la categoría de producto  $i$ , y el formato  $j$

$\varepsilon_{ijt}$  = Término de perturbación estocástica (se asume independiente e idénticamente distribuido a partir de una normal de media 0 y varianza  $\sigma^2_{\varepsilon_{ijt}}$ )

#### 4. Resultados

La estimación de las elasticidades del tamaño del surtido son satisfactorias, tal y como pone de manifiesto la significatividad de los *tests-F* (todos significativos al 99%). El valor del coeficiente de ajuste  $R^2$  es elevado para todos los modelos estimados, oscilando entre 0,024 y 0,849 (el valor medio del coeficiente  $R^2$  para el conjunto de modelos estimados es 0,4683). La distribución de la elasticidad por formato y categoría se muestra en la tabla 1.

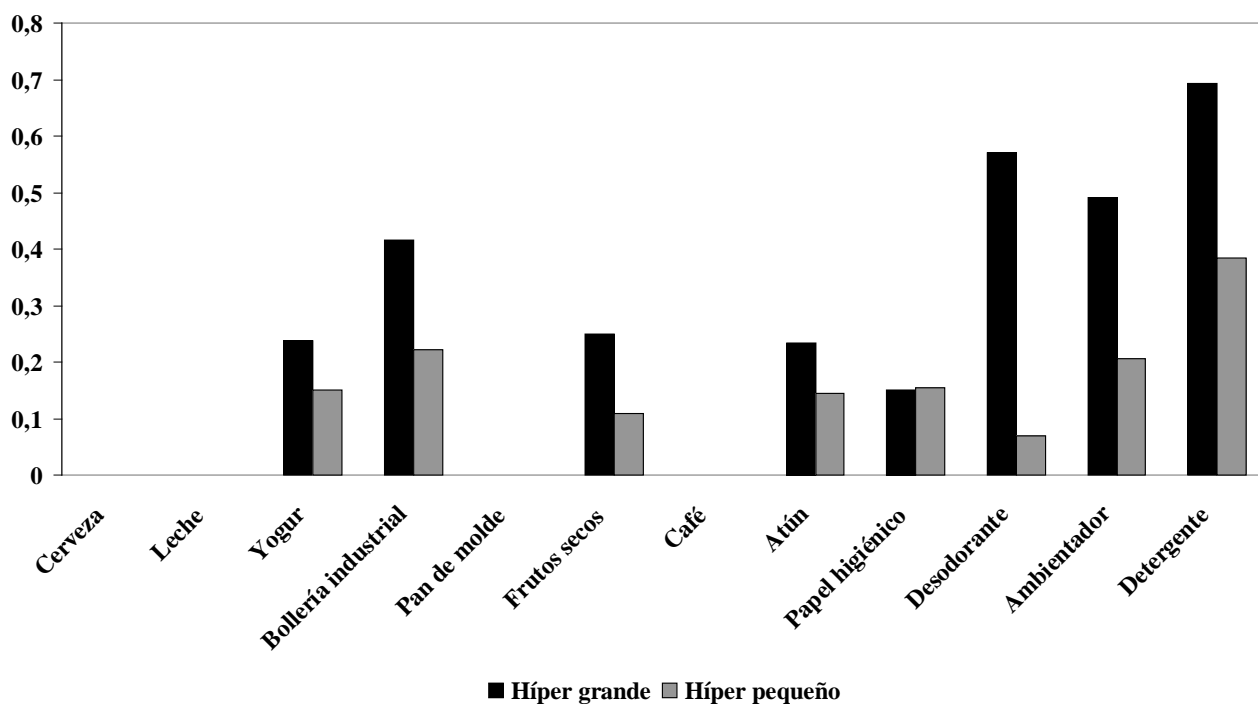
**TABLA 1**  
**Distribución de las elasticidades medias (para el conjunto de categorías) del tamaño de surtido entre formatos**

		<b>Habituales</b>			<b>Nicho</b>		
		<i>Cerveza</i>	<i>Leche</i>	<i>Yogur</i>	<i>Bollería industrial</i>	<i>Pan de molde</i>	<i>Frutos secos</i>
<i>Híper grande</i>	<i>Tamaño del surtido</i>	0,032	-0,081	0,238***	0,415***	-0,050	0,250***
	<i>Variable de retardo</i>	0,702***	0,271***	0,609***	0,563***	0,373***	0,577***
	<i>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></i>	0,494	0,082	0,614	0,849	0,138	0,507
<i>Híper pequeño</i>	<i>Tamaño del surtido</i>	0,060	-0,003	0,150**	0,221***	-0,004	0,109*
	<i>Variable de retardo</i>	0,858***	0,177**	0,755***	0,724***	0,655***	0,622***
	<i>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></i>	0,766	0,024	0,747	0,765	0,424	0,418
		<b>Potenciadores de variedad</b>			<b>Relleno</b>		
		<i>Café</i>	<i>Atún</i>	<i>Papel higiénico</i>	<i>Desodorante</i>	<i>Ambientador</i>	<i>Detergente</i>
<i>Híper grande</i>	<i>Tamaño del surtido</i>	0,027	0,233***	0,151*	0,571***	0,491***	0,694***
	<i>Variable de retardo</i>	0,349***	0,511***	0,245***	0,282***	0,414***	0,183***
	<i>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></i>	0,115	0,369	0,088	0,582	0,509	0,714
<i>Híper pequeño</i>	<i>Tamaño del surtido</i>	0,013	0,145***	0,154**	0,070*	0,205***	0,385***
	<i>Variable de retardo</i>	0,377***	0,765***	0,511***	0,822***	0,554***	0,543***
	<i>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></i>	0,134	0,705	0,317	0,697	0,405	0,776

\*\*\*  $p < 0,0001$  \*\*  $p < 0,01$  \*  $p < 0,05$

Gráficamente, la figura 1 nos muestra la representación gráfica de los valores de las elasticidades del tamaño de surtido para cada una de las categorías y los dos tipos de hipermercado considerados (las elasticidades no significativas han sido consideradas como cero).

**FIGURA 1**  
**Elasticidades tamaño del surtido – ventas**





Las elasticidades tamaño de surtido-ventas varían de forma considerable entre categorías de producto y entre ambos formatos. Como podemos observar en la tabla 1, existen algunas categorías de producto cuyas elasticidades no difieren significativamente de cero al 95%. Es el caso de dos productos habituales (cerveza y leche), un producto nicho (pan de molde), y un producto potenciador de variedad (café). El valor no significativo de estas elasticidades supone que un incremento (o decremento) del número de referencias ofrecido no produce ningún cambio significativo en el nivel de ventas de la categoría. Las categorías no sensibles al tamaño del surtido abarcan todas las tipologías de producto excepto los productos de relleno (i.e., desodorante, ambientador y detergente de máquina en polvo), cuyas elasticidades son todas significativas. Cabe destacar que de las cuatro categorías con elasticidades no significativas, dos de ellas son consideradas como habituales, lo que parece señalar que en productos adquiridos de manera muy frecuente por una mayoría de hogares, son aspectos diferentes al tamaño del surtido los que pueden incrementar las ventas de la categoría.

La figura 1 muestra como son las categorías de relleno, i.e., aquellas adquiridas de manera menos frecuente y por un porcentaje menor de hogares (ambientador, desodorante y detergente de máquina en polvo), las que mayor sensibilidad presentan a cambios en el tamaño del surtido. Esta mayor sensibilidad es especialmente destacable en el caso del hipermercado grande. De hecho, la elasticidad tamaño del surtido-ventas media para el conjunto de categorías dentro del formato hipermercado grande es muy superior al formato hipermercado pequeño (0,2535 vs. 0,1199), lo que sugiere una mayor capacidad de los hipermercados de mayor tamaño para modificar el nivel de ventas de sus categorías de producto utilizando el número de referencias.

Por categoría, la tabla 2 muestra el valor medio de las elasticidades tamaño del surtido-ventas para cada una de las doce categorías de producto analizadas, para los dos tipos de hipermercados considerados.

TABLA2  
Distribución de las elasticidades del tamaño de surtido entre categorías

	Habituales			Nicho			Potenciadores variedad			Relleno		
	Cerveza	Leche	Yogur	Bollería industrial	Pan molde	Frutos secos	Café	Atún	Papel higiénico	Desodorante	Ambientador	Detergente
Elasticidad	— <sup>a</sup>	—	0,194	0,318	—	0,180	—	0,189	0,153	0,321	0,348	0,540
	0,064			0,060			0,220			0,402		

<sup>a</sup>No significativamente distinto de cero

Como podemos observar en la tabla 2, el valor de la elasticidad tamaño de surtido-ventas para las categorías habituales y nicho es muy similar, y mucho más reducido que para las categorías potenciadoras de variedad y, sobre todo, para las categorías de relleno. En este sentido, la sensibilidad de las ventas de las categorías habituales y nicho frente a cambios en el tamaño del surtido es aproximadamente cuatro veces menor a la sensibilidad de categorías potenciadoras de variedad, y casi siete veces menor a la sensibilidad de categorías consideradas de relleno.

## 5. Conclusiones

Los resultados obtenidos apoyan la relación positiva entre tamaño de surtido y ventas encontrada en trabajos previos. Así, las elasticidades tamaño del surtido-ventas son significativamente no diferentes de cero para una mayoría de categorías de producto en los dos formatos de hipermercados analizados. La excepción son dos de las categorías habituales, una categoría nicho y otra potenciadora de variedad. Estos resultados indican que, de alguna manera, las características de la categoría de producto condicionan la sensibilidad de las ventas de la misma ante cambios en el tamaño del surtido. Igualmente, parece que existen diferencias entre el tamaño del hipermercado, dado que el valor medio de las elasticidades para el caso de los hipermercados más grandes duplica al de los hipermercados pequeños. Parece, por tanto, que hay una relación directa entre el tamaño y la sensibilidad (una vez consideradas las diferencias entre las categorías de producto). Por otra parte, en todos los casos en los que la elasticidad es significativa, ésta toma un valor positivo, señalando que cuanto mayor es el

número de referencias ofertadas dentro de una categoría, mayor es el nivel de ventas de la misma, de modo que esa relación no cambia.

En relación a la categoría de producto, nuestros resultados muestran como las categorías de relleno son las que mayor sensibilidad presentan (valor medio de 0,402) ante modificaciones del tamaño del surtido. Este resultado sugiere que el incremento del tamaño del surtido (nº de referencias) en aquellas categorías adquiridas de manera menos habitual y de forma menos frecuente por parte del individuo ofrece los mejores resultados en categorías de este tipo. Por el contrario, aquellas categorías más frecuentemente adquiridas por el consumidor (tanto por una mayoría de hogares (i.e., productos habituales) como por un porcentaje menor (i.e., productos nicho)) presentan la menor sensibilidad frente a cambios en el número de referencias, por lo que parece que el surtido no va a ser uno de los aspectos que mayor efecto vaya a generar en el nivel de ventas de la categoría. Esto probablemente se deba al elevado nivel de “saturación” de referencias que estas categorías presentan (Drèze et al., 1994). Dados estos resultados, recomendamos a los minoristas que para este tipo de categorías prioricen la utilización de otras herramientas de marketing que tal vez sí puedan incrementar el nivel de ventas de la categoría de manera significativa (e.g., promociones de ventas) frente a estrategias de incremento del número de referencias ofertadas. En línea con este resultado, parece, incluso, que un descenso en el tamaño medio de los surtidos de categorías adquiridas de manera muy frecuente puede ser incluso beneficioso para el minorista, dado que es probable que el descenso de los costes de stock y de gestión de los surtidos más pequeños compense el descenso (muy reducido) de las ventas de estas categorías.

El ahorro de costes derivado del menor tamaño del surtido en las categorías de elevada frecuencia de compra podría, adicionalmente, compensar el mayor coste que supondría incrementar el tamaño de los surtidos de las categorías de baja frecuencia. Y es que en estas categorías, el incremento del tamaño del surtido sí que tiene un efecto positivo mucho mayor. Así, para el caso de los productos potenciadores de variedad, un incremento del 10% en el tamaño del surtido supone un aumento del nivel de ventas de la categoría en un 2,2%, mientras que para el caso de los productos de relleno este incremento es superior al 4%. Parece, por tanto, que en este tipo de categorías de producto el surtido es un aspecto de la estrategia del minorista que puede estimular las ventas de un modo más significativo, por lo que es recomendable su utilización junto con otras herramientas del marketing mix.

En definitiva, nuestros resultados aconsejan al minorista que tenga en cuenta las características de las categorías de producto en términos de frecuencia y penetración, a la hora de decidir si puede ser o no interesante la modificación del número de referencias con objeto de incrementar el nivel de ventas de la categoría. En este sentido, parece que el surtido juega un papel mucho más significativo en categorías compradas de manera menos frecuente que en aquellas adquiridas de manera muy habitual por parte del consumidor. La menor influencia del surtido sobre el nivel de ventas en estas categorías más frecuentes puede ser analizada desde una doble perspectiva: desde la perspectiva del incremento del surtido o desde el punto de vista de la reducción del mismo. Desde la primera, la capacidad del surtido para incrementar las ventas se manifiesta escasa; desde la segunda, reducciones importantes del surtido parecen no provocar descensos muy significativos de las ventas, por lo que si el objetivo es reducir costes vía disminución del número de referencias, este tipo de categorías es el contexto idóneo para hacerlo. Por otra parte, en aquellas categorías adquiridas de manera menos habitual, la mayor sensibilidad de las ventas a cambios en el número de referencias ofrecido ofrece una oportunidad para aquellos establecimientos que quieran incrementar el tamaño del surtido, pero, igualmente, supone una llamada de atención para los establecimientos que quieran reducir dicho tamaño, dado que las consecuencias sobre el nivel de ventas de estas categorías va a ser mucho mayor.

## **6. Limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación**

Como cualquier trabajo de investigación, este estudio no está exento de limitaciones que, por otra parte, abren la posibilidad a futuras investigaciones. En primer lugar, hay que tener en cuenta que la evolución de las ventas y el éxito de un establecimiento/marca no depende, únicamente, del tamaño del surtido, sino que existen otros aspectos de la estrategia de marketing del minorista – tal y como hemos comentado en el apartado anterior de conclusiones – que van a influir en el éxito del mismo. En

este sentido, en este trabajo nos hemos centrado en el surtido como variable “fundamental” de éxito para un minorista, pero aspectos como el precio, la cercanía o las promociones también son muy relevantes en este análisis. Sería, por tanto, muy interesante poder desarrollar un marco de estudio en el que, además del tamaño del surtido, se incluyan otros aspectos relacionados con la gestión del establecimiento. Otra de las limitaciones de este estudio se refiere al formato analizado. En este sentido, en trabajos futuros sería interesante incluir en el análisis otros formatos de distribución (e.g., supermercados y discounters), de modo que nos permitiera conocer si la relación obtenida en este trabajo es extensible a otros formatos de distribución. La no diferenciación entre marcas nacionales y marcas de distribuidor es otra de las limitaciones. En futuros trabajos sería interesante poder estimar elasticidades diferenciadas para cada tipo de marca, dado que aspectos como la preferencia, la lealtad y, en definitiva, el comportamiento de compra del consumidor son diferentes para un tipo de marcas y otro. Finalmente, sería interesante utilizar tipologías de categorías de producto diferentes a la utilizada en este trabajo y desarrollada por Dhar et al. (2001). Si bien es cierto que dicha tipología es ampliamente utilizada en el ámbito de la gestión por categorías, sería interesante utilizar el carácter utilitario o hedónico de la categoría para agruparlas; esto nos permitiría comparar las similitudes y diferencias entre los resultados. Finalmente, cabe señalar que el análisis se ha limitado a doce categorías de producto, por lo que sería interesante ampliar los resultados con un mayor número de categorías de producto.

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# LA SATISFACCIÓN CON LA RECUPERACIÓN DEL SERVICIO: EFECTO MODERADOR DE LA EDAD EN EL BOCA-OÍDO POSTERIOR<sup>1</sup>

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## RESUMEN

*El estudio de las valoraciones y conductas del consumidor asociadas al proceso de recuperación del servicio es un tema de gran interés académico y empresarial. En este contexto, nuestro objetivo es, por una parte, analizar los efectos directos de esta cadena de relaciones “atribuciones causales y esfuerzos de recuperación → satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio → intenciones de boca-oído y de boca-oído online” y, por otra parte, estudiar el papel moderador que tiene la edad en la relación entre la satisfacción y el boca-oído posterior. Utilizando una muestra de 336 sujetos que han experimentado un fallo en algún establecimiento minorista, los resultados del modelo de ecuaciones estructurales confirman los efectos directos propuestos. Además, el análisis multigrupo revela que la edad modera la relación entre la satisfacción y el boca-oído online. Estos resultados derivan en implicaciones importantes para la gestión y en futuras líneas de investigación.*

## Palabras clave:

Recuperación del servicio, satisfacción, atribuciones, boca-oído, comercio minorista

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## 1. Introducción

En el proceso de prestación del servicio es muy difícil que las empresas puedan eliminar todos los fallos, incluso aunque tengan una clara orientación al cliente y ofrezcan altos niveles de excelencia (Del Rio et al., 2009). La variabilidad inherente al servicio hace que sea imposible garantizar el 100% de servicios libres de errores (Lovelock y Wirtz, 2004). Cuando el cliente percibe algún fallo se genera un nivel de insatisfacción que puede favorecer el cambio de proveedor, el boca-oreja negativo o cualquier forma de queja (Crié, 2003). Por tanto, recuperar al cliente es crucial para evitar estas consecuencias negativas. En esta línea, existen muchas aportaciones que destacan la importancia que tiene una recuperación exitosa del servicio en la satisfacción posterior (p.e. Holloway y Beatty, 2003), en la repetición de compra (p.e. Mattila, 2001) y en las comunicaciones boca-oído (p.e. Swanson y Hsu, 2009).

La investigación sobre la recuperación del servicio es extensa y su interés continúa siendo de gran importancia tanto para académicos como gestores (Kunz y Hogreve, 2011). En la literatura se han propuesto diversos antecedentes de la satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio y entre ellos destacan las atribuciones que realiza el consumidor sobre las causas del fallo (Maxham y Netemeyer, 2002). También son importantes las estrategias y esfuerzos que realiza la empresa para conseguir la recuperación del servicio. En este sentido, existen evidencias empíricas del efecto que tiene una recuperación exitosa en la satisfacción del cliente (p.e. Smith et al., 1999). En cuanto a las consecuencias de la satisfacción con la recuperación, numerosos trabajos confirman el impacto positivo que tienen dicha satisfacción en las respuestas de lealtad (Cambra et al., 2013) y concretamente en los comentarios boca-oído (Kau y Loh, 2006).

En este contexto, nuestro objetivo se centra en estudiar el proceso de satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio en el ámbito del comercio minorista a partir de dos tipos de relaciones. Por una parte, pretendemos investigar los efectos directos que se producen en la siguiente cadena de relaciones: atribuciones causales y esfuerzos de recuperación → satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio → intenciones de boca-oído y de boca-oído online. Y por otra parte, abordamos el estudio del efecto moderador que tiene la edad del cliente en la relación entre la satisfacción con la recuperación y las intenciones de boca-oído y de boca-oído online.

## 2. Revisión teórica

Un fallo en un servicio se refiere a cualquier problema que ocurra en la interacción entre el comprador y el proveedor (Michel y Meuter, 2008). Cuando se produce un fallo, las empresas pueden desarrollar un conjunto de acciones para tratar de resolver el problema con el cliente (Grönroos, 1998). Autores como Smith et al. (1999) y Chang y Hsiao (2008) destacan que, a diferencia de la gestión de quejas que tiene carácter reactivo, la recuperación del servicio es un proceso proactivo que persigue una solución satisfactoria, orientación al cliente y lo más rápida posible. Así pues, se puede definir la recuperación del servicio como el *“proceso que identifica el fallo, resuelve de forma efectiva el problema con el cliente, clasifica la causa que lo ha originado y genera información sobre cómo mejorar el proceso de prestación del servicio”* (Tax y Brown, 2000: p. 272). Más recientemente, Michel et al. (2009: p. 267) definen este proceso como *“las acciones que desarrolla una empresa para reestablecer la satisfacción y la lealtad del cliente después del fallo, para asegurar que el incidente consiga mejorar el proceso y para capacitar y recompensar a los empleados para esta tarea”*. Según este enfoque, se reconocen tres partes en el proceso de recuperación: el cliente, el proceso y los empleados. Por tanto, los clientes y los empleados de primera línea adquieren un papel fundamental en el proceso de recuperación del servicio (Edvardsson et al., 2011).

La satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio se refiere a la evaluación favorable que realiza el consumidor cuando compara los beneficios y sacrificios del fallo experimentado con las consecuencias de la solución del problema (Huang, 2011). Considerando este tipo de satisfacción, analizamos en primer lugar los dos antecedentes propuestos (las atribuciones causales y la percepción sobre los esfuerzos de recuperación del servicio), posteriormente las

consecuencias en forma de intenciones de boca-oído (tanto convencional como online) y, por último, el efecto moderador de la edad del cliente.

### ***2.1. Las atribuciones causales***

Según la teoría de las atribuciones, los consumidores buscan las causas del resultado de una experiencia de compra, sobre todo cuando se trata de algo inesperado (Weiner, 2000). En este proceso, los individuos pueden identificar las causas del éxito o fracaso de su experiencia utilizando tres criterios: el origen, la estabilidad y el control (Folkes, 1984; Folkes et al., 1987; Bitner et al. 1990). Así pues, considerando situaciones de fallo en el servicio, los consumidores pueden realizar los tres siguientes tipos de atribuciones.

Las atribuciones de origen o *locus* se refieren a la búsqueda del origen. El consumidor puede percibir que las causas pueden ser internas si asume que es él mismo el causante del problema, externas si atribuye el problema al proveedor del servicio, y situacionales cuando asigna las causas a factores del entorno o a terceras partes (p.e. el azar, otros consumidores, etc.). En general, los trabajos abordan esta variable considerando las atribuciones de origen externo ya que los consumidores suelen percibir en la mayoría de ocasiones que los fallos son responsabilidad de la empresa (Smith et al., 1999; Hess et al., 2003). Este tipo de atribuciones tienen un gran impacto en la satisfacción del cliente (Maxham y Netemeyer, 2002).

Respecto a las atribuciones de estabilidad, el individuo valora la estabilidad de las causas cuestionando la probabilidad de que vuelva a repetirse la causa que originó el problema. Será una causa estable o permanente cuando éste percibe que se va a repetir en el futuro, mientras que será una causa inestable o temporal si percibe que tiene carácter puntual. Diversos trabajos relacionan las atribuciones de estabilidad con la satisfacción. Por ejemplo, en el trabajo de Smith y Bolton (1998) se concluye que la percepción de estabilidad de las causas tiene un efecto negativo en la satisfacción del cliente. También Casado y Mas (2002) encuentran que la satisfacción es más baja cuando los consumidores perciben que el problema se repite.

Y en cuanto a las atribuciones de control, el individuo analiza si la parte responsable del fallo en el servicio puede tener cierto control sobre las causas, es decir, si puede prevenirlo. Será una situación controlable o evitable si el consumidor piensa que el causante del problema puede intervenir para evitarlo, y será una situación incontrolable o inevitable cuando considera que el responsable no puede actuar para evitar el fallo. Existen evidencias empíricas del efecto que tienen las atribuciones de control sobre la satisfacción. Por ejemplo, Choi y Mattila (2008) revelan que si los consumidores perciben que la empresa no hace nada para solucionar el problema teniendo la capacidad para evitarlo están menos satisfechos que aquellos que desconocen el grado de control que puede tener el proveedor. Magnini et al. (2007) también confirman que la satisfacción es mayor cuando el cliente percibe que la empresa tiene poco control sobre la causa.

En resumen, de acuerdo con estas atribuciones, cuando el consumidor percibe que el culpable del fallo es el proveedor del servicio, que es probable que el problema se repita y que la empresa podría haberlo evitado, se sentirá más insatisfecho y desarrollará conductas desfavorables para la empresa (Folkes, 1984; Gooding y Kinicki, 1995). A la vista de estos resultados, suponemos que en los comercio minoristas cuanto más atribuya el cliente la responsabilidad del fallo a la tienda servicio (atribuciones de origen externo), menor nivel de satisfacción va a experimentar. Asimismo, cuanto más perciba que la causa es inestable o puntual (atribuciones de causa inestable) y poco controlable por la tienda (atribuciones de causa incontrolable), mayor será su nivel de satisfacción. En esta línea, formulamos las siguientes hipótesis relacionadas con las atribuciones (Figura 1):

*H<sub>1</sub>: Las atribuciones de origen externo influyen negativamente en la satisfacción del cliente con la recuperación del servicio.*

*H<sub>2</sub>: Las atribuciones de causa inestable influyen positivamente en la satisfacción del cliente con la recuperación del servicio.*

*H<sub>3</sub>: Las atribuciones de causa incontrolable influyen positivamente en la satisfacción del cliente con la recuperación del servicio.*

## **2.2. Los esfuerzos de recuperación del servicio**

Es compartido que una recuperación exitosa tiene un gran efecto sobre la satisfacción y la lealtad del cliente (Zeithaml et al., 1996; Maxham y Netemeyer, 2002). Por tanto, estudiar el efecto que tiene una adecuada recuperación del servicio en los juicios de satisfacción es clave para comprender las respuestas posteriores en forma de lealtad (Chang y Hsiao, 2008; Varela et al., 2009). En una situación insatisfactoria, cuando la empresa desarrolla acciones para recuperar el servicio el consumidor no sólo evalúa la solución o el resultado (lo que recibe) sino también el proceso de recuperación (cómo lo recibe) (Tax et al., 1998). Por tanto, la recuperación del servicio tiene una doble dimensión: resultado y proceso (Duffy et al., 2006).

Aunque las compensaciones se han reconocido como herramientas adecuadas para una recuperación efectiva (Hoffman et al., 2003), en algunas situaciones deben de ir acompañadas de ciertas explicaciones por parte de los empleados para que tengan un efecto importante en las valoraciones del consumidor (Grewal et al., 2008). En este contexto, el esfuerzo percibido por el cliente se puede definir como la percepción de energía y recursos que una empresa dedica para solucionar el problema (De Matos et al., 2007; Huang, 2008). Dicho esfuerzo se ha reconocido en la literatura como un antecedente clave de la satisfacción con la recuperación (Huang 2008; Ha y Jang, 2009; Cambra et al., 2011).

Las evidencias empíricas muestran que cuando el cliente percibe que la empresa realiza esfuerzos para reparar el fallo en el servicio su nivel de satisfacción aumenta (p.e. Gruber et al., 2009; Cambra et al., 2013; Balaji y Sarkar, 2013), e incluso si la solución o el resultado final no es satisfactorio (p.e. Bandhari et al., 2007; Specht et al., 2007). Específicamente, diversos trabajos también confirman el efecto positivo que tienen los esfuerzos percibidos por los clientes para recuperar el servicio en la satisfacción con este proceso de recuperación (p.e. Kau y Loh, 2006), en la lealtad (p.e. Lin, 2009) y de forma específica en las intenciones de boca-oído (p.e. McQuilken, 2010). Por ejemplo, Bradley y Sparks (2012) concluyen que la satisfacción con la recuperación y las actitudes hacia la empresa son más positivas cuando la compensación y la explicación ofrecidas al cliente son mejores. Por tanto, entendemos que a mayor percepción de esfuerzo por parte de la tienda para solucionar el problema, mayor va a ser la satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio, formulando así la siguiente hipótesis (Figura 1):

*H<sub>4</sub>: La percepción del cliente sobre los esfuerzos de recuperación del servicio de la tienda influye positivamente en la satisfacción del cliente con dicha recuperación.*

## **2.3. La conducta de boca-oído**

La relación entre la satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio y la lealtad ha sido ampliamente estudiada en la literatura (p.e. Homburg y Fürst, 2005; Kikbin et al., 2013; Cambra et al., 2013). Dicha lealtad se puede manifestar en diferentes formas de conducta y actitudes (Oliver, 1999; Zeithaml et al., 1996) que aportan beneficios importantes para las empresas. En este sentido, los clientes fieles tienen más intención de repetir la compra, desarrollan más ventas cruzadas, tienen menor sensibilidad al precio, les influyen menos las acciones de la competencia, realizan comunicaciones boca-oído positivo y se sienten menos insatisfechos si se repiten los fallos en el servicio (Oliva et al., 1992). Además, el tratamiento adecuado de los problemas e insatisfacciones de los clientes generan mayor lealtad que en situaciones de ausencia de problemas (Oliver, 1997).

Una de las dimensiones más relevantes y reconocidas de la lealtad son los comentarios boca-oído (Carl, 2006). En general, las definiciones coinciden en señalar que se trata de una comunicación entre consumidores acerca de un producto, servicio o empresa y que el emisor de la información es un individuo independiente (Harrison-Walker, 2001; Litvin et al., 2008). Por tanto, esta conducta excluye la comunicación formal de los clientes a las empresas (en forma de quejas o sugerencias) y de las empresas a los clientes (mediante las acciones de promoción) (Mazzarol et al., 2007). También se ha destacado que se trata de un tipo de conducta directo y



personal que hace que la información transmitida sea más real y creíble y, por tanto, con un efecto en las decisiones de otros consumidores mucho mayor que el de la publicidad o promoción (Sen, 2008).

Con el crecimiento de las tecnologías, surge la dimensión virtual de la conducta de boca-oído. Aunque algunos trabajos demuestran que esta forma de comunicación tiene menor impacto que la experiencia cara a cara del boca-oreja convencional (p.e. Sen y Lerman, 2007), su importancia académica y empresarial va en aumento (Lee y Koo, 2012; WOMMA). Al ser internet el canal de comunicación del boca-oreja online, los individuos pueden compartir información por tres vías: *one-to-one* (mail o mensajería instantánea), *one-to-many* (p.e. sitios web) y *many-to-many* (p.e. blogs, comunidades virtuales o foros) (Chan y Ngai, 2011).

Existen numerosas evidencias empíricas del efecto que tiene la satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio y la conducta de boca-oído. Por ejemplo, Maxham y Netemeyer (2002) encuentran una relación positiva entre la satisfacción con la recuperación y las intenciones de boca-oído. Los resultados de Kau y Loh (2006) indican que la confianza y el boca-oído se pueden aumentar mejorando la satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio. También Farquhar y Panther (2007) obtienen que la satisfacción con la solución de un problema aumenta las intenciones de continuar comprando y de recomendación. Los resultados de Komunda y Osarenkhoe (2012) indican que la satisfacción con el tratamiento de la queja provoca boca-oído positivo. Haciendo referencia al boca-oído negativo, Voorhees et al. (2006) demuestran que es menos probable que los consumidores satisfechos con la recuperación realicen comentarios boca-oído negativos. Y el trabajo de Balaji y Sarkar (2013) revela que la satisfacción después de la recuperación afecta negativamente al boca-oído negativo. Considerando estas aportaciones, suponemos que en nuestro contexto la satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio va a tener un efecto positivo en la intención de boca-oído convencional y en la intención de boca-oído online en particular, formulando así las siguientes hipótesis (Figura 1):

*H<sub>5</sub>: La satisfacción del cliente con la recuperación del servicio influye positivamente en su intención de boca-oído.*

*H<sub>6</sub>: La satisfacción del cliente con la recuperación del servicio influye positivamente en su intención de boca-oído online.*

#### **2.4. El efecto moderador de la edad del cliente**

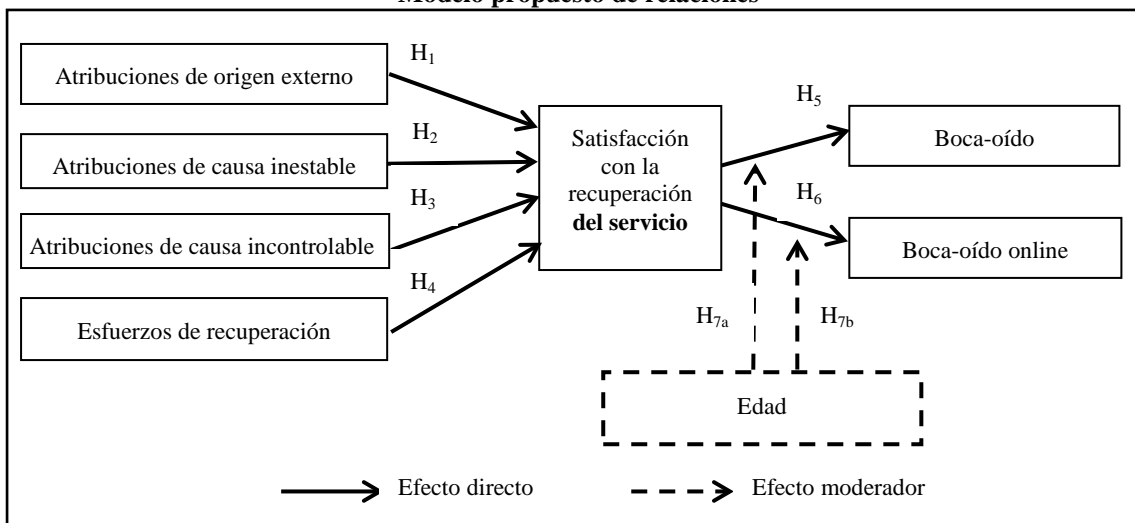
En la literatura se ha abordado el estudio de diferentes variables moderadoras que intervienen en el proceso de recuperación del servicio. Respecto al efecto moderador en la formación de la satisfacción se han investigado variables como el tipo de servicio (online vs offline) (p.e. Lii et al., 2013), la edad (p.e. Roschk et al., 2013), las atribuciones de estabilidad y control (p.e. Nikbin et al., 2013), la gravedad del fallo (p.e. McQuilken et al., 2013; Balaji y Sarkar, 2013), el género (p.e. Cambra et al., 2013), el tipo de compensación (p.e. Bradley y Sparks, 2012), la equidad de la marca (p.e. Huang, 2011) o el grado de implicación del consumidor (p.e. Cambra et al., 2014). En cuanto al efecto moderador en la relación entre la satisfacción con la recuperación y la lealtad, las variables más estudiadas son el tipo de relación que tiene el cliente con la empresa (cliente relacional vs cliente transaccional) (p.e. Pizzutti y Basso, 2012), el género (p.e. Cambra et al., 2013), la gravedad del fallo (p.e. Balaji y Sarkar, 2013), equidad de la marca (p.e. Huang, 2011) o la justicia (p.e. Wang et al., 2011).

Diversos trabajos que han estudiado la relación entre la satisfacción y la retención de clientes sugieren que algunas características culturales y socio-demográficas como la edad, el género, los ingresos o el nivel de formación (p.e. Verhoef, 2003; Shahin y Chan, 2006; Karande et al., 2007; Cambra et al., 2013) pueden influir en las conductas del consumidor. En particular, el efecto que tiene la edad en contextos de recuperación del servicio ha sido una variable escasamente investigada (Roschk et al., 2013). Sin embargo, el interés por la investigación de la edad del consumidor va en aumento, sobre todo en sociedades que están envejeciendo, como es la española, ya que la población adulta representa un segmento cada vez mayor y con gran capacidad de compra (Simcock et al., 2006).

Existen evidencias empíricas sobre el papel moderador de la edad en las valoraciones y respuestas de los consumidores ante fallos en el servicio. Por ejemplo, en el trabajo de Varela et al. (2010) se confirma que la edad modera el efecto que tiene el tipo de fallo en las emociones negativas del consumidor. Roschk et al. (2013) concluyen que la edad modera la relación entre la justicia y la satisfacción después de la queja. Y los resultados de Cambra et al. (2011) indican que los clientes adultos se muestran más leales que los jóvenes después de la recuperación del servicio. A la vista de estas investigaciones, consideramos que en nuestro contexto de estudio la edad del cliente va a ejercer un efecto moderar en la relación entre la satisfacción y las intenciones posteriores de boca-oído, tanto convencional como online. Por tanto, formulamos de esta forma la última hipótesis de nuestro trabajo (Figura 1):

*H<sub>7</sub>: La edad del cliente modera el efecto de la satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio en H<sub>7a</sub> la intención de boca-oído y en H<sub>7b</sub> la intención de boca-oído online.*

FIGURA 1  
Modelo propuesto de relaciones



### 3. Metodología

Con la finalidad de contrastar el modelo propuesto, se llevó a cabo una investigación cuantitativa en el contexto de experiencias de compras y/o consumo que incluyen esfuerzos de recuperación del servicio por parte de establecimientos comerciales minoristas. El método aplicado para la recoger este tipo de información ha sido la técnica retrospectiva del recuerdo, de tal forma que el individuo ha tenido que recordar una situación insatisfactoria en cualquier tienda donde haya habido actuación por parte del empleado para solucionar el problema. Para ello, se desarrolló una encuesta personal a 336 individuos basada en un cuestionario estructurado (Tabla 1).

TABLA 1  
Detalles técnicos de la investigación

<b>Ámbito geográfico</b>	Provincial
<b>Universo</b>	Clientes de establecimientos minoristas de diversos sectores (alimentación, textil, electrónica, hogar, multiproducto...) mayores de 18 años
<b>Metodología</b>	Entrevista personal mediante cuestionario estructurado
<b>Procedimiento de muestreo</b>	Aleatorio Simple
<b>Tamaño muestral</b>	336 encuestas válidas
<b>Nivel de confianza</b>	95%
<b>Error muestral</b>	5.3%
<b>Técnicas estadísticas</b>	Análisis descriptivo Análisis de la varianza Análisis Factorial Exploratorio Análisis Factorial Confirmatorio Modelo de Ecuaciones Estructurales

<b>Software estadístico</b>	SPSS versión 19 EQS versión 6.1
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Con la finalidad de obtener una muestra representativa de la población, el trabajo de campo se ha desarrollado en diferentes ubicaciones comerciales de una provincia española que han facilitado la localización y disponibilidad de consumidores. Las encuestas fueron realizadas a la salida de diversos establecimientos comerciales preguntando a los encuestados acerca de su relación con la tienda visitada. Para seleccionar a los encuestados se ha seguido un procedimiento de muestreo aleatorio simple. Las características socio-demográficas y relacionadas con la experiencia de compra se muestran en las tablas 2 y 3, respectivamente.

**TABLA 2**  
**Perfil socio-demográfico de la muestra**

Género		Edad		Ocupación		Estudios		Ingresos (€)	
Hombres	31,6%	≤ 20	6,6%	Trabajando	44,1%	Primarios	22%	≤ 1000	35,7%
Mujeres	68,4%	21-30	15,5%	Estudiando	7,9%	Bachiller	20,4%	1000-2000	43,5%
		31-40	19,1%	Trabajando y estudiando	4,9%	Formación profesional	19,4%	2000-3000	18%
		41-50	27,6%	En paro	18,1%	Diplomatura	13,8%	3000-4000	1,8%
		51-60	16,4%	Jubilado/a	15,5%	Licenciatura	24,4%	> 4000	1%
		61-70	10,5%	Amo/a de casa	19,5%				
		> 70	4,3%						

**TABLA 3**  
**Características de la experiencia de compra**

Motivos del problema		Tipo de tienda		Tiempo transcurrido	
Producto en mal estado, caducado o roto	37,5%	Alimentación	22,4%	Menos de 1 mes	13,8%
Producto de mala calidad	21,1%	Textil	26,6%	1-3 meses	17,1%
No se cumplen las características contratadas	30,3%	Equipamiento doméstico	22%	3-6 meses	18,4%
Servicio lento	1,6%	Multiproducto	21,4%	6 meses-1 año	16,8%
Atención inapropiada del empleado	2,6%	Otras tiendas	7,6%	Más de 1 año	33,9%
Error en la factura	4,9%				
Otros	2%				

En la elaboración del cuestionario, las escalas fueron seleccionadas de la literatura más relevante y se adaptaron a nuestro contexto de estudio empleando un formato de tipo Likert de 5 puntuaciones (Tabla 4). Dicho cuestionario se sometió a una prueba piloto para verificar su funcionamiento.

**TABLA 4**  
**Escalas de medida**

Fuente	Escala	
Maxham y Netemeyer (2002)	Atribuciones de origen externo	En general, el problema era responsabilidad de la tienda
		El problema fue completamente por culpa de la tienda
Smith et al. (1999); Wirtz y Mattila (2004)	Atribuciones de causa inestable	Parecía que el problema fue puntual
	Atribuciones de causa incontrolable	La tienda no podía controlar el problema
Bradley y Sparks (2012)	Esfuerzos de recuperación del servicio	Los empleados me pidieron perdón
		Los empleados se esforzaron en justificar lo que hicieron para resolver el problema
		Los empleados me explicaron que lo sucedido suele pasar en otras ocasiones
		Los empleados me ofrecieron una solución muy generosa para compensarme
Goodwin y Roos (1992)	Satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio	En general, pienso que la solución ha sido buena
		En general, estoy satisfecho con la forma en que se ha resuelto mi queja
		En general, estoy encantado con la solución que me han dado
Maxham y Netemeyer (2002); Zeithaml et al. (1996)	Boca-oído	Recomendaré esta tienda a otras personas
		Animaré a amigos y familiares a que compren en esta tienda
		Contaré a amigos y familiares cosas positivas de esta tienda
Blodgett et al. (1997); De Matos et al. (2009)	Boca-oído online	Voy a contar a través de Internet a mis familiares y amigos mis experiencias con esta tienda
		Voy a hablar bien de esta tienda a través de internet

		Voy a recomendar esta tienda si alguien me pide información por internet
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Una vez recogidos los datos, se realiza un análisis de componentes principales (ACP) con el fin de agrupar los ítems utilizados en factores. A continuación, con el fin de confirmar la validez del modelo propuesto, se realiza un análisis de covarianzas o estimación de un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales siguiendo el procedimiento en dos etapas recomendado por Anderson y Gerbing (1988). Este procedimiento implica, en primer lugar, analizar la calidad de la medida de los constructos a través de un análisis factorial confirmatorio y, en segundo lugar, la estimación de un modelo estructural, teórico o causal, que permite obtener información acerca de las relaciones entre los constructos a los que se refieren las hipótesis de este estudio. De esta forma, se pueden contrastar simultáneamente las hipótesis acerca de las relaciones de causalidad entre las variables latentes y/o observadas (Figura 1).

Por último, con el fin de contrastar la influencia de la edad del consumidor en la relación entre la satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio y las intenciones de comunicación boca-oído a través de los medios tradicionales y por vía electrónica, se estima un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales multigrupo o multimuestra. A través de esta técnica tratamos de contrastar la existencia de diferencias significativas en estas relaciones en función de la edad del consumidor (Figura 1).

#### 4. Resultados

En primer lugar, a modo de análisis preliminar, se realiza un análisis de componentes principales (ACP) con rotación VARIMAX con el fin de obtener la estructura de relaciones entre las variables que componen las diferentes escalas. Tras esta primera fase exploratoria, los resultados del ACP fueron sometidos a un análisis factorial confirmatorio. Como resultado, se observa que los índices de ajuste oscilan alrededor de 0,9, lo que indica un ajuste aceptable del modelo (Tabla 5). Adicionalmente, el error cuadrático medio es bajo (RMSEA = 0.053).

TABLA 5  
Resultados del análisis factorial confirmatorio

Constructo	Ítem	Carga fact. est. (error est.)	t	$\alpha$ Cronbach	Fiabilidad compuesta	Varianza extraída
F1. Atribuciones de origen externo	AO1	0.886	-	0.940	0.943	0.892
	AO2	1.000 (0.084)	13.761*			
F2. Atribuciones de causa inestable	AE1	1.000	-	-	-	-
F3. Atribuciones de causa incontrolable	AC1	1.000	-	-	-	-
F4. Esfuerzos de recuperación	ER1	0.809	-	0.812	0.824	0.544
	ER2	0.864 (0.057)	16.514*			
	ER3	0.614 (0.070)	9.136*			
	ER4	0.632 (0.067)	9.763*			
F5. Satisfacción con la recuperación	S1	0.947	-	0.967	0.970	0.914
	S2	0.964 (0.020)	50.438*			
	S3	0.957 (0.022)	40.505*			
F6. Boca-oído	BO1	0.949	-	0.979	0.979	0.939
	BO2	0.984 (0.016)	63.996*			
	BO3	0.974 (0.017)	59.312*			
F7. Boca-oído online	BOO1	0.700	-	0.949	0.877	0.708
	BOO3	0.982 (0.117)	9.810*			
	BOO3	0.818 (0.113)	9.924*			

Chi-cuadrado Satorra-Bentler: 188.49; grados de libertad: 98; CFI: 0.979; IFI: 0.979; Bentler-Bonett NNFI: 0.941; RMSEA: 0.053.

A partir de los resultados expuestos en la Tabla 5, se puede confirmar la fiabilidad de las escalas, ya que tanto la fiabilidad compuesta como el coeficiente alfa de Cronbach están por encima del valor recomendado de 0,8 para todos los constructos, las varianzas extraídas son superiores al 50% y las cargas factoriales estandarizadas son estadísticamente significativas para todos los ítems. Todo ello nos permite confirmar la validez convergente del modelo.

TABLA 6  
Medias, desviaciones típicas y correlaciones entre constructos

Constructo	Media	Desv. típ.	Correlaciones						
			F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7
F1. Atribuciones de origen externo	3.290	1.430		0.000 (-0.18, 0.18)	-0.196 (-0.37, -0.02)	-0.131 (-0.29, 0.02)	-0.350 (-0.56, -0.14)	-0.414 (-0.61, -0.21)	-0.175 (-0.29, -0.06)
F2. Atribuciones de causa inestable	3.036	1.238			0.232 (0.05, 0.42)	0.369 (0.19, 0.55)	0.482 (0.28, 0.69)	0.346 (0.16, 0.53)	-0.069 (-0.17, 0.04)
F3. Atribuciones de causa incontrolable	2.613	1.153				0.125 (-0.04, 0.29)	0.348 (0.16, 0.54)	0.218 (0.05, 0.39)	-0.054 (-0.14, 0.04)
F4. Esfuerzos de recuperación	2.490	1.142					0.588 (0.41, 0.77)	0.529 (0.37, 0.69)	0.221 (0.12, 0.32)
F5. Satisfacción con la recuperación	3.242	1.358						0.735 (0.55, 0.92)	0.188 (0.09, 0.28)
F6. Boca-oído	2.736	1.284							0.324 (0.22, 0.43)
F7. Boca-oído online	2.909	1.322							

Por otra parte, se calculan las correlaciones entre constructos con el fin de comprobar la validez discriminante (Tabla 6). Para ello, calculamos el intervalo de confianza descrito por Anderson y Gerbing (1988) para las correlaciones entre todos los pares de constructos. Esta prueba requiere el cálculo de un intervalo de confianza de  $\pm$  dos errores estándar para la correlación entre dos constructos y determinar si este intervalo incluye el valor 1. En caso de que este intervalo no incluya el valor 1, la validez discriminante queda confirmada. En este caso, como se puede comprobar en la Tabla 6, ninguno de los intervalos incluye la unidad, quedando así confirmada la validez discriminante.

Una vez confirmada la validez, estimamos el modelo de ecuaciones estructurales que aparece en la Figura 1, obteniendo los resultados que se muestran en la Tabla 7.

TABLA 7  
Resultados del modelo de ecuaciones estructurales

Relación	Parámetro estandarizado	Error estándar	t	Hipótesis
Atribuciones de origen externo → Satisfacción con recuperación	-0.304	0.047	-6.404*	H <sub>1</sub> aceptada
Atribuciones de causa inestable → Satisfacción con recuperación	0.736	0.293	5.474*	H <sub>2</sub> aceptada
Atribuciones de causa incontrolable → Satisfacción con recuperación	0.382	0.206	3.938*	H <sub>3</sub> aceptada
Esfuerzos de recuperación → Satisfacción con recuperación	0.458	0.067	8.084*	H <sub>4</sub> aceptada
Satisfacción con recuperación → Boca-oído	0.709	0.039	17.689*	H <sub>5</sub> aceptada
Satisfacción con recuperación → Boca-oído online	0.180	0.031	3.078*	H <sub>6</sub> aceptada

Chi-cuadrado Satorra-Bentler: 291.40; grados de libertad: 113; CFI: 0.959; IFI: 0.959; Bentler-Bonett NNFI: 0.950; RMSEA: 0.07; \* Significativo  $p < 0.05$

Como resultado, cabe destacar, en primer lugar, que todas las relaciones presentan los signos que se habían hipotetizado a partir de la revisión de la literatura. Así, las atribuciones de causa inestable y de causa incontrolable y los esfuerzos de recuperación influyen positiva y significativamente sobre la satisfacción del cliente con la recuperación, y esta última, a su vez, influye positivamente sobre la intención de emitir comunicaciones boca-oído por medios convencionales y, en menor medida, a través de Internet. En cambio, las atribuciones de origen externo ejercen una influencia negativa sobre la satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio. El ajuste global del modelo es aceptable, ya que los índices de ajuste se encuentran alrededor del valor recomendado de 0,9 y el RMSEA es inferior al valor de referencia de 0,08.

Adicionalmente, para contrastar la H<sub>7</sub> esperamos encontrar diferencias significativas entre los clientes más jóvenes y los de mayor edad en la evaluación de la satisfacción del cliente con la recuperación y las intenciones de boca-oído (tanto convencional como online). Con el fin de contrastar esta hipótesis, en primer lugar, se realiza un análisis de varianza entre dos grupos de clientes, a saber, los menores de 40 años y los que superan esta edad (Tabla 8).

TABLA 8  
Valores medios y diferencias significativas de las variables propuestas en función de la edad

	Edad < 40 (N=134)	Edad ≥ 40 (N=202)	F	p valor
F1. Atribuciones de origen externo	3.36	3.24	0.74	0.391
F2. Atribuciones de causa inestable	2.89	3.13	3.19	0.075
F3. Atribuciones de causa incontrolable	2.53	2.67	1.16	0.283
F4. Esfuerzos de recuperación	2.39	2.56	2.63	0.106
F5. Satisfacción con recuperación	3.11	3.33	2.19	0.140
F6. Boca-oído	2.54	2.86	5.23	0.023
F7. Boca-oído online	1.52	1.33	4.84	0.028

Los clientes de mayor edad muestran puntuaciones más altas para todos los constructos analizados, a excepción de las atribuciones de origen externo y las intenciones de boca-oído online. Sin embargo, las diferencias son estadísticamente significativas únicamente para las intenciones de boca-oído convencional y online, de manera que los clientes que superan la cuarentena tienden a compartir sus experiencias con el establecimiento con familiares, amigos y conocidos en mayor medida que los clientes más jóvenes, si bien éstos presentan una tendencia significativamente mayor a realizar más boca-oído por Internet ( $p < 0.05$ ). Este hecho puede venir explicado por el uso de las redes sociales por parte de los más jóvenes para comunicarse con sus contactos, reemplazando así las comunicaciones cara a cara o por vía telefónica para este grupo de edad.

Con el fin de profundizar en esta cuestión, se lleva a cabo un análisis multigrupo. De esta manera, se trata de contrastar la existencia de diferencias significativas en las relaciones entre la satisfacción del cliente con la recuperación y las intenciones de boca-oído por medios convencionales y online en función de la edad del consumidor. Los resultados obtenidos se muestran en la Tabla 9.

TABLA 9  
Resultados del análisis multigrupo

	Edad < 40 (N=134)	Edad ≥ 40 (N=202)	Chi <sup>2</sup>	p valor
Atribuciones de origen externo → Satisfacción con recuperación	-0.401	-0.230	-	-
Atribuciones de causa inestable → Satisfacción con recuperación	0.659	0.579	-	-
Atribuciones de causa incontrolable → Satisfacción con recuperación	0.145	0.609	-	-
Esfuerzos de recuperación → Satisfacción con recuperación	0.459	0.455	-	-
Satisfacción con recuperación → Boca-oído	0.719	0.694	0.000	0.995
Satisfacción con recuperación → Boca-oído online	0.113	0.176	9.134	0.003

Chi-cuadrado Satorra-Bentler: 445.83; grados de libertad: 228; CFI: 0.951; IFI: 0.951; Bentler-Bonett NNFI: 0.941; RMSEA: 0.054

A partir de los resultados obtenidos, cabe resaltar la existencia de diferencias significativas entre los dos grupos de edad considerados únicamente en la relación entre la satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio y las intenciones de boca-oído online. Así, la intensidad de esta relación es más fuerte para los consumidores de mayor edad frente a los más jóvenes ( $p < 0.01$ ), confirmándose la hipótesis  $H_{7b}$ . En cambio, si bien anteriormente se constató a través del análisis de la varianza que los clientes de mayor edad presentan valores significativamente mayores para las intenciones de boca-oído por medios convencionales frente a los más jóvenes, a partir del análisis multigrupo no se observa un efecto moderador de la edad sobre esta relación.

## 5. Conclusiones

La investigación de las valoraciones y respuestas que tienen los clientes en situaciones de fallo en el servicio es un área que está recibiendo una atención especial tanto a nivel académico como a nivel práctico (Kunz y Hogreve, 2011). Este trabajo ha abordado el estudio del proceso de recuperación del servicio en experiencias insatisfactorias de compra en comercios minoristas. Para ello, en primer lugar, hemos analizado el efecto directo que tienen las tres dimensiones de las atribuciones causales y la percepción sobre los esfuerzos de recuperación en la satisfacción, así como de dicha satisfacción sobre las intenciones de boca-oído convencional y online. Y en

segundo lugar, se ha estudiado el efecto moderador que ejerce la edad en la relación entre la satisfacción y las intenciones de boca-oído.

Los resultados muestran que las atribuciones que realizan los consumidores sobre las causas del fallo influyen en el grado de satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio. Concretamente, las atribuciones de origen externo afectan negativamente a la satisfacción, mientras que las atribuciones de causa inestable y de causa incontrolable lo hacen positivamente, siendo las de causa inestable las que más influencia ejercen. Cuando los consumidores asignan la responsabilidad del problema a la tienda, se sienten menos satisfechos con la solución, sin embargo, si perciben que la causa es puntual y que la tienda no ha podido evitar el problema, se sienten más satisfechos con la recuperación. Estos resultados se encuentran en la línea de investigaciones previas sobre el papel de las atribuciones en la satisfacción del consumidor (p.e. Maxham y Netemeyer, 2002; Choi y Mattila, 2008).

Respecto a la percepción de los esfuerzos de recuperación por parte de la tienda, también se ha revelado como un antecedente importante de la satisfacción del cliente con la solución del fallo, tal y como lo confirman evidencias empíricas anteriores (p.e. Kau y Loh, 2006; Bradley y Sparks, 2012). Del mismo modo, la satisfacción con la recuperación estimula las intenciones de realizar comentarios boca-oído (p.e. Farquhar y Panther, 2007; Komunda y Osarenkhoe, 2012). En nuestro caso, podemos comprobar que el efecto que tiene la satisfacción sobre el boca-oído convencional es mayor que el efecto sobre el boca-oído online. Consideramos que esta diferencia puede deberse al mayor esfuerzo que requiere hacer comentarios y recomendaciones por el medio virtual.

Adicionalmente, los resultados indican que las conductas de boca-oído son diferentes en función de la edad. Los clientes de más de 40 años realizan más comentarios de este tipo que los de menos de 40 años pero menos a través de internet. Este hecho puede venir explicado por el elevado uso de las redes sociales por parte de los más jóvenes para comunicarse con sus contactos, reemplazando así las comunicaciones cara a cara o por vía telefónica para este grupo de edad. También la edad del cliente modera la relación entre la satisfacción con la recuperación y el boca-oído online. De forma específica, la satisfacción de los clientes de más de 40 años influye más en la conducta de boca-oído online que en clientes de menor edad. Este hallazgo puede implicar que los consumidores más adultos que escriben sus comentarios sobre la tienda a través de internet necesitan estar muy satisfechos para realizar este tipo de boca-oreja, mientras que los menos adultos están menos condicionados por su nivel de satisfacción a la hora de emitir sus valoraciones de forma virtual, ya que emplean este medio más habitualmente.

Desde el punto de vista de la gestión empresarial, los responsables de tiendas deben ser conscientes de la importancia que tiene la percepción del cliente sobre las causas del fallo y sobre los esfuerzos de recuperación, tanto los orientados a la solución como los orientados al proceso. Para ello, los establecimientos deberían diseñar actuaciones orientadas a tratar los fallos prestando especial atención a las compensaciones de tipo material o económico y a las explicaciones sobre las causas del problema. En este sentido, en la medida en que los consumidores perciban que el fallo es puntual e inevitable, realizarán valoraciones más positivas y será más probable que cuenten a otros su satisfacción.

Para avanzar en el estudio de la satisfacción con la recuperación del servicio, proponemos incorporar otros antecedentes importantes que destaca la literatura, como son la justicia o equidad (p.e. Bradley y Sparks, 2012) o la gravedad del problema (p.e. Betts et al., 2011). Así mismo, se puede analizar el efecto moderador de otras características personales del consumidor (p.e. Cambra et al., 2013) y relacionadas con el contexto de compra, como el tipo de compra online y en tienda (p.e. Lii et al., 2013). Estos análisis permitirán mejorar nuestra comprensión sobre las variables que influyen en la relación entre la satisfacción con la recuperación y la conducta de boca-oído posterior.

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# RELACIÓN ENTRE EL CAPITAL DE MARCA DE LA TIENDA Y LA LEALTAD: PROPUESTA DE DOS MODELOS CAUSALES ALTERNATIVOS <sup>1</sup>

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## RESUMEN

*El concepto del capital de marca ha despertado un interés creciente en el contexto de la distribución comercial minorista. Sin embargo, las contribuciones dirigidas a determinar su contenido todavía son limitadas. Además, no existe consenso en cuanto a la relación entre este constructo y la lealtad del cliente. Por ello, este trabajo pretende profundizar en la dimensionalidad del capital de marca de la tienda y su relación con la lealtad a través de dos modelos alternativos, uno que propone la lealtad como una dimensión del capital de marca y otro que considera este constructo como el efecto del capital de marca. Los resultados afirman dos dimensiones clave del capital de marca de la tienda – la imagen y la calidad de servicio y corroboran la validez de ambos modelos propuestos, si bien se constata una cierta superioridad del modelo que presenta la lealtad como dimensión del capital de marca de la tienda, frente al que supone la lealtad como consecuente.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE

*Capital de marca de la tienda, lealtad, notoriedad, imagen, calidad, valor percibido.*

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## 1. Introducción

Desde la literatura se evidencia la necesidad de investigar el concepto “capital de marca”, entendido como un valor añadido que los consumidores atribuyen a los productos a través de su marca (Lassar et al., 1995; Yoo et al., 2000; Pappu y Quester, 2006a). En este contexto, algunos trabajos muestran los efectos del capital de marca en productos (e.g. Lassar et al., 1995; Yoo et al., 2000; Villarejo, 2003; Taylor et al., 2004). Así, se ha señalado que los consumidores otorgan un mayor valor de marca a aquellas que consideran fuertes, únicas y deseables (Yoo et al., 2000; Verhoef et al., 2007), lo que permite crear una serie de ventajas competitivas capaces de ofrecer una propuesta de valor sobre la base de las asociaciones existentes (Aaker, 1996) y unos resultados financieros superiores (Roberts y Dowling, 2002).

En el contexto de la distribución comercial minorista, se empieza a referir la importancia de construir un capital de marca vinculado al establecimiento comercial (Ailawadi y Keller, 2004; Jinfeng y Zhilong, 2009), lo que supone la aparición del concepto de capital de marca de la tienda (Pappu y Quester, 2006). Desde la literatura de marketing se advierte que este constructo representa uno de los elementos clave sobre el que es posible apoyar una estrategia de diferenciación frente a la competencia (Lassar et al., 1995; Yoo et al., 2000).

No obstante, aunque existen estudios recientes que reflejan el interés progresivo suscitado en torno a la conceptualización del capital de marca del establecimiento (p.e. Pappu y Quester, 2006a; Jinfeng y Zhilong, 2009; Swoboda et al., 2009), a partir de la revisión de la literatura se observa que su desarrollo y análisis ha sido, hasta el momento, escaso. Además, existe un cierto desacuerdo en cuanto a la dimensionalidad del capital de marca de la tienda y sus relaciones con otras variables. En este sentido, la lealtad ha sido considerada por algunos investigadores como una dimensión del capital de marca de la tienda (Arnett et al., 2003; Hartman y Spiro, 2005; Pappu y Quester, 2006a; Jinfeng y Zhilong, 2009), mientras que otros sugieren que es su consecuencia (p.e. DeCarlo et al., 2007; Martenson, 2007; Chebat et al., 2009; Fleck y Nabec 2010).

Por todo lo anteriormente expuesto, el presente trabajo se enmarca en la línea de investigación que persigue profundizar en el estudio del capital de marca de la tienda, delimitando las variables que contribuyen a su formación, al igual que la influencia que esta variable puede ejercer en la lealtad del cliente hacia el establecimiento comercial. De este modo, este estudio busca ser una aproximación que pretende entender el proceso de formación del capital de marca de la tienda y sus dimensiones, con una orientación metodológica intervariable por recoger las relaciones del capital de marca con otras variables resultado (Gallarza y Gil, 2006). En particular, se trata de definir el tipo de relación que presentan el capital de marca de la tienda y la lealtad, posicionándonos en la discusión entre los académicos que consideran la lealtad como dimensión del capital de marca de la tienda y los que proponen una relación causa-efecto entre ambos constructos.

## 2. Marco teórico e hipótesis de investigación

### 2.1. Capital de marca: conceptualización y evaluación

A lo largo de los años han surgido diversas aproximaciones que tratan de definir el capital de marca, delimitándolo como el valor añadido al producto consecuencia de la existencia de una marca (Yoo et al., 2000). La marca es definida como aquel valioso activo intangible y difícil de imitar (Roberts y Dowling, 2002) capaz de ofrecer una propuesta de valor sobre la base de las asociaciones existentes y transmitir la cultura y valores de la organización (Aaker, 1996), además de ayudar al logro de unos resultados financieros superiores (Roberts y Dowling, 2002).

Las aportaciones realizadas respecto al concepto de capital de marca desde la perspectiva de marketing, confieren al mercado y a los consumidores el mayor protagonismo, analizándolo en términos de actitudes acumuladas en la mente del consumidor (Ambler y Styles, 1995), preferencias (Park y Srinivasan, 1994), percepciones (Lassar et al., 1995; Yoo et al., 2000), asociaciones y comportamientos (Aaker, 1991) del consumidor hacia la marca. En este sentido, Keller (1993: 8) concibe el capital de marca como “*el efecto diferencial del conocimiento de la marca en la respuesta del consumidor al marketing de la marca*”. Y, por su parte, Yoo et al. (2000: 196) introducen

explícitamente la comparación con otras marcas como un elemento conceptual relevante, definiendo de este modo el capital de marca como *“el valor añadido percibido por el consumidor que le lleva a la elección entre varias alternativas con idénticas características”*.

Si bien la investigación en torno al capital de marca en el ámbito del producto goza de una larga tradición, el número de aportaciones dirigidas a delimitar su contenido en el contexto de la distribución comercial minorista es limitado (Arnett et al., 2003; Hartman y Spiro, 2005; Pappu y Quester, 2006a y b; Christodoulides et al., 2006; Baldauf et al., 2009; Chebat et al., 2009; El Hedhli y Chebat, 2009; Jinfeng y Zhilong, 2009; Swoboda et al., 2009; Hernández y Navarro, 2009; Fleck y Nabec, 2010; Shen, 2010; Arnett et al., 2010; Ha et al., 2010). Estas contribuciones se pueden clasificar en cuatro grupos, según el objetivo que pretendían alcanzar: a) elaborar índices de capital de marca de la tienda, entendiendo éste como un constructo multidimensional (Arnett et al., 2003); b) extender las medidas multidimensionales de capital de marca desarrolladas en contextos de producto al contexto minorista (Pappu y Quester, 2006a; Jinfeng y Zhilong, 2009; Shen, 2010); c) desarrollar medidas multidimensionales de este constructo según formato comercial, como las aportadas para centros comerciales bajo la denominación de *shopper-based mall equity* (SBME) de Chebat et al. (2009) y El Hedhli y Chebat (2009) y d) utilizar medidas globales unidimensionales (Arnett et al., 2003; Hernández y Navarro, 2009; Shen, 2010; Ha et al., 2010). Muchas de estas aportaciones acotan el dominio del constructo “capital de marca”, a partir de dimensiones con denominaciones similares, pero que difieren en cuanto a su conceptualización y evaluación.

Así, dentro del primer grupo de trabajos se enmarca la investigación desarrollada por Arnett et al. (2003) quienes desarrollan un índice parsimonioso de medición del capital de marca de la tienda, demostrando al mismo tiempo su utilidad. Basándose en los trabajos de Aaker (1991) y Yoo et al. (2000), estos autores identifican las siguientes dimensiones del capital de marca de la tienda: a) la lealtad hacia la tienda; b) la conciencia del nombre marca; c) la calidad de servicio y d) las asociaciones del minorista (medidas a partir de la calidad de producto y del valor). Para los autores, las tres primeras dimensiones son consistentes de minorista a minorista y por lo tanto, su medición debe ser similar para todos ellos, mientras que es necesario ajustar y seleccionar el tipo de asociaciones de marca más relevantes para cada minorista, pues pueden no ser las mismas.

Desde la segunda perspectiva, Hartman y Spiro (2005: 1114) definen el capital de marca de la tienda como: *“el efecto diferencial existente del conocimiento de la tienda en la respuesta del consumidor al marketing del establecimiento”*, tomando como punto de partida la aproximación de Keller (1993). En esta línea, Pappu y Quester (2006a) extienden las medidas de capital de marca desarrolladas por Yoo y Donthu (2001) al ámbito minorista y delimitan el constructo a partir de cuatro dimensiones: a) conciencia de la enseña del distribuidor; b) asociaciones del distribuidor (definidas éstas como la imagen de tienda); c) calidad percibida del distribuidor, y d) lealtad conceptualizada desde un planteamiento actitudinal y no conductual como *“la tendencia de ser leales a un determinado minorista demostrado por la intención de comprar en él como primera elección”*.

Los trabajos de Chebat et al. (2009) y El Hedhli y Chebat (2009) pertenecen al tercer planteamiento del constructo, pues desarrollan medidas del capital de marca de la tienda aplicadas al formato centro comercial, entendiéndose como un constructo formado por dos dimensiones: la conciencia del centro comercial y su imagen. A su vez esta última se constituye a partir de cuatro dimensiones en la propuesta de Chebat et al. (2009) (conveniencia, ambiente global, calidad de los servicios y calidad de los productos), mientras que El Hedhli y Chebat (2009) concluyeron que la imagen del centro comercial puede ser explicada a partir de la apariencia general, el ambiente global y el comportamiento de los empleados.

Por último, en el contexto minorista se han utilizado medidas globales del capital de marca adaptadas del contexto de producto. Así Arnett et al. (2003) utilizan como criterio externo para valorar la validez del índice de capital de marca, una escala de medida global reflectiva desarrollada por Yoo et al. (2000), mientras que Shen (2010) adapta en su investigación la propuesta de medida global del capital de marca planteada por Yoo y Donthu (2001). Adicionalmente, desde la perspectiva del propio distribuidor y dentro del contexto de la construcción de la cadena de valor en el canal de distribución, se ha abordado el análisis del capital de marca desde la valoración del propio minorista. Hernández y

Navarro (2009) proponen el concepto *Buying group's retailer equity* (BGRE) para referirse al capital de marca del minorista al que accede como consecuencia de usar una marca perteneciente a la agrupación de compra de la que forma parte. En este caso, la estimación del capital de marca se realiza a partir de las percepciones de distribuidores a través de una medida global ad hoc.

A partir de todas estas contribuciones, podríamos concluir que existe evidencia en la literatura para considerar que el capital de marca de la tienda podría ser entendido como un constructo multidimensional compuesto por seis dimensiones: a) la notoriedad; b) la imagen; c) la calidad de servicio; d) la calidad de producto; e) el valor percibido y d) la lealtad. Si bien, también podría ser igualmente cierto, a la luz de algunas de las aportaciones referidas, que todas las dimensiones anteriores contribuyeran a la formación del capital de marca de la tienda y que este tuviera a su vez una influencia positiva sobre la lealtad del consumidor hacia el establecimiento comercial minorista. A continuación abordamos más detenidamente todas las dimensiones identificadas y su relación con el capital de marca y proponemos distintas hipótesis a investigar.

## **2.2. Capital de marca de la tienda y sus dimensiones**

La notoriedad de marca se ha definido como el grado de familiaridad del nombre del minorista para los consumidores (Aaker, 1991), relacionándose con la facilidad con la que el nombre del minorista es evocado en la mente del consumidor. El lugar que ocupa la marca en la mente del consumidor resulta crucial en el proceso de elección, en la medida en que contribuye a determinar su conjunto de consideración (Keller, 1993), ya que si esa marca no está en su memoria cuando este se plantea el lugar donde realizar su compra, rara vez la elegirá entre sus alternativas (Villarejo et al., 2007). La notoriedad ha sido positivamente relacionada en diversas ocasiones con el capital de marca de la tienda (Keller, 1993; Yoo et al., 2000; Hartman y Spiro, 2005; Pappu y Quester, 2006a; Jinfeng y Zhilong, 2009). Por ello, se constituye como un elemento del capital de marca que influye en las decisiones del consumidor tanto a nivel afectivo como a nivel conductual (Villarejo et al., 2007) creando sentimientos de agrado y familiaridad (Aaker, 1991). A partir de ahí, proponemos la primera hipótesis a investigar:

*H1: La notoriedad de la tienda influye positiva y significativamente sobre el capital de marca de la tienda.*

De otro lado, la imagen del establecimiento, resultado de la gestión de la distribución por parte de las empresas (Villarejo et al., 2007), es utilizada como herramienta de marketing para lograr, incrementar y mejorar el capital de marca (Srivastava y Shocker, 1991). Cada establecimiento tiene una imagen única, definida a partir de asociaciones automáticas al establecimiento por parte de sus principales clientes, incluso aunque existan dos o más tiendas con los mismos precios y políticas operativas en la misma área de mercado (Thelen y Woodside 1997). Diversos estudios han concluido que cuanto más favorable sea la imagen del establecimiento para el consumidor, mayor será el valor de ese establecimiento, ejerciendo así una influencia positiva sobre el capital de marca global de la tienda (Villarejo, 2003). Más recientemente, Beristain y Zorrilla (2011) encuentran apoyo empírico a la idea de que la imagen de la tienda puede ser utilizada por los minoristas para influir en todos los componentes del capital de marca de la tienda. Estas ideas dan lugar a la segunda hipótesis de investigación:

*H2: La imagen de la tienda influye de forma positiva y significativa sobre el capital de marca de la tienda.*

En cuanto a la calidad de servicio, ha sido identificada como una característica importante de las marcas fuertes (Arnett et al., 2003), que influye significativamente en el comportamiento del consumidor (Bolton, 1998). En este sentido Arnett et al. (2003) han concluido que la calidad servicio contribuye a la creación del capital de marca de la tienda en mayor medida que cualquier otra dimensión. A partir de ahí proponemos la tercera hipótesis a investigar:

*H3: La calidad de servicio influye de forma positiva y significativa sobre el capital de marca de la tienda.*

Adicionalmente, se ha argumentado que el capital de la marca de la tienda se asienta, en gran parte, en las asociaciones específicas vinculadas a la misma (Aaker, 1991). Dichas asociaciones vinculadas al

nombre del minorista, con frecuencia dependen de las estrategias de marketing implementadas por la tienda. Entre dichas asociaciones, Arnett et al. (2003) destacan la calidad del producto y el valor percibido. Con respecto al valor percibido, en el ámbito del comercio minorista, Sweeney y Soutar (2001) desarrollan una escala de su medición, nombrada PERVAL. Las dos dimensiones funcionales de esta escala se refieren a la utilidad derivada del producto debida a la reducción de sus costes percibidos a corto y largo plazo, y la utilidad derivada de la calidad percibida y el rendimiento esperado del producto, que se corresponden con el valor percibido por el consumidor y la calidad del producto, respectivamente. A partir de estas consideraciones, enunciarnos las siguientes hipótesis de investigación:

*H4: La calidad de producto influye de forma positiva y significativa sobre el capital de marca de la tienda.*

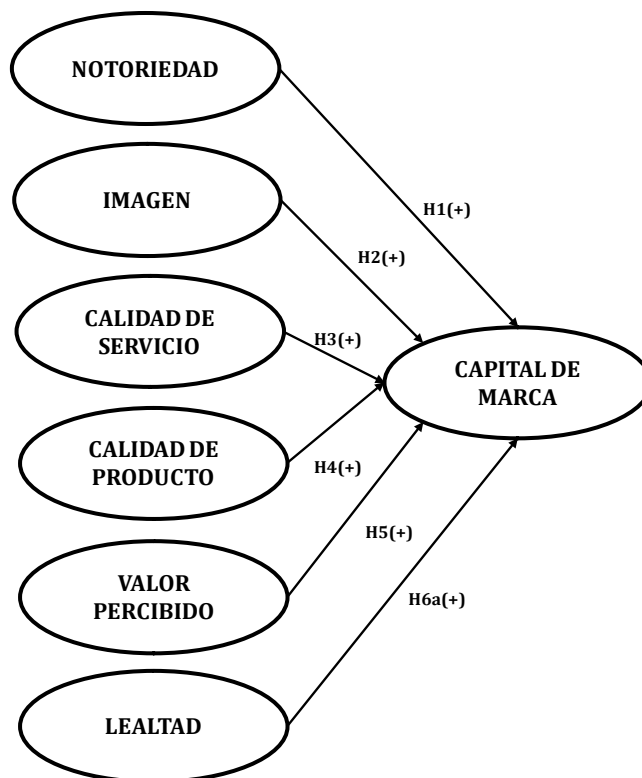
*H5: El valor percibido influye de forma positiva y significativa sobre el capital de marca de la tienda.*

Por último, a partir de la evidencia existente en el ámbito del capital de marca del producto (Aaker 1991, Yoo et al., 2000) numerosos autores sugieren que la lealtad es una de las dimensiones que constituyen el capital de marca de la tienda (p.e. Arnett et al., 2003; Hartman y Spiro, 2005; Pappu y Quester, 2006a; Jinfeng y Zhilong, 2009), señalando que la lealtad hacia la tienda correlaciona positivamente con el resto de dimensiones del capital de marca, contribuyendo así a su formación (Jinfeng y Zhilong, 2009). En este sentido, la lealtad hacia la marca se conforma como la medida del vínculo entre el consumidor y la marca que a menudo constituye el núcleo del capital de marca. Por tanto, planteamos la sexta hipótesis de investigación:

*H6a: La lealtad hacia la tienda influye de forma positiva y significativa sobre el capital de marca de la tienda.*

Todas las hipótesis de investigación enunciadas se recogen en el primer modelo causal propuesto, ilustrado en la Figura 1.

FIGURA 1  
Modelo causal 1



### 2.3. Lealtad como efecto del capital de la marca de la tienda

Con respecto a la relación entre la lealtad y el capital de marca, mientras que algunos investigadores señalan que la lealtad puede ser entendida como una de las dimensiones que constituyen el capital de marca de la tienda (p.e. Arnett et al., 2003; Hartman y Spiro, 2005; Pappu y Quester, 2006a; Jinfeng y Zhilong, 2009), otros consideran que es un efecto del mismo (p.e. DeCarlo et al., 2007; Martenson, 2007, Chebat et al., 2009; Fleck y Nabec, 2010; Allaway et al., 2011). A partir de este desacuerdo acerca del entendimiento de la lealtad y capital de marca de la tienda, se precisa clarificar la naturaleza de la relación entre los dos constructos.

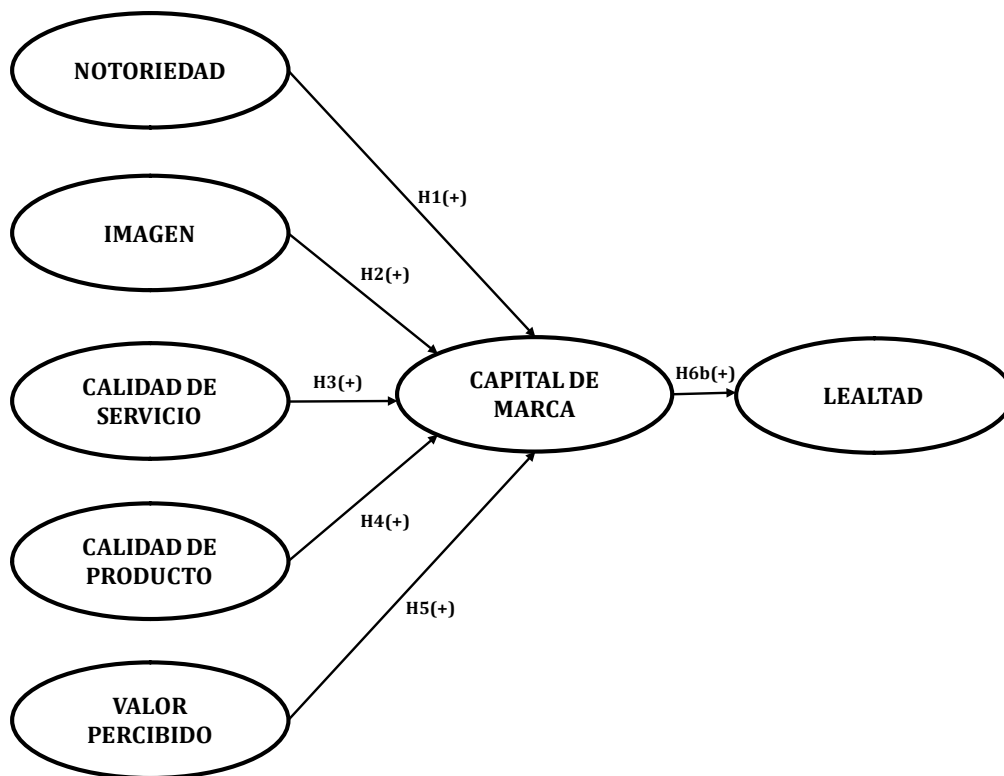
Respecto a los efectos producidos por el capital de marca, existen diversas aportaciones desde la perspectiva de producto (e.g. Taylor et al., 2004; Broyles et al., 2009) que analizan la existencia de un conjunto de variables resultado del efecto diferencial proporcionado por el capital de marca. En particular, se ha señalado la lealtad, identificándola como el resultado de una serie de actitudes y pensamientos generados en el consumidor (Keller, 1993) como consecuencia de un proceso de decisión y evaluación (Bloemer y Ruyter, 1998).

En esta línea, entre los autores que sugieren que la lealtad es una consecuencia del capital de marca, Chebat et al. (2009) han evidenciado que *shopper-based mall equity* genera la lealtad entre todos los compradores, tanto entre las mujeres como entre los hombres. Del mismo modo, Allaway et al. (2011) han concluido que la lealtad del consumidor es un efecto del capital de marca en la industria de supermercados estadounidenses. A partir de estos hallazgos, se propone la siguiente hipótesis de investigación alternativa:

*H6b: El capital de marca de la tienda influye de forma positiva y significativa sobre la lealtad hacia la tienda.*

Esta hipótesis está reflejada en el segundo modelo causal propuesto, tal y como se puede observar en la Figura 2.

FIGURA 2  
Modelo causal 2





### 3. Metodología

Con el objetivo de contrastar los modelos propuestos, se desarrolló una encuesta personal estructurada a 820 individuos. En concreto, la encuesta se realizó en una provincia española, seleccionando trece enseñas de los sectores de alimentación, textil, electrónica y hogar. Los establecimientos que han sido retenidos en base a los productos ofertados y su posicionamiento en el mercado español, forman parte de los principales grupos de distribución en España y son considerados como algunas de las marcas minoristas europeas más sobresalientes y de mayor rendimiento. Adicionalmente, la mayoría de estos establecimientos fueron citados como referentes en sus respectivos sectores, según se desprende de un estudio anterior realizado por los autores. Con la finalidad de obtener una muestra más representativa de la población, las encuestas fueron realizadas a la salida de estos establecimientos, siguiendo un muestreo dirigido, interceptando a los compradores de lunes a sábado y en horarios de mañana y tarde, preguntándoles acerca de su relación con la tienda visitada.

La Tabla 1 refleja la distribución de la muestra según las variables de clasificación (género, edad, niveles de estudios y ocupación).

TABLA 1  
Distribución de la muestra

CARACTERÍSTICAS DE LOS CONSUMIDORES	FRECUENCIA	%
<b>Género</b>		
Hombres	293	35,7
Mujeres	527	64,3
<b>Edad</b>		
18-25 años	151	18,4
26-35 años	163	19,9
36-45 años	184	22,4
46-55 años	164	20,0
56-65 años	114	13,9
Más de 65 años	44	5,4
<b>Nivel de estudios</b>		
Sin estudios	14	1,7
Educación Primaria	125	15,2
Educación Secundaria y Ciclos formativos	286	34,9
Estudios Universitarios	386	47,1
No contesta	9	1,1
<b>Ocupación</b>		
Estudiante	123	15,0
Ama de casa	67	8,2
Desempleado	102	12,4
Pensionista	76	9,3
Trabajador por cuenta propia	72	8,8
Trabajador por cuenta ajena	380	46,3

Para la recogida de la información se procedió a la administración de un cuestionario estructurado con preguntas cerradas, en el que el consumidor debía indicar su grado de acuerdo o desacuerdo con una serie de afirmaciones utilizando una escala Likert de 7 puntos, así como una serie de cuestiones de clasificación.

Los ítems incluidos en el cuestionario para el análisis de los constructos han sido propuestos en base a la revisión de diferentes estudios previos. Así, se ha adaptado la escala global de capital de marca de la tienda de Shen (2010), y se han tomado ítems de las escalas de lealtad, notoriedad y calidad de servicio utilizadas por Arnett et al. (2003). Por su parte, la calidad de producto y el valor percibido han sido medidos a través de ítems de las escalas propuestas para sendos constructos por Sweeney y Soutar

(2001), mientras que la imagen ha sido evaluada a partir de las escalas propuestas por Chowdhury et al. (1998) y Jinfeng y Zhilong (2009). Los detalles de la investigación se resumen en la Tabla 2.

TABLA 2  
Ficha técnica de la investigación

<b>Ámbito geográfico</b>	Provincial
<b>Universo</b>	Clientes de establecimientos minoristas de los sectores de alimentación, textil, electrónica y hogar, mayores de 18 años
<b>Metodología</b>	Entrevista personal mediante cuestionario estructurado
<b>Tamaño muestral</b>	820 encuestas válidas
<b>Escalas (7 puntos Likert)</b>	Capital marca de la tienda – Shen (2010) Imagen – Chowdhury et al. (1998) y Jinfeng y Zhilong (2009) Notoriedad – Arnett et al. (2003) Calidad de servicio- Arnett et al. (2003) Calidad de producto - Sweeney y Soutar (2001) Valor percibido – Sweeney y Soutar (2001) Lealtad – Arnett et al. (2003) TIC – Wu et al. (2006)

## 4. Análisis y resultados

### 4.1. Validación de las escalas de medida

Con el fin de validar las escalas de medida empleadas, se ha usado la técnica de regresión por mínimos cuadrados parciales (PLS) con ayuda del software Smart PLS (versión 2.0). Se trata de una técnica a la que cada vez se le presta mayor atención en la investigación en marketing y dirección de empresas tanto a nivel internacional como nacional (p.e. Barclay et al., 1995; Arnett et al., 2003; Cepeda y Roldán, 2004; Henseler et al., 2009; Arteaga et al., 2010; Hair et al., 2012a y b).

Para la valoración de la validez convergente analizamos las cargas de cada indicador sobre su variable latente, la varianza extraída promedio (AVE) y las cargas cruzadas (cross-loadings) (Hair et al., 2014) (véase Tabla 3). Al analizar las cargas se comprueba que todos los indicadores tienen cargas superiores a 0,6, criterio establecido por Bagozzi y Yi (1988). Además, a través de las cargas cruzadas comprobamos que ningún indicador tiene cargas superiores sobre un constructo distinto de aquel para el que se concibió. A continuación evaluamos la varianza extraída promedio, observando valores superiores a 0,5 en todos los casos, con lo que se establece que más del 50% de la varianza del constructo es debida a sus indicadores (Cepeda y Roldán, 2004).

De otro lado, la fiabilidad fue medida a través de los criterios de  $\alpha$  de Cronbach e índice de fiabilidad compuesta (IFC), observando valores superiores a 0,7 en ambos casos (Nunnally y Bernstein, 1994), lo que confirma la fiabilidad del instrumento de medida (véase Tabla 3).

TABLA 3  
Instrumento de medida: Fiabilidad y validez convergente

FACTOR	INDICADOR	CARGA	VALOR t	$\alpha$ de Cr.	IFC	AVE
<b>NOT</b>	NOT1. Conozco bien esta tienda	0,7796**	36,3710	0,8934	0,9268	0,7606
	NOT2. Puedo distinguir esta tienda	0,8856**	70,5378			
	NOT3. Recuerdo las características de esta tienda	0,9190**	114,7389			
	NOT4. Puedo imaginar cómo es esta tienda	0,8976**	92,3645			
<b>IMG</b>	IMG1. Esta tienda tiene una gran variedad de productos	0,6126**	18,9670	0,8740	0,9009	0,5339
	IMG2. Es cómodo comprar en esta tienda	0,8265**	54,7736			
	IMG3. Esta tienda es fácilmente accesible	0,6949**	23,1577			
	IMG4. Esta tienda está bien organizada	0,8147**	49,3266			

RELACIÓN ENTRE EL CAPITAL DE MARCA DE LA TIENDA Y LA LEALTAD...

	IMG5. En esta tienda siempre encuentro lo que busco	0,7074**	33,8056			
	IMG6. Es fácil desplazarse dentro de esta tienda	0,7555**	29,3717			
	IMG7. La reputación de esta tienda es buena	0,7076**	29,6569			
	IMG8. Esta tienda mantiene sus promesas de forma fidedigna (fiel)	0,7029**	32,5931			
<b>CS</b>	CS1. Servicio excelente	0,9421**	162,9227	0,8706	0,9392	0,8854
	CS2. Servicio correcto siempre a la primera	0,9398**	127,7186			
<b>CP</b>	CP1. Productos de buena calidad	0,9099**	92,4172	0,9165	0,9473	0,8570
	CP2. Productos de calidad aceptable	0,9509**	123,6687			
	CP3. Productos cumplen su función	0,9157**	117,1373			
<b>VP</b>	VP1. Precio razonable	0,8886**	62,15183	0,8925	0,9237	0,7527
	VP2. Valor por dinero	0,8962**	87,1532			
	VP3. Bueno por el precio que vale	0,9249**	130,5285			
	VP4. Productos económicos	0,7501**	24,8681			
<b>LEA</b>	LEA1. Me considero un cliente leal a esta tienda	0,8407**	60,1913	0,9253	0,9472	0,8179
	LEA2. Cuando compro, esta tienda es mi primera elección	0,9252**	138,1163			
	LEA3. No compraré en otra tienda de la competencia si puedo comprar lo mismo en esta tienda	0,9215**	106,9969			
	LEA4. Aunque encuentre productos similares en otras tiendas, suelo comprar en esta tienda	0,9271**	144,4914			
<b>CM</b>	CM1. Elijo esta tienda, incluso si hay similares	0,9368**	121,1212	0,9662	0,9753	0,9080
	CM2. Prefiero esta tienda, aunque haya otra tienda con similares características	0,9643**	256,0503			
	CM3. Prefiero esta tienda, aunque haya otras tan buenas	0,9603**	231,7333			
	CM4. Es más inteligente elegir esta tienda	0,9500**	186,6008			

Notas. NOT-Notoriedad, IMG-Imagen, CS-Calidad de servicio, CP-Calidad de producto, VP-Valor percibido, LEA-Lealtad, CM-Capital de marca; \*\*p<0,01.

Para corroborar la validez discriminante en el instrumento de medida comprobamos que el cuadrado de la correlación estimada entre dos factores es inferior a la varianza extraída promedio de cada factor (Fornell y Larcker, 1981). A partir de los valores de la Tabla 4, observamos que se cumple esa condición en todos los casos.

TABLA 4  
Instrumento de medida: Estadísticos descriptivos y Validez discriminante

	Media	DT	CP	CS	CM	IMG	LEA	NOT	VP
<b>CP</b>	5,56	1,149	<b>0,9257</b>						
<b>CS</b>	5,46	1,258	0,5771	<b>0,9410</b>					
<b>CM</b>	4,19	1,568	0,4234	0,5045	<b>0,9529</b>				
<b>IMG</b>	5,54	,986	0,6179	0,5983	0,5175	<b>0,7307</b>			
<b>LEA</b>	4,00	1,665	0,4315	0,5173	0,7056	0,4682	<b>0,9044</b>		
<b>NOT</b>	5,71	1,179	0,4205	0,4563	0,3965	0,4144	0,4936	<b>0,8721</b>	
<b>VP</b>	5,00	1,198	0,4209	0,4560	0,3948	0,4061	0,4124	0,3101	<b>0,8676</b>

Notas. DT-Desviación típica, CP-Calidad de producto, CS-Calidad de servicio, CM-Capital de marca, IMG-Imagen, LEA-Lealtad, NOT-Notoriedad, VP-Valor percibido. Diagonal en negrita: Raíz cuadrada de la Varianza Extraída Promedio (AVE). Debajo de la diagonal: Correlación estimada entre los factores

Una vez verificado que el modelo de medida es satisfactorio en relación a los criterios precedentes, es decir, las medidas de los constructos son fiables y válidas, damos paso a la evaluación de los dos modelos causales (Barclay et al., 1995; Cepeda y Roldán, 2004; Hair et al., 2014).

#### 4.2. La evaluación de los modelos causales

Tras la evaluación y análisis del instrumento de medida, procedemos al análisis de los dos modelos alternativos propuestos, expuestos en las Figuras 1 y 2, que reflejan las hipótesis planteadas en el presente trabajo. Para la estimación de cada uno de los modelos propuestos, igual que para la validación del instrumento de medida, se utiliza la técnica PLS y el *bootstrapping* de 500 submuestras de tamaño igual a la muestra original para la determinación de la significatividad de las cargas. Los resultados obtenidos se pueden observar en las Tablas 5 y 6.

En primer lugar comprobamos el poder predictivo del modelo estructural a través de los  $R^2$ . Según esta medida, la proporción de varianza de las variables endógenas que es explicada por los constructos que las predicen debería ser superior a 0,1. Como podemos ver en las Tablas 5 y 6, todos los valores de las variables dependientes superan este límite establecido por Falk y Miller (1992). A la vez que se ha analizado el tamaño del valor  $R^2$  como criterio de relevancia predictiva, también se ha aplicado la técnica de reutilización de muestra - *blindfolding*, proporcionando una distancia de omisión de siete (Geiser, 1974; Stone, 1974). Según esta reflejado en las Tablas 5 y 6, el estadístico  $Q^2$  de todas las variables resulta positivo. Este estadístico representa una medida de lo bien que los valores observados son reconstruidos a partir de los parámetros estimados (Hair et al., 2014). Por tanto, las hipótesis formuladas respecto a las variables latentes tendrán un nivel predictivo adecuado y permitirán evaluar la significatividad de las relaciones causales establecidas en ambos modelos.

Por lo que respecta al primer modelo, que propone la lealtad hacia la tienda como dimensión del capital de marca del establecimiento (Tabla 5), no todas las dimensiones propuestas resultan ser estadísticamente significativas. Así, mientras se confirma la influencia positiva y significativa de la imagen de la tienda ( $\beta=0,1898$ ;  $p<0,01$ ; H2), la calidad de servicio ( $\beta=0,0838$ ;  $p<0,05$ ; H3) y la lealtad hacia la tienda ( $\beta=0,5573$ ;  $p<0,01$ ; H6a) en la creación del capital de marca, no se encuentra apoyo a la inclusión de la notoriedad ( $\beta=-0,0120$ ; H1), la calidad de producto ( $\beta=-0,0001$ ; H4) y el valor percibido ( $\beta=0,0534$ ; H5) entre las dimensiones del capital de marca de la tienda.

TABLA 5  
Contraste de hipótesis de investigación: Modelo 1

RELACIÓN CAUSAL	HIPÓTESIS	$\beta$	T
H1: Notoriedad → Capital de marca	NO ACEPTADA	-0,0120ns	0,3855
H2: Imagen → Capital de marca	ACEPTADA	0,1898**	5,1718
H3: Calidad de servicio → Capital de marca	ACEPTADA	0,0838*	2,1088
H4: Calidad de producto → Capital de marca	NO ACEPTADA	-0,0001ns	0,0025
H5: Valor percibido → Capital de marca	NO ACEPTADA	0,0534ns	1,6501
H6a: Lealtad → Capital de marca	ACEPTADA	0,5573**	17,3801

$R^2$  (Capital de marca) = 0,5500;  $Q^2$  (Capital de marca) = 0,4910.  
\* $p<0,05$ ; \*\* $p<0,01$ ; ns=no significativo.

En relación al modelo que sugiere una relación causa-efecto entre el capital de marca de la tienda y la lealtad (Tabla 6), los resultados confirman la dimensionalidad de todas las variables, excepto una -la calidad de producto- ( $\beta=-0,0235$ ; H4). Así, se puede observar que las siguientes dimensiones afectan positiva y significativamente al capital de marca de la tienda: a) la notoriedad ( $\beta=0,1398$ ;  $p<0,01$ ; H1); b) la imagen ( $\beta=0,2661$ ;  $p<0,01$ ; H2); c) la calidad de servicio ( $\beta=0,2039$ ;  $p<0,01$ ; H3) y d) el valor percibido ( $\beta=0,1406$ ;  $p<0,01$ ; H5).

Por lo que respecta al impacto del capital de marca sobre la lealtad (véase Tabla 6), los resultados demuestran que el capital de marca de la tienda ejerce un efecto positivo y significativo sobre la

lealtad del consumidor, siendo esta relación la más fuerte entre las propuestas en el segundo modelo causal ( $\beta=0,7056$ ;  $p<0,01$ ; H6b).

TABLA 6  
**Contraste de hipótesis de investigación: Modelo 2**

RELACIÓN CAUSAL	HIPÓTESIS	$\beta$	t
H1: Notoriedad → Capital de marca	ACEPTADA	0,1398**	3,8286
H2: Imagen → Capital de marca	ACEPTADA	0,2661**	6,5105
H3: Calidad de servicio → Capital de marca	ACEPTADA	0,2039**	4,5064
H4: Calidad de producto → Capital de marca	NO ACEPTADA	0,0235ns	0,6219
H5: Valor percibido → Capital de marca	ACEPTADA	0,1406**	3,9770
H6b: Capital de marca → Lealtad	ACEPTADA	0,7056**	33,2272

$R^2$  (Capital de marca) = 0,3614;  $R^2$  (Lealtad) = 0,4978;  $Q^2$  (Capital de marca) = 0,3126,  $Q^2$  (Lealtad) = 0,4018.  
 \*\* $p<0,01$ ; ns=no significativo.

Con todo, del análisis de los resultados obtenidos para los dos modelos alternativos, se puede concluir la validez de ambas propuestas. Ambas señalan la imagen del establecimiento y la calidad de servicio como dimensiones que contribuyen positivamente a la formación del capital de marca de la tienda; mientras que para la calidad de producto hacia la tienda, los resultados obtenidos a partir de ambos modelos discrepan de los hallazgos en estudios previos (Arnett et al., 2003). Con respecto a la relación entre lealtad y capital de marca de la tienda, la inclusión de la lealtad como dimensión del capital de marca de la tienda contribuye a explicar en mayor medida este constructo ( $R^2$  del Capital de marca de la tienda = 0,5500 en el modelo que presenta la lealtad como dimensión, frente a valor promedio de  $R^2 = 0,4296$  en el modelo que propone la lealtad como efecto). Además, según la propuesta de Tenenhaus et al. (2005) al calcular la medida global de bondad del ajuste (GoF) (Guenzi y Georges, 2010), se obtiene un valor superior en el modelo que plantea la lealtad como dimensión del capital de marca de la tienda. En concreto, este modelo consigue alcanzar un 65,83% del ajuste total, frente a un 58,18% para el modelo que propone la lealtad como consecuencia última del capital de marca de la tienda. Por ello, concluimos la superioridad del modelo que presenta la lealtad como dimensión del capital de marca de la tienda, frente al que supone la lealtad como efecto.

TABLA 7  
**Bondad de ajuste de los modelos propuestos**

	Comunalidad	MODELO 1		MODELO 2	
		$R^2$	GoF	$R^2$	GoF
NOT	0,7606	-	0,6583	-	0,5818
IMG	0,5339	-		-	
CS	0,8854	-		-	
CP	0,8570	-		-	
VP	0,7527	-		-	
LEA	0,8179	-		0,3614	
CM	0,9080	0,5500		0,4978	
<b>Promedio</b>	<b>0,7879</b>	<b>0,5500</b>	<b>0,4296</b>		

Notas. Se obtienen valores  $R^2$  solo para las variables dependientes.  $GoF = \sqrt{\text{valor promedio de la comunalidad} \times \text{valor promedio de } R^2}$

## 5. Conclusiones

A través del presente trabajo se ha pretendido contribuir a la investigación en torno al capital de marca en el ámbito de la distribución comercial minorista. El estudio realizado ha permitido profundizar en la naturaleza del constructo y la delimitación de las variables que contribuyen a su formación a través de una muestra de consumidores españoles, proponiendo un modelo integrador para el análisis de las dimensiones y efectos del capital de marca de la tienda.

A la vista de los resultados obtenidos mediante la estimación de dos modelos estructurales podemos identificar como dimensiones del capital de marca de la tienda dos variables: a) la imagen del establecimiento (H2) y b) la calidad de servicio (H3). En este sentido, teniendo en cuenta la significatividad de las relaciones previamente establecidas estamos en disposición de afirmar que la imagen y la calidad de servicio que el consumidor percibe están relacionadas positiva y significativamente con el capital de marca de la tienda. Consecuentemente, cuanto más positiva sea la imagen del establecimiento en la mente del consumidor, mayor será su capital de marca. Asimismo, al confirmar la existencia de una relación positiva entre la calidad de servicio y el capital de marca, podemos concluir que un nivel superior de la calidad de servicio ofrecido incrementará el capital de marca de la tienda. Entre estas dos dimensiones, la imagen de la tienda ejerce el papel más importante en la creación del constructo en ambos modelos.

De otro lado, el efecto de la calidad de producto no resulta ser significativo (H4) en ninguno de los dos modelos planteados. Por ello, concluimos que la calidad de producto no influye de forma significativa sobre el capital de marca de la tienda y, por tanto, no podemos aceptar la hipótesis que establecía la relación positiva y significativa entre estas dos variables, lo que coincide con algunos estudios previos (p.e. Atilgan et al., 2005; Bravo et al., 2006; Buil et al., 2010). En esta línea, la razón de esta falta de influencia significativa de la calidad percibida de producto sobre el capital de marca en ambos modelos puede deberse a que esta variable tiene un fuerte carácter cognitivo. Así, la compra del producto parece ser la consecuencia de la mayor valoración del consumidor de una marca frente a otras marcas alternativas, y en muchos casos esta elección es realizada entre marcas percibidas como similares.

Adicionalmente, atendiendo a los resultados obtenidos en el primer modelo causal, no se puede afirmar la influencia positiva y significativa de otras dos dimensiones propuestas: notoriedad (H1) y valor percibido (H5). Mientras que la falta del impacto positivo del valor percibido en la formación del capital de marca se podría explicar por la naturaleza cognitiva de esta variable, al igual que en el caso de la calidad percibida, es probable que la notoriedad no muestre un valor significativo por el hecho de que todos los establecimientos minoristas analizados pueden ser considerados como referentes en sus respectivos sectores. Otra posible explicación puede radicar en la menor importancia, en términos relativos, de la notoriedad, frente a otros aspectos relativos al surtido o al servicio del minorista y, especialmente a la lealtad hacia la tienda. En este sentido, el impacto de la lealtad se muestra como la dimensión que incide en mayor medida en la creación del capital de marca (H6a), entre seis dimensiones propuestas.

En cambio, a la luz de los resultados obtenidos en el segundo modelo causal podemos confirmar la contribución positiva sobre la formación del capital de marca de la tienda de cuatro de las cinco variables identificadas como posibles dimensiones del constructo, es decir: a) la notoriedad de la tienda; b) la imagen del establecimiento; c) la calidad de servicio y d) el valor percibido de la tienda. En consecuencia, resulta evidente que la forma en que la tienda es definida en la mente de los consumidores a través de sus percepciones e impresiones, el valor global percibido, el nivel de reconocimiento o recuerdo de la identidad de la tienda y la calidad de servicio ofrecido resultan herramientas claves sobre las que el establecimiento debe profundizar, ya que a través de ellas podrá incrementar su capital de marca y conseguir un elemento de diferenciación frente a la competencia. Adicionalmente, cabe señalar que, según este modelo, la lealtad se afirma como un efecto del capital de la marca (H6b), pudiéndose concluir que el capital de marca de la tienda ejerce una influencia positiva y significativa sobre la lealtad del consumidor. También se observa que esta relación es la más fuerte que cualquier otra relación del modelo. Sin embargo, la medida global de bondad del ajuste (GoF) demuestra la inferioridad de este modelo frente al que considera la lealtad como una dimensión del capital de marca. Por ello, podemos concluir que la lealtad es mejor entendida como una dimensión del capital de marca que su efecto.

Con todo, de nuestro trabajo pueden derivarse diversas implicaciones para la gestión. Ante la creciente competencia en la distribución comercial minorista (Sales y Gil, 2007), los establecimientos deberán iniciar estrategias de diferenciación para mantener su competitividad. En este sentido, y dado que el capital de marca de la tienda se muestra como una variable clave sobre la que actuar, un mejor conocimiento de las variables que influyen en su formación permitirá al detallista articular estrategias

y acciones con el fin de lograr un mejor posicionamiento y realizar una entrega de valor superior para el consumidor. Para ello, deberá cuidar todos los aspectos, tanto funcionales como emocionales, vinculados al establecimiento que puedan generar imagen, calidad de servicio, valor percibido o notoriedad en el consumidor, ya que a través de ellos podrá influir en las percepciones e impresiones de los consumidores (Yoo et al., 2000) y lograr un incremento en la lealtad del consumidor hacia el punto de venta.

Para finalizar, cabe apuntar algunas limitaciones que en sí mismas consideraríamos futuras líneas de investigación. La primera se refiere al ámbito geográfico restringido de aplicación del estudio. Así, sería interesante poder comparar los resultados derivados de este trabajo con las percepciones de los consumidores de otras zonas, ya que cabe esperar que la estructura comercial, la cultura y costumbres de los consumidores de cada región influyan en la percepción del consumidor. Además, también se podría comparar los resultados del modelo establecido entre las tres enseñas comerciales retenidas detectando posibles diferencias en las percepciones de los consumidores y en la formación de los distintos capitales de marca. En esta línea, sería interesante la comparación entre formatos comerciales distintos.

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# PRIVATE LABEL BRANDS: MEASURING THE ROLE OF IMAGE, LOYALTY AND MANUFACTURER IDENTIFICATION

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** *With the prompting trend today toward higher retail concentration, the global recession and the changing consumer habits, building successful private labels has become a priority for many retailing companies.*

**Purpose:** *This study aims to analyze the dimensions influencing private labels' purchase intention, as well as the roles of manufacturer identification and brand loyalty.*

**Methodology:** *For this purpose we develop structural equation model analysis, gathering a sample of 362 individuals.*

**Findings:** *Our findings suggest that private labels' image and their quality perception are partially mediated by loyalty, whereas the manufacturer identification plays a moderating role. In addition, our results reveal that store image and retailer reputation enhance private labels' image and perceived quality.*

**Implications:** *This research provides useful insights for retailing managers, who should deeply consider the store image and their reputation when designing their branding strategies, and develop marketing activities in order to enhance customers' private label loyalty.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Private label, purchase intention, manufacturer identification, loyalty, retailing*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the introduction of private labels into the market, consumers have witnessed a substantial increase in their availability, due to the higher retailing concentration and the changing consumer habits (Ailawadi and Keller, 2004; Anselmsson et al., 2007). The private labels' continuous growth was also caused by the constant evolution they have undergone since their appearance in the marketplace. In fact, the annual sales revenue of private label brands worldwide approaches one trillion US dollars (Kumar and Steenkamp, 2007; Wu et al., 2011), and especially in Europe private label penetration is extremely large (Hoch, 1996; De Wulf et al., 2005). Private labels, also known as store brands, retailer brands and distributor's brands are brands owned, developed and managed by one retailer (Kotler and Armstrong, 1996). As the economic downturn causes a decline in consumer income, retailers build and develop private labels in order to increase profit and differentiation (Richardson et al., 1996; Wu et al., 2011), retain customers and increase market share (Hoch, 1996, Wu et al., 2011). Thus, developing private label brands becomes a relevant strategy for retailers. In fact, in the recent decades, retailers have tried to convert their brands into just one more alternative brand choice within the range available to consumers, offering a great variety of private label products (Choi and Huddleston, 2013) and boosting their image so that private labels are not perceived as low quality alternative, since their competitiveness was mainly rooted in lower prices and less promotional expenses compared to manufacturer brands (Bao et al., 2011).

In spite of the emergence and growing importance of private labels, most previous conceptual and empirical research has been focused on manufacturer brands, and only recently they have been deeply investigated (Ailawadi, 2001; Karry and Zaccour, 2006). Previous studies on private labels could be split into two main categories. First one addresses the private labels' purchasing proneness in comparison with manufacturer brands (Hoch, 1996; Ailawadi et al., 2001). Second ones are related to the variables influencing consumers' attitude and preferences towards the consumption of private labels, considering the product category, price consciousness or perceived risk (Batra and Sinha, 2000; Baltas, 2003; Semeijn et al., 2004). However, previous research rarely incorporates store or retailer image variables; although they are increasingly important, since consumers use the store image and retailer reputation as cues for reducing the purchasing risk of private labels (Semeijn et al., 2004), as well as a means of reducing poor quality associations and extending private labels' purchase intention beyond price sensitive consumer segments (Vahie and Paswan, 2006; Wu et al., 2011). Moreover, previous empirical studies primarily focus on the mediating role of price consciousness (Tseng and Hwang, 2003), despite consumers choose private label brands to which they are loyal. Thus, loyalty may be considered a mediator for private label purchase intention. Additionally, our research analyzes the role of manufacturer identification on the product package as a moderating variable, since consumers may choose private labels which provide information on the product manufacturer, in order to reduce the purchase perceived risk (Purohit and Srivastava, 2001). Thus, the manufacturer identification on private label products may be playing a moderating role on consumers' purchase intention.

Our research seeks to provide a more in-depth understanding of the dimensions generating private labels' purchasing proneness, in order to examine the main components through which private labels increase their purchase intention. For this purpose, this research proposes a causal model covering both the direct and indirect effects caused by one consumer-level variable -private label loyalty-, along with a product-level factor -manufacturer identification on the package-, developing a multiple group analysis through structural equation modeling. Finally, our results suggest that private labels' image and their quality perception influence -through consumers' loyalty- on their purchasing proneness, as well as highlight the role of the manufacturer identification on the product package as a

moderating variable on private labels' purchase intention. This paper is structured as follows. First, a conceptual framework presentation of the variables to be studied is provided. This is followed by the description of the methodology adopted and fieldwork. Finally, the results and implications of the study are discussed together with limitations and possible future lines of research.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 *Private labels' purchase intention*

#### 2.1.1. *Store image*

Martineau (1958) first introduced the concept of store image as the way the consumers' mind picture the store, influenced by functional qualities and by psychological attributes. In fact, the store image has generally been conceptualized as the way in which the store is defined in consumers' minds by attributes such as the quality of products offered, the product assortment, the services provided, the physical facilities and layout, the internal environment or the good relation of *value for money* (Grewal et al., 1998; Chowdhury et al. 1998; Anselmsson et al., 2007). Consequently, the store image is expressed in terms of the store's attributes assessed by consumers (Devlin et al., 2003), and could be conceptualized as the overall attitude or impression consumers derive from the intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics of the store (Wu et al., 2011).

From a managerial point of view, private label brands are brands like any other, despite they are subject to one important difference, which is their image positioning based on that of the store (Kapferer, 2008). Consequently, consumers use store image as one variable to evaluate private label brands (Ailawadi and Keller, 2004). When consumers have a positive perception of the store image, it exerts a positive influence on private labels carried by the store (Dhar and Hock, 1997; Wu et al., 2011) and on their purchase intention (Grewal et al., 1998). Thus, store image is predominantly important as a source of value for private labels (De Wulf et al., 2005), influencing their purchasing proneness (Semeijn et al. 2004, Vahie and Paswan 2006). More specifically, Richardson et al. (1996) found that consumers' evaluations of the overall quality of private labels were higher when the store image was more favorable. According to Semeijn et al. (2004) the store image directly influences the perceived quality of private labels; and a better store image leads to a greater perception of private label brand image (Beristain and Zorrilla, 2011). Thus, a better store image leads to a greater perception of private label's quality (Beristain and Zorrilla, 2011). Additionally, Vahie and Paswan (2006) found a positive relationship between store image and private labels' image. Therefore, we can hypothesize that stores with a better image make consumers perceive them as offering private label brands with better image and offering higher quality; so, the more positive a store image, the higher private labels' quality perception and the better image. Hence, the following research hypotheses are posed:

*H<sub>0</sub>: The store image is positively related to private label image*

*H<sub>1</sub>: The store image is positively related to private label perceived quality*

#### 2.1.2. *Corporate reputation*

Retailers can be perceived as firms or companies, linking the retailer to aspects such as the company interest in and commitment to society (Brown and Dancing, 1997; Beristain and Zorrilla, 2011). The corporate reputation could be conceptualized as the degree to which firms assume economic, legal,

ethical and social responsibilities towards their stakeholders (Maignan et al., 1999). According to Purohit and Srivastava (2001) retailers provide the interface between consumers and manufacturers, given that retailer reputation is directly and indirectly linked to private labels. The corporate reputation or retailer reputation not only impacts perceptions of private labels' quality directly, but also indirectly impacts quality perception by increasing the likelihood of warranty in assessing private labels' quality. In this way, retailing corporations with a high-quality reputation have great incentives to preserve their reputation by screening out poor-quality manufacturers and offering high-quality private labels. So, private label products distributed through reputable retailers provides assurance to consumers (Dodds et al., 1991; Purohit and Srivastava, 2001).

The corporate reputation allows consumers to infer the quality of the merchandise (Bao et al., 2011), in terms that perceptions of product quality are higher when private label products are sold through a retailer with a good reputation (Purohit and Srivastava, 2001). As a result, consumers perceive private labels owned by a favorable reputed retailer to carry higher quality than a poor reputed retailer (Bao et al., 2011). So the quality of a given private label is perceived differently depending on the reputation of the retailer who offers it. Moreover, Ånselmsson and Johansson (2007) showed that reputed and socially responsible image of the retailer has a positive influence on private labels' purchase intention. The present research considers corporate reputation in broad perspective, including the corporate image deriving from its social and strategic behavior. Thus, we would hypothesize that consumers who perceive the retailing corporation as a competent firm, with experience and that behaves in an ethical honest way, may also perceive that has capacity to offer private label brands that satisfy their needs and expectations. Thus, we posit the following hypotheses:

*H<sub>2</sub>: The corporate reputation is positively related to private label image*

*H<sub>3</sub>: The corporate reputation is positively related to private label perceived quality*

#### *2.1.3. Private label image*

Aaker (1991) conceptualizes brand image or associations as the information in consumers' minds linked to a brand or product, which create favorable attitudes towards the brand. According to Yoo et al. (2000) brand image consist in multiple associations, ideas or facts that establish solid brand knowledge, resulting in a higher purchase intention. More specifically, private labels' image is the association consumers add to private label products, leading to perceptions of private label brands (Wu et al., 2011). On one hand, private labels' positive image can be used by retailers as a tool to differentiate and enhance consumers' loyalty (Levy and Weitz, 2004). And on the other hand, consumers use private label image as one extrinsic cue for evaluating their quality and reduce the purchasing perceived risk (Wu et al., 2011). In this way, private labels with good image, create more positive attitudes from consumers and a higher purchase intention (Wu et al., 2011). Therefore, increasing private labels' image enhances purchasing intention. So, we propose that the positive and favorable private label image or associations can positively influence consumer loyalty to private label brands, leading also to a greater purchase intent. Thus, the following research hypotheses are posed:

*H<sub>4</sub>: Private label image is positively related to private label loyalty*

*H<sub>7</sub>: Private label image is positively related to private label purchase intention*

#### *2.1.4. Private label perceived quality*

According to Zeithaml (1988), perceived quality could be conceptualized as the consumers' global judgment of the brand or product overall excellence or superiority. According to Aaker (1991) perceived quality is related to consumers' subjective perception of a product or brand attributes involved in the brand choice and purchase. Previous studies indicate that consumers generally perceive private label brands to be of lower quality than manufacturer brands (Dick et al., 1995). Nevertheless, retailers have been introducing private label brands whose quality matches or even exceeds that of manufacturer brands, while still selling for a slightly lower price (De Wulf et al., 2005). More

specifically, perceived quality predominantly determines the consumer private labels' purchasing proneness (Richardson et al., 1996; Bao et al., 2011). Furthermore, the most important driver of private label share is their perceived quality (Hoch and Banerji, 1993; Sethuraman, 2000; Ailawadi and Keller, 2004); being a key factor of their purchase intention. So, the better the private label positions in terms of quality, the more likely it is to be purchased (Ailawadi and Keller, 2004; Sprott and Shimp, 2004), and exerts substantial influence on the purchase intention (Bao et al., 2011). So, we propose that consumers will have higher loyalty, when they perceive that private label brands offer quality; and that consumers are more prone to purchase private label brands with higher perceived quality. This set of considerations leads us to the following hypotheses:

*H<sub>5</sub>: Private label perceived quality is positively related to private label loyalty*

*H<sub>8</sub>: Private label perceived quality is positively related to private label purchase intention*

## ***2.2. The mediating role of private labels' loyalty***

Oliver (1997) conceptualizes brand loyalty as a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred brand consistently in the future despite situational influences. According to Aaker (1991), brand loyalty is defined as the attachment a customer has to a brand, reflecting how likely a customer will switch to another brand. Then, in branding literature, a consumer is said to be brand loyal when this consumer consistently purchases a single brand (De Wulf et al., 2005).

Loyalty is one variable which many studies have demonstrated to have strong influence on purchase decision (Rondan et al., 2006). In fact, there is empirical evidence suggesting that once the consumer has tried private labels, increases their purchasing proneness and engenders loyalty (Steenkamp and Dekimpe 1997); and that private label brands encompass private labels' loyalty (Huang and Huddleston, 2009). More specifically, previous research links private labels' loyalty to their image and perceived quality. The outcome of consumer's associations and perceived quality may result in loyalty toward a specific private label (Choi and Huddleston, 2013). Moreover, loyalty to private labels is only possible if they possess a positive favorable image (Steenkamp and Dekimpe, 1997); and high perceived quality (Binninger, 2008). So, consumers' satisfaction with private label brands is a significant driver of private label brand loyalty (Huang and Huddleston, 2009); while private label loyalty is the main variable influencing the purchasing process (Rondan et al., 2006).

In our research we will examine the conceptual base for the relationships between consumers' image of private labels, their quality perception and their influence on private labels' purchase intention. Specifically, we argue that consumers' loyalty to private label brands mediate these relationships. Therefore, we propose that private label loyalty not only leads to purchase intention, but also mediates the positive relationship between private label image and private label quality perception and purchase intention. That is, we consider that consumers' loyalty to private label brands will mediate the relationships between image, perceived quality and their purchase intention. Thus, this set of considerations leads us to the following research hypotheses:

*H<sub>6</sub>: Consumers are more prone to purchase a private label with higher loyalty*

*H<sub>7</sub>: Besides the indirect influence through private label loyalty, private label image has a positive direct influence on purchase intention*

*H<sub>8</sub>: Besides the indirect influence through private label loyalty, private label perceived quality has a positive direct influence on purchase intention*

## ***2.3. Moderating role of manufacturer identification***

The information related to private labels brands that consumers have is not as complete as for manufacturer brands (Wu et al., 2011); in fact, private labels are characterized as basic and functional products, which may identify or not a specific product manufacturer (Huang and Huddleston, 2009). Private label brands often lack a distinct identification with a specific manufacturer (Dick et al., 1995; De Wulf et al., 2005). However, when consumers hold a favorable and strong quality perception toward a private label brand they are likely to purchase it; and these favorable perceptions are more effectively internalized when manufacturer name is present (Choi and Huddleston, 2013). The reason may be that consumers prefer the guarantee that a familiar manufacturer brings, rather than the risk linked with purchasing an unknown manufacturer private label product (Baltas, 1997). Additionally, different types of private label brands are available in the market, since some retailers provide the manufacturer identification from the product package, allowing the manufacturer recognition to consumers.

In this way, private labels with manufacturer identification on the package allow consumers associate and connect one specific private label product with an identified manufacturer, and consequently, reduce the purchase risk. So, the purchase risk is the operating mechanism underlying the effect of manufacturer identification on purchase intention, since the manufacturer identification would carry less purchasing risk for consumers than non-identified manufacturer products (Batra and Sinha, 2000; Bao et al., 2011). Thus, the manufacturer identification sends a strong signal to consumers about the product image and quality, providing assurance and reducing purchase risk. So, to the extent that the manufacturer identification on the product package provides assurance to consumers about product quality (Purohit and Srivastava, 2001), we expect a more favorable private label purchase intention for these private label brands providing manufacturer identification or recognition, rather than for private label brands with no manufacturer information. That is, we propose that is likely that providing consumers' information about the product manufacturer, will influence consumers' private label purchase intention, since the presence of the manufacturer identification may be particularly useful for reducing the purchasing risk, as well as for obtaining greater confidence in the private label product quality.

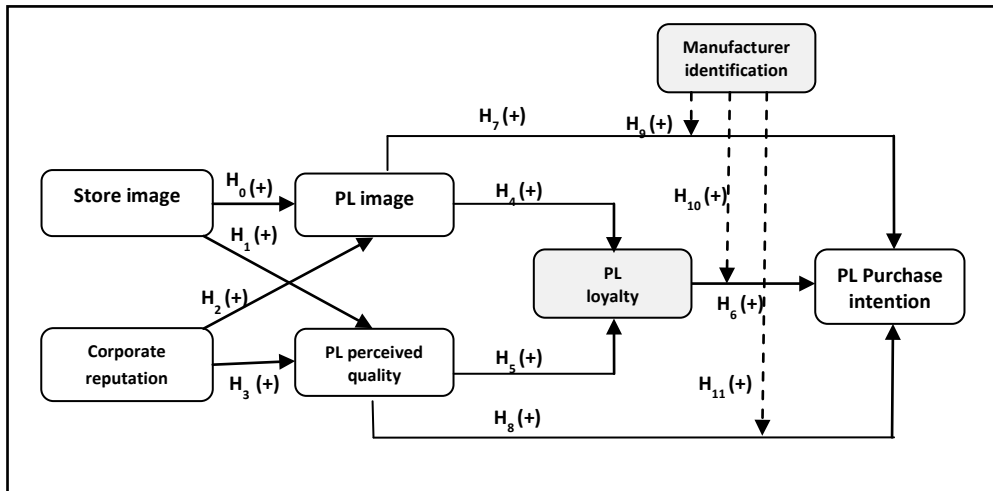
Our research contends that any attributes serving to mitigate and diminish private labels' purchasing risk would increase consumer purchase intention, such as manufacturer identification. This specific extrinsic cue can fulfill the purchase risk and influence consumers' purchase intention, by moderating the relationship among private labels' image, perceived quality and loyalty with their purchase intent. Hence, we propose that providing the manufacturer identification on private label products' packages may be an effective way to improve their purchase intention. In other words, when a private label identifies its manufacturer, this information may influence the consumer attitude and perceptions. So, we propose that the manufacturer identification on private label brands will positively moderate the effect of private label image, quality perception and loyalty on their purchasing intention:

*H<sub>9</sub>: The manufacturer identification moderates the influence of private label image on purchase intention*

*H<sub>10</sub>: The manufacturer identification moderates the influence of private label loyalty on purchase intention*

*H<sub>11</sub>: The manufacturer identification moderates the influence of private label quality perception on purchase intention*

**FIGURE 1.** Conceptual Proposed model



### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Data collection

To test the research hypotheses, the information was collected by means of a structured on-line questionnaire among consumers residing in Spain. Spain has become one of the European markets with higher private labels' market share (Bigné et al. 2013), thus representing an excellent basis for our study, and providing a large mature market. We proceeded with a random sampling among consumers so that each participant evaluated one single private label brand. In fact, the respondents were deliberately not asked to select the one private label brand for which they have knowledge or consumer experience. The sampling error was 5.53%, with a confidence level of 95% under the hypothesis  $p=q=0.5$ , and fieldwork was carried out in June 2012. A sample of 394 consumers was gathered, obtaining a total amount of 362 valid responses on the five major Spanish retailers' private label brands. The last part of the questionnaire contained several socio-demographic questions.

#### 3.2. Variables and measurement scales

Two criteria were followed in order to select the private label brands for our study. In first place, we considered the Spanish major retailers, according to their total revenue in year 2012 (Worldpanel Distribucion, 2012). Secondly, we took into consideration retailers who give their own name to their private label brands, including either the store name or logo on the packaging. This way, we selected five major retailers, namely Carrefour, Mercadona, Dia, Eroski and El Corte Ingles. Additionally, we chose private label brands with different manufacturer information. More specifically, the private label brands of Mercadona, Eroski and El Corte Ingles ( $n= 219$ ) provide the manufacturer identification on their products' packages; and these retailers are popular for providing such information for all their private label products. On the other hand private label brands of Carrefour and Dia ( $n= 143$ ) exhibit no manufacturer identification, deleting information about the product manufacturer, except for a code number which relates to the industrial registration number. Moreover, it should be remarked that the 61% of the Spanish consumers read the package information on agrifood products, then showing their interest on the origin and manufacturers of products (Nielsen, 2010).

All measures are adapted from or developed based on prior research, and were measured using the classic Likert-type 1-5 scale. The *store image* is measured by three items adopted from Chowdhury et al. (1998) and Beristain and Zorrilla (2011), in order to assess consumers' perception of the store from multiple perspectives, such as product offer, service and quality. Secondly, we used three items to measure *corporate reputation*, adopted from previous studies (Handelman and Arnold, 1999), based



on the research line about the influence of the company experience or their honest behavior. *Private label image* is measured on a 4-item scale, comprising items proposed by Aaker (1991) and Netemeyer et al. (2004). Private labels' *quality perception* is measured on the scale proposed by Dodds et al. (1991), which evaluates the consumer's overall assessment of the quality of a product or brand. For measuring private label *loyalty*, we used two items proposed by Yoo et al., (2000), regarding whether the consumer is considered loyal to a particular brand. Finally, *purchase intention* is measured on a 3-item scale, including items adopted from Netemeyer et al. (2004).

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Analysis of the measurement model

Structural equation modeling was carried out in order to analyze the proposed model with Amos. Confirmatory factor analyses were employed to address the issues of dimensionality, convergent and discriminant validity (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Our confirmatory factorial analysis shows that all standardized factor loadings are significant, exceeding the recommended minimum of 0.50, with a reliability level of 95%. These results reveal the strong convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Steenkamp and Trijp, 1991; Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2006). In relation with the internal consistency and reliability, Cronbach Alpha, composite reliability coefficients and analysis of the extracted variance exceeded were calculated. We obtained cronbach alpha values from 0.716 to 0.903, thus being acceptable as suggested Anderson and Gerbing (1988) and Hair et al. (1998). The composite reliability exceeded the value of 0.70, satisfying the criteria (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1998), and providing evidence of convergent validity. The average variance extracted for these measures ranged from 0.504 to 0.779 and exceeded the recommended minimum of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1999), demonstrating discriminant validity.

TABLE 1

Factor loadings of latent variables and Indicators of Internal Consistency and Reliability

Construct	Indicators	Cronbach Alpha	Lambda	CR	AVE
<b>Store image</b> Chowdhury et al. (1998), Beristain and Zorrilla (2011)	Stim1 Store X offers a wide range of products Stim2 Store X offers products with high quality Stim3 The store X offers the services that I'm looking for (ex. Pay over time, free parking, products' return, etc.)	0.716	0.561 0.876 0.534	0.704	0.504
<b>Corporate reputation</b> Handelman and Arnold (1999).	Rep1 Retailer X behaves in an ethic honest way Rep2 Retailer X is concerned with consumers' health and welfare Rep 3 Retailer X has wide experience in retailing	0.725	0.701 0.706 0.601	0.709	0.606
<b>PL image</b> Aaker (1991), Netemeyer et al. (2004)	Im1 I associate products of private label X to positive characteristics (ex. good prices) Im2 Buyer of products of private label X know how to buy (buy with common sense) Im3 It gives me confidence buying a private label X Im4 The prices of private label X products are adequate and affordable	0.788	0.756 0.701 0.798 0.535	0.794	0.506
<b>PL perceived quality</b> Dodds et al. (1991)	Qal1 The products of private label X have a high quality Qal2 The products of private label X are reliable/trustworthy Qal3 The products of private label X give me the result I'm looking for	0.876	0.839 0.879 0.804	0.878	0.708
<b>PL loyalty</b> Yoo et al. (2000)	Loy1 I consider myself a loyal consumer to the private label X products	0.874	0.904 0.861	0.876	0.779

	Loy2 I will keep on buying store brand X.				
<b>Purchase intention</b> Netemeyer et al. (2004)	Pint1 I would buy private label X. Pint2 I am likely to buy private label X. Pint3 It makes sense to purchase private label X instead of other competing brands	0.903	0.754 0.915 0.948	0.908	0.768

**4.2. Analysis of the structural model**

Structural equation modeling was developed to assess the statistical significance of the research proposed relationships (Figure 1). Model fit criteria suggested by Hu and Bentler (1996) were used for both the measurement and the structural model:  $\chi^2 / df$ , goodness of fit (GFI), adjusted goodness of fit (AGFI), comparative fit index (CFI), root mean square residual (RMR) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Acceptable models should have  $\chi^2 / df \leq 3$ , AGFI  $\geq 0.80$ , RMR  $\leq .1$ , RMSEA  $\leq 1.0$  and GFI and CFI higher than 0.90. All of the obtained fit measures indicated that the structural model was acceptable ( $\chi^2/df=2.361$ ;  $p<.000$ ): RMSEA=0.061; RMR= 0.054; GFI=0.918; AGFI=0.888; CFI=0.958). Since the goodness of fit index surpass the recommended value of 0.9, the proposed causal model can be considered satisfactory. Moreover, the conceptual model shows structural parameter estimates with an acceptable fit to the data (Table 2).

**TABLE 2.**

Structural modeling adjustment indexes.

<i>Structural model</i>	ABSOLUTE FIT MEASURES						INCREMENTAL FIT MEASURES					PARSIMONY MEASURES
	<i>Chi-square</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>GFI</i>	<i>RMR</i>	<i>RMSEA</i>	<i>AGFI</i>	<i>NFI</i>	<i>IFI</i>	<i>TLI</i>	<i>CFI</i>	<i>Normed Chi-square</i>
<b>Direct</b>	247.496	97	0.001	0.922	0.056	0.066	0.891	0.928	0.955	0.944	0.955	2.552
<b>Partial mediation</b>	295.180	125	0.001	0.918	0.054	0.061	0.888	0.929	0.958	0.948	0.958	2.361
<b>Full mediation</b>	336.325	127	0.001	0.907	0.065	0.068	0.875	0.919	0.948	0.937	0.949	2.648

**4.3. Direct effects**

The conceptual proposed model showed an adequate general fit to the provided data; and the parameters were tested to decide whether to accept the proposed relationships and the research hypotheses. Our results report the antecedents of private label purchasing proneness, namely, store image and corporate reputation, that are positively related with private label image and perceived quality; thus supporting H<sub>0</sub>, H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>3</sub>.

In terms of effect size, the corporate reputation seems to contribute the most to private label image ( $\beta_{23}=0.741^{**}$ ), followed by store image ( $\beta_{13}=0.240^{**}$ ). On the other hand, regarding the private labels' quality perception, it should be highlighted that all the proposed relationships of store image ( $\beta_{14}=0.643^{**}$ ) and corporate reputation ( $\beta_{24}=0.362^{**}$ ) are significantly positive on private labels' perceived quality. So, it can be stated that the better and more favorable store image and corporate reputation, the better private label image and quality perception. Thus, regarding the casual hypothesized relationships, seven of them were statistically significant in the suggested direction, with the exception of the relationship of perceived quality on purchase intention. Finally, it should stressed the significant relationship among the dimensions of private labels' purchase intention and two antecedents –store image and corporate reputation-.

**TABLE 4.**

Results of the structural model (standarized coefficients)

<i>Causal relationships</i>		<b>Direct effect</b>	<b>Partial mediation</b>	<b>Full mediation</b>
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PRIVATE LABEL BRANDS

$\beta$ (standardized coefficients)	Path	$\beta$	t	$\beta$	t	$\beta$	t
Store image → PL image	H <sub>0</sub>	$\beta_{13} = 0.240^{**}$	3.232	-		-	
Store image → PL perceived quality	H <sub>1</sub>	$\beta_{14} = 0.643^{**}$	7.575	-		-	
Corporate reputation → PL image	H <sub>2</sub>	$\beta_{23} = 0.741^{**}$	8.128	-		-	
Corporate reputation → PL perceived quality	H <sub>3</sub>	$\beta_{24} = 0.362^{**}$	5.229	-		-	
PL image → PL loyalty	H <sub>4</sub>	-		$\beta_{35} = 0.700^{**}$	7.761	$\beta_{35} = 0.821^{**}$	8.963
PL perceived quality → PL loyalty	H <sub>5</sub>	-		$\beta_{45} = 0.163^{**}$	1.991	$\beta_{45} = 0.066^{ns}$	0.835
PL loyalty → Purchase intention	H <sub>6</sub>	-		$\beta_{56} = 0.325^{**}$	3.479	$\beta_{56} = 0.790^{**}$	13.482
PL image → Purchase intention	H <sub>7</sub>	$\beta_{36} = 0.991^{**}$	8,902	$\beta_{36} = 0.764^{**}$	6.057	-	
PL perceived quality → Purchase intention	H <sub>8</sub>	$\beta_{46} = -0.255^{**}$	-2.790	$\beta_{46} = -0.298^{**}$	-3.663	-	
<i>ns=no significant</i> <i>** significant (p&lt;0.01)</i>							

**4.4. The mediating effect of private label loyalty**

Our conceptual model proposes that private label loyalty mediates the influence of private label image and private label perceived quality on purchase intention. According to Baron and Kenny (1986) a mediating effect takes place when three conditions are satisfied. First, the independent variable has a significant influence on the mediator. Second, the mediating variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable; and third, the previous significant relationship between the independent and the dependent variables is reduced when introducing the mediator. Additionally, whether the effect of the independent variable is not statistically significant a complete mediating role exists; otherwise, a partial mediating effect takes place. For analyzing the mediating role of private label loyalty, our research estimates both a *direct effect* and a *full mediating* models (Table 4). On the other hand, in the *full mediating* model, significant influences exist between private label image and private label loyalty and purchase intention, while we observed a relationship in the expected direction between private label perceived quality and purchase intention, but it failed to reach statistical significance. Finally, in a *partial mediating* model, in addition to the significant relationships among private label image, perceived quality, loyalty and purchase intention, our research shows a direct influence of the independent variables on purchase intention. Therefore, partial mediating effects are supported. Regarding the *direct effect* model, significant effects are observed of private label image and perceived quality on purchase intention. More specifically, private label image shows a significant influence on purchase intention ( $\beta_{36}=0.991^{**}$ ), as well as private label quality perception ( $\beta_{46}=-0.255^{**}$ ). However, and contrary to our expectations this relationship was significant but in the opposite direction. Nevertheless, in the *partial mediating* model this influence is reduced both for private label image ( $\beta_{36}=0.764^{**}$ ) and for perceived quality ( $\beta_{46}=-0.298^{**}$ ), supporting H<sub>7</sub> and H<sub>8</sub>. Finally, a comparison between the full and the partial mediating models shows that the latter fits data better ( $\Delta\chi^2=41.145$ ;  $df=4$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

**4.5. The moderating role of manufacturer identification**

Data have been analyzed through structural equation modeling and multigroup analysis to test the moderation hypotheses, that is, the moderating role of manufacturer identification on the relationship

between private label image, perceived quality and loyalty on their purchase intention. The sample was divided into two groups, according to the manufacturer identification on the products' package. Thus, sample comparisons were made between private labels with manufacturer identification - Mercadona, Eroski and El Corte Ingles- (n=219) and private labels with no manufacturer identification -Dia and Carrefour- (n=143). The model estimated simultaneously on these two groups shows an adequate fit ( $\chi^2=216.849$ ;  $p<0.001$ ; CFI=0.970). In first place, the proposed model is estimated with all hypothesized parameters being allowed to be estimated freely within each subsample ( $\chi^2=216.849$ ;  $df=134$ ). Next, in a constrained model, the path coefficients corresponding to the relationship between private label image and private labels' purchase intention ( $H_9$ ) is constrained to remain invariant across the two subsamples ( $\chi^2=217.169$ ;  $df=135$ ). The significantly higher  $\chi^2$  value for the constrained model did not improve the model fit, thus supporting  $H_9$  ( $\Delta\chi^2=0.32$ ;  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Additionally, the equality constraint of private label loyalty and their purchase intention did not improve the model fit ( $\chi^2=216.986$ ;  $df=135$ ), as well as the constraint of private label perceived quality and their purchase intention ( $\chi^2=217.733$ ;  $df=135$ ). The significantly higher  $\chi^2$  value for the constrained models supports  $H_{10}$  ( $\Delta\chi^2=0.137$ ;  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and  $H_{11}$  ( $\Delta\chi^2=0.884$ ;  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Our findings show that the manufacturer identification on private label products' packages moderates the effect of private label image, perceived quality and loyalty on their purchase intention.

TABLE 5.

Moderating variable hypotheses test: multiple group comparison.

Moderating effect	Chi-square	df	CFI		
Unconstrained baseline model	216.849	134	0.970		
Constrained paths	Chi-square	$\Delta\chi^2$	df	p	Hypotheses
PL image → Purchase intention	217.169	0.32	135	0.001	$H_9$ :Supported
PL loyalty → Purchase intention	216.986	0.137	135	0.001	$H_{10}$ : Supported
PL Perceived quality → Purchase intention	217.733	0.884	135	0.001	$H_{11}$ :Supported
<b>All path constraints</b> ** <i>significant</i> ( $p<0.05$ )	218.474	1.625	137	0.001	$H_{12}$ :Supported

## 6. CONCLUSION

There are many articles on private labels, retailer or store brands, whilst there are not as abundant researches analyzing the dimensions influencing their purchase intention. The present paper aims to contribute to this lack of research by assessing the variables that influence private labels' purchase intention, along with the mediating effect of private labels' loyalty and the moderating role of manufacturer identification. Our study has tested a model which integrates numerous variables related to private labels' purchasing proneness, but incorporating the original focus on the role of the manufacturer identification.

In first place, our model estimation provides evidence that both store image and the corporate reputation are powerful antecedents to private label purchase intention. In this regard, our findings support a higher influence of corporate reputation on private label image, whereas the store image exerts a higher impact on private label quality perception. So, the obtained results imply that when consumers are making decisions about the purchase of private labels brands, the image of the store, as

well as the corporate reputation play determinant roles; highlighting that private labels' consumer behavior is a complex process, where consumers evaluate and assess two store related variables. The reason may be that consumers would be highly confident in the signaling ability of the store image (Bao et al., 2011), or that consumers rely on the store image and the corporate reputation to reduce the purchase risk for private labels, being in line with some previous research (Purohit and Srivastava, 2001).

Other important finding is that private labels' image appears to be heavily weighted by consumers, exerting the strongest effect on loyalty and on purchase intention. That is, the private label image is the most important driver for private label loyalty and purchasing proneness. So, private label image is critical to private labels' success in today's increasingly competitive marketplace, being the variable exerting higher influence on consumers' behavior. Additionally, it should be stressed that private label purchase intention was found to be significantly affected by perceived quality, but not in the expected direction, while exerting a lower influence on their purchase intent. This may be due to the fact that nowadays private labels are positioning as an equal quality alternative to manufacturer brands (Choi and Huddleston, 2013), competing on a more equal footing with manufacturer brands in terms of product quality (Grunert et al., 2006). These results suggest that retailing managers should focus on creating and communicating a positive favorable private label image. Other major finding is related with one consumer-level factor, that is, private label loyalty. Our major contribution is the examination of the direct and indirect effects, both mediated by private label loyalty; and thus, demonstrating the partially mediating role of private label loyalty. In our study we first considered the relationship between private labels' loyalty and their purchase intention, and subsequently we focused on the indirect relationships between private label image and their quality perception on private labels' purchase intention. The results show that the indirect effect through the mediation of private label loyalty outperforms the direct effect of private label image and their quality perception on purchase intent; while showing the positive influence of private labels' loyalty on consumers' purchase intention.

Finally, one major research question was aimed at providing insights in the moderating role of the manufacturer identification. Our findings indicate that the presence of the manufacturer identification on private label products' package moderates the private labels' purchase intention, upon three drivers, namely private label image, private label quality perception and loyalty. This finding, related to one product-level variable, supports the idea that consumers' private label purchasing proneness is different for private label brands providing the manufacturer identification on the package, from private labels without this information. We assumed the hypothesis that the effect of manufacturer identification on private labels' purchase intention may differ across the two types of private labels - private labels with manufacturer identification and private labels which deleted this information-, thus being a predictor of private labels' purchase intention. This assumption is supported by the results obtained. So, when a private label brand is associated with a specific manufacturer, in general terms consumers perceive it as a guarantee, and this private label is perceived as offering an acceptable quality. The explanation may be that the presence of the name or identification on the private label product package has conferred these brands a degree of security and protection against the purchase perceived risk (Gonzalez-Mieres et al., 2006). According to McNeill and Wyeth (2011), customers tend to choose familiar brands and branded products rather than private labels with unknown and unfamiliar brand names; being the manufacturer recognition and familiarity a key variable in the decision-making process. So, consumers seek for the guarantee and prestige offered by private labels containing manufacturers' identification.

Derived from our findings, we propose some useful insights for retailers, in order to increase private labels' proneness and purchase intent. In first place, our findings provide some highlights on the influence of antecedents such as store image and the corporate reputation. In this sense, the development of commercial policies focused to reinforcing the store image or the corporate reputation, contribute to the improvement of private labels' image and their quality perception, increasing their purchase intention. Secondly, our findings show consumers' reliance on extrinsic variables, such as the private label image, their perceived quality and the manufacturer identification, being key elements for consumers when making the decision to purchase private labels. Regarding the manufacturer

identification on the product package, retailers who introduce and offer private label brands need to consider the positive and favorable impact of the manufacturer identification, in order to influence consumers' purchase intention. So, why not including this information on the private labels' package?.

Moreover, we understand that for enhancing private label image, retailers should increase the exposure of consumers to these brands, inside and outside of the point of sale. So, in terms of actions which may be performed inside the store, there should be considered the merchandising and the good private label brand display in the store lineal. As for the actions which may developed outside the store, retailers should strongly invest on private labels' advertising, along with strengthening promotional campaigns. Regarding their quality perception, it is essential that retailers banish the idea that private label products are of inferior quality, merely based on their affordable and lower prices. So, we would suggest retailers to communicate and make clear to consumers that the private labels' lower prices are not a consequence of an inferior quality, but rather a result from greater cost savings in marketing and advertising. It would be of great interest to promote trials and sampling of private labels among consumers, so they can thereby evaluate their quality, not only based on external variables (Sprott and Shimp, 2004).

This research has several limitations which also provide possible avenues for future research. As for the main limitation of this study, first we should notice that this empirical research was carried out limited to a number of private labels in one specific European developed market and these factors may limit the generalizability of our results. Thus, we encourage future research to pursue in this direction by undertaking cross-cultural studies. Secondly, it would be interesting to incorporate new variables or dimensions into the model, related to private labels' consumer purchasing behavior, such as the price perception, the attitude towards private labels. Finally, as proposed in previous literature on the topic, there are differences among product categories regarding private labels' purchasing proneness (Batra and Sinha, 2000).

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# **BE CREATIVE BUT NOT SO MUCH. DECREASING BENEFITS OF CREATIVITY IN FIRMS.<sup>1</sup>**

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## **RESUMEN**

Several previous studies have investigated creativity as an enhancer of innovation, their results showing that there is a positive relationship between the organizational creative climate and innovation. However, no research has been conducted on whether there is a saturation point beyond which an increase in creativity makes innovation performance decrease. In this paper we question the traditional positive relationship between creativity and innovation, and suggest that such a relationship is not linear, but has instead an inverted U-shape due to a saturation effect. We have developed a conceptual model to explain innovation performance considering creativity and network centrality, and it has been tested in the ceramic industrial cluster in Spain. Empirical findings support the inverted U-shaped relationship between creativity and innovation. The implications of these results in relation to creativity and innovation theory and practices are discussed.

## **Keywords**

Creativity; Innovation; Networks; Ceramic; Inverted-U

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## 1. Introduction

This study examines the effect of organizational creativity and centrality on innovation performance, and suggests the existence of an inverted U-shaped relationship between creativity and innovation.

According to previous research, creativity has become a relevant input, if not a prerequisite, for innovation in firms (Amabile 1998) and so for any marketing success, as all of them begin with a creative idea (Levitt, 1986). Some authors have repeatedly argued for the positive implications of creativity on innovation (Amabile et al. 1996; Shalley, Zhou, and Oldham 2004). and firms are moving from the cost-cutting focus to the revenue growth generated by the organizational creativity and innovation (Coy, 2000).

In this context, it seems to be almost axiomatic that creativity is good. Indeed, it cannot be denied that it often leads to beneficial advances for individuals and organizations. However, in spite of these precedents, the creativity literature has yet to come up with sufficient empirical evidence proving its positive effects. Particularly, more precise considerations about a direct causal relation between creativity and innovation are required. For instance, intuitively, since creativity can be associated to the first phases of the innovation process, that is to say, those connected to the pure generation of ideas, it is reasonable to suppose that a firm may have a limited capacity to absorb all this new creative material. In consequence, it can be suggested that there is a potential excess of creativity and a need to find a balance among all the phases of the innovation process.

In this direction, we captured some insights from diverse literature sources, particularly from the field of psychology, which talk about the *dark side of creativity*. This literature is critical about the dominant assumption that considers that the enchantment with creativity typically ignores the fact that a great deal of creative effort is made in service of negative ends (James, Clark, and Cropanzano 1999). The perverse results of innovation occur when creativity is deliberately aimed at hurting others or in the case of the accidental negative side effects of well-intentioned acts (Cropley 2010). However, in this work we focus on a distinct dimension of the issue: the negative effect of an excess of creativity in terms of cost-benefit for the organizations, regardless of whether right or wrong use is made of it.

In our case we argue that creativity has a positive effect on innovation through the development of novel product and service ideas, processes, and procedures by employees or a small group of employees (Woodman, Sawyer, and Griffin 1993; Amabile et al. 1996). Beyond a certain point, however, additional increases in creativity become detrimental for firms. A curvilinear relationship facilitates the understanding of the problem as well as the search for possible solutions.

This line of argument shows some resemblance to other curvilinear relations found in the literature. Similarly to what happens with other positive assets of firms, when they reach a certain level additional increases are not followed by parallel benefits and finally they may become negative. For example, Stock, Greis, and Fischer (2001) proposed this relation in the effects of absorptive capacity on innovation. Berman, Down, and Hill (2002) looked at how shared experience affected performance. Moreover, McFadyen and Cannella (2004) examined the influence of the number of exchange partners on the amount of knowledge that a person creates, and Nooteboom (1992; 1999) considered the relation between cognitive distance and innovation performance. Finally, Molina-Morales and Martínez-Fernández (2009) found support for an inverted U-shaped relation between trust and innovation. In general, all these previous references coincide in

considering that accumulation of an encouraging asset or factor has no linear positive effect on the outcomes of the firm.

In addition, having the appropriate knowledge is a source of competitive advantage so we could differentiate one firm from the rest (Spender, 1996) and so we consider the network position of the firm as an explanatory factor of innovation. Ties in networks are viewed as pipes through which knowledge flows (Ahuja 2000). Firms well connected to others in the network gain a lot of benefits, some of them related to innovation results (Tsai 2001; Reinhold, Pedersen, and Foss 2011).

However, not all the firms have the same opportunities to gather the innovative knowledge within a territory, this is why we have extended this literature by exploring the territorial dimension of these issues. Industrial clusters contain heterogeneous firms (Boschma and Ter Wal 2007), with distinct attributes (Giuliani and Bell 2005). In clusters, firms in the same area are connected in social relations and have access to knowledge that physical proximity makes available (Beschi and Lissoni 2001). Opportunities and constraints are also asymmetrically distributed within regional clusters, and in consequence individual firms show significant differences in innovation performance (Giuliani 2007a).

What our study mainly adds to recent creativity research is evidence that the degree of creativity of a firm in an industrial cluster has a non-linear repercussion on its innovation results. In addition, we confirm the key value of the firm's network position for innovation. We therefore offer a valuable contribution to the understanding of the genesis of innovation by emphasizing the relevance of creativity and network position, and providing explanations.

We now begin by describing the logic of our study, followed by our hypotheses. We then present a description of our methods and analyses based on a study of 155 firms representing the total population of a ceramic tile cluster in Spain. We finish with a discussion of our findings and proposed directions for future research.

## **2. Hypotheses**

### **2.1. Creativity and innovation performance**

According to Amabile (1988), creativity is the production of novel and useful ideas i.e. produce creative products, services, production services and marketing initiatives that are unique to the market place and create value for the customer. Thus, creativity in marketing consists of any novel and valuable marketing idea, product, process, strategy or tactic (Titus, 2007). Innovation, on the contrary, refers to the refining and implementation of these ideas (Gurteen 1998; Ekvall 1997). Hence, creativity can be considered a key input of innovation (Chang and Chiang 2010; Oldham and Cummings 1996; Shalley, Zhou, and Oldham 2004) affecting innovation performance (Koen et al. 2001; Reid and de Brentani 2004; Zhang and Doll 2001). Recently, authors have reported how creativity leads the most relevant improvements in employment and value creation in modern economies (Moultrie and Young 2009; Chang and Chiang 2010).

Creativity is generated by individuals and groups, but it is fostered or hampered by the organizational environment, which is also responsible for implementing the result of this creativity – the ideas – and turning them into innovation, as creativity is an important factor of innovation, but it is not sufficient by itself (Amabile et al. 1996). Many precedents can be found in favor of a positive relationship between creativity and innovation. For instance, the greater density of the creative workforce can aggregate to a richer knowledge structure to provide more knowledge exchanges and learning opportunities within the firm, thus contributing to organizational innovation outcomes (Chen and Huang 2010).

In addition Woodman et al. (1993) suggested that the creativity output of a firm also depends on the context and the environment where the firm operates, not only on the individual, team, and organizational creativity inputs. In this sense the territory becomes a strategic asset for the development of creativity (Power and Scott 2004), as the relational dynamics created by the actors operating in the territory influence the creative processes (Granovetter 1985; Sedita and

Paiola 2009). This idea is consistent with the cluster and industrial districts literature that supports the creation of advantages inside a specific territory (Becattini 1987; Becchetti and Rossi 2000). In short, it can be concluded that within the context of the industrial cluster, the propensity to be creative is likely to enhance the innovation of firms (Isaksen, Lauer, and Ekvall 1999; Shalley, Zhou, and Oldham 2004; Amabile et al. 1996).

Amabile (1988) and Woodman et al. (1993) placed creativity inside the organizational innovation system, showing that the organizational climate is essential to promote creativity and therefore innovation (Amabile et al. 1996; Hosseini, Azar, and Rostamy 2003; Shalley, Zhou, and Oldham 2004). In this vein Çokpekin and Knudsen (2012) stated that firms that motivate their employees to be creative, allocate their resources bearing in mind this goal, and have the management skills to set up a creative work environment are more likely to innovate. Moreover, Baron and Tang (2011) found that enhancing creativity is related to new innovation ventures, and affects more especially the radicalness of these innovations.

In spite of the above arguments, it is also possible to develop a theoretical proposition positing a curvilinear relationship between level of creativity and innovation. In other words, the previous causal relation between creativity and innovation can be refined.

By definition, creativity can be associated to the pure generation of ideas, and we could assume that a firm cannot successfully complete and implement all this creative material. An excess of creativity can lead to a breakdown between the phases of the innovation process with detrimental consequences. Koput (1997) provided three related reasons why too many ideas may have a negative influence on performance. First, there may be a large number of ideas for the firm to manage and choose between ('the absorptive capacity problem'). Second, many ideas may come at the wrong time and in the wrong place, thereby preventing them from being fully exploited ('the timing problem'). Third, since there are so many ideas, few of these ideas are taken seriously or given the required level of attention or effort to bring them to implementation ('the attention allocation problem') (in Laursen and Salter 2006:135). Creativity benefits may rise only up to a threshold, after which point they become negative. This proposition recognizes that more creativity may not be associated with parallel increases in innovation across the entire relevant continuum. The challenge, then, is to generate creativity, but not so much that it precludes exploitation by the firm.

Creativity is associated to the size of the firm's creative staff. A high-density creative workforce may also have dark side effects on innovation. As the size of the workforce increases, interaction problems would become more complicated and costly, and thus negative to the innovation outcomes (Chen and Huang 2010). A high-density creative workforce contributes to the organization not only a total pool of creativity-related skills, know-how, and perspectives, but also the potential for more comprehensive and creative innovation processes via informational conflicts (Milliken and Martins 1996; Simons, Pelled, and Smith 1999). Accordingly, the higher the density of the creative workforce is, the costlier it will be to achieve effective communication and coordination among creative individuals, and will thus negatively affect innovation outcomes.

Moreover, further reviewing, particularly in the field of psychology, reveals the existence of the so-called *dark side of creativity*. This literature questions the dominant assumption of the positive effects of creativity and ignores the fact that a great deal of creativity pursues negative ends (James, Clark, and Cropanzano 1999). Sometimes creativity is deliberately aimed at causing harm to others or there are accidental negative effects resulting from well-intentioned acts (Cropley 2010). In our case we focus on the negative effects of excessive creativity.

In addition, we captured some ideas and insights from related theoretical perspectives to contextualize this curvilinear relationship. Evidence of this effect can be seen in the fact that economies of scale often become diseconomies at some level. First, the trust literature posited a curvilinear relationship with some firms' outputs. Trust improves innovation performance, although under certain conditions high levels of trust can result in a negative effect for performance (Langfred 2004). Second, Palich, Cardinal, and Miller (2000) analyzed different

relationships between diversification and performance, including an inverted U-shaped relationship. While diversification benefits accrue, at some point these efforts are also associated with higher costs. Furthermore, the proposition that the learning curve reaches a point for the amount of cumulative production beyond which improvements are insignificant (Stock, Greis, and Fischer 2001) is relevant to our study. Berman, Down, and Hill (2002) looked at how shared experience affected performance and, moreover, McFadyen and Cannella (2004) examined the influence of the number of exchange partners on the amount of knowledge that a person creates. On the relation between cognitive distance and innovation performance, Nooteboom (1992; 1999) proposed that there is an inverted U-shaped relationship. First, as cognitive distance increases, it has a positive effect on learning by interaction because it yields opportunities for novel combinations of complementary resources. However, at a certain point, cognitive distance becomes so large as to preclude the sufficient mutual understanding needed to utilize those opportunities.

In clusters, the existence of systemic capacities may generate redundancies with respect to those developed internally by firms. In this vein a recent study by Molina-Morales and Martínez-Fernández (2009) provided strong evidence that intensity of relations and trust on innovation performance in cluster firms can be described using an inverted U-shaped function.

Finally, linking creativity and innovation, Chen and Huang (2010) expected creative workforce density to have a curvilinear effect on innovation performance, and speculated on what the optimal level of creativity would be to maximize the innovation results. Before the optimal level, the creative workforce density would enhance innovation performance because increasing creativity gives rise to more discussions and knowledge sharing. On the other hand, innovation performance would decrease as the creative workforce density increases beyond the optimal level, because of the coordination difficulties and potential conflicts that arise.

In conclusion, extending this curvilinear perspective to our case, initially, below the optimal level, creativity is expected to enhance innovation, although diminishing returns are also expected later on when the level of creativity increases beyond the optimal level. This implies that the level of creativity reached in an organization may have its bright side and its dark side, and so it is hard to explain a direct relationship between creativity and innovation. The non-linear inverted U-shaped relationship is the one that best captures expectations based on the argument. The above reasoning leads to the following hypothesis.

*Hypothesis 1: The level of creativity that a clustered firm maintains has a quadratic (inverted U-shaped) relationship with its innovation outcomes.*

## **2.2. Firm's position in the cluster network and innovation performance**

New models of innovation have suggested that many innovative firms have changed the way they search for new ideas, adopting open search strategies that involve the use of a wide range of external actors and sources to help them achieve and sustain innovation (Laursen and Salter 2006), the ability to exploit external knowledge being a critical component of innovative performance (Cohen and Levinthal 1990). Those firms that are willing to increase their competitiveness, must have the relevant knowledge to enhance innovation (Akgün et al., 2008) and all the creative ideas come from the previous knowledge available.

Following Laursen and Salter (2006), there are three theoretical approaches that confirm that idea: the "open innovation model" (Chesbrough 2003a, 2003b; Sakkab 2002), network models (Shan, Walker, and Kogut 1994; Ahuja 2000), and research in evolutionary economics.

Open innovation models suggest that the advantages that firms gain from internal R&D expenditure have declined, and now many innovative firms spend little on R&D and yet they are able to successfully innovate by drawing on knowledge and expertise from a wide range of external sources (Chesbrough 2003a;2003b). The focus of the open innovation model is how

firms use ideas and knowledge from external actors in their innovation processes. Thus, the “connect and develop” model is based on the idea that external sources of ideas may often be more valuable than internal ones (Sakkab 2002), and so open innovators are those who integrate these external sources within their innovation processes and competitive strategy (Chesbrough 2003a;2003b.). The movement toward open innovation is a change in the way firms go about searching for new ideas and technologies for innovation (Laursen and Salter 2006).

Secondly, scholars have drawn on the network literature to highlight the importance of external resources available to the firm through its networks (McEvily and Marcus 2005; Gnyawali and Madhavan 2001; Gulati 1999). Previous research (Björk and Magnusson 2009) focused on the influence of network characteristics on innovation has, for instance, studied (1) business units’ connectivity in an intraorganization network regarding the innovation and performance of the unit (Tsai 2001); (2) firms’ positions in an industry network and the firms’ innovation outputs (Ahuja 2000); and (3) managers’ likelihood of coming up with good ideas, depending on their position within a network (Burt 2004). The location of the firm in its network of relationships is becoming more and more a key factor to enhance the value creation of firms.

On the other hand, the network centrality perspective views ties as pipes through which knowledge flows (Ahuja 2000). The position of the firms inside the network becomes important and affects innovation. Closeness represents the capacity of an actor to access the others using other nodes as a bridge, so it is the possibility of using direct and indirect ties to connect with the other members of the network (Freeman 1979). Ahuja (2000) finds that indirect and direct ties influence the ability of the firm to innovate. The extent to which an actor is well connected to others in the network is a benefit in terms of knowledge that it receives and its potential learning. Since interactions in networks dissolve the boundaries between organizations and stimulate the formation of a common interest, actors gain access to other actors’ valuable resources by participating in networks (Gulati 1999). A firm that is well connected in a network has different mechanisms through which to generate and transfer innovation: by systematically exploring new territories; second, by searching through past experiences in a creative way; and, third, by proposing hidden combinations between internal resources and sources of knowledge (Hargadon 1998). In addition, maintaining a presence in innovation networks further enhances a firm’s innovative capabilities by developing and maintaining its absorptive capacity (Cohen and Levinthal 1990; Powell, Koput, and Smith-Doerr 1996). Particularly, firms holding central network positions are favored by strategic benefits such as timely access to a large volume of diverse knowledge, which increases the extent to which they can learn from their networks (Beckman and Haunschild 2002). These benefits of network centrality affect a number of aspects of the firm, such as advantages in performance, competitive capabilities, and innovation (Phelps, Heidl, and Wadhwa 2012; Tsai 2001; Tsai and Ghoshal 1998).

Thirdly, evolutionary economists highlight the role of searches in the external environment in helping organizations to find sources of variety, thereby allowing them to create new combinations of knowledge and technologies that can improve their ability to innovate (Nelson and Winter 1982). In industries with high levels of technology, a firm will often need to search more widely and deeply in order to gain access to critical knowledge sources, while in industries where there are low technological opportunities, a firm has weaker incentives to draw from external knowledge sources and may foster internal sources (Klevorick et al. 1995).

We particularly seek to explain the implications of the position in a network on the innovation performance of clustered firms. An important aspect for generating innovation is having access to knowledge sources. Operating in an industrial cluster – a context of proximity (Inkpen and Tsang 2005) – could be conceived as a network in a production context in a geographically defined area (Boschma and Ter Wal 2007; Branston et al. 2005; Parrilli and Sacchetti 2008). Final producers, suppliers, customers, and other actors are close, both physically and cognitively, thus favoring their access to better knowledge and sources, and enhancing innovation and value creation (Capello 1999; Maskell and Malmberg 1999). On the other hand, some authors have questioned the effect of centrality on clustered firms. These scholars, focusing on the geographic or territorial aspect, argue that because of the special contextual

conditions centrality in a network of geographically close actors has either no strategic effect (Owen-Smith and Powell 2004) or only a small positive influence (Whittington, Owen-Smith, and Powell 2009). However, a great deal of prior research has been conducted that supports the notion that actors that are better positioned in the network receive more innovation-related knowledge resources than others (Becker 1970). Firms can improve their innovative capabilities using the network (Ahuja 2000) and, in fact, network scholars often treat innovativeness as a function of network position (Galunic 1998; Hargadon and Sutton 1997).

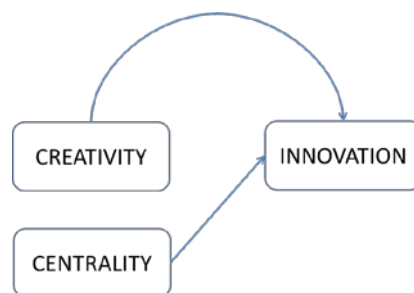
In addition, proximity and co-location (Tallman et al. 2004) are facilitators for the transmission of tacit knowledge and so the organizations involved receive the benefits of the flow of knowledge (Uzzi 1996). In clusters, firms release their technical information to actual and potential competitors, and those actors in an industry thus build on each other's expertise. The fluid exchange of technical information also generates new technical knowledge. Following evolutionary economics, in a cluster strategies for searching for Knowledge sources are strongly influenced by the richness of technological opportunities.

Due to the internal heterogeneity of the cluster firms (Camuffo 2003), knowledge in a network is distributed in an uneven way (Giuliani and Bell 2005; Giuliani 2007b), restraining its access to a specific group of actors (Morrison and Rabellotti 2009). Industrial clusters contain heterogeneous firms (Boschma and Ter Wal 2007), with distinct attributes, stock of internal resources, and network positioning (Giuliani and Bell 2005). Firms in social relations connected with other firms in the same area have access to knowledge that further physical proximity makes available (Beschi and Lissoni 2001). Opportunities and constraints are also asymmetrically distributed within regional clusters (Giuliani 2007b). As a consequence of that, individual firms show significant differences in innovation performance. Some authors (Coombes, Deeds, and Ireland 2009) have argued for a positive association between network connectedness in the cluster and innovation. So, better connections between the firms in an industrial cluster and other players in the network (number of direct and indirect ties) can be expected to provide knowledge resources related to innovation; consequently, this can be expressed more formally as the following hypothesis.

*Hypothesis 2: Occupying a more central position in the cluster network is positively associated to the innovation performance of the firm.*

The research model can be seen in the Figure 1.

FIGURE 1.  
Research model



### 3. Empirical setting

The ceramic tile industry can be found in many locations in the world, such as China, Italy or Brazil, mainly in cluster-type geographical concentrations. Despite being known as a traditional industry, it has emerged as a dynamic and fairly knowledge-intensive activity (Russo 1985), especially regarding the technological advances focused especially on process and product improvements.

Our empirical study is based on the Spanish ceramic tile cluster located within a radius of 20 kilometers in the province of Castellón, Spain, where 90% of the Spanish ceramic output is produced. The ceramic tile cluster covers not only the production of wall and floor tiles but also

special pieces and auxiliary activities, such as the production of frits and glazes, chemical additives, raw materials, and machinery, among others.

The Spanish ceramic tile industry has already been identified and analyzed as a district and cluster in seminal works such as Ybarra (1991) and more recently Boix and Galleto (2006) and Boix (2009), where it was identified as a case of Marshallian-type industrial cluster (district). The Castellón cluster, which is cited in several empirical papers (Russo 2004; Hervás-Oliver, Albors-Garrigós, and Dalmau-Porta 2008; Albors-Garrigós, Hervás-Oliver, and Márquez 2008) has been recognized as an industrial district phenomenon (Giner and Santa María 2002). Molina-Morales (2002) offered a comprehensive description of the whole process of creation of knowledge and innovation in this cluster. Finally, Molina-Morales et al. (2002) and Molina-Morales (2005) analyzed the role played by the specific local institutions in the transmission of knowledge in this cluster.

### **3.1. Data collection**

The primary data for this study were collected from the core of the Spanish ceramic tile cluster at the firm level using questionnaires and interviews. The survey was carried out with the firms' managers and engineers in charge of R&D activities or the production process. Given the characteristics of the companies we consider this profile the most adequate to answer our questionnaire. The survey was carried out between February 2011 and July 2011 and was directed toward companies operating in the different cluster activities, that is, ceramic floor and wall tiles, decorative pieces, chemical additives, glazes and frits, machinery and equipment, and atomized clay producers. The survey was directed toward a universe of 280 cluster companies; finally, we collected a total of 155 complete questionnaires accounting for 55.35% of the total.

In order to build the Technological Knowledge Network, we based our work on (Giuliani 2007a; Morrison and Rabellotti 2009; Ramírez-Pasillas 2010; Giuliani and Bell 2005). To compute the value of exchange activities, we asked the respondents about the destination of their knowledge and the origin where they gather it from. It was collected through a roster recall method. Technical knowledge includes aspects such as: production techniques, product applications, chemical additives, raw materials, characteristics and performance of machinery and technology, enamel applications, new technologies, and so forth.

### **3.2. Variables**

#### *3.2.1 Dependent variable*

*Innovation.* To collect the innovation results, we used the 13 items included in the National Innovation Survey about innovation in firms, which is carried out by the Spanish National Statistics Institute. The items include information about four kinds of innovation: product, process, organizational, and marketing. The variable shows the percentage of these 13 innovations that the firm has achieved.

#### *3.2.2 Independent variables*

*Creativity Overlap Index.* In order to assess creativity, we followed the work of Mathisen and Einarsen (2004). They concluded that two instruments, TCI (Anderson and West 1998) and KEYS (Amabile et al. 1996), were the most adequate. In addition, Moultrie and Young (2009) found that the KEYS of Amabile et al. (1996) is much more detailed, less generalizable, and built around the process of creativity. Bearing in mind the above-mentioned authors, in order to assess creativity in an organization we built the Creativity Overlap Index (COI), based on Amabile (1988), in order to assess creativity. Amabile describes *the Creativity Intersection* as the overlap between all three types of factors which affect creativity and innovation: motivation, resources, and techniques.

The organization controls three elements: Resources, Techniques, and Motivation. Resources are the essential elements in a particular domain. For the organization, resources consist of the funds, materials, systems, people, and information available to aid work in the identified task domain (Amabile 1988:155). Techniques operate the resources and it is skills' management at



all levels of the organization that nurtures the conception, development, and implementation of creative ideas (Amabile 1988:156). Motivation is the most important of the three components. Resources and Techniques make innovation possible, but the necessary catalyst is Motivation, the forward-looking, risk-oriented vision that comes from the highest level of the organization (Amabile 1988:156). We have used 8 different items (two of them negative) to measure Motivation, 9 items to evaluate Resources, and 11 items to measure Techniques. All of them were assessed by a dichotomous variable (0 = no, 1 = yes), and the calculation of each of the three components is the sum of the items with a positive answer.

Our COI was built with the aim of finding the intersection between the three types of factors mentioned above, namely: resources, motivations, and techniques. The greater the overlap between the three categories of factors is, the greater the likelihood of true creativity will be. To operationalize the indicator, we multiplied the indices for each firm's resources, skills, and motivation. The index ranges from zero to 594 (6 x 9 x 11), but it has been standardized for the statistical analysis.

*Centrality.* We measured centrality through the closeness centrality. We used Social Network Analysis (SNA) (Freeman 1979).

### 3.2.3 Control variables

*Size.* The firm's size is measured by the natural logarithm of the number of employees in the firm. Taking the logarithm reduces the effect of the skewness of the firm size distribution. Following Acs and Audretsch (1991), size and innovation are linked. We assume that larger organizations have more capacity to acquire and generate knowledge resources and consequently are more likely to show a greater capacity for innovation (Damanpour 1991; Tsai and Ghoshal 1998).

*Absorptive capacity.* We capture the Absorptive capacity through the R&D effort by computing R&D expenditure as a percentage of total revenue. This approach has already been used in some previous research performed by authors like Cohen and Levinthal (1990) or Tsai (2001).

### 3.3. Analysis techniques

We took several diagnostic procedures to control for multi-collinearity problems between the variables involved. We checked the correlation coefficients and all of them were below the 0.80 level (Hair et al. 2010). We also conducted a Variance Inflation Factor Analysis (VIF) and the VIF values for the theoretical variables ranged between 1.21 and 2.34. These figures are far from the cut-off value of 10 (Belsley 1991). Finally, we checked the tolerance values and all of them were above 0.10 (Hair et al. 2010). So, according to the previous results, multi-collinearity was not a problem in this study.

### 3.4. Results

In Table 1 we present the basic descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation for all variables.

TABLE 1.  
Descriptive statistics and correlations of the measures

Variables	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5
(1) Innovation	0.554	0.312	1				
(2) Firm Size	3.985	1.101	.398***	1			
(3) Absorptive capacity	2.70	1.451	.511***	.228***	1		
(4) Centrality	2.720	.0932	.457***	.434***	.326***	1	
(5) Creativity	-0.004	1.002	.515***	.478***	.327***	.338***	1

N= 96; \*\*\*p< .01 and \*\* p< .05

To test the hypotheses we ran a stepwise hierarchical regression approach to assess the explanatory power of each set of variables. The models are as follows:

**Model 1:** Innovation =  $\alpha_1 + \beta_1$  Firm Size +  $\beta_2$  Absorptive capacity +  $\beta_3$  Centrality

**Model 2:** Innovation =  $\alpha_1 + \beta_1$  Firm Size +  $\beta_2$  Absorptive capacity +  $\beta_3$  Centrality +  $\beta_4$  Creativity

**Model 3:** Innovation =  $\alpha_1 + \beta_1$  Firm Size +  $\beta_2$  Absorptive capacity +  $\beta_3$  Centrality +  $\beta_4$  Creativity +  $\beta_5$  Creativity<sup>2</sup>

Model 1 presents the base case controlling for firm size, absorptive capacity, and centrality.

Model 2 introduces creativity and finally Model 3 examines the proposed inverted U-shape.

Model 3 reports the regression results for Hypotheses 1 and 2. The curvilinear model attempts to validate the existence of a non-linear relationship between creativity and innovation in cluster firms. In order to statistically justify the proposed Inverted U-shape, we ran a regression analysis with curvilinear estimation to find a quadratic relation.

The results of Model 3 are shown in Table 2, which confirm the possible existence of significant correlation between variables. In our case, the F-statistic result is significant, which means the variance of the dependent variable is significantly explained through the quadratic model. Results confirm the significant relationship between creativity and innovation adjusted to the inverted U-shape. The regression coefficients – both creativity and creativity squared – are significant. It is also noticeable that the sign of creativity squared is negative, thereby indicating an inverted U-shaped relationship. This means increasing values of the variables of creativity run parallel to the increasing values for innovation, although at a certain point additional increases are negatively associated with innovation. Hence, the positive effect of creativity was eroded by making intensive use of it.

Table 2 also shows that size is not significantly associated to innovation. In fact this result can be expected, since in these territorial agglomerations it has been argued that size is not such a relevant factor because there is an intense division of labor among specialized firms. For instance, Russo (1985) argued how economies of scale are not significant in these contexts. By contrast, as expected, absorptive capacity showed a highly significant impact on the dependent variable. In accordance with some previous innovation research we consider firms' absorptive capacity to be one of the most important determinants (Zahra and George 2002). The concept of absorptive capacity has been defined by Cohen and Levinthal (1989; 1990) as the ability of a firm to identify, assimilate, and exploit knowledge from the environment.

TABLE 2.  
Regression analysis of the determinants of the clustered firms' innovation

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>
<i>Constant</i>	-0.120 (0.081)	0.071 (0.090)	0.138 (0.094)
<i>Size</i>	0.058 (0.020)***	0.026 (0.021)	0.027 (0.020)
<i>Absorptive Capacity</i>	0.083 (0.15)***	0.070 (0.014)***	0.066 (0.014)***
<i>Centrality</i>	0.081 (0.24)***	0.071 (0.023)***	0.062 (0.023)**
<i>COI</i>		0.091 (0.022)***	0.131 (0.028)***
<i>COI<sup>2</sup></i>			-0.036 (0.017)**
<i>F</i>	32.065	30.779	26.185
<i>R<sup>2</sup></i>	0.389	0.451	0.468
<i>R<sup>2</sup> Adjusted</i>	0.377	0.436	0.450

<i>Increase of R2</i>	0.062***	0.017**
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*N=155; \*\*\*p<.01; \*\*p<.05, \*p<.1 Non-Standardized coefficients (errors in brackets)*

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper we have considered the relation between creativity and innovation performance of firms in a cluster. Creativity has been interpreted in terms of the Creativity Overlap Index (COI) based on Amabile (1988). The key finding is that the hypothesis of an inverted U-shaped effect of creativity on innovation performance of firms is confirmed. Moreover, as expected, we found that the positive effect of holding a central network position for firms is also supported by results.

The implications are important, for theory and practice. Rather than assuming that creativity is unconditionally good for innovation, we posit that at a certain point creativity becomes so large as to preclude the sufficient internal capacity needed to utilize those opportunities. This result confirms calls for additional and more sophisticated research on the effects of creativity (Çokpekin and Knudsen 2012). In addition findings can be interpreted in line with the reservations expressed by the so-called *dark side of creativity*, which questions the dominant assumption of the positive effects of creativity (Cropley 2010; James, Clark, and Cropanzano 1999).

Regarding the network and cluster literatures, our results coincide with some previous research such as Phelps, Heidl, and Wadhwa (2012), Tsai and Ghoshal (1998), and Tsai (2001) in confirming a positive association between centrality and innovation performance, and more particularly inside the cluster, as argued by Coombs et al. (2009), Galunic (1998), and Hargadon and Sutton (1997). In this way, results contradict or at least contrast with the more ambiguous findings obtained by Owen-Smith and Powell (2004) and Whittington, Owen-Smith, and Powell (2009).

One limitation of the present study is that we used indicators of the main variables that can be refined and adapted for specific contexts. We accept the definition of creativity proposed by Amabile (1988), but we are aware that many other alternatives can be found and consequently results can be affected. Similarly, our indicators of innovation can be adapted more precisely to the context of research and, for instance, technical and market components can be differentiated. On the other hand, the specific features of our empirical setting lead us to be cautious about generalizing the results. Hence, our findings cannot be extrapolated to other industries or clusters, therefore making it necessary to test whether these results are applicable in other contexts.

The following points can be viewed as possible future avenues of research for the development of this study. The fine-grained process through which network structure is created or modified is an interesting and important area for future research. Another fruitful area of inquiry is the dynamics of how firms' networks evolve and change in response to external challenges and opportunities. This research should be completed in order to trace and follow individual changes in network configurations over a lifetime, which would thereby require the use of longitudinal research designs (Björk and Magnusson 2009; Kratzer and Lettl 2008).

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# LA INFLUENCIA DE LA INNOVACIÓN SOBRE LOS BENEFICIOS DE LA RELACIÓN Y LA LEALTAD HACIA LA TIENDA\*

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## RESUMEN

*Desde la literatura se ha señalado la importancia de los beneficios de la relación para explicar la lealtad hacia el establecimiento comercial. Por otra parte, se ha destacado la necesidad de innovar para diferenciarse en sectores altamente competitivos como es el comercio minorista. Sin embargo, hasta la fecha no se ha dedicado atención a la posible influencia de la capacidad de innovación del minorista sobre la relación entre beneficios relacionales y lealtad del cliente. Por ello, el presente trabajo pretende profundizar en el vínculo entre los beneficios de la relación y la lealtad hacia la tienda, examinando el papel moderador de la capacidad de innovación del minorista en estas relaciones. De los resultados obtenidos a partir de un estudio realizado entre 820 clientes de cadenas de tiendas pertenecientes a diversos sectores, se infiere una serie de implicaciones para la gestión por lo que se refiere a la priorización de distintos tipos de innovación por parte del minorista.*

## Palabras clave:

Beneficios de la relación, lealtad, innovación relacional

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## **1. Introducción**

La investigación empírica en el marco de la teoría de la contingencia sugiere que el nivel de dinamismo del entorno generado a través de la capacidad de innovación es un factor clave en las decisiones estratégicas de la empresa (Miller, 1988; Miller y Dröge, 1986). En entornos altamente competitivos, como es el caso del comercio minorista, existe una gran presión sobre los establecimientos comerciales que les empuja a innovar (Homburg et al., 2002). Sin embargo, hasta la fecha se ha prestado escasa atención a la innovación en el ámbito de la distribución comercial debido a que, por su pertenencia al sector servicios, no se dedica a la producción de productos nuevos o técnicamente mejorados (Quinn et al., 2013).

Por otra parte, el estudio de la innovación en el comercio minorista se ha centrado tradicionalmente en la predicción del grado de aceptación de una nueva tecnología de servicio, considerando que los minoristas son fundamentalmente usuarios de las innovaciones desarrolladas por otras empresas (Pantano, 2014). En este sentido, sería de utilidad para los minoristas priorizar aquellas innovaciones que permitan fidelizar, en mayor medida, a la clientela.

Por otra parte, desde el punto de vista de la empresa, y en particular, del comercio minorista, resulta de gran interés el conocimiento de los beneficios percibidos por el cliente, ya que se ha observado la existencia de una relación entre dichos beneficios y la lealtad hacia el establecimiento (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002). Una clientela satisfecha y leal permite aumentar el volumen de ventas de la empresa (Gwinner et al., 1998), reducir los costes de comunicación para atraer a nuevos clientes (Payne y Frow, 2005) y crear capital de marca (Bhattacharya y Sen, 2003).

Por ello, centrándonos en el sector de la distribución minorista, el presente trabajo se plantea un doble objetivo. En primer lugar, se trata de contrastar la positiva influencia de los beneficios de la relación sobre la lealtad hacia el minorista. En segundo lugar, se pretende analizar el posible papel moderador de la capacidad de innovación del minorista sobre el vínculo entre los distintos tipos de beneficios de la relación y la lealtad. De esta forma se espera obtener evidencia que oriente a los gestores del comercio minorista acerca del tipo de beneficios en el que deben centrar sus esfuerzos de innovación.

## **2. Revisión de la literatura**

### ***2.1. Beneficios de la relación***

En los últimos años, se observa en la literatura un creciente interés por investigar qué tipo de beneficios obtienen los consumidores de sus relaciones de larga duración con las empresas (Gwinner et al., 1998; Reynolds y Beatty, 1999; Yen y Gwinner, 2003; Marzo-Navarro et al., 2004; Vázquez-Carrasco y Foxall, 2006). Esto ha representado un giro en la investigación en el ámbito académico, al pasar de centrarse en las relaciones a largo plazo en el marco de las relaciones interorganizacionales a las relaciones entre las empresas y los consumidores finales.

En este sentido, diversos trabajos se han perseguido como meta identificar los beneficios que reciben los clientes como resultado de transacciones en una relación a largo plazo con empresas de servicios (Gwinner et al., 1998; Reynolds y Beatty, 1999; Patterson y Smith, 2001; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002). Así, se ha identificado la presencia de una serie de beneficios derivados de la simple existencia de la relación con el proveedor del servicio, con independencia del servicio principal (Barnes, 1994). Estos beneficios se refieren a cualquier esfuerzo activamente realizado por el proveedor para aumentar el valor percibido por el cliente más allá del producto o servicio recibido (De Wulf y Odekerken-Schröder, 2003).

La mayor parte de estos trabajos señalan la existencia de tres tipos de beneficios para el consumidor derivados de su relación con el proveedor; a saber: beneficios de la confianza,

beneficios sociales, y beneficios de trato especial (Gwinner et al., 1998; Patterson y Smith, 2001; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002; Yen y Gwinner, 2003; Park y Kim, 2006).

Entre los beneficios de la confianza se encontrarían factores de tipo psicológico relacionados con la menor ansiedad y la percepción de un riesgo inferior en el resultado de la transacción que se deriva de la existencia de una relación con el proveedor del servicio (Berry, 1995). De manera más específica, los beneficios de la confianza se derivan de la fiabilidad percibida en el proveedor del servicio en cuanto al mantenimiento de sus promesas (Grönroos, 1990; Bitner, 1995).

Los beneficios sociales se refieren a la fraternización, la familiaridad y el reconocimiento personal entre el cliente y el personal de la empresa, que puede, incluso, derivar en una relación de amistad (Berry, 1995).

Por último, entre los beneficios de trato especial o preferencial se encuentran los descuentos, ahorro de tiempo y servicios adicionales no disponibles para otros clientes, derivados de la consideración de cliente especial, debida a la historia de la relación. Si bien los ahorros monetarios representan la principal motivación para entablar relaciones de intercambio (Peterson, 1995; Sheth y Parvativar, 1995), los beneficios de trato especial combinan beneficios económicos y de personalización del servicio que los clientes perciben al mantener relaciones con las empresas de servicios.

Alternativamente, otros trabajos agrupan los beneficios relacionales en dos tipos: beneficios funcionales y beneficios sociales (Reynolds y Beatty, 1999; Pedraja y Rivera, 2002; Marzo-Navarro et al., 2004). En este caso, los beneficios funcionales incluyen ahorros de tiempo y dinero, conveniencia y asesoramiento personal que facilitan las decisiones de compra. Siguiendo a Reynolds y Beatty (1999), este tipo de beneficios incluye los beneficios de la confianza y de trato especial de Gwinner et al. (1998).

Por otra parte, los beneficios sociales incluyen el disfrute derivado de la relación personal con el personal de la empresa proveedora del servicio. En este sentido, este tipo de beneficios es muy similar a los beneficios sociales identificados por Gwinner et al. (1998).

## **2.2. Lealtad**

La lealtad ha sido definida como la combinación de una actitud positiva y la repetición de compra (Dick y Basu, 1994), considerando conjuntamente de esta manera las dos perspectivas – actitudinal y conductual - tradicionalmente discutidas en la literatura. De acuerdo con la perspectiva actitudinal, la lealtad se define como una actitud que en ocasiones implica una relación con la empresa. Desde la segunda perspectiva, la lealtad se considera en términos de comportamiento revelado a través de repetición de compra (Uncles et al., 2003).

La lealtad en el sector servicios es quizás más difícil de conceptualizar en comparación con los bienes, debido a la intangibilidad, la inseparabilidad, la variabilidad y el carácter perecedero de los servicios (Bloemer et al., 1998; Mittal y Lassar, 1998), siendo fundamental el papel de las relaciones con los clientes.

En particular, en el contexto del comercio minorista, se pueden encontrar definiciones que adoptan uno de los dos tipos de enfoques tradicionales – actitudinal y conductual – o una combinación de ambos. Así, la lealtad a la tienda se ha definido como la respuesta conductual positiva de repetición de compra, expresada a lo largo del tiempo, de un consumidor hacia un establecimiento de entre un conjunto de tiendas. Esta conducta es una consecuencia de procesos evaluativos y de toma de decisiones que resultan en el compromiso (Bloemer y Ruyter, 1998; Knox and Walker, 2001). La parte fundamental de esta definición es el compromiso hacia la tienda, ya que en ausencia del mismo, la repetición de compra es mera lealtad espúrea, es decir, el comportamiento de repetición de visita se debe únicamente a la inercia (Dick y Basu, 1994).

Alternativamente, Srinivasan et al. (2002) definen la lealtad al establecimiento comercial como una actitud favorable del cliente hacia el minorista que se traduce en la repetición del comportamiento de compra. En esta línea, Arnett et al. (2003) conceptualizan la lealtad como la tendencia de ser leales a un determinado minorista demostrado por la intención de comprar en él como primera elección.

### ***2.3. Innovación relacional***

En los últimos años se ha empezado a prestar atención al concepto de “innovación relacional” o “innovación basada en la relación”. Sin embargo, no existe consenso acerca del contenido y de la dimensionalidad de este constructo.

Según UNIDO (2002), se pueden distinguir cuatro principales enfoques o formas de entender la innovación en el contexto de las relaciones dentro del canal de comercialización, a saber: innovaciones en producto, innovaciones en procesos, innovación funcional e innovación dentro de la cadena de valor. Las innovaciones de producto se basan en el conocimiento o la tecnología aplicada a la fabricación del producto, mientras que las innovaciones de proceso se centran en la producción o en las fases necesarias para combinar nuevos materiales con el fin de producir un producto terminado, reduciendo costes o mejorando la eficiencia. La innovación funcional, por su parte, implica asumir la responsabilidad de nuevas actividades en la cadena de valor. Por último, la innovación dentro de la cadena de valor se refiere a la adopción de nuevas posiciones en el canal de distribución.

En el ámbito académico, se ha tratado de profundizar en la identificación de las iniciativas de innovación a través de la relación entre los miembros del canal de distribución (Ganesan et al., 2009; Hu y Zhao, 2010). Según Musso (2010), la innovación en los canales de marketing sigue tres aproximaciones, a saber: tecnológica, relacional y estructural. La aproximación tecnológica comprende, en lo que se refiere a las relaciones con la demanda final, una serie de aplicaciones de las tecnologías de la información y de la comunicación centradas en la gestión de tesorería, fijación de precios dinámica, medios de pago, venta a distancia y on-line, y máquinas de venta automática y tecnologías de autoservicio, entre otras.

La perspectiva relacional se refiere a algunas aplicaciones que no son innovadoras en sí mismas, en la medida en que ya se han desarrollado y difundido ampliamente, pero representan áreas en las que las empresas pueden desarrollar soluciones innovadoras, como el surtido de productos éticos y socialmente responsables, los programas de fidelización, y las iniciativas encaminadas a garantizar la sostenibilidad medioambiental del establecimiento (Ganesan et al, 2009; Musso, 2010).

Por último, la aproximación estructural se centra en nuevas configuraciones de los canales, nuevos canales o canales múltiples, bien sean introducidas por iniciativa de las empresas industriales (p.e. franquicias, tiendas monomarca, canales directos multinivel, factory outlet, comercio electrónico), o bien como resultado de los mecanismos internos de la oferta comercial (p.e. estrategia multicanal).

Con todo, hasta donde tenemos conocimiento, han sido escasos los intentos de desarrollar una escala de medición de la innovación en el ámbito del comercio minorista en sus relaciones con los clientes. Entre estos destacamos la escala de valoración global de la capacidad de innovación del comercio minorista propuesta por Homburg et al. (2002), quienes definen este constructo como el grado en el que los minoristas que operan en determinado mercado adoptan nuestras ideas de merchandising o servicio, tratando de recoger así la valoración del consumidor acerca del número de innovaciones adoptadas, el momento en que se adoptan y la consistencia de la propensión a innovar por parte del minorista a lo largo del tiempo.

### 3. Hipótesis a contrastar y modelo propuesto

En el sector servicios, la participación del consumidor en la prestación del servicio añade una dimensión emocional a la lealtad (Javalgi y Moberg, 1997). En este contexto, la lealtad del cliente depende en gran medida de la capacidad de personalización del servicio (Ball et al., 2006), la gestión de las comunicaciones personales (Jones y Farquhar, 2003) y el sentimiento de disfrute o entretenimiento al realizar las compras en el establecimiento (Wong, 2004).

La literatura en marketing de servicios ha hecho hincapié en la importancia de los beneficios relacionales percibidos por el cliente como antecedente de la satisfacción del cliente y la lealtad hacia el proveedor de servicios (Gwinner et al., 1998; Patterson y Smith, 2001; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002; Yen y Gwinner, 2003; Park y Kim, 2003; Thao y Swierczek, 2008). Así, se ha evidenciado empíricamente que los beneficios de la relación actúan como antecedentes de la lealtad hacia el proveedor de servicios (Beatty et al., 1996). En particular, siguiendo los resultados de trabajos previos, esperamos que la lealtad se encuentre influida positivamente por los beneficios de la confianza (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002; Yen y Gwinner, 2003), los beneficios sociales (Reynolds y Beatty, 1999; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002; Pedraja y Rivera, 2002; Marzo-Navarro et al., 2004), y los beneficios de trato especial (Yen y Gwinner, 2003).

A partir de todo lo anteriormente expuesto, enunciaremos la primera hipótesis como sigue:

*H<sub>1</sub>: Los beneficios de la confianza (H<sub>1a</sub>), los beneficios sociales (H<sub>1b</sub>), y los beneficios de trato especial (H<sub>1c</sub>) influyen positivamente en la lealtad del cliente hacia la tienda.*

Por otra parte, en el contexto del comercio minorista, se ha señalado que las innovaciones basadas en la relación pueden, en última instancia, mejorar el valor percibido por el cliente a través de un mejor surtido y de precios más bajos gracias a una mayor eficiencia en los procesos internos del establecimiento (Ganesan et al, 2009).

De forma similar, siguiendo la perspectiva tecnológica de innovación relacional de Musso (2010), en el ámbito del comercio minorista, son múltiples las aplicaciones que se pueden implantar en las tiendas: tecnologías para la gestión de clientes, gestión integral del negocio, tecnologías de respuesta rápida, datos de punto de venta, códigos universales de producto, medios de pago a través de las TIC (pago vía teléfono móvil, internet o transferencia bancaria), tecnologías de autoservicio, entre otras (Ellram et al., 1999; Weber y Kantamneni, 2002; Liljander et al., 2006; ONTSI, 2008).

Desde la literatura, se han resaltado los beneficios de las TIC en términos de ganancia en eficiencia de los procesos internos de la empresa y mejora en el servicio ofrecido al cliente (e.g. Lawson, 2001). En particular, desde el punto de vista de la tienda, las aplicaciones tecnológicas ofrecen una serie de ventajas en términos de ahorro de tiempo, ahorro de gastos de personal, fiabilidad, exactitud, reducción de errores, mejora en la gestión del inventario, mejora de la productividad a través de la mecanización de tareas intensivas en mano de obra, etc. (Ellram et al., 1999; Lawson, 2001) que se pueden traducir en sustanciales mejoras del servicio al cliente (Gurau y Ranchhod, 2002). Desde la óptica del consumidor, las TIC implantadas por el minorista permiten crear un ambiente agradable (Bäckström y Johansson, 2006) y ahorrar tiempo de compra, al poder disponer de un mayor surtido y realizar las compras en un único viaje (Messinger y Narasimhan, 1997).

Por otra parte, trabajos recientes en el ámbito del comercio electrónico, como el desarrollado por O’Cass y Carlson (2012), demuestran la existencia de una relación entre la innovación tecnológica, la confianza y la lealtad de los clientes.

Todo lo anteriormente expuesto puede llevar a concluir que la capacidad de innovación del minorista podría incidir positivamente en la intensidad del vínculo entre los beneficios de la relación y la lealtad.

Sin embargo, aunque la tecnología puede mejorar la gestión de las relaciones y la personalización del servicio, las TIC pueden ser fuente de satisfacción o insatisfacción del cliente en función de la actitud del mismo hacia la tecnología (Joseph et al., 1999; Parasuraman

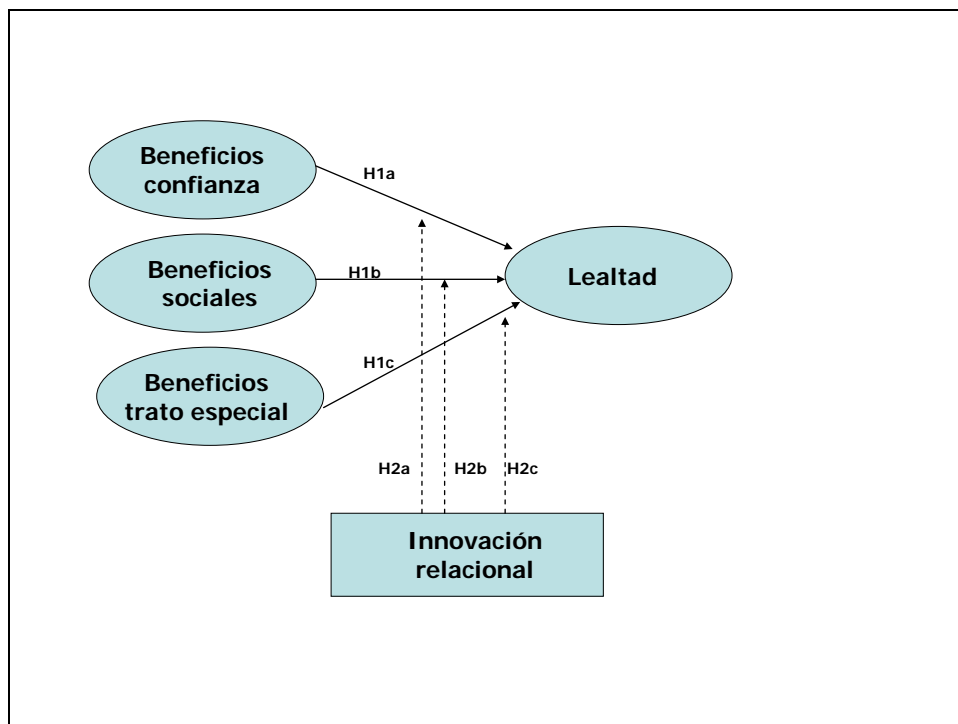
y Colby, 2001, Walker et al., 2002) y/o la capacidad de respuesta del empleado (Meuter et al., 2000; Bitner, 2001). En este sentido, cabe destacar que la valoración de los beneficios puede presentar diferencias significativas según el tipo de servicio y la forma en que éste es prestado (Gwinner et al., 1998; Patterson y Smith, 2001; 2003). En concreto, en los servicios personalizados y de alto contacto tienen una importancia significativamente mayor los beneficios de trato especial y de tipo social, en comparación con aquellos servicios impersonales o estandarizados.

Con todo, enunciaremos las siguientes hipótesis:

*H<sub>2</sub>: Para los clientes que perciben al minorista como más innovador, la intensidad de la relación entre beneficios de la confianza (H<sub>2a</sub>), beneficios sociales (H<sub>2b</sub>), y beneficios de trato especial (H<sub>2c</sub>) y la lealtad hacia la tienda es mayor que para los clientes que perciben menor capacidad de innovación del establecimiento comercial.*

En definitiva, esperamos que los beneficios relacionales influyan positivamente en la lealtad. Adicionalmente, se postula la existencia de un efecto moderador de la innovación relacional sobre las relaciones anteriormente señaladas. Las relaciones entre los distintos constructos se muestran en la Figura 1.

FIGURA 1  
Modelo propuesto



#### 4. Metodología

Con la finalidad de contrastar el modelo propuesto, se desarrolló una encuesta personal estructurada a 820 individuos. En concreto, la encuesta se realizó en una provincia española. Los detalles de la investigación se resumen en la Tabla 1.

TABLA 1  
Detalles técnicos de la investigación

<b>Ámbito geográfico</b>	Provincial
<b>Universo</b>	Clientes de establecimientos minoristas de los sectores de alimentación, textil, electrónica y hogar, mayores de 18 años
<b>Metodología</b>	Entrevista personal mediante cuestionario estructurado

<b>Tamaño muestral</b>	820 encuestas válidas
<b>Escalas (7 puntos Likert)</b>	Beneficios de la relación – Gwinner et al. (1998) Lealtad – Arnett et al. (2003) Innovación relacional – Homburg et al. (1992)
<b>Técnicas estadísticas</b>	Análisis descriptivo Análisis de la varianza Análisis Factorial Confirmatorio Modelo de Ecuaciones Estructurales
<b>Software estadístico</b>	SPSS versión 19 EQS versión 6.1

Para realizar el análisis, se han seleccionado trece enseñanzas de los sectores de alimentación, textil, electrónica y hogar. Los establecimientos han sido retenidos en base a los productos ofertados y su posicionamiento en el mercado español, forman parte de los principales grupos de distribución en España y son considerados como algunas de las marcas minoristas europeas más sobresalientes y de mayor rendimiento. Adicionalmente, la mayoría de estos establecimientos fueron citados como referentes en sus respectivos sectores, según se desprende de un estudio anterior realizado por los autores. Con la finalidad de obtener una muestra más representativa de la población, las encuestas fueron realizadas a la salida de estos establecimientos, preguntándoles acerca de su relación con la tienda visitada. Para seleccionar a los encuestados se sigue un procedimiento de muestreo dirigido. La Tabla 2 refleja la distribución de la muestra según las variables de clasificación.

TABLA 2  
Distribución de la muestra

CARACTERÍSTICAS DE LOS CONSUMIDORES	FRECUENCIA	%
<b>Género</b>		
Hombres	293	35,7
Mujeres	527	64,3
<b>Edad</b>		
18-25 años	151	18,4
26-35 años	163	19,9
36-45 años	184	22,4
46-55 años	164	20,0
56-65 años	114	13,9
Más de 65 años	44	5,4
<b>Nivel de Estudios</b>		
Sin estudios	14	1,7
Educación Primaria	125	15,2
Educación Secundaria y Ciclos formativos	286	34,9
Estudios Universitarios	386	47,1
No contesta	9	1,1
<b>Ocupación</b>		
Estudiante	123	15,0
Ama de casa	67	8,2
Desempleado	102	12,4
Pensionista	76	9,3
Trabajador por cuenta propia	72	8,8
Trabajador por cuenta ajena	380	46,3

Para la recogida de la información se procedió a la administración de un cuestionario estructurado con preguntas cerradas, en el que el consumidor debía indicar su grado de acuerdo o desacuerdo con una serie de afirmaciones utilizando una escala Likert de 7 puntos, así como una serie de cuestiones de clasificación.

Los ítems incluidos en el cuestionario para el análisis de los constructos han sido propuestos en base a la revisión de diferentes estudios previos. Así, se ha adaptado la escala de beneficios de la relación a partir de Gwinner et al. (1998), y se han tomado los ítems de la escala de lealtad utilizada por Arnett et al. (2003). Por su parte, la innovación del minorista se ha medido a través de ítems adaptados a partir de la escala propuesta por Homburg et al. (2002).

Una vez recogidos los datos, se realiza un análisis de componentes principales (ACP) con el fin de agrupar los ítems utilizados en factores. A continuación, con el fin de confirmar la validez del modelo propuesto, se realiza un análisis de covarianzas o estimación de un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales siguiendo el procedimiento en dos etapas recomendado por Anderson y Gerbing (1988). Este procedimiento implica, en primer lugar, analizar la calidad de la medida de los constructos a través de un análisis factorial confirmatorio, y en segundo lugar, la estimación de un modelo estructural, teórico o causal que permite obtener información acerca de las relaciones entre los constructos a los que se refieren las hipótesis de este estudio. De esta forma, se pueden contrastar simultáneamente las hipótesis acerca de las relaciones de causalidad entre las variables latentes y/o observadas.

Por último, con el fin de contrastar la influencia del nivel de innovación del minorista con respecto a sus competidores en la relación entre los beneficios de la relación y la lealtad, se estima un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales multigrupo o multimuestra. A través de esta técnica tratamos de contrastar la existencia de diferencias significativas en las relaciones entre las variables analizadas en función del grado de innovación por parte del minorista en sus relaciones con los clientes.

## 5. Resultados

En primer lugar, a modo de análisis preliminar, se realiza un análisis de componentes principales (ACP) con rotación VARIMAX con el fin de obtener la estructura de relaciones entre las variables que componen las diferentes escalas. Tras esta primera fase exploratoria, los resultados del ACP fueron sometidos a un análisis factorial confirmatorio. Como resultado, se observa que los índices de ajuste oscilan alrededor de 0,9, lo que indica un ajuste aceptable del modelo (Tabla 3). Adicionalmente, el error cuadrático medio es bajo (RMSEA = 0,034).

TABLA 3  
Resultados del análisis factorial confirmatorio

Constructo	Ítem	Carga fact. estand. (error est.)	t	$\alpha$ Cronbach	Fiabilidad compuesta	Varianza extraída
Beneficios de la confianza	BC1. Comprando en esta tienda creo que tengo menos riesgo de que algo salga mal	0.827	-	0.909	0.915	0.782
	BC2. Creo que puedo confiar en esta tienda	0.918 (0.028)	32.712*			
	BC3. Tengo más confianza de que el servicio será prestado correctamente	0.906 (0.025)	36.485*			
Beneficios sociales	BS1. Conozco al empleado/s que presta/n el servicio	0.893	-	0.872	0.882	0.789
	BS2. Me conocen por mi nombre	0.884 (0.043)	19.007*			
Beneficios de trato especial	BT1. Obtengo descuentos u ofertas especiales que la mayoría de clientes no pueden obtener	0.923	-	0.972	0.973	0.924
	BT2. Me prestan servicios que no proporcionan a la mayoría de los clientes	0.979 (0.028)	36.602*			
	BT3. Obtengo un servicio más rápido que el resto de clientes	0.980 (0.033)	30.859*			
Lealtad	L1. Me considero cliente leal	0.773	-	0.923	0.927	0.762
	L2. La tienda X es mi primera elección	0.904 (0.034)	33.814*			
	L3. No compraré en la competencia	0.898 (0.034)	29.242*			
	L4. Aún con producto similar, prefiero X	0.910 (0.035)	30.801*			
Innovación relacional	I1. Esta tienda adopta más nuevas ideas de prácticas de merchandising o servicios que otras	0.909	-	0.948	0.948	0.860
	I2. Adopta ideas nuevas de prácticas de merchandising o servicios antes que otras	0.925 (0.024)	41.870*			
	I3. Adopta ideas nuevas de prácticas de merchandising o servicios continuamente	0.947 (0.022)	46.453*			

Chi-cuadrado Satorra-Bentler: 154.60; grados de libertad: 80; CFI: 0.950; IFI: 0.990; Bentler-Bonett NNFI: 0.987; RMSEA: 0.034.

A partir de los resultados expuestos en la Tabla 3, se puede confirmar la fiabilidad de las escalas, ya que tanto la fiabilidad compuesta como el coeficiente alfa de Cronbach están por encima del valor recomendado de 0,8 para todos los constructos, las varianzas extraídas son



superiores al 50% y las cargas factoriales estandarizadas son estadísticamente significativas para todos los ítems. Todo ello nos permite confirmar la validez convergente del modelo.

Por otra parte, se calculan las correlaciones entre constructos con el fin de comprobar la validez discriminante (Tabla 4).

TABLA 4  
Medias, desviaciones típicas y correlaciones entre constructos

Constructo	Media	Desv. típ.	Correlaciones				
			F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
F1. Beneficios de la confianza	4.970	1.587					
F2. Beneficios sociales	1.673	1.427	0.255 (0.10, 0.41)				
F3. Beneficios de trato especial	1.350	1.020	0.106 (0.03, 0.19)	0.632 (0.41, 0.85)			
F4. Lealtad	3.998	1.847	0.439 (0.26, 0.62)	0.346 (0.17, 0.53)	0.327 (0.20, 0.45)		
F5. Innovación relacional	4.238	1.776	0.375 (0.17, 0.58)	0.006 (-0.18, 0.19)	-0.037 (-0.14, 0.07)	0.174 (-0.02, 0.36)	

Para ello, calculamos el intervalo de confianza descrito por Anderson y Gerbing (1988) para las correlaciones entre todos los pares de constructos. Esta prueba requiere el cálculo de un intervalo de confianza de + / - dos errores estándar para la correlación entre dos constructos y determinar si este intervalo incluye el valor 1. En caso de que este intervalo no incluya el valor 1, la validez discriminante queda confirmada. En este caso, como se puede comprobar en la Tabla 4, ninguno de los intervalos incluye la unidad, quedando así confirmada la validez discriminante.

Una vez confirmada la validez, estimamos el modelo de ecuaciones estructurales que aparece en la Figura 1, obteniendo los resultados que se muestran en la Tabla 5.

TABLA 5  
Resultados del modelo de ecuaciones estructurales

Relación	Parámetro estandarizado	Error estándar	t	Hipótesis
Beneficios de la confianza → Lealtad	0.397	0.036	11.092*	H1a aceptada
Beneficios sociales → Lealtad	0.125	0.032	3.739*	H1b aceptada
Beneficios de trato especial → Lealtad	0.228	0.043	8.010*	H1c aceptada

Chi-cuadrado Satorra-Bentler: 333.02; grados de libertad: 51; CFI: 0.943; IFI: 0.943; Bentler-Bonett NNFI: 0.926; RMSEA: 0.08.

\* Significativo, p < 0.05

Como resultado se obtiene apoyo al primer grupo de hipótesis, que sostenían la influencia positiva y significativa de los beneficios de la confianza, los beneficios sociales y los beneficios de trato especial sobre la lealtad del cliente al minorista. Estos resultados se encuentran en la línea de la evidencia empírica previa, que señala la existencia de una relación positiva entre beneficios de la relación y lealtad (Gwinner et al., 1998; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002).

El ajuste global del modelo es aceptable, ya que los índices de ajuste se encuentran alrededor del valor recomendado de 0,9 y el RMSEA se encuentra en torno al valor de referencia de 0,08.

Adicionalmente, de acuerdo con el segundo grupo de hipótesis, esperamos encontrar diferencias significativas en la valoración de los beneficios de la relación y en la lealtad del cliente, así como en las relaciones entre estos constructos en el modelo, en función del grado de innovación del establecimiento. Con el fin de contrastar estas hipótesis, en primer lugar, se divide la muestra en dos submuestras en función del grado de innovación del minorista percibida por el consumidor. Para ello, se calcula la mediana del promedio de los tres ítems de la escala (que en este caso es 4) y se consideran dentro del grupo de innovación baja los elementos muestrales que toman valor inferior a 4 y en el grupo de innovación alta los que presentan valor promedio superior a 4, eliminando todos los elementos muestrales que tomen un valor exactamente igual a 4. A continuación, se calculan los valores medios y se contrasta la existencia de diferencias significativas entre dos grupos de tiendas (nivel de innovación bajo y alto) para los constructos relativos a los beneficios de la relación y la lealtad del cliente hacia el establecimiento comercial

(Tabla 6). Como resultado de este análisis, se observa que los valores obtenidos para los beneficios de la confianza y la lealtad son significativamente superiores para los minoristas más innovadores, no existiendo diferencias significativas para los beneficios sociales y de trato especial ( $p < 0.05$ ). De este resultado se puede inferir la superior credibilidad que inspiran los establecimientos que se esfuerzan por introducir servicios novedosos frente a los ofrecidos por la competencia, así como la mayor fidelidad de los clientes hacia los establecimientos percibidos como más innovadores.

TABLA 6

**Dimensiones y valoración global del capital de marca de la tienda e intenciones conductuales en función del grado de avance tecnológico de la tienda: Valores medios y diferencias significativas**

	Innovación baja (N=285)	Innovación alta (N=391)	F	p valor
F1. Beneficios de la confianza	4.49	5.42	72.21	0.000
F2. Beneficios sociales	1.72	1.68	0.15	0.698
F3. Beneficios de trato especial	1.41	1.29	2.17	0.141
F4. Lealtad	3.82	4.23	10.88	0.001
F5. Innovación relacional	2.37	5.69	2445.09	0.000

A continuación, se lleva a cabo un análisis multigrupo. De esta manera, se trata de contrastar la existencia de diferencias significativas en las relaciones entre constructos en función del grado de innovación por parte del minorista. Los resultados obtenidos se muestran en la Tabla 7.

TABLA 7

**Resultados del análisis multigrupo**

	Innovación baja (N=285)	Innovación alta (N=391)	Chi <sup>2</sup>	p-valor
Beneficios de la confianza → Lealtad	0.472	0.339	0.954	0.329
Beneficios sociales → Lealtad	0.169	0.124	5.695	0.017
Beneficios de trato especial → Lealtad	0.216	0.204	7.017	0.008

Chi-cuadrado Satorra-Bentler: 365.8;5 grados de libertad: 105; CFI: 0.936; IFI: 0.937; Bentler-Bonett NNFI: 0.920; RMSEA: 0.061.

\* Significativo,  $p < 0.05$

A partir de los resultados obtenidos, cabe resaltar la existencia de diferencias significativas entre los establecimientos que son percibidos como más innovadores y los considerados como menos innovadores por lo que respecta a la intensidad de la relación entre los beneficios sociales y la lealtad del consumidor hacia el establecimiento comercial, por una parte, y los beneficios de trato especial y la lealtad, por otra. En particular, la intensidad de la relación entre los beneficios sociales y la lealtad del cliente es más fuerte para los establecimientos con menor nivel de innovación frente a los más innovadores ( $p < 0.05$ ). Esta evidencia se puede explicar por el hecho de que la innovación puede conllevar la introducción de, por ejemplo, las tecnologías de la información y de la comunicación (TIC) en ciertos procesos habitualmente realizados por el personal del establecimiento. Esto puede ser percibido por los clientes como una pérdida del trato personal, del vínculo emocional con el empleado del establecimiento, debilitando la intensidad de la relación entre beneficios sociales y lealtad en los establecimientos más innovadores frente a los más tradicionales.

De forma similar, el grado de sofisticación influye significativamente en la intensidad de la relación entre beneficios de trato especial y lealtad, en el sentido de que la relación entre estos constructos es más fuerte para los establecimientos percibidos como menos innovadores frente a los más innovadores ( $p < 0.01$ ). De nuevo, el superior grado de innovación de ciertos establecimientos puede redundar en un trato más impersonal, por lo que el vínculo entre beneficios de trato especial y lealtad es más fuerte para las tiendas tradicionales frente a los minoristas más innovadores.

En cambio, no se observa un efecto moderador de la innovación sobre las relaciones entre los beneficios de confianza y la lealtad.

## 6. Conclusiones

El grado de innovación relacional del minorista ha sido señalado como un factor diferenciador importante. No obstante, se trata de un constructo al que todavía se le ha prestado escasa atención, y para el que no existe consenso acerca de su conceptualización y dimensionalidad. Por otra parte, hasta donde tenemos conocimiento, este es el primer trabajo en el que se aborda el estudio de su papel moderador en la relación entre beneficios relacionales y lealtad.

Los resultados obtenidos en el presente estudio, en primer lugar, vienen a corroborar la evidencia obtenida por estudios previos en lo que se refiere al papel de los beneficios de la relación como generadores de lealtad hacia la tienda, destacando entre ellos los beneficios de la confianza. En segundo lugar, aquellos establecimientos valorados como más innovadores presentan puntuaciones significativamente superiores en lo que se refiere a los beneficios de la confianza y la lealtad del cliente. En este sentido, los consumidores valoran positivamente la introducción de novedades en servicios por parte de los minoristas frente a sus competidores, entendiendo que el esfuerzo realizado por la tienda redundará en beneficio del cliente, quien le concede su confianza en mayor medida y la tiene en mejor consideración para futuras compras.

En cambio, se observa un papel moderador de la innovación relacional en sentido exactamente contrario al que cabría esperar por lo que respecta a la relación entre beneficios sociales y de trato especial y lealtad. Así, las relaciones entre beneficios sociales y de trato especial con respecto a la lealtad son más fuertes para los establecimientos tradicionales en comparación con los más innovadores. De este resultado se podría inferir que las innovaciones introducidas por algunos comercios vienen a minar los atributos del servicio valorados por los consumidores como beneficios sociales y de trato especial que emanan de la relación a largo plazo con el minorista.

A partir de estos resultados, se puede vislumbrar la importancia de la implicación continuada del minorista en procesos de innovación relacional, siempre que dichos cambios permitan mejorar la eficiencia en la gestión, la minimización de errores y la fiabilidad de los procesos, elementos que pueden influir positivamente en la generación de beneficios de la confianza y, en última instancia, fidelizar en mayor medida al cliente. Pero al mismo tiempo, se debe cuidar el trato personal y no descuidar el aspecto humano que, si bien los beneficios sociales son los que contribuyen en menor medida a la lealtad, sigue siendo una cuestión altamente valorada por los consumidores. Así, por ejemplo, la utilización de las nuevas tecnologías para acercar el establecimiento al cliente, a través del correo electrónico, los SMS, las aplicaciones de mensajería instantánea o las redes sociales, debe cuidar aspectos tales como la personalización del destinatario de los mensajes – dirigidos al cliente con su nombre –, la inclusión de contenidos que pueda ser de su interés – en función de los datos de compras anteriores de los que dispone el establecimiento –, y la personalización del emisor del mensaje – gestor personal o persona de contacto en el establecimiento –.

Adicionalmente, entendemos que las innovaciones introducidas por el minorista deben considerar asimismo el desarrollo de nuevas formas de reconocer la fidelidad del cliente a través de la operativización de diversos beneficios de trato especial. Así, la emisión de una tarjeta de socio cliente o la clasificación de los clientes en diferentes categorías que les permitan acceder a ventajas especiales, no disponibles para otros consumidores, serían fórmulas valoradas positivamente por la clientela, que redundarían en una mayor lealtad hacia los establecimientos más innovadores.

No obstante, entendemos que la presente investigación no está exenta de limitaciones. La primera se refiere al ámbito geográfico restringido de aplicación del estudio. En este sentido, sería interesante poder comparar los resultados derivados de este trabajo con las percepciones de los consumidores de otras zonas, ya que es de esperar que la estructura comercial, la cultura y costumbres de los consumidores influya en sus percepciones.

Por otra parte, en el presente trabajo consideramos como medida de la capacidad de innovación del minorista una valoración global de la misma por parte del consumidor. Entendemos que se

requiere un análisis más pormenorizado de las distintas facetas de la innovación del minorista, pues a partir de los resultados del mismo se podrían inferir implicaciones relevantes para los gestores de los establecimientos comerciales. Con todo, entendemos que este estudio representa una primera aproximación a la consideración de la innovación relacional en el contexto de los beneficios de la relación y debería inspirar futuras investigaciones encaminadas a desarrollar una escala de innovación relacional que permita identificar las distintas dimensiones de este constructo y su relación con los beneficios de la relación y la lealtad hacia la tienda.

Por último, la lealtad del consumidor hacia la tienda ha sido vinculada a factores personales y situacionales (Bloemer y Odekerken-Schröder, 2002). Así, cabría considerar en el análisis la influencia de diversas características sociodemográficas de los consumidores y de las motivaciones de compra a la hora de explicar el rol moderador de la innovación en la relación entre beneficios relacionales y lealtad.

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# CREATIVIDAD, INNOVACIÓN Y GESTIÓN DE LA EXPERIENCIA DEL VISITANTE EN INDUSTRIAS CREATIVAS<sup>1</sup>

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## RESUMEN

*Las industrias creativas constituyen un sector que se caracteriza por la creatividad, entendida como la apuesta por nuevas ideas desde la libertad del artista. Por otro lado, en este sector, también se pueden implementar otras innovaciones tecnológicas y en servicios, que no son en sí nuevas creaciones, sino la aplicación de elementos innovadores, nuevos para la organización, pero no para el mercado. En el presente trabajo tomamos como ejemplo el caso de los museos para analizar cómo creatividad e innovación contribuyen a ampliar y diversificar las audiencias y a mejorar la imagen y el prestigio de la organización. Además, proponemos que la influencia de la creatividad y la innovación sobre estos resultados está condicionada por la capacidad de los museos de cautivar las emociones del visitante a partir de una gestión eficaz de las experiencias.*

## Palabras clave:

Creatividad, innovación, innovación tecnológica, experiencias, museos.

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## 1. Introducción

El concepto de industrias creativas es una noción relativamente reciente, que ha comenzado a utilizarse para describir a “aquellas industrias que utilizan el talento, la creatividad y la capacidad emprendedora para producir bienes y servicios creativos” (Bakhshi y Throsby, 2010: 10). Esta categoría incluye tanto bienes y servicios culturales (arte, música, artes escénicas, literatura, cine, televisión, vídeo), como otros con un fin meramente comercial (moda, software).

A pesar de la amplia utilización y expansión de este concepto, hay que señalar que se trata de una noción subjetiva y aún “en construcción” (Tremblay, 2011), debido sobre todo a la propia indefinición del concepto de creatividad. En todo caso, es evidente que hay organizaciones, en especial, las culturales, donde la innovación y la creación y su adecuada gestión constituye en el contexto actual un requisito esencial para garantizar la consecución de sus objetivos y asegurar su viabilidad financiera. Sin embargo, la innovación y, sobre todo, la creatividad pueden no ser apreciadas por el consumidor si no se canalizan a través de las herramientas necesarias para ponerlas en valor a través de una experiencia de consumo satisfactoria.

Partiendo de este contexto, el objetivo de este trabajo es analizar en qué medida la creatividad y la innovación en las industrias creativas influyen en los resultados de las organizaciones a través de la adecuada gestión de la experiencia del visitante (interacción, adaptación, experiencia sensorial). En concreto, en el presente trabajo tomando como caso de estudio los museos españoles, pretendemos analizar el efecto de la creatividad, la innovación y la gestión de la experiencia del visitante sobre resultados ligados a la captación de audiencias y a la mejora de la imagen y el prestigio de la organización. Además, proponemos analizar en qué medida la influencia de la creatividad y la innovación sobre estos resultados está condicionada por la capacidad de los museos de ofrecer experiencias que cautiven el interés del público.

## 2. Creatividad e innovación: el caso de los museos

El significado más convencional del término innovación en las empresas hace referencia a un nuevo producto o servicio, un proceso de producción, una estructura, un sistema administrativo, un plan o programa que pertenece a los miembros de una organización (Damanpour, 1991). La creatividad, por su parte, es un concepto borroso cuyas fronteras son difíciles de determinar (Markusen et al., 2008). Una interpretación es la que considera la creatividad como una capacidad: la capacidad de algunos individuos de crear e imaginar cosas nuevas. Esta idea se encuentra en la base del emergente concepto de “economía creativa” (Florida, 2002; Lazzaretti, 2013). Otra interpretación es la que entiende la creatividad como un proceso: el proceso por el cual las ideas se generan, conectan y transforman en valor (UNCTAD, 2010). Desde esta última perspectiva, es evidente que creatividad e innovación son dos conceptos interrelacionados, cuando no utilizados como sinónimos.

En el caso de las industrias creativas, como se ha señalado, la creatividad es el elemento que las define, pero eso no resta importancia a la implementación de otro tipo de innovaciones de carácter tecnológico, en productos o en procesos. Por tanto, en el presente trabajo vamos a analizar de forma diferenciada el papel de la creatividad y de la innovación sobre los resultados, y lo vamos a ejemplificar en un caso concreto de industria creativa: los museos. Para ello nos vamos a tratar la creatividad y la innovación como dos dimensiones de un mismo proceso innovador, pero que encierran matices distintos:

- En las industrias creativas la creatividad podría considerarse como un tipo de innovación que atañe al núcleo de la propia industria (*core business*) y donde prima un componente artístico, estético o simbólico (Stoneman, 2009). Ese componente es el que define principalmente la originalidad y la novedad de una creación. Es más, esa creatividad no nace únicamente de una orientación al consumidor y de dar respuesta a la demanda del mercado, sino que está más vinculada al espíritu creativo e imaginativo del artista. El artista es el principal agente del



cambio. Es lo que Castañer y Campos (2002) definen como innovación de contenido en el ámbito artístico.

- Otras innovaciones que se pueden implementar en industrias creativas tienen una naturaleza funcional o tecnológica. Son aquellas que nacen de dar respuestas específicas al mercado mediante el uso de tecnologías o la oferta de servicios no necesariamente nuevos para el mundo, pero sí nuevos en dicha industria. Atañen más a la forma en la que se presenta el producto o servicio que al contenido (Castañer y Campos, 2002). Sería el caso de la distribución de música o libros digitales, la oferta de servicios educativos o culturales online o la programación en un museo de obras que no habían sido exhibidas antes.

### ***2.1. La gestión de la creatividad en los museos***

La gestión de la creatividad en los museos supone atraer y potenciar la capacidad artística, imaginativa, la curiosidad y, en definitiva, la capacidad de creación de ciertos individuos (artistas, científicos). En el caso de los museos ello implica promover y producir la actividad de artistas e investigadores, estimular la creación y el conocimiento y apostar por el riesgo en nuevos proyectos.

La gestión adecuada de la creatividad puede redundar en una mayor eficiencia de la organización. Es de esperar que la apuesta por el talento y el riesgo creativo dote al museo de una imagen de prestigio, vanguardia y renovación, que le permita ser valorado positivamente por la prensa especializada, museos y otros agentes externos. Por otro lado, aunque la creatividad permite ofrecer experiencias distintas para el público, ello no supone que esas experiencias sean percibidas como superiores y relevantes. La creación, el riesgo y la renovación pueden conseguir sorprender y entusiasmar al visitante o bien frustrarle y decepcionarle. Aunque el creador parta de una idea o de un mensaje dirigido al público, no se puede asegurar que dicho mensaje sea comprendido por los receptores. Como señalan Castañer y Campos (2002) la creatividad implica altos niveles de riesgo e incertidumbre en relación con la respuesta de la audiencia y con los resultados. De ahí que no sea evidente el efecto de la creatividad y el riesgo artístico sobre los resultados en audiencias.

***H1a. La creatividad influye de forma positiva en la imagen del museo.***

***H1b. La creatividad influye de forma negativa en la captación de audiencias.***

### ***2.2. La gestión de la innovación en los museos***

El componente artístico y arriesgado estéticamente que define la innovación en las industrias creativas, no impide que también se desarrollen otro de tipo de innovaciones relacionadas con la presentación del producto, los servicios o las tecnologías aplicadas. En los museos, estas innovaciones son incrementales, relacionadas con las mejoras y los cambios en la forma y presentación de los productos y servicios ofrecidos. En concreto, Bakhshi y Throsby (2010, 2012) señalan dos tipos de innovaciones culturales relacionadas con la forma de presentación de la oferta: la innovación tecnológica y la innovación en la creación de valor añadido a través de nuevas posibilidades de explotar los activos culturales.

La innovación en la creación de valor añadido en los museos se manifiesta en la amplitud de su oferta, a través de las exposiciones temporales, la diversidad en programación, la oferta educativa, los programas de amigos, etc. También es corriente que los museos manifiesten interés por facilitar y hacer ameno su discurso a los visitantes mediante recursos diversos como proyecciones de cine y vídeo, charlas o conciertos, entre otras muchas actividades.

La innovación tecnológica, por su parte, implica el uso de nuevas tecnologías ya experimentadas en otros ámbitos (desarrollos tecnológicos en el mundo de la imagen, de la comunicación, del diseño, de la estética, de la arquitectura, etc.) y posibilitan innovaciones en la presentación de la colección y en mejorar el servicio al visitante (pantallas táctiles, visitas virtuales, programas educativos online, etc.).

En el ámbito cultural y de museos, Voss, Montoya-Weiss y Voss (2006) demuestran que la innovación en el producto (en su caso, nuevas producciones teatrales) está correlacionada de forma significativa con los ingresos por ventas. En cuanto a las nuevas tecnologías, éstas pueden conseguir atraer a un público más diverso (estudiantes, docentes, familias, entre otros), así como ofrecer servicios más amplios a otros públicos objetivo (prensa, agencias turísticas). Si a ello unimos que las TIC aplicadas en los museos pueden mejorar el aprendizaje del visitante, estaríamos admitiendo que la innovación en los museos puede contribuir a una mejora en los resultados en audiencias y educativos (Camarero y Garrido, 2008). Por lo tanto, proponemos que:

***H2. La innovación en la creación de valor añadido (H2a) y la innovación tecnológica (H2b) influyen positivamente en la imagen del museo***

***H3. La innovación en la creación de valor añadido (H3a) y la innovación tecnológica (H3b) influyen positivamente en la captación de audiencias.***

### **3. La gestión de la experiencia del visitante**

En 1998, Pine y Gilmore, en su artículo *Welcome to the experience economy*, acuñaron el concepto de “economía de la experiencia”. Pine and Gilmore (1999, p.2) observan que se ha pasado de una economía de servicios a una economía, en la que la función económica ya no es la provisión de servicios, sino la teatralización de experiencias sensoriales y la oferta de hechos memorables. Ante esta idea las empresas se cuestionan cómo se han de diseñar los productos y servicios para proporcionar dichas experiencias. Parte de la respuesta nos la ofrecen Pine y Gilmore (1998, p. 98), quienes definen el uso empresarial de las experiencias en los siguientes términos: “una experiencia tiene lugar cuando una empresa utiliza intencionadamente los servicios como escenario y los bienes como apoyo para involucrar a consumidores individuales de una manera que genera un evento memorable”. Recientemente, Pine II and Gilmore (2014) proponen varias formas de crear valor en el ámbito de la economía de la experiencia: customización de productos y servicios, diferenciación a través de experiencias, fusionar la tecnología digital con la realidad y crear experiencias transformadoras. También Wu (2012) indica que una estrategia de marketing experiencial debería fortalecer una imagen de marca vinculada a la experiencia y promover la interactividad como un elemento básico de la oferta.

#### ***3.1. Gestión de la experiencia y resultados***

En nuestro estudio hemos centrado las propuestas experienciales de los museos en tres ámbitos:

**Adaptación.** La adaptación a las necesidades y características del visitante es el elemento básico, imprescindible para que la experiencia vivida pueda ser memorable. Como señalábamos anteriormente, Pine II y Gilmore (2014) proponen la customización como una vía para crear experiencias. En el caso de un museo es necesario que la visita esté adaptada tanto en contenido, en tiempo o en actividades propuestas a los intereses de cada visitante. Algunos museos proponen diferentes recorridos en función del tiempo del que dispone el visitante. En otros casos se proponen visitas guiadas alternativas (para niños, para familias, para expertos). De hecho, se puede intentar involucrar al público en la elección de temas y contenidos de algunas exposiciones.

**Interactividad y la participación.** La interactividad y la participación del visitante son probablemente los dos elementos más mencionados en la literatura de museos como mecanismos para generar experiencias (Falk y Dierking, 2000). Los museos se preocupan por animar a los visitantes a ser sujetos activos y a participar e interactuar lo máximo posible durante la visita. En el trabajo realizado por Ingle (1994) revela que la manipulación de los objetos, el hecho de poder tocarlos y sentirlos personalmente, así como otras actividades que permitían la participación activa (disfraces, simulación, dramatización, actividades manuales, discusión de opiniones, etc.) resultaron tener un efecto positivo sobre el aprendizaje de los visitantes.

Experiencia sensorial. El marketing sensorial analiza cómo el estímulo de los sentidos del consumidor puede afectar a su comportamiento. Diferentes aspectos sensoriales de un producto (tacto, gusto, olor, sonido o la apariencia visual) pueden afectar a nuestras emociones, memorias, percepción, preferencias, elecciones y consumo (Krishna, 2010, p. 2). En los museos, la oferta de experiencias multisensoriales puede ir más allá de la mera experiencia visual fruto de la observación de una exposición. La experiencia del visitante se puede reforzar a través de otros elementos visuales (iluminación, proyecciones), del tacto (mediante la posibilidad del visitante de manipular e interactuar con los objetos de la exposición), del olfato (por ejemplo, en museos industriales o relacionados con la ciencia que recrean experiencias olfativas), del oído (acompañando la visita con música o con conciertos en vivo), o, incluso, del gusto (es el caso de museos etnográficos o industriales en los que el visitante puede degustar productos relacionados con la temática del museo). Como han señalado algunos autores (Csikszentmihalyi, 1998; Hooper-Greenhill, et al., 2004; Ping-Tsan y Hsin-Yu, 2010) las experiencias más agradables estéticamente provocan más diversión y comprensión por parte del visitante.

***H4. La adaptación (H4a), la interactividad (H4b) y la experiencia sensorial (H4c) influyen de forma positiva en la captación de audiencias.***

### ***3.2. De la creatividad y la innovación a los resultados a través de la experiencia***

De acuerdo con la lógica dominante en servicio, los consumidores son siempre co-creadores de valor (Vargo y Lusch (2004, 2008). Las innovaciones y la oferta de nuevos productos y servicios que realiza la empresa son meras propuestas de valor que sólo adquieren valor real en uso. Como indican Grönroos y Voima (2013), el valor es acumulado, experimentado y percibido por el consumidor durante todo el proceso de interacción con el producto o servicio. Pero para que dicha co-creación sea efectiva, las empresas y proveedores de servicios deben involucrar a los consumidores en el proceso de creación de valor durante la interacción y ofrecerle la posibilidad de crear valor conjuntamente.

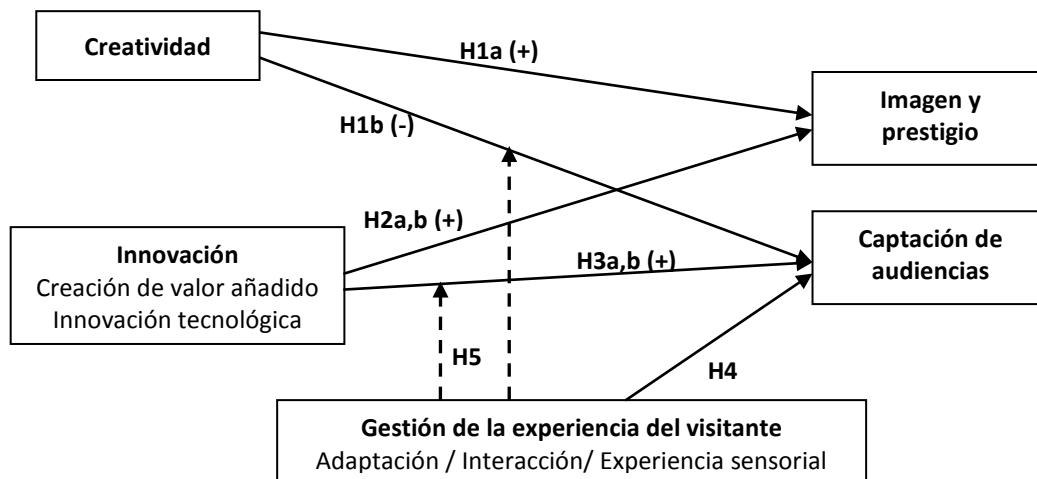
Desde esta perspectiva, las empresas deberían facilitar valor al consumidor y gestionar el proceso de co-creación a través de interacciones empresa-consumidor (Grönroos y Voima, 2013). Aunque algunos autores se centran en la co-creación de valor durante el proceso de innovación y desarrollo de nuevos productos, la co-creación es un concepto más amplio que también implica la co-creación de experiencias e incluye toda la interacción entre empresa y consumidor dirigida a crear un entorno experiencial personalizado (Prahalad y Ramaswamy, 2004).

En el caso de los museos, como hemos señalado anteriormente, la creatividad y la innovación crean valor para los visitantes ofreciendo nuevas propuestas culturales, nuevos servicios, nuevas tecnologías y nuevas formas de presentar las obras. Son propuestas de valor que adquieren valor real para el visitante durante la interacción con dichos servicios. Pero para ello es necesario una gestión proactiva por parte del museo enfocada a facilitar que el visitante sea co-creador de valor y pueda vivir realmente una experiencia personalizada. La oferta más creativa y vanguardista, los nuevos servicios ofrecidos o las nuevas tecnologías han de ir acompañadas de una propuesta experiencial para transformarse realmente en experiencias memorables (estéticas, educativas, escapistas) que aporten valor al consumidor, mejorando así los resultados en audiencias, educación o imagen y prestigio. Por tanto,

***H5. La implementación de experiencias para el visitante refuerza el efecto positivo de la creatividad (H5a), de la innovación en valor añadido (H5b) y de la innovación en tecnología (H5c) sobre la captación de audiencias***

El conjunto de hipótesis propuestas se resume en la Figura 1.

FIGURA 1  
Propuesta de hipótesis



## 4. Metodología

### 4.1. Universo de población y selección de la muestra

El universo de población considerado consistía en 900 museos españoles incluidos en la página web del Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte. La recogida de información se realizó mediante encuesta postal dirigida a los directores de los museos. El desarrollo del cuestionario exigió, en primer lugar, un exhaustivo análisis de las particularidades y evolución de este tipo de organizaciones a través de la consulta de noticias en prensa, páginas web de museos, revistas especializadas en museos y exposiciones y otras fuentes secundarias. Asimismo, mantuvimos entrevistas en profundidad con algunos directores y gerentes de museos. Estos contactos nos sirvieron como pretest y nos permitieron corregir y enriquecer el cuestionario.

El cuestionario se envió mediante correo postal incluyendo la opción de contestar el cuestionario online. La recogida de información se ha extendido durante los meses de febrero, marzo y abril de 2014. El total de respuestas obtenidas a lo largo de todo el proceso una vez eliminados cuestionarios incompletos alcanzó la cifra de 201, lo que representa un ratio de respuesta del 22%. El incentivo para el director del museo fue la promesa de facilitarles los resultados finales del estudio. Los museos que forman parte de la muestra engloban diferentes áreas temáticas (arqueológicos, arte contemporáneo, artes decorativas, bellas artes, casa museo, ciencia y tecnología, ciencias naturales e historia natural, sitio, especializado, etnografía y antropología, historia, general) y tamaño (28.2% con menos de 5.000 visitantes anuales, 19.3% entre 5.000 y 10.000, 35% entre 10.000 y 50.000 y 17.5% más de 50.000).

### 4.2. Medición de variables

Para la medición de las variables se han creado escalas ad hoc basadas en la revisión de la literatura sobre innovación e indicadores de resultados en la cultura y en museos, especialmente el informe de Bakhshi y Throsby (2010) sobre innovación en organizaciones artísticas y culturales. Así, la creatividad recoge el apoyo del museo a proyectos arriesgados, y la producción y el estímulo a la obra de artistas e investigadores. La innovación en creación de valor añadido y tecnológica se ha medido, respectivamente, como la cantidad y variedad de actividades culturales propuestas y el total de innovaciones tecnológicas implementadas. Para medir la gestión de la experiencia del visitante se han considerado nueve indicadores que recogen el interés del museo por ofrecer servicios adaptados al visitante, experiencias interactivas y experiencias sensoriales. Los resultados en cuanto a imagen y prestigio del museo aluden a la mejora en la valoración del museo entre diferentes agentes y públicos (otros museos, prensa, agencias, residentes, etc). Los resultados en audiencias y educativos se refieren a la

difusión del contenido entre mayor número y diversidad de público, residentes, estudiantes, investigadores o personas con problemas de exclusión. Las medidas se muestran en la Tabla 2, junto con los estadísticos descriptivos.

TABLA 2  
Medición de variables y estadísticos descriptivos

	Media/ %	Desv. típ.
<b>Creatividad</b> ( <i>escalas Likert de 1 a 5</i> )		
En el museo se combinan proyectos arriesgados (que pueden fracasar) con otros exitosos	2,53	1,246
Se promueven y apoyan proyectos generadores de conocimiento	3,52	1,243
Servimos de escaparate para que artistas o investigadores realicen exposiciones de su trabajo	2,67	1,392
Producimos obras de artistas actuales	1,90	1,323
Estimulamos la creación de obras para espacios concretos de nuestro museo	2,00	1,245
<b>Innovación en creación de valor añadido</b>		
Programamos nuevas actividades ( <i>escala Likert de 1 a 5</i> )	3,30	1,336
Nº exposiciones	7,67	8,165
Diversidad de oferta cultural ( <i>número de total de otras actividades que realiza</i> ) Proyecciones cinematográficas; Talleres didácticos; Representaciones teatrales; Conciertos; Talleres literarios; Desfiles de moda; Espectáculos de baile; Otras esferas culturales		
<b>Innovación tecnológica</b> ( <i>Número de innovaciones tecnológicas implementadas dentro del museo</i> )		
Tours multimedia; Paneles informativos interactivos; Simulación y experiencias de realidad virtual; Wifi; Espectáculos de sonido, láser y luz; Presentaciones IMAX; Atracciones temáticas; Dispositivos móviles para el visitante durante el recorrido; Paneles interpretativos; Reconstrucciones 3D; Proyecciones holográficas; Realidad aumentada		
<b>Gestión de la experiencia del visitante</b> ( <i>escalas Likert de 1 a 5</i> )		
<b>Experiencia sensorial</b>		
El museo ofrece experiencias multisensoriales al visitante	2,34	1,301
Tratamos de crear sensaciones físicas que acompañan a la obra e intensifican la experiencia	2,27	1,305
Se recrean ilusiones que afectan a los cinco sentidos	2,01	1,287
<b>Interacción y participación</b>		
En las actividades propuestas se anima al visitante a participar e interactuar	3,29	1,250
Intentamos que los visitantes se convierten en los actores de la exposición	2,63	1,208
Utilizamos distintas técnicas para implicar al visitante durante la exposición	2,77	1,207
<b>Adaptación</b>		
Adaptamos las visitas a las características de los visitantes (niños, grupos, etc.)	3,98	1,094
Se ofrecen distintos recorridos en función del tiempo del que dispone el visitante	3,32	1,427
Las rutas de las visitas guiadas cambian en función de las preferencias de los visitantes	3,36	1,368
Tratamos de involucrar al público en la elección de los temas de las exposiciones	2,20	1,238
<b>Resultados en audiencias</b> ( <i>escalas Likert de 1 a 5</i> )		
Ha aumentado el número de visitantes anuales	3,25	1,378
Los visitantes muestran entusiasmo y satisfacción tras la visita	4,01	,948
Se ha conseguido mayor diversidad de audiencias	3,48	1,102
El museo ha contribuido a una mayor difusión de su contenido entre los residentes	3,83	1,047
El museo ha contribuido a la formación de estudiantes o investigadores	3,73	1,183
El museo ha aumentado la audiencia de públicos con problemas de exclusión	2,84	1,232
<b>Imagen y prestigio</b> ( <i>escalas Likert de 1 a 5</i> )		
Hemos conseguido logros significativos en nuestro ámbito en relación a otros museos de la categoría	3,51	1,207
Ha mejorado la imagen del museo dentro de la comunidad de museos	3,59	1,122
Ha mejorado la valoración del museo por parte de la prensa especializada	3,41	1,102
Ha mejorado la valoración del museo por parte de las agencias turísticas	3,29	1,194
El museo se ha convertido en una referencia cultural de la zona	3,66	1,150
El museo ha fortalecido su reputación y prestigio	3,65	1,156

#### 4.3. Análisis de la información y resultados

Para la estimación de las hipótesis propuestas proponemos la estimación de un modelo de regresión jerárquico. De dichos análisis, aún en fase incipiente, cabe esperar poder identificar en qué medida la apuesta de los museos por potenciar el talento y la creatividad constituye una política arriesgada pero que puede llegar a cautivar a la audiencia a través de una correcta gestión de la experiencia. Igualmente, consideramos que las innovaciones promovidas por el mercado pueden ser el mecanismo alternativo que facilite la difusión de los museos entre las audiencias y facilite el logro de los objetivos.

## 5. Conclusiones

En el orden académico, nuestro estudio introduce el concepto de creatividad como un aspecto de la innovación que puede ser analizado de forma independiente porque sus efectos sobre los resultados de la organización no resultan evidentes. Asimismo, desde el marco conceptual y teórico que nos brinda la lógica de dominante en servicio, conjugamos la innovación con la co-creación de valor y experiencia del consumidor para valorar como la innovación es un proceso que debe incluir necesariamente al consumidor, no sólo en la gestión o desarrollo de ideas sino también, y especialmente en el caso de los servicios, en las fases de interacción, experiencia y relación del consumidor con el servicio, puesto que en esos momentos se genera el valor que obtiene el consumidor.

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# THE EFFECTS OF PREDEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ON NEW PRODUCT PERFORMANCE

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## RESUMEN

*Effectively managing predevelopment activities is one of the most important and difficult challenges facing innovation managers. Its importance lies in the fact that effectively performing predevelopment activities can reduce costs during the new product process and contribute directly to the success of a new product. Unfortunately, research and framework-building in this area has been limited. In fact, difficulties occur in studying the predevelopment stage as it is dynamic, often unstructured, has traditionally been characterized by low levels of formalization and it is extraordinarily difficult to evaluate its performance. With these arguments in mind, this study aims to analyze the relationship between predevelopment and project performance. We test our hypotheses on a sample of 207 manufacturing firms, applying the technique of structural equation modelling. Our results demonstrate the importance of predevelopment activities on the operational and market results of new products.*

## Palabras clave:

Innovation, predevelopment activities, new product performance, product innovation



## 1. Theoretical background

Firms today face intense competition due to increasing globalization (Gumusluoglu and Ilsev, 2009), rapid changes in technology and customer demand (Birdi, Leach, and Magadley, 2012) as well as a reduction in product life cycles (Langerak, Hultink, and Griffin, 2008). Innovation and new product development are therefore key to business survival (Calantone et al., 2006). In fact, the strategic importance of innovation to enhance the competitiveness of enterprises has been widely recognized, not only at a professional level but also academically (Markham and Lee, 2013). Numerous studies have analyzed the key success factors of innovation (Evanschitzky et al., 2012, Henard and Szymanski, 2001). However, innovation is risky and expensive, so despite major efforts made by academics and managers to improve new product development, the rate of failure of new products is still very high (Evanschitzky et al., 2012). This evidence, in turn, adds weight to the importance of the key success factors of innovation and the need to carry out further studies on this subject.

One of the success factors that is generally considered to be critically important is the study of predevelopment activities. In fact, it has been found that the steps that precede the design and development of the product make the difference between winning and losing (Cooper, 2001). New-product projects featuring a high quality of execution of activities that precede the development phase are more successful. In the Cooper (2001) reported the following results: a success rate of 75.0% (versus only 31.3% for projects where the predevelopment activities are found to be lacking); a higher rated profitability (7.2 out of 10 versus only 3.7 for projects where predevelopment activities are poorly undertaken); a market share of 45.7% (versus 20.8%). However, although these activities are crucial to the success of any new product, little attention has been paid to the predevelopment (Markham, 2013), partly because difficulties occur in studying the predevelopment stage as it is dynamic, often unstructured, and has traditionally been characterized by low levels of formalization (Murphy and Kumar, 1997). On the other hand, two of the major sources of confusion in this area are the use of different terms (e.g. Kim and Wilemon, 2002; Langerak et al., 2004) and the difficulty of evaluate predevelopment performance (e.g. Ho y Tsai, 2011). Over the last decade, the number of publications on predevelopment activities is increasing, and the literature provides more detailed insights into this area. However, most papers on predevelopment activities are theoretical (Zhang and Doll, 2001; Reid and de Brentani, 2004; Reid and de Brentani, 2012) or explorative studies (Khurana and Rosenthal 1998; Montoya-Weiss and O'Driscoll, 2000; Koen et al., 2001; Rosenthal and Capper, 2006). Considering the small number of empirical studies so far, it is not surprising that Kahn et al. (2003, p. 193) still see the predevelopment as an important issue in future research on product development management. Thus, it is thought that a deeper understanding of predevelopment and its impact on new product development success could help firms to be more successful in their efforts to develop new products (Verworn et al., 2008).

With these arguments in mind, this study aims to achieve a number of objectives. From an academic standpoint, we try to shed light on predevelopment, going in depth into its results (concept complexity and novelty, strategic renewal and effectiveness) and its impact on product performance (adherence to schedule and budget, product novelty, competitive advantage and market performance). Concept complexity and novelty are equivalent measures of the product novelty but in the first stage (E.g. Martinsuo and Poskela, 2011). Also, predevelopment performance has been measured in some academic researches by its strategic renewal (Martinsuo and Poskela, 2011) and effectiveness (Ho y Tsai, 2011). From this point of view, strategic renewals deals with the future potential of the developed idea and effectiveness of predevelopment is based on achieving the expected outcome of predevelopment (such as explicit and stable product concept, novel ideas, project plan, etc.). From a business standpoint, we try to offer recommendations on how to effectively manage these predevelopment activities and the impact that this management has on the results obtained with its new products.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Data collection

The initial sampling frame included 2,230 Spanish firms operating in a wide and varied number of sectors and involved in developing new products for their markets. The advantage of this selection is that it enables the generalization of the results beyond the idiosyncratic nature of a specific industry. These firms were selected from a national report that lists the most innovative businesses according to different indicators. Data were collected through a Web-based questionnaire sent to the person in charge of predevelopment activities of new product development process at each company. Before collecting the data, the questionnaire was pretested with six managers and seven academics. Several attempts, email and telephone were conducted in order to reach all the firms selected. Also, respondents were offered a gift and a summary of the most relevant findings of the study for their response. Finally, we obtained a total of 207 complete questionnaires, a response rate similar to other studies in the area of new product development. To test for non-response bias, early and late respondents were compared in all the variables of interest and in their firm size (Armstrong and Overton, 1977). Table 1 shows the sample characteristics.

TABLE 1.  
Sample characteristics

Number of employees		Sales volume (mill. €)	
<10	9,2%	< 10	30%
10-49	16,9%	10-50	36,7%
50-249	47,3%	> 50	28,9%
> 250	26,6%	No response	4,4%
	207		207

The unit of analysis was the new product project. Respondents were asked to base their answers on a new product representative of the firm that had been fully completed within the past three years. It should have been on the market for more than 12 months to ensure that the firm had sufficient data on the resulting performance. To assure quality of the answers, respondents were asked to indicate their degree of knowledge about the new product and the degree of involvement in the predevelopment activities and in the development and launching using a seven-point Likert scale (1 very limited; 7 very substantial). The mean responses were 6.24, 6.04 and 6.11 respectively, thus showing a high knowledge level not only on the new product selected but also on the whole process.

### 2.2. Measures

Our multi-item scales were adapted from those employed in prior studies. All items used 7-point Likert-type scales.

**Predevelopment performance:** Strategic renewal was operationalized according to Poskela and Martinsuo (2009). In order to measure concept complexity and novelty, we used the scale proposed by Martinsuo and Poskela (2011). Effectiveness was assessed using four items from Ho and Tsai (2011).

**Project performance:** Product novelty was operationalized with three items from Rodríguez et al., (2011). Adherence to budget and schedule was operationalized with two items from Tatikonda and Montoya-Weiss (2001) and Langerak, Hultink, and Robben (2004). Competitive advantage was assessed using a two-item measure adapted from the work of Tatikonda and Montoya-Weiss (2001). New product performance was measured using four items adapted from Tatikonda and Montoya-Weiss (2001) and Langerak, Hultink, and Robben (2004).

**Controls:** Two control variables were included to reduce the possibility of alternative explanations: development and launching effort.

**Unidimensionality, Reliability, and Validity.** The data were analyzed using path modeling using the structural equations software AMOS 18. However, the descriptive and psychometrics properties of the scales were analyzed first using SPSS20 and AMOS18 respectively (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The internal consistency, reliability, and convergent validity were investigated by performing a confirmatory factor analysis. Composite reliabilities estimates exceeded the standard suggested by Bagozzi, Yi, and Phillips (1991). Values of average variance extracted (AVE) provided satisfactory results. Standardized item loadings for all constructs were greater than .50 and significant ( $p < .05$ ), evidencing good convergent validity (Bagozzi et al. 1991). An inspection of alpha coefficients revealed that all values were equal or greater than .80, which indicates good reliability. Evidence of discriminant validity among the dimensions was provided by three different procedures recommended in the literature as follows: (1) the 95% confidence interval constructed around the correlation estimate between two latent variables never includes the value 1 (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988); (2) the comparison of the square root of the AVE with the correlations among constructs reveals that the square root of the AVE for each component is greater than the correlation between components, in support of discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Together the results of the tests suggest that the reflective scales used in this study possess sufficient unidimensionality, reliability and validity.

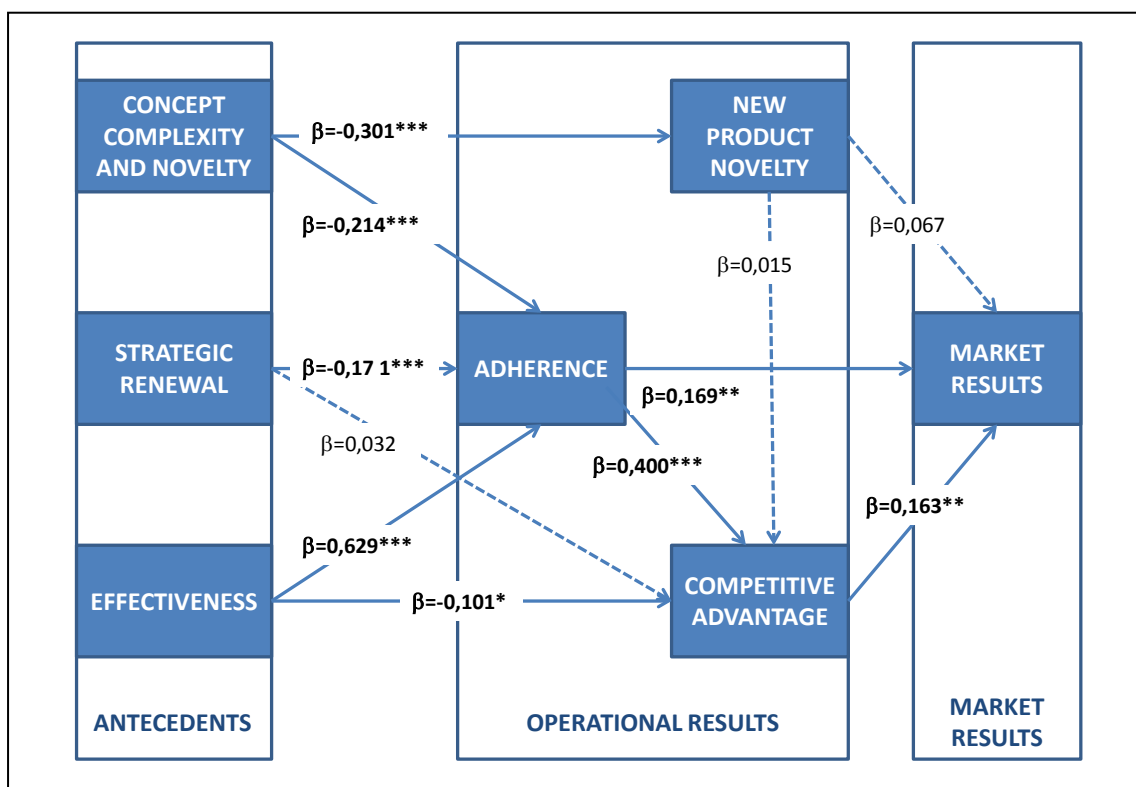
Most researchers agree that common method variance is a potentially and serious biasing threat in behavioral research and its potential effect should therefore be accessed. Therefore, Harman's one-factor test was conducted. Neither a single factor nor a general factor that could account for the majority of the covariance in the measures emerged. This provided evidence that common method variance was not a problem in the sample.

### 3. Empirical testing of hypothesized model

Structural equation modeling was then used to test the hypothesized relationships. The fit indices for the full model were as follows: chi-square (d.f. = 45) = 127.39  $p < 0.001$ ; CFI = .93; IFI = .94 NFI = .92; and standardized RMSEA = .07. These values collectively indicate that the structural model has an acceptable fit.

The detailed results show that almost all hypothesized main effects are significant (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1.  
Result model



#### 4. Major results and implications

This study has several implications from both an academic and a managerial point of view. Academically, we gain a deeper understanding of one of the most important determinants of product success: predevelopment activities. First, the results obtained have allowed us to verify the impact of predevelopment activities in the project performance. This influence had been proposed in the literature but had not been found empirically in the literature. Thus, we can say that effective management of predevelopment activities positively influences the final result of the new product. Our research also has important contributions from a managerial point of view. According to our results, product managers should acknowledge that a good way of ensuring that their innovation projects are profitable is to pay special attention to the generation of ideas and their screening, as well as to the definition and selection of concepts. An efficient implementation of these activities allows the adherence to schedule and budgets and also superior products on the market. So, product managers should make a major change in their philosophy, since those activities that they tend to devote less attention and importance to, such as predevelopment, are in fact key to the success of their projects.

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# COMO OPTIMIZAR EL TRABAJO COOPERATIVO: UNA EXPERIENCIA DOCENTE

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## RESUMEN

*Las exigencias planteadas en el Espacio Europeo nos llevan a plantearnos fórmulas que fomenten el aprendizaje cooperativo en el aula. En este trabajo describimos una experiencia docente en la que, basándonos en el Modelo del Cerebro Total de Herrmann (1989), se forman los equipos de trabajo (con perfiles homogéneos y heterogéneos) para el desarrollo práctico de la asignatura Técnicas de Ventas del Grado de ADE. Los objetivos a alcanzar son tres: 1) fomentar la cooperación; 2) analizar el funcionamiento, rendimiento y satisfacción de los equipos de trabajo; 3) obtener información sobre cómo diseñar equipos eficientes y optimizar sus recursos. El objetivo, en última instancia, es ajustar nuestros métodos de enseñanza a los estilos de aprendizaje de los alumnos.*

## Palabras clave:

Estilos de aprendizaje, Modelo del Cerebro Total, Universidad

## 1. Introducción

La implementación de las exigencias derivadas del Espacio Europeo (EEES) de educación Superior han comportado una profunda reflexión sobre la configuración de las titulaciones universitarias y la forma de transmitir el conocimiento utilizada por el profesorado. En este contexto, El EEES defiende focalizar la atención en la formación de los estudiantes y más concretamente, en su desarrollo competencial (Cano, 2008). El nuevo enfoque docente se basa en la evaluación de competencias específicas (propias de cada asignatura) y competencias transversales (cuyo principal objetivo es la formación integral de la persona y su crecimiento personal) y cuya asunción es requisito fundamental para los alumnos de cualquier titulación (Baena y Padilla, 2012; Espinosa et al., 2006). Esta circunstancia implica una reforma substancial en las metodologías utilizadas y una apuesta clara por un aprendizaje en el que el alumno sea parte activa y protagonista en su proceso formativo, asumiendo responsabilidades que le permitan estar más preparado para enfrentarse a los avatares del mercado profesional (Baena, 2010; De Juan et al., 2008; González y García, 2007).

En este sentido, EEES pretende favorecer aquellas metodologías docentes que fomenten la planificación, desarrollo y evaluación de las competencias transversales en las que desarrollo del trabajo en equipo supone un elemento clave para modificar las estructuras de metas de grupo de clase, tradicionalmente competitiva e individualista, introduciendo una serie de elementos que favorecen la cooperación como medio principal de enseñanza. El aprendizaje cooperativo supone una interesante alternativa para organizar los procesos de enseñanza y de adquisición de las competencias. Se trata de una forma de trabajo en grupo basado en la construcción colectiva del conocimiento y el desarrollo de habilidades mixtas (aprendizaje y desarrollo personal, social y laboral), donde cada miembro del grupo es responsable de su aprendizaje y del de los restantes miembros del grupo (García y Troyano, 2010). En este sistema de aprendizaje la finalidad del producto académico no es exclusiva e individualista, sino que desplaza aquella en busca de la mejora de las propias relaciones sociales, donde para alcanzar tanto los objetivos académicos como los relacionales se enfatiza en la interacción grupal. Los alumnos inmersos en una metodología cooperativa generan una interdependencia positiva, interacción cara a cara, responsabilidad individual, mejoran sus habilidades sociales y desarrollan un procesamiento grupal autónomo (Johnson y Johnson, 1989). Este tipo de aprendizaje es más profundo y duradero (Gil, et al., 2006) ya que el alumno es parte activa y protagonista en su proceso formativo, asumiendo responsabilidades que le permitan estar más preparado para enfrentarse a los avatares del mercado profesional (Baena, 2010; De Juan et al., 2008; González y García, 2007). Estos razonamientos han motivado que diversos especialistas de educación postulen la necesidad de introducir el trabajo en equipos cooperativos dentro de la dinámica habitual de trabajo en el aula (Espinosa et al., 2006). Sin embargo, existen investigaciones que demuestran que la práctica de agrupar a los estudiantes no necesariamente genera un espacio de construcción colectiva, ya que esto depende de las estrategias y contenidos que se trabajan dentro del aula y de los perfiles de los alumnos integrados en el equipo (Pulido de Bazán y Contrera, 2005). Para propiciar el trabajo cooperativo no basta con poner a trabajar a los alumnos en torno a una mesa, es necesario conocer su forma de aprender, el sistema de selección, de procesamiento y la forma de empleo de la información de los mismos. El logro de un buen proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje redundará en la óptima conjunción entre la metodología a utilizar y el proceso de aprendizaje de los alumnos (Pulido de Bazán y Contrera, 2005). El descubrimiento de las capacidades individuales permitirá, siguiendo planteamientos gestálicos, que el grupo salga potenciado por la suma de las particularidades de cada uno de sus integrantes.

Las diversas teorías o modelos sobre los estilos de aprendizaje: la Teoría de Sperry (1973), la Teoría del Cerebro Triuno (MacLean, 1990), el Modelo de las Inteligencias Múltiples (Gardner, 1983), el Modelo del Cerebro Total de Herrmann (1989), entre otros, resultan de obligatoria consulta al presentar diversas perspectivas sobre el funcionamiento del cerebro en los procesos de aprendizaje. En este sentido, el profesor como facilitador de los procesos pedagógicos, ha de desplegar una serie de estrategias en las que apoyándose de los conocimientos aportados por los

modelos o teorías de aprendizaje, contribuya a la construcción del conocimiento y al mayor desarrollo de la potencialidad del grupo. Hoy sabemos que, tal y como señala Pulido de Bazán y Contreras (2005), conocer cómo aprenden nuestros alumnos y determinar cuáles son los factores que influyen sobre los procesos de aprendizaje son aspectos muy importantes en el momento de planificar el dictado de la asignatura.

En este trabajo proponemos una experiencia basada en el Modelo del Cerebro Total. Los planteamientos de esta teoría suponen un recurso interesante al permitir al profesor averiguar el perfil individual de cada estudiante, saber que capacidades de su cerebro tiene más potenciadas y, de esta forma, obtener información que fomente el aprendizaje cooperativo defendido en el EEES. En base a esta línea, presentamos una actividad docente realizada en la asignatura obligatoria de 4º curso Técnicas de Ventas del Grado de ADE consistente en la creación de equipos de trabajo de acuerdo a los perfiles de dominancia de los alumnos matriculados. Esta experiencia tiene un triple objetivo: 1) desarrollar la competencia transversal del aprendizaje cooperativo; 2) analizar el funcionamiento, rendimiento y satisfacción de los equipos de trabajo dependiendo de si el grupo está formado por alumnos con el mismo perfil de aprendizaje (equipos homogéneos) o distinto perfil (equipos heterogéneos); 3) tomar decisiones en base a los resultados obtenidos que nos permitan diseñar los equipos en posteriores cursos así como adoptar la metodología de enseñanza más eficaz según las características del grupo.

En la redacción de este trabajo en primer lugar, describimos las teorías o modelos sobre los estilos de aprendizaje y más concretamente el Modelo del Cerebro Total, en segundo lugar relatamos la experiencia docente, analizamos los datos y resultados y finalmente aportamos las conclusiones.

## **2. Las teorías sobre los hemisferios cerebrales: el modelo de Herrmann**

### ***2.1. Teorías sobre los hemisferios cerebrales***

Los modelos sobre los estilos de aprendizaje relacionados con el funcionamiento del cerebro provienen, en sus orígenes, de los estudios sobre sus particularidades y relación con la conducta humana efectuados desde la neurociencia. En este sentido, los resultados más relevantes de la investigación consisten en el descubrimiento de dos hemisferios cerebrales que difieren significativamente en su funcionamiento. La naturaleza de esta diferencia ha sido intensivamente estudiada desde la década de los años 50 por biólogos, neurólogos y psicólogos (Gómez, 2003). Uno de los trabajos pioneros en esta área fue el realizado por Sperry (1973) y que dio origen a la Teoría del Cerebro Derecho vs. El Cerebro Izquierdo, siendo el punto de partida para otras interpretaciones sobre el funcionamiento del cerebro y el aprendizaje como la Teoría del Cerebro Triuno y el Modelo del Cerebro Total.

La Teoría de Sperry (1973) establece que los dos hemisferios controlan diferentes modos de pensamiento y que depende de cada individuo el priorizar uno sobre otro. Los resultados de estas investigaciones permitieron conocer aspectos relacionados con el control de la conducta, por ejemplo, que el lado izquierdo está controlado principalmente por el hemisferio derecho y que el lado derecho por el hemisferio izquierdo. Otras investigaciones (Gazzaniga et al., 1962) estuvieron orientadas a determinar el intercambio de información entre los hemisferios. En esta línea, el aporte más significativo es haber descubierto que los dos hemisferios son responsables de diferentes maneras de procesar la información y, por ende, de establecer diferentes estilos de pensamiento. Así, el cerebro izquierdo está especializado en el procesamiento secuencial, paso a paso. Es lógico, racional, lingüístico, objetivo y coherente. En cambio, el cerebro derecho está especializado en el proceso simultáneo o en paralelo, integra partes y las organiza en un todo. Es memorístico, espacial, sensorial, intuitivo, holístico, sintético y subjetivo (Velásquez et al., 2007).

Por otro lado, la Teoría del Cerebro Triuno (MacLean, 1990) presenta otra visión del funcionamiento del cerebro y sus implicaciones para la educación, sirviendo de complemento de la teoría anterior. MacLean considera que existen tres cerebros integrados en uno: el reptiliano,



el sistema límbico, y la neocorteza. El cerebro reptiliano o básico es el responsable de la supervivencia del individuo, de la conducta automática o programada. El sistema límbico está formado por el cerebro afectivo, en el que se dan los estados de calidez, amor, odio y el resto de emociones. Por último, la neocorteza está formada por los dos hemisferios en donde se llevan a cabo los procesos intelectuales superiores. El hemisferio izquierdo se ocupa del razonamiento lógico mientras que el hemisferio derecho se ocupa del razonamiento abstracto.

Otro investigador, Gardner (1983), propone el Modelo de las Inteligencias Múltiples y concibe la inteligencia no como un todo unitario sino como un conjunto de inteligencias múltiples, distintas y semi-independientes. Gardner define la inteligencia como una habilidad que se puede cultivar a través de la educación y no como algo innato. Todos los individuos son capaces de conocer el mundo desde ocho inteligencias diferentes: la inteligencia lingüística, la lógico-matemática, la corporal-Kinestésica, la musical, la espacial, la naturalista, la interpersonal y la intrapersonal. La diferencia entre unos individuos y otros estriba en la intensidad de estas inteligencias y en la forma en las que se recurre a las mismas para solucionar los problemas. Los individuos aprenden, representan y utilizan el saber de muchos y diferentes modos.

Además de estos modelos, tal y como señalan otros autores como Pérez (2001) y Gómez et. al. (2010), existen otros que estudian el estilo de aprendizaje de acuerdo con criterios como: el sistema de selección de la información, tal y como mantiene la Programación Neurolingüística (estilos visual, auditivo y cinestésico), el de procesamiento de la información (estilos lógico y holístico), la forma de empleo de la información (activo, reflexivo, teórico y pragmático) (Kolb, 1984; Kolb y Kolb, 2005) o criterios mixtos, como el del Modelo de las Cuatro Categorías Bipolares (activo/reflexivo, sensorial/intuitivo, visual/verbal y secuencial/global) (Felder y Silverman, 1988). La revisión de los mismos muestra la importancia, tal y como se señala desde la neurociencia, de utilizar metodologías de carácter mixto que combinen técnicas secuenciales con otras que permitan el desarrollo de pensamientos visuales y espaciales, la fantasía, el lenguaje evocador y la experiencia directa. Sobre esta idea de potenciar la utilización de distintas partes de nuestro cerebro como método de aprendizaje eficaz se basa el Modelo del Cerebro Total de Herrmann (1989) y en el que nos centramos en este trabajo.

## ***2.2. El Modelo del Cerebro Total de Herrmann***

En base a los estudios sobre la Dominancia Cerebral (Sperry, 1973) y el Cerebro Triuno (MacLean, 1978), Herrmann (1989) elaboró el Modelo del Cerebro Total. En su modelo, Herrmann integra la neocorteza (hemisferio izquierdo y derecho) con el sistema límbico dividiéndolos en cuatro cuadrantes interrelacionados que constituyen modalidades autónomas de procesamiento diferencial de la información, las cuales pueden ser convenientemente desplegadas de manera individual o combinada, tanto secuencial como simultáneamente, en los diferentes procesos del funcionamiento cerebral (véase Figura 1). Cada cuadrante se especializa en la realización de unas determinadas funciones. Así, el lóbulo superior izquierdo (cuadrante A) se especializa en el pensamiento lógico-analítico, cualitativo, matemático y basado en hechos. Mientras que el lóbulo inferior izquierdo (cuadrante B), se dedica al pensamiento secuencial, organizado, planificado y detallado. Por otro lado, el lóbulo inferior derecho (cuadrante C) supone el pensamiento emocional, comunicador, sensorial, espiritual y humanístico. Por último, el lóbulo superior derecho (cuadrante D) se basa en el pensamiento conceptual, holístico-intuitivo, estratégico, integrador, creativo, espacial y visual.

Con la aplicación del Instrumento de Dominancia Cerebral de Herrmann (HBDI) se detecta el perfil de combinación de cuadrantes, el cual indica qué cuadrantes son dominantes, formando así cuatro modalidades de pensamiento: 1) realista, propio del hemisferio izquierdo (cuadrantes A y B); 2) idealista, propio del hemisferio derecho (cuadrantes C y D); 3) pragmático (cuadrantes A y D); e instintivo (cuadrantes B y C). El individuo manifiesta una dominancia cerebral, es decir, una tendencia a utilizar más las funciones de un hemisferio que las de otro para interactuar con su medio (Salas et al., 2004), en uno/s cuadrante/s u otro/s. La mayoría de los sujetos procesa la información desde varios cuadrantes. El HBDI permite determinar el

perfil distintivo de los individuos estableciendo la dominancia según las puntuaciones alcanzadas en el test. En este sentido, una puntuación superior a los 67 puntos implica una clara dominancia en un determinado perfil, dominancia primaria; entre 34 y 66 puntos, supone una dominancia secundaria o indecisión; y menos de 34 puntos, dominancia terciaria o rechazo. Los perfiles de los cuadrantes se representan por los números 1, 2 y 3, de acuerdo con la puntuación obtenida por cada uno, en la secuencia A, B, C, D. De esta manera, el perfil 1-2-3-2, por ejemplo, significa que hay dominancia primaria en el cuadrante A, dominancia secundaria en el B, terciaria en el C y secundaria en el D. El perfil 1-1-1-1 significa que se tiene una dominancia primaria en todos los cuadrantes (cuádruple dominancia), en el extremo opuesto se tiene el perfil 3-3-3-3 (cuádruple rechazo) y el perfil 2-2-2-2 significa que no hay dominancia ni rechazo por ninguno de los cuadrantes. Existen entonces, bajo todas las combinaciones posibles, los siguientes grados de dominancias: simple, doble, triple y cuádruple. Partiendo de una muestra de más de 500.000 sujetos Herrmann observa que sólo el 6% de los individuos tienen una dominancia simple. El 60% tiene una dominancia doble y procesa la información desde dos cuadrantes siguiendo alguna de las siguientes combinaciones AB; CD; AD; AC y BC. El 30% tiene una dominancia triple y genera sus pensamientos desde las combinaciones ABC, BCD, CDA, DAB. Por último, una minoría compuesta por el 3% de los individuos tiene dominancia cuádruple.

FIGURA 1  
El Modelo del Cerebro Total



Fuente: Basado en Cazau (2004).

El individuo con dominancia simple en el cuadrante A (cortical izquierdo) es frío, de pocos gestos, intelectualmente brillante, capaz de evaluar y criticar, competitivo e individualista. Los procesos cognitivos que desarrolla son: el análisis, el razonamiento, la lógica, el rigor, la claridad, el gusto hacia los modelos y las teorías, colecciona hechos y prefiere la palabra precisa. Las estrategias de procesamiento de información que conforman este cuadrante constituyen la referencia básica de la enseñanza, la formación científica y la capacitación profesional en aquellas especialidades asociadas con el rigor del pensamiento analítico y cuantitativo. Las competencias que posee son la abstracción, las matemáticas, las finanzas y la resolución de problemas (Velásquez et al., 2007). Este cuadrante se asocia el esfuerzo constante, la experiencia y la capacitación profesional.

El individuo con dominancia simple en el cuadrante B (límbico izquierdo) es introvertido, emotivo, maniático, tiende a monologar, es secuencial, metódico, es conservador y fiel. Los procesos cognitivos que desarrolla son la planificación, la formulación, la estructuración y la definición de procedimientos. Las estrategias que conforman el cuadrante B pueden ser definidas como operacionales y dirigidas fundamentalmente a la ejecución de acciones previamente diseñadas (no concibe la búsqueda de alternativas distintas a las pautadas), lo importante es administrar recursos y supervisar el desempeño de las metas. Si un individuo con dominancia en el cuadrante B no cuenta con elementos suficientes para la planificación, la ejecución y la evaluación de procesos se hace difícil alcanzar la eficiencia y la calidad deseada.

Las competencias que posee son: la administración, la organización y la capacidad de liderazgo (Velásquez et al., 2007).

El individuo con dominancia simple en el cuadrante C (límbico derecho) es extrovertido, emocional, espontáneo, gesticulador, lúdico, hablador, espiritual y reacciona negativamente hacia las críticas. Los procesos cognitivos que desarrolla son: la integración mediante la experiencia, la tendencia hacia el placer, la fuerte implicación afectiva y la escucha activa, siente la necesidad de compartir y evalúa los comportamientos. Presenta una clara tendencia a involucrarse en relaciones interpersonales de cooperación y amistad, en proyectos sociales y comunitarios y en causas humanitarias. Las competencias que posee son: la relación interpersonal, la propensión al diálogo, el gusto por la docencia, la tendencia al trabajo en equipo y la comunicación (Velásquez et al., 2007).

El individuo con dominancia simple en el cuadrante D (cortical derecho) es original, con sentido del humor, gusto por el riesgo, discutidor, futurista, de discurso brillante e independencia. Los procesos cognitivos que desarrolla son: conceptualización, síntesis, imaginación, visualización, asociación, integración por imágenes. Sus principales competencias son la innovación, la creación, el espíritu empresarial y la investigación (Velásquez et al., 2007).

En este trabajo, nos basamos en el Modelo de Cerebro Total para comprender el estilo de aprendizaje individual utilizado por los alumnos y diseñar fórmulas óptimas que sirvan para la mejora del aprendizaje cooperativo de los trabajos en grupo, potenciando así el rendimiento académico. En este sentido, analizaremos qué perfiles y dominancias pueden cooperar de forma más eficaz y lograr la mayor satisfacción individual.

### **3. Descripción de la actividad docente**

La cooperación, comparada con esfuerzos competitivos e individualistas tiende a resultar, en altos niveles de logro, una mayor retención a largo plazo de lo aprendido, un uso más frecuente de niveles altos de razonamiento y una mayor voluntad para persistir en tareas difíciles (Gil et al., 2006). Además, implica una mayor motivación intrínseca y una mayor facilidad para transferir el aprendizaje de una situación a otra. Sin embargo, tal y como se ha descrito en apartados anteriores, para el logro del éxito del trabajo en equipo resulta fundamental la elección correcta de los perfiles del estilo de aprendizaje de sus miembros. En este sentido se plantea el trabajo que a continuación se detalla.

#### **3.1. Objetivos**

En el contexto descrito, el objetivo más inmediato de esta experiencia es que los alumnos trabajen de manera colaborativa a través de un proceso de conocimiento compartido en el que el alumno sea capaz de comprender, analizar y adoptar la perspectiva del resto de los miembros del grupo, llegar a acuerdos y encontrar soluciones y resultados compartidos en aras a alcanzar un objetivo común. Esta forma de trabajar genera un sentimiento de interdependencia, confianza y responsabilidad en el grupo que fomenta la interacción de sus miembros en la construcción conjunta de ideas y, por tanto, en la configuración conjunta del trabajo final encargado por el profesor. Para alcanzar este objetivo nos proponemos:

- Desarrollar en el alumnado, al margen de su perfil de dominancia y desde la cooperación, las habilidades conceptuales necesarias para superar con éxito la asignatura.
- Fomentar la habilidad procedimental del trabajar en grupo. Esto implica fomentar en el alumno las destrezas necesarias para la negociación, la correcta planificación, el diálogo, la asertividad y la empatía para aprender del perfil de los compañeros.
- Potenciar la cooperación entre compañeros con diversos perfiles de dominancia.

A este objetivo general se suman dos objetivos cuyo logro se sitúan más en el corto y medio plazo y que también son propósito de esta experiencia docente:

- Conocer el grado de satisfacción percibido por el alumnado en su relación con el equipo al que ha sido asignado y con el que ha trabajado.
- Obtener información sobre los perfiles de dominancia de la titulación y cuáles son las combinaciones más adecuadas para obtener los mejores resultados en el trabajo cooperativo generado en esta asignatura. Esto nos permitirá incrementar la efectividad en el diseño de los equipos del próximo curso, así como adoptar la metodología de enseñanza a las características del grupo.

### **3.2. Metodología**

Para llevar a cabo este proyecto se utiliza una muestra de conveniencia de 84 sujetos, 39 hombres y 45 mujeres, con edades comprendidas entre los 22 y los 30 años, estudiantes de la asignatura Técnicas de Ventas, obligatoria de 4º curso del Grado en Administración de Empresas de la Universitat Jaume I, impartida durante el primer semestre del curso 2013-2014.

La metodología utilizada para la valoración del aprendizaje cooperativo se fundamenta en el método del caso y en la realización de un trabajo final en equipo consistente en la redacción de un manual de ventas de una empresa de libre elección.

Los instrumentos de valoración para el grado de consecución de los objetivos propuestos son:

- 1) El sistema de evaluación de la asignatura a través de la nota académica. Dicho sistema nos permite obtener información sobre el éxito de la metodología utilizada. En este sentido, la evaluación se compone de un examen teórico/práctico (50% de la puntuación) al que hay que sumarle la nota obtenida en la parte práctica de la asignatura. Las prácticas se desarrollan en equipo y suponen la resolución de casos prácticos (20% de la puntuación) y la redacción de un manual de ventas (30% de la puntuación).
- 2) El cuestionario elaborado por Jiménez (2006) que tiene su antecedente inmediato en el *Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument* (HBDI) y que permite la obtención del perfil de dominancia de cada alumno y, por lo tanto, posibilita la formación posterior de equipos de trabajo (homogéneos y heterogéneos).
- 3) El cuestionario elaborado por Viles et al. (2013) para medir la satisfacción del alumno con el equipo asignado.

### **3.3. Cronograma de acción**

El desarrollo de esta experiencia docente se distribuye y temporaliza en las siguientes fases:

#### **Fase 1: Formación del profesorado.**

Durante el segundo semestre del curso 2012-2013 los profesores de la asignatura, tanto de la parte teórica como de la práctica, asisten a un curso organizado por la Unidad de Soporte Educativo de la Universitat Jaume I sobre modelos de aprendizaje. Como resultado del mismo surge la creación de un Seminario Permanente de Innovación Educativa (SPIE) cuyo objetivo es aprender a formar equipos de trabajo en el aula.

#### **Fase 2: Planificación del proyecto.**

Al comienzo del semestre se establecieron una serie de reuniones entre el profesorado con el fin de plantear objetivos comunes, discutir sobre el instrumento de medida idóneo y establecer reparto de responsabilidades y el calendario de acciones.

#### **Fase 3: Respuesta al cuestionario sobre los cuadrantes cerebrales por parte de los alumnos.**

Para realizar la medición y evaluación respecto a los estilos de aprendizaje dominantes de los estudiantes, el instrumento de medida utilizado fue el elaborado por Jiménez (2006) que tiene su antecedente inmediato en el *Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument* (HBDI), instrumento de

papel y lápiz elaborado por Herrmann (1989), ampliamente utilizado por su autor en muestras norteamericanas, y elemento clave en la conformación de su Modelo del Cerebro Total.

Concretamente, este instrumento de 40 ítems (ver Tabla 1), supone un proceso de auto-evaluación en el que el entrevistado debe mostrar, en una escala tipo Likert de 5 puntos (donde 1 es “lo que hago peor” y 5 es “lo que hago mejor”), su opinión respecto a su grado de desempeño en cada uno de los aspectos o actividades asociados a los distintos cuadrantes cerebrales (10 ítems asociados a cada cuadrante). La valoración total en cada cuadrante se obtiene multiplicando por dos los resultados obtenidos en cada uno de ellos.

TABLA 1  
**Escala de medición para el diagnóstico del Modelo del Cerebro Total**

<b>CUADRANTE A (superior izquierdo cerebral)</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tengo habilidades específicas en el campo de las matemáticas y las ciencias.</li> <li>2. Pienso que la mejor forma de resolver un problema es siendo analítico.</li> <li>3. Me inclino hacia la crítica en todos los asuntos.</li> <li>4. Tengo habilidades para solucionar problemas complejos de manera lógica.</li> <li>5. Antes de tomar algo como verdadero, lo compruebo, e indago otras fuentes.</li> <li>6. Tengo capacidad de comprender, manipular números y estadísticas de acuerdo con un fin.</li> <li>7. Me gusta solucionar problemas inclinándome a conocerlos y buscar mediciones exactas.</li> <li>8. Tengo la capacidad frente a los problemas de razonar en forma deductiva, a partir de alguna teoría.</li> <li>9. Descompongo ante un problema las ideas y las relaciono con la totalidad.</li> <li>10. Selecciono alternativas sobre la base de la racionalidad y la inteligencia, en oposición al instinto, a la emoción.</li> </ol>
<b>CUADRANTE B (inferior izquierdo límbico)</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. La planificación y la organización son prioritarias en mis actividades.</li> <li>12. Es importante para mí tener un lugar para cada cosa y cada cosa en su lugar.</li> <li>13. Acostumbro escuchar las opiniones de los demás y hacer aclaraciones.</li> <li>14. Prefiero las instrucciones específicas en lugar de aquellas generales que dejan muchos detalles opcionales.</li> <li>15. Pongo mucha atención en los pequeños detalles o partes de un proyecto.</li> <li>16. Tengo capacidad de control y dominio de mis emociones cuando elaboro un plan o proyecto.</li> <li>17. Pienso que trabajar con un método paso a paso es la mejor manera de resolver mi problema.</li> <li>18. Tengo habilidades específicas en el manejo de auditorio o hablar en público.</li> <li>19. Formulo métodos o medios para alcanzar un fin deseado antes de pasar a la acción.</li> <li>20. Tengo la capacidad de coordinar a las personas o de ordenar los elementos para lograr relaciones coherentes y armoniosas.</li> </ol>
<b>CUADRANTE C (inferior derecho límbico)</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21. Prefiero trabajar en equipo que hacerlo sólo.</li> <li>22. Es importante para mí estar en muchas oportunidades acompañado.</li> <li>23. Creo en la trascendencia humana, en algo superior o espiritual.</li> <li>24. Soy emotivo frente a las situaciones difíciles.</li> <li>25. A menudo actúo para solucionar problemas de tipo social.</li> <li>26. En muchas ocasiones prima más en mis decisiones, lo emotivo que lo lógico y lo racional.</li> <li>27. Disfruto, observo y me emociono frente a la belleza de la naturaleza.</li> <li>28. Tengo habilidades para percibir, entender, manipular posiciones relativas de los objetos en el espacio.</li> <li>29. Utilizo todos mis sentidos con frecuencia para resolver problemas (olfato, vista, gusto, tacto, oído).</li> <li>30. Tengo la capacidad de desarrollar y mantener buena comunicación con diferentes tipos de personas.</li> </ol>
<b>CUADRANTE D (superior derecho cerebral)</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>31. Tengo un interés muy fuerte o talento con la música, la poesía, la escultura. También para pintar, dibujar, esquematizar etc.</li> <li>32. Tengo la capacidad de razonar en forma avanzada y creativa, siendo capaz de adquirir, modificar y retener conocimientos.</li> <li>33. Produzco nuevas ideas e innovaciones en mi trabajo.</li> <li>34. Tengo la capacidad de entender y hacer uso de imágenes visuales y verbales para representar</li> </ol>

- semejanzas y diferencias.
35. Tengo la capacidad de percibir y entender una problemática global sin entrar en el detalle de los elementos que la componen.
  36. A menudo mis mejores ideas se producen cuando no estoy haciendo nada en particular.
  37. Prefiero ser conocido y recordado como una persona imaginativa y fantasiosa.
  38. Frecuentemente me anticipo a la solución de los problemas.
  39. Tengo la capacidad de utilizar o comprender objetos, símbolos y señales complejas.
  40. Utilizo el juego y el sentido del humor en muchas de mis actividades.

Fuente: Jiménez (2006).

#### **Fase 4: Construcción de equipos de trabajo.**

En base a los resultados obtenidos en el cuestionario de Jiménez (2006) se construyen los equipos de trabajo. En este sentido se realizan un total de 14 equipos con 6 integrantes cada uno, 8 equipos heterogéneos con perfiles de dominancias mixtas y 5 equipos homogéneos con perfiles de dominancia pura, 5 del hemisferio izquierdo y 1 del derecho. A los alumnos no se les notifica su perfil de dominancia con el fin de no sesgar su compartimiento frente al equipo.

#### **Fase 5: Planteamiento de los casos prácticos por parte del profesorado.**

Los profesores diseñan los casos prácticos a resolver por equipo. En este sentido, se plantean 6 casos representativos de todos los estilos de aprendizaje, 3 más adaptados a las características propias del hemisferio izquierdo (su óptima resolución necesita de la capacidad analítica, planificadora y secuencial) y 3 con un perfil más propio del hemisferio derecho (su óptima resolución necesita de la capacidad holística, creativa, intuitiva, sintetizadora, emocional para su resolución).

#### **Fase 6: Toma de contacto del alumno con su equipo: LA ISLA.**

Para conseguir la aproximación y conocimiento de los estudiantes con el equipo se realiza la práctica de LA ISLA. Esta consiste en que, a diversos equipos, una vez dotados de material propio de manualidades y de plástica (colores, pegamento, cartulina, plastilina), se les pide la ejecución de lo que entienden por el concepto isla (ver Figura 2). Esta actividad didáctica permite ver un diferente desarrollo según el perfil dominante en el grupo. Además genera relaciones interpersonales, habilidades comunicativas, crítica constructiva, creatividad, empatía y asertividad, habilidades, todas ellas, propias del desarrollo de una metodología cooperativa. A continuación observamos algunos ejemplos de las islas realizadas.

FIGURA 2  
La Isla



#### **Fase 7: Resolución de casos prácticos en el aula**

Los alumnos resuelven y discuten de forma cooperativa los casos en la propia aula y reciben el *feedback* del profesor y de la crítica constructiva resto de equipos.

#### **Fase 8: Reunión de control**

Los profesores, hacia la mitad del semestre, se reúnen para discutir la marcha de los equipos y la metodología utilizada.

## Fase 9: Presentación de los manuales de venta

A través de dos sesiones prácticas, los equipos exponen públicamente los manuales de venta. En esta fase, para la evaluación de los mismos, se invita al director comercial de una importante empresa del sector azulejero para que ayude al profesor en las tareas de asesoramiento y consulta.

## Fase 10: Respuesta a cuestionario sobre la satisfacción grupal

En relación a la medición de la satisfacción del alumno con respecto a su equipo de trabajo recurrimos a la escala de medida desarrollada por Viles et al. (2013) (ver Tabla 2). Este instrumento de medida se compone de un total de 23 ítems (ver Tabla 2), en el que el alumno debe mostrar, en una escala tipo Likert de 5 puntos, su grado de acuerdo con una serie de afirmaciones relacionadas con el funcionamiento de su grupo de trabajo a lo largo del semestre (donde 1 es “totalmente en desacuerdo” y 5 es “totalmente de acuerdo”) sobre una serie de dimensiones fundamentales: la participación en la toma de decisiones (3 ítems), la gestión de conflictos (2 ítems), la resolución de problemas (2 ítems), la cooperación (3 ítems), el liderazgo (2 ítems), la comunicación interna (3 ítems) y el *feedback* (8 ítems).

TABLA 2  
Escala de medición para el diagnóstico de la satisfacción grupal

<b>PARTICIPACIÓN EN LA TOMA DE DECISIONES</b>	
1.	Se han establecido normas internas que han facilitado el trabajo en equipo.
2.	Todos los miembros han participado en las tareas del equipo.
3.	Las decisiones en el equipo se han tomado teniendo en cuenta la opinión de todos los miembros.
<b>GESTIÓN DE CONFLICTOS</b>	
4.	Las discrepancias en el equipo han permitido considerar nueva ideas o nuevos puntos de vista.
5.	No ha habido conflictos de tipo interpersonal y si los ha habido, se han resuelto sin que nadie se haya sentido perjudicado.
<b>RESOLUCIÓN DE PROBLEMAS</b>	
6.	Se han utilizado los datos o se ha seguido algún tipo de método para la resolución del caso planteado.
7.	Se ha potenciado la creatividad para la resolución de los problemas o propuestas planteadas.
<b>COOPERACIÓN</b>	
8.	Las tareas y actividades concretas que cada miembro del equipo debería realizar han estado claras desde el inicio tanto en contenido como en plazo.
9.	Tus compañeros han contribuido al equipo tal y como se estableció y ha sido necesario.
10.	Ha existido colaboración entre los miembros del equipo (nos hemos ayudado, compartido información, comunicado las dificultades, etc...).
<b>LIDERAZGO</b>	
11.	El líder del equipo ha sido aceptado por todos los miembros del equipo.
12.	El líder del equipo ha dirigido y coordinado las actividades del equipo.
<b>COMUNICACIÓN INTERNA</b>	
13.	El trabajo del equipo ha transcurrido en un ambiente de confianza.
14.	A pesar de las diferencias entre los miembros del equipo, ha existido un ambiente de respeto entre todos.
15.	En general, la comunicación ha sido buena entre los miembros del equipo.
<b>FEEDBACK</b>	
16.	Los objetivos se han transmitido bien al equipo y han sido comprendidos.
17.	El profesor ha facilitado los recursos (información, materiales, tiempo, o de otro tipo) que el equipo ha necesitado.
18.	Las tareas y actividades concretas a realizar por el equipo han estado claras tanto en contenido como en plazo.
19.	Los criterios de evaluación se han transmitido bien al equipo y han sido comprendidos al inicio del trabajo.
20.	Como equipo, hemos tenido acceso a la información que hemos necesitado.
21.	En caso de necesidad, el equipo ha podido comunicarse fácilmente con los profesores de las asignaturas involucradas.
22.	Como equipo, hemos recibido información acerca del resultado de nuestro trabajo ( <i>feedback</i> del trabajo realizado, fallos cometidos, puntos a destacar).
23.	El trabajo ha sido de alguna manera valorado públicamente al resto de la clase.

Fuente: Viles et al. (2013)

## Fase 11: Elaboración de las conclusiones

Finalizado el curso los profesores se reúnen para analizar los resultados obtenidos y el grado de satisfacción manifestado por los alumnos con la metodología utilizada. Los análisis, resultados y conclusiones permiten observar el grado de consecución de los objetivos propuestos en esta experiencia. Además, los mismos, serán de utilidad para formar equipos de trabajo óptimos en la asignatura Técnicas de Ventas en el próximo curso.

### 4. Resultados

Los datos fueron analizados mediante técnicas de análisis descriptivo y de frecuencias, análisis de la varianza (ANOVA) y análisis de varianza múltiple (MANOVA) utilizando el programa estadístico SPSS 18.0, con tal de analizar al estudiante tanto de forma individual como a nivel de equipo.

#### 4.1. Análisis atendiendo a criterios individuales

En primer lugar, tal y como se recoge en la Tabla 3, se lleva a cabo un análisis descriptivo respecto a los valores promedio de cada uno de los cuadrantes así como de los perfiles de dominancia observados en los estudiantes.

TABLA 3  
Análisis descriptivo de las dominancias cerebrales de la muestra

Cuadrantes	A	B	C	D
Media	65,46	70,24	63,93	60,95
Desv. típica	10,15	9,03	10,64	13,39
Dominancias	% (muestra)	% (muestra)	% (muestra)	% (muestra)
Terciaria (0 - 33)	0,0% (0)	0,0% (0)	1,2% (1)	4,8% (4)
Secundaria (34 - 66)	53,6% (45)	42,9% (36)	61,9% (52)	64,3% (54)
Primaria (67 - 100)	46,4% (39)	57,1% (48)	36,9% (31)	31,0% (26)
Dominancias primarias			%	Muestra
Sin dominancias primarias			17,9%	15
Dominancia hemisferio izquierdo			34,5%	29
Dominancia hemisferio derecho			10,7%	9
Dominancia mixta (hemisferio izquierdo y derecho)			36,9%	31

Atendiendo a los valores promedio de cada uno de los cuadrantes, los alumnos encuestados presentan dominancias primarias en el cuadrante B (70,24). De hecho, observamos que, al valorar la distribución en cuanto a la importancia de cada dominancia (primaria, secundaria y terciaria) para cada uno de los cuadrantes, salvo en este cuadrante B en el que el mayor porcentaje es de dominancia primaria (57,1%), en el resto de cuadrantes el mayor peso lo tienen las dominancias secundarias. Así, en general los alumnos analizados pertenecientes al Grado de Administración de Empresas presentan una dominancia simple en el cuadrante B (2122). Las personas con dominancia simple se comportan de forma previsible y la coherencia es un rasgo dominante. Sin embargo, pueden tener conflictos externos con personas que no tienen esta dominancia. Éste es un caso que podemos considerar atípico puesto que lo normal es encontrar dominancias dobles o triples.

Centrándonos en las posibles combinaciones de dominancias primarias existentes en la muestra vemos que, a pesar de que como suele ser habitual la mayoría de los estudiantes presentan una dominancia mixta (36,9%), su importancia es compartida con aquellos estudiantes que presentan dominancias en el hemisferio izquierdo (34,5%). De hecho, atendiendo a los valores de la Tabla 3 podemos ver como los cuadrantes C y D son los que presentan los valores medios más bajos (63,93 y 60,95 respectivamente), así como los menores porcentajes de dominancia primaria (36,9 y 31,0).

Tomando como punto de partida estas valoraciones, relacionadas con las dominancias cerebrales de los estudiantes, se plantean diferentes cuestiones que nos permiten detectar el carácter diferenciador que los perfiles de dominancia pueden tener sobre los equipos de trabajo.



#### 4.2. Análisis atendiendo a criterios grupales de los equipos de trabajo

Finalmente, centramos nuestros análisis en diversas cuestiones relacionadas con el ámbito del equipo, tratando de determinar la existencia de posibles diferencias en su rendimiento en función de sus perfiles de dominancia.

*¿Existen diferencias en los resultados del equipo en base a sus perfiles de dominancia?*

Para contrastar el rendimiento final del equipo en función del perfil de dominancia se revisan los 14 equipos de trabajo de los alumnos a lo largo del curso procediendo a su catalogación (tanto respecto a cuadrantes como a hemisferios cerebrales). Concretamente, realizamos diversos análisis asociados a las diferentes tipologías de trabajo realizadas por los equipos a lo largo del curso. Por un lado, el proyecto semestral consistente en el desarrollo de un manual de ventas y, por otro lado, los casos semanales resueltos en el aula. En este último aspecto, se diferencian aquellos casos de tipología más cercana al hemisferio izquierdo de aquellos más cercanos al hemisferio derecho. Como puede observarse en la Tabla 4, los resultados apuntan a que, en global, los alumnos pertenecientes a equipos con dominancia en el hemisferio izquierdo (en especial con perfiles del cuadrante A) y con dominancia mixta tienen mejores notas grupales (8,46 y 8,79 respectivamente) que los alumnos pertenecientes a equipos con dominancias en el hemisferio derecho (7,51).

Adicionalmente, los resultados obtenidos demuestran que la heterogeneidad de opinión propia de los equipos mixtos dificulta la capacidad de rápida resolución asociada a la metodología del caso (presentan las valoraciones más bajas en todas las notas asociadas a casos). Sin embargo, esta diversidad de habilidades y destrezas les llevan a conseguir las mejores valoraciones en los proyectos semestrales, en los que el tiempo disponible para llegar a una solución se incrementa.

Más aún, si atendemos a la tipología de los casos observamos una correspondencia directa entre los perfiles de los equipos y la propia naturaleza del caso. Así en los casos asociados al hemisferio izquierdo las notas más altas son las logradas por los equipos de dominancia en este hemisferio (8,48), mientras que en los casos asociados al perfil derecho, hace lo propio el equipo con dominancia en tal hemisferio (9,53).

TABLA 4  
Perfiles de dominancia y notas de equipo

Perfiles de los equipos (cuadrantes)	% (muestra)	Nota global	Nota plan	Nota casos	Casos izq.	Casos der.
A	7,1% (1)	9,00	9,00	9,13	9,00	9,40
B	28,6% (4)	8,29	8,47	8,61	8,31	9,01
C	7,1% (1)	7,51	7,00	8,77	8,39	9,53
D	0,0% (0)	-	-	-	-	-
Mixto	57,2% (8)	8,79	9,21	8,36	7,95	8,87
ANOVA F (Sig.)		13,690 (0,000)	16,397 (0,000)	8,220 (0,000)	9,006 (0,000)	4,514 (0,006)
Perfiles de los equipos (hemisferios)	% (muestra)	Nota global	Nota plan	Nota casos	Casos izq.	Casos der.
Dom. hem. izquierdo	35,7% (5)	8,46	8,60	8,73	8,48	9,10
Dom. hem. derecho	7,1% (1)	7,51	7,00	8,77	8,39	9,53
Dom. mixta	57,2% (8)	8,79	9,21	8,36	7,95	8,87
ANOVA F (Sig.)		15,075 (0,000)	23,213 (0,000)	7,620 (0,001)	8,463 (0,000)	5,265 (0,007)

*¿Existen diferencias en el funcionamiento satisfactorio del equipo en base a sus perfiles de dominancia?*

Tal y como muestran los resultados recogidos en la Tabla 5, en todas las dimensiones asociadas al funcionamiento del equipo, la diversidad de opinión y heterogeneidad de criterios y habilidades que se da entre los miembros de los equipos heterogéneos o mixtos hace que el trabajo en el mismo resulte más satisfactorio que en el caso de los equipos con perfiles de dominancia pura. De hecho, conviene resaltar el caso de los equipos con cuadrante A en los que la sensación de sus miembros respecto al funcionamiento del equipo resulta insatisfactoria en prácticamente todas las dimensiones consideradas (considerando el 3 como el valor umbral entre insatisfacción y satisfacción)

**TABLA 5**  
**Perfiles de dominancia y funcionamiento satisfactorio del grupo**

<b>Perfil de los grupos</b>	<b>Toma decisiones</b>	<b>Gestión conflictos</b>	<b>Resolución problemas</b>	<b>Coordinación</b>	<b>Liderazgo</b>	<b>Comun. interna</b>	<b>Feedback</b>
A	2,89	2,33	2,73	2,72	2,33	3,28	3,52
B	3,92	2,65	3,81	4,08	3,73	4,42	4,17
C	3,48	2,50	4,08	3,78	3,50	4,22	3,94
D	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mixto	3,74	3,03	3,49	3,98	4,26	4,46	4,08
ANOVA F (Sig.)	7,210 (0,000)	9,216 (0,000)	25,570 (0,000)	10,556 (0,000)	69,612 (0,000)	23,447 (0,000)	13,687 (0,000)
<b>Perfiles de los grupos (hemisferios)</b>	<b>Toma decisiones</b>	<b>Gestión conflictos</b>	<b>Resolución problemas</b>	<b>Coordinación</b>	<b>Liderazgo</b>	<b>Comun. interna</b>	<b>Feedback</b>
Dom. hem. izquierdo	3,66	2,57	3,53	3,73	3,37	4,12	4,00
Dom. hem. derecho	3,48	2,50	4,08	3,78	3,50	4,22	3,94
Dom. mixta	3,74	3,03	3,49	3,98	4,26	4,46	4,08
ANOVA F (Sig.)	0,702 (0,499)	12,075 (0,000)	5,763 (0,005)	1,273 (0,005)	30,174 (0,000)	4,977 (0,009)	1,035 (0,360)

## 5. Conclusiones

Las nuevas metodologías propuestas por el EEES y que propician el trabajo en equipo buscan modificar la estructura de metas del grupo en clase, tradicionalmente competitiva e individualista, e introducir actividades que favorezcan el establecimiento de la cooperación como medio principal de aprendizaje. El alumno, en este proceso construye su propio conocimiento a través la interacción con compañeros de diverso perfil. Para lograr el éxito del trabajo en equipo y el establecimiento de las bases cooperativas es muy importante determinar el perfil de aprendizaje y, de esta forma, diseñar los equipos más eficaces.

En este sentido, según los resultados de nuestro estudio, el estilo de aprendizaje de los estudiantes del Grado Administración de Empresas presenta una dominancia simple en el cuadrante B y, si nos fijamos en las dominancias dobles, se observa que tanto los perfiles de dominancia mixtos (36,9%) como los de dominancia del hemisferio izquierdo (34,5%) tienen la misma importancia. Esto va en línea con trabajos anteriores que mantienen la existencia de una relación entre el perfil de dominancia y la preferencia en la elección de titulaciones universitarias y futura ocupación profesional. La dominancia en el cuadrante A es propia de los alumnos de titulaciones de las ciencias en general (naturales, sociales y jurídicas). El cuadrante B es dominante en el perfil de aquellos alumnos de titulaciones relacionadas con las ciencias naturales, de la administración de empresas y la contabilidad. El perfil de dominancia en el cuadrante C es propio de las titulaciones relacionadas con la enseñanza, la sociología, el periodismo, la enfermería y el trabajo social. Por último, la dominancia en el cuadrante D se manifiesta en las titulaciones de publicidad, bellas artes, música o arquitectura (Herrmann, 1989). Sin embargo, el perfil de aprendizaje más completo es el que supone una dominancia en

todos los cuadrantes y, por lo tanto, la máxima representación del funcionamiento del cerebro total. Encontrar alumnos con un perfil de dominancia cuádruple, tal y como sostiene Herrmann, resulta difícil pero subsanable, formando equipos completos en los que aparezcan representados los diferentes perfiles de aprendizaje.

En este sentido, con respecto al trabajo en equipo y su composición, nuestros resultados muestran que los alumnos pertenecientes a equipos homogéneos (dominancias primarias puras) alcanzan mejores resultados que los alumnos de equipos heterogéneos, siempre y cuando la práctica se ajuste a su perfil de aprendizaje. Sin embargo, en general, los equipos heterogéneos, con dominancias mixtas, presentan mayores dificultades en la solución de los casos prácticos. Esto es consecuencia directa de que los casos prácticos se solventan de forma rápida en el aula y, en este sentido, las diferencias de perfiles entre los alumnos de estos equipos ralentiza su eficacia al necesitar de mayor tiempo para organizarse, planificarse y coordinarse correctamente. Sin embargo, cuando disponen de mayor tiempo, como sucede en el caso del manual de prácticas (trabajo semestral), consiguen vencer estas dificultades y los resultados académicos son superiores. En esta línea podríamos decir que la composición idónea para trabajar en grupo en la asignatura Técnicas de Ventas y obtener el mejor rendimiento académico es aquella formada por miembros con distintos perfiles, preferentemente alumnos con el perfil de dominancia cerebral propio de la titulación (en nuestro caso el B) y perfiles de dominancia mixto, puesto que estos tienen puntos en común con los perfiles de dominancia puros (lateralizados) pero a la vez son capaces de pensar de otra forma y enfocar una situación de aprendizaje de forma distinta.

Los equipos de trabajo heterogéneos en su forma de aprender tienen como principal reto la capacidad para aprender a gestionar sus diferencias y a ser tolerantes con las distintas formas de pensar (Herrmann, 1989; Pujolàs, 2008) y, si lo logran, obtendrán resultados enriquecedores. Además, la formación de equipos heterogéneos supone la preparación del alumno hacia las demandas de un mercado laboral que, no sólo necesita titulados con una gran capacitación técnica, sino que puedan adaptarse a los cambios, que sean permeables y flexibles. La sociedad actual necesita profesionales interdisciplinarios capaces de enfrentarse al cambio constante, de trabajar con equipos heterogéneos, adaptarse al know-how de cualquier empresa y sector empresarial. En este sentido, los profesores universitarios tenemos la responsabilidad de formar a los estudiantes no sólo en las competencias que requieren específicamente cada titulación, sino en aquellas otras que potencien su polivalencia. Los nuevos titulados deben ser formados para utilizar los dos hemisferios cerebrales, siempre que las necesidades lo requieran.

En este sentido, proponemos desarrollar metodologías de aprendizaje a partir del Modelo del Cerebro Total. Para ello, en un primer paso el profesor debe conocer el estilo de aprendizaje de los estudiantes para formar equipos heterogéneos. En segundo lugar, desarrollar actividades que incluyan distintas formas de aprender y que no estén condicionadas por el currículum formativo de la especialidad. Es decir, presentar actividades que obliguen a los alumnos a potenciar los dos hemisferios. El objetivo es formar titulados universitarios completos, capaces de enfrentarse a los retos del mercado laboral de una forma abierta, capaces de cooperar y enriquecerse de otras perspectivas. En definitiva hay que formar grupos e individuos que supongan en sí mismos un gran cerebro total.

La principal limitación de la experiencia descrita se refiere a que su campo de aplicación se constriñe a una sola asignatura y durante un semestre concreto. No obstante, actualmente estamos trabajando en la ampliación de esta experiencia docente a otras titulaciones contando para ello con profesores de otras áreas (comunicación, periodismo e ingenierías). Esta colaboración y cooperación interdisciplinaria en el seno de la universidad nos permitirá comparar resultados y llegar a conclusiones más amplias y profundas.

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# COMPETENCIAS TRANSVERSALES Y SU INFLUENCIA EN LA SATISFACCIÓN DE LOS ESTUDIANTES DE MARKETING. UN ESTUDIO INTERNACIONAL

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## RESUMEN

*El entorno universitario actual está atravesando importantes cambios que deben gestionarse de forma eficiente para garantizar el éxito de las instituciones de educación superior. Los principales clientes de las universidades son los estudiantes y éstos deben estar satisfechos con la educación recibida. Cada vez son más conscientes de lo que demanda el mercado y de lo que tienen que conseguir de su paso por la institución universitaria: adquirir conocimientos y también competencias. Los alumnos participantes en este estudio cursaban estudios en universidades públicas de dos países distintos, España y Turquía. Los resultados obtenidos muestran que las ocho competencias transversales consideradas (trabajar en equipo; aprendizaje autónomo; toma de decisiones aplicando los conocimientos a la práctica; análisis de problemas con razonamiento crítico; comunicación oral, comunicación escrita, participación activa en clase y uso de herramientas informáticas) determinan la satisfacción de los estudiantes con las asignaturas en las que se matriculan.*

## Palabras clave:

Satisfacción, competencias, educación superior, estudiante, docencia en marketing

## 1. Introducción

Las Administraciones Públicas (AAPP) son las instituciones acreditadas para facilitar bienes y servicios básicos para los ciudadanos. Su cometido es clave tanto para asegurar el bienestar social como por la responsabilidad derivada de que esos bienes y servicios sólo pueden ser viables gracias al esfuerzo de todos los contribuyentes. En este sentido, las AAPP -y las universidades públicas como parte de las mismas- tienen como obligación responder ante este objetivo haciéndolo del modo más eficiente posible. Sin embargo, lamentablemente, muchas de las AAPP son culpadas de no cumplir con su cometido y, en consecuencia, de defraudar a los contribuyentes. Esta situación está obligando a que nos enfrentemos al paradigma de la ‘nueva gestión pública’, cuyas premisas se importan del sector privado al público.

Concretamente la nueva gestión pública se basa en utilizar los métodos y técnicas de la empresa privada en las AAPP para conseguir actuar con eficacia y eficiencia (Olías de Lima, 2006). Ante esta situación las AAPP en general y las Universidades como parte de las mismas en particular, se vuelven conscientes de la necesidad de aplicar modelos de medición de la satisfacción de los usuarios similares a los utilizados por las empresas privadas (Alves y Raposo, 2003 y Zuluaga-Duque, 2004).

El entorno universitario europeo está atravesando importantes cambios que deben gestionarse de forma eficiente para garantizar el éxito de las instituciones de educación superior. Los principales clientes de las universidades son los estudiantes (Browne, Kaldenberg, Browne y Brown, 1998; Tsarenko, Mavondo y Gabbot, 2004), quienes al fin y al cabo garantizan su éxito o fracaso (Siu y Wilson, 1998). Sin embargo, estos clientes ya no son rehenes de sus universidades cercanas.

El abanico del que dispone en la actualidad un estudiante para formarse es muy amplio. Qué duda cabe que la trayectoria de las universidades depende de que éstas puedan financiarse y parte de esa financiación proviene de mantener o, mejor aún, de aumentar el número de matriculados en sus centros, en definitiva del número de clientes (Bailey, 2000). Para alcanzar este objetivo, además de las decisiones políticas, es necesario que los estudiantes estén satisfechos con la educación recibida. En la literatura, la concepción del rol de los estudiantes es muy variada, se les ha llamado desde clientes (como se apuntaba anteriormente) o productos, hasta consumidores o ciudadanos (Bailey, 2000; Halbesleben, Becker y Buckley, 2003). A pesar de todas esas metáforas, la mayor parte de los investigadores están de acuerdo en que la satisfacción de los estudiantes con su experiencia educativa es fundamental (Suhre, Jansen y Harskamp, 2007).

Dando un paso más en el diseño curricular de los grados, el nuevo proyecto de educación, cristalizado con el Plan Bolonia, no busca transmitir solamente contenidos y conocimientos específicos, sino también un conjunto de destrezas y competencias que son aplicables a diferentes tipos de empleo y a la resolución de problemas específicos en el ámbito profesional. Los estudiantes se están convirtiendo en verdaderos aprendices activos, autónomos, cooperativos y verdaderamente responsables, que se transformarán en los profesionales competentes del futuro. Ello determina un importante cambio en su mentalidad derivado, entre otros factores, del cambio que ya ha sufrido el profesorado. El trabajo por competencias se convierte así en uno de los ejes centrales en la reforma educativa que supone la creación del nuevo EEES (Armengol, Castro, Jariot, Massot y Sala, 2010).

Diversos estudios han demostrado la influencia de las competencias en la satisfacción (Marzo, Pedraja y Rivera, 2005; De-Juan-Vigaray y González-Gascón, 2013, entre otros) confirmando la validez como variables antecedentes de este instrumento. Sin embargo, no hemos encontrado en la literatura estudios que indaguen sobre cuáles de las competencias adquiridas por los estudiantes pueden representar mayor satisfacción para ellos. Por lo tanto, consideramos relevante seguir investigando sobre cuáles son las competencias que pueden repercutir en mayor medida en la satisfacción de los estudiantes con su experiencia educativa, y cuáles son los consecuentes de esa satisfacción. Específicamente, nuestra atención de investigación se centra en examinar los antecedentes:

*¿Qué competencias afectan y en qué medida, a la satisfacción de los estudiantes con las enseñanzas recibidas en las instituciones públicas? Y comprobar los consecuentes ¿Una vez satisfechos con la institución, los estudiantes son leales a la misma?*

Para dar respuesta a estas cuestiones de investigación el objetivo de esta investigación es doble. Por un lado, analizar cómo influye cada una de las competencias transversales estudiadas en la satisfacción de los estudiantes y, por otro, analizar la relación entre la satisfacción de los estudiantes y su lealtad a la institución. Con la finalidad de comprobar la validez externa de los resultados se ha replicado el estudio en dos países distintos. El trabajo se estructura, en primer lugar, presentando una breve revisión de la literatura sobre la satisfacción, la lealtad y sobre las competencias. A continuación se expone la metodología utilizada y los resultados obtenidos. Terminamos con un resumen de las principales conclusiones obtenidas de los análisis y las futuras líneas de investigación.

## **2. La satisfacción de los estudiantes en las instituciones de educación superior**

Para poder modelizar y medir la satisfacción de un cliente con un servicio es necesario conocer los procesos a través de los que se forma la propia satisfacción, las variables que la conforman y la relación entre ellas, los antecedentes y consecuentes. En esta área de investigación se distinguen principalmente tres paradigmas. El paradigma relacional que se centra en los aspectos psicológicos de la relación empresa-cliente (Gruning y Huang, 2000), que en el sector público hace referencia al usuario-administración y en el universitario al estudiante-universidad. Concretamente tiene en cuenta la influencia de la confianza y el compromiso mutuo entre el receptor y el suministrador del bien o servicio (Bruning y Ledingham, 1999). Sin embargo, no resulta operativo porque no determina la satisfacción ni cuál o cuáles son las variables que la maximizan.

El paradigma de la calidad subjetiva, toma como punto de partida las escalas del bienestar y las de satisfacción (Hagerty *et al.*, 2001). El inconveniente es que pone en un mismo nivel el bienestar y la satisfacción, cuando muchas investigaciones demuestran que son constructos diferentes (Sirgy *et al.*, 2006). Tampoco encuentra, como ocurre con el anterior, las consecuencias ‘conductuales’ de los estados de satisfacción del usuario.

El paradigma intencional toma como base la psicología social y sí que explica los procesos de fidelización del cliente o usuario. Ajzen y Fishbein (1980) identifican la evaluación de la calidad de los servicios como antecedente de la intención de los clientes. En este sentido, las normas sociales y/o las actitudes de los individuos determinan sus intenciones en relación con la adquisición de un servicio. Por su parte, Bagozzi (1992) demostró que la elección racional no es suficiente, además se necesita un deseo para que la adquisición de un servicio tenga lugar. En definitiva este paradigma difiere de los anteriores en que propone un modelo causal y una variable final que determina todo el proceso: la fidelidad del cliente o usuario.

Es cierto que en la literatura (Browne, Kaldenberg, Browne y Brown, 1998; Aldridge y Rowley, 1998) existen distintas definiciones de satisfacción en relación con los estudiantes (Elliot y Healy, 2001), así como ciertas limitaciones en las investigaciones que escapan al control de las instituciones. Entre estas últimas destacan los rápidos cambios en el mercado o los planes de estudio, limitaciones que se pueden traducir en ocasiones en diplomas obsoletos, que pueden afectar a la evaluación de la satisfacción del estudiante. Pero incluso no existiendo unanimidad en cuanto a su definición y a sabiendas de sus limitaciones, lo que sí está generalmente aceptado es su naturaleza multidimensional (Hartman y Schmidt, 1995). Las discrepancias sobre cuáles son esas dimensiones son las que conducen a indagar más en este respecto y a proponer una visión más parsimoniosa y explicativa de la realidad actual. Más oferta educativa de calidad se traducirá en más y mejores estudiantes (Serenko *et al.*, 2010).

### **3. Las competencias y su relevancia en el nuevo marco europeo**

Las nociones de competencia se han convertido en el eje central de la formación de los estudiantes desde la escuela primaria (Perrenoud, 2001) hasta la educación universitaria (De Miguel Díaz, 2006). La participación del alumno en el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje resulta primordial en el actual contexto de la educación superior, puesto que el nuevo proyecto de educación no trata de transmitir sólo contenidos y conocimientos específicos, sino también un conjunto de destrezas y competencias definidas como transversales aplicables a diferentes tipos de resolución de problemas específicos en el ámbito profesional.

La competencia hace referencia a la cualidad de una persona cuando recurre a sus capacidades para llevar a cabo un trabajo o tarea con el estándar de calidad requerido en su entorno profesional y que, como señala Aristimuño (2005), se apoya en conocimientos, pero no se reduce únicamente a ellos. Según el proyecto “Tuning Educational Structures in Europe”, desarrollado con el objeto de hallar vías prácticas que permitan avanzar en la construcción del área europea de educación superior, el término competencias constituye una combinación de atributos -con respecto al conocimiento y su aplicación, a las actitudes y a las responsabilidades-, que describen el nivel o grado de suficiencia con que una persona es capaz de desempeñarlos. En el informe final del proyecto, las competencias hacen referencia a ‘conocer y comprender’ (referidos al conocimiento teórico de un campo académico), ‘saber cómo actuar’ (la aplicación práctica y operativa del conocimiento en situaciones determinadas) y ‘saber cómo ser’ (los valores como parte integrante de la forma de percibir a los otros y vivir en un contexto social).

En definitiva, el concepto de competencia describe conocimientos, capacidades, destrezas, actitudes y valores necesarios para ejercer una profesión determinada, llamándose genéricas o transversales las que son necesarias para cualquier profesión, o para desarrollarse de forma activa en la sociedad, y específicas las propias de un determinado campo de estudio. El Proyecto Tuning (2011), clasifica las primeras en tres categorías: (a) instrumentales, que pueden ser a su vez cognoscitivas, metodológicas, tecnológicas y lingüísticas; (b) interpersonales, que tienden a favorecer los procesos de interacción social y comunicación; y (c) sistémicas, o la combinación de comprensión, sensibilidad y conocimiento, para permitir al individuo ver cómo las partes de un todo se relacionan y se agrupan (Gómez y Lamarche, 2013).

Dentro de las competencias genéricas instrumentales se puede mencionar: la comunicación oral y escrita en la lengua materna y/o extranjera, el uso de herramientas informáticas y la toma de decisiones aplicando los conocimientos a la práctica. Entre las competencias transversales interpersonales se encuentra la competencia para analizar problemas con razonamiento crítico sin prejuicios con precisión y la participación activa en clase. Por último, entre las genéricas sistémicas se encuentran la autonomía en el aprendizaje y el trabajo en equipo.

Sánchez Guzmán (2008) puntualiza que la competencia no está realmente en los recursos que se activan, sino en la movilización misma de estos recursos. La movilización, pues, según la autora, implica que la aplicación de competencias dependa del individuo, de su medio, de su esfuerzo y de los recursos disponibles para su ejecución, dentro del marco de expectativas generadas por un ambiente socio-cultural determinado. Las competencias se han estudiado incluso para conocer los factores determinantes del rendimiento del alumnado universitario relacionados con el ámbito de la gestión universitaria (Zabalandikoetxea y García Merino, 2013), pero no estrictamente sobre la satisfacción de los estudiantes con sus estudios de marketing.

### **4. Modelo propuesto**

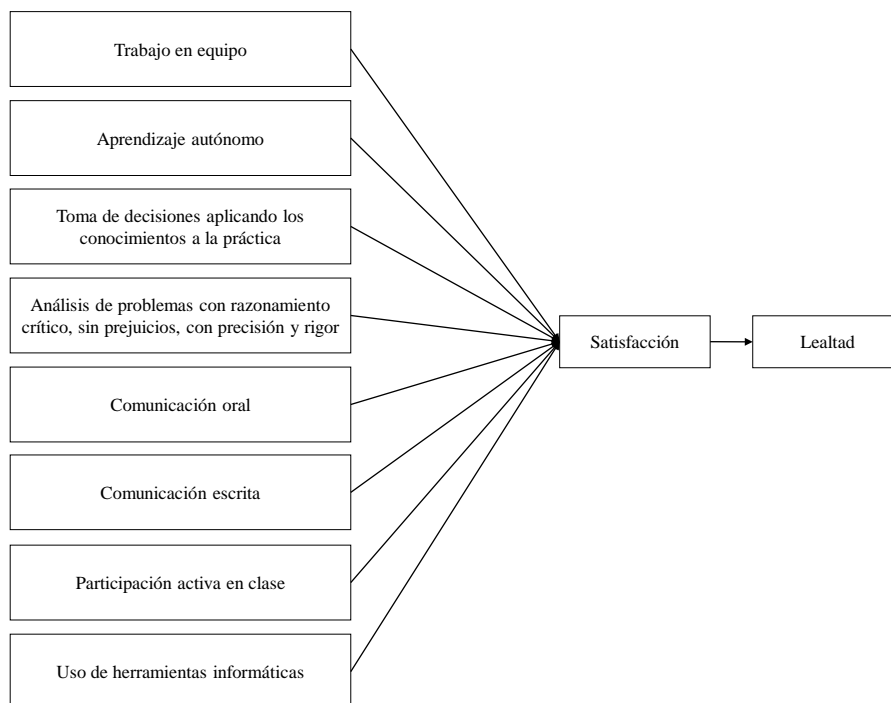
En el actual proceso de cambio metodológico y curricular se han generado numerosos estudios en diversos ámbitos relacionados con la educación universitaria. Por una parte, existen trabajos que analizan y definen los nuevos conceptos de competencias que deben constituir el eje central en la formación de los estudiantes, así como su inserción en una nueva estructura curricular de la universidad (Perrenoud, 2001). Existen también trabajos específicos que presentan metodologías para



desarrollar las competencias concretas de las distintas asignaturas de cada titulación, y en un sentido más amplio de las distintas titulaciones agrupadas por rama de conocimiento (Rojas Soriano, 2002 y Dueñas, 2001). Ejemplos de aplicaciones concretas de desarrollo de competencias para asignaturas y titulaciones específicas se pueden encontrar en los trabajos de Dueñas (2001), para las Ciencias de la Salud; de Font (2002), para las Matemáticas, y de Rojas Soriano (2002) para las Ciencias Sociales, entre otros. Sin embargo, no hemos encontrado estudios que profundicen en este tema en el campo del marketing ni en la preponderancia de una/s competencias sobre las demás a la hora de influir en la satisfacción percibida por los estudiantes.

Las investigaciones indican también que la satisfacción es un antecedente de la lealtad, relación que también se produce en el sector de la educación superior (Alves y Raposo, 2004). Teniendo en cuenta el concepto y las dimensiones que influyen en la satisfacción, así como la relación entre ésta y la lealtad, se plantea el modelo de la Figura 1.

FIGURA 1.  
**Modelo propuesto: Influencia de las competencias transversales.**



Fuente: Elaboración propia

Según Armengol *et al.*, (2010) la competencia hace referencia al conjunto de conocimientos, procedimientos y actitudes que se complementan entre sí, y que capacitan al estudiante para actuar con eficacia en las diferentes situaciones profesionales. La competencia aporta un saber (conocimientos), un saber hacer (destrezas) y un saber estar (actitudes) en cada actuación. Existen además otro tipo de competencias que afectan a un abanico más amplio de estudiantes y que no son patrimonio única y exclusivamente de un único estudio de grado, son las competencias genéricas o transversales (Corominas, 2001; ANECA, 2005). Se trata de competencias habituales en muchas profesiones y transferibles, dado que pueden ponerse en práctica en distintas esferas (Corominas, 2001).

Además de revisar la literatura sobre el tema objeto de estudio, a la hora de determinar el conjunto final de competencias a tener en cuenta, las investigadoras (que forman parte de una red interdisciplinar en docencia) llevaron a cabo diversas sesiones con expertos y se asesoraron a partir de jueces versados en la materia tales como el equipo vicerrectoral de asuntos académicos o comisiones

académicas. Se propusieron, cribaron y seleccionaron aquellas competencias transversales que mejor se adaptaban a las distintas asignaturas impartidas en ciencias sociales.

En la literatura, el desarrollo de las competencias no se ha considerado como una dimensión que conforma la satisfacción de los estudiantes. Sin embargo, su desarrollo resulta de vital importancia para la incorporación posterior de los estudiantes al mercado laboral. Tal y como señalan Pérez, Quijano y Pérez (2005), la formación adquirida por los estudiantes tiene que mejorar sus posibilidades de conseguir un empleo de calidad, que se adapte a sus expectativas. Máxime cuando cada vez es más frecuente que una persona tenga que cambiar varias veces de profesión a lo largo de su vida. Las reformas en el mundo profesional requieren un nuevo tipo de formación.

Las empresas de hoy en día demandan profesionales polivalentes, flexibles, con facilidad de adaptarse a los cambios que en el entorno puedan ocurrir, con capacidades comunicativas y de trabajo en equipo, con cierto nivel de autonomía en el trabajo, siendo capaces de “autodirigirse” y de tomar decisiones por ellos mismos. Las empresas buscan empleados en los que poder delegar con la seguridad y la confianza de que el trabajo quedará bien hecho. Un titulado universitario sin estas competencias tendrá muy difícil su inserción en el competitivo mundo laboral. Y los estudiantes ahora son más conscientes que nunca de lo que demanda el mercado y de lo que tienen que conseguir de su paso por la institución universitaria, aprender conocimientos y aprender competencias. Por todo ello, teniendo en cuenta la asignatura que decide escoger el estudiante para completar sus estudios, se plantea la hipótesis siguiente:

- H1. El desarrollo de la competencia de ‘trabajo en equipo’ influye positivamente sobre la satisfacción del estudiante.
- H2. El desarrollo de la competencia ‘aprendizaje autónomo’ influye positivamente sobre la satisfacción del estudiante.
- H3. El desarrollo de la competencia ‘toma de decisiones aplicando los conocimientos a la práctica’ influye positivamente sobre la satisfacción del estudiante.
- H4. El desarrollo de la competencia ‘análisis de problemas con razonamiento crítico, sin prejuicios, con precisión y rigor’ influye positivamente sobre la satisfacción del estudiante.
- H5. El desarrollo de la competencia ‘comunicación oral’ influye positivamente sobre la satisfacción del estudiante.
- H6. El desarrollo de la competencia ‘comunicación escrita’ influye positivamente sobre la satisfacción del estudiante.
- H7. El desarrollo de la competencia ‘participación activa en clase’ influye positivamente sobre la satisfacción del estudiante.
- H8. El desarrollo de la competencia ‘uso de herramientas informáticas’ influye positivamente sobre la satisfacción del estudiante.

En la mayoría de la literatura sobre los servicios en general, las variables satisfacción y lealtad aparecen relacionadas entre sí (Lervik y Johnson, 2003), siendo la satisfacción la variable antecedente (Alves y Raposo, 2004 y Lervik y Johnson, 2003). El concepto se ha evaluado también para determinar si se produce repetición en las ventas, en el aumento de los beneficios, en las recomendaciones ‘boca a boca’ (Mavondo y Zaman, 2000) y lo más importante, la lealtad de los clientes (Seiders, Voss, Grewal y Godfrey, 2005). En el sector de la enseñanza superior, diversos estudios apuntan que esta relación también se cumple (Browne, *et al.*, 1998; Tsarenko, *et al.*, 2004; Wiers-Jenssen, *et al.*, 2002).

La satisfacción de los estudiantes se considera una actitud resultante de su experiencia educativa. Por ejemplo, Arambewela y Hall (2009) detectan cómo la satisfacción de los estudiantes juega un rol fundamental en la gestión del marketing de las instituciones y se evalúa para conocer el aumento de tasas, las recomendaciones ‘boca a boca’ positivas (Mavondo y Zaman, 2000) y la lealtad. Estas conclusiones apoyan la importancia de la relación entre la satisfacción de un cliente (un estudiante) y el éxito de una institución (la universidad) (Kevin y Dooyoung, 2002).

La atracción de estudiantes evitándose que acudan a otras instituciones supone el activo de las instituciones de educación superior. De tal forma, como se ha indicado previamente, varios estudios corroboran una relación causal entre el concepto de satisfacción y el de lealtad. Centrando el objetivo de este estudio se deduce la siguiente hipótesis:

H9: La satisfacción del estudiante influye positivamente sobre la lealtad hacia las asignaturas en las que decide matricularse.

## 5. Metodología

A continuación se detalla la metodología seguida para la realización de esta investigación. En concreto se presenta la muestra, las escalas y los indicadores utilizados para medir las variables del modelo, la explicación de cuándo y cómo se administra la prueba y los análisis estadísticos realizados, tanto para comprobar la fiabilidad del instrumento de medida como para el contraste de las hipótesis planteadas.

Los alumnos que han participado en este estudio cursaban estudios en universidades de dos países distintos, España y Turquía. En ambos casos se trata de universidades públicas, la Universidad de Alicante (España) y la Hacettepe University (Turquía). Los datos se recogieron durante el curso académico 2012-2013, al final del periodo docente, pero antes de realizar las pruebas finales de evaluación. De esta forma los contenidos habían sido impartidos y la evaluación continua había sido llevada a cabo. Todos los estudiantes fueron informados de que su participación era absolutamente voluntaria y anónima, así como de los objetivos de la investigación y de que la información facilitada sería utilizada única y exclusivamente con fines investigadores.

Todos los estudiantes tenían en común que cursaban estudios en el ámbito del marketing. Los estudiantes españoles pertenecían a la diplomatura en Ciencias Empresariales (EUCE, con 197 matriculados) y la licenciatura en Administración y Dirección de empresas (ADE, 97 matriculados). La asignatura escogida por estos estudiantes fue Distribución Comercial. Los estudiantes turcos, por su parte, cursaban una licenciatura en ADE y la asignatura escogida fue Fundamentos de Marketing (con 200 estudiantes matriculados).

Como se puede observar en la Tabla 1, se ha conseguido un total de 355 cuestionarios válidos. En el caso de los españoles la muestra final fue de 169 cuestionarios, de un total de 294 posibles, lo que representa una tasa de respuesta de 57,48%, y para un nivel de confianza del 95%, un nivel máximo de error del 4,9%. Para la muestra de los estudiantes turcos, se obtuvieron un total de 186 cuestionarios válidos de 200 posibles, lo que representa una tasa de respuesta del 93% y para un nivel de confianza del 95%, un nivel máximo de error del 1,9%.

En relación a los descriptivos de ambas muestras, la distribución es similar tanto en el porcentaje de mujeres (59,7% y 55,9%) como en el de los hombres (40,3% y 44,1%), encontrándose en ambos países mayor cantidad de féminas estudiando. La edad oscila entre 19 y 43 años para los estudiantes españoles y entre 20 y 27 para los estudiantes turcos.

TABLA 1  
Descriptivos de la muestra

		Número	%	Edad		
				Mínimo	Máximo	Media
Españoles	Hombres	68	40,3	19	37	23,60
	Mujeres	101	59,7	19	43	22,13
	Total	169	100	19	43	22,72
Turcos	Hombres	82	44,1	20	27	22,52
	Mujeres	104	55,9	20	25	21,51
	Total	186	100	20	27	21,97
Total		355				

### 5.1. Diseño del instrumento de medida

Para medir las competencias en este estudio se han utilizado escalas procedentes de la literatura. Las escalas están formadas por varios ítems que puntúan aditivamente, de tipo Likert de 7 puntos [(1) “total desacuerdo”; (2) “muy en desacuerdo”; (3) “algo en desacuerdo”; (4) “indeciso”; (5) “algo de acuerdo”; (6) “muy de acuerdo” y (7) “total acuerdo”].

Para medir la variable desarrollo de competencias se ha optado por utilizar la escala de De-Juan-Vigaray *et al.*, (2012), también utilizada por De-Juan-Vigaray y González-Gascón (2013). La escala considera ocho competencias, que en este trabajo han sido tratadas como indicadores individuales, con el objetivo de contrastar las hipótesis y dar respuesta a la pregunta de investigación.

Siguiendo a Marzo *et al.*, (2005) y a De-Juan-Vigaray y González-Gascón (2013), para medir la satisfacción del estudiante, se ha utilizado el ítem “estoy satisfecho/a con la asignatura”, que también oscila entre (1) “total desacuerdo” y (7) “total acuerdo”. Para medir la lealtad del estudiante se utiliza una escala de dos ítems: “voy a recomendar esta asignatura” y “volveré a matricularme en asignaturas similares”.

### 5.2. Procedimiento

El cuestionario fue autoadministrado a los estudiantes de ambas universidades. Como se ha mencionado anteriormente, los participantes contestaron el cuestionario en la última etapa del cuatrimestre en el que se impartía la asignatura. La fiabilidad del instrumento de medida se ha comprobado mediante el coeficiente alfa de Cronbach. Para los contrastes de la varianza se ha utilizado la prueba no paramétrica “K muestras independientes”, ya que no se han cumplido las condiciones necesarias (normalidad y homocedasticidad) para utilizar ANOVA. Para el contraste de las hipótesis planteadas se ha utilizado la regresión lineal.

## 6. Resultados

### 6.1. Descriptivos del instrumento de medida

En la Tabla 2 se muestran los descriptivos de las variables utilizadas en el estudio. Los resultados muestran que los estudiantes (de ambas universidades) tienen una opinión favorable sobre el desarrollo de las competencias analizadas, con valores para la media del estadístico obtenida, que oscilan entre el 4,54 para el *uso de herramientas informáticas* y el 5,74 para la *participación activa en clase*, frente a la media aritmética (3,5).

TABLA 2  
Descriptivos de las variables utilizadas.

Indicador / Escala	Origen	Mín.	Máx.	Media	Error típico	Desviación típica
Trabajar en equipo	E	1	7	5,51	0,11	1,41
	T	1	7	5,33	0,09	1,23
Aprendizaje autónomo	E	1	7	5,38	0,09	1,17
	T	1	7	5,34	0,08	1,15
Toma de decisiones aplicando los conocimientos a la práctica	E	1	7	5,64	0,09	1,15
	T	1	7	5,41	0,08	1,12
Análisis de problemas con razonamiento crítico, sin prejuicios, con precisión y rigor	E	1	7	5,41	0,10	1,25
	T	1	7	5,25	0,08	1,08
Comunicación oral	E	1	7	5,09	0,11	1,47
	T	1	7	5,05	0,11	1,43
Comunicación escrita	E	1	7	4,88	0,11	1,46
	T	1	7	5,03	0,10	1,34
Participación activa en clase	E	1	7	5,74	0,10	1,35
	T	1	7	5,15	0,11	1,49
Uso de herramientas informáticas	E	1	7	4,54	0,13	1,75
	T	1	7	4,80	0,10	1,31
Satisfacción del estudiante	E	2	7	6,01	0,09	1,12
	T	1	7	5,70	0,08	1,04

Indicador / Escala	Origen	Mín.	Máx.	Media	Error típico	Desviación típica
Lealtad	E	2	14	12,00	0,19	2,45
	T	3	14	11,29	0,14	1,90

Al comparar los resultados por universidades, los estudiantes españoles declaran que las asignaturas cursadas han incrementado en mayor medida (que los estudiantes turcos) las siguientes seis competencias: *trabajar en equipo; aprendizaje autónomo; toma de decisiones aplicando los conocimientos a la práctica; análisis de problemas con razonamiento crítico, sin prejuicios, con precisión y rigor; comunicación oral y participación activa en clase*. Para las competencias *comunicación escrita y uso de herramientas informáticas* los estudiantes turcos declaran un mayor incremento frente a los españoles.

La variable *satisfacción del estudiante* se ha medido utilizando un indicador (De-Juan-Vigaray y González-Gascón (2013)). A este respecto, los estudiantes españoles declaran estar muy satisfechos con la asignatura cursada (con un valor medio del estadístico de 6), mientras que los estudiantes turcos, que también declaran estar satisfechos, obtienen un valor algo menor (5,7).

Para el caso de la variable *lealtad*, los datos muestran una situación muy parecida a la variable *satisfacción*, los estudiantes españoles manifiestan su intención de recomendar la asignatura y volver a matricularse en asignaturas similares con unos valores de media superiores a los estudiantes turcos (12,00 vs. 11,29) siendo en ambos casos, los estadísticos, valores que claramente indican una elevada lealtad.

En la Tabla 3 se muestran los resultados del análisis de la varianza de las variables utilizadas en el estudio. Al realizar las pruebas para contrastar la hipótesis de la normalidad, tanto Kolmogorov-Smirnov como Shapiro-Wilk, arrojan unos resultados significativos ( $p < 0,05$ ), por lo que se rechaza la hipótesis nula de normalidad. Por tanto, como se ha mencionado, para realizar los contrastes se ha utilizado la prueba no paramétrica “K muestras independientes.

TABLA 3  
Análisis de la varianza de las variables utilizadas.

Indicador / Escala	Prueba de Kruskal-Wallis	
	Chi-cuadrado	Sig.
Trabajar en equipo	3,498	0,061
Aprendizaje autónomo	0,031	0,861
Toma de decisiones aplicando los conocimientos a la práctica	5,201	0,022
Análisis de problemas con razonamiento crítico, sin prejuicios, con precisión y rigor	3,575	0,059
Comunicación oral	0,102	0,749
Comunicación escrita	0,961	0,327
Participación activa en clase	17,312	0,000
Uso de herramientas informáticas	0,637	0,425
Satisfacción del estudiante	13,829	0,000
Lealtad	24,226	0,000

De los resultados obtenidos se puede afirmar que se acepta la hipótesis nula de que las medias de las competencias *trabajar en equipo, aprendizaje autónomo, análisis de problemas con razonamiento crítico, sin prejuicios, con precisión y rigor, comunicación oral, comunicación escrita y el uso de herramientas informáticas* son iguales en los diferentes grupos de estudiantes (españoles y turcos). No están asociadas en la población de la que provienen la muestra estudiada, pudiendo achacarse las pequeñas diferencias apreciadas al puro azar o error aleatorio del muestreo. Es decir, no tenemos pruebas para rechazar la hipótesis nula, y por tanto se acepta la igualdad de medias.

En cambio para las competencias *toma de decisiones aplicando los conocimientos a la práctica y participación activa en clase* las diferencias de medias sí son estadísticamente significativas. Aunque con este tipo de contrastes no paramétricos no es posible realizar contrastes a posteriori, los descriptivos de la Tabla 2 muestran tanto para la primera como para la segunda variable, valores superiores en el caso de los estudiantes españoles (5,64 vs. 5,41 y 5,74 vs. 5,15).

Para las variables dependientes *satisfacción del estudiante* y *lealtad*, los datos muestran que las diferencias sí son estadísticamente significativas. Al igual que con las variables anteriores, tampoco es posible realizar contrastes a posteriori, pero como ya se ha señalado, los estudiantes españoles declaran estar muy satisfechos con la asignatura cursada (6), mientras que los estudiantes turcos obtienen un valor algo menor (5,7). Situación que se repite para la variable lealtad (12,00 vs. 11,29). Para ambas variables el valor de los estadísticos indica claramente que los estudiantes están realmente satisfechos y declaran una elevada lealtad, en el sentido de que recomendarían las asignaturas.

## 6.2. Fiabilidad del instrumento de medida

El resultado del análisis realizado (alfa de Cronbach) para medir la fiabilidad de la escala *lealtad del estudiante* se puede considerar como óptimo para la muestra de los estudiantes españoles ( $\alpha = 0,832$ ), mientras que para la muestra de los estudiantes turcos el valor obtenido ( $\alpha = 0,669$ ) está rozando el límite inferior para el alfa de Cronbach, según el acuerdo general (Robinson, Shaver y Wrightsman, (1991), que es de 0,70, aunque puede bajar a 0,60 en la investigación exploratoria (Nunnally, 1987). En estudios previos, los autores De-Juan-Vigaray y González-Gascón (2013) reportan una fiabilidad de 0.861.

## 6.3. Contraste de hipótesis

Para realizar el contraste de las hipótesis planteadas se ha utilizado como método estadístico la regresión lineal. En la Tabla 4 se pueden observar los resultados obtenidos para ambas muestras.

TABLA 4  
Contraste de las Hipótesis.

Hipótesis	Descripción relación variables	Origen	R <sup>2</sup>	F	p
H1	Trabajar en equipo → Satisfacción	E	0,251	57,192	0,000
		T	0,210	50,294	0,000
H2	Aprendizaje autónomo → Satisfacción	E	0,284	67,587	0,000
		T	0,289	79,258	0,000
H3	Toma de decisiones aplicando los conocimientos a la práctica → Satisfacción	E	0,294	71,091	0,000
		T	0,197	46,529	0,000
H4	Análisis de problemas con razonamiento crítico, sin prejuicios, con precisión y rigor → Satisfacción	E	0,294	71,111	0,000
		T	0,227	55,303	0,000
H5	Comunicación oral → Satisfacción	E	0,198	42,570	0,000
		T	0,123	26,869	0,000
H6	Comunicación escrita → Satisfacción	E	0,101	19,811	0,000
		T	0,095	20,464	0,000
H7	Participación activa en clase → Satisfacción	E	0,335	85,452	0,000
		T	0,129	28,364	0,000
H8	Uso de herramientas informáticas → Satisfacción	E	0,074	14,440	0,000
		T	0,102	22,099	0,000
H9	Satisfacción del estudiante → Lealtad	E	0,541	198,729	0,000
		T	0,277	72,013	0,000

Al analizar cada una de las hipótesis planteadas, los resultados muestran que todas ellas tienen una relación significativa ( $p=0.000$ ), por lo que no se puede rechazar ninguna de ellas. El coeficiente de determinación ( $R^2$ ) indica la proporción de la varianza explicada por la variable independiente de la variable dependiente. De tal manera se puede observar cuál de las diferentes competencias estudiadas posee un mayor porcentaje de explicación de la variable dependiente (*satisfacción del estudiante*) que era uno de los objetivos del presente estudio.

Observando los resultados se comprueba que se obtienen valores diferentes para cada una de las muestras, por lo que primero se comentará una y después la otra. En lo referente a los estudiantes españoles, la variable dependiente *satisfacción del estudiante* con la asignatura escogida, viene explicada en un 33,5% por la competencia *participación activa en clase*, siendo la que mayor porcentaje de explicación posee (H7).

Compartiendo el segundo lugar figuran las competencias *toma de decisiones aplicando los conocimientos a la práctica y análisis de problemas con razonamiento crítico, sin prejuicios, con precisión y rigor* con un 29,4% de explicación de la *satisfacción del estudiante* (H3 y H4).

En un cercano tercer lugar la competencia *aprendizaje autónomo* representa un 28,4% (H2). La competencia que tiene un menor coeficiente de regresión (aunque no por ello bajo) es el *uso de herramientas informáticas*, con un 7,4% (H8). Para concluir con los estudiantes españoles, comentar que el porcentaje de la variable *lealtad del estudiante*, que viene explicada por la *satisfacción* del estudiante con la asignatura elegida, es de un 54,1% (H9).

Al observar los datos obtenidos con los estudiantes turcos la competencia que posee un mayor porcentaje de explicación de la variable *satisfacción* es el *aprendizaje autónomo* con un 29,1% (H2). En segundo lugar, con un 22,7% de explicación figura la competencia *análisis de problemas con razonamiento crítico, sin prejuicios, con precisión y rigor* (H4) y en tercer lugar la competencia *trabajar en equipo* (H1) con un 21%. La competencia que tiene un menor coeficiente de regresión (que en este caso es superior al inferior valor obtenido para los estudiantes españoles) es la *comunicación escrita*, con un 9,5% (H6). La variable *satisfacción del estudiante* explica un 27,7% de la variable *lealtad* del estudiante (H9). Cabe destacar que este porcentaje es notablemente inferior que el valor obtenido con los estudiantes españoles.

## 7. Conclusiones

Los resultados obtenidos muestran que las ocho competencias transversales consideradas en este estudio *trabajar en equipo; aprendizaje autónomo; toma de decisiones aplicando los conocimientos a la práctica; análisis de problemas con razonamiento crítico, sin prejuicios, con precisión y rigor; comunicación oral, comunicación escrita, participación activa en clase y uso de herramientas informáticas* determinan la *satisfacción de los estudiantes* con las asignaturas en las que se matriculan. El resultado se mantiene, aunque con valores distintos, en las dos muestras analizadas en países diferentes (universitarios que cursaban estudios en el ámbito del marketing en España y en Turquía).

Dado el interés de la satisfacción de los estudiantes con respecto a las instituciones en las que estudian, los docentes pueden favorecer el desarrollo de las competencias transversales de sus discentes. Si los estudiantes están bien preparados tanto en contenidos como en competencias, esto les permitirá una más rápida incorporación al mercado laboral y desarrollar con mayor éxito su carrera profesional, sea cual sea la rama de conocimiento elegida. Además de lo mencionado, los docentes pueden conseguir un mayor grado de *satisfacción* de sus estudiantes, tanto con las asignaturas cursadas como con quienes las imparten. Ello revertirá en una mejor reputación tanto para el profesorado como para las instituciones en las que éste desempeña su labor, ya que los estudiantes, identifican, entienden y reconocen la utilidad práctica de las competencias adquiridas a lo largo del curso.

En este estudio también se comprueba que la *satisfacción del estudiante* con la asignatura, afecta positivamente a la *lealtad*, que está medida a partir de la intención de recomendar la asignatura cursada y el propósito de matriculación en asignaturas similares. Considerando los resultados obtenidos para cada una de las muestras, el primer dato a destacar es el elevado porcentaje explicativo de las diferentes competencias transversales estudiadas, que oscila entre el 33,5% y el 7,4%. Cabe reseñar que las competencias transversales *uso de herramientas informáticas* (para el caso de los estudiantes españoles) y *comunicación escrita* (estudiantes turcos) obtienen porcentajes inferiores al 10% de explicación de la variable *satisfacción del estudiante*.

En el caso de los discentes españoles seis competencias (véase la Tabla 4) obtienen coeficientes de regresión superiores (o muy cercanos) al 20%, siendo cuatro el número de competencias para los turcos. Las competencias comunes a ambas muestras son: *trabajar en equipo; aprendizaje autónomo; toma de decisiones aplicando los conocimientos a la práctica y análisis de problemas con razonamiento crítico, sin prejuicios, con precisión y rigor*.

La competencia *participación activa en clase* merece una reflexión en particular, por dos motivos. El primero es que es la competencia que mayor porcentaje de explicación de la *satisfacción* obtiene con

los estudiantes españoles, llegando a un 33,5% y sin embargo, para el caso de los estudiantes turcos es uno de los coeficientes más bajos 12,9%. El segundo motivo es que es la competencia que mayor diferencia arroja en los porcentajes de explicación (20,6%) para ambas muestras. Cabe recordar que es una de las dos competencias cuyas medias eran significativamente diferentes (5,74 para el caso de los españoles vs. 5,15 para los turcos), aunque en ambos casos los valores del estadístico se pueden considerar claramente por encima de la media aritmética. Todo ello se puede interpretar como que los estudiantes de ambas muestras declaran que la asignatura cursada desarrollaba su competencia de *participación activa* en clase. Una explicación puede estar basada en el hecho de que los docentes que impartieron las asignaturas eran distintos (aunque ambos utilizaron metodologías de enseñanza aprendizaje similares).

En línea con Sánchez Guzmán (2008) los estudiantes de España y Turquía pueden estar movilizando sus recursos disponibles de forma diferente, ya que pueden tener marcos de expectativas dispares, haber realizado esfuerzos académicos desiguales y, finalmente, por encontrarse en ambientes socio-culturales distintos. Hay que tener en cuenta las posibles diferencias entre ambos sistemas educativos y lo acostumbrados a la participación que puedan estar los estudiantes en sus respectivos entornos, así como su madurez y la preparación previa sobre la materia que se está estudiando.

En cualquier caso, como las posibles diferencias son aplicables a todas las competencias estudiadas, los investigadores se inclinan a pensar que la justificación más plausible es que los estudiantes turcos valoran en menor medida que los españoles la participación en clase como un componente de la satisfacción, posiblemente por ser una competencia menos desarrollada a lo largo de su experiencia en el sistema educativo.

Para terminar destacar que el desarrollo de competencias transversales es valorado muy positivamente por los estudiantes y adquiere un elevado protagonismo no sólo durante su estancia en la institución educativa, sino a lo largo de toda su carrera profesional.

Como líneas de investigación futuras se plantea realizar el estudio en otros contextos universitarios, así como conocer la posible distinción en la satisfacción con la institución si se trata de estudiantes de universidades públicas o privadas.

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# CONSECUENCIAS AFECTIVAS Y OBJETIVAS DEL USO DE UN CANAL DE YOUTUBE DE APOYO A LA DOCENCIA EN MARKETING

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## RESUMEN

*Esta investigación presenta los resultados de un proyecto de innovación docente basado en la creación de un canal en la plataforma YouTube de apoyo a la docencia en la asignatura Introducción al Marketing. En la actividad, los alumnos pudieron crear vídeos sobre conceptos de marketing que posteriormente fueron subidos al canal. Posteriormente, se llevó a cabo un estudio empírico para detectar el impacto de la participación en el proyecto sobre diferentes aspectos del aprendizaje. Los resultados muestran que la participación del estudiante en el proyecto favorece la adquisición de competencias transversales y el rendimiento académico. Si bien la participación no incrementa el aprendizaje subjetivo ni la satisfacción con la asignatura, sí que favorece indirectamente estas variables mediante la adquisición de competencias académicas.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE:

YouTube, resultados del aprendizaje, satisfacción, competencias transversales.

## 1. Introducción

Cada vez con mayor frecuencia las instituciones académicas están integrando nuevas tecnologías en sus sistemas educativos (Schmid et al., 2014) debido a las oportunidades que éstas ofrecen para aumentar la motivación del estudiante y los resultados del aprendizaje (p.ej. Roblyer y Wiencke, 2003). Recientes investigaciones sugieren que el uso de las nuevas tecnologías puede mejorar la comprensión de conceptos por parte del estudiante, su experiencia del aprendizaje (Blasco et al., 2013), su actitud (Barlés et al., 2011), o incluso la calificación final obtenida (Huffman y Huffman, 2012).

Tradicionalmente, la mayor parte de la literatura científica en esta temática se ha centrado en estudiar la adopción de plataformas de e-learning (p.ej. Sumak et al., 2011; Hernández et al., 2011). Más recientes son los estudios relativos al uso de nuevas tecnologías que favorecen la interacción entre alumnos y entre alumnos y profesor. En este sentido, diversos trabajos han analizado los efectos del uso de clickers (o mandos de respuesta) en clase (p.ej. Blasco et al., 2013), la integración de sistemas de mensajería instantánea y videoconferencias como Skype (p.ej. Sivula, 2011), o el uso de “tablet PCs” (p.ej. Ifenthaler y Schweinbenz, 2013).

Sin embargo, este trabajo se centra en el análisis de las consecuencias derivadas de la integración en una asignatura de la plataforma virtual y red social YouTube, que permite a sus usuarios subir, visionar, comentar y compartir videos de manera online. La integración de esta tecnología en el aula es especialmente pertinente hoy en día debido a la proliferación de herramientas de grabación digital de bajo coste (cámaras y videocámaras digitales, dispositivos móviles), el desarrollo del streaming (la posibilidad de visionar un archivo de vídeo o escuchar un archivo de audio a la vez que se descarga), o al hecho de que los medios audiovisuales ofrecen un gran potencial de expresión y comunicación. A su vez, según la página Web de medición de tráfico [www.alexacom.com](http://www.alexacom.com), YouTube es el tercer sitio Web más visitado del mundo, tan sólo por detrás de Google y Facebook, y el visionado de vídeos a través de Internet se encuentra generalizado en el público juvenil (ONTSI, 2011). En concreto, los autores de este trabajo han desarrollado un canal en YouTube dedicado a la asignatura Introducción al Marketing de primer curso del Grado en Administración y Dirección de Empresas de la Universidad de Zaragoza. En este canal, los alumnos han podido subir, visionar, comentar y difundir vídeos realizados por ellos mismos. Los objetivos del proyecto son mejorar el proceso de aprendizaje y la comprensión de los conceptos teóricos impartidos en la asignatura, tratando que los alumnos mostrasen su aplicación práctica a través de la realización de vídeos. Asimismo, se pretende fomentar la interactividad entre alumnos y profesores, acercar las nuevas tecnologías de la información y comunicación a la docencia universitaria, o fomentar el desarrollo de competencias transversales, tales como la capacidad creativa o el trabajo en equipo.

A pesar de la potencialidad de este tema, pocos trabajos se han centrado todavía en el uso de YouTube en el aula (p.ej. Krauskopf et al., 2012), sin profundizar en sus consecuencias más allá de las habilidades comunicativas (Jenkins y Dillon, 2013) o de la consecución de una mayor implicación por parte del alumnado (Clifton y Mann, 2011). Por ello, con el propósito de avanzar en la comprensión de esta emergente cuestión, el principal objetivo del estudio es analizar el impacto de la participación en el canal de YouTube de la asignatura sobre los resultados del aprendizaje. Para ello se analizarán tres resultados del aprendizaje que también se relacionan entre sí:

- Competencias adquiridas por el alumnado; de manera que se analizará si el alumno que ha participado en la actividad percibe una mayor o menor adquisición de las competencias especificadas en la guía docente de la asignatura (p.ej.: capacidad de aplicar los conocimientos en la práctica; comunicarse correctamente por escrito y oralmente, poniendo énfasis en la argumentación; capacidad de análisis y síntesis; capacidad de trabajo en equipo; etc.). En concreto, se considerará la percepción que el alumno tiene de haber adquirido tanto competencias transversales como específicas (lo que se define como el aprendizaje subjetivo).
- Satisfacción del alumnado con la asignatura, entendida como un resultado afectivo de la misma. La satisfacción puede definirse como una condición afectiva del individuo que resulta de una evaluación global de todos los aspectos que forman parte de la relación en la que

interviene (Severt, 2002); en este caso, de su relación con la asignatura. Así será posible evaluar si también existen o no diferencias afectivas entre los alumnos que han participado en el canal de YouTube y los que no.

- Calificación final obtenida por el alumnado en la asignatura, entendida como un resultado objetivo de la misma. De esta forma, esta investigación permitirá comprobar si los estudiantes que han participado en la asignatura han obtenido calificaciones superiores o inferiores a los que no han participado.

Con el ánimo de cumplir con estos objetivos, el presente artículo se estructura de la siguiente manera: en primer lugar, se realizará una breve revisión de la literatura relativa a la integración de las nuevas tecnologías de información y comunicación en los sistemas educativos, profundizando en el caso del empleo de canales de vídeo en la docencia. A continuación, se desarrollarán las hipótesis de trabajo para seguidamente explicar el caso objeto de análisis y la metodología empleada. Finalmente, se presentarán los principales resultados de la investigación así como sus principales conclusiones y futuras líneas de investigación.

## **2. Revisión de la literatura: integración de nuevas tecnologías en los sistemas educativos**

Tal y como se ha comentado con anterioridad, la principal corriente de la literatura relativa a la integración de nuevas tecnologías en la docencia se ha basado en las plataformas de e-learning (p.ej. Moodle, WebCT, etc.). Por una parte, algunos autores (p.ej. Chen, 2010; Sánchez-Franco, 2010; Sánchez y Hueros, 2010; Hernández et al., 2011) se han centrado en el análisis de los principales antecedentes que llevan a la aceptación y uso de este tipo de plataformas, siendo la actitud y las creencias propuestas por el Modelo de Aceptación Tecnológica (utilidad y facilidad de uso percibidas [Davis, 1989]) los principales factores determinantes de la adopción (Sumak et al., 2011). Estos trabajos se han realizado tanto desde la perspectiva del profesor (p.ej. Chen, 2010) como del estudiante (p.ej. Sánchez-Franco, 2010). Por contra, otros autores han tratado de averiguar cuáles son las principales consecuencias que se derivan de la participación del alumnado en este tipo de plataformas, proponiendo –entre otras– una mejora en la interacción percibida entre alumnos y entre alumnos y profesores cuando se implementan estas nuevas tecnologías en la docencia (Beauchamp y Kennewell, 2010). De hecho, Cotner et al. (2008) sugieren que los métodos tradicionales de enseñanza limitan la interactividad en el aula y, en este sentido, la incorporación de nuevas tecnologías puede ayudar a incrementarla (Blasco et al., 2013).

Debido al relevante papel que la interacción percibida tiene para aumentar la satisfacción del alumnado (Sun y Hsu, 2013), su implicación o los resultados del aprendizaje (Blasco et al., 2013), varios autores se han centrado en analizar las consecuencias derivadas de la introducción de otras herramientas que también favorecen la interactividad. A modo de ejemplo, se han investigado los clickers o mandos de respuesta (p.ej. Blasco et al., 2013), sistemas de mensajería instantánea y videoconferencias como Skype (p.ej. Sivula, 2011), los “tablet PCs” (p.ej. Ifenthaler y Schweinbenz, 2013; Dündar y Akçayir, 2014), o hasta los juegos y mundos virtuales (p.ej. Merchant et al., 2014). Así mismo, la mayor parte de estos estudios han sugerido la existencia de consecuencias positivas para el estudiante derivadas del uso de todas estas herramientas. Por ello, en la literatura se continúa analizando el impacto de la integración de las nuevas tecnologías de información en los sistemas educativos, siendo el uso de YouTube en clase uno de los casos más recientes (p.ej. Krauskopf et al., 2012). Si bien parece que los efectos de esta integración son también positivos (Jenkins y Dillon, 2013; Clifton y Mann, 2011), en este trabajo se va a profundizar en mayor medida en las consecuencias derivadas de la creación de un canal de YouTube para una asignatura concreta.

### **2.1. El uso de YouTube en educación**

YouTube constituye una de las principales herramientas de la web 2.0, que facilita la búsqueda de videos de cualquier contenido o tema, fomenta la colaboración y ayuda en el proceso de aprendizaje de sus usuarios (Domínguez y Llorente, 2009). Es uno de los canales de entretenimiento más utilizados en internet, y recientemente se está ampliando su uso en el mundo educativo universitario como herramienta de aprendizaje (Fralinger y Owens, 2009; Chan, 2010; Sherer y Shea, 2011; Tugrul,

2012; Torres-Ramírez *et al.*, 2014). Tras la pionera Universidad de California (Berkeley) ([youtube.com/ucberkeley](https://www.youtube.com/ucberkeley)), otras universidades han puesto en marcha sus propios canales de YouTube.

El uso de YouTube como plataforma para colgar vídeos educativos realizados por los alumnos resulta ventajosa al facilitar el poder compartir contenidos en tiempo real y obtener comentarios de los estudiantes sobre la totalidad del canal o sobre un vídeo en concreto, así como obtener estadísticas acerca del número total de reproducciones, entre otros datos (Chan, 2010; Torres-Ramírez, *et al.* 2014).

Las nuevas generaciones de estudiantes, consideradas como las “generaciones red” (Domínguez y Llorente, 2009) o “nativos digitales” (Chan, 2010), están muy familiarizadas con este tipo de aplicaciones ya que han crecido en una sociedad caracterizada por las Nuevas Tecnologías de la Información que les ha permitido desarrollar una forma distinta de pensar, expresarse y relacionarse con los demás (Domínguez y Llorente, 2009).

Aprovechando esta coyuntura, y siguiendo las recomendaciones del EEES por las que el trabajo del estudiante adquiere mayor protagonismo en la educación superior, la herramienta YouTube se ha convertido en un instrumento muy adecuado para enganchar y motivar al estudiante en el aprendizaje de sus asignaturas (Frallinger y Owens, 2009; Sherer y Shea, 2011). La percepción del estudiante por el uso de esta herramienta en la docencia es muy satisfactoria (Tugrul, 2012; Torres-Ramírez *et al.*, 2014). Las áreas de aplicación de YouTube como herramienta educativa son muy variadas encontrando trabajos al respecto en disciplinas tan diferentes como las médicas (Duncan *et al.*, 2012), las ciencias exactas (Everson *et al.*, 2013) y las artes (DeWitt *et al.*, 2013).

En la mayoría de los casos mencionados, el estudiante actúa como espectador del material que se cuelga en Youtube. Desde este rol, la utilidad del uso de imágenes grabadas en el ámbito de la educación superior ha sido contrastada ampliamente. Así, algunos trabajos han hallado que esta herramienta es ampliamente aceptada por los estudiantes (Almécija *et al.* 2011; García Fernández, 2011); logra un mayor compromiso del estudiante con la materia, incrementa su capacidad crítica, facilita su aprendizaje (Clifton y Mann, 2011); potencia su actitud positiva tanto afectiva como cognitiva hacia la información recibida, mejora sus hábitos de estudio (Kay, 2012) y, finalmente, se ha observado que incrementa sus resultados académicos (Dupuis *et al.*, 2013).

También puede ocurrir que el estudiante adopte un rol más activo en la asignatura, creando su propio video ya sea de forma individual o en equipo. En este caso, son escasos los trabajos que abordan situar al estudiante como generador de contenidos educativos en vídeo, aunque algunas experiencias encuentran resultados positivos en cuanto a generar interés, aprendizaje, consecución de objetivos, adquisición de habilidades o competencias de trabajo en grupo (Frallinger y Owens, 2009) y que dichos resultados mejoran si los comparamos con los resultados alcanzados siguiendo metodologías didácticas tradicionales (Pereira *et al.*, 2014).

Siguiendo esta línea, plantear esta actividad dentro de la docencia de una asignatura, favorece que el estudiante adquiera, además de las competencias mencionadas anteriormente, la habilidad de búsqueda de información, de organización y resolución de problemas, habilidad tecnológica, etc. En este caso, si los videos se suben a la plataforma YouTube y se comparten, convendría que el docente o la institución universitaria facilitara unas instrucciones básicas sobre formato y contenido para garantizar que el video está relacionado con los conceptos teóricos de la asignatura y para asegurarnos de que se cumple con unos mínimos requisitos legales y éticos (Chan, 2010).

### **3. Formulación de hipótesis**

La Figura 1 recoge el modelo de medida propuesto con las hipótesis a analizar. La participación del alumno en el proyecto supone una mayor dedicación a los aspectos relacionados directamente con esta actividad de aprendizaje. Así, el tiempo y esfuerzo dedicado a estas tareas repercute sobre la adquisición de competencias diversas por parte de los alumnos. En este sentido, Frallinger y Owens (2009) encuentran que el uso de YouTube favorece la adquisición de habilidades o competencias de trabajo en grupo. Del mismo modo, la participación en la actividad podría conllevar una mayor formación y adquisición de experiencia acerca del uso de software para la edición y publicación de

videos, un mayor conocimiento del canal de YouTube, así como la adquisición de habilidades sociales en la forma de presentar la información y cautivar visualmente a todo aquel que vea el vídeo o durante la presentación en el aula. Finalmente, también se fomenta la creatividad y capacidad de análisis en la generación de la idea, realización del vídeo y su vinculación al contenido de la asignatura. Por todo ello, nuestra primera hipótesis vincula la participación en el proyecto con la adquisición de competencias transversales por parte del alumnado:

**Hipótesis 1:** La participación del alumno en el proyecto afecta positivamente a la adquisición de competencias transversales.

Sin embargo, la participación en el proyecto también supone una mayor atención a los aspectos teóricos y prácticos plasmados en la materia estudiada, dado que es preciso que los vídeos reflejen estos contenidos y favorezcan el aprendizaje y difusión de los mismos. Por tanto, proponemos que la participación también conlleva un mayor aprendizaje subjetivo por parte de los alumnos (medido a través de las competencias específicas que los alumnos perciben haber adquirido):

**Hipótesis 2:** La participación del alumno en el proyecto afecta positivamente al aprendizaje subjetivo.

De forma similar, la participación en el proyecto supone un reto para los alumnos dadas las numerosas habilidades que han de adquirir para la creación de videos de cierta calidad para ser subidos a YouTube. Este hecho permite que los alumnos perciban que han logrado sus objetivos al ser capaces de completar este proceso relativamente complejo. Además, la propia participación activa como creadores de contenidos audiovisuales acerca del mundo que les rodea, para difundirlo mediante una red social de la que habitualmente solo son espectadores pasivos, también podría motivar una generación de satisfacción entre los jóvenes participantes. Esta idea es coherente con los resultados de estudios previos que indican que la percepción del estudiante por el uso de YouTube en la docencia es muy satisfactoria (Tugrul, 2012; Torres-Ramírez et al., 2014). Así mismo, teniendo en cuenta que la satisfacción se forma a partir de la confirmación de las expectativas que el individuo tiene a priori (p. ej. Oliver, 1980), la satisfacción con la asignatura puede aumentar en tanto en cuanto los alumnos perciben que el proyecto en el que participan es atractivo y poco habitual en el resto de asignaturas del plan académico. Esto es, por su novedad, el proyecto puede ayudar a confirmar las expectativas iniciales de los alumnos con la asignatura aumentando su satisfacción. De este modo, se propone una relación causal positiva entre la participación en la actividad y la satisfacción con la asignatura:

**Hipótesis 3:** La participación del alumno en el proyecto afecta positivamente a la satisfacción con la asignatura.

Asimismo, la participación de los alumnos en la actividad podría verse reflejada en un mejor rendimiento académico en la nota final. La creación de vídeos que posteriormente serán publicados supone cierto grado de esfuerzo tanto en la elaboración de los mismos como en los conocimientos adquiridos durante ese proceso. Por tanto, esa participación puede mejorar el resultado del apartado dedicado al tema abordado en la actividad (por ej., trabajo final) o la evaluación final como resultado de una mayor implicación y dedicación a la asignatura. En este sentido, estudios recientes han encontrado una mejora en los resultados académicos derivada del uso de YouTube (p. ej., Dupuis et al., 2013), por lo que proponemos una vinculación positiva entre la participación en la actividad y el rendimiento académico:

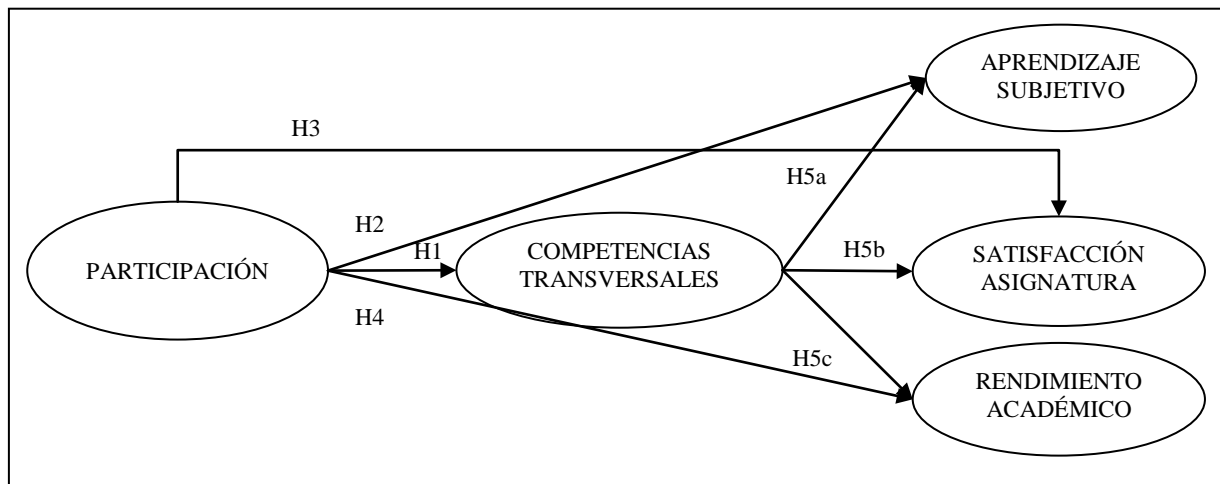
**Hipótesis 4:** La participación del alumno en el proyecto afecta positivamente al rendimiento académico.

Por otro lado, la adquisición de competencias transversales es un factor crucial para la adquisición de una formación completa y la consecución de objetivos de aprendizaje concretos a lo largo de toda la formación académica. No en vano, la adaptación al nuevo Espacio de Educación Superior supone un refuerzo de aspectos como la participación, la tecnología aplicada al aprendizaje y la adquisición de habilidades intelectuales más allá de la memorización. Así pues, poseer competencias transversales en los nuevos estudios de grado (por ej. habilidades sociales, uso de TIC, capacidades académicas generales), facilita y fomenta el aprendizaje específico de cada materia por parte de los alumnos. Asimismo, esta apuesta por la adquisición de habilidades más generales puede ser percibida por el alumno como un objetivo más provechoso, más satisfactorio en lo que conlleva a su protagonismo en

el aprendizaje y su mayor adquisición de competencias que le sirvan para su futuro profesional. Además, la adquisición de mayores niveles de competencias transversales puede resultar útil en el momento en el que los estudiantes se enfrenten a la evaluación final, pudiendo mejorar su resultado académico gracias a estas habilidades generales. Así pues, la última hipótesis refleja los efectos positivos de las competencias transversales sobre el aprendizaje subjetivo, la satisfacción y el rendimiento académico. En resumen, tal y como se propone en la literatura actual (p. ej., Merchant et al., 2014), se espera que la integración en el aula de una nueva tecnología (YouTube en nuestro caso) tenga consecuencias positivas sobre el alumnado, ya sea de manera directa o indirecta.

**Hipótesis 5:** La adquisición de competencias transversales afecta positivamente (H5a) aprendizaje subjetivo, (H5b) la satisfacción con la asignatura y (H5c) el rendimiento académico.

FIGURA 1  
Modelo propuesto e hipótesis



## 4. Metodología

### 4.1. Caso de Estudio

#### 4.1.1. Contexto

El Departamento de Dirección de Marketing e Investigación de Mercados de la Universidad de Zaragoza ha puesto en marcha en el presente curso académico 2013-2014 el proyecto de innovación docente sobre la creación de un canal de YouTube para la docencia en la asignatura Introducción al Marketing. Ésta es una asignatura obligatoria de primer curso del grado en Administración y Dirección de Empresas, de formación básica, que se imparte en el primer semestre. Así, contamos con un total de 426 alumnos matriculados en el curso 2013-2014, repartidos en la Facultad de Economía y Empresa de Zaragoza (301 alumnos), la Facultad de Empresa y Gestión Pública de Huesca (72 alumnos) y la Facultad de Ciencias Sociales y Humanas de Teruel (53 alumnos).

Introducción al Marketing supone un contexto adecuado para el desarrollo de esta actividad, debido a varios motivos: en primer lugar, uno de los elementos básicos de evaluación está centrado en el desarrollo de un trabajo en grupo sobre una empresa o institución real y sus estrategias comerciales. La implantación de un canal de YouTube supone la posibilidad de que los grupos de trabajo desarrollen un vídeo sobre un concepto de marketing, que pueden ilustrar a través del caso real de la empresa o institución sobre el que versa su trabajo.

En segundo lugar, los estudiantes conocen y utilizan con frecuencia los servicios ofrecidos por Youtube. En España, el estudio llevado a cabo por el Observatorio Nacional de las Telecomunicaciones y la Sociedad de la Información (ONTSI, 2011) revela que YouTube se encuentra entre las redes sociales más utilizadas por el segmento de edad de 16 a 25 años. Este hecho representa una oportunidad para acercar la docencia a los medios sociales en los que se desenvuelven los estudiantes.



En tercer lugar, los docentes, especialmente en el área de marketing, precisan herramientas que complementen los métodos tradicionales de enseñanza. La proyección de vídeos prácticos puede adquirir una dimensión mayor mediante la capacitación de estudiantes para el diseño, elaboración y análisis de estos vídeos. De esta forma los estudiantes pueden asimilar mejor los conocimientos que allí se tratan, además de aumentar la motivación y desarrollar competencias difícilmente asumibles de otro modo.

Finalmente, el departamento, así como el propio grado y las facultades donde se imparte, demandan una mayor visibilidad de las actividades que realiza la Universidad con diversos fines: atraer estudiantes, fomentar la transmisión de conocimiento a la sociedad, etc. El hecho de contar con un canal público de Youtube donde se expongan estos trabajos sin duda cumple esta función, cohesiona la docencia entre centros y está en sintonía con los medios de difusión en auge empleados para tal fin.

#### ***4.1.2 Procedimiento para el desarrollo de la actividad***

Dada la novedad de la actividad, se hizo necesaria la realización de una sesión introductoria a la misma. Esta sesión tuvo lugar durante los primeros días de clase de prácticas. Así, los profesores explicaron la actividad a los alumnos, establecieron los objetivos que se pretenden conseguir, especificaron los materiales a utilizar y las instrucciones para la realización del vídeo:

- Explicación de la actividad: los alumnos, en grupos de 4-5 personas, deben producir un vídeo cuyo contenido esté basado en los conceptos del temario de la asignatura.
- Objetivos que se pretenden alcanzar con la actividad:
  - Generales: facilitar el aprendizaje de los aspectos teóricos de la asignatura; tangibilizar la teoría tratando que los alumnos muestren la aplicación práctica de los conceptos teóricos; mejorar el proceso de aprendizaje (mayor retención de los conceptos); incrementar la implicación del alumnado; mejorar la capacidad de síntesis; desarrollar la capacidad creativa; mejorar la capacidad para trabajar en equipo.
  - Específicos: acercar las nuevas tecnologías de la información a la docencia universitaria; utilizar redes sociales como método de difusión de la información y conocimiento; mejorar la confianza y la complicidad de los alumnos de una misma clase como consecuencia de la necesidad de compartir material; incrementar la percepción de utilidad por parte de los alumnos con respecto a los conocimientos que han ido adquiriendo en la asignatura; fomentar la interactividad entre alumnos y profesores; promocionar la Universidad de Zaragoza en las redes sociales a través de la participación activa del alumnado en la elaboración de material audiovisual, que pueda servir como complemento docente de carácter divulgativo
- Materiales a utilizar:
  - Grabación del vídeo: videocámaras digitales, cámaras digitales, teléfonos móviles con cierta calidad de grabación.
  - Contenido del vídeo: el contenido de los vídeos se dejará a la elección del grupo de trabajo. Se dieron algunas sugerencias a los estudiantes (presentación oral llevada a cabo por el grupo de trabajo, entrevistas a expertos, formato documental -combinación de imágenes, clips de vídeo y narración de fondo-, presentación de powerpoint dinámica con voz de fondo, escenificación,
- Instrucciones para la realización del vídeo: todos los vídeos deben tener unas características comunes:
  - Duración: entre 3 y 5 minutos.
  - Formato del clip: DV, AVI, MOV, MPEG, WMV, Flash Video.
  - Contenido: el vídeo debe comenzar con una cabecera que identifique claramente que está realizado por estudiantes del Grado en Administración y Dirección de Empresas de la Universidad de Zaragoza. Los profesores responsables de la asignatura se encargan de facilitar la plantilla que debe ser utilizada. También deben especificarse las personas participantes en el proyecto, el grupo al que pertenecen y el tema tratado.

- **Edición del vídeo:** en la sesión introductoria, los profesores de la asignatura dan algunas nociones sobre la utilización de herramientas comunes de edición, como Windows Movie Maker o el editor de vídeos de YouTube.
- **Subir el vídeo al canal:** los profesores de la asignatura son los encargados de crear el canal en YouTube y subir los vídeos. Además, los profesores supervisan todas las actividades, reservándose el derecho de poder eliminar aquellos vídeos que hayan sido subidos sin su autorización o no cumplan los criterios anteriores.

Al final de la sesión introductoria, los profesores sondearon a los alumnos sobre su grado de comprensión de la actividad, así como sobre su intención de llevarla a cabo. Posteriormente, los profesores de la asignatura fueron supervisando el trabajo de los alumnos que decidieron realizar la actividad. La fecha límite para la realización del vídeo se estableció en el último día de clase previo al periodo vacacional de final de año (22 de diciembre de 2013). Posteriormente los profesores crearon el canal en la plataforma YouTube ([www.youtube.com/channel/UCXj1vWQprt0bGUSnEweGjHA](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXj1vWQprt0bGUSnEweGjHA)) y subieron los vídeos creados por los alumnos. Se crearon tres listas de reproducción correspondientes a los vídeos creados por los estudiantes de los campus de Zaragoza, Huesca y Teruel. Las imágenes 1, 2 y 3 muestran la portada del canal, la descripción del mismo, y las listas de reproducción, respectivamente.

IMAGEN 1  
Página principal del canal de Introducción al Marketing

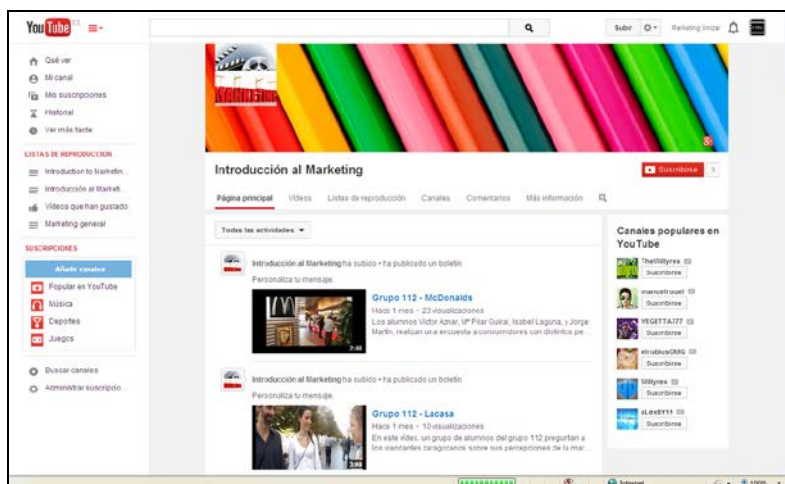


IMAGEN 2  
Descripción del canal de Introducción al Marketing

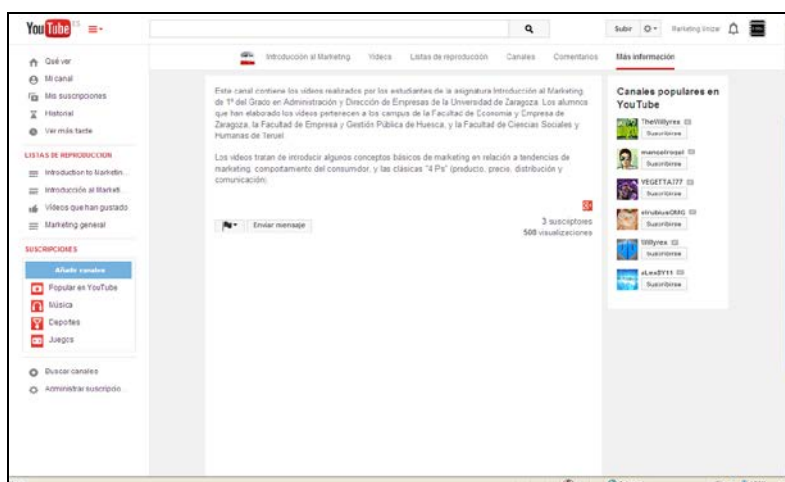
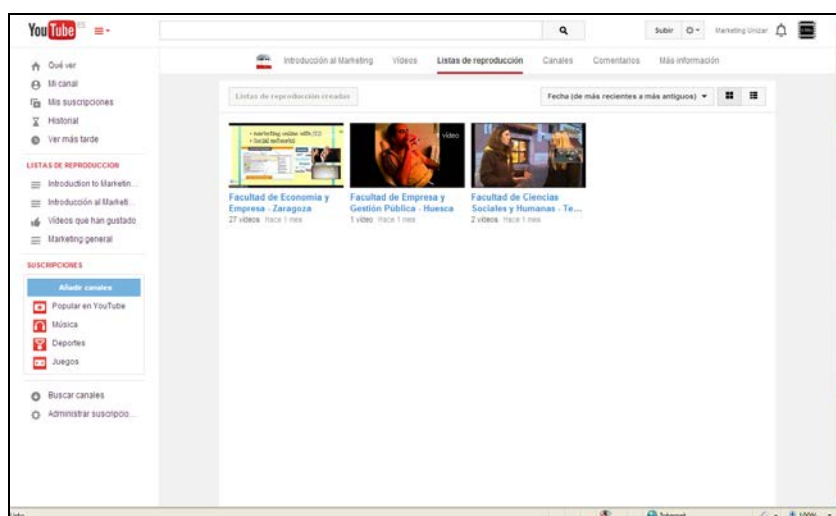


IMAGEN 3

**Listas de reproducción del canal de Introducción al Marketing****4.2. Cuestionario****4.2.1. Recogida de datos**

En las últimas semanas de docencia en el aula, se realizó una encuesta destinada a todos los alumnos de todos los grupos de la asignatura del Grado. Mediante este proceso se obtuvieron un total de 221 cuestionarios válidos. De éstos, 108 cuestionarios fueron respondidos por participantes en la actividad mientras que 113 no habían participado en la misma.

**4.2.2. Medición**

Las medidas consideradas en el cuestionario fueron tomadas de diversas fuentes en función de su validez de contenido teórico y su utilidad práctica para la consecución de los objetivos del proyecto. Así pues, los seis ítems para la variable Competencias Transversales se obtuvieron de la memoria de verificación del grado, los dos ítems de Aprendizaje Subjetivo surgieron de la guía de la asignatura y los tres ítems para la medida de la Satisfacción con la Asignatura surgieron de una adaptación de la escala de satisfacción (Casaló et al., 2011). Estas escalas tuvieron el formato Likert de 7 puntos. Por otro lado la Participación en la actividad fue operacionalizada como una variable dicotómica (1 = ha participado en la actividad, 0 = no ha participado en la actividad), y la calificación final global de la asignatura (de 0 a 10) sirvió como medida del Rendimiento Académico.

**4.2.3. Procedimiento analítico**

Los datos fueron analizados en primer lugar para confirmar la validez del modelo de medida y posteriormente para conocer las relaciones entre variables. Conforme a la tendencia creciente en investigación en marketing y otras disciplinas se utilizó el procedimiento de estimación de regresión de mínimos cuadrados parciales (Partial Least Squares, PLS), utilizando Smart PLS 2.0 como software para los análisis (Ringle et al., 2005). Esta metodología de estimación es particularmente útil puesto que no asume normalidad en la distribución de las variables y está especialmente indicada para estudios con muestras pequeñas (Chin y Newsted, 1999; Stan y Saporta, 2005), como es nuestro caso.

**5. Resultados****5.1. Análisis Descriptivo**

De los 426 alumnos matriculados, 125 realizaron un vídeo que posteriormente fue subido al canal. Se crearon un total de 30 vídeos, de los cuales 27 se hicieron por alumnos del campus de Zaragoza, 1 por alumnos del campus de Huesca, y 2 por alumnos del campus de Teruel. Teniendo en cuenta que no todos los alumnos matriculados siguieron el sistema de evaluación continua, y que la realización del vídeo no conllevaba una vinculación directa a la nota final, se considera un índice de participación aceptable.

La duración media de los vídeos fue de 3 minutos, con un mínimo de 1 minuto y 4 segundos, y un máximo de 5 minutos y 27 segundos. En relación al contenido de los vídeos, la gran mayoría de grupos (87%) se basó en la empresa o institución real sobre la que hacía el trabajo de la asignatura. Sin embargo, sólo 13 vídeos trataban de explicar un concepto teórico de marketing. El resto se centró en desarrollar una presentación general de la empresa o en realizar una encuesta a los viandantes o clientes sobre sus percepciones de la misma.

Tal y como se ha detallado anteriormente, los alumnos de la asignatura contestaron a un cuestionario al finalizar la actividad. Además de las preguntas descritas en el apartado 4.2.2, los alumnos que no participaron (113) indicaron las causas de no participación. En concreto, contestaron a una serie de indicadores tipo Likert de 7 puntos, cuya descripción aparece detallada en la Tabla 1, así como los datos descriptivos de las respuestas dadas. En este sentido, cabría destacar que la falta de tiempo fue la razón fundamental por la que los estudiantes decidieron no llevar a cabo la actividad. Asimismo, se dejó un espacio para que los estudiantes indicaran cualquier causa adicional, donde de nuevo la falta de tiempo fue el principal motivo argumentado. La falta de un conocimiento más detallado sobre la actividad, y razones de carácter más personal (p. ej. “me daba vergüenza”, “lo hice pero me quedó muy pobre”), también fueron citadas por los estudiantes.

TABLA 1  
Causas de no participación en la actividad

Causa	Media	d.t.	Mín.	Máx.
La actividad requiere invertir demasiado tiempo	4,99	1,44	1	7
Realizar la actividad requiere conocimientos avanzados	3,46	1,58	1	7
La actividad apenas influye sobre la calificación final de la asignatura	3,48	1,59	1	7
La actividad precisa recursos tecnológicos de difícil acceso para mí	2,84	1,64	1	7

## 5.2. Análisis del modelo estructural

En primer lugar, se llevó a cabo la validación de los instrumentos de medida. En este sentido, el análisis factorial confirmatorio constató que todos los ítems tenían cargas superiores a 0,8 sobre su respectivo constructo, es decir, por encima del 0,7 sugerido por la literatura (Henseler et al., 2009). Tal y como muestra la Tabla 2, todas las variables multi-ítem presentaron valores de fiabilidad compuesta por encima de 0,8, lo que indica la fuerte consistencia interna de los constructos. Asimismo, la varianza extraída media (Average Variance Extracted, AVE) de estos constructos fue en todos los casos superior a 0,7, asegurando la validez convergente de las escalas. Finalmente, para evaluar la validez discriminante, confirmamos que la raíz cuadrada del AVE era mayor a la correlación entre cada par de variables (Fornell y Larcker, 1981), cumpliéndose en todos los casos tal y como se observa en la Tabla 2.

TABLA 2  
Estadísticos descriptivos, fiabilidad compuesta, validez convergente y discriminante.

	Media	d.t.	$\rho_c$	AVE	1	2	3	4	5
1. Participación	0,49	NA	NA	NA	NA				
2. Comp. Transversales	4,84	1,35	0,906	0,616	0,322	<b>0,784</b>			
3. Aprendizaje Subjetivo	5,87	1,10	0,930	0,871	-0,030	0,490	<b>0,933</b>		
4. Satisfacción Asignatura	5,23	1,33	0,932	0,820	0,073	0,591	0,485	<b>0,906</b>	
5. Rendimiento Académico	5,60	0,81	NA	NA	0,353	0,218	0,086	0,083	NA

Nota: Los elementos de la diagonal (en negrita) son la raíz cuadrada del AVE. Los elementos por debajo de la diagonal son las correlaciones entre constructos. NA: No aplicable.

Una vez fueron validadas las escalas, se procedió a estimar el modelo de relaciones causales entre variables y su significatividad conforme a la técnica de bootstrap o muestreo aleatorio de 500 interacciones recomendado por Chin (1998). La Tabla 3 recoge el resumen de los resultados y el contraste de hipótesis.

Los resultados del estudio muestran que la Participación en el proyecto tiene un efecto positivo y significativo sobre las Competencias Transversales ( $\beta = 0,322$ ,  $p < 0,01$ ) así como sobre el Rendimiento Académico ( $\beta = 0,316$ ,  $p < 0,01$ ), por lo que se confirman las Hipótesis 1 y 4 respectivamente. Sin embargo, y en contra de lo esperado inicialmente, el efecto de la Participación

sobre el Aprendizaje Subjetivo es negativo y significativo ( $\beta = -0,210, p < 0,01$ ). Puesto que el sentido del efecto es el contrario al esperado, se rechaza la Hipótesis 2. A su vez, la Hipótesis 3 también se rechaza, dado que el efecto de la Participación sobre la Satisfacción con la Asignatura no es significativo ( $\beta = -0,131, p > 0,1$ ). En conjunto, estos resultados indican que los alumnos participantes en el proyecto adquieren un mayor nivel de Competencias Transversales y un mejor Rendimiento Académico en la evaluación de la asignatura, pero que su percepción de Aprendizaje es menor y su Satisfacción similar a la del resto de alumnos.

Respecto a los efectos de las Competencias Transversales sobre el resto de variables dependientes, se confirma la relación causal propuesta en dos de las tres hipótesis. Concretamente, las Competencias Transversales afectan positivamente y significativamente al Aprendizaje Subjetivo ( $\beta = 0,558, p < 0,01$ ), así como a la Satisfacción con la Asignatura ( $\beta = 0,634, p < 0,01$ ). De este modo se confirman las Hipótesis 5a y 5b. Sin embargo la adquisición de mayores niveles de Competencias Transversales no afecta significativamente al Rendimiento Académico de los alumnos en la asignatura ( $\beta = 0,116, p > 0,1$ ), por lo que se rechaza la Hipótesis 5c.

El modelo propuesto consigue explicar cierto grado de varianza explicada de las variables dependientes. Este indicador es menor para constructos que podrían deberse a otras múltiples causas, como es el caso las Competencias Transversales ( $R^2 = 0,104$ ) o el Rendimiento Académico ( $R^2 = 0,137$ ), y mayor para constructos como el Aprendizaje Subjetivo ( $R^2 = 0,280$ ) y la Satisfacción con la Asignatura ( $R^2 = 0,365$ ).

TABLA 3  
Resumen de los resultados y contraste de hipótesis del modelo.

Hipótesis	Efecto ( $\beta$ )	Resultado
H1 Participación $\rightarrow$ Comp. Transversales	0,322*	Confirmada
H2 Participación $\rightarrow$ Aprendizaje Subjetivo	-0210*	Rechazada <sup>a</sup>
H3 Participación $\rightarrow$ Satisfacción Asignatura	-0,131	Rechazada
H4 Participación $\rightarrow$ Rendimiento Académico	0,316*	Confirmada
H5a Competencias Transversales $\rightarrow$ Aprendizaje Subjetivo	0,558*	Confirmada
H5b Competencias Transversales $\rightarrow$ Satisfacción Asignatura	0,634*	Confirmada
H5c Competencias Transversales $\rightarrow$ Rendimiento Académico	0,116	Rechazada

Notas: \* $p < 0,01$ ; <sup>a</sup>Efecto significativo en sentido contrario al esperado.

### 5.2.1. Análisis post-hoc

Con el objetivo de ampliar el alcance de las conclusiones del estudio, consideramos conveniente ahondar un poco más en el análisis de las Competencias Transversales y sus relaciones con el resto de variables del modelo. Dado que las Competencias Transversales de una titulación hacen referencia a diferentes aspectos del aprendizaje, resulta especialmente interesante conocer mejor su contenido específico para obtener mejores implicaciones para la innovación docente. Atendiendo al contenido de los ítems que formaban la variable Competencias Transversales, se observó que las dos primeras cuestiones se referían a Competencias Sociales (“Esta asignatura me ha sido útil para... (1) desarrollar habilidades sociales, (2) elaborar mis ideas en público y someterlas a debate”), las dos siguientes estaban relacionadas con el uso de las TIC (“... (3) conocer las herramientas básicas de comunicación informativa, (4) mejorar mi capacidad para usar las TIC en el desempeño profesional”), y las dos últimas se referían a Competencias Académicas (“... (5) adquirir capacidad de síntesis, (6) fomentar la creatividad”). Por todo ello, se realizó un análisis post-hoc exploratorio que consistió en contrastar las mismas hipótesis del modelo, fraccionando la variable general Competencias Transversales en tres variables más concretas: Competencias Sociales, Competencias Uso TIC, y Competencias Académicas. La fiabilidad compuesta y el AVE de los tres nuevos constructos superaron los valores recomendados y también se verificó la validez discriminante según el test de Fornell y Larcker (1981) mencionado anteriormente.

Los resultados del análisis post-hoc muestran que la Participación tiene un efecto positivo y significativo sobre las Competencias Sociales ( $\beta = 0,261$ ,  $p < 0,01$ ), Competencias Uso TIC ( $\beta = 0,346$ ,  $p < 0,01$ ), y Competencias Académicas ( $\beta = 0,252$ ,  $p < 0,01$ ). Por otro lado, las Competencias Sociales y las Competencias Uso TIC no tienen efectos significativos sobre el Aprendizaje Subjetivo ( $\beta = 0,087$  y  $\beta = 0,206$ , respectivamente;  $p > 0,1$ ), la Satisfacción con la Asignatura ( $\beta = 0,146$  y  $\beta = 0,224$ , respectivamente;  $p > 0,1$ ), y el Rendimiento Académico ( $\beta = 0,075$  y  $\beta = 0,020$ , respectivamente;  $p > 0,1$ ). Por su parte, la adquisición de Competencias Académicas afecta positivamente y significativamente al Aprendizaje Subjetivo ( $\beta = 0,336$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ) y a la Satisfacción con la Asignatura ( $\beta = 0,346$ ,  $p < 0,01$ ), pero no al Rendimiento Académico en la misma ( $\beta = 0,032$ ,  $p > 0,1$ ). En resumen, los resultados del análisis post-hoc muestran que la participación en la actividad es beneficiosa para la adquisición de Competencias Transversales diversas, si bien estas no afectan significativamente en ningún caso al Rendimiento Académico de la asignatura. Sin embargo, un mayor grado de Competencias Sociales y de Uso de las TIC no implican un mayor Aprendizaje Subjetivo, o Satisfacción con la asignatura; mientras que una mayor adquisición de Competencias Académicas consigue aumentar las percepciones subjetivas de Aprendizaje y la Satisfacción con la Asignatura.

## 6. Discusión general y conclusiones

Este trabajo analiza el impacto del uso de un canal de YouTube como apoyo a la docencia en marketing en alumnos de primer curso de Grado. Existe cierta escasez de literatura especializada centrada en el análisis de las implicaciones del uso de esta herramienta tecnológica de forma activa por parte de los estudiantes. Así, esta investigación supone un paso adelante en el estudio de la influencia de la utilización de la plataforma YouTube en términos de resultados de aprendizaje del alumnado.

Los análisis efectuados ponen de manifiesto que los alumnos participantes en la actividad adquirieron un mayor nivel de Competencias Transversales y un mejor Rendimiento Académico en la asignatura, que aquéllos que no participaron en dicho proyecto. No obstante, debemos señalar que los datos indican que la participación activa en la actividad no influyó sobre los niveles de satisfacción con la asignatura. Por su parte, en contra de lo esperado, la participación en el proyecto afectó negativamente al aprendizaje subjetivo.

Una posible explicación de estos resultados puede encontrarse en el hecho de que la mayoría de los vídeos que se subieron a la plataforma no cumplían estrictamente con el requisito de estar centrado en la explicación y/o profundización en uno de los conceptos teóricos de la asignatura. Es por ello que la actividad podría no mejorar el aprendizaje percibido de los conceptos básicos del temario. Asimismo, la población objeto de estudio eran alumnos de primer curso, en una asignatura del primer semestre. Debido a la falta de experiencia de estos estudiantes con la metodología docente universitaria, la realización del vídeo pudo ser percibida como una carga adicional de trabajo, más que como un incentivo para mejorar su aprendizaje y comprensión de la asignatura. Finalmente, cabría destacar que la participación en el proyecto era voluntaria, esto es, no era evaluada como parte de la calificación final ni suponía una nota adicional. Así, los alumnos podrían haber percibido una mayor carga de trabajo en la asignatura que no se vería reflejada en su calificación, lo que podría haber afectado a sus niveles de satisfacción. En este sentido, sería interesante plantearse algunos cambios tales como la dedicación de sesiones de clase exclusivamente a la explicación, seguimiento y apoyo a la actividad, así como la incorporación de incentivos a la participación que tuviera reflejo en la nota final del estudiante. Sin duda, todas estas cuestiones serán consideradas para los próximos cursos académicos.

Si bien el hecho de participar en la actividad no ha repercutido directamente sobre las percepciones del estudiante en relación a su aprendizaje y a su grado de satisfacción con la asignatura, sí se ha podido observar un efecto indirecto a través de las competencias transversales adquiridas. De acuerdo con los resultados del análisis post-hoc, la realización del vídeo ha incrementado las percepciones del estudiante sobre su capacidad de desarrollar habilidades sociales, de utilización de las TIC, y académicas. Estas últimas competencias, concretamente la adquisición de capacidad de síntesis y de desarrollo de la actividad, han influido sobre el aprendizaje subjetivo y la satisfacción con la asignatura. Futuras investigaciones deberán encaminarse a estudiar todas estas relaciones en mayor

profundidad, utilizando mediciones más rigurosas de los constructos tratados, y determinado los efectos directos e indirectos de manera más específica.

Finalmente, a través de este caso de estudio se han mostrado los resultados obtenidos con la actividad y mediciones específicas, pero sería importante complementar la investigación con metodologías alternativas, o proponiendo diferentes actividades en distintos grupos para comprobar la efectividad de las acciones de apoyo a la docencia con YouTube. Además de los resultados favorables, la introducción del canal de YouTube también ha sido beneficiosa desde la propia opinión de los docentes, por lo que animamos a incorporar este tipo de herramientas entre los profesores universitarios de marketing.

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# ESTILOS DE APRENDIZAJE Y TECNOLOGÍA: PERFIL DEL ESTUDIANTE Y HERRAMIENTAS DOCENTES DE WEB SOCIAL

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## RESUMEN

*A pesar de la importancia de las nuevas tecnologías en la educación y del alcance del uso de las herramientas 2.0, tanto para educadores como estudiantes, éstas no siempre son utilizadas de forma adecuada en el proceso educativo. Los trabajos existentes en la actualidad, se limitan en muchas ocasiones a determinar qué herramientas son más utilizadas y con qué frecuencia, según la edad, género o estudios, aunque sin interrelacionar dichas variables (Hernández, 2008; Moreno, 2012; Koçak y Oyman, 2012; García y García, 2013). La presente investigación pretende cubrir esa laguna identificando perfiles de estudiantes 2.0 a partir de los estilos de aprendizaje característicos (Kolb, 1984; Honey y Mumford, 1986), estudios cursados, género y frecuencia de uso de las herramientas docentes de Web Social. Los resultados obtenidos a partir de una muestra de 292 estudiantes de Marketing de Enseñanzas Medias, nos han permitido identificar tres perfiles mediante segmentación latente. La identificación por parte del profesorado de las características obtenidas en cada perfil, permitirá la adecuación de las herramientas docentes 2.0 a lo largo del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.*

## Palabras clave:

Web Social, Herramientas docentes 2.0, Estilos de aprendizaje, Segmentación latente, Perfil del estudiante

## 1. Introducción

Como afirman Fumero y Roca (2007), la Web Social nace con la intención de resolver una necesidad social y, aunque algunas de sus propuestas pueden generar beneficios, se trata más de un movimiento social (movimiento 2.0) que de un modelo empresarial. La Web 2.0 implica no tanto la aplicación de una nueva tecnología, como el hecho de asumir una nueva filosofía, por eso se habla de la actitud 2.0 que supone compartir los recursos propios y beneficiarse al mismo tiempo de los ajenos (Arroyo, 2007).

Una parte importante del éxito de la Web Social o 2.0 reside en la aplicabilidad de su filosofía y sus herramientas a cualquier ámbito, siendo cada vez más habitual que las actividades de las personas y de las organizaciones se trasladen al entorno digital, encontrándonos con: Educación 2.0, Empresa 2.0, Periodismo 2.0, Marketing 2.0, Biblioteca 2.0 e, incluso, como Fútbol 2.0 (Arroyo 2007; Celaya, 2011). En cada caso, es imprescindible involucrar a los usuarios fomentando la comunicación bidireccional.

Este siglo XXI, siglo de la Revolución Digital, lleva aparejado un cambio o redefinición en los modelos de negocios de empresas e instituciones, máxime si tenemos en cuenta que las empresas deben contar entre su plantilla o entre sus posibles competidores con una nueva generación de personas, que se están formando ya en Centros Educativos utilizando las nuevas tecnologías en los procesos de aprendizaje. Esta generación rechazará a las empresas donde no se tenga en cuenta esta nueva forma de intercambiar y gestionar el conocimiento (Celaya, 2011).

El sistema educativo actual, que no es ajeno a la revolución digital, otorga un papel cada vez más importante al alumnado, considerándolo un sujeto activo que se encuentra en el centro del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. En este contexto es muy importante determinar las Estrategias y Estilos de Aprendizaje seguidos por los alumnos para “aprender a aprender” (Cano, 2000). Se pretende que el estudiante alcance una mayor flexibilidad y autonomía en su forma de aprender, de forma que este auto-aprendizaje pueda trascender los límites académicos y prepararlos para un mercado laboral en constante cambio donde las competencias más valoradas son la autoformación y la formación continua (Adán, 2008). De esta nueva realidad se hacen eco las enseñanzas no universitarias, conscientes de que, gracias a los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje, sus estudiantes van a adquirir y desarrollar las competencias personales necesarias para su futuro, por eso la principal finalidad<sup>1</sup>, tanto de bachillerato como de los ciclos formativos, es proporcionar a los estudiantes formación, madurez intelectual y humana, así como los conocimientos y habilidades que les permitan desarrollar sus funciones sociales y laborales con responsabilidad, competencia y solidaridad, contribuyendo al desarrollo económico del país y capacitándolos tanto para acceder a la educación superior, como para adaptarse a los cambios profesionales y sociales que se puedan producir a lo largo de su vida.

La Web 2.0 está abriendo las puertas a un nuevo modelo de enseñanza, el aprendizaje 2.0 que, con la utilización de sus herramientas de marketing 2.0 en el aprendizaje se favorece el desarrollo de las mismas competencias que se están exigiendo a los trabajadores para su incorporación al mercado laboral, concretamente favorecen el desarrollo del pensamiento crítico, la autonomía, la iniciativa, el trabajo colaborativo y la responsabilidad individual (Esteve, 2009).

La incorporación de las nuevas tecnologías no van a suponer una innovación educativa en sí misma si esta no viene acompañada de un cambio metodológico en la práctica docente (Esteve, 2009). La tecnología de uso educativo supone mejoras a nivel cuantitativo, enseñanzas no presenciales, pero sobre todo a nivel cualitativo, al disponer de nuevos recursos que enriquecen su proceso de aprendizaje (Cobo y Pardo, 2007), que repercutirá positivamente en la gestión estratégica y comercial del Centro.

Por ello, el objetivo general de nuestra investigación consiste en analizar la Web 2.0 y sus herramientas y cómo estas pueden contribuir a la estrategia empresarial y comercial llevadas a cabo por los Centros Educativos y cómo favorecen el cambio que está experimentando el modelo de educación actual, variando la metodología para adaptarse a los diferentes estilos de aprendizaje individuales que tienen los estudiantes y que son necesarios para alcanzar las competencias necesarias en su futuro académico y profesional.

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<sup>1</sup> Artículo 3 Decreto 85/2008, de 17-06-2008, currículo del bachillerato en la Comunidad Autónoma de Castilla-La Mancha. Artículo 2 del R.D. 1147/2011, de 29 de julio, ordenación general de la formación profesional del sistema educativo.

En suma, conociendo los principales perfiles a partir del análisis de los estilos de aprendizaje dominantes de los estudiantes, podremos definir la metodología docente, diseñando actividades y utilizando recursos didácticos en las que se aprovechen las ventajas de las herramientas Web 2.0, con el objeto de conseguir un proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje más efectivo y eficiente, permitiendo una mejor gestión y organización del aula por parte de los docentes, que repercutirá en la gestión estratégica y comercial del Centro Educativo.

## 2. Marco teórico

### 2.1. Web 2.0 y sus herramientas. La Web 3.0

No existe un amplio consenso entre los autores de cuál sería la definición de Web Social o 2.0, pero sí se han dado diferentes aproximaciones. El término se atribuye a O'Reilly (2005), para el cual era una segunda generación en la historia de la Web, basada en comunidades de usuarios y un conjunto de servicios y aplicaciones de Internet como *wikis*, blogs o redes sociales entre otros, que se modifican gracias a la participación social. Más recientemente, atendiendo a Celaya (2011, p.9), la etiqueta Web 2.0 “representa una Web más colaborativa que permite a sus usuarios acceder y participar en la creación de un conocimiento ilimitado y, como consecuencia de esta interacción, se generan nuevas oportunidades de negocio para las empresas”.

Aun sin haber unanimidad en la definición, sí se puede afirmar, que hay dos conceptos que están íntimamente ligados a la Web 2.0 y han servido de base para definirla: la inteligencia colectiva<sup>2</sup> y la arquitectura de la participación<sup>3</sup> (O'Reilly, 2005; Arroyo, 2007).

Por tanto, podríamos decir que los valores fundamentales que definen los principales atributos de la Web 2.0 son la interacción, la participación y el intercambio, que está en clara consonancia con el objetivo final de las herramientas 2.0. Estos valores vienen a representar las nuevas características de los usuarios en la Web Social.

El nuevo rol de los usuarios, como centro de las plataformas sociales, hace que estos sean a la vez consumidores, productores, difusores y editores que añaden constantemente valor a los contenidos existentes (Shin y Kim, 2008).

Las herramientas Web 2.0 han adquirido una importancia estratégica en contextos personales, sociales, profesionales y educativos en los últimos años, constituyendo útiles herramientas de marketing, cuya implementación se está extendiendo a todos los sectores mencionados.

No existe una clasificación unificada de los servicios y herramientas Web 2.0, dada la gran cantidad de las que disponemos y que muchas de ellas en un periodo breve de tiempo son renovadas por otras que presentan una tecnología más avanzada, si bien, siguiendo lo indicado por Cobo y Pardo (2007) podemos ordenar las aplicaciones, recursos y herramientas que ofrece la Web Social en cuatro líneas fundamentales, teniendo todas ellas como nexo común el hecho de ser herramientas útiles, fáciles de usar y gratuitas: redes sociales, diseñadas para la creación de comunidades virtuales que favorecen intercambios sociales (e.g. *Facebook*, *Tuenti*, *Twitter*); contenidos, herramientas de lectura y escritura en línea que favorecen la distribución, intercambio y creación colectiva (e.g. *Wikipedia*, *GoogleDocs*, *SlideShare*, *Flickr*, *YouTube*); organización Social e intelectual de la información, permiten etiquetar, sindicar e indexar, para facilitar el orden y almacenamiento de la información ayudando a los usuarios (e.g. *Google*, *Itunes*, *Spotify*, *Vimeo*, *Delicious*); aplicaciones y servicios (*Mashups*), software, plataformas en línea y un híbrido de recursos, creados para ofrecer un servicio y proporcionar valor añadido al usuario (e.g. *Dropbox*, *Podcast*, *WhatsApp*).

Cuando todavía no hemos acabado de interiorizar la Web Social aparece en el horizonte una nueva generación de Internet, la Web 3.0, denominada también Web semántica (*Semantic Web*). Este nuevo modelo pretende dar un paso más, aportando más información a los contenidos ya difundidos por los usuarios, con esta información complementaria los *internautas* serán capaces de encontrar y reutilizar el contenido de forma más productiva (Celaya, 2011).

La evolución de la Red no se detiene, e incluso, ya se habla de Web 4.0 y 5.0. En ella se permitirá la integración en la Web de los objetos, el desarrollo de redes sensoriales y emotivas o la integración

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<sup>2</sup> Entendida como el conocimiento compartido por todos y que da lugar a una obra colectiva, convirtiendo a la Web en una especie de cerebro global (O'Reilly, 2005). El ejemplo más característico sería *Wikipedia* (<http://www.wikipedia.org>).

<sup>3</sup> Esta implica una nueva forma de construir los sitios web para que todos los usuarios puedan participar a la vez (Arroyo, 2007).

de la Web semántica, dando acceso a información más relevante y personalizada, que cambiará la estructura tal y como la conocemos hoy. Se pretende integrar las tecnologías móviles, y la difusión de un nuevo modelo de conexión a Internet, consiguiendo que los *internautas* prescindan de las aplicaciones locales (INTECO, 2011).

## **2.2. Herramientas Web 2.0 de uso educativo**

El cambio en la metodología, lleva implícito la utilización de herramientas Web 2.0, sin embargo, es imprescindible que el binomio metodología-herramientas Web 2.0 sea el adecuado para conseguir unos resultados positivos y efectivos en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. Por ello, estas herramientas deben de presentar las siguientes características (Hernández, 2008; Moreno, 2012): interactividad e interacción; conectividad y conexión con el mundo real; abiertas y dinámicas; simples, intuitivas y gratuitas.

En general, las aplicaciones Web 2.0 se pueden clasificar en dos grandes grupos, ya que no todas requieren las mismas habilidades, ni son utilizadas para los mismos fines (García y García, 2013):

- Aplicaciones sociales o emocionales, se centran más en el fomento de las relaciones personales a través de la creación de perfiles o publicaciones de contenidos multimedia y que tienen un uso más intuitivo (por ejemplo, redes sociales virtuales, *YouTube*, *Skype*, etc...). Son las más utilizadas y conocidas entre los estudiantes universitarios (Koçak y Oyman, 2012).
- Aplicaciones instrumentales, son utilizadas en educación y que requieren más habilidades para usarlas (por ejemplo, *wikis*, blogs o herramientas de ofimática *online*).

Como hemos comentado anteriormente, el abanico de aplicaciones Web 2.0 es muy amplio, variado y evoluciona rápida y constantemente. Sin embargo, en el entorno educativo resultan especialmente útiles las siguientes herramientas y aplicaciones sociales (Cobo y Pardo, 2007; Conole y Alevizou, 2010): *Blogging*, versión educativa *edublogs*. En la actualidad, éxito de los *microblogging* (e.g. *Twitter*); *Wikis* y herramientas de edición colaborativas, permiten la escritura colaborativa, dentro y fuera del aula (e.g. *Wikipedia*, *GoogleDrive*); Colaboratorios, plataformas que permiten compartir haciendo el proceso de aprendizaje más dinámico y participativo (e.g. *PowerPoint* en línea o podcasts); RSS, herramientas que permiten recibir información personal de las novedades y las aportaciones relacionadas con los temas de estudio; Comunicación, facilita la comunicación fluida y continua profesor-alumno (e.g. *Skype*, *Gmail*); Mapas digitales y geolocalización, permiten visualizar información de mapas (e.g. *GoogleMaps*, *Street view*, *GoobleEarth*); uso compartido multimedia, permiten crear y descargar de la Red sus propios archivos fomentando la creatividad (e.g. *TeacherTube*, *Flickr*, *Slideshare*); buscadores, permiten el acceso a información muy variada (e.g. *Google*, *Yahoo*); redes sociales virtuales, en el ámbito educativo, permitir el intercambio y la discusión en temas de interés escolar (e.g. *Facebook*); mensajería instantánea, chat y foros de conversación, en el ámbito educativo se pueden establecer foros de discusión en torno a materias específicas; Juegos y mundos virtuales, permiten interactuar con otros usuarios, favoreciendo el intercambio de experiencias en el aprendizaje (e.g. simuladores empresariales, económicos); marcadores sociales, en educación el profesor puede diseñar marcadores específicos por materias o temas (e.g. *Delicious*).

## **2.3. Estilos de aprendizaje y nuevas tecnologías como elementos de gestión del Centro Educativo**

Las investigaciones realizadas en las últimas décadas nos confirman que existe un gran interés por conocer, no sólo la forma de aprender de cada individuo, sino también la forma en la que mejor aprende. Por tanto, podemos afirmar que los estilos de aprendizaje son una variable importante en el proceso de aprendizaje en cualquier nivel educativo (López-Aguado, 2011).

No existe una definición unánime del concepto de Estilo de Aprendizaje. De modo general, García, Santizo y Alonso (2009, p. 3) reunificaron el término, definiendo Estilos de Aprendizaje como “los rasgos cognitivos, afectivos, fisiológicos, de preferencias por el uso de los sentidos, ambiente, cultura, psicología, comodidad, desarrollo y personalidad que sirven como indicadores relativamente estables, de cómo las personas perciben, interrelacionan y responden a sus ambientes de aprendizaje y a sus propios métodos o estrategias en su forma de aprender”.

La revisión de la literatura nos muestra que, de las tipologías del aprendizaje existentes, destacan las realizadas por: Kolb (1984), Honey y Mumford (1986) y Alonso (1995). Así lo corroboran las

investigaciones realizadas sobre estilos de aprendizaje desde el año 2000, en las que los instrumentos de medición y clasificación de los estilos de aprendizaje utilizados en la mayoría de ellas, han sido los creados por estos autores (Bahamón, Vianchá, Alarcón y Bohórquez, 2012).

Concretamente, los instrumentos de medición de estilos de aprendizajes definidos por estos autores son:

- *Learning Style Inventory* (LSI), conocido en España como Inventario de Estilos de Aprendizaje (Kolb, 1984), este instrumento tiene una gran versatilidad, ya que aunque en origen fue creado para determinar los estilos de aprendizaje de los directivos y personas adultas, se ha usado indistintamente, tanto en el plano académico como empresarial. Hasta este momento, son seis las versiones que se han publicado de la LSI (Castaño, 2004; Kolb y Kolb, 2005; Web oficial<sup>4</sup>)
- *Learning Style Questionnaire* (LSQ), Cuestionario de Estilos de Aprendizaje (Honey y Mumford, 1986). La versión original del cuestionario consta de 80 ítems, desarrollándose posteriormente una versión abreviada de 40 ítems. Aunque las dos versiones permiten explorar las preferencias de las personas por los estilos de aprendizaje, esta nueva versión emplea menos tiempo en realizar el cuestionario y, además, utilizan un vocabulario más conciso y adecuado para los posibles participantes (Honey y Mumford, 2000).
- Cuestionario Alonso-Honey de Estilos de Aprendizaje (CHAEA), consiste en la adaptación del LSQ al ámbito académico español (Alonso, Gallego y Honey, 1995). El cuestionario consta de 80 ítems valorados en una escala dicotómica. A cada uno de los estilos de aprendizaje le corresponden 20 ítems.

Los modelos de clasificación de los estilos de aprendizaje definidos por Kolb (1984), Honey y Mumford (1986) y Alonso et al. (1995), sirven de referencia para conocer las preferencias y características principales que presentan los individuos a la hora de aprender, sin embargo, las investigaciones recientes, siendo conscientes del papel protagonista que tienen las nuevas tecnologías en los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje, van un paso más allá.

Como afirman Ocepek, Bosni`c, Servec y Rugelj (2013), la combinación de estilos de aprendizaje definidos por Kolb, junto con las preferencias que los estudiantes muestran hacia unos materiales multimedia, proporcionan diferentes tipos de aprendizaje multimedia que son más precisos, fiables y acordes a la sociedad de la comunicación, la información y las nuevas tecnologías, favoreciendo la eficacia de los procesos de aprendizaje de los alumnos, al poder cada estudiantes seleccionar los materiales más apropiados.

La Web 2.0 ofrece muchas posibilidades al sistema educativo, al permitir la participación social de un grupo de personas en la elaboración de contenidos, acercando la figura del profesor al papel de mediador y la del alumno al del verdadero valedor de sus conocimientos, siendo una parte muy activa de su formación (Moreno, 2012). La Web Social está inmersa en el proceso formativo desde hace varios años a través de la Escuela 2.0, también conocida como Aprendizaje 2.0 o Aula 2.0, su implantación ha requerido introducir una serie de cambios.

El educador ha pasado a tener un nuevo estilo más innovador, fomentando la investigación y la creación de conocimiento por parte de los alumnos. El profesor debe de potenciar la autonomía individual y colectiva. Para ello es imprescindible que este abierto para adaptarse a los cambios (Fernández y Cubo, 2011). El aprendizaje apoyado por la Web 2.0, descansa en sus dos principios básicos: contenidos generados por el usuario y arquitectura de la participación, donde tanto estudiantes como docentes pueden aportar sus conocimientos, favoreciendo la cooperación, multiplicando así las posibilidades de aprender (Cobo y Pardo, 2007). Para que esto sea posible es imprescindible que las nuevas herramientas Web 2.0 no se utilicen simplemente para sustituir los recursos tradicionales.

En la misma línea, los Sistemas Educativos con apoyo tecnológico en la Web tienen como principal finalidad atender a cada alumno de forma personalizada, teniendo en cuenta que cada uno de ellos tiene necesidades diferentes, conocimientos previos y/o estilos de aprendizaje y que, además, estas enseñanzas deben de proporcionar experiencias de aprendizaje. Por ello, la combinación de variables como los estilos de aprendizaje y los rasgos cognitivos, contribuyen de manera beneficiosa a

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<sup>4</sup> <http://learningfromexperience.com/> [consultada: 16 abril 2014]

las enseñanzas online, ya que dicha unión genera sinergias en los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje de los estudiantes (Graf, Liu, Chen y Yang, 2009).

#### 2.4. Planteamiento de cuestiones a investigar

El presente trabajo trata de proporcionar una mejor comprensión de los efectos, experiencias y potencialidades que las herramientas 2.0 pueden ofrecer a los centros educativos para llevar a cabo estrategias de gestión formativa en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. Junto a estos objetivos, el trabajo también proporciona una panorámica del uso de este tipo de tecnologías 2.0 mediante la realización de una segmentación latente de los estudiantes a partir de la intensidad con que ellos las utilizan de acuerdo con su estilo de aprendizaje dentro y fuera del aula, así como por el curso académico en el que actualmente se encuentran y el género.

En resumen, este trabajo proporcionará respuestas a las siguientes proposiciones de investigación:

- P1. ¿Cuáles son las prioridades de los estudiantes en el uso de la Web Social como herramienta de aprendizaje?
- P2. ¿Afecta el género en el grado de adopción de la Web 2.0 en un contexto educativo?
- P3. ¿Afecta el tipo de estudios cursados en el grado de adopción de la Web 2.0 en un contexto educativo? ¿
- P4. ¿Cómo influyen las capacidades de los estudiantes para aprender y para conseguir los resultados en las competencias que deben alcanzar al finalizar la etapa educativa?
- P5. ¿Qué tipos de segmentos de estudiantes podemos encontrar a partir del nivel de adopción y uso de aplicaciones 2.0 como herramientas de estudio?
- P6. A partir de los perfiles encontrados, ¿de qué manera influye el estilo de aprendizaje del estudiante en el uso de las herramientas 2.0?
- P7. ¿Qué estrategias de gestión estratégica y comercial han de adoptar los centros educativos para atender a las demandas observadas en los diferentes perfiles de estudiantes?

### 3. Metodología

En el cuadro 1 se muestra la ficha técnica resumen del método utilizado en nuestra investigación.

CUADRO 1  
Ficha técnica

Universo poblacional	Estudiantes de enseñanzas medias
Muestra	292 estudiantes de Marketing Bachillerato (173) Grado Medio (33) Grado Superior (86)
Procedimiento de muestreo	Por conveniencia y cuotas (Bachiller y FP) <i>Online</i> – presencial
Cuestionario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceso a Internet</li> <li>• Uso Internet actividades enseñanza aprendizaje</li> <li>• Uso Internet en el proceso de aprendizaje</li> <li>• Utilidad herramientas 2.0</li> <li>• Estilos de aprendizaje</li> <li>• Capacidad aprender y obtener resultados</li> <li>• Información demográfica</li> </ul>
Análisis de datos	Univariantes -> Porcentajes y frecuencias Bivariantes -> Tablas de contingencias y análisis de la chi-cuadrado Multivariantes -> Análisis factorial y de segmentación latente
Software utilizado	SPSS 21® Latent Gold®

## 4. Resultados

### 4.1. Análisis descriptivos

#### 4.1.1. Uso de herramientas 2.0 en la docencia

Existen múltiples y variadas herramientas sociales. Para el presente estudio hemos analizado un total de dieciocho herramientas 2.0 que pueden ser utilizadas por los alumnos en sus procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

Concretamente, del conjunto de herramientas Web 2.0, entre las que presentan un mayor porcentaje de uso destacamos: los servicios de mensajería (*WhatsApp*) (76% de los estudiantes), seguidas de, redes sociales virtuales (*Facebook, Twitter,...*) (66,1%), herramientas de vídeo (*YouTube, Vimeo...*) (24,3%) y de comunicación (*Google Talk, Skype...*) (13,7%), mientras que las herramientas que menos utilizan diariamente los alumnos son: espacios de documentos y presentaciones (*SlideShare, Docstoc...*) (3,4%), marcadores sociales (*Deicious, Stumbleupon...*) (2,7%), agregadores RSS (*RSS Feed, Google Reader,...*) (1,4%), y, por último, esquemas y mapas mentales (*CmapTools...*) (0,7%).

Por otro lado, debemos hacer una apreciación en la frecuencia de uso de dos herramientas 2.0, concretamente, el aula virtual y las *wikis* (*Wikipedia, Wikispaces..*), que aun siendo la quinta y sexta herramienta más utilizada (con un 12,7% y un 12,3% respectivamente), si consideramos la frecuencia de uso semanal, pasarían a ser más utilizadas que las herramientas de comunicación (32,5%), ocupando las *wikis* el cuarto lugar (44,5%) y el aula virtual el quinto (35,0%).

#### 4.1.2. Uso de herramientas 2.0 en función del género

En este epígrafe, utilizando la técnica descriptiva de tablas de contingencias y, mediante la prueba de independencia chi-cuadrado, determinaremos si existe relación o no entre la frecuencia de uso de dichas herramientas distinguiendo entre hombres y mujeres.

Hemos observado que la frecuencia de uso de las herramientas Web 2.0 es superior en las mujeres cuando se trata de calendarios y agendas (35,2% frente a un 14,6%), mientras que en los hombres se observa una mayor frecuencia en las herramientas de audio (31,8% frente al 20,3%), vídeo (77,2% frente al 61,5%) y aquellos espacios para guardar y compartir documentos (32,4% frente a un 24,7%), en el resto de las herramientas no observamos una frecuencia de uso diferenciado entre ambos.

Según la prueba de independencia chi-cuadrado, el uso de las herramientas sociales depende del género del usuario, concretamente en las herramientas de audio ( $\chi^2=16,549$ ; sig.=0,005), vídeo ( $\chi^2=17,858$ ; sig.=0,003), espacios para guardar y compartir documentos ( $\chi^2=11,803$ ; sig.=0,038) y los blogs ( $\chi^2=16,386$ ; sig.=0,006), son más usadas por los hombres. En el resto de las herramientas no se aprecia una diferencia significativa entre el uso de las mismas y el género (véase la Tabla 1).

TABLA 1  
Uso herramientas Web 2.0 – Género

Herramientas 2.0	$\chi^2$	Sig.
Herramientas de audios (Webs con <i>Podcasts, Itunes ..</i> )	16,549	0,005
Vídeo ( <i>Youtube, Dailymotion, Vimeo</i> )	17,858	0,003
Espacios para guardar y compartir documentos ( <i>Dropbox, Box, Sugar Sync, Google Drive, iCloud</i> )	11,803	0,038
Blogs	16,386	0,006

#### 4.1.3. Uso de herramientas Web 2.0 según estudios cursados

De la misma forma que con el género, hemos analizado si existe relación entre la frecuencia de uso y el curso académico en el cual se encuentran los alumnos (1º y 2º Bachillerato Ciencias, Bachillerato Humanidades y Bachillerato Ciencias Sociales; 1º y 2º Grado Medio; 1º y 2º Grado Superior), utilizando la misma técnica descriptiva de tablas de contingencias y la prueba de independencia chi-cuadrado.

La frecuencia de uso de las herramientas sociales en relación con los estudios cursados muestra que las herramientas más utilizadas en todos los cursos son la mensajería (71,0%, 81,3%, 69,0%, 75,0%, 75,0%, 92,9%, 66,7%, 77,8%, 89,8% y 75,7% respectivamente para cada uno de los cursos analizados, de 1º de Bachillerato de Ciencias a 2º de Grado Superior), las redes sociales virtuales



(62,9%, 56,3%, 62,1%, 75,0%, 66,7%, 71,4%, 50,0%, 55,6%, 73,5% y 70,3% respectivamente) y, en tercer lugar las herramientas de video (40,3%, 37,5%, 13,8%, 15,0%, 0,0%, 28,6%, 29,2%, 22,2%, 26,5% y 10,8% respectivamente). Analizando los diferentes estudios cursados en su conjunto, observamos que los ciclos formativos, tanto de grado medio como de grado superior, hacen un mayor uso de todas las herramientas 2.0, especialmente destaca 2º de grado medio.

Según la prueba de independencia chi-cuadrado, el uso de algunas herramientas sociales depende de los estudios cursados. Concretamente, el aula virtual ( $\chi^2=130,026$ ; sig.=0,000), los espacios para guardar y compartir documentos ( $\chi^2=75,354$ ; sig.=0,003) y las herramientas de ofimática ( $\chi^2=73,814$ ; sig.=0,004) son más utilizadas por los alumnos que cursan estudios de grado medio y grado superior, los vídeos ( $\chi^2=84,191$ ; sig.=0,000) son usado en menor medida por los estudiantes de 2º de bachillerato en cualquiera de las modalidades, las imágenes ( $\chi^2=73,171$ ; sig.=0,005) se utilizan sobre todo en los estudiantes de 1º de bachillerato y ciclos formativos de grado medio, las aplicaciones de mapas ( $\chi^2=76,486$ ; sig.=0,002) especialmente utilizadas por los alumnos que estudian 2º de bachillerato, modalidad de ciencias sociales, los marcadores sociales ( $\chi^2=64,904$ ; sig.=0,028), los calendarios y agendas ( $\chi^2=67,721$ ; sig.=0,016), las herramientas de audio ( $\chi^2=63,333$ ; sig.=0,037) y los buscadores personales ( $\chi^2=65,842$ ; sig.=0,023) más usados por los alumnos de grado medio, sobre todo en el segundo curso. En el resto de las herramientas no se aprecia una relación significativa (Véase Tabla 2).

TABLA 2  
Uso herramientas Web 2.0 – Estudios cursados (Bachillerato/Ciclos Formativos)

Herramientas 2.0	$\chi^2$	Sig.
Aula Virtual	130,026	0,000
Espacios para guardar y compartir documentos ( <i>Dropbox,Box,SugarSync,GoogleDrive,iCloud</i> )	75,354	0,003
Ofimática ( <i>GoogleDocs,Thinkfree</i> )	73,814	0,004
Imagen ( <i>Flickr,Picasa,Panoramio</i> )	73,171	0,005
Aplicaciones sobre mapas ( <i>GoogleMaps,BingMaps</i> )	76,486	0,002
Marcadores sociales ( <i>Delicious,Stumbleupon</i> )	64,904	0,028
Calendarios y agendas ( <i>GoogleCalendar,AirSet</i> )	67,721	0,016
Herramientas de audios ( <i>Podcasts,Itunes</i> )	63,333	0,037
Buscadores personalizados ( <i>Tecnorati,GoogleBooks,GoogleAcadémico</i> )	65,842	0,023
Vídeo ( <i>Youtube,Dailymotion,Vimeo</i> )	84,191	0,000

#### 4.1.4. Capacidades de aprendizaje y resultados obtenidos

Por último, dentro de los análisis descriptivos, se han analizado, mediante porcentajes, las capacidades que los alumnos de la muestra presentan a la hora de aprender y para conseguir los resultados.

A la vista de los resultados obtenidos, en cuanto a las capacidades para aprender, observamos que, excepto para la utilización de la biblioteca para conseguir información (el 44,9% consideran que son totalmente incapaces o poco capaces), para el resto de capacidades los estudiantes se muestran capaces, destacando la capacidad para finalizar las tareas y actividades en el plazo previsto (51,7%), tomar notas durante las clases (32,2%), utilizar Internet para desarrollar las actividades y tareas (46,6%), organizar un lugar de estudio sin distracciones (32,5%) y participar en discusiones de clase (29,5%).

Observamos que los resultados obtenidos en las dos capacidades directamente relacionadas con la obtención de información para las actividades de aprendizaje, en la biblioteca o en Internet, están en clara consonancia con la muestra objeto de estudio, mayoritariamente nativos digitales.

En cuanto a la capacidad para conseguir los resultados, observamos que la principal dificultad encontrada es a la hora de expresarse en más de un idioma (26%), mientras que no encuentran dificultades, principalmente, para trabajar en equipo (47,8%), identificar, analizar y definir la

información que define un problema (49,0%), aprender y trabajar de forma continua, autodirigida y autónoma (46,9%) y, la utilización y aplicación de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación (38,4%). Estos resultados están en concordancia con el rol que en la actualidad deben de tener los alumnos en la educación, como participantes activos en el proceso, capaces de trabajar autónomamente, pero guiados por el docente, realizando trabajos colaborativos y, bajo el marco de las nuevas tecnologías como eje central del proceso de educación.

#### **4.2. Perfil del estudiante: uso de herramientas 2.0 y estilos de aprendizaje**

Se ha utilizado la metodología de segmentación latente para clasificar y definir el perfil de los estudiantes de centros educativos de Educación Secundaria, con respecto al uso, actitud y percepciones de las herramientas de la Web 2.0. Este tipo de procedimiento permite asignar los estudiantes a los segmentos a partir de sus probabilidades de pertenencia a los grupos, rompiendo con la restricción de asignación determinista propia del análisis *cluster* no jerárquico (Dillon y Kumar, 1994). Esta metodología asigna los individuos a los diferentes segmentos, bajo la suposición de que los datos provienen de una mezcla de distribuciones de probabilidad, es decir, de varios grupos o segmentos homogéneos que están mezclados en proporciones desconocidas (McLachlan y Basford, 1988). La ventaja de los modelos de clases latentes es que se pueden incorporar variables con diversas escalas de medición (continua, ordinal o nominal) (Vermunt y Magidson, 2005). Además, los modelos por lo general pueden incorporar las variables independientes que se pueden utilizar para describir (en lugar de definir o medir) las clases latentes. Estas variables exógenas son conocidas como covariables o variables de agrupación (MCutcheon, 1987; Hagenaars, 1993; Vermunt y Magidson, 2005).

En este estudio, las variables utilizadas como indicadores para el análisis *cluster* se han basado en la frecuencia en que los estudiantes usan las herramientas 2.0, dentro y/o fuera del aula, en sus procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje, utilizando para ello una escala diferencial-semántico ordinal de seis puntos (nunca, muy esporádicamente, cada dos o tres meses, varias veces al mes, varias veces a la semana, todos los días) de las 18 herramientas de Web Social incluidas en el cuestionario.

En función de los posicionamientos de los distintos individuos en relación a estas variables, pretendemos obtener agrupaciones que cumplan los principios de máxima coherencia interna y máxima diferenciación externa. Para ello hemos optado por utilizar el *software* estadístico LatentGold 4.5<sup>5</sup>.

Basándonos en los indicadores anteriormente mencionados y con el fin de realizar una segmentación de estudiantes en función de sus estilos de aprendizaje, se han introducido como covariables dentro del modelo de segmentación las escalas de Honey y Mumford (LSQ) en su versión reducida, y la de Kolb (LSI), previamente contrastadas en publicaciones académicas, lo que nos ha permitido asegurarnos la fiabilidad y validez de las mismas. En este caso, hemos identificado los cuatro estilos de aprendizaje de ambas escalas: teórico, pragmático, activo y reflexivo, para la escala de Honey-Mumford; así como experiencia concreta (EC), observación reflexiva (OR), conceptualización abstracta (CA) y experimentación activa (EA), para la escala de Kolb.

Siguiendo las escalas propuestas por los autores, la escala LSQ se ha medido mediante una escala *Likert* de cinco puntos para cada uno de los 40 ítems que la componen. La escala LSI se ha medido mediante una escala diferencial-semántico ordinal de cuatro puntos en la que se tenía que indicar el orden de preferencia del ítem.

Una vez identificados los cuatro estilos de cada escala (LSQ y LSI), hemos convertido las puntuaciones originales en dicotómicas. El objetivo de la conversión dicotómica reside en conseguir comparar ambas escalas entre las puntuaciones obtenidas por cada individuo encuestado (Barron, 1996), así como para definir los puntos de corte que determinan cada uno de los tipos de estilos de aprendizaje (Kolb y Kolb, 2005). Para desarrollar dicha conversión, se han dividido por percentiles las puntuaciones indicadas por los estudiantes (Kolb y Kolb, 2005). Así, a partir de la media obtenida para cada tipo de estilo de aprendizaje se estableció una dicotomía, numerando como 1 las puntuaciones por encima de la media y como 0 las restantes. Este procedimiento sigue la lógica de que quien esté por encima de la media es quien realmente presenta el tipo de aprendizaje en cuestión.

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<sup>5</sup> No se incluye la tabla de indicadores obtenida en la segmentación latente, debido su extensión. Los valores p-valor indican diferencias significativas en el uso de todas las herramientas-indicadores. La explicación de los indicadores se detalla en los perfiles obtenidos.

Asimismo, como covariables, hemos introducido dos variables descriptivas con el objetivo de perfilar el análisis de segmentación: el género y el curso que el estudiante estaba realizando cuando realizó de la encuesta.

El primer paso de la estimación consiste en la elección del número óptimo de segmentos, por lo que el modelo fue estimado desde 1 (no existe heterogeneidad) hasta 8 (existen 8 segmentos).

El ajuste del modelo fue evaluado con el criterio de información bayesiana (*bayesian information criterion*, BIC), que permite identificar el modelo con el menor número de clases que se ajusta mejor a los datos. El menor valor del BIC fue considerado como indicador del mejor modelo (Vermunt y Magidson, 2005). En nuestro caso, la mejor alternativa es dividir la muestra en tres grupos distintos de estudiantes, donde el BIC se minimiza, en la Tabla 4 se muestra los resultados para el cluster 3.

TABLA 4  
Resumen de los resultados de los modelos

Número de conglomerados	LL	BIC(LL)	Npar	Class.Err.	$E_s$	$R^2$
3-Cluster	-7283,7488	15951,788	244	0,0511	0,8764	0,8813

LL=log-likelihood; BIC=criterio de información bayesiana; Npar=número de parámetros; Class.Err.=error de clasificación;  $E_s$ = estadístico de entropía (*entropy R-squared*);  $R^2$ =R cuadrado (*Standard R-squared*)

Una vez escogido el número de segmentos más idóneos según el ajuste del modelo indicado, pasamos a determinar el perfil de los segmentos obtenidos. El nombre asignado a los tres grupos, ordenados de menor a mayor uso de las herramientas 2.0 utilizadas en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje ha sido: cluster “introvertido-reflexivo” representa el 43,01% de los estudiantes; cluster “novel-pragmático” el 35,77%; y cluster “social-activo” el 21,21%.

Finalmente, para todos los indicadores, es decir, las herramientas 2.0 utilizadas en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje, se ha obtenido un p-valor significativo asociado con el estadístico de Wald, lo que indica que cada indicador discrimina entre los *clusters* de forma significativa (Vermunt y Magidson, 2005). Por lo tanto, existe independencia entre pertenecer a un grupo u otro tanto en lo que respecta a cada una de las aplicaciones 2.0 analizadas (aceptando el uso del WhatsApp al 87% de nivel de confianza).

Partiendo del análisis de indicadores previamente señalado y con el fin de observar la composición de los tres segmentos a partir de los estilos de aprendizaje de los estudiantes, en la Tabla 5 se han incluido las puntuaciones medias que toma cada segmento en cada una de las covariables relativas a los dos estilos de aprendizaje estudiados (LSQ y LSI). Téngase en cuenta que los indicadores correspondientes a las escalas de los estilos de aprendizaje pueden tomar valores entre 0 y 1, ya que los ítems que componían cada escala se dicotomizaron para posibilitar su comparación. Ello nos lleva a obtener cada grupo ordenado de menor a mayor grado de reflexión versus actividad respecto al estilo de aprendizaje del estudiante, coincidentes con el orden obtenido en los indicadores (i.e. de menor a mayor uso de las herramientas 2.0).

Por último y con el fin de completar la composición de los tres segmentos obtenidos, se ha analizado el perfil de los grupos resultantes de acuerdo con la información de otras dos covariables: género y etapa educativa en curso.

Los contrastes asociados al estadístico Wald y el p-valor concluyen que existen diferencias significativas entre los segmentos en cuanto a todas las tipologías que constituyen ambas escalas (i.e. LSQ: teórico, pragmático, activo y reflexivo; LSI: EC, OR, CA y EA), así como en las dos restantes covariables analizadas (i.e. género y etapa educativa). Por lo tanto, existe independencia entre pertenecer a un grupo u otro tanto en lo que respecta a cada estilo de aprendizaje (aceptando el estilo teórico a un 88% de nivel de confianza), el género y la etapa educativa.

TABLA 5  
Perfil de los segmentos obtenidos (covariables)

	Covariables	Introvertido-reflexivo	Novel- práctico	Social	Wald	p-valor
Escala de Honey y Mumford (LSQ)*	Teórico	0,7152	0,7139	0,7125	3,4328	0,12
	Pragmático	0,7053	0,7084	0,7017	8,6107	0,027
	Activo	0,6657	0,6380	0,6716	8,8202	0,024
	Reflexivo	0,7597	0,7352	0,7036	12,7715	0,001

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Escala de Kolb scale (LSI)*	Experiencia concreta	0,6807	0,7318	0,6862	5,1079	0,095
	Observación reflexiva	0,6125	0,5313	0,5950	5,1101	0,095
	Conceptualización abstracta	0,6317	0,6080	0,5857	5,1262	0,094
	Experimentación activa	0,5751	0,5689	0,6329	5,0949	0,096
Género	Hombre	35,38%	22,84%	68,01%	24,3822	5,1e-6
	Mujer	64,62%	77,16%	31,99%		
Etapa educativa en curso	Bachillerato Ciencias	25,56%	55,23%	18,63%		
	Bachillerato Humanidades	19,08%	5,43%	2,16%		
	Bachillerato Ciencias Sociales	9,52%	18,87%	15,35%	51,1021	2,5e-8
	Grado Medio	11,47%	4,59%	22,48%		
	Grado Superior	38,68%	11,57%	41,39%		

\* Se ha indicado la media de las respuestas afirmativas (variables dicotómicas)

En negrita se señala la mayor importancia relativa entre cada categoría de cada segmento

A partir de los resultados obtenidos, podemos distinguir los tres segmentos con las siguientes características:

- “Introvertido-reflexivo”. Es el grupo de estudiantes más elevado (43,01% de la muestra) y se caracterizan por presentar un estilo de aprendizaje teórico y reflexivo (según escala LSQ) y de OR y CA (según escala LSI), y cuyo uso de las herramientas 2.0 para el aprendizaje no es excesivamente elevado. En definitiva, se caracterizan por ser el grupo más reflexivo y teórico en su aprendizaje y menos activo en la Web Social. El 25,53% nunca utiliza el aula virtual, el 58% nunca utiliza calendarios web, un 42,83% no utiliza formatos de audio como *podcasts*. Sí utilizan formatos de vídeo (35,14%), aunque en menos porcentaje que el resto de grupos. Pero el uso de *Dropbox* no es utilizado nunca por casi la mitad de los estudiantes encuestados (46,56%), e igualmente sucede con *Google Talk* (41,58%), aplicaciones de presentación como *Slideshare* (49,47%), aplicaciones de etiquetado como *Delicious* (95,83%), *Google Books* (70,09%), *Blogs* (38,35%), aplicaciones web para compartir fotos como *Flickr* (51,96%), uso de mapas perceptuales (82,74%), uso de herramientas de ofimática (73,38%), uso de las redes sociales virtuales (8,42%), herramientas de *geolocalización* como *Google Maps* (43,77%) y *RSS* (89,14%). En el caso de las *Wikis*, este segmento lo utiliza todos los días mayor proporción que en el caso del grupo intermedio (i.e. “novel-pragmático”). Sin embargo, el *WhatsApp* lo utilizan todos los días un mayor porcentaje que el segmento “Social-activo” (73,20%). Este segmento está compuesto especialmente por chicas (64,62%). Y, con respecto a la etapa educativa cursada, el porcentaje más predominante es el de estudiantes que cursan Bachillerato de Humanidades (19,08%). En suma, se trata de un perfil caracterizado por no utilizar en exceso las herramientas 2.0 para su aprendizaje, son metódicos, reflexivos y teóricos, principalmente mujeres y de disciplinas formativas relacionadas con las Humanidades.
- “Novel-pragmático”. Este segmento lo compone el 35,77% de la muestra analizada. Se caracterizan por presentar un estilo de aprendizaje pragmático (70,84%, según escala LSQ) y de EC (73,18%, según escala LSI). El nivel de uso de las TICs es medio. Herramientas 2.0 como aula virtual (22,50%), aplicaciones como *podcasts* (19,04%), vídeo (44,91%), *Dropbox* (20,94%), *Google Talk* (25,46%) y redes sociales virtuales (14,57%), las utilizan varias veces por semana. Este segmento utiliza en mayor porcentaje las herramientas de mensajería instantánea como *WhatsApp* (83,97%) y de comunicación como *Google Talk* y *Skype* (20,30%). El resto de herramientas las utilizan con menor asiduidad para el aprendizaje, aunque en mayor proporción que el segmento anterior. Un 77,16% está conformado por mujeres y, respecto a los estudios cursados, este grupo se caracteriza por realizar Bachillerato de Ciencias (55,23%) y Bachillerato de Ciencias Sociales (18,87%). En suma, este grupo presenta una actividad media en el uso de aplicaciones 2.0 para su proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje, son más prácticos y concisos en su estilo de aprendizaje, mayoritariamente están formados por estudiantes del género femenino y cursan principalmente el Bachillerato de Ciencias y de Ciencias Sociales.
- “Social-activo”. Este grupo lo compone el 21,21% de la muestra. Se caracterizan por presentar un estilo de aprendizaje activo (67,16%, según escala LSQ) y de EA (63,29%, según escala LSI). En comparación con los otros dos grupos, muestra el mayor porcentaje de uso diario de

todas las herramientas 2.0 analizadas (i.e. aula virtual un 18,53%, *Google Calendar* un 17,15%, *podcasts* un 17,48%, aplicaciones de vídeo como *YouTube* un 31,69%, *Dropbox* un 20,17%, *Slideshare* un 10,29%, *Delicious* un 9,39%, *Google Books*, un 20,02%, *Blogs* un 23,02%, *Wikis* un 25,07%, *Flickr* un 14,31%, mapas conceptuales un 2,58%, *Office* un 18,49%, redes sociales virtuales un 69,41%, *Google Maps* un 13,87% y *RSS* un 5,41%). Curiosamente este grupo utiliza en menor grado, frente al resto, la aplicación *WhatsApp* de mensajería instantánea. Se caracteriza este grupo por estar principalmente compuesto por chicos (68,01%), cuya etapa académica es Grado Medio y Grado Superior (22,48% y 41,39% respectivamente). En suma, este segmento presenta un mayor grado de actividad con las herramientas 2.0, es activo y experimental en su estilo de aprendizaje, principalmente del género masculino y con una formación en curso más elevada que el resto de grupos.

## 5. Conclusiones e implicaciones. Limitaciones y futuras líneas

### 5.1. Conclusiones teóricas

Con la recensión de la literatura se pone de manifiesto de qué manera la incursión de la Web social en los Centros Educativos y, más concretamente a través de sus herramientas 2.0, puede contribuir a una mejora de su estrategia de gestión formativa y organizativa. Asimismo, se ha indagado si estas nuevas aplicaciones web están pasando a formar parte de la manera de organizar el Centro Educativo, teniendo como eje central, no sólo dichas herramientas, sino también a sus protagonistas principales: profesores y estudiantes. Las herramientas 2.0, sin embargo, no son utilizadas por los jóvenes de la misma manera, sino que son las herramientas denominadas emocionales (García y García, 2013), las que tienen un mayor impacto, destacando entre ellas las redes sociales virtuales, las aplicaciones de mensajería y las herramientas de vídeo (Koçak y Oyman, 2012). Por ello, implementar dichas herramientas en los procesos educativos y, más concretamente, formando parte de la metodología de trabajo, puede llevar a mejorar los resultados (Hernández, 2008; Moreno, 2012).

Esta nueva forma de gestionar los Centros Educativos, tiene como finalidad, no sólo que el alumnado alcance las competencias educativas básicas de cada etapa, sino que, además, los prepare para su futuro laboral, dónde la Web 2.0 es una realidad y, las competencias demandadas a los trabajadores son coincidentes (Esteve, 2009). Así mismo, debemos de tener en cuenta que los alumnos que actualmente forman parte del sistema educativo son nativos digitales.

### 5.2. Conclusiones e implicaciones para la gestión del Centro Educativo

Dando respuesta a la proposición de investigación P1 (i.e. ¿Cuáles son las prioridades de los estudiantes en el uso de la Web Social como herramienta de aprendizaje?), del conjunto de herramientas sociales, las que más utilizan los estudiantes y, en consecuencia, los Centros Educativos, son los servicios de mensajería, seguidas de redes sociales, herramientas de vídeo y de comunicación, mientras que entre las que menos utilizan están los espacios de documentos y presentaciones, los marcadores sociales, los agregadores RSS y, en último lugar, esquemas y mapas mentales. Este resultado está en sintonía con los principales *sites* visitados en España; con las estadísticas de usuarios en redes sociales virtuales, que revelan que redes sociales virtuales como *Facebook* y *Twitter* cuentan en la actualidad con 17 y 4,7 millones de usuarios, respectivamente, registrados en España<sup>6</sup>; y, por último, con los datos que revelan que *WhatsApp* es la aplicación más usada por los usuarios es sus dispositivos 3G (AIMC, 2013). Cabe destacar también la frecuencia de uso que los alumnos hacen de una herramienta 2.0 concreta, los blogs que, de forma general y sin hacer ninguna distinción por género o nivel educativo, están cayendo en desuso a favor de otras herramientas sociales (AIMC, 2013). Estos resultados son acordes con investigaciones anteriores (e.g. García y García, 2013), donde las herramientas sociales más utilizadas, valoradas y que les reportan una mayor satisfacción son las redes sociales virtuales, seguidas por las herramientas vídeo, mientras que la menos conocidas y usadas son los marcadores sociales (Kocak y Oyman, 2012; García y García, 2013).

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<sup>6</sup> Datos del año 2012. Estadísticas de usuarios en redes sociales. Agencia de Marketing *online* Concepto 05. Disponible en: <http://www.concepto05.com/2013/07/estadisticas-usuarios-redes-sociales-en-espana-2013/> (consultada: 1 de septiembre de 2013).

Dando respuesta a las proposiciones de investigación P2 y P3 (i.e. ¿Afecta el género y el nivel de estudios cursados sobre el grado de adopción de la Web 2.0 en un contexto educativo?), hemos observado que existen diferencias significativas.

Atendiendo al género (P2) existen diferencias de uso en algunas de estas herramientas, concretamente, las mujeres hacen un uso más frecuente de los calendarios y agendas web, mientras que los hombres utilizan más las herramientas de audio, vídeo y aquellos espacios para guardar y compartir documentos. En el resto de herramientas, no se observa una discriminación significativa. Los resultados obtenidos son coincidentes con los arrojados por la investigación de García y García (2013), donde los hombres muestran una mayor preferencia y un uso más frecuente por herramientas instrumentales, mientras que las mujeres disfrutan más con las herramientas sociales y emocionales.

En relación con los estudios cursados (P3) observamos que los ciclos formativos, tanto de grado medio como de grado superior, hacen un mayor uso de todas las herramientas 2.0, especialmente destaca 2º de grado medio. Entre las principales herramientas que ofrecen una diferencia significativa con respecto a la etapa educativa que cursan los alumnos, destacan: el aula virtual, los espacios para guardar y compartir documentos y las herramientas de ofimática, más utilizadas por los alumnos que cursan ciclos formativos de grado medio y grado superior; los vídeos menos usados por los estudiantes de 2º de bachillerato en cualquier modalidad; las imágenes más utilizadas si los alumnos cursan 1º de bachillerato y ciclos formativos de grado medio; las aplicaciones de mapas, especialmente utilizadas por los alumnos que estudian 2º de bachillerato, en la modalidad de ciencias sociales; los marcadores sociales, los calendarios y agendas, las herramientas de audio y, los buscadores personales más usados por los alumnos de grado medio, sobre todo en el segundo curso.

Con el fin de dar respuesta la proposición de investigación P4 (i.e. ¿Cómo influyen las capacidades de los estudiantes para aprender y para conseguir los resultados en competencias que deben alcanzar al finalizar la etapa educativa?), podemos concluir que, respecto a las capacidades de aprendizaje, los alumnos solo presentan dificultades en la utilización de la biblioteca para obtener información, el resto de capacidades no les suponen ninguna dificultad. En cuanto a la capacidad para conseguir resultados, la mayor dificultad la encuentran en expresarse en más de un idioma, para la cual se siente poco o totalmente incapaces, mientras que para el resto de capacidades no presentan dificultades. Basándonos en Esteve (2009), podemos afirmar que los alumnos se sienten capaces de alcanzar las competencias principalmente demandadas en el mercado laboral.

A partir del análisis de segmentación latente hemos dado respuesta a las proposiciones de investigación P5 (i.e. ¿Qué tipos de segmentos de estudiantes podemos encontrar a partir del nivel de adopción y uso de aplicaciones 2.0 como herramientas de estudio?) y P6 (i.e. ¿de qué manera influye el estilo de aprendizaje del estudiante y sus características personales en el uso de las herramientas 2.0?), obteniendo tres perfiles diferentes:

- Introvertido-reflexivo. A este segmento pertenecen la mayoría de los estudiantes de la muestra. Sus estilos de aprendizaje característicos son teórico y reflexivo (según la escala LSQ) y de OR y CA (según la escala LSI). No hacen mucho uso de las herramientas 2.0 para sus procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje, podríamos decir que es el grupo menos activo en la Web Social. Los alumnos pertenecientes a este segmento estudian Bachillerato de Humanidades, son mujeres y se caracterizan por ser metódicos, reflexivos y teóricos.
- Novel-pragmático. Este sería el segundo segmento con un mayor porcentaje de alumnos. Su estilo principal de aprendizaje es el pragmático (según escala LSQ) y de EC (según escala LSI). Hacen un uso medio de las herramientas 2.0. Está formado por mujeres, que realizan estudios, principalmente, en Bachillerato, en las modalidades de Ciencias y Ciencias Sociales. Los alumnos pertenecientes a este segmento son más prácticos, concisos y, realistas en su estilo de aprendizaje.
- Social-activo. Es el segmento menos numeroso de la muestra. Se caracteriza por un estilo de aprendizaje activo (según la escala LSQ) y de EA (según la escala LSI). Es el grupo que utiliza con mayor frecuencia las herramientas 2.0, haciendo el mayor uso diario de todas las analizadas. Destacando por ser el que menos utiliza las herramientas de mensajería. Es un segmento compuesto mayoritariamente por hombres que cursan ciclos formativos de grado medio o de

grado superior. Los alumnos que pertenecen a este segmento son más activos, espontáneos y arriesgados en sus aprendizajes.

Por último, para dar respuesta a la proposición de investigación P7 (i.e. ¿Qué estrategias de gestión estratégica y comercial han de adoptar los Centros Educativos para atender a las demandas observadas en los diferentes perfiles de estudiantes?, las herramientas sociales que mejorarían la práctica docente y se adaptarían a cada uno de los grupos encontrados, serían las siguientes:

- Introvertido-reflexivo. Herramientas que despierten el interés y provoquen la curiosidad, el pensamiento y la detección de incoherencias (e.g. *wikis* o *GoogleMaps*). Estos recursos permitirían despertar esa curiosidad de una manera más motivadora, pero centrándose sobre todo en la recogida y análisis de la información.
- Novel-pragmático. Se adaptarían mejor aquellas herramientas que permitan una aplicación práctica de las materias estudiadas (e.g. simuladores o juegos virtuales).
- Social-activo. Se adaptan mejor herramientas donde se desarrolla el trabajo de grupo, pero teniendo en cuenta que este trabajo no pueden tener un horizonte temporal a largo plazo (e.g., blogs, herramientas de ofimática o plataformas para compartir documentos, archivos de vídeo o imágenes).

### **5.3. Limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación**

Una limitación encontrada en nuestra investigación es que únicamente hemos analizado el uso de las herramientas 2.0 y los estilos de aprendizaje desde la perspectiva de los estudiantes. Para futuras investigaciones proponemos que se analicen el uso que los docentes hacen de dichas herramientas, así como sus estilos preferentes de enseñanza. De esta forma se podría mejorar su uso con fines educativos, facilitando a los Centros el planteamiento de una formación que se ajuste a sus necesidades. Además, esta medida mejoraría la estrategia de gestión planteada por los Centros en sus proyectos educativos, al minimizar el rechazo que en muchas ocasiones presentan los docentes para introducir las herramientas sociales como un recurso didáctico más. Como afirman Pantoja y Huertas (2010), no solamente se deben de adquirir los conocimientos técnicos que permitan dominarlas, sino conseguir generar un cambio de mentalidad y una actitud positiva hacia el uso de las mismas.

En segundo lugar, nuestro trabajo ha analizado exclusivamente las herramientas 2.0. Sin embargo, el avance de las nuevas tecnologías sigue presente en la actualidad, siendo un elemento fundamental en la actividad económica de nuestra sociedad. Sería interesante para futuras investigaciones realizar un análisis de la nueva tecnología Web 3.0 con fines educativos. Como señala Celaya (2011) este nuevo modelo aporta una mayor información a los datos difundidos por los usuarios (la denominada era 3.0 o semántica web), lo que redundará en los *internautas*, al ser capaces de utilizarla de una manera más productiva. Además, gracias a ella los usuarios podrán identificar de una manera más sencilla la información de calidad (Cobo y Pardo, 2007). Dicha tecnología puede mejorar dos de los inconvenientes encontrados en la implantación de las herramientas 2.0 en el contexto educativo: el exceso de información y la falta de control y revisión de la información (Cabero, 2006; Moreno, 2012).

En tercer lugar, hemos de considerar que investigaciones previas afirman que los estilos de aprendizaje característicos de los alumnos de las distintas modalidades de bachillerato están en clara consonancia con las diferentes disciplinas universitarias (Segura, 2011; Santos y Santos, 2013; Williams, Brown y Etherington, 2013). En este sentido nos parece interesante plantear como futura línea de investigación la realización de un estudio comparativo con los estudiantes universitarios, concretamente aquellos que cursan el grado en Administración y Dirección de Empresas.

Por último, es importante destacar que nuestra investigación se ha realizado en un contexto concreto, la provincia de Cuenca, y más concretamente en una zona rural, pudiendo haber obtenido unos resultados limitados y relativamente sesgados. Para futuras investigaciones planteamos ampliar el estudio a toda la provincia, la Comunidad autónoma o, incluso, realizar una comparativa con otros países. Esta última línea de investigación estaría en concordancia con una de las variables que está cobrando mayor relevancia en los estudio de los últimos años (Alarcón, 2011; Choi y Totten, 2012).

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# MODELIZACIÓN DEL VALOR PERCIBIDO EN LA EDUCACION SUPERIOR Y SU EFECTO EN LA SATISFACCIÓN

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## RESUMEN

*El presente trabajo ofrece un estudio exploratorio acerca de cómo se modeliza el valor percibido en el caso de la educación superior y desde la perspectiva de los egresados. Así mismo, se analiza el impacto de los componentes sobre la satisfacción diferenciado según el sexo. Se obtienen siete dimensiones del valor: tres enmarcados en el valor social (integración en la sociedad, aceptación de amigos y familiares, y los amigos realizados durante la carrera), valor funcional, valor condicional, valor epistémico y emocional y el coste monetario como sacrificio percibido para obtener un título universitario. Para determinar la satisfacción, los valores epistémicos, emocionales y funcionales son los aspectos más importantes no habiendo diferencias según el género. El estudio supone una novedad dada la escasa literatura del valor en la universidad a pesar de que el estudiante realiza importantes sacrificios para obtener en título con la expectativa de conseguir unos beneficios laborales y personales adecuados. Además se analiza desde la óptica de los egresados y aplicado al contexto español.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE:

*Valor percibido, educación superior, satisfacción, diferencias según género*

## 1. Introducción

Las universidades poseen una larga historia de compromiso con el mundo y la sociedad. Las instituciones de educación superior son centros de formación, investigación y transmisión de conocimiento que además suponen un motor estratégico en el escenario productivo y económico de cualquier nación (Estudio GUNI, 2013). Las universidades, dada su importancia, deben transformarse y satisfacer a sus distintos públicos al ritmo de los tiempos debido a la gran influencia que ejercen en la sociedad y su potencial para contribuir al desarrollo humano y social.

Desde hace aproximadamente tres décadas las universidades han desarrollado y establecido políticas de marketing en su gestión (Litten, 1980; Naver y Slater, 1990; Mazzarol, 1998; Marzo, Pedraja y Rivera, 2006; Hemsley-Brown y Oplatka, 2006; Maringe y Mourad, 2012). Estas políticas han sido más complejas y difíciles de asimilar por las instituciones universitarias de carácter público. La adopción de prácticas de marketing ha sido una respuesta a los múltiples cambios políticos, tecnológicos y sociales (así como un aumento de la competencia y la internacionalización) que afecta al mundo de la educación superior.

Este contexto ha dado lugar a la preocupación de los gestores y académicos universitarios por analizar distintos factores que incrementen la mejora del servicio y permitan la correcta rendición de cuentas de la universidad al conjunto de la sociedad con los distintos públicos que la configuran.

La mayoría de la investigación se ha dirigido a conocer cómo es la percepción de los estudiantes acerca de la principal variable durante el transcurso de su experiencia, es decir, la calidad universitaria (Harvey, 1995; Bigné, Moliner y Sánchez, 2003; Munteanu et al., 2010; Sultan y Wong, 2012). Así mismo se ha investigado los resultados del servicio universitario como son la satisfacción (Elliot y Shin, 2002; Biggs, 2003; Alves y Raposo, 2004) o el comportamiento de intención universitaria (recomendación a otras personas, probabilidad de repetir la institución) (Felton et al., 1995; Zellweger et al., 2011).

Sin embargo, dentro de la educación superior se ha obviado prácticamente la importancia del valor percibido (Nguyen y LeBlanc, 1999; Alves y Raposo, 2011) a pesar de ser un elemento esencial puesto que el estudiante realiza importantes sacrificios con la expectativa de que su formación le repercuta positivamente en su experiencia laboral o aportación personal.

Recientes estudios sobre el sector de la educación superior como los de la Fundación BBVA (2012), Informe CYD (2012) o StudyPortals (2013) reconocen la importancia del valor estratégico de la universidad en la sociedad para el desarrollo de la misma. Además, el propio Informe de Expertos del Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte (2012) establece que deben realizarse estudios desde la perspectiva de los egresados puesto que este *stakeholder* es el único que puede determinar el auténtico valor de un título universitario en función del sacrificio realizado y los beneficios obtenidos.

De forma específica, los objetivos que se persiguen en este trabajo son:

1. Analizar el valor percibido dentro del sector universitario.
2. Explorar y evaluar los principales componentes que conforman el valor percibido desde la perspectiva de los egresados.
3. Conocer cuáles son los componentes el valor percibido que da lugar a un mayor nivel de satisfacción con la experiencia universitaria.
4. Estudiar las diferencias según el sexo del egresado respecto el impacto del valor en la satisfacción.

## 2. Aproximación al concepto de valor percibido

La definición de valor percibido resulta de gran complejidad puesto que se trata de un concepto multifacético y complicado por sus numerosas interpretaciones (Huber, Hermann y Morgan, 2001). El concepto de valor está vinculado con la Teoría de la Equidad que considera la relación obtenida entre lo que entrega el consumidor y los resultados obtenidos del proveedor (Oliver y DeSarbo, 1988). Tal concepto de equidad se refiere a la evaluación de los clientes sobre lo que es justo y merecido por el coste de un servicio (Bol-

ton y Lemon, 1999), así un cliente se siente equitativamente tratado si tiene un saldo positivo de la relación entre el sacrificio y el resultado logrado (Pakdil y Harwood, 2005). De este modo, pensando inicialmente en el servicio universitario, se correspondería con el hecho de que el estudiante tiene una percepción positiva sobre los resultados logrados de los años invertidos y de esfuerzo en su etapa universitaria.

Zeithaml (1988) define el valor percibido como la evaluación general de los consumidores de un producto o servicio, en base a su percepción de lo que "dan" y lo que "reciben" a cambio. Sin embargo, la conceptualización del valor percibido también implica otros factores como el coste percibido, sacrificio o atributos intrínsecos y extrínsecos que se han añadido desde la definición original de Zeithaml.

Por otra parte, Rust y Oliver (1994) consideran al valor como "una combinación de los que se recibe y lo que se sacrifica" mientras que Bigné et al. (2000) lo define como "la valoración global que hace el consumidor de la utilidad de una relación de intercambio basada en las percepciones de lo que da y de lo que recibe". La composición del valor percibido depende del contexto y las características de cada servicio (Dodds, 1991). Sánchez et al. (2006) conciben el valor percibido como una variable dinámica, que se experimenta antes de la compra, en el momento de la compra y de uso y después del uso.

### **2.1. Dimensionalidad del valor percibido**

El concepto de valor ha sido analizado en distintos y muy variados sectores tales como el turismo (Gallarza y Saura, 2006; Chen y Tsai, 2007), la restauración (McDougall y Levesque, 2000; Ryu, Lee y Kim, 2012), sector hotelero (Hu et al., 2009), sector deportivo (Cronin et al., 2000; Murray y Howat, 2002), transporte u automovilismo (Cronin et al., 2000), comercio electrónico (Tam, 2004; Chang et al., 2009), telefonía móvil (Turel, Serenko y Bontis, 2007; Philström y Brush, 2008), en el negocio de las auditorías (Caruana et al., 2000) o en el de la salud (Cronin et al., 2000).

Los estudios del concepto de valor percibido han tenido dos perspectivas fundamentales en la investigación académica: por una parte su modelización desde una perspectiva multidimensional y, por otro lado, desde un enfoque unidimensional.

En primer lugar, los modelos de estructura unidimensional (Patterson y Spreng, 1997; Webb y Jagun, 1997; McDougall y Levesque, 2000; Martensen et al., 2000; Murray y Howat, 2002; Alves y Raposo, 2007; Chen y Tsai, 2007; Lee, Yoon y Lee, 2007; Pihlström y Brush, 2008; Hu et al., 2009; Alves y Raposo, 2010; Sánchez Fernández et al., 2010; Wang, 2010; Alves, 2011; Moosmayer y Siems, 2012; Ryu, Lee y Kiim, 2012; Dib y Alnazer, 2013; Clemes et al., 2013) se desarrollaron con el objetivo fundamental de comprender la relación del valor con otras variables tales como la imagen o la satisfacción. En otras palabras, la cuestión que más interés ha despertado acerca del valor es profundizar en el estudio de éste con otras variables, y para ello, se han enfocado desde una perspectiva unidimensional.

Por otra parte, la perspectiva **multidimensional** (Sheth et al., 1991; Grönroos, 1997; LeBlanc y Nguyen, 1999; Sánchez et al., 2006; Ledden et al., 2007; Brown y Mazarrol, 2009; Lai et al., 2012), surge como una respuesta al hecho de que el valor no supone únicamente un resultado de beneficio/sacrificio donde el aspecto más importante es el precio o coste monetario realizado por el cliente o consumidor.

Este enfoque tiene en cuenta los elementos tanto afectivos como sociales o emocionales del consumidor. En este sentido el trabajo realizado por Sheth et al. (1991) fue clave en la modelización desde esta perspectiva. Realizaron un estudio empírico donde estaban implicadas distintas disciplinas (desde el marketing hasta la psicología clínica) en la cual establecieron la siguiente escala acerca de las dimensiones del valor:

- **Valor funcional:** se relaciona con la percepción de prestaciones/utilidad de un producto o servicio, es decir, la capacidad de la oferta para cumplir su función, así como los beneficios asociados con la posesión del producto o la realización del servicio.
- **Valor social:** representa los beneficios que se derivan a través de interacciones inter-personales así como la aceptabilidad en su entorno social.

- **Valor epistémico:** beneficios derivados de la capacidad del servicio o producto a despertar la curiosidad o satisfacer un deseo de conocimiento.
- **Valor emocional:** registra los beneficios obtenidos a partir de la capacidad de la oferta para despertar sentimientos. Representa sentimientos como la curiosidad o los buenos recuerdos con el servicio.
- **Valor condicional:** representa los beneficios que se derivan de un contexto situacional específico.

Otra escala multidimensional a destacar fue la desarrollada por Sweeney y Soutar (2001) dentro de su estudio en el sector minorista. Los autores concluyeron que el valor está formado por cuatro dimensiones (también según elementos cognitivos y afectivos): el valor emocional, la calidad percibida, el valor social así como el valor monetario (precio).

Por otra parte los modelos de estructura **unidimensional** (Patterson y Spreng, 1997; Webb y Jagun, 1997; McDougall y Levesque, 2000; Martensen et al., 2000; Murray y Howat, 2002; Alves y Raposo, 2007; Chen y Tsai, 2007; Lee, Yoon y Lee, 2007; Pihlström y Brush, 2008; Hu et al., 2009; Alves y Raposo, 2010; Sánchez Fernández et al., 2010; Wang, 2010; Alves, 2011; Moosmayer y Siems, 2012; Ryu, Lee y Kiim, 2012; Dib y Alnazer, 2013; Clemes et al., 2013) se desarrollaron con el objetivo fundamental de comprender la relación del valor con otras variables tales como la imagen o la satisfacción. En otras palabras, la cuestión que más interés ha despertado acerca del valor es profundizar en el estudio del valor con otras variables, y para ello, se han enfocado desde una perspectiva unidimensional.

### 3. El valor percibido en el sector de la educación superior

Como se ha visto en el epígrafe anterior, el concepto de valor ya no supone únicamente satisfacer las necesidades funcionales o de supervivencia sino que ese valor representa necesidades de seguridad, auto-expresión, curiosidad, buscar nuevas experiencias o, incluso, el placer puesto que hoy en día cualquier producto o servicio puede ofrecer un universo simbólico y genera experiencias que signifiquen algo más para las personas desde un punto de vista emocional. Por ello, el valor tiene unas connotaciones diferentes en el mundo universitario y la experiencia del estudiante por todo lo que se deriva y conlleva la experiencia y el paso por la universidad.

Resulta fundamental para las universidades, comprender que la educación superior no ofrece productos o prestan servicios, sino que ofrecen valor. Un estudiante universitario deposita grandes cantidades de esfuerzo, ilusión y confianza en la obtención de un título universitario y espera que se recompense con una buena formación, con la adquisición de conocimientos, con encontrar un trabajo, hacer buenos amigos o tener en el futuro un nivel de vida de acuerdo a sus expectativas. La universidad ofrece, por tanto, un valor emocional y funcional que determinará en gran medida la satisfacción y su percepción.

Así, en el contexto de la educación superior, Lovelock (1983) considera el valor en la universidad como un servicio que ofrece acciones intangibles en las mentes de las personas, el valor percibido se configura como un proceso complejo en el que se evaluarán los beneficios en el ámbito académico, social y personal y las condiciones de empleo, mientras que los sacrificios suelen ser de naturaleza monetaria (matrícula, viaje, alojamiento, etc) o basados en el esfuerzo personal.

Por otra parte, Petruzellis y Romanazzi (2010) consideran que el valor de un servicio universitario no está determinado tanto por las infraestructuras o la calidad de las instalaciones (como podría ser el caso de otros tipos de servicios), sino por el conocimiento que poseen los docentes, los conocimientos adquiridos, la eficacia de los procesos administrativos y la percepción pública de un título universitario. Este concepto de valor percibido se configura dentro del contexto universitario como el resultado neto de la vida universitaria (Stafford, 1994), la percepción de los beneficios recibidos versus sacrificios, y la satisfacción de necesidades (Unni, 2005). En la tabla 1 se ofrecen los estudios que han versado sobre el valor percibido en el sector de la educación superior.

TABLA 1  
Estudios que miden el valor percibido en el sector universitario

Autor/año	Objetivo	Nº	Referencia	Medida del valor
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MODELIZACIÓN DEL VALOR PERCIBIDO EN LA EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR Y SU EFECTO EN LA SATISFACCIÓN

		ítem	original	
<b>UNIDIMENSIONAL</b>				
<b>Webb y Jagun (1997)</b>	Examinar la importancia de la atención al cliente en relación al comportamiento de “queja”, el valor percibido, la satisfacción y la lealtad en el contexto universitario.	2	Elaboración propia	Los beneficios que he recibido han sido mayor que el sacrificio realizado (tiempo, dinero, esfuerzo, etc.) Mi paso/asociación con la universidad ha sido buena.
<b>Marten-sen et al. (2000)</b>	Desarrollar y aplicar un modelo entre la calidad percibida de los estudiantes, su satisfacción y la lealtad. El modelo de modelo está inspirado en el Índice de Satisfacción del Cliente Europeo.	2	No especificado	Valor en relación con el esfuerzo realizado Valor en relación al resultado laboral y de los estudios
<b>Alvés y Raposo (2007)</b>	Elaborar y poner a prueba un modelo explicativo de la satisfacción de los estudiantes en la educación superior.	3	Elaboración propia	He alcanzado un buen trabajo Ha sido una buena inversión Está bien valorado por los empleadores
<b>Alvés (2010)</b>	Elaborar un índice de medición del valor percibido para las IES.	2	Alvés y Raposo (2007)	Considerando el precio que he pagado, he recibido un servicio de calidad. Comparado con otras universidades, he recibido un mejor servicio.
<b>Alvés y Raposo (2010)</b>	Validar un modelo de formación de la imagen universitaria (antecedentes y consecuencias) en base sus escalas validadas anteriormente.	3	Elaboración propia	Escala elaborada por los autores en su trabajo anterior (2007).
<b>Alvés (2011)</b>	Comprender la visión del valor percibido para establecer relaciones a largo plazo en la universidad.	2	Alvés (2010)	Medida de su trabajo anterior (2010)
<b>Moosmayer y Siems (2012)</b>	Investigar cómo la educación orientada en valores refiere a la satisfacción de los estudiantes.	4	Elaboración propia de la escala.	Medida basa en el valor emocional (valores transmitidos por las conferencias, profesores u otro personal)
<b>Duarte, Alvés y Raposo (2012)</b>	Analizar los factores que influyen en la satisfacción de los estudiantes con los servicios de educación superior y evaluar cómo cambian después de la graduación, cuando entran en el mercado laboral.	5	Elaboración propia.	He alcanzado un buen trabajo Ha sido una buen inversión Está bien valorado por los empleadores La universidad me ha ofrecido un buen servicio El coste monetario ha sido bueno
<b>Dib y Alnazer (2013)</b>	Determinar la influencia del valor percibido, calidad percibida e imagen en la satisfacción así como las consecuencias de ésta.	3	Alves y Raposo (2007)	He alcanzado un buen trabajo Ha sido un buen a inversión Está bien valorado por los empleadores
<b>Clemes et al. (2013)</b>	Analizar las relaciones entre las intenciones de comportamiento, satisfacción, calidad , valor percibido e imagen de la según edad, sexo, años de estudio y tipo de estudiante.	--	No especificado	No especificado
<b>MULTIDIMENSIONAL</b>				
<b>LeBlanc y Nguyen (1999)</b>	Examinar el concepto de valor de servicio en la educación universitaria de estudiantes de negocios	25	Elaboración propia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Valor funcional (6 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor social (4 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor emocional (3 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor epistémico (5 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor funcional (precio) (3 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor funcional (imagen) (4 ítems)</li> </ul>

<b>Ledden et al. (2007)</b>	Proporcionar un modelo acerca de los efectos de los valores personales en el desarrollo del valor percibido en el entorno educativo y el efecto de estas dimensiones en la satisfacción.	30	LeBlanc y Nguyen (1999) y Cronin et al. (1997)	Valor dado (25 ítems): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funcional, Epistémico, Emocional, Social y Condicional.</li> <li>▪ Valor recibido (5 ítems) : Sacrificio monetario y no monetario</li> </ul>
<b>Brown y Mazzarol (2009)</b>	Analizar el impacto de la imagen y de la calidad percibida sobre el valor percibido, satisfacción y lealtad.	17	Cronin y Taylor (1992,). Sweeney y Soutar (2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Valor emocional (5 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor social (4 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor funcional (precio) (4 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor funcional (calidad) (4 ítems)</li> </ul>
<b>Lai et al. (2011)</b>	Explorar el concepto de valor percibido en la educación superior desde la perspectiva de los estudiantes chinos para comprender cómo las diversas dimensiones del valor afectan a la satisfacción universitaria.	26	LeBlanc y Nguyen (1999)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Valor funcional (9 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor social (4 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor emocional (3 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor epistémico (3 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor funcional (valor de la experiencia) (3 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor funcional (imagen) (2 ítems)</li> <li>▪ Valor condicional (2 ítems)</li> </ul>

### 3.1. Proceso de creación de valor en la universidad

En nuestro estudio de valor percibido se establece que tal dimensión podría surgir de la comparativa de un estudiante del servicio recibido con sus expectativas así como de la etapa laboral surgida tras su etapa universitaria en función de los sacrificios realizados. Todo ello desde un punto de vista tanto emocional como racional o cognitivo. Pero ¿cómo se lleva a cabo el proceso de creación de valor?

Dentro del sector servicios, Kotler et al. (2000) planteaba que los usuarios acuden a un determinado servicio a aquel proveedor que les pueda proporcionar la máxima expectativa de valor. Realizando un símil con el servicio universitario sobre los factores que exponía como claves en el valor, podemos destacar lo siguiente:

- Valor percibido: diferencia entre el beneficio y el coste total. En la educación superior supondría el saldo positivo percibido por el estudiante a cambio del esfuerzo realizado. De forma específica:
  - Beneficio total recibido: conjunto de ventajas que se ha recibido. Aquí se puede señalar distintos aspectos referido a los resultados: consecuencias laborales, académicas, vida social, calidad, etc.
  - Coste total: En el caso de la universidad supondría todo el esfuerzo monetario y de tiempo entre otros frente a los resultados alcanzados y la conformidad con el servicio universitario. En definitiva, la suma de todos los aspectos negativos que siente que no han sido compensados.

Por otra parte, si atendemos a estudios específicos del proceso de creación de valor universitaria, destaca el realizado por LeBlanc y Nguyen (1999) donde partiendo de la perspectiva multidimensional del valor de Sheth et al. (1991) establecen los siguientes componentes en la creación del valor en el estudiante:

- Valor funcional: en el contexto de la educación, este valor se relaciona con las expectativas de los estudiantes respecto a sus estudios elegidos y el empleo o los resultados laborales derivados de tales estudios.
- Valor social: se relaciona en el contexto educativo a través del valor que perciben los estudiantes sobre las amistades con los compañeros y su integración y aceptación del entorno y la sociedad.
- Valor epistémico: se refiere a que el que el principal beneficio es la adquisición de conocimiento.
- Valor emocional: se realiza a través del sentido del entusiasmo y el auto-rendimiento de los estudiantes en su carrera.
- Valor condicional: se relaciona fundamentalmente con los elementos tangibles (material escolar, infraestructuras, etc.).

Con todo este proceso, podríamos definir el valor en el contexto universitario como *el saldo resultante del juicio evaluativo entre el sacrificio percibido y el beneficio percibido en función de aspectos académicos, socia-*

les, de calidad, de crecimiento personal y resultados obtenidos tanto laborales como de confirmación de las expectativas.

Teniendo en cuenta todo este proceso de valor, en la educación superior dependería de las expectativas, de la percepción de calidad así como de los componentes cognitivos y afectivos que componen el valor donde entra en juego el sacrificio y el beneficio percibido. Todo ello desde la perspectiva del estudiante, pues no se debe obviar que la universidad debe ofrecer valor a sus distintos stakeholders y a la sociedad en general aunque en este punto se estaría limitado y sería difícil definir los sacrificios percibidos, por ejemplo, por parte de las empresas. El proceso de valor en el estudiante se representa de forma sintética en la figura 1.

FIGURA 1  
Proceso de creación en la universidad.



#### 4. Valor percibido y satisfacción

En el marco de la educación superior, Elliot y Healy (2001) afirman que la satisfacción de los estudiantes es una actitud a corto plazo derivada de la evaluación de su experiencia educativa. Por otra parte, Elliott y Shin (2002) la definen como la evaluación subjetiva de los estudiantes de los diferentes resultados (empleo, social, etc), así como sus experiencias de la educación y la vida en el campus y sus expectativas iniciales.

Normalmente la satisfacción de los estudiantes ha sido evaluada a lo largo de la literatura a través de cuestionarios que valoran la calidad docente y el contenido de las materias, o mediante servicios específicos como la biblioteca. Pero en menor medida se envían cuestionarios a los estudiantes donde puedan evaluar la institución tras finalizar la etapa universitaria. Los estudiantes participan en un proceso de educación constituyendo el principal stakeholder de la universidad y, de esta manera, el enfoque de satisfacción del alumnado va mano a mano con el desarrollo de una cultura de la mejora continua de la universidad (Harvey, 1995).

Biggs (2003) realiza una revisión de los estudios que han abordado la satisfacción universitaria concluyendo que lograr una alta satisfacción del estudiante permite obtener distintos beneficios en el proceso de aprendizaje: Mejor desempeño y el entusiasmo de los profesores al comprobar su alta valoración de su servicio y la institución está más dispuesta a los cambios, en el caso de la educación superior, por ejemplo, a asumir nuevos estilos de enseñanza / aprendizaje.

Por otra parte, dada la polisemia de la noción de valor, se ha señalado la existencia de dificultades para comparar distintos estudios empíricos y, con ello, la inconsistencia en los procedimientos de medición del valor percibido y satisfacción (Gallarza y Gil, 2006). En este sentido, existe consenso en cuanto a la multidimensionalidad del concepto de valor (Sweeney y Soutar, 2001), y su influencia sobre la satisfacción.

El valor percibido es un constructo diferente al de la satisfacción. Esta diferencia radica principalmente en que, mientras el valor percibido ocurre en el desarrollo de las diferentes etapas del proceso de adquisición de un producto o servicio, incluyendo la etapa de pre-compra (Woodruff, 1997), la satisfacción se define como una evaluación post-compra y post-consumo (Hunt, 1977; Oliver, 1981), siendo universalmente aceptada esta vi-



sión por los investigadores que han estudiado el concepto. Las percepciones del valor, por tanto, se podrían generar sin haber comprado o usado el producto, mientras que la satisfacción dependerá siempre de la experiencia de utilización del producto o servicio adquirido.

Mientras tanto, una serie de autores han aludido a la importancia de combinar la medición del valor con satisfacción (Woodruff, 1997, Oh, 2000). El valor percibido se ha estudiado extensamente en la investigación como antecedente de la satisfacción del cliente (Patterson y Spreng, 1997; Mittal et al., 1998). Se ha demostrado que el valor tiene una participación directa y específica con la satisfacción respecto a un determinado servicio (Rust y Oliver, 1994).

Así mismo, dentro del contexto universitario diferentes autores han confirmado la relación positiva del valor percibido como antecedente de la satisfacción (Webb y Jagun, 1997; Martensen et al., 2000; Ledden et al., 2007; Alves y Raposo, 2007; Brown y Mazzarol, 2009; Alves, 2010; Alves y Raposo, 2010; Sánchez Fernández et al., 2010; Alves, 2011; Lai et al., 2012; Moosmayer y Siems, 2012; Clemes et al., 2013).

Lai et al. (2012) ponen de relieve la importancia del valor percibido en las universidades para la identificación de las necesidades de los estudiantes y lograr su satisfacción. Todo con el fin de conseguir, en última instancia, modelos más eficaces de educación. Vila et al. (2007) también han estudiado los efectos del valor en cuanto a los posibilidades de trabajo mientras que Ledden et al. (2007) consideran que las personas perciben el valor dentro de un entorno socio/cultural global que define y forma los valores personales. Tales estudios llegan a la conclusión de que el valor es un determinante importante de la satisfacción.

## 5. Metodología

### 5.1. Muestra y trabajo de campo

El trabajo de campo se realizó durante el mes de julio de 2012. La selección de la muestra se hizo a través de un muestreo aleatorio mediante entrevistas telefónicas asistidas por ordenador (CATI) tomando como universo la población española de egresados que tuvieran al menos un título de diplomatura o licenciatura o postgrado (master o doctorado) con fecha posterior a 1997. La decisión de elegir un periodo no superior a 15 años desde la finalización de los estudios se basa en la idea de que más allá de ese tiempo la situación de la universidad española era muy diferente a la actual y los datos no serían del todo comparables, al margen del esfuerzo de memoria que deberían hacer los sujetos a la hora de responder al cuestionario.

El cuestionario constaba de los siguientes bloques de preguntas: motivos de elección de estudios universitarios, nivel de implicación, valor percibido, valoración de la calidad percibida, satisfacción, imagen, lealdad y variables sociodemográficas.

Finalmente se obtuvo una muestra de 537 respuestas válidas, que para un nivel de confianza del 95%,  $P=Q=0,5$ ; implica un error del 4,23% asumiendo que se cumplen los requisitos del muestro aleatorio simple. Está compuesta por un 56,6% de mujeres y un 43,4% de hombres. El 63,5% de los sujetos manifestaban estar trabajando frente al 36,5% que estaban en situación de desempleo.

Por área científica, los egresados de Ciencias Sociales son quienes tienen la mayor representación muestral suponiendo más de la mitad de los encuestados (55,6%). Por el contrario, Ciencias Experimentales es quien tienen una menor representación muestral (4,9%),

TABLA 2  
Características de la muestra

Variable	Categoría	Muestra	
		N	%
Género	Hombre	233	43.4
	Mujer	304	56.6
Situación laboral	Autónomo	39	7.3
	Contrato fijo	110	20.5
	Contrato temporal	85	15.8

	Funcionario	79	14.7
	Prácticas	23	4.3
	Sin trabajo	201	37.4
<b>Nivel de estudios</b>	Grado	455	84.7
	Posgrado	82	15.3
<b>Edad</b>	<25	80	15.0
	25-30	164	30.5
	31-35	144	26.8
	36-40	95	17.7
	>40	54	8.4
<b>Área científica</b>	Ciencias de la Salud	74	13.4
	Ciencias Experimentales	27	4.9
	Ciencias Sociales	302	55.6
	Enseñanzas Técnicas	66	12.1
	Humanidades	62	11.3

## 5.2. Medida de las variables

Para la medida multidimensional del valor percibido se recurrió a diversas escalas adaptadas de varios trabajos previos en el ámbito universitario (LeBlanc y Nguyen, 1999; Cronin et al., 1997; Ledden et al., 2007) que se inspiraban en las teorías del concepto de valor percibido de Sheth et al. (1991).

Respecto a la satisfacción se utilizó una escala adaptada de Cronin et al. (2000) de tipo Likert (de 1 a 5) de 4 ítems para medir la satisfacción con la experiencia universitaria. Esta escala fue utilizada en el sector de la educación universitaria por Ledden et al. (2007)

## 6. Análisis de datos

### 6.1. Exploración de las dimensiones del valor percibido

Dentro de las variables del cuestionario, el valor percibido era medido en el cuestionario a través de 27 ítems diferentes. Para sintetizar y comprender los factores que subyacían en tales variables, y que se deseaban investigar en el estudio, se procedió a realizar un análisis factorial exploratorio para comprender las agrupaciones homogéneas de tales variables. Durante el análisis se suprimieron cuatro ítems incluidos en el cuestionario, debido a que ofrecían una baja comunalidad (menor de 0,5): “La ciudad donde se localizaba mi universidad era muy atractiva”, “Fui a la universidad en el contexto social y económico adecuado”, “Creo que las empresas u organizaciones están interesados en contratar estudiantes de mi universidad” y el “El esfuerzo que requirió la consecución de mi título fue muy alto”. De este modo, el número total de variables en este momento se reducía a 23.

El análisis ofreció unos valores adecuados de KMO (0,89) y de prueba de esfericidad de Barlett ( $p=0,00$ ) favorables para la realización del análisis. Se seleccionó un número total de siete factores dado el criterio de escoger los autovalores superiores a 1. Estos factores suponen un 66% de la varianza total explicada. Luego se realizó una fase de rotación mediante el procedimiento Varimax para conocer la estructura de los siete factores. Se utilizó esta rotación ya que se trata de un método ortogonal y además de que es uno de los enfoques más ampliamente utilizados, tal como destaca Luque (2012). Los resultados no varían cuando se utilizan otros métodos de rotación ortogonales, como Quartimax o Equimax.

Los siete factores obtenidos son: “Valor social: aceptación del entorno” (6,8% de la varianza explicada); “Valor social: integración” (7,9%); “Valor social: amigos” (4,7%); “Valor funcional” (9,3%); “Valor condicional” (5,1%); “Valor epistémico y emocional” (25,8%) y “Valor: coste monetario” (6,5%).

En la tabla 3 se detallan la composición de tales factores o dimensiones contempladas en el análisis así como las comunalidades de cada uno de los diferentes ítems donde se pueden encontrar que los ítems “Las personas que me influyen veían bien que yo asistiera a la universidad” (0,83), “Mis familiares y amigos veían bien que yo asistiera a la universidad” (0,82) y “La localización de la facultad/escuela dentro de la ciudad era conveniente” (0,81) son las que están mejor representadas en la solución factorial. Por el contrario, “Estudiar

en mi universidad me proporcionó importantes contactos profesionales para el futuro” (0,51) y “La novedad de la experiencia universitaria despertó mi curiosidad” son las que tienen las comunales más bajas. En todos los factores se encontraron valores de alfa de Cronbach por encima de 0,7 excepto en los casos del “valor condicional” y “coste monetario” que oscilaban con valores entre 0,6 y 0,7.

**TABLA 3**  
**Dimensiones del valor percibido**

<b>FACTOR</b>	<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>COMUNALIDAD</b>
FACTOR 1: Valor social: aceptación del entorno	Mis familiares y amigos veían bien que yo asistiera a la universidad	0,820
	Las personas que me influyen veían bien que yo asistiera a la universidad	0,831
FACTOR 2: Valor social: integración	Se valoró más mi opinión desde que obtuve el título en la universidad	0,680
	Haber asistido a mi universidad me ayuda a sentirme socialmente aceptado	0,655
	Haber realizado mi carrera contribuyó a mi desarrollo personal	0,612
FACTOR 3: Valor social: amigos	Los amigos que hice en la universidad fueron una parte importante de mi experiencia universitaria	0,560
FACTOR 4: Valor funcional	Mi título me ha permitido ganar un mejor sueldo ahora	0,672
	Mi título me ha permitido conseguir mis objetivos profesionales	0,782
	El conocimiento que adquirí durante mi carrera me ha permitido realizar mi trabajo mejor	0,530
	Mi carrera fue una buena inversión para mi futuro	0,712
	Estudiar en mi universidad me proporcionó importantes contactos profesionales para el futuro	0,509
FACTOR 5: Valor condicional	La localización de la facultad/escuela dentro de la ciudad era conveniente	0,810
	El ambiente de la universidad era agradable	0,659
FACTOR 6: Valor epistémico y emocional	El contenido de mis estudios me interesaba	0,555
	Haber estudiado en mi universidad fue una experiencia que me motivó intelectualmente	0,722
	La novedad de la experiencia universitaria despertó mi curiosidad	0,519
	Me siento orgulloso de haber estudiado en la universidad	0,524
	Haber estudiado en mi universidad ha supuesto la realización de una ambición	0,577
	La entrada en mi universidad fue un reto personal	0,703
	Haber asistido a mi universidad me hizo sentir auto-realizado	0,708
	Haber realizado mi carrera contribuyó a mi desarrollo personal	0,546
FACTOR 7: Coste monetario	El coste de la matrícula universitaria fue muy alto	0,736
	Los costes económicos derivados de mi estancia en la universidad fueron muy altos (ej. alojamiento, manutención, transporte, etc.)	0,747

En la exploración de los valores subyacentes del valor percibido según la perspectiva de los egresados hay notables diferencias con respecto a otros estudios que han modelizado esta variable dentro del contexto de la educación superior. En primer lugar, el valor social se fragmenta en tres diferentes dimensiones. El valor social percibido de su paso por la universidad tiene tres connotaciones distintas: la aceptación de las personas de su entorno (amigos y familiares), sentirse más integrado y valorado en la sociedad al tener un título universitario y, por último, hay un factor conformado por el valor otorgado a los amigos que hicieron durante la carrera universitaria (es el único factor representado con un solo ítem). En otros estudios (LeBlanc y Nguyen, 1999; Ledden et al., 2007; Brown y Mazzarol, 2009; Lai et al., 2011) la dimensión social estaba representado por un único factor. En sus estudios, era en todos los casos el valor funcional se dividía en distintas sub-dimensiones dada su importancia.

Otro aspecto a destacar en referencia los estudios mencionados es el hecho de que el valor epistémico y emocional estén unidos y carguen en un solo factor según nuestros resultados. De este modo existe una especial vinculación entre la curiosidad y el interés intelectual respecto a otras variables del valor emocional estrechamente relacionadas: la universidad como un reto personal, sentirse orgulloso de haber acudido a la universidad y que la experiencia haya aumentado la confianza en sí mismo.

**6.2. Efecto de los componentes de valor sobre la satisfacción**

Tras comprender las dimensiones que conforman el valor percibido desde la perspectiva de los egresados y dentro del contexto español, se procede a analizar su efecto en la satisfacción con la universidad. Tal objetivo será llevado a cabo mediante la realización de dos modelos de regresión lineal (uno para cada sexo) para conocer si existe diferencias según el sexo del graduado.

Por lo tanto las variables independiente son los 7 factores obtenidos anteriormente y la variable dependiente la satisfacción. Para medir la satisfacción se realizó un análisis factorial exploratorio de los cuatro ítems que miden tal variable en el cuestionario. El objetivo era comprobar si efectivamente hay una estructura homogénea y obtener una medida métrica única. El análisis factorial tuvo un test de esfericidad de Barlett ( $p=0,00$ ) adecuado y los 4 ítems presentaban altas comunalidades (por encima de 0,8) por lo que no se eliminó ninguno. La varianza explicada es del 77%.

**TABLA 3  
Análisis factorial Satisfacción**

	Ítems	Comunalidad
FACTOR 1: Satisfacción	En términos generales, estoy satisfecho con mi universidad	0,910
	Estoy satisfecho con el servicio prestado por mi universidad	0,856
	Tomé la decisión correcta cuando elegí esa universidad	0,919
	La experiencia con mi universidad fue satisfactoria	0,812

En los análisis de regresión realizados, tanto para el modelo de hombres y de mujeres, el análisis resultó significativo en su conjunto ( $p=0,00$ ). En cuanto a los  $R^2$  se obtuvo que la satisfacción era explicada en el caso de los hombres en un 47% mientras que en las mujeres aumentaba al 51%. En la tabla 4 aparecen los resultados de los análisis de regresión según hombres y mujeres:

**TABLA 4  
Resultados Valor-Satisfacción por sexo**

Dimensión	HOMBRES			MUJERES		
	<i>B</i>	Error	Sign.	<i>B</i>	Error	Sign.
Término independiente	,017	,052		0,14	0,041	
<b>Social (entorno)</b>	,075	,045	,099	,035	,045	,433
<b>Social (integración)</b>	,037	,051	,472	,034	,040	,388
<b>Social (amigos)</b>	,187	,049	,000	,126	,041	,002
<b>Funcional</b>	,272	,053	,000	,300	,039	,000
<b>Condicional</b>	,233	,051	,000	,279	,040	,000
<b>Epistémico y emocional</b>	,539	,050	,000	,559	,042	,000
<b>Coste económico</b>	-,041	,048	,389	-,076	,043	,076

Observando la tabla puede comprobarse que no existen prácticamente diferencias en el efecto de los distintos componentes de valor sobre la satisfacción según el sexo. En ambas regresiones las variables de “valor social (amigos)”, “valor funcional”, “valor condicional” y el “valor epistémicos y emocional” son significativas para determinar la satisfacción mientras que en los casos de otros valores de tipo social y el coste económico no son significativas (aunque en el caso de las mujeres es cuasi-significativa,  $p=0,076$ ). Por lo tanto, en consonancia con los resultados de Lai et al. (2011) no se encuentran diferencias según el sexo a la hora de analizar el valor sobre la satisfacción. Además, en ambos grupos el orden de importancia de las dimensiones de valor es el mismo. En un análisis pormenorizado de cada componente podemos destacar los siguientes aspectos:

En primer lugar, respecto a los distintos factores del valor social, la aceptación del entorno, es decir, la influencia para los egresados de sus familiares y personas cercanas no tiene un impacto importante para la satisfacción. Del mismo modo, para determinar la satisfacción, la aceptación de la sociedad y su estatus según el título académico no tiene un efecto significativo ni para los hombres ni para las mujeres. Ello

está en contraposición con Petruzellis y Romanazzi (2010) que establecían que la aceptación social era el aspecto más importante. En cambio, los egresados están más satisfechos por la dimensión social que supone los amigos de su experiencia universitaria. Las amistades se conforman (según el indicador *B* ofrecido en la tabla) como el cuarto aspecto más importante para la satisfacción en ambos sexos. Por lo tanto, el auténtico valor reside en las amistades y no asocian su satisfacción a la aceptación de terceros y la imagen social al tener un título universitario.

En segundo lugar, el valor funcional es significativo siendo el segundo aspecto más importante a la hora de configurar la satisfacción. De esta manera, tras obtener el título para los egresados es importante que el valor de su título se traduzca en un sueldo adecuado, en una profesión acorde a sus expectativas y que sientan que ha sido una apuesta de futuro acertada además de la propia pertinencia de la formación recibida, la calidad percibida o el profesorado. En definitiva, que el sacrificio realizado se traduzca en beneficios pragmáticos y que compensen al esfuerzo que se ha llevado a cabo. Estos resultados, contrastan con los estudios de Nguyen y LeBlanc (1999), Ledden et al. (2007), Brown y Mazzarol (2009) y Lai et al. (2011) que establecían que esta dimensión era la más importante para la satisfacción del estudiante.

En tercer lugar, referido al valor condicional, resultando significativo para la satisfacción es el tercer aspecto para aumentar el nivel de la misma. Esta dimensión se relaciona con los elementos tangibles (material escolar, infraestructuras, etc.) así como el ambiente y la localización de la universidad. Con ello podemos deducir, que para los egresados es importante que la universidad o el campus se encontrara en un lugar adecuado (o que incluso estuviera cerca de su hogar de origen para los estudiantes desplazados) y que el ambiente fuera afín a sus expectativas, algo que está estrechamente relacionado con el valor social de los amigos. Estos resultados validan los obtenidos por Nguyen y LeBlanc (1999).

En cuarto lugar, el valor epistémico y emocional es la dimensión más importante a tener en cuenta a la hora de satisfacer al estudiante universitario. Los egresados otorgan la máxima importancia al hecho de desarrollarse intelectualmente, de que la universidad les forme como personas o de que se sientan autorrealizadas. Tal como afirmaba Lovelock (1983) el valor en la universidad se basa en beneficios intangibles en las mentes de las personas. De este modo, tal como se expuso en la revisión de la literatura, el servicio de la educación superior se caracteriza por una mayor importancia de los aspectos emocionales en el concepto de valor dado el entusiasmo, la ilusión y la propia experiencia en el estudiante universitario.

Por último, el coste monetario no es significativo para la satisfacción (aunque en el caso de las mujeres es cuasi-significativo). Es la única relación que se establece de forma negativa, como resulta lógico pues un alto coste disminuye la percepción de valor. Estos resultados están en contraposición a Ledden et al. (2007) que encontraron que éste era un factor de importancia para la satisfacción.

Los resultados aquí comentados confirman la relación positiva del valor percibido como antecedente de la satisfacción al igual que otros estudios anteriores en el sector de la educación superior (Webb y Jagun, 1997; Martensen et al., 2000; Ledden et al., 2007; Alves y Raposo, 2007; Brown y Mazzarol, 2009; Lai et al., 2012; Moosmayer y Siems, 2012; Clemes et al., 2013) así como de otros estudios en otros sectores de servicios (Patterson y Spreng, 1997; Mittal et al., 1998)

## **7. Conclusiones**

El presente trabajo ha tenido como objetivo explorar las dimensiones del valor percibido en la educación superior y comprender su efecto sobre la satisfacción. El estudio supone una novedad dado los pocos estudios que versan sobre el valor ofrecido por la universidad (sobre todo desde un punto de vista multidimensional) además de ser de los pocos realizado desde la perspectiva del egresado y en el marco español.

Los resultados revelan que el valor está conformado por siete dimensiones: tres referidos al valor social ofrecido por la universidad (la integración con la sociedad, la aceptación de sus personas cercas y los amigos realizados durante la carrera), el valor funcional, valor epistémico y emocional, valor condicional, y valor como esfuerzo económico realizado. Por orden importancia, a la hora de determinar la satisfacción con la experiencia universitaria, para los egresados el aspecto emocional y epistémico es el más importan-

te seguido del valor funcional, valor condicional y, por último, los amigos. Además, los resultados son similares tanto para los egresados y las egresadas,

Los hallazgos de este trabajo podemos concluir que tienen implicaciones en tres niveles: en primer lugar, la universidad debe tener en cuenta que el desafío intelectual y la experiencia emocional son los principales atributos de valor para el egresado. En este sentido, la formación debe estar dirigida a motivar al alumno, a despertar la curiosidad y el interés por la novedad, en formarle en capacidad y habilidades, en la transmisión de conocimientos. Además es importante tener en cuenta que la autorrealización y desarrollo personal está vinculado estrechamente con la satisfacción.

En segundo lugar, los gestores universitarios deben poner un especial énfasis en la calidad funcional del servicio lo que implica tener en cuenta, sobre todo, el contacto con las empresas, la oferta de prácticas, la adecuación de los estudios al empleo posterior. En esta misma línea, se deben tener en cuenta a las empresas. Los egresados consideran que el valor de un título reside en gran medida en los resultados laborales alcanzados y el desarrollo profesional. Por último, en tercer lugar, el valor social como son los amigos y el condicional que implica un buen ambiente universitario y la pertinencia de la ubicación. Por lo tanto, las universidades deben fomentar actividades sociales y culturales que integren al alumno con la institución y le permita establecer nuevos contactos. Ello implica otros servicios como el alojamiento o, incluso, redes sociales.

El presente estudio presenta ciertas limitaciones como son que el valor de coste monetario y condicional aunque presenta valores aceptables no son óptimos en cuanto al alfa de cronbach así como que no se incluyen otros antecedentes de la satisfacción como puede ser la calidad o la imagen. En cuanto a futuras líneas de investigación sería interesante estudios que tuvieran en cuenta diferentes públicos de la universidad (estudiantes aún no graduados, ciudadanos, etc.) acerca del valor de la universidad o estudios transculturales además de modelos más completos de antecedentes y consecuencias de las dimensiones de valor.

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# ¿CÓMO DINAMIZAR EL AULA A TRAVÉS DE COMPETENCIAS TRANSVERSALES EN MARKETING ? : EL PAPEL DEL RELATOR

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## RESUMEN

*Las exigencias marcadas por el proceso de convergencia europeo de educación superior han abierto un gran campo para la innovación docente. La introducción de planteamientos pedagógicos más modernos y diferentes, permiten cambiar el papel del docente que pasa de instructor a facilitador en el tratamiento del conocimiento, además de favorecer una implicación mucho más activa del alumno. El ámbito de este trabajo en curso se circunscribe en la adaptación de nuevas metodologías docentes en el área de Comercialización e Investigación de Mercados, con la introducción de la figura de relator, de forma que el modelo docente se centra en el aprendizaje constructivo del alumno y apoyado en el desarrollo de competencias transversales.*

## Palabras clave

Innovación Docente, Constructivismo, Facilitador, Relator, Nuevas Metodologías, Conocimiento Transversal, Herramientas virtuales.

## 1. Introducción

El Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior busca mejorar la calidad en los resultados del aprendizaje en pro de unas mejores capacitaciones y competencias en los alumnos, tanto específicas, como genéricas. Estas últimas se refieren a que son compartidas por distintas ocupaciones o varios ámbitos del conocimiento, lo que implica el estar en posesión de conocimientos que aplicar a entornos nuevos, dentro de contextos más amplios o multidisciplinares.

El proceso de Convergencia Europea implica un "cambio de paradigma en los procesos de enseñanza" favoreciendo la utilización de procedimientos instrumentales (De Miguel *et al.*, 2006) con los que poder llevar la innovación docente al aula y aprovechar los beneficios en los desempeños, que en los estudiantes se pueden generar, con la introducción de nuevas metodologías docentes. Conseguir que la implementación de esta innovación docente, suponga la calidad de los resultados del aprendizaje, que pretende el Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior supone un reto. Para alcanzarlo, los docentes universitarios han de promover propuestas innovadoras que fomenten la formación integral al colectivo de estudiantes, así como una formación no sólo efectiva sino también eficiente, con miras a la repercusión que ésta tendrá en la sociedad del siglo XXI.

En línea con lo anterior, resulta fundamental la implantación de propuestas novedosas que aborden la consolidación y la actuación de conocimientos en todas las áreas del saber, mediante programas y contenidos didácticos que ayuden a procurar un aprendizaje atractivo, que motive a los alumnos en la aprehensión de conocimientos, como incentivo, a fin de mejorar los logros y frutos de ese aprendizaje (Bas, 2006). Entendemos que el concepto, *dinamización del aula*, no se trata tanto de un nuevo tipo o una nueva forma de docencia, sino de un impulso innovador al ya existente, con metodologías y recursos actualizados al mundo en el que nos desenvolvemos. En definitiva consiste en adoptar un nuevo rol en la docencia, adecuado al nuevo entorno, con el uso de metodologías innovadoras que permitan alcanzar destrezas (Villa *et al.*, 2007), competencias y acciones en el aula en pro de una formación para los estudiantes lo más completa y cercana posible a la realidad. Se refiere también a la utilización de herramientas virtuales, modos de trabajo e hitos evaluatorios, que persigan el objetivo de abrir un espacio de interacción entre docentes y alumnos y entre los propios alumnos, contribuyendo a la aparición de una comunidad y no a un conjunto de individuos aislados, que permitan alcanzar los resultados del aprendizaje previstos.

Con el presente trabajo en curso, se propone estudiar cómo puede afectar al resultado de las asignaturas de marketing en el nuevo contexto del EEES, el desarrollo de la *dinamización del aula*, a través de la actualización de metodologías y recursos ya existentes en general, y con la introducción de la figura del *relator* como innovación docente en particular. Esta figura que se utiliza en la asignatura "Introducción a la Investigación de Mercados", obligatoria en el 2º curso del Grado de Administración y Dirección de Empresas, puede contribuir a una mejora de la calidad docente mediante un aprendizaje por competencias, puesto que el modelo docente se centra en el aprendizaje constructivo del alumno y se apoya en el desarrollo de sus competencias transversales.

A continuación exponemos un apartado en el que se explican las diferentes estrategias didácticas en las que se puede fundamentar esta *dinamización del aula*, basadas en un enfoque constructivista, y a través de competencias transversales y de herramientas virtuales. Terminaremos este trabajo en curso con la propuesta de unos análisis y unas consideraciones finales.

## 2. Estrategias Didácticas

Dado que la sociedad actual se encuentra sometida a rápidos y constantes cambios, de tipo económico, científico, tecnológico y cultural, resulta fundamental que la universidad y los docentes universitarios adopten un rol multidimensional a la hora de relacionarse con los estudiantes, a través de dinámicas educativas que les permitan adecuarse a los nuevos escenarios cambiantes, en los que éstos se han de desenvolver en un futuro próximo, cuando se incorporen a la sociedad como profesionales formados en la universidad.

## 2.1. Enfoque Constructivista

La rica investigación existente sobre los procesos de aprendizaje y formación del conocimiento, nos ha permitido acercarnos a uno de sus paradigmas, el constructivismo. Se trata más que una teoría en sentido estricto, de un marco explicativo o conjunto articulado de principios, desde donde es posible diagnosticar, establecer juicios y tomar decisiones fundamentadas sobre la enseñanza (Coll y Salé, 1999). El constructivismo plantea fundamentalmente que, el conocimiento se va construyendo activamente por el sujeto a partir de su experiencia, lo que le permite adaptarse y aprender de forma activa a través de las nuevas situaciones que se le plantean. Su potencial para el docente es poder utilizarlo como herramienta para la planificación docente y como marco evaluador sobre la consecución de las metas que se persiguen en el aula.

El planteamiento constructivista (Carretero, 2009) no ve al ser humano como un receptor pasivo de experiencias y aprendizajes, sino como un constructor activo de habilidades y conocimientos (Chadwick, 2012). Lo que significa que, en el proceso de aprendizaje, el alumno estructura, extiende e interpreta las experiencias e informaciones que le facilita el docente, para construir conocimiento a través de su propio trabajo. De esta forma, el constructivismo asume que el conocimiento se va construyendo a través de aspectos cognitivos, sociales y afectivos. Su base se fundamenta en las teorías e investigaciones psicológicas y educativas llevadas a cabo por autores como Ausubel (1983), Bruner (1959; 1966), Piaget (1981; 1990) y Vigotsky (1978; 1985; 1991).

Con este enfoque, el alumno va construyendo su propio conocimiento a través de un aprendizaje significativo (Ausubel *et al.*, 1983). Para poder alcanzar dicho aprendizaje han de combinarse tres elementos: las actitudes, las aptitudes y los contenidos. Según estos autores, para lograr este tipo de aprendizaje, el estudiante ha de asimilar, relacionar y enjuiciar los nuevos conocimientos con aquellos que ya posee, desde una actitud interesada. Del mismo modo, el docente debe estructurar en el diseño de la asignatura un cuerpo de conocimiento que sea fácilmente asimilable para el estudiante (Bruner, 1966), mediante la organización de tareas, formación de grupos, secuenciación en los aportes de material, proponiendo la búsqueda de información, etc.

Con la implementación de este enfoque en las asignaturas de marketing en general, y la de "Introducción a la Investigación de Mercados" en particular, tratamos de desarrollar una metodología activa e inductiva en la que los estudiantes construyen su propio conocimiento a través de la investigación, el descubrimiento y la interpretación de sus experiencias. La forma de aplicarlo en el aula es mediante el planteamiento a los alumnos del desarrollo de trabajos expositivos, fundamentados en casos reales, los cuales les permiten a los estudiantes reflexionar, argumentar, crear, aplicar, explicar y resolver situaciones problemáticas. Una de las figuras que potencia, todavía más si cabe, este aprendizaje significativo es la de *relator*.

Los trabajos consisten en cinco casos prácticos<sup>1</sup>, realizados en equipos de cuatro a seis miembros, basados en el planteamiento de una investigación de mercados concreta, para la que se han de desarrollar respectivamente, los siguientes aspectos:

1. Determinar decisiones comerciales a tomar, recabar información necesaria y buscar fuentes de información para la propuesta de investigación.
2. Presentar los resultados de la aplicación de técnicas cualitativas y de observación para la propuesta de investigación.
3. Presentar un estudio basado en una encuesta y relacionarlo con la propuesta de investigación.
4. Presentar un experimento relacionado con la propuesta de investigación.
5. Exponer un informe final de toda la investigación de mercados realizada, revisada y mejorada.

Junto con este desarrollo se introduce la figura antes citada del *relator*. El papel del relator consiste en la elaboración, de comentarios críticos y constructivos que además permitan un punto de partida para el debate. Es decir, todos los casos elaborados en grupo y expuestos en clase, son "relatados" por otro

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<sup>1</sup> Cabe apuntar que los alumnos que realizan estos casos prácticos, previamente han optado por el sistema de evaluación continua. Es decir, dichos casos prácticos suman una puntuación de hasta 3,5 puntos sobre el total de la nota final.

equipo previamente asignado. La función del equipo que relata es exponer una serie de comentarios al equipo que expone su trabajo, con la intención de destacar aquellas cuestiones de las ya planteadas que se pueden mejorar, resolver dudas, o incluso introducir innovaciones, en caso de detectar carencias en el tratamiento de determinados aspectos relacionados con dichos casos prácticos. De esta forma, cada equipo, una vez realizada la presentación de su caso práctico, debe contestar y defender de forma razonada su presentación ante los comentarios, dudas y propuestas de su equipo "relator", generando el establecimiento de un debate entre ambos equipos y el resto de la clase. Además, todos y cada uno de los equipos ejercen de relator a un equipo diferente a lo largo de las cinco sesiones prácticas, puesto que la asignación la realiza el profesor de forma aleatoria pero controlada. Así, se pone de manifiesto la importancia de la figura de relator, ya que a lo largo de toda la investigación, y específicamente en el desarrollo del informe final, los alumnos tienen que demostrar que han considerado e implementado todas las correcciones que les han sido recomendadas por los equipos que han ejercido dicho papel de relator y por supuesto, las realizadas por el profesor, que siempre ejerce de juez y dinamizador durante todo el proceso de las prácticas.

## **2.2. Competencias Transversales**

La adquisición de competencias transversales, es una necesidad que ha sido plasmada en las memorias de los títulos de grado, y que supera el ámbito del sistema docente universitario tradicional. Ya en el proyecto piloto apoyado por la Comisión Europea en el marco del programa Sócrates, cuyo objetivo consistía en "sintonizar las estructuras educativas en Europa" y denominado proyecto Tuning, se confirma la necesidad de que la capacitación del alumno venga de la mano de la asimilación por el mismo no sólo de competencias específicas sino también de lo que han venido a llamarse competencias genéricas o transversales (González y Wagenaar, 2003; 2006).

El desarrollar en la universidad competencias no tradicionales como las habilidades sociales de liderazgo (Brunner, 2009), habilidades de comunicación, o la capacidad de trabajo en equipo, la capacidad para planificar, organizar, dirigir y controlar tareas, personas y recursos, o la capacidad para resolver problemas y tomar decisiones con iniciativa, creatividad y razonamiento crítico, permiten a los egresados acceder a conocimientos fundamentales y básicos con los que poder competir y posicionarse en el mercado laboral. En nuestra sociedad se emplea el término empleabilidad (Alonso *et al.*, 2009) para referirse a las competencias y cualificaciones que refuerzan la capacidad de las personas para aprovechar las oportunidades de educación y formación con el objetivo de obtener mejores condiciones laborales.

Las competencias y conocimientos de naturaleza transversal (Guedea, 2008), son partes del conocimiento que todo universitario debe tener presente en su formación, sea cual sea la rama del conocimiento en la que se está formando, dado que en la actualidad resultan básicos e imprescindibles para el buen desarrollo y desenvolvimiento en el mundo en el que vivimos. A su vez el implementar estas competencias transversales en el aula, abre un gran abanico de posibilidades para el diseño, aceptación y aprovechamiento de los conocimientos o competencias específicas que los alumnos deben lograr en su formación, a partir del diseño de sus planes docentes.

En la formación universitaria de índole social, como son los grados en economía, y en concreto en el área de Comercialización e Investigación de Mercados, es determinante afrontar ese tipo de habilidades en su formación, para ir aproximando la enseñanza al contexto empresarial y comercial al que en un futuro próximo se encontrarán los alumnos de estas disciplinas, cuando desempeñen su actividad profesional, una vez que hayan finalizado sus estudios universitarios.

El fundamentar la docencia con nuevas metodologías de enseñanza-aprendizaje, potenciando la aprehensión de competencias transversales, requiere de un entorno de trabajo en la universidad que facilite la puesta en práctica de tareas que favorezcan la capacidad de trabajo cooperativo en equipo y de una actitud activa entre docentes y alumnos para la consecución de conocimientos. Todo ello significa que, a lo largo del curso el profesor adopta el rol de facilitador de conocimientos y el alumno debe asumir su responsabilidad en el proceso de generación de dicho conocimiento mediante su trabajo activo y participativo.

De ahí que fundamentar la asignatura de "Introducción a la Investigación de Mercados" en la búsqueda y aplicación de los procedimientos de diseño y ejecución de investigaciones, que tengan por objeto el

tratamiento de información relativa a hechos, actitudes, opiniones, conductas y actividades de carácter económico y social que puedan afectar a la actividad de la empresa y, en particular, a la actividad de marketing, permite el desarrollo y la evaluación de competencias transversales en los alumnos, al introducirlos en las tareas que configuran este sistema de información-investigación en el área de marketing. Permitiendo que el alumno adquiera, entre otras la capacidad de detectar y satisfacer necesidades de información para poder tomar decisiones relevantes en cualquier organización, la capacidad para resolver problemas con iniciativa, creatividad y razonamiento crítico, y en definitiva el desarrollo de actitudes, a lo largo del curso, que permitan a los estudiantes acceder y conformar conocimientos fundamentales y básicos con los que poder competir y posicionarse en el mercado laboral.

A lo largo de la asignatura los alumnos desarrollan este tipo de competencias transversales a partir de la búsqueda, identificación y selección de aquellas fuentes de información adecuadas para lograr sus objetivos de investigación de mercados, así como para lograr la planificación y optimización del tiempo para alcanzar las metas propuestas. Así mismo, a través de la exposición de los trabajos encomendados al grupo, o también denominados casos prácticos, de los comentarios de casos a relatar y de la participación en los debates que generan estas actividades, se potencian las competencias de desenvolvimiento comunicativo, tanto en modo oral como en modo escrito, de los conocimientos alcanzados por los estudiantes, de sus ideas y de los resultados obtenidos tras el trabajo a lo largo del curso. Por lo tanto, el esfuerzo de juzgar a sus iguales con espíritu crítico y constructivo permite establecer un feedback de conocimiento junto al docente, favoreciendo su proceso de maduración.

### **2.3. Herramientas Virtuales**

En muchos casos, el uso y la incorporación de las nuevas tecnologías de la información y comunicación (TIC) en la enseñanza universitaria, son clave para una asimilación práctica de todo tipo de competencias, incluidas, por supuesto, las transversales, ya que además de facilitar el aprendizaje potencian la interdisciplinariedad (Arias, 2003). La utilización de herramientas virtuales en el aula, permite abrir un espacio de interacción entre docentes y alumnos actualizado a nuestros días, a la vez que contribuyen a la aparición de una comunidad de aprendizaje y no a un conjunto de individuos aislados. Esta comunidad de aprendizaje favorece la actitud activa e interesada de los alumnos a la hora de investigar y autoformarse, participando y compartiendo con el resto del aula, dudas, opiniones, reflexiones, debates y en general ideas.

Los docentes han de hacer uso de la tecnología, como un medio más con el que alentar y facilitar la aprehensión de conocimientos, utilizando herramientas y recursos con los que el estudiante se sienta familiarizado, motivado y cómodo. Este sistema bien administrado y utilizado permite que aflore su gran logro, que es la construcción de un grupo de aprendizaje. Con el uso de herramientas virtuales en el aula el alumno tiene la posibilidad de aprender más de lo que aprendería por sí solo, fruto de la interacción de los participantes del curso (Guitert *et al.*, 2007) o también lo podríamos definir utilizando el concepto de aprendizaje colaborativo (Seitzinger, 2006).

La plataforma usada en la asignatura de "Introducción a la Investigación de Mercados" para lograr el propósito citado arriba es Blackboard learn 9.1, facilitada por la Universidad, como sistema virtual de gestión de cursos, y que nos permite como docentes poder gestionar el aprendizaje de la materia de una forma fácil, rápida, interactiva y participativa. En este sentido, dentro del diseño y planteamiento de la asignatura, está el facilitar desde el primer momento a través de la dicha plataforma virtual, todos los materiales necesarios para el desarrollo del curso, en cuanto a programa, fichas de equipo para poder realizar las prácticas, documentos explicativos sobre la gestión de prácticas, casos prácticos, calendarios sobre actividades teóricas y prácticas, lecturas básicas o enlaces de interés, entre otros. De igual modo la plataforma permite la comunicación constante entre docente y alumno, así como el compartir conocimiento a través de los foros de dudas.

### **3. Análisis previstos y consideraciones finales**

Para poder analizar la importancia de la inclusión de todas estas herramientas en la enseñanza adaptada a los nuevos grados, dentro del contexto de la EEES, y sobre todo, si el uso de todas estas herramientas está ayudando a los alumnos a alcanzar todos los resultados de aprendizaje propuestos,

sería necesario recoger dos tipos de información. Por un lado, pretendemos comparar los resultados alcanzados a lo largo de los cuatro primeros años de andadura del nuevo Grado en Administración y Dirección de Empresas. Concretamente, este curso 2013/2014 se van a graduar la primera promoción de alumnos en GADE, por lo que podremos obtener una primera serie de cuatro cursos, en los que se han desarrollado y aplicado en la docencia las herramientas diseñadas al efecto, e incluso, podremos comparar, las tasas de éxito en esta asignatura, con los datos de los egresados que cursaron la asignatura "Investigación de Mercados", antecesora de la actual, licenciados de la etapa anterior al proceso de Bolonia (en el que no se empleaban todas y cada una de las herramientas didácticas expuestas). Por otro lado, también sería necesario recabar información de los alumnos, (6 grupos, en 2º curso de GADE, con unos 60 alumnos matriculados por grupo, un total de unos 360), acerca de cuál es su opinión sobre si el uso de todas las herramientas utilizadas en general, y en particular, si el hecho de haber ejercido de *relatores*, les ha podido suponer una mejora en la adquisición de todos los conocimientos y competencias programados. Para ello, sería necesario diseñar una encuesta diseñada ad-hoc y que se administraría a través de la Plataforma Blackboard learn 9.1, utilizada para comunicarnos con los alumnos, una vez hubiera concluido el curso. La recogida de información debería incorporar no sólo una evaluación comparativa sobre los resultados de aprendizaje logrados en el curso, sino también abrir la posibilidad de evaluar las expectativas, el interés y la motivación de los alumnos a través de sus comentarios. Las opiniones de los alumnos nos permitirán manejar información básica con la que poder iniciar un debate abierto con ellos, acerca de cualquier tema relacionado con la metodología utilizada en la asignatura, las herramientas puestas a su disposición y las tareas llevadas a cabo en la misma. Las opiniones de los alumnos deberían de ser anónimas para que expresasen con total sinceridad sus reflexiones.

En cuanto a las consideraciones finales, podemos destacar que, la realización de tareas en grupo, de tipo cooperativo o colaborativo, diseñadas para la construcción de conocimiento con el trabajo constante del alumno y apoyadas con la utilización de herramientas virtuales, es uno de los aspectos más interesantes del diseño de la asignatura de "Introducción a la Investigación de Mercados", en cuanto a su eficacia para la construcción de conocimiento, para la obtención y desarrollo de competencias genéricas y transversales y para la adquisición de valores personales que les ayudarán en su vida profesional y social. Finalmente, nuestra valoración sobre el proceso de organización del currículo siguiendo las normas ECTS es positiva, y se nos plantea el reto necesario de recoger información, sobre todo el proceso seguido y la valoración de resultados de aprendizaje obtenidos, para poder ir incorporando en la medida de lo posible mejoras para cursos posteriores, de forma que la adaptación a plan Bolonia sea progresiva y efectiva.

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## LOS SISTEMAS DE EVALUACIÓN SEGÚN LAS GUÍAS DOCENTES PUBLICADAS DESDE LA INTRODUCCIÓN DEL EEES

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### RESUMEN

*La evaluación es la forma en la que el profesor universitario valora los resultados del aprendizaje del estudiante de acuerdo con los objetivos fijados y las competencias adquiridas. El objetivo de nuestro trabajo es analizar los sistemas de evaluación reflejados en 546 guías docentes publicadas en grados de cuatro universidades españolas y analizamos las pruebas incluidas y los pesos otorgados a cada una de ellas. Los resultados preliminares nos permiten reflexionar sobre el grado de aplicación del sistema de evaluación continua, nuevas formas de evaluación y requerimientos del profesor para valorar el aprendizaje de los estudiantes universitarios en sus asignaturas.*

### Palabras clave:

Enseñanza superior; evaluación; guías docentes.



## 1. Introducción. La evaluación en la docencia universitaria

La investigación docente ha abordado las características que debe reunir un buen profesor/a (Zabalza, 2003; Martínez et al., 2006; Celdrán y Escartín, 2008; Gargallo et al., 2010; Casero, 2010; Voss y Gruber, 2011). No obstante, es un tema no resuelto porque, como señala Ruiz (2005, p.89) “aunque resulte paradójico no hay unanimidad a la hora de delimitar qué es una docencia de calidad. La actividad docente es una tarea compleja, multidimensional, en la que el profesor puede asumir diferentes roles, adoptando enfoques diferentes respecto a la enseñanza.” El EEES conlleva cambios en el proceso educativo que afectan al perfil del profesorado universitario, entre los que se encuentra el cambio en la centralidad del propio proceso educativo (López-Sidro, 2011), que se traslada del profesor al alumno. El EEES trae consigo una revisión tanto de los modelos de aprendizaje como de las fuentes y recursos empleados y de los sistemas de evaluación (Álvarez et al., 2009). Estas reflexiones acerca del perfil y competencias del profesor universitario han sido abordadas también desde la investigación docente a través de la utilización de valoraciones que el estudiante realiza sobre el profesor y sus características (estudios SET en terminología anglosajona: Student’s Evaluations of Teaching) (Marsh, 1987, p. 255). No obstante, en estos estudios se pregunta a los alumnos por el profesor que les ha impartido docencia. La heterogeneidad de enfoques y metodologías así como la diversidad de muestras utilizadas hace difícil extraer conclusiones generales. Dejando a un lado las valoraciones subjetivas de estudiantes y profesores, las guías docentes publicadas para cada asignatura suponen un contrato entre la universidad y el estudiante que puede incluir, con mayor o menor detalle, distintos aspectos como los objetivos, el índice del temario, las competencias que debe adquirir el estudiante, la forma de impartición de las clases, las pruebas y sistemas de evaluación, los pesos otorgados a cada sistema de evaluación y los resultados esperados del aprendizaje. Hay trabajos que señalan las pautas para elaborar guías docentes (García-Sanz, 2008; Zabalza y Zabalza, 2012). Zabalza y Zabalza (2012) proponen un modelo de guía docente que constituye un auténtico instrumento de orientación y diálogo con los estudiantes y que debe incluir los datos generales de la misma, su sentido curricular, sus propósitos formativos, los contenidos de la propuesta, las líneas metodológicas en la que se mueve y el sistema de evaluación utilizado. Además, estos autores sugieren que la construcción de una buena guía docente constituye una competencia básica de los buenos profesores, aquellos a los que no les basta con conocer bien el campo disciplinar, sino que saben cómo combinar ese conocimiento con las particulares condiciones en las que deben llevar a cabo su docencia. Por ello, sostienen que las guías deben ser mecanismos que se asemejen a contenedores abiertos y flexibles en los que los docentes van incorporando progresivamente todos los nuevos avances y conocimientos que consideren relevantes.

Por lo que se refiere a la evaluación y si nos fijamos en estudios previos, el sistema de evaluación deseado por los alumnos no incluye el examen final, centrándose en la evaluación continua y en la presentación de trabajos. Gargallo et al. (2010) encuentran que los métodos de evaluación que los alumnos proponen como idóneos son, por este orden: valoración de trabajos (86%), valoración del esfuerzo del alumno (68%) y exámenes parciales-valoración de la realización de las prácticas (ambas respuestas con la misma frecuencia, 54%). También son elegidos con frecuencias importantes la valoración de la asistencia a clase (48%), la valoración del interés del alumno (46%), y la valoración de las actividades diarias de clase (40%). Ningún alumno elija en este estudio la opción de sólo examen final.

En un estudio previo que hemos realizado con estudiantes preuniversitarios justo cuando llegan a la universidad (Autores), entre las formas de evaluación preferidas por los alumnos/as españoles/as destacan los exámenes parciales a lo largo del curso (72.4%), la entrega de trabajos sin exámenes (70%) y la realización de trabajos en grupo (64.3%). Entre las menos valoradas aparecen con un 8.6% la realización de un único examen al final del curso y los exámenes orales con un 7%. Cuando se les pide escoger un máximo de 3 aspectos a valorar en el sistema de evaluación ideal del profesor universitario eligen en las tres primeras posiciones y muy distanciadas del resto, la posibilidad de recuperar solo las partes no superadas (71.4%) y valorar el esfuerzo realizado durante el curso (67.9%).

Algunos autores, como Nicol (2007) llegan a proponer un conjunto de principios para que el estudiante sea la parte esencial en su evaluación, se implique y participe de forma muy activa en su aprendizaje y evaluación. De igual modo, Carless et al. (2006) señalan que el estudiante debe ser

gestor de su aprendizaje y el profesor/a universitario/a deber ser un orientador y facilitador del mismo, lo que adquiere gran importancia en sistemas de evaluación como la coevaluación y la autoevaluación (Trujillo, 2011; Ibarra et al., 2012). Además, no debemos olvidar la utilización de recursos electrónicos y nuevas tecnologías utilizados ampliamente en la docencia actual, en la interacción profesor-alumno y en la evaluación correspondiente, mediante recursos como Moodle, MUD, foros, etc (Fisher y Baird, 2005; Thomas, 2002; Ellis et al., 2006).

El *objetivo* de nuestro trabajo es analizar las guías docentes publicadas de cuatro universidades diferentes para conocer los sistemas de evaluación que se están aplicando en los grados adaptados al EEES y conocer así el grado de aplicación del sistema de evaluación continua, las nuevas formas de evaluación del estudiante y los pesos otorgados a cada sistema de evaluación, entre otros aspectos.

## 2. Estudio empírico

Para llevar a cabo el estudio empírico, los miembros del grupo de innovación docente I.M.@.G.E. (Innovación Multidisciplinar Aplicada a los Grupos de Enseñanza) registrado en nuestra Universidad, con profesores pertenecientes a cuatro universidades diferentes (tres públicas y una privada, tres españolas), buscaron y analizaron las guías docentes publicadas en cada universidad en todos los grados que se imparten (grados ya adaptados al EEES). En concreto, se analizan las guías docentes de 128 asignaturas de la universidad pública X, 106 de la universidad pública Y, 260 de la universidad pública Z (cuatro campus) y 51 de una universidad privada. La Tabla 1 recoge la ficha técnica del estudio y detalles de las variables analizadas en cada guía docente acordadas en diversas reuniones del grupo de innovación docente junto con otros profesores consultados.

TABLA 1

**Ficha técnica del estudio y variables analizadas**

Universo	Guías docentes universitarias publicadas en todos los grados adaptados al EEES en 4 universidades
Muestra	546 guías docentes de 4 universidades españolas (3 públicas y 1 privada)
Muestreo	Probabilístico (elegida la 5ª guía correspondiente a una asignatura obligatoria de cada curso dentro de cada grado y la 5ª asignatura optativa de último curso de grado).
Trabajo de campo	Enero, febrero y marzo de 2014
Recogida y análisis de datos	Miembros del grupo de innovación docente GID I.M.@.G.E.
Porcentaje de guías ofrecidas	97% sí están introducidas y entregadas en los departamentos (las de una de las universidades de la muestra no son públicamente accesibles en la web, pero sí las tienen los departamentos. En las demás universidades están introducidas y publicadas en la web institucional correspondiente)
Cursos a los que pertenecen las guías	20% guías de primer curso, 21% de segundo curso, 26% de tercer curso, 32% de cuarto curso y 1 de quinto curso.
Tipo de asignatura a la que corresponden las guías	60% obligatorias, 21% optativas y 19% básicas
Variables analizadas	-Universidad, grado, departamento, asignatura, número de profesores que imparten cada asignatura, curso. -Si distingue o no sistemas de evaluación, si los ponderan, si se marcan mínimos para pasar cada prueba de evaluación, si se relacionan sistemas de evaluación con competencias, si las pruebas de la convocatoria ordinaria y extraordinaria son las mismas o no. -Si se evalúa mediante examen final, examen parcial, pruebas de desarrollo, pruebas tipo test, examen oral final, un trabajo global final, un conjunto de prácticas parciales, varias pruebas orales, la participación en clase, la asistencia en clase, portafolios, autoevaluación, recursos electrónicos u otros sistemas. Y los pesos otorgados a cada sistema de evaluación utilizado.

## 3. Algunos resultados preliminares

Por lo que se refiere al número de profesores que imparten cada asignatura según refleja cada guía docente, en el 69% de los casos, sólo imparte un profesor la asignatura, en el 21% la imparten dos profesores, en el 5% imparten tres profesores y podemos destacar que en un 5% de los casos de la muestra que corresponden a asignaturas impartidas por más de tres profesores.

Como aspectos generales de los sistemas de evaluación recogidas en las guías analizadas, el 94,7% distingue sistemas de evaluación, el 90,2% ofrecen la ponderación o pesos de cada sistema de evaluación, el 60% señala mínimos para pasar cada prueba de evaluación y sólo un 6% relaciona los sistemas de evaluación con la adquisición de competencias. En el 34% de las guías docentes se

señalan sistemas de evaluación diferentes para la convocatoria ordinaria y la extraordinaria, un 21% indican los mismos sistemas en ambas convocatorias y un 45% no hace alusión a la convocatoria extraordinaria.

En cuanto a sistemas concretos de evaluación, el 78% incluye el examen final, el 29% exámenes parciales, el 25% especifica que se realizará un examen de desarrollo, el 18% especifica que se realizará un examen tipo test, el 5% un examen oral, el 29% la entrega de un trabajo final o global de asignatura, en el 71% de los casos se valora el conjunto de varias prácticas parciales y el 23% varias pruebas orales. En el 43% se valora concretamente la participación activa en clase, el 15% de las guías incluye como sistema de evaluación la asistencia a clase, el 6% portafolio, el 2% la autoevaluación y el 4% evalúa mediante el uso de recursos electrónicos<sup>1</sup>. Además, un 15% de guías recoge otros sistemas o pruebas de evaluación no codificados previamente, minoritarios, como la coevaluación, los debates, el herbario, prácticas de laboratorio, un cuaderno, escalas de actitudes, técnicas de observación, valoración cualitativa, trabajo de campo, fichas de observación sistemática, seminarios, diseño de pósters, asistencia a conferencias, comentarios de texto, comentarios de imágenes, participación en un juicio, que normalmente corresponden a campos específicos ligados a un grado concreto o sólo vienen contemplados en una guía docente en nuestra muestra.

En cuanto a los pesos otorgados a cada prueba de evaluación y dado que la variabilidad entre guías en algunos casos es grande (ej. el peso del examen final varía desde un 10% nada hasta un 80%), se ha calculado el peso medio otorgado a cada sistema de evaluación, de modo que el examen final tiene un peso medio de 52%, el examen parcial un 24%, el de desarrollo un 22%, el test un 14%, la prueba final oral un 6%, el trabajo escrito global un 16%, las prácticas parciales un 27%, las pruebas orales un 11%, la participación un 14%, la asistencia a clase un 4%, el portafolio un 4%, la autoevaluación un 1%, los recursos electrónicos un 3% y otras pruebas un 24%.

En este apartado de resultados preliminares obtenidos, también hemos podido observar diferencias significativas entre las guías de las distintas universidades de la muestra. Cada universidad tiene su normativa en cuanto a aspectos como la elaboración de las guías y los pesos máximos de los sistemas de evaluación utilizados para cada asignatura, pero sí podemos adelantar cierta comparación entre ellas. Hay universidades en que las guías publicadas están accesibles a cualquier usuario que consulte la web institucional, mientras que en otras no es así y en unas universidades se observa que se marcan mínimos para cada prueba en mayor medida que en otras. En la universidad privada de la muestra no se distingue la asistencia y participación en clase como sistema de evaluación específico, quizás porque se da por supuesta en la docencia en el marco del EEES y se señalan sistemas de evaluación que no hemos encontrado en las guías de las universidades públicas como las escalas de actitudes o las fichas de observación sistemáticas. Asimismo, se observan diferentes pruebas de evaluación según la Facultad o rama del conocimiento, como una mayor prevalencia de las pruebas orales en asignaturas de las facultades de Derecho y Humanidades.

#### 4. Consideraciones finales

El trabajo presentado aborda los sistemas de evaluación del estudiante universitario según las guías docentes publicadas en la docencia impartida en los grados adaptados al EEES. Los resultados preliminares muestran algunos datos llamativos. Hemos observado en varias guías docentes la impartición de asignaturas de 6 créditos por más de tres profesores, lo que puede dificultar la coordinación y aprendizaje del estudiante. Aunque hay estudios como el de Gargallo et al. (2010), que resaltaba la conveniencia de valorar el esfuerzo del estudiante y ese es el espíritu de la docencia en el EEES, hemos podido observar que el examen final sigue teniendo un peso importante en la evaluación. De igual forma, podemos señalar la escasa importancia otorgada a sistemas de evaluación tan útiles como la autoevaluación (2%) o la coevaluación, como señalan Trujillo (2011) o Ibarra et al. (2012). Así, con la autoevaluación, el estudiante se implica, se motiva y reflexiona sobre su propio aprendizaje, comprende mejor el rol del profesor, interactúa con el profesor y en la coevaluación,

<sup>1</sup> La suma total de porcentajes correspondientes a los sistemas de evaluación utilizados puede ser mayor que el 100% en cada guía docente (p.ej. una guía puede señalar evaluación mediante examen final con un peso del 30% y después indicar evaluación tipo test con un peso del 20% sin señalar el otro 10% restante a qué prueba de evaluación corresponde, por lo que en la base de datos aparece examen final 30% y examen test 20%).

interactúa con sus compañeros (Carless et al., 2006). Por otra parte, las TICs les permiten llevar a cabo un aprendizaje mucho más colaborativo con sus compañeros y profesores gracias a la comunicación interactiva, tal y como indicaban también los trabajos de Álvarez et al. (2009) y de De Pablo y Villaciervos (2005). Sin embargo y aunque los estudiantes valoran la utilización de las nuevas tecnologías por parte del profesor (Gargallo et al., 2010), en las pruebas de evaluación sólo un 4% los utiliza. Finalmente, llama la atención que se contemple explícitamente la asistencia a clase como un sistema de evaluación, probablemente algo que se supone obligatoria en la docencia actual y que no habría que puntuar sin que haya la correspondiente participación activa el estudiante en clase.

Dado que en este momento estamos trabajando en los resultados, queríamos proporcionar unos resultados preliminares para poder reflexionar conjuntamente sobre ellos y el objetivo último es poder comparar los sistemas de evaluación publicados en las guías docentes, las opiniones y preferencias de los estudiantes y de los profesores universitarios para obtener una comparación integral de los agentes implicados en la evaluación del estudiante en el marco del EEES. Este trabajo forma parte de un proyecto de innovación docente financiado por la universidad donde está registrado el grupo I.M.@.G.E. y no nos consta ninguno similar realizado hasta el momento.

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# ¿DE QUIÉN ES LA CULPA? ATRIBUCIÓN Y GRAVEDAD DEL FALLO EN SERVICIOS PRESTADOS POR MÁS DE UN PROVEEDOR. APLICACIÓN A LA COMPRA POR INTERNET

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## RESUMEN

*La compra a través de Internet cada vez es más frecuente debido a las importantes ventajas que ofrece como la opción de realizar la compra en horarios 24/7 desde la comodidad de nuestras casas, a precios más económicos y con la posibilidad de obtener información y opiniones de otros consumidores sobre lo que queremos comprar. Sin embargo, como en todo el sector de servicios, el comercio electrónico no es inmune a fallos. En España el 7,7% de las personas que realizaron alguna compra en Internet obtuvieron algún fallo. ¿Qué comportamiento adoptamos en esta situación? Dado que en este servicio pueden participar varias compañías ¿A quién culpamos? El objetivo de este trabajo es analizar cómo varía la percepción de justicia de un consumidor en un escenario de fallo y recuperación del servicio de una compra online. En concreto, se investiga la percepción de justicia, satisfacción, atribución y gravedad del fallo mediante la metodología de experimentación a través de dieciséis escenarios que abarcan elementos de justicia interpersonal, justicia procedimental y justicia distributiva.*

## Palabras clave

Atribución fallo, gravedad fallo, percepción justicia, recuperación servicio.

## 1. Introducción

Internet ha crecido exponencialmente en la última década, incrementando su poder de difusión y su impacto en la industria (Kim *et al.*, 2012). Ha afectado la manera en la cual la mayoría de los negocios trabajan y se ha convertido en una herramienta sumamente importante debido a su capacidad para ofrecer información, entretenimiento, y nuevas posibilidades de compras (Richard *et al.*, 2010). Por ejemplo, en España en el primer trimestre de 2013, el comercio electrónico alcanzó un volumen de negocio de 2.822,6 millones de euros, lo que supone un 15,1% más que en el mismo trimestre de 2012; con un total de 43,5 millones de operaciones (CMT, 2013).

Pero este extraordinario crecimiento en número de consumidores y ventas también viene acompañado de quejas debido a fallos en las compras online (Forbes *et al.*, 2005). A pesar del establecimiento de las ventas online como un modelo de negocio vital para las empresas hoy en día, el fallo en este tipo de ventas es aún inevitable (Kuo y Wu, 2012). Según el informe más reciente del Observatorio Nacional de las Telecomunicaciones y de la Sociedad de la Información, el 9,6% de los compradores online en España han tenido algún problema con su compra electrónica (ONTSI, 2013).

En este contexto las empresas se han esforzado en perfeccionar los sistemas de recuperación utilizados. Estos sistemas se caracterizan por incorporar elementos de justicia interpersonal (e.g. ofreciendo un trato amable y cordial al consumidor), de justicia procedimental (e.g. desarrollando procesos ágiles y flexibles) y de justicia distributiva (e.g. ofreciendo compensaciones o reembolsos). Resulta interesante analizar, en qué medida estos elementos no solo sirven para recuperar el fallo en el servicio cometido por la empresa, sino que pueden llegar a convertir a consumidores ocasionales de la empresa en consumidores fieles e incluso cambiar las percepciones del cliente relativas al fallo como puede ser la gravedad de dicho fallo.

El fallo en el servicio, puede tener diferentes orígenes. Por ejemplo, es posible que el fallo haya sido cometido por la empresa principal a la cual el consumidor contrató el servicio o bien el que fallo deba atribuirse a una empresa colaboradora de la principal (e.g. una empresa de mensajería que colabora en hacer llegar el producto al domicilio del consumidor). Este matiz del origen de la responsabilidad del fallo podría afectar a las percepciones del consumidor sobre el fallo e incluso podría condicionar otros aspectos como la satisfacción del consumidor con el proceso de compra y su relación con la empresa principal.

El objetivo de este trabajo es analizar cómo varía la influencia ejercida por la responsabilidad de la empresa principal a la que se ha contratado el servicio (según ésta sea una responsabilidad directa o indirecta al ser atribuida a un colaborador) sobre la satisfacción del consumidor y su percepción de responsabilidad y controlabilidad del fallo. De igual forma, se analiza la percepción de responsabilidad y controlabilidad que tiene el consumidor sobre una empresa colaboradora cuando el fallo se atribuye a la empresa principal. Por otra parte, estudiamos en qué medida los elementos de justicia interpersonal, procedimental y distributiva puedan reducir la percepción de la gravedad del fallo por parte del consumidor. Finalmente, se analiza el efecto moderador ejercido por la justicia interpersonal sobre la justicia procedimental y la justicia distributiva percibida por el cliente.

Para ello, se parte de las argumentaciones realizadas en la Teoría de la Atribución (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1980) y la Teoría de la Equidad (Adams, 1963) y se utiliza la metodología de experimentación en un contexto de fallo de una compra online que involucra a dos compañías (la compañía principal a la que compra el consumidor a través de Internet y a la compañía colaboradora que se ocupa de hacer llegar dicho producto al domicilio del consumidor).

## 2. Revisión de la literatura

### 2.1 Atribución del fallo

Por lo general, los consumidores responden a los fallos en el servicio de diversas maneras (Bonifield y Cole, 2007): atribuyendo la culpa por el fallo cometido, apelando a la justicia, mostrando respuestas emocionales, expresando las expectativas de recuperación, y mediante las intenciones de comportamiento post fallo. La atribución, en psicología se define como un proceso cognitivo,

mediante el cual un individuo, a través de su percepción, atribuye las causas y responsabilidades de un evento (Liu, 1998).

La Teoría de la Atribución (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1980) es una de las teorías más utilizadas en el contexto de las investigaciones sobre fallos en los servicios. Esta teoría argumenta que los consumidores normalmente buscan explicaciones que permitan identificar las causas de los fallos (Bitner *et al.*, 1990; Folkes, 1984) y que en este proceso de búsqueda el consumidor intenta descubrir si la causa que provocó el fallo podía haber sido controlada por la empresa e identificar quién fue el responsable del fallo en el servicio (Weiner, 2000).

### **2.1.1 Responsabilidad del fallo**

Ante un fallo en el servicio, una respuesta frecuente del consumidor es la identificación del responsable del fallo (Folkes, 1984; Weiner, 2000). El "locus" o la atribución de responsabilidad del fallo determinan las creencias acerca de quién debe resolver los problemas. En concreto, los problemas derivados de las acciones de los consumidores deben ser resueltos por los consumidores, mientras que los problemas derivados de las acciones de las empresas deben ser resueltos por las empresas (Folkes, 1988). Por tanto, si el consumidor está convencido de que el fallo es culpa del proveedor del servicio, éste pensará que merece una compensación por el mismo, que podría consistir en una sustitución, reembolso, disculpa o alguna combinación de estos (Harris *et al.*, 2006).

Saber quién es considerado como responsable en una situación de fallo y recuperación del servicio es muy importante para la resolución del conflicto (Ok *et al.*, 2005). Todo consumidor implicado en un fallo suele hacer una atribución de responsabilidades en sus encuentros con los proveedores (Susskind, 2004), e independientemente de la exactitud de las inferencias que éste haga, su comportamiento posterior con cada proveedor se verá notablemente condicionado por la responsabilidad que le haya sido atribuida (Swanson y Hsu, 2010).

### **2.1.2 Controlabilidad del fallo**

La Atribución de controlabilidad es el grado en que la causa del fallo está sujeta a la voluntad del proveedor del servicio cuando el resultado "podría haber sido de otra manera" (Weiner, 2000), es decir, el grado en que el consumidor cree que la organización pudo haber evitado la causa que originó el fallo.

La percepción del consumidor con respecto al grado de control de la compañía sobre el fallo es una variable psicológica importante que puede afectar la respuesta con el proceso de recuperación del servicio (Betts *et al.*, 2011). El consumidor experimenta insatisfacción cuando percibe que la empresa podía haber controlado el evento que provocó el fallo (Casado y Más, 2002). De este modo, es importante recurrir a la dimensión de la prevención de la Teoría del Enfoque Regulatorio (Higgins, 1997). Esta teoría afirma que, en una situación negativa los individuos se sienten prevenidos por la amenaza de la pérdida y tratan de evitarla. Por ejemplo, un consumidor que lee foros sobre las opiniones y calificaciones que se le brindan a un vendedor en páginas como Amazon y E-bay. Si observa comentarios sobre fallos atribuidos a ese vendedor, intentará evitar realizar esa misma compra.

De esta manera, la percepción que tiene el usuario respecto al control de la empresa sobre el fallo es un factor clave en el proceso de recuperación del servicio. Si el evento que provocó el fallo en la prestación del servicio se percibe como algo fuera del control de la empresa, los clientes podrían ser más propensos a justificar el inconveniente y por lo tanto, puede que disminuyan sus expectativas con respecto al resultado de la recuperación. Por ejemplo, cuando una compañía aérea cancela un vuelo debido a las condiciones climáticas, es probable que los clientes sean más comprensivos que si la cancelación se produce con buen tiempo y no existe una causa externa que permita justificarla (Betts *et al.*, 2011).

### **2.2 Gravedad del fallo**

La gravedad del fallo se refiere a la intensidad del problema que percibe un consumidor cuando se presenta un inconveniente en la prestación del servicio (Weun *et al.*, 2004). La percepción de gravedad del fallo puede variar de un consumidor a otro (Craighead *et al.*, 2004) por lo que los fallos

pueden ser percibidos como pequeñas molestias o incluso hasta agravios mayores (McQuilken y Robertson, 2011).

La gravedad del fallo del servicio es una cuestión clave a la que debe prestarse una gran atención en todo estudio de fallo y recuperación (Webster y Sundaram, 1998). En esta línea, Singh y Wilkes (1996), argumentan que la intensidad con la que se verá afectada negativamente la relación entre el cliente y el proveedor del servicio, será mayor cuanto más importante es la intensidad de ese fallo en el servicio. Estos mismos autores afirman que los clientes son más propensos a involucrarse en comportamientos negativos (e. g. intención de no revisita, WOM negativo) a medida que aumenta la gravedad del fallo.

La gravedad del fallo también puede tener una gran influencia en las percepciones del consumidor, ya que condiciona las expectativas de dicho consumidor respecto al tipo de solución que deberían ofrecerle en el proceso de recuperación del servicio (Betts *et al.*, 2011). Es por esta razón que, un fallo muy grave tiene una probabilidad alta de acarrear reacciones negativas respecto al resultado del proceso de recuperación, ya que por lo general en este caso es difícil que el consumidor perciba que la solución es equivalente al valor de la pérdida sufrida originalmente (Levesque y McDougall, 2000).

### **3. Formulación de hipótesis**

#### ***Satisfacción***

Los fallos se presentan como consecuencia de que las expectativas de los consumidores no han sido satisfechas. Ante una situación de fallo en el servicio, una de las primeras reacciones del consumidor será la atribución de dicho fallo para delimitar responsabilidades. Este proceso consiste en encontrar explicaciones racionales para justificar el incidente que produjo el fallo (Folkes, 1984) y en identificar el responsable de dicho fallo. El resultado de este proceso de atribución podría ser que la responsabilidad recayera directamente en la empresa principal que ha sido contratada para prestar el servicio (Folkes, 1988; Maxham y Netemeyer, 2002). Pero también es posible que esta empresa principal tan sólo tenga una responsabilidad indirecta porque la responsabilidad del fallo sea atribuida a una empresa colaboradora de la empresa principal (e.g una empresa de mensajería que debe entregar el producto comprado a través de Internet en la página Web de la empresa que vende el producto). En esta línea, autores como Holloway y Beatty (2003) argumentan que los problemas en la entrega del producto comprado es uno de los fallos más frecuentes en las ventas online.

En la literatura ha sido ampliamente constatada la insatisfacción del consumidor cuando la responsabilidad es atribuida directamente a la empresa que presta el servicio (Folkes, 1988; Maxham y Netemeyer, 2002; Wirtz y Mattila, 2004; Hess, 2008; Shi *et al.*, 2011). Sin embargo, parece razonable pensar que si la responsabilidad no se atribuye directamente a la empresa que presta el servicio (venta online), sino que su responsabilidad es indirecta (ya que recae en una empresa colaboradora) la insatisfacción del consumidor con la empresa que presta el servicio podría ser menor, pues al fin y al cabo el fallo no es una responsabilidad directa suya. Basándonos en los argumentos expuestos se propone la siguiente hipótesis:

*H1) El efecto negativo del fallo en la satisfacción del consumidor con la empresa que presta el servicio será menor si la responsabilidad del fallo es atribuida a la empresa colaboradora.*

#### ***Responsabilidad y Controlabilidad del fallo***

Cuando el consumidor identifica un fallo en el servicio que recibe, una de las primeras reacciones es intentar averiguar cuáles fueron las razones que lo provocaron (Bitner *et al.*, 1990). Para conseguirlo, se hace dos preguntas ¿Quién es el responsable? ¿Pudo haber evitado el fallo? (Weiner, 2000). Las percepciones del consumidor, con respecto a la habilidad de la organización para evitar el fallo, dependen en gran medida de si efectivamente el proveedor pudo haber hecho algo de otra manera y por lo tanto haber evitado el incidente (Weiner, 1980).

Si el consumidor percibe que la organización pudo haber prevenido el fallo, sus reacciones tienden a ser más negativas. La incapacidad para prevenir fallos controlables es vista por el consumidor como un signo de un trato inadecuado o falta de habilidad para corregirlo (Poon *et al.*, 2004). Por el



contrario, el hecho de no tener claro quién es el responsable del fallo, mitigará los efectos que éste puede causar sobre el comportamiento del consumidor (Yen *et al.*, 2004). En una línea similar, Maxham y Netemeyer (2002) argumentan que los clientes son más indulgentes si perciben que la empresa tenía poco control sobre la ocurrencia del fallo; mientras que son menos tolerantes cuando sienten que este fallo era razonablemente previsible y podría haberse evitado fácilmente (Folkes, 1984).

Por tanto, parece razonable plantear que el consumidor percibe que la responsabilidad que tiene la empresa que presta el servicio será menor si el fallo no es atribuido directamente a esta empresa sino a la empresa colaboradora (e.g. la empresa de mensajería que hace llegar el pedido al cliente). A partir de estos razonamientos, se plantean las siguientes hipótesis:

*H2a) Cuando se presenta un fallo en el servicio, el consumidor percibe que la responsabilidad de la empresa que presta el servicio será menor si el fallo es cometido por la empresa colaboradora.*

De igual forma, podría ser interesante analizar en qué medida varía la responsabilidad que el consumidor percibe que tiene la empresa colaboradora, según el fallo haya sido cometido por ella misma o por la empresa que presta el servicio, para poder comparar ambas situaciones y ver si la atribución de responsabilidades es más exigente con la empresa que presta el servicio (empresa contratada por el consumidor) que con la empresa colaboradora que no fue contratada directamente por el consumidor.

*H2b) Cuando se presenta un fallo en el servicio, el consumidor percibe que la responsabilidad de la empresa colaboradora será menor si el fallo es cometido por la empresa que presta el servicio.*

Utilizando los mismos argumentos podría ser interesante analizar cómo varía la controlabilidad percibida del consumidor en ambas situaciones. En la misma línea que en el caso anterior, parece razonable plantear que la percepción de controlabilidad del fallo que tiene el consumidor con respecto a la empresa que presta el servicio será menor, si el fallo no es atribuido directamente a dicha empresa sino a la empresa colaboradora (e.g. la empresa de mensajería que hace llegar el pedido al cliente). En este caso, la entrega del servicio está fuertemente influenciada por factores ajenos al control de la organización (Vázquez-Casielles *et al.*, 2007). A partir de estos razonamientos, se plantean la siguiente hipótesis:

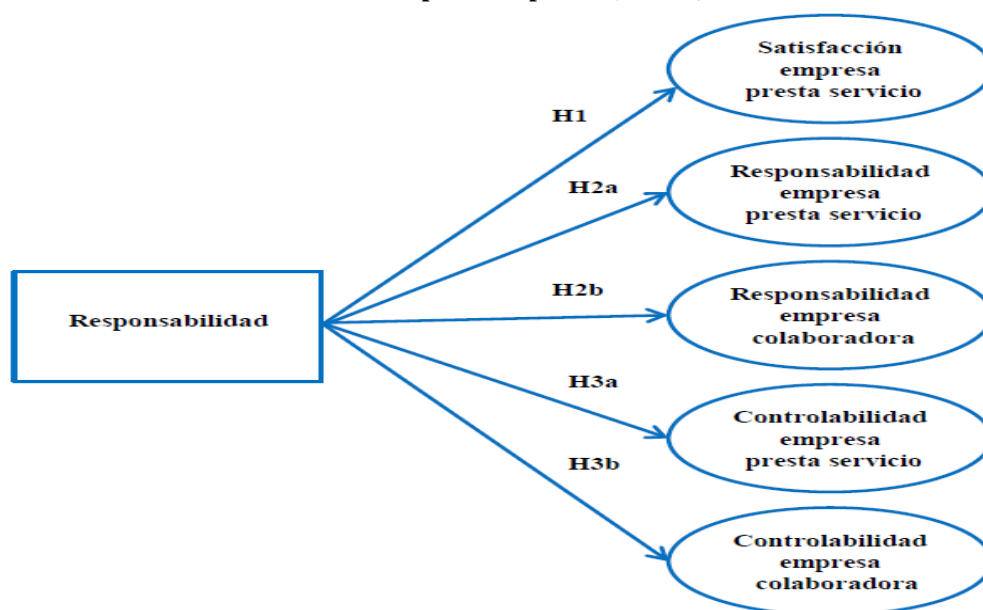
*H3a) Cuando se presenta un fallo en el servicio, el consumidor percibe que la controlabilidad de la empresa que presta el servicio será menor si el fallo es cometido por una empresa colaboradora.*

De la misma forma, parece interesante analizar la controlabilidad asignada a la empresa colaboradora, según el fallo haya sido cometido por ella misma o por la empresa principal a la que contrató el servicio para poder comparar ambas situaciones. De esta forma se plantea la siguiente hipótesis.

*H3b) Cuando se presenta un fallo en el servicio, el consumidor percibe que la controlabilidad de la empresa colaboradora será menor si el fallo es cometido por la empresa que presta el servicio.*

La figura 1 presenta la primera parte del modelo conceptual propuesto. En ella se plantea, por una parte, la influencia ejercida por la atribución de la responsabilidad del fallo sobre la satisfacción del consumidor con respecto a la empresa que presta el servicio; y por otra parte, la influencia ejercida por la atribución de la responsabilidad del fallo sobre la responsabilidad percibida y la controlabilidad percibida tanto de la empresa que presta el servicio como de la empresa colaboradora.

Figura 1  
**Modelo Conceptual Propuesto (Parte I)**



### ***Gravedad del fallo***

La gravedad del fallo se define como la percepción de la intensidad de un problema surgido durante la prestación del servicio: cuanto más intenso o grave sea el fallo, mayor será la sensación de pérdida que tiene el consumidor (Weun *et al.*, 2004). La Teoría de la Equidad (Adams, 1963) plantea que es importante que exista un equilibrio en los intercambios que se llevan a cabo entre dos o más individuos. Cuando se produce un fallo, se pierde el equilibrio en la relación entre el consumidor y el proveedor (Weun *et al.*, 2004). Al evaluar la recuperación del servicio, los consumidores valoran la relación existente en ese momento entre lo invertido y lo obtenido, a través de la relación, y dónde se encuentra en cada momento el punto de equilibrio (Smith *et al.*, 1999). Si lo invertido es más importante que lo obtenido, el consumidor podría percibir que el fallo es más grave.

Los fallos que el consumidor percibe que son más graves, y que por tanto le acarrearán más pérdidas, exigen que la ganancia ofrecida en la recuperación del servicio sea mayor para alcanzar el equilibrio en la relación (Smith *et al.*, 1999). Por esta razón, la Teoría de la Equidad sugiere que cuando el fallo que se produce es muy grave, se requiere que el proveedor reaccione ofreciendo un servicio de recuperación capaz de compensar la magnitud de dicho fallo (Webster y Sundaram, 1998). Así, parece razonable argumentar que cuanto más importante sea el fallo, más completa debe ser la compensación que se ofrezca al consumidor, por ejemplo, incluyendo adecuados elementos de justicia interpersonal, procedimental y distributiva. Dicho de otra forma, parece razonable suponer que la percepción de gravedad del fallo podrá verse parcialmente mitigada si el sistema de recuperación incluye elementos de justicia interpersonal, procedimental y distributiva. Por tanto, de acuerdo a estos argumentos, se plantean las siguientes hipótesis:

*H4) La percepción de gravedad del fallo será menor si el sistema de recuperación del servicio cuenta con elementos de justicia interpersonal*

*H5) La percepción de gravedad del fallo será menor si el sistema de recuperación del servicio cuenta con elementos de justicia procedimental*

*H6) La percepción de gravedad del fallo será menor si el sistema de recuperación del servicio cuenta con elementos de justicia distributiva*

Un aspecto sumamente importante al establecer las estrategias de recuperación, es ser conscientes de que durante la recuperación del servicio, los consumidores no consideran solamente el “resultado” (lo que reciben) sino también la “forma” (cómo lo reciben). Los consumidores evalúan la “forma” muy subjetivamente, basándose sobre todo en las interacciones con los empleados (Parasuraman *et al.*,

1985). Por tanto, los procesos de recuperación que atienden el aspecto interpersonal, tienen más probabilidades de obtener evaluaciones positivas por parte del consumidor que los procesos que atienden únicamente el resultado de la recuperación (De Ruyter y De Wetzels, 1998).

La Teoría de la Justicia (Folger y Cropanzano, 1998) sugiere que contemplar acciones de justicia interpersonal es crucial en situaciones de recuperación del servicio. Aun cuando los procedimientos sean justos, los consumidores pueden percibir que el tratamiento interpersonal que han recibido en el proceso no lo ha sido (Erdogan, 2002). De hecho, algunos consumidores utilizan de manera prioritaria para evaluar el servicio aspectos como el trato cordial y la capacidad de respuesta de los empleados (Laguna y Palacios, 2009).

De acuerdo a estos argumentos, sería razonable plantear que las estrategias de recuperación procedimental (e.g. ofrecer una respuesta rápida para comunicarle al cliente cómo se está resolviendo el fallo) y estrategias de recuperación distributivas (e.g. ofrecer algún regalo o un descuento especial) podrían obtener mejores resultados si se complementan con estrategias de recuperación interpersonal (e.g. envío de un mensaje amable para transmitir la idea de que se está haciendo el máximo esfuerzo por resolver el fallo en la mayor brevedad posible, se pidan disculpas y se ofrezca una explicación clara sobre la razón del fallo). Es decir, que la influencia de las estrategias de recuperación procedimental y distributiva sobre la percepción de gravedad del fallo podría verse multiplicada si además el sistema de recuperación contempla elementos de justicia interpersonal.

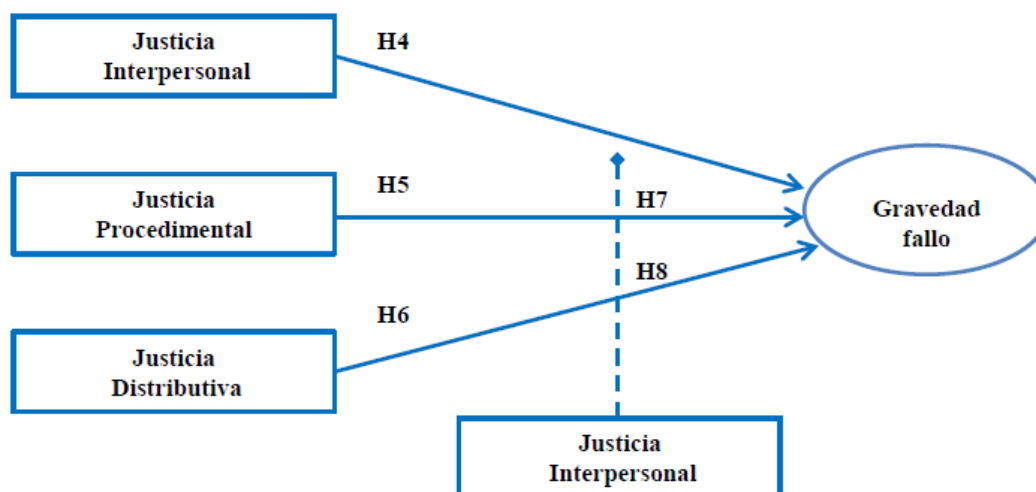
A partir de los razonamientos anteriormente expuestos, se proponen las siguientes hipótesis:

*H7) El efecto positivo de la justicia procedimental sobre la percepción de gravedad del fallo será mayor si el sistema de recuperación cuenta con elementos de justicia interpersonal*

*H8) El efecto positivo de la justicia distributiva sobre la percepción de gravedad del fallo será mayor si el sistema de recuperación cuenta con elementos de justicia interpersonal*

La figura 2 presenta la segunda parte del modelo conceptual propuesto. En él se plantea la existencia de una relación entre la justicia interpersonal, la justicia procedimental y la justicia distributiva con la percepción de la gravedad del fallo, así como el efecto moderador que la justicia interpersonal tiene en la influencia que ejercen la justicia procedimental y la justicia distributiva sobre la percepción de la gravedad del fallo.

Figura 2  
Modelo Conceptual Propuesto (Parte II)



#### 4. Metodología

Para el contraste de las hipótesis de investigación la metodología aplicada ha sido un diseño experimental de dieciséis escenarios. Los sujetos fueron asignados aleatoriamente a un escenario de dieciséis posibles, dentro de un diseño entre-sujetos de 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 condiciones. Para la obtención de una muestra representativa se contrató una empresa de Investigación de Mercados (NetQuest). La

muestra obtenida fue de 494 personas, cuya media de edad fue de 43 años, de los cuales el 51% eran mujeres.

Con el fin de que estuvieran más identificados con el escenario planteado, la condición exigida para poder participar en el estudio fue que hubieran sufrido alguna vez un fallo al realizar una compra en Internet. Al preguntar sobre un servicio que han utilizado (Smith y Bolton, 1998) los consumidores se sienten más identificados e involucrados con el escenario que se les presenta, por lo que, se obtienen mejores resultados con esta muestra. Si la obtención de la muestra no contara con este filtro, se correría el riesgo de incluir en el estudio personas que nunca hubieran realizado una compra online, por lo que su identificación con los escenarios del experimento sería menor, y por ende, la muestra de menor calidad.

Son varias las razones que permiten justificar el uso de la metodología de experimentación con varios escenarios en el estudio de la recuperación del servicio. En primer lugar, este método minimiza los sesgos de información que podrían presentarse cuando se le pide a un consumidor que recuerde experiencias pasadas concretas (Smith *et al.*, 1999). En segundo lugar, como Smith y Bolton (1998) indican, los escenarios pueden ser efectivamente manipulados, lo cual permite mejorar la variabilidad en las respuestas de los consumidores con respecto a la recuperación del servicio en el aspecto concreto que se está analizando. En tercer lugar, el uso de escenarios reduce los problemas relacionados con las diferencias individuales en las respuestas y las circunstancias personales al contexto de la investigación (Bateson y Hui, 1992). Es decir, esta metodología confiere validez interna y permite obtener resultados estadísticos más concluyentes mediante la manipulación de las variables independientes, y la reducción de ruido aleatorio en las variables dependientes, ya que utiliza el mismo entorno estandarizado para todos los sujetos (Churchill, 1995). Finalmente, la metodología de experimentación ha demostrado tener la capacidad de involucrar a los participantes en situaciones concretas, diseñadas por el investigador y que suelen darse en la vida real (Bateson y Hui, 1992).

Para llevar a cabo el experimento, tomamos como referencia una situación de compra a través de Internet en la que se produce un fallo. Este caso no resulta especialmente extraño, pues el 11% de los compradores online no están satisfechos con las páginas Web que visitaron (Harris *et al.*, 2006) y más de un 65% de los usuarios que compran a través de Internet han sufrido algún fallo en alguna ocasión (Wu, 2013). Tal y como hemos señalado anteriormente, destaca que entre los problemas más frecuentes en las ventas online, se encuentran los fallos en la entrega del producto comprado (Holloway y Beatty, 2003).

#### **4.1. Diseño del experimento**

Para el contraste de las hipótesis de investigación se ha diseñado un experimento 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 (Responsable del fallo: empresa que presta el servicio vs empresa colaboradora / justicia interpersonal vs no justicia interpersonal / justicia procedimental vs no justicia procedimental / justicia distributiva vs no justicia distributiva). Se ha planteado un escenario en el cual el consumidor compra una Tablet en una página Web, y al cumplirse el plazo de entrega, el paquete aún no ha llegado. Para solucionar el problema, el encuestado se sitúa en uno de 16 posibles escenarios (2 x 2 x 2 x 2) respecto a la atribución del fallo y las tres dimensiones de justicia manipuladas de la forma siguiente:

1) La atribución del fallo se manipula en dos niveles, según el fallo sea responsabilidad de la empresa principal a la que se ha contratado el servicio (A: BuyExperience) o sea responsabilidad de la empresa colaboradora (B: Transportering):

*A: Mediante un mail informan que el problema ocasionado se ha presentado debido a un mal registro del pedido como resultado de un fallo en el sistema informático*

*B: Mediante un mail informan que el problema ocasionado ha sido debido a un error al teclear el código postal del envío por parte de la empresa que colabora con ellos en las labores de mensajería*

2) La justicia interpersonal se manipula en dos niveles (A y B), según haya o no elementos de justicia interpersonal:

*A: Como respuesta a la consulta del comprador, responde el mail el gerente de la empresa, quien de una manera muy amable pide disculpas y explica la razón del inconveniente. En el mail aparece el logo de la empresa y todos los datos de contacto del gerente*

*B: Como respuesta a la consulta del comprador, llega un mail que nadie firma, escrito con un tono cortante y nada amable, y que en ningún momento se disculpa por el fallo cometido*

3) La justicia procedimental se manipula en dos niveles (A y B), según haya o no elementos de justicia procedimental:

*A: A primera hora del día siguiente llega un mail de la empresa, en el que se le informa al cliente que su paquete será entregado entre los primeros del día, y que en unos minutos le llamarán para preguntarle a qué hora y en qué lugar quiere que le entreguen el pedido*

*B: Hasta el día siguiente por la tarde no llega un mail de la empresa, en el que se le informa al cliente que no saben con certeza el día ni la hora en que llegará el paquete, que si quiere esa información que se ponga en contacto con la empresa de mensajería*

4) La justicia distributiva se manipula en dos niveles (A y B), según haya o no elementos de justicia distributiva:

*A: Al día siguiente llega un mail de la empresa, en el que se le informa al cliente que como compensación por lo sucedido le envían un código promocional, que podrá cambiar por 35 euros en compras en la página Web*

*B: Al día siguiente llega un mail de la empresa, en el que se le informa al cliente que es imposible ofrecerle algún tipo de compensación*

Después de llevar a cabo la descripción de los escenarios se les pidió a los individuos que valorasen en una escala tipo Likert del 1 al 7 su satisfacción, percepción de la gravedad del fallo, y su percepción acerca del grado de responsabilidad y control sobre el fallo que tenían ambas empresas. También se pidió que valorasen su percepción con respecto al grado de realismo o credibilidad del escenario planteado. La distribución de la muestra por escenarios se presenta en la tabla 1.

Tabla 1  
**Distribución de la muestra (por escenarios)**

Justicia			Responsable fallo		N
Interpersonal	Procedimental	Distributiva	Empresa principal contratada para el servicio BuyExperience	Empresa colaboradora Transportering	
No	No	No	38	32	70
No	No	Sí	28	19	47
No	Sí	No	46	24	70
No	Sí	Sí	25	28	53
Sí	No	No	33	32	65
Sí	No	Sí	39	25	64
Sí	Sí	No	30	28	58
Sí	Sí	Sí	32	35	67
			<b>271</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>494</b>

#### 4.2. Validación escalas de medida

Para llevar a cabo el proceso de validación de las escalas de medida se realizaron diferentes pruebas y contrastes que se describen a continuación. En primer lugar, se efectuó un análisis de la validez de contenido de las escalas propuestas. Posteriormente, se llevó a cabo el análisis exploratorio y confirmatorio. Finalmente, se valoró el grado de fiabilidad y el nivel de validez de cada constructo, en términos de validez convergente y discriminante (Gerbing y Anderson, 1988).

Las escalas utilizadas para medir los diferentes constructos incluidos en el análisis se obtuvieron a través de una exhaustiva revisión de la literatura especializada, y se adaptaron al escenario de compra online considerado en esta investigación. En concreto, la escala de la satisfacción fue adaptada de Varela-Neira *et al.* (2008), la percepción de gravedad del fallo fue adaptada de Weun *et al.* (2004), la responsabilidad del fallo (empresa que presta el servicio y empresa colaboradora) fue adaptada de Maxham y Netemeyer (2002), la controlabilidad del fallo (empresa que presta el servicio y empresa colaboradora) de Xie y Heung (2012) y el realismo o credibilidad del escenario fue adaptada de Collie *et al.* (2002).

Para valorar la fiabilidad y dimensionalidad de las escalas, se utilizó el método del Alpha de Cronbach considerando como valor mínimo 0,7 (Nunnally, 1978). Todas las escalas superaron este mínimo: satisfacción (0,984), gravedad del fallo (0,954), responsabilidad del fallo (empresa que presta el servicio) (0,969), responsabilidad del fallo (empresa colaboradora) (0,972), controlabilidad del fallo (empresa que presta el servicio) (0,934), controlabilidad del fallo (empresa colaboradora) (0,972), realismo del escenario (0,819).

## 5. Resultados

### 5.1 Chequeo de la manipulación

El análisis de las variables en el chequeo de la manipulación demostró que las manipulaciones en las variables independientes fueron percibidas por los encuestados como se esperaba. En este caso, las variables analizadas fueron Responsable del fallo (empresa que presta el servicio o empresa colaboradora); Escenario Justicia Interpersonal: sin Justicia Interpersonal o con Justicia Interpersonal; Escenario Justicia Procedimental: sin Justicia Procedimental o con Justicia Procedimental; Escenario Justicia Distributiva: sin Justicia Distributiva o con Justicia Distributiva.

Además, como paso previo a la realización del estudio principal se había realizado un pretest con 81 personas para comprobar que tanto los escenarios planteados como las escalas propuestas recogían lo que se quería analizar. Este análisis fue realizado siguiendo el criterio propuesto por Blodgett *et al.*, (1997), Harris *et al.*, (2006) y Shi *et al.*, (2011). Los resultados obtenidos permiten constatar que los participantes en este estudio percibieron los escenarios como realistas (media de 5,99 sobre 7).

### 5.2 Contraste de hipótesis

Con el fin de contrastar las hipótesis, se llevó a cabo un análisis multivariante de la varianza (MANOVA) con las seis variables dependientes (satisfacción, gravedad del fallo, responsabilidad del fallo de la empresa que presta el servicio (BuyExperience), responsabilidad del fallo de la empresa colaboradora (Transportering), controlabilidad del fallo de la empresa que presta el servicio (BuyExperience) y controlabilidad del fallo de la empresa colaboradora (Transportering)) con respecto al responsable del fallo y los tres tipos de justicias, como las variables independientes. Los resultados del MANOVA muestran efectos multivariantes significativos para el responsable del fallo (Wilks's  $\lambda = 0,844$ ;  $F = 14,622$ ;  $p = 0,000$ ), la justicia interpersonal (Wilks's  $\lambda = 0,736$ ;  $F = 28,281$ ;  $p = 0,000$ ), la justicia procedimental (Wilks's  $\lambda = 0,897$ ;  $F = 9,044$ ;  $p = 0,000$ ) y la justicia distributiva (Wilks's  $\lambda = 0,905$ ;  $F = 8,307$ ;  $p = 0,000$ ). A continuación, se realizaron ANOVAs univariantes para probar los efectos específicos.

En la tabla 2 se recoge la influencia ejercida por el responsable del fallo sobre la satisfacción, la responsabilidad del fallo y la controlabilidad del fallo. En cuanto a la satisfacción (H1), cabría indicar que los resultados se encuentran en la dirección que argumenta la hipótesis. Es decir, que el efecto negativo del fallo en la satisfacción del consumidor con la empresa que presta el servicio será menor si la responsabilidad del fallo es atribuida a una empresa colaboradora, aunque las diferencias encontradas no son significativas.

Sin embargo, sí se confirma la H2a que indica que cuando se presenta un fallo en el servicio, el consumidor percibe que la responsabilidad que tiene la empresa que presta el servicio será menor si el fallo es cometido por la empresa colaboradora, y la H2b, que indica que el consumidor percibe que la responsabilidad que tiene la empresa colaboradora será menor si el fallo es cometido por la empresa que presta el servicio. Los resultados son significativos en ambos casos.

Tabla 2  
Influencia del responsable del fallo

Variable	Responsable del fallo				F	p-valor
	BE (BuyExperience) N = 271		TR (Transportering) N = 223			
	Media	Desv.	Media	Desv.		
Satisfacción	2,36	1,68	2,55	1,74	1,427	0,233
Responsabilidad percibida de (BE)	5,54	1,73	4,58	1,93	33,881	0,000
Responsabilidad percibida de (TR)	3,14	1,77	4,19	1,81	41,01	0,000
Controlabilidad percibida de (BE)	5,60	1,50	5,60	1,57	0,003	0,960
Controlabilidad percibida de (TR)	4,03	2,11	5,33	1,71	53,897	0,000

En relación a este aspecto resulta interesante destacar, no solo la significatividad de ambas hipótesis, sino también el hecho de que en ambos casos la responsabilidad percibida de la empresa que presta el servicio es claramente mayor (responsabilidad percibida empresa que presta el servicio 5,54 y responsabilidad percibida empresa colaboradora 4,58) que la que se percibe que tiene la empresa colaboradora (responsabilidad percibida empresa que presta el servicio 3,14 y responsabilidad percibida empresa colaboradora 4,19).

Respecto a la controlabilidad percibida del fallo, al igual que en el caso anterior cabría destacar que en ambas situaciones la controlabilidad que percibe el consumidor que tiene la empresa que presta el servicio es mayor (empresa que presta el servicio 5,60 y empresa colaboradora 5,60) que la que percibe que tiene la empresa colaboradora (empresa que presta el servicio 4,03 y empresa colaboradora 5,33). Sin embargo, aquí las diferencias resultan significativas para el caso de la empresa colaboradora, pero no lo son para el caso de la empresa principal a la que se contrata el servicio. Es decir, cuando se presenta un fallo en el servicio, la responsabilidad que percibe el consumidor que tiene la empresa colaboradora será menor si el fallo es cometido por la empresa que presta el servicio (H3b). Sin embargo, la controlabilidad que percibe el consumidor que tiene la empresa que presta el servicio no es menor si el fallo es cometido por una empresa colaboradora. Este resultado presenta un gran interés y nos indica que el consumidor considera que la empresa que presta el servicio tiene la misma capacidad para evitar el fallo tanto si dicho fallo es responsabilidad suya o es responsabilidad de la empresa colaboradora. En definitiva, el consumidor considera que los fallos de la empresa colaboradora están bajo el control de la empresa que presta el servicio. En la Tabla 3 se muestra el contraste de las hipótesis H1, H2a, H2b, H3a y H3b.

Tabla 3  
Resultado del contraste de hipótesis (primera parte)

H	Var. Dependiente	Var. Independiente	F	p-valor	Contraste hipótesis
H1	Satisfacción	Responsable fallo	1,427	0,233	✗
H2a	Responsabilidad percibida BE	Responsable fallo	33,881	0,000	✓
H2b	Responsabilidad percibida TR	Responsable fallo	41,01	0,000	✓
H3a	Controlabilidad percibida BE	Responsable fallo	0,003	0,960	✗
H3b	Controlabilidad percibida TR	Responsable fallo	53,897	0,000	✓

Centrando la atención en la influencia ejercida por los elementos de justicia interpersonal, justicia procedimental y justicia distributiva que incorpora el sistema de recuperación de un fallo en el servicio sobre la percepción de la gravedad del fallo por parte del consumidor cabría destacar lo siguiente (ver tabla 4). La presencia de elementos de justicia interpersonal, justicia procedimental y justicia distributiva ejerce un efecto significativo sobre la percepción de gravedad del fallo que tiene el consumidor. Por tanto, los resultados del análisis indican que debe confirmarse la hipótesis 4 (F=9,862; p=0,002), la hipótesis 5 (F=8,876; p=0,003) y la hipótesis 6 (F=4,430; p=0,036).

Tabla 4  
**Influencia de la justicia interpersonal, procedimental y distributiva**

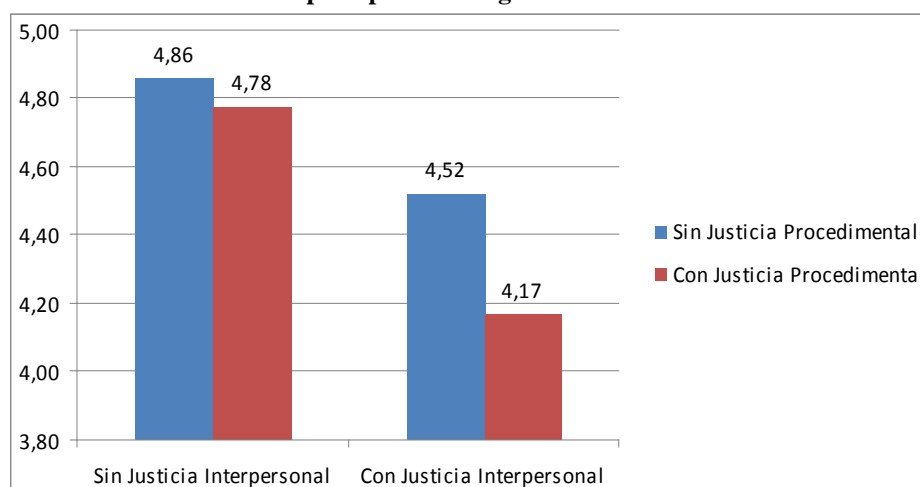
Variable: GRAVEDAD FALLO									
Justicia Interpersonal		F	Justicia Procedimental		F	Justicia Distributiva		F	
(Sin)	(Con)	9,862	(Sin)	(Con)	8,676	(Sin)	(Con)	4,43	
N = 240	N = 254		N = 246	N = 248		N = 263	N = 231		
Media	Desv.	P-valor	Media	Desv.	P-valor	Media	Desv.	P-valor	
4,92	2,11	0,002	4,97	1,79	0,003	4,89	1,91	0,036	
			4,42	1,68		4,52	1,86		

Finalmente, al analizar la moderación de la justicia interpersonal sobre los efectos ejercidos por la justicia procedimental y distributiva sobre la percepción de gravedad del fallo cabría destacar lo siguiente. Los resultados mostrados en la tabla 5 y en el gráfico 1 permiten constatar que durante el proceso de recuperación del servicio, el efecto moderador de la justicia interpersonal sobre la influencia ejercida por la justicia procedimental sobre la percepción de gravedad del fallo resulta significativo ( $F= 3,672$ ;  $p=0,056$ ) lo cual permite confirmar la hipótesis 7. Es decir, la percepción de gravedad del fallo puede verse reducida significativamente si el proceso de recuperación incorpora una adecuada justicia procedimental en combinación con una adecuada justicia interpersonal. Sin embargo, el efecto moderador de la justicia interpersonal sobre la influencia ejercida por la justicia distributiva sobre la percepción de gravedad del fallo no resulta significativo ( $F= 0,074$ ;  $p=0,786$ ) y por tanto la hipótesis 8 no se puede confirmar.

Tabla 5  
**Resultado del contraste de la hipótesis (segunda parte)**

H	Var. Dependiente	Var. Independiente	F	p-valor	Contraste hipótesis
H4	Gravedad del fallo	JI	9,862	0,002	✓
H5	Gravedad del fallo	JP	8,676	0,003	✓
H6	Gravedad del fallo	JD	4,430	0,036	✓
H7	Gravedad del fallo	JI * JP	3,672	0,056	✓
H8	Gravedad del fallo	JI * JD	0,074	0,786	✗

Gráfico 1  
**Moderación de la Justicia Interpersonal sobre la Justicia Procedimental en la percepción de la gravedad del fallo**





## 6. Conclusiones e implicaciones para la gestión

Utilizando la metodología de experimentación en un contexto de fallo de una compra online y tomando como referencia la Teoría de la Atribución y la Teoría de la Equidad, hemos analizado dos aspectos que tienen un claro interés para la investigación especializada en la materia y la gestión empresarial. En primer lugar, se ha analizado cómo varía la influencia ejercida por la responsabilidad de la empresa (ya sea de la empresa que presta el servicio o de la empresa colaboradora) sobre la satisfacción del consumidor y su percepción de responsabilidad y controlabilidad. De igual forma y con la finalidad de tener un punto de comparación, también se ha analizado la percepción de responsabilidad y controlabilidad que tiene el consumidor sobre una empresa colaboradora cuando el fallo se atribuye a la empresa que presta el servicio. En segundo lugar, se ha contrastado la influencia ejercida por los elementos de justicia interpersonal, justicia procedimental y justicia distributiva que incorpora el sistema de recuperación de un fallo en el servicio sobre la percepción de la gravedad del fallo por parte del consumidor. Adicionalmente, se ha analizado el efecto moderador de la justicia interpersonal en la influencia que ejercen la justicia procedimental y la justicia distributiva sobre la percepción de la gravedad del fallo.

El desarrollo de estos análisis nos ha permitido encontrar una serie de resultados reveladores, que detallamos a continuación. En cuanto a la responsabilidad del fallo (según ésta sea directa: empresa que presta el servicio; o indirecta: empresa colaboradora) y su influencia en las percepciones del cliente (satisfacción, responsabilidad y controlabilidad) cabría hacer referencia a los siguientes aspectos. En primer lugar, destacaríamos que el nivel de satisfacción del consumidor ante el fallo fue bajo en ambos casos y algo menor en el caso de que la responsabilidad le fuera atribuida directamente a la compañía que presta el servicio. Sin embargo, no existen diferencias significativas entre las dos situaciones. Es decir, el hecho de que la responsabilidad no fuera atribuida directamente a la compañía contratada no reduce la insatisfacción del cliente. Esto no resulta del todo extraño pues, al fin y al cabo, el perjuicio sufrido por éste (la no disponibilidad del producto comprado) es el mismo para los dos casos.

Respecto a la atribución de responsabilidades a sendas compañías, cabría destacar que se han encontrado diferencias significativas en las responsabilidades atribuidas en ambos casos, en función de si la responsabilidad del fallo fue atribuida a la empresa que presta el servicio o a la empresa colaboradora. En las dos situaciones, la responsabilidad que percibe el consumidor que tiene la empresa correspondiente (empresa que presta el servicio o empresa colaboradora) es menor si el responsable del fallo ha sido la otra empresa. No obstante, resulta especialmente interesante constatar que la percepción de la responsabilidad que tiene la empresa que presta el servicio es mayor en ambos casos que la responsabilidad asignada a la empresa colaboradora.

Acerca de la controlabilidad, cabría decir que una vez que un fallo se ha producido, además de identificar quién es el responsable, el consumidor también reflexiona sobre si ese fallo se podía haber evitado y quien podría haberlo hecho, es decir, qué empresa tiene bajo su control la posible ocurrencia del fallo. Los resultados de este análisis nos indican que para los dos casos la controlabilidad asignada a la empresa que presta el servicio fue mayor que la controlabilidad atribuida a la empresa colaboradora. No obstante, la controlabilidad de la empresa colaboradora sí presenta diferencias significativas pues cuando la responsabilidad es de la empresa que presta el servicio, la controlabilidad de la empresa colaboradora es claramente inferior. Sin embargo, resulta especialmente interesante constatar que la controlabilidad de la empresa que presta el servicio no se reduce si la responsabilidad recae sobre la empresa colaboradora. Esto permite reflejar que el consumidor considera que la empresa que presta el servicio debe controlar no sólo sus propios errores sino también los que pudieran ser cometidos por la empresa colaboradora.

Los resultados del presente trabajo también han permitido confirmar que los sistemas de recuperación del servicio también pueden ser capaces de cambiar la percepción del consumidor en relación a la gravedad que tenía el fallo que cometió la empresa. En concreto, se ha comprobado que los elementos de justicia interpersonal, justicia procedimental y justicia distributiva son capaces de que el consumidor perciba que el fallo de servicio que sufrió fue menos grave. De esta forma, se ha demostrado que un consumidor que percibe que se le ha brindado un buen trato (justicia

interpersonal) tiene una percepción de gravedad del fallo menor (4,42) que un consumidor al que se le ha tratado de una manera grosera y no se le ha pedido una disculpa adecuadamente (4,92). De manera similar, un consumidor que percibe que se le han aplicado mejores procesos en la resolución del fallo (justicia procedimental) tiene una percepción de gravedad del fallo menor (4,47) que un consumidor para el que el tiempo de respuesta y la información sobre la resolución del fallo no han sido las más adecuadas (4,97). La misma tendencia se cumple para la justicia distributiva: un consumidor que ha recibido una determinada compensación (justicia distributiva) tiene una menor percepción de gravedad del fallo (4,52) que un comprador al cual no se le ofrece ninguna compensación (4,89).

De igual forma, cabría destacar que se ha puesto de manifiesto el papel moderador de la justicia interpersonal (e.g. una comunicación amable y cortés con el cliente) sobre el efecto que ejerce la justicia procedimental (e.g. un proceso que permite una respuesta rápida ante el fallo) en la percepción de gravedad del fallo por parte del consumidor. Sin embargo, no se ha podido probar la existencia de un efecto moderador de la justicia interpersonal sobre la justicia distributiva.

El presente trabajo contribuye al avance de esta interesante línea de investigación, con las siguientes aportaciones:

- *Atribución del fallo*: la literatura ha aplicado la Teoría de la Atribución utilizando el concepto de “locus” con únicamente dos opciones: “locus externo” para atribuir el fallo al proveedor del servicio y “locus interno” para atribuir el fallo al propio consumidor. El presente estudio presenta una propuesta en la cual, el consumidor tiene una opción distinta de atribución: atribuir el fallo a uno de dos (o a los dos) proveedores que brindan un servicio de manera conjunta (empresa principal contratada por el consumidor o empresa colaboradora).
- *Recuperación servicio ofrecido por más de un proveedor*: en los últimos años la literatura ha estudiado ampliamente diversas facetas de la recuperación del servicio. Sin embargo, en casi todas las investigaciones se explotan escenarios donde solamente un proveedor está implicado en la prestación del servicio. En este estudio se destaca la necesidad de profundizar en la investigación en contextos en los cuales el servicio sea ofrecido por más de un proveedor. De esta manera, se puede contar con más información que podría ser sumamente valiosa en el sector de los servicios, tanto desde la perspectiva del consumidor como del proveedor. Desde el punto de vista del consumidor, esta información nos permite determinar cómo cambia su comportamiento ante este escenario, es decir, si le es indiferente quién cometió el fallo, o si por el contrario, dependiendo de qué empresa cometa el fallo muestra un mayor nivel de satisfacción, así como de atribución de responsabilidad y controlabilidad. Desde el punto de vista del proveedor, es importante estar atento a la reacciones de sus clientes, y de esta manera tomar una decisión mejor fundamentada sobre quiénes pueden ser sus *partners* al proveer el servicio.
- *Gravedad del fallo*: A pesar de que ha sido reconocido que la percepción de la gravedad del fallo tiene una influencia importante sobre la evaluación de la recuperación (Smith *et al.*, 1999; Levesque y McDougall, 2000), ha sido muy limitada la investigación que ha abarcado el estudio de la gravedad del fallo como un factor a tener en cuenta al analizar la respuesta de un consumidor ante los fallos (Hess, 2008). Por ello, en este estudio se ha incluido esta variable, y se ha hecho desde un punto de vista muy innovador: estudiando su variación como resultado de la influencia de las distintas justicias. El estudio de esta variable permite tener una comprensión más amplia de lo que un consumidor percibe como justo o injusto, al vincularlo con su noción de lo que entiende como un fallo grave o no grave.

Asimismo, los resultados del presente trabajo pretenden proveer de algunas claves en la gestión del servicio, de modo que los compradores tengan la percepción de que a pesar del fallo, han sido tratados de manera justa, se les ha solucionado rápidamente el problema y han sido recompensados de alguna forma. En primer lugar, se debe contar con estrategias de recuperación que contemplen aspectos de justicia interpersonal (e.g. una respuesta amable), justicia procedimental (e.g. procesos rápidos y flexibles), y justicia distributiva (e.g. regalos, descuentos, participación en sorteos en la misma página Web), con el fin de conseguir que el consumidor disculpe el fallo ocasionado y continúe haciendo compras en el mismo sitio online.

En segundo lugar, se debe utilizar la página Web como un medio de comunicación en dos vías, en lugar de un canal solamente para proveer información. Se podría habilitar una zona de “incidencias” para que el comprador pueda trasladar al vendedor cualquier situación relacionada con la transacción, por ejemplo, si el paquete no ha llegado a tiempo, si el objeto ha llegado en mal estado (pantalla de la Tablet rayada), si llegó el producto con características distintas a la solicitada (Tablet negra en lugar de blanca). De esta manera, se desestimula al consumidor a quejarse por otros medios, ya que se le está proveyendo de un medio -el cual es familiar al comprador, ya que estaba registrado en la página Web- para que comunique su insatisfacción directamente al vendedor.

Posteriormente, el proveedor debe entender que no basta solamente con obtener la queja del consumidor, se debe responder de forma rápida. Mediante un correo electrónico o un mensaje de texto (enviado de inmediato una vez conocida la incidencia) se le debe comunicar al usuario que la empresa ya tiene conocimiento de la situación, que lo va a solucionar a la mayor brevedad posible, y que pronto se pondrán en contacto con más información. Este simple mensaje puede tranquilizar al comprador, y suponer la diferencia entre un consumidor paciente y otro desesperado que da difusión a su insatisfacción y a al fallo de la empresa a través de las redes sociales o por cualquier otro medio.

Finalmente, si en el servicio participan más proveedores, y se produjera algún inconveniente, se debe valorar la posibilidad de “compartir” el fallo. De esta manera, la culpabilidad se “diluye”, de modo que el consumidor podría suponer que el 100% de la culpa no es exclusiva de una sola empresa, y por lo tanto podría mostrarse, al menos por una ocasión, un poco más tolerante hacia el fallo.

## **7. Limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación**

En cuanto a las limitaciones del trabajo, el análisis se ha desarrollado con una muestra homogénea en cuanto a la experiencia de compra online, es decir, personas que han hecho alguna compra para un consumo personal. Sería interesante replicar el estudio con otra muestra de consumidores muy experimentados en la compra de productos en la red y otra de consumidores claramente ocasionales para determinar si la frecuencia de compra presenta diferencias significativas en relación a los aspectos aquí estudiados.

De igual forma, sería interesante plantear otros escenarios utilizando la gravedad del fallo como variable de manipulación en función de si este fallo es más o menos grave. Por ejemplo, podría plantearse un fallo leve cuando el paquete se retrasa un par de horas y comparar los resultados obtenidos con un fallo más grave, cuando el paquete se atrasa dos días, y con un fallo muy grave cuando el paquete nunca llega y hay que volver a realizar la transacción.

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# LA ESTRUCTURA DE PREFERENCIAS DE LOS CLIENTES DE ENTIDADES FINANCIERAS: ANÁLISIS DEL EFECTO REGIÓN DE ORIGEN

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## **RESUMEN**

*La crisis financiera desatada en 2007 en los EE.UU. ha provocado que el sistema financiero español se encuentre inmerso en un profundo proceso de reestructuración. Este hecho ha obligado a muchas entidades a acometer procesos de fusión en los que deben decidir entre perder o mantener su identidad de marca regional.*

*Con el objetivo de responder a este dilema, se pretende analizar la importancia concedida por los clientes al atributo origen en la elección de una entidad financiera mediante el análisis de sus preferencias. Los resultados guiarán la toma de decisiones relativa a la gestión de marca en el sector financiero. Entre los principales resultados destacan la alta importancia concedida por los encuestados al origen de la entidad, la preferencia por las entidades financieras regionales frente a las nacionales y a las extranjeras y la existencia de tres segmentos de clientes diferentes en función de su estructura de preferencias.*

## **Palabras clave:**

Región de origen, Sector Financiero, Preferencias, Análisis Conjunto.



## 1. Introducción

La crisis financiera desatada en 2007 en los EE.UU. con las denominadas hipotecas “subprime” se extendió a todo el sistema financiero internacional y derivó en una crisis económica que azotó con mayor fuerza a las economías occidentales más endeudadas, como es el caso de los países del sur de Europa, España incluida. Desde entonces, el sistema financiero español está inmerso en un proceso de reestructuración necesario por la falta de liquidez en los mercados internacionales y por la caída de los precios de los activos inmobiliarios, muy presentes en los balances de las entidades financieras españolas. En algunos casos esta reestructuración ha conllevado políticas de ampliación de capital, pero en otros casos ha sido necesario acometer procesos de integración entre dos o más entidades financieras.

El número de entidades financieras en el mercado español ha ido reduciéndose progresivamente, de forma que en 2012 el sistema financiero estaba formado por 277 entidades, de las cuales, un 28,5% eran bancos nacionales, un 31,4% eran divisiones de bancos extranjeros y el restante 40% eran entidades de la denominada Economía Social, es decir cajas de ahorro y cooperativas de crédito, que suelen tener un tamaño muy reducido y un ámbito geográfico de actuación centrado principalmente en una región del país.

La reestructuración financiera ha afectado fundamentalmente a este grupo de entidades financieras, pues además de poseer un menor nivel de solvencia, disponen de menores posibilidades para el saneamiento de sus cuentas debido a que, por su forma jurídica, tienen limitadas las ampliaciones de capital. Según explican Miralles y Daza (2011), las razones que justifican que la reestructuración del sector financiero esté centrada en las cajas de ahorro y cooperativas de crédito se resumen en las siguientes:

- Gran parte del sector financiero y, en mayor medida las cajas de ahorro, se encuentra sobredimensionado, de forma que con la caída del volumen de negocio y la reducción de los márgenes en sus operaciones han visto reducida drásticamente su rentabilidad.
- El sector de la construcción y el elevado endeudamiento han sido los pilares en los que se ha basado la estrategia de expansión y, por lo tanto, en ellos residen las causas del exceso de capacidad del sector de las cajas de ahorro. El deterioro de valor de los activos inmobiliarios que las entidades financieras mantienen en sus balances ante la inexistencia de mercado, el incremento de la morosidad por la quiebra de muchas empresas inmobiliarias y las dificultades para encontrar financiación en los mercados mayoristas han influido de manera negativa en los resultados de explotación de dichas entidades.
- El problema de las cajas de ahorro surge especialmente por la dificultad de incrementar sus recursos propios mediante ampliaciones de capital. La emisión de cuotas participativas para incrementar el capital de las cajas de ahorro no es una opción atractiva para los inversores debido a que éstas no tienen derecho de voto.

Ante esta situación, algunas entidades han optado por acometer procesos de fusiones que han dado lugar a una nueva entidad que, en la mayoría de los casos, perdía su vínculo a una región. Otras, sin embargo, han optado por crear los denominados “Sistemas Institucionales de Protección” (SIP), es decir, un acuerdo contractual de responsabilidad conjunta entre varias entidades, de tal manera que los miembros del SIP respondan en términos de solvencia y liquidez ante cualquier dificultad de uno de los miembros que lo conforman. En este segundo caso, todas las entidades que entran a formar parte del proceso de integración mantienen su forma jurídica y, por consiguiente, pueden mantener su identidad de marca regional o usar una nueva marca única para todo el mercado nacional.

La realidad es que estos continuos cambios y procesos de integración de las cajas de ahorros y cooperativas de crédito están provocando que muchas de estas entidades pierdan total o parcialmente su identidad de marca regional. Por tanto y aunque sea de forma implícita, detrás de la decisión financiera de integrarse con otras entidades competidoras existe una decisión de marketing: mantener o eliminar las marcas de origen. Esta investigación pretende responder a este dilema analizando la importancia concedida por los clientes de las entidades financieras al origen regional de las mismas.



Los resultados pretenden servir de directrices útiles para los directivos de las entidades financieras en lo que respecta a la gestión de sus marcas.

El objetivo principal de este trabajo es analizar la estructura de preferencias de los clientes en la elección de una entidad financiera para evaluar la importancia que otorgan a distintos atributos a la hora de seleccionar a su entidad habitual, entre ellos el origen de la misma. Hasta donde alcanza nuestro conocimiento, no existen estudios dedicados al efecto del origen en este sector, salvo el llevado a cabo por Bigné y Sánchez (2002). Estos autores analizaron la preferencia de consumidores de 4 países (Alemania, España, Francia, y Reino Unido) para 6 categorías de productos, una de ellas, los bancos, y demostraron que los consumidores de todos los países tenían preferencias hacia las entidades financieras propias de su país frente a las extranjeras. La novedad de nuestro estudio radica en analizar el efecto región de origen, en lugar del efecto país de origen.

El trabajo se estructura de la siguiente forma. En el próximo apartado se desarrolla el marco conceptual sobre el Efecto Lugar de Origen, para posteriormente explicar el diseño y los objetivos de la investigación. A continuación, se muestran los resultados de la encuesta realizada y se finaliza mencionando las principales conclusiones e implicaciones del estudio.

## **2. El Efecto Lugar de Origen**

El efecto lugar de origen se define como un *“conjunto de fortalezas y debilidades vinculadas al lugar de origen que incorporan o sustraen el valor suministrado por una marca o servicio al fabricante y/o a sus clientes”* (Papadopoulos y Heslop, 2003) y ha sido ampliamente estudiado en la investigación académica (Ahmed y d’Astous, 2008). Este efecto del origen se puede manifestar de distintas formas, principalmente en la calidad percibida del producto por parte del consumidor (Han y Terpstra, 1988; Ahmed y d’Astous, 1992, 1996, 2001 y 2007; Verlegh et al., 2005; Veale y Quester, 2009), en sus actitudes y preferencias (Bigné y Cuenca, 2000; Van Ittersum et al., 2003; Font et al., 2011 y Gracia et al., 2011) o en sus intenciones de compra (González y Villanueva, 2000; Cerviño et al., 2005; Montesinos y Currat, 2007; Auger et al., 2010 y Godey et al., 2012). En la mayoría de los casos que se ha medido de varias formas, se concluye que el efecto lugar de origen se atenúa a medida que se pasa a fases más avanzadas del proceso de decisión de compra, es decir, es mayor cuando se mide en términos de percepciones de calidad, algo menor cuando se miden actitudes y menor cuando se evalúa en términos de intenciones de compra (Agrawal y Kamakura, 1999; Verlegh y Steenkamp, 1999; Peterson y Jolibert, 2005).

La mayoría de estos estudios sobre el origen se han centrado en analizar el efecto país de origen y sus variables explicativas. A título de ejemplo, se pueden citar como estudios recientes en esta materia los de Godey et al. (2012), Claret et al. (2012), Lee et al. (2013) o Lagerkvist et al. (2014), entre otros. Sin embargo, existe aún escasez de estudios sobre las variables que explican el efecto origen en el ámbito regional. Podemos citar como principal referente el estudio de Van Ittersum et al (2003) sobre patatas y cerveza en regiones de Holanda. De forma indirecta, también se pueden mencionar los trabajos que en el ámbito del marketing agroalimentario analizan las valoraciones y preferencias de los consumidores por las *“denominaciones de origen protegidas”* propias de determinadas regiones (por ejemplo, Gil y Sánchez, 1997; Monjardino y Ventura, 2001; Fotopoulos y Krystallis, 2003; Bernabéu y Tendero, 2005; Tendero y Bernabéu, 2005; Martínez-Carrasco et al., 2006; Hersleth et al., 2012; Caldas y Rebelo, 2013).

La revisión de la literatura también pone de manifiesto la escasez de investigaciones sobre el efecto lugar de origen en el sector servicios. Los estudios se han centrado en productos industriales (por ejemplo, Ahmed y d’Astous, 1995; Edwards et al., 2007 o Chen et al., 2011), y sobre todo bienes de consumo (Baldauf et al., 2009; Veale y Quester, 2009; Jiménez y San Martín, 2010; Font et al., 2011; Lee y Lockshin, 2011; Gázquez et al., 2012; Claret et al., 2012; Godey et al., 2012 o Lagerkvist et al., 2014).

Existen evidencias de la existencia de algunas variables que explican o moderan el efecto país de origen, como por ejemplo, la imagen del país, la familiaridad con un lugar y con sus productos, la familiaridad con la categoría de producto, algunas características socio-demográficas del individuo y

algunos aspectos de su personalidad, como la animosidad hacia un país determinado o el nivel de etnocentrismo.

La imagen se refiere a aquella representación mental que poseen los individuos acerca de un determinado lugar, ya sea en relación con aspectos históricos, políticos, culturales, económicos, geográficos o humanos, o en relación con una combinación de todos ellos. Puede afirmarse que la mayoría de los trabajos han encontrado una relación positiva entre la imagen de un lugar y el comportamiento de compra de los individuos hacia sus productos. Por una parte, algunos autores han demostrado la existencia de percepciones positivas y de una preferencia general de los consumidores por los productos procedentes de países desarrollados (Cordell, 1992; Srinivasan et al., 2004; Ahmed y d'Astous, 2001, 2007 y 2008). Otros trabajos, por su parte, confirman que ante percepciones positivas de un lugar, los consumidores muestran percepciones positivas y preferencia por sus productos (Roth y Romeo, 1992; Johansson et al., 1994; González y Villanueva, 2000; Verlegh et al., 2005; Montesinos y Currás, 2007; Lee y Lockshin, 2011 y Lee et al., 2013).

La familiaridad o nivel de conocimiento es otra de las variables moderadoras del Efecto que ha sido ampliamente estudiada en la literatura. Concretamente, son dos tipos de familiaridades las que han sido analizadas en la mayoría de estudios: la familiaridad con la categoría de producto (por ejemplo, Maheswaran, 1994; Bigné y Sánchez, 2002; Inch y McBride, 2004 o Jiménez y San Martín, 2010) y la familiaridad con un lugar y con sus productos (Roth y Romeo, 1992; González y Villanueva, 2000; Bigné y Sánchez, 2002; Ahmed y d'Astous, 2001, 2007 y 2008; Lee y Lockshin, 2011; o Gázquez et al., 2012). En ambos casos, los resultados obtenidos en los diferentes trabajos han sido contradictorios y aún existen lagunas respecto al papel de estas dos variables en el comportamiento de los individuos hacia el origen de los productos.

El etnocentrismo del consumidor se puede definir como “aquella creencia de que un producto derivado de tu grupo étnico o cultural es inherentemente superior a productos similares de otros grupos culturales o étnicos” (Myers, 1995). Las conclusiones respecto al papel de esta variable en el efecto lugar de origen son claras, pues la mayor parte de los estudios coinciden en afirmar la existencia de una relación negativa entre el nivel de etnocentrismo de los consumidores y las percepciones, actitudes e intención de compra de los mismos hacia los productos foráneos (Shimp y Sharma, 1987; González y Villanueva, 2000; Klein et al., 1998; Moon y Jain, 2002). Y, por otra parte, suele existir una relación positiva entre el nivel de etnocentrismo de los consumidores y las percepciones, actitudes e intención de compra de los mismos hacia los productos locales (Shimp y Sharma, 1987; Luque et al., 2004; Dmitrovic et al., 2009).

Las variables sociodemográficas también han sido ampliamente estudiadas en el contexto del comportamiento de los consumidores hacia los productos con origen. Sin embargo, los resultados obtenidos hasta el momento no revelan conclusiones claras. Autores como Inch y McBride (2004), Srinivasan et al. (2004), Samiee et al. (2005) o Ahmed y d'Astous (2001, 2007 y 2008) han analizado variables sociodemográficas como la edad, el sexo, los ingresos, el nivel de educación, el estado civil o el número de hijos, obteniendo conclusiones en diferentes direcciones y sin llegar a un consenso sobre su influencia en las valoraciones y en el comportamiento de los individuos.

### **3. Objetivos y diseño de la investigación**

El objetivo de este trabajo es analizar la estructura de preferencias de los clientes para conocer qué criterios o atributos tienen en cuenta en la elección de su entidad financiera habitual, entre ellos su vinculación con la región del cliente. De esta forma podremos evaluar si, en el proceso de reestructuración que se está viviendo en España (fusiones vs SIPs), es interesante desde el punto de vista comercial para la entidad financiera resultante mantener las marcas regionales previas al proceso de integración.

Este objetivo general se concreta en dos. En primer lugar, pretendemos conocer la importancia relativa que los clientes conceden al origen de la entidad financiera con respecto a otras características de la misma. En segundo lugar, pretendemos conocer las utilidades estimadas para cada una de las opciones de origen de una entidad financiera, de forma que se conozca si se prefiere o no una entidad regional, a una nacional o a una internacional.

Como se ha indicado anteriormente, en la revisión de la literatura no se han encontrado estudios previos que analicen la temática planteada en esta investigación. En el estudio de Devlin y Gerrard (2005) se analizan los principales criterios de elección de una entidad financiera, aunque no incluyen el origen como uno de los atributos analizados. Por todo ello, las hipótesis de trabajo se han basado en los resultados de una encuesta exploratoria previa y en los resultados de algunos estudios previos en el mismo entorno geográfico, pero en el sector agroalimentario. Por ejemplo, los estudios de Martínez-Carrasco et al. (2006) o Monjardino y Ventura (2001) ponen de manifiesto como los consumidores españoles y portugueses conceden una importancia relativa al origen de los alimentos superior a la de otros atributos, incluido en algunos casos el precio. Además, aunque hay excepciones (como por ejemplo, Martínez-Carrasco et al., 2006), la mayoría de los estudios sobre el origen en España ponen de manifiesto la preferencia del consumidor por el producto regional, frente a lo nacional y lo internacional (Bernabéu y Tendero, 2005; Gil y Sánchez, 1997) o para las denominaciones de origen de la región (Fotopoulos y Krystallis, 2003; Tendero y Bernabéu, 2005; Chocarro et al., 2009; Font et al., 2011; Claret et al., 2012; Realiani et al., 2013). En el caso del estudio citado de Bigné y Sánchez (2002), referido a los bancos, solo se concluía la preferencia por las entidades nacionales frente a las entidades internacionales, pues no se contemplaba el efecto región de origen.

Por esa razón, a priori, consideramos las dos siguientes hipótesis:

*Ha: El origen de la entidad financiera es un atributo que tiene mayor importancia relativa en la formación de las preferencias del cliente que otros atributos directamente relacionados con el servicio que les presta; en concreto: el trato de los empleados, la localización de las oficinas, las actividades de inversión social y los servicios de banca electrónica.*

*Hb: El origen regional de la entidad financiera será preferido al origen nacional y al origen extranjero.*

Por otro lado, pretendemos identificar la existencia de segmentos de compradores claramente diferenciados según sus preferencias a la hora de seleccionar su entidad financiera habitual y, en caso de que existan, se pretende describir el perfil de los individuos que los componen.

Para alcanzar los objetivos establecidos se ha utilizado la técnica del Conjoint Analysis a través de una encuesta dirigida a clientes de entidades financieras residentes en la región de Extremadura (suroeste de España). El trabajo de campo para la recogida de información se realizó desde febrero a junio de 2012 y se obtuvo una muestra de 427 personas (tabla 1). Esta técnica fue usada por primera vez en el campo del marketing a mediados de los años 70 (Green y Wind, 1975; Green y Srinivasan, 1978), desde entonces, su uso se ha extendido ampliamente, siendo el marketing agroalimentario el campo en el que se usa más frecuentemente. En los últimos años ha sido usada para evaluar la importancia del origen (Bernabéu & Tendero, 2005; Schunettler et al., 2008; Mesías et al., 2009; Font et al., 2011), pero especialmente ha sido usada para evaluar la preferencia por alimentos funcionales (Ares et al., 2008, 2009, 2010; Hailu et al., 2009; Johansen et al., 2010) y por alimentos modificados genéticamente (Carneiro et al., 2005; O'Connor et al., 2006; Cox et al., 2008). En el ámbito del marketing financiero, se ha utilizado para evaluar las preferencias por distintos tipos de tarjetas de crédito y otros productos financieros (Gómez Arias, 1996; Kara et al., 1996, 1994; Clark-Murphy y Soutar, 2004; Mankila, 2004; Baheri et al., 2011; Mishra y Bisht, 2013), pero no para la selección de entidades financieras.

**TABLA 1**  
**Ficha técnica del estudio**

<b>Población</b>	Clientes de entidades financieras mayores de 18 años
<b>Muestra</b>	427 clientes
<b>Ámbito geográfico</b>	Regional (Extremadura, España)
<b>Tipo de muestreo</b>	No probabilístico por cuotas (sexo y residencia)
<b>Tipo de encuesta</b>	Personal, auto-administrada
<b>Trabajo de campo</b>	<b>Febrero-junio, 2012</b>

Previamente al diseño del cuestionario final se procedió a seleccionar los atributos a introducir en el estudio. Para ello se realizó una breve encuesta a 40 clientes de entidades financieras que permitiese conocer aquellos aspectos que valoran a la hora de elegir a las mismas. Los atributos escogidos para el estudio final fueron los más valorados por los encuestados en este pre-test. Tan sólo hubo una excepción. A pesar de incluir en el pre-test atributos relativos a las condiciones financieras ofrecidas por las entidades, este atributo no fue incluido en el estudio. En el cuestionario final se especificaba que la decisión entre una y otra entidad financiera estaría basada en la igualdad en las condiciones financieras y, por tanto, la decisión recaería sobre el resto de atributos a valorar. Esta decisión se justifica por la pérdida de información muy valiosa para el objetivo del estudio que supondría la inclusión de este atributo claramente determinante de la elección de una entidad financiera.

Teniendo presente que las condiciones financieras son un aspecto fundamental a la hora de elegir cualquier entidad por parte del cliente, es necesario recordar que el objetivo específico de este estudio es valorar la importancia relativa del origen respecto a otros atributos. Lo que se pretende en este estudio es averiguar si existe la posibilidad de que las entidades financieras regionales, generalmente más pequeñas y con menos recursos financieros, puedan contrarrestar la (supuesta) mayor solidez financiera y mejores condiciones de las grandes entidades nacionales e internacionales a través de otros atributos como el trato al cliente, la inversión social en las regiones o el origen regional de la entidad. Se trata de dar respuesta a preguntas como: ¿es importante para el cliente que la entidad pertenezca a su región? ¿Debe la entidad financiera regional mantener su marca y potenciar la comunicación en ese aspecto?

Los atributos elegidos finalmente para el estudio fueron: el origen de la entidad, el trato de los empleados, la localización de las oficinas, los servicios on-line ofrecidos y las actividades sociales que la entidad realiza en la región del encuestado. Respecto al origen, se incluyeron en el estudio tres posibles opciones: entidad regional, nacional o extranjera. Por lo que se refiere al trato de los empleados, las opciones eran un trato correcto (le atienden de forma educada y profesional) o un trato cercano y personalizado (Le atienden de forma educada y profesional, pero además existe una relación más personal, el empleado le conoce y se interesa por cómo se encuentra). El tercer atributo, la localización de las oficinas de la entidad financiera, podía presentarse en dos niveles diferentes: oficinas cercanas o lejanas al hogar o al lugar de trabajo del encuestado. Respecto a los servicios on-line, los ejemplos de entidades financieras que se le presentaban a los encuestados podían disponer de una web básica (donde sólo se permite realizar operaciones financieras básicas, como consultas de saldo o transferencias) o una web completa (permitiendo todo tipo de operaciones financieras, incluidas las relativas a contratación y cancelación de productos financieros). Finalmente, el atributo “actividades sociales que la entidad realiza en su región” (definido como patrocinio y promoción de eventos deportivos o culturales, apoyo a personas discapacitadas, apoyo a proyectos empresariales, etc.) podía presentarse en dos niveles: pocas y bastantes.

Para llevar a cabo el Análisis Conjunto se ha trabajado con el método de perfil completo. Según este método, al entrevistado se le presenta un único conjunto de estímulos para ser evaluados, estando formado cada uno de estos estímulos por información sobre los 5 atributos incluidos en el estudio. El número de estímulos a utilizar en el método de perfil completo depende del número de atributos y niveles considerados. En nuestro estudio, el número de estímulos posibles eran 48. Sin embargo, presentar tantos estímulos al entrevistado generaría una sobrecarga de información que influiría negativamente en la calidad de respuesta. Para evitar este problema se ha procedido a realizar un *diseño ortogonal* que redujo las combinaciones a sólo 8. La reducción de todas las combinaciones posibles se realiza de tal forma que la información recogida en dicho subgrupo dará lugar a un resultado semejante al que se alcanzaría utilizando todos los estímulos. De esta forma, se puede garantizar la presencia de todos los atributos y sus correspondientes niveles con igual intensidad en los estímulos obtenidos con este diseño, no sesgándose hacia ningún nivel.

Las valoraciones de los compradores hacia las 8 entidades financieras fueron obtenidas mediante entrevistas personales, en las cuales los encuestados debían valorar cada estímulo en una escala

métrica de 1 a 9 según su preferencia (1=seguro que no la elegiría; 9= seguro que la elegiría). Para estimar los parámetros del modelo planteado, el programa SPSS emplea la regresión múltiple por mínimos cuadrados ordinarios.

Además de las preguntas relativas a los 8 tipos de entidades financieras, el cuestionario utilizado incluía preguntas relativas a variables que la literatura ha identificado como antecedentes o moderadoras del efecto lugar de origen, en concreto la familiaridad con la categoría de producto (funcionamiento de los productos financieros), la familiaridad con los productos del lugar (nivel de conocimiento de las entidades financieras de la región), el nivel de etnocentrismo y, como variables sociodemográficas, el sexo, el nivel de estudios y el nivel de ingresos.

La familiaridad de los clientes con la categoría de producto se midió a través de cuatro preguntas que permitían evaluar el conocimiento de los encuestados sobre el funcionamiento de los productos financieros. Los consumidores tenían la posibilidad de marcar una de las tres opciones disponibles: “verdadero”, “falso” o “no sabe”. Este sistema permitió dividir a los encuestados en dos grupos: experto y bajo nivel de conocimiento. Para que un consumidor fuera considerado experto en la categoría de producto debía acertar al menos tres preguntas de las cuatro realizadas en el cuestionario (61,8%). Se consideró que este sistema era más adecuado para evaluar el conocimiento real de los consumidores sobre los productos que el uso de una pregunta de autoevaluación (Ahmed y d’Astous, 1999).

Para medir la familiaridad con los productos de su región se usó una pregunta abierta en la que se pedía al encuestado que enumerasen tantas entidades financieras de su región como recordase en ese momento (notoriedad espontánea). Aquellos encuestados que nombrasen cuatro o más entidades serían considerados clientes altamente familiarizados con el sector financiero regional (28,8%).

Finalmente, para medir el nivel de etnocentrismo de los individuos se usó la escala CETSCALE, creada por Shimp y Sharma (1987). Esta escala de medida ha sido ampliamente validada en diferentes países y en diversos contextos y situaciones, aunque en algunas ocasiones se han utilizado versiones reducidas de la misma (Olsen et al., 1993; Samiee et al., 1994; Marín y Bigné, 1998; Klein et al., 1998; Watson y Wright, 2000; Moon y Jain, 2002; Srinivasan et al., 2004; Dmitrovic et al., 2009; Díaz et al., 2011). Está compuesta por 17 ítems medidos mediante escala de Likert de 7 puntos de forma que el valor mínimo de la escala para un individuo serían 17 puntos, mientras que el valor máximo de etnocentrismo se situaría en 119 puntos. En el caso de esta investigación, los ítems de la escala han sido adaptados para referirse al ámbito regional, pues la escala original es de aplicación a países. La muestra se dividió en tres grupos: bajo nivel de etnocentrismo si obtuvieron una puntuación inferior o igual a 44 puntos (35% de la muestra), nivel medio de etnocentrismo si obtuvieron una puntuación comprendida entre los 45 y los 82 puntos (53% de la muestra) y alto nivel de etnocentrismo si superaron los 82 puntos (12% de la muestra).

#### **4. Resultados**

Mediante las puntuaciones otorgadas por los entrevistados a las 8 entidades financieras propuestas se estimaron las utilidades concedidas a cada uno de los niveles de los atributos considerados en el modelo (tabla 2) y, por consiguiente, la importancia relativa de cada uno de los atributos. Según el valor obtenido para la Tau de Kendall se puede decir que el modelo ajusta correctamente.

En primer lugar, los resultados ponen de manifiesto que, para el conjunto de la muestra, la entidad financiera preferida sería una entidad regional, con un trato cercado por parte de los empleados, con oficinas localizadas cerca de la casa o el lugar de trabajo del cliente, que disponga de una Web en la que se puedan realizar una amplia gama de gestiones financieras y que invierta en bastantes actividades sociales dentro de la región. El perfil de esta entidad financiera “ideal” se ajusta a lo esperado, salvo en el caso del origen, en el que existía incertidumbre acerca de las preferencias de los clientes antes de comenzar este estudio y que supone una información relevante para los gestores de las entidades financieras regionales.

TABLA 2  
**Estimación de utilidades para los niveles de los atributos**

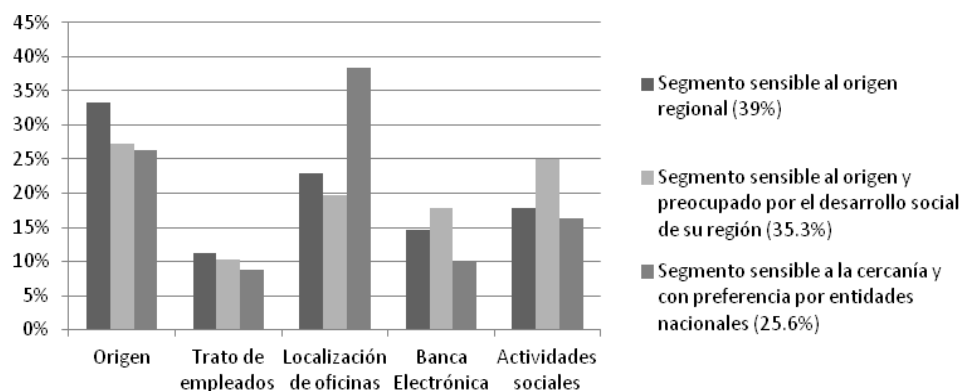
Atributos	Niveles	Estimated utility	Standard error	Relative importance
<b>Origen</b>	Regional	0,58	0,14	29,37%
	Nacional	0,29	0,17	
	Extranjera	-0,87	0,17	
<b>Trato empleados</b>	Correcto	-0,15	0,11	10,25%
	Cercano	0,15	0,11	
<b>Localización oficinas</b>	Cercanas a casa o lugar de trabajo	0,83	0,11	25,72%
	Lejanas a casa o lugar de trabajo	-0,83	0,11	
<b>Banca electrónica</b>	Todo tipo de operaciones financieras	0,38	0,11	14,66%
	Sólo operaciones financieras básicas	-0,38	0,11	
<b>Actividades Sociales</b>	Bastantes	0,66	0,11	20,00%
	Pocas	-0,66	0,11	
<b>(Constante)</b>		5,09	0,11	

R de Pearson= 0,999; Tau de Kendall= 1,000

Con relación a la importancia relativa de cada atributo en la formación de las preferencias del cliente, el atributo más importante para el conjunto de la muestra es el origen de la entidad financiera, con un peso relativo del 29,4%. Este atributo es seguido de cerca en importancia por la localización de las oficinas, con un 25,7%, y posteriormente por las actividades sociales realizadas por la entidad en la región del encuestado (20%), las características de la banca electrónica de la entidad (14,7%) y, en último lugar, por el trato de los empleados (10,25%). Por tanto, estos resultados nos permiten corroborar la hipótesis H<sub>a</sub>, puesto que el origen, en igualdad de condiciones financieras, es el atributo más importante para los consumidores en la formación de sus preferencias, por delante del resto de atributos. Y al observar las utilidades estimadas para cada nivel de los atributos se observa que también se corrobora la hipótesis H<sub>b</sub>, puesto que el origen regional de la entidad financiera es preferido al nacional, y este al extranjero.

Una vez analizadas las preferencias para el conjunto de la muestra de cliente se realizó una segmentación según los scores o puntuaciones otorgadas a los diferentes estímulos presentados a los encuestados. Para ello se realizó un análisis cluster K-medias que permitiese identificar segmentos con estructuras de preferencias claramente diferentes. Tras realizar las pruebas oportunas, la opción más adecuada fue considerar K=3. Cada uno de estos tres grupos realiza sus elecciones de entidades financieras de forma distinta y no conceden el mismo valor al origen regional. En la figura 1 se recoge una comparativa de la importancia relativa de los atributos del modelo entre los tres segmentos y, por otra parte, en la tabla 3 se indican las utilidades estimadas para cada uno de ellos.

FIGURA 1  
Importancia relativa según segmentos



Si analizamos detenidamente la información para cada segmento, se extraen los siguientes resultados:

- **Segmento 1:** se trata de un grupo de consumidores especialmente sensibles al origen de la entidad. Contiene algo más de un 39% del total de la muestra. Para ellos, el origen es el principal atributo diferenciador en una entidad financiera con un peso relativo del 33% en la formación de sus preferencias. Como se puede observar en la tabla 3, y tal y como ocurría con el global de la muestra, este segmento prefiere en primer lugar las entidades regionales, algo que, tratándose del grupo de consumidores más sensible a este atributo, es un dato relevante para la gestión de estas entidades. Por detrás de las entidades regionales, muestran preferencia por las nacionales y por último, muestran una preferencia negativa hacia las extranjeras. Por tal razón puede denominarse como “segmento sensible al origen regional de la entidad financiera”.

- **Segmento 2:** se trata de un segmento sensible al origen y preocupado por el desarrollo social de su región. Está compuesto por el 35% de la muestra; sus integrantes se caracterizan por otorgar una mayor importancia al origen en relación con el resto de atributos. Sin embargo, esa importancia es menor que en el caso del primer segmento (27% vs 33%) y además esta importancia es muy similar a la concedida a la vinculación de la entidad financiera con la región a través de actividades sociales (25%). Por lo que respecta a las utilidades de cada nivel, los consumidores pertenecientes a este segmento también muestran una mayor preferencia por las entidades regionales, por delante de las nacionales y de las extranjeras, con una utilidad negativa.

- **Segmento 3:** Está formado por un 25,6% de la muestra y se caracteriza por otorgar una fuerte importancia relativa (38,3%) a la localización de las oficinas, muy por encima del resto de atributos. Es el primer caso en el que el origen pasa a ser el segundo atributo en importancia, con un 26,3% de peso relativo. Se puede definir a este segmento como especialmente sensible a la localización de las oficinas de la entidad. Además, este grupo difiere del resto, al preferir las entidades nacionales por encima de las entidades regionales y de entidades extranjeras. Por otro lado, el compromiso con el desarrollo social de la región se trata de una característica secundaria en la formación de las preferencias de los individuos de este segmento. El peso relativo de dicho atributo es el más bajo en comparación con el resto de segmentos (solo un 16,4%).

Estos resultados ponen de manifiesto que se corroboran la hipótesis  $H_a$  y la hipótesis  $H_b$  para dos de los tres segmentos.

TABLA 3  
Estimación de las utilidades, según segmentos

		Sensibles al origen regional (39,1%)	Sensibles al origen y preocupado por el desarrollo social (35,3%)	Sensibles a la cercanía y con preferencia por entidades nacionales (25,6%)
<b>Origen</b>	Regional	0,62	0,77	0,27
	Nacional	0,32	0,02	0,62
	Extranjera	-0,94	-0,79	-0,89
<b>Trato empleados</b>	Correcto	-0,17	-0,19	-0,06
	Cercano	0,17	0,19	0,06
<b>Localización oficinas</b>	Cercanas a casa o lugar de trabajo	0,56	0,61	1,56
	Lejanas a casa o lugar de trabajo	-0,56	-0,61	-1,56
<b>Banca electrónica</b>	Todo tipo de operaciones financieras	0,38	0,60	0,08
	Sólo operaciones financieras básicas	-0,38	-0,60	-0,08
<b>Actividades Sociales</b>	Bastantes	0,44	0,93	0,62
	Pocas	-0,44	-0,93	-0,62
<b>(Constante)</b>		6,07	4,71	4,13

1. R de Pearson= 0,999; Tau de Kendall= 1,000
2. R de Pearson= 0,997; Tau de Kendall= 0,929
3. R de Pearson= 0,994; Tau de Kendall= 1,000

Tras analizar las preferencias de los tres segmentos, se realizaron los correspondientes test de chi-cuadrado para conocer el perfil de los integrantes de cada uno de ellos. Sin embargo, se extrajeron resultados poco aclaratorios, puesto que ninguno de los tres segmentos mostraba diferencias significativas en lo referente a las variables:

- Familiaridad o conocimiento del sistema financiero, en la línea de estudios como Bigné y Sánchez (2002) o Srinivasan et al. (2004), y al contrario de otros estudios que sí encontraron influencia de esta variable, como Maheswaran (1994) o Jiménez y San Martín (2010).
- Familiaridad con las entidades financieras regionales, en la línea de estudios como Roth y Romeo (1992), y en contra de numerosos estudios que ponen de manifiesto la importancia de esta variable en la importancia concedida al origen, como Johansson (1989), González y Villanueva (2000), Jaffe y Nebenzahl (2001), Bigné y Sánchez (2002), Ahmed y d'Astous (2001, 2007 y 2008), Lee y Lockshin (2011) o Gázquez et al. (2012).
- Algunas variables sociodemográficas como sexo, estudios o ingresos, en la línea de otros estudios como Ahmed y d'Astous (2001 y 2008) o Srinivasan et al. (2004).
- Nivel de etnocentrismo, en la línea de Srinivasan et al. (2004) y Jiménez y San Martín (2008), y al contrario de numerosos estudios que sí han identificado una fuerte influencia de esta variable, como Shimp y Sharma (1987), Klein et al. (1998), Watson y Wright (2000), González y Villanueva (2000), Moon y Jain (2002), Del Río et al. (2003), Luque et al. (2004), Samiee et al. (2005) o Dmitrovic et al. (2009). Todos estos análisis resultaron no significativos.

La edad fue la única variable para la que se obtuvieron diferencias significativas al 10% entre los tres segmentos, tal y como indica el valor de la Chi-cuadrado recogido en la tabla 4. Se puede concluir que el segmento sensible al origen regional de la entidad está formado por un grupo de consumidores principalmente joven, ya que casi la mitad de sus integrantes son menores de 35 años. Por su parte, el segmento sensible al origen y preocupado por el desarrollo social de su región lo constituye un grupo que contiene un amplio número de personas de entre 46 y 55 años (30,2% del total de sus integrantes). Además, más de la mitad de los encuestados mayores de 65 años se encuentran en este segmento, por lo que se puede concluir que se trata del segmento de mayor edad. Y por último, el tercer segmento, o clientes que prefieren entidades nacionales y cercanas, está formado principalmente por personas jóvenes menores de 35 años (38% de sus integrantes) y de edades comprendidas entre los 46 y 55 años (29,6% de sus integrantes).

**TABLA 4**  
**Perfil de los segmentos según edades**

		Menor de 35	Entre 35 y 45	Entre 46 y 55	Entre 56 y 65	Mayor de 65	Total
<b>Sensibles al origen regional</b>	según segmento	49,09%	20,61%	21,82%	6,67%	1,82%	100%
	según edad	47,93%	37,36%	31,86%	35,48%	16,67%	39,10%
<b>Segmento sensible al origen y preocupados por el desarrollo social de su región</b>	según segmento	31,54%	23,49%	30,20%	8,05%	6,71%	100%
	según edad	27,81%	38,46%	39,82%	38,71%	55,56%	35,31%
<b>Segmento sensible a la cercanía y con preferencia por entidades nacionales</b>	según segmento	37,96%	20,37%	29,63%	7,41%	4,63%	100%
	según edad	24,26%	24,18%	28,32%	25,81%	27,78	25,59%
<b>Total</b>	según segmento	40,05%	21,56%	26,78%	7,35%	4,27%	100%
	según edad	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



Estos resultados son similares a los de algunos autores como Ahmed y d'Ástous (2001), quienes encontraron relación significativa entre el origen de los productos y la edad, pero no para variables como la educación o los ingresos. Sin embargo, la dirección de la relación demostrada por estos autores no se corresponde con los resultados de este estudio, pues aseguraban que a menor edad, menores eran los prejuicios sobre los productos extranjeros. Inch y McBride (2004), por su parte, también encontraron un efecto moderador de la edad en el Efecto Lugar de Origen, aunque con resultados algo contradictorios. El resultado obtenido se puede justificar alegando que, en los tiempos de crisis económica y altas tasas de desempleo, los jóvenes están valorando más lo local y lo regional como forma de apostar por su futuro.

## **5. Conclusiones e implicaciones para la gestión**

El efecto lugar de origen ha sido ampliamente estudiado, pero no es un efecto universal porque varía geográficamente y según las categorías de producto (Johansson, 1989). Además, en la mayoría de los casos, los estudios se han centrado en el ámbito del efecto país de origen en bienes de consumo, siendo muy escasos los estudios en el ámbito de las regiones y de los servicios. Estas razones justifican la realización de este estudio, que ha pretendido cubrir parcialmente el vacío existente en el estudio del efecto lugar de origen en el sector financiero.

Los resultados del estudio sirven para confirmar la importancia del origen con respecto a otros atributos como elemento que el cliente utiliza para decantarse por su entidad financiera habitual, siempre y cuando las condiciones financieras sean similares. Además, se confirma un efecto región de origen positivo, puesto que existe una preferencia del cliente medio por las entidades regionales, frente a las nacionales y las extranjeras.

En un estudio de este tipo es importante resaltar el valor de la transferencia del conocimiento al sector empresarial. En el caso que nos ocupa, la crisis económica y financiera internacional ha tenido un relevante impacto negativo en España, obligando a una reestructuración del sistema financiero español. La mayoría de las cajas de ahorro y cooperativas de crédito, que suponen más de la mitad del sector y suelen tener un ámbito de actuación regional, se han visto obligadas a acometer procesos de integración entre ellas para mejorar su solvencia y competitividad. Este proceso se podía plantear a través de fusiones y absorciones o a través de una figura específica conocida como SIP. En el primer caso, la decisión suele conllevar la creación de un banco y la pérdida de la vinculación con la región de origen de las entidades integradas. En el segundo caso, esta pérdida no se produce necesariamente. Desde el punto de vista del marketing y la gestión de marca, las entidades financieras regionales que están en procesos de integraciones con otros competidores deben plantearse mantener su marca regional y potenciar la comunicación en ese aspecto, o si por el contrario, deben apostar por una marca única, común para todas las regiones donde compitan. Los resultados de nuestro estudio justifican la elección de la primera opción como estrategia de marca.

Además, el estudio realizado nos permite identificar la existencia de tres segmentos de clientes diferentes en función de su estructura de preferencias. Concretamente, se detecta la existencia de un segmento sensible al origen regional de la entidad, otro sensible al origen y preocupado por el desarrollo social de su región y un tercero especialmente sensible a la localización de las oficinas de la entidad. El mercado potencial de las entidades financieras regionales lo constituyen los dos primeros. Las características de estos segmentos también permiten plantear a los responsables de marketing de las entidades financieras la posibilidad de usar el compromiso y la vinculación con la región como medios para acceder a ellos y diferenciarse y posicionarse frente a la competencia.

A pesar de los resultados obtenidos hay que resaltar las limitaciones del estudio por cuanto que los mismos no se pueden extrapolar directamente a otros ámbitos geográficos, como hemos dicho el efecto lugar de origen no es universal. El comportamiento de los clientes y consumidores hacia los productos locales, regionales y nacionales puede variar considerablemente según las características políticas e históricas de cada región o país y variables como el etnocentrismo, el sentimiento regionalista o la reputación otorgada a su lugar de origen. Además, como se ha recogido en la literatura previa, el efecto lugar de origen varía de una categoría de producto a otra.

Sin embargo, creemos que este trabajo también abre nuevas alternativas para investigaciones futuras, tales como analizar si el efecto región origen en el sector financiero es similar para otras regiones y como evaluar el efecto lugar de origen en otros tipos de servicios no financieros.

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# LA ORIENTACIÓN AL MERCADO INTERNO Y SU INFLUENCIA EN LOS EMPLEADOS Y CLIENTES: ANÁLISIS COMPARATIVO SEGÚN LA EXPERIENCIA LABORAL

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## RESUMEN

*El objetivo del trabajo es enriquecer la investigación centrada en el marketing interno al analizar su incidencia en la satisfacción de los clientes a partir del papel mediador de la actitud y desempeño de los empleados, si bien diferenciando esta incidencia según la experiencia laboral de los trabajadores.*

*Para ello, se hace uso de una metodología diádica, con 244 díadas (relacionando las respuestas de cada empleado con las respuestas medias de tres de sus pacientes) en el servicio de consultas externas de cinco hospitales valencianos. El análisis se realiza a través de modelos de ecuaciones estructurales (EQS 6.1).*

*Los resultados corroboran la mayoría de las relaciones causales propuestas en el modelo. Además, se demuestran diferencias significativas en algunas relaciones en función de la experiencia laboral del trabajador. Precisamente, una de las principales contribuciones del trabajo es su análisis de las consecuencias de la OMI en distintos segmentos de empleados.*

## Palabras clave:

*Marketing interno, orientación al mercado interno, respuesta afectiva del empleado, calidad del servicio, satisfacción del paciente.*

## 1. Introducción

La relación demostrada entre la calidad percibida y la satisfacción del cliente y su lealtad explica el esfuerzo empresarial por mejorar la percepción que los clientes hacen de la calidad del servicio ofrecido. Esta relación se vuelve aún más importante en el caso de las empresas de servicios, por la variabilidad en la calidad ofrecida al depender de la interacción que se produce entre los empleados y sus clientes (Gunawardane, 2011). En consecuencia, las empresas de servicios dependen de sus trabajadores para lograr un servicio de calidad en tales encuentros (Cheung y To, 2010).

A nivel académico, la literatura centrada en el marketing interno ha analizado el modo en que la relación dirigente-trabajador puede gestionarse para mejorar el resultado en el mercado externo (Gounaris, 2006). Siguiendo a Ahmed and Rafiq (2003, p. 1180), el término marketing interno puede definirse como “una filosofía que centra su atención en la satisfacción del cliente y en la productividad organizativa a través de la atención continua y la mejora de los trabajos que los empleados realizan y del ambiente en el que los llevan a cabo”. Por lo tanto, las aportaciones que tratan el marketing interno pueden contribuir a enriquecer la llamada “linkage literature”, centrada en la relación entre la gestión interna y los resultados externos organizativos (Hartline y Ferrell, 1996).

En este sentido, el presente trabajo desea contribuir a esta línea de investigación al considerar, por vez primera, el papel mediador que la respuesta afectiva de los empleados puede tener sobre la relación entre la gestión interna (marketing interno) y el resultado externo organizativo (calidad del servicio percibida por el cliente y su satisfacción). Para tal fin, a partir de distintos trabajos (Gounaris et al., 2010; Lings y Greenley, 2010), utilizamos la Orientación al Mercado Interno (OMI) para representar y definir el concepto marketing interno.

La justificación teórica de las relaciones propuestas se basa en principios teóricos como la teoría de intercambio social (Homans, 1958), la teoría del contrato psicológico (Robinson, 1996) y la teoría de la equidad (Adams, 1963). Para ello, se hace uso de una metodología diádica, al relacionar respuestas de los empleados y de sus clientes, lo que supone dar respuesta a las limitaciones mostradas por diversos trabajos (Akroush et al., 2013; Lings y Greenley, 2010) centrados en la relación gestión interna – resultados externos organizativos sin contemplar la formación de díadas.

Además, con la excepción del reciente trabajo de Huang y Rundle-Thiele (2014), la literatura centrada en el marketing interno no ha analizado, a través del análisis multigrupo, la posible existencia de diferencias significativas en las consecuencias de la aplicación del marketing interno en su organización. De hecho, creemos que esta investigación es la primera que analiza la posible influencia que la experiencia laboral puede tener en el papel antecedente del marketing interno sobre la actitud y desempeño del trabajador.

Los resultados de la investigación pretenden ser de utilidad a las empresas de servicios, al ofrecer, a través de la Orientación al Mercado Interno, una herramienta de planificación, gestión y control de la aproximación directiva a los empleados. Además, se prueba la necesaria adopción de políticas y acciones diferenciadas según las necesidades y exigencias que los segmentos de trabajadores identificados muestran.

Finalmente, la investigación se centra en el sector sanitario, en el que los centros hospitalarios muestran una tendencia creciente a orientarse a los pacientes (Chen y Lin, 2013), lo que les exige una atención a los empleados a través de una filosofía marketing (marketing interno). Esta orientación a los trabajadores es muy necesaria en los servicios sanitarios debido al decisivo papel que juegan los profesionales para garantizar la calidad del servicio. En este sentido, diversos trabajos defienden que los empleados sanitarios tienen un mayor riesgo de sufrir desgaste emocional en el trabajo (Laranjeira, 2011; Lim et al., 2010), lo que lleva a justificar el tratamiento que este trabajo hace de la posible incidencia positiva que el marketing interno puede tener en la actitud y desempeño laboral de estos trabajadores.

El trabajo se estructura con el análisis, en primer lugar, de la literatura centrada en el marketing interno y la presentación de los principios teóricos que justifican las relaciones planteadas. Posteriormente, se menciona la metodología seguida y los resultados más destacados de la investigación. Finalmente, se argumentan las principales implicaciones, limitaciones del estudio y se sugieren futuras líneas de investigación.

## **2. Revisión de la literatura e hipótesis de la investigación**

### **2.1. Marketing interno y la Orientación al Mercado Interno (OMI)**

Desde su inicio académico, la falta de acuerdo sobre la naturaleza conceptual del término ha dificultado el desarrollo del marketing interno. A pesar de ello, siguiendo a Gounaris et al. (2010), treinta años de investigación han llevado a los siguientes acuerdos: (1) los principios para aplicar el marketing internamente son análogos a los principios a aplicarlo externamente; (2) el desarrollo del marketing interno ayuda a que los empleados alcancen sus necesidades laborales; y (3) el ámbito de aplicación del marketing interno es también externo ya que tiene como objetivo lograr la satisfacción del cliente a través de la satisfacción del empleado.

Recientes trabajos han desarrollado y validado distintos instrumentos para medir el marketing interno, destacando sobremanera la Orientación al Mercado Interno (OMI) de Lings y Greenley (2005). Este constructo representa que el marketing interno se refleja a través de la generación y comunicación de información sobre las exigencias y necesidades de los empleados, así como el diseño e implementación de las respuestas adecuadas a dichas exigencias y necesidades.

Siguiendo esta definición, Gounaris (2008a, b) trata la OMI como un constructo jerárquico y multidimensional, siendo la generación interna de información, la comunicación y la respuesta a dicha información sus principales dimensiones. Estas dimensiones están constituidas por un total de diez subdimensiones (ver tabla en el anexo). El presente trabajo utiliza este constructo, al considerar que por su riqueza y variedad de dimensiones y subdimensiones es el que mejor representa conceptual y operativamente la naturaleza del marketing interno.

### **2.2. Referencias teóricas**

La teoría del intercambio social defiende la existencia de dos tipos de relaciones de intercambio entre individuos y/o entidades: económicas y sociales (Homans, 1958). El intercambio social se basa en la confianza y cumplimiento de las obligaciones de cada partícipe (Rousseau, 1990). Además, la teoría de la equidad justifica que la respuesta de cada parte se basa en la valoración de la equidad de la relación (Adams, 1963). En el contexto organizativo, siguiendo a Settoon et al. (1996), las actuaciones organizativas y/o de sus dirigentes beneficiosas para los empleados contribuyen al establecimiento de relaciones de intercambio de gran calidad, que crean en los trabajadores la obligación de responder de manera positiva, beneficiosa para la organización.

La presente investigación, siguiendo los resultados de distintas aportaciones en los últimos años (Alexandrov et al., 2007; Chen et al., 2009; Paulin et al., 2006), considera que los empleados muestran una respuesta afectiva hacia su trabajo coherente con la valoración que hacen de su relación de intercambio social con su organización y dirigentes. El estado afectivo o actitud<sup>1</sup> de los empleados incide en su comportamiento durante el desempeño laboral. El modelo planteado se basa en esta secuencia, en la que la valoración que los trabajadores hacen de la OMI de su organización puede influir en su respuesta afectiva (satisfacción laboral, confianza en la benevolencia y honestidad de sus dirigentes, y su compromiso organizativo). Esta respuesta afectiva, en consecuencia, puede determinar su comportamiento laboral, y con ello la calidad del servicio percibido por el cliente y su nivel de satisfacción.

A pesar de las numerosas aportaciones que configuran la llamada “linkage literature”, centradas en analizar la relación entre la gestión interna y los resultados externos organizativos, el presente estudio creemos que es el primero que analiza la relación entre la gestión interna

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<sup>1</sup> Emociones, talante y actitud son elementos que forman parte de una categoría general de procesos mentales que puede designarse como afecto (Bagozzi et al., 1999).



(marketing interno, a través de la OMI), la respuesta afectiva de los empleados (satisfacción laboral, confianza en la honestidad y benevolencia de los dirigentes, y compromiso organizativo) y los resultados externos de la empresa (calidad del servicio percibida y satisfacción del cliente).

### **2.3. La influencia de la IMO en la respuesta afectiva de los empleados**

La relación que los empleados tienen con su organización les permite evaluar el grado de orientación que su empresa tiene hacia la fuerza laboral, lo que puede incidir en que los trabajadores tengan una respuesta afectiva coherente con dicha valoración. Distintos estudios han representado esta respuesta a través de la satisfacción laboral (Alexandrov et al., 2007; Paulin et al., 2006); la confianza de los empleados en la empresa y los dirigentes que la representan (Chen et al., 2009; Garbarino y Johnson, 1999); y su compromiso afectivo (Babakus et al., 2003; Paulin et al., 2006). Ahora bien, una de las contribuciones del estudio es que, por vez primera, analiza en el mismo modelo la influencia que el marketing interno, representado por la OMI, tiene sobre estas tres respuestas afectivas, y la posible relación causal entre ellas. Por tal motivo, nuestra investigación responde a la necesidad manifestada en la literatura (Kaur et al., 2009) de investigar más sobre las posibles consecuencias de la OMI.

La satisfacción del empleado se ha definido tradicionalmente como el estado afectivo resultado de la evaluación que éste hace de su trabajo (Hartline y Ferrell, 1996), en concreto de lo recibido comparado con lo deseado alcanzar en su relación laboral (Locke, 1969). La satisfacción laboral puede estar influida por la valoración que el empleado hace del grado de atención (IMO) que la organización muestra hacia sus trabajadores.

Diversas contribuciones, centradas en el sector hotelero (Gounaris, 2006, 2008a) y financiero (Tortosa et al., 2009, 2010; Ferdous y Polansky, 2014), demuestran esta relación. Consideramos oportuno tratar de corroborar esta relación en el servicio sanitario, donde los empleados tienen una gran responsabilidad en el cumplimiento eficiente de su trabajo, al ser un servicio de vital importancia para la ciudadanía. Esta responsabilidad supone una mayor presión que puede incidir en el estado afectivo de los trabajadores (Fiabane et al., 2013). Por tal motivo planteamos la siguiente hipótesis:

H<sub>1</sub>: La OMI tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en la satisfacción laboral del empleado.

La confianza puede considerarse una reacción afectiva favorable explicada a través de dos dimensiones (Kumar et al., 1995, p. 349): (1) la confianza en la benevolencia, o el interés que la otra parte demuestra en el bienestar de la persona que confía; y (2) la confianza en la honestidad (credibilidad), o fe de aquellos que confían en las acciones y comentarios de la otra parte de la relación. La presente investigación sigue esta delimitación conceptual de la confianza, definiéndola como la respuesta afectiva del trabajador a la honestidad y benevolencia demostrada por la organización y los dirigentes que la representan.

Hasta el momento la investigación centrada en el marketing interno no ha analizado la posible influencia que la OMI puede tener en la confianza de los trabajadores. Sin embargo, aproximaciones teóricas como la teoría del intercambio social (Homans, 1958) o la teoría del contrato psicológico (Robinson, 1996) justifican que la evaluación positiva que los empleados pueden hacer del apoyo organizativo y de sus dirigentes puede influir en la mayor confianza de los trabajadores. Por este motivo, consideramos las siguientes hipótesis:

H<sub>2a</sub>: La OMI tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en la confianza de los empleados sobre la honestidad de la organización y sus dirigentes.

H<sub>2b</sub>: La OMI tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en la confianza de los empleados sobre la benevolencia de la organización y sus dirigentes.

A partir de distintos trabajos (Paulin et al., 2006; Whitener, 2001), definimos el compromiso organizativo como el estado afectivo de adhesión del trabajador hacia su organización. Esta actitud también se ha descrito como la unión de la identidad del empleado con la identidad de su

empresa. En definitiva, la definición adoptada en el trabajo es la conocida en la literatura por compromiso organizativo afectivo.

Precisamente, uno de los objetivos del marketing interno es asegurar que los empleados sientan que la dirección se preocupa por ellos y por alcanzar sus necesidades. El marketing interno puede, por lo tanto, incidir en el compromiso organizativo del trabajador (Awwad y Agti, 2011; Paulin et al., 2006). Así, dos trabajos centrados en la IMO, en el sector bancario (Kaur et al., 2009) y en el servicio de transporte marítimo de pasajeros (Lings et al., 2008), han corroborado esta relación positiva. Tal y como hemos mencionado con anterioridad, debido a las características del servicio sanitario, consideramos relevante replicar la posible influencia de la OMI sobre el compromiso organizativo en este sector. Proponemos como hipótesis:

H<sub>3</sub>: La OMI tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en el compromiso organizativo afectivo del empleado.

El presente estudio también plantea como hipótesis las relaciones causales ente las variables representativas de la respuesta afectiva del empleado. La naturaleza conceptual de cada una de ellas justifica tales relaciones. De hecho, distintos trabajos han corroborado la influencia directa que la satisfacción laboral puede tener en la confianza del trabajador (Daley y Vasu, 1998; Williams, 2005) o en el compromiso afectivo (Alexandrov et al., 2007; Chen et al., 2009; Yousef, 2002), y la incidencia que la confianza de los empleados puede tener sobre su compromiso afectivo (Alder et al., 2006; Doucet et al., 2008). En este línea, proponemos como hipótesis:

H<sub>4a</sub>: La satisfacción laboral del empleado tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en su confianza sobre la honestidad de la organización y sus dirigentes.

H<sub>4b</sub>: La satisfacción laboral del empleado tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en su confianza sobre la benevolencia de la organización y sus dirigentes.

H<sub>5</sub>: La satisfacción laboral del empleado tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en su compromiso organizativo afectivo.

H<sub>6a</sub>: La confianza del empleado sobre la honestidad de la organización y sus dirigentes tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en su compromiso organizativo afectivo.

H<sub>6b</sub>: La confianza del empleado sobre la benevolencia de la organización y sus dirigentes tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en su compromiso organizativo afectivo.

#### ***2.4. La relación entre la respuesta afectiva de los empleados y su desempeño laboral***

Para analizar la incidencia que la respuesta afectiva de los empleados puede tener en su actuación en el trabajo consideramos que la calidad del servicio ofrecida por éstos, tal y como valoran sus clientes, es representativa del desempeño laboral.

La respuesta afectiva de los trabajadores puede determinar su interacción con los clientes (Babakus et al., 2003). De hecho, la relación entre la satisfacción laboral y el desempeño de los trabajadores ha sido corroborada empíricamente (Hartline and Ferrell, 1996; Yoon et al., 2001; Malhotra y Mukherjee, 2004), lo que nos lleva a plantear la siguiente hipótesis:

H<sub>7</sub>: La satisfacción laboral del empleado tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en la calidad del servicio percibida por el cliente.

La literatura centrada en el marketing de relaciones defiende que la confianza puede influir en el comportamiento del trabajador (Konovsky y Pugh, 1994). Algunos estudios han corroborado el papel antecedente que la confianza del empleado en la organización y sus dirigentes puede tener en la calidad del servicio (Aryee et al., 2002; Podsakoff et al., 1990). De nuevo, estimamos relevante replicar esta relación, a través de una metodología diádica, en un sector donde la confianza del empleado deviene clave ante la exigencia que recae en su labor. Por lo que proponemos como hipótesis:

H<sub>8a</sub>: La confianza del empleado sobre la honestidad de la organización y sus dirigentes tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en la calidad del servicio percibida por el cliente.

H<sub>8b</sub>: La confianza del empleado sobre la benevolencia de la organización y sus dirigentes tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en la calidad del servicio percibida por el cliente.

Meyer y Herscovich (2001) defienden que el compromiso afectivo es el deseo a continuar una acción o comportamiento en aras a lograr un objetivo. En el contexto organizativo, el objetivo del deseo del empleado puede ser seguir en la empresa donde trabaja y la acción su eficiente desempeño laboral. El compromiso afectivo puede incidir favorablemente en acometer un desempeño de mayor calidad (Jiang et al., 2009; Meyer et al., 2002), por tal motivo mostramos como hipótesis:

H<sub>9</sub>: El compromiso afectivo del empleado tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en la calidad del servicio percibida por el cliente.

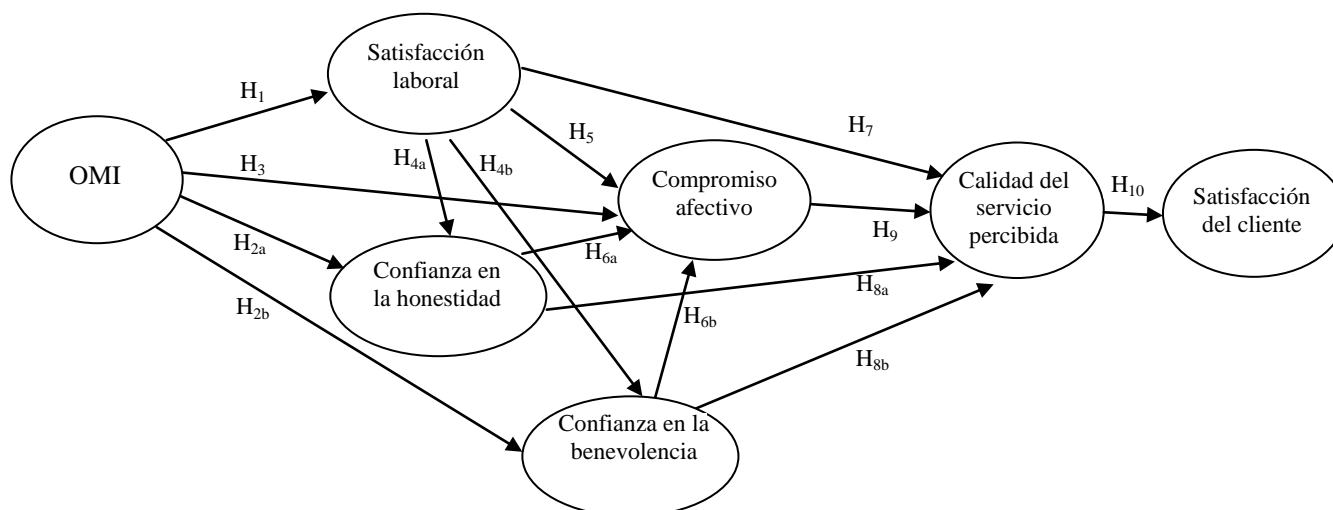
Finalmente, el estudio defiende que la calidad del servicio percibido es fruto de un proceso de evaluación de distintas transacciones que a lo largo del tiempo ha recibido el cliente del mismo trabajador. Si la valoración global es positiva, el cliente tiene una respuesta afectiva en forma de satisfacción por el servicio recibido. Diversos estudios (Boshoff y Gray, 2004; Mohr y Bitner, 1995) corroboran esta relación, lo que justifica su planteamiento en forma de hipótesis:

H<sub>10</sub>: La calidad del servicio percibida por el cliente tiene una influencia directa, positiva y significativa en su satisfacción.

La figura 1 muestra el modelo de la investigación con las hipótesis propuestas.

FIGURA 1

**Modelo de la investigación**



Además, en la presente investigación valoramos la posible existencia de diferencias significativas en las relaciones propuestas en el modelo a partir de la experiencia laboral de los trabajadores. La consideración de la experiencia laboral como criterio para formar submuestras de empleados se justifica por el desgaste emocional que, según corroboran diversos trabajos (Laranjeira, 2011; Lim et al., 2010), tienen los empleados sanitarios con mayor experiencia en el ejercicio de su trabajo.

### **3. Metodología**

#### **3.1. *Ámbito del estudio***

La investigación se centra en el sector sanitario, en concreto en el servicio de consultas externas de cinco hospitales en la Comunidad Valenciana. Los cinco hospitales, tres públicos y dos privados, son de similar tamaño (mediano) y ofrecen parecidos servicios sanitarios. Analizamos el servicio de consultas externas porque facilita la formación de díadas y permite alcanzar los objetivos planteados por la investigación.

La elección del sector sanitario se debe al elevado nivel de contacto personal existente entre los empleados y sus paciente (Curry et al., 1986). De hecho, la actuación de los trabajadores influye en gran medida en la percepción que el paciente tiene de la calidad del servicio recibida. Todo ello explica la creciente atención que en general los dirigentes hospitalarios dan al servicio prestado y al logro de la satisfacción del paciente (Paulin et al., 2006). Además, la presión externa (pacientes, sociedad en general) e interna (carga de trabajo, recortes presupuestarios) que sufren los profesionales sanitarios puede llevar a un mayor desgaste afectivo respecto a otros profesionales (Fiabane et al., 2013), lo que refuerza el interés directivo por implementar actuaciones que mejoren la actitud y desempeño de los trabajadores.

#### **3.2. *Recogida de datos***

Debido al análisis que el estudio pretende realizar de las percepciones de empleados y de sus pacientes fue necesario diseñar una investigación con dos muestras, confeccionándose dos tipos de cuestionario. El primero para medir la valoración que los trabajadores hacen de la OMI y de sus respuestas afectivas. El segundo para medir la calidad del servicio percibida por los pacientes y su nivel de satisfacción.

Las escalas utilizadas (ver tabla en el anexo) se basaron en trabajos previos. La OMI (constructo multijerárquico de tres niveles y multidimensional con tres dimensiones y diez subdimensiones) se adaptó al sector sanitario tomando como referencia el trabajo de Gounaris (2006, 2008a, b); la satisfacción laboral se basó en los trabajos de Churchill et al. (1974) y Oliver (1980); la confianza en la honestidad y en la benevolencia en la aportación de Ganesan (1994) y Kumar et al. (1995); el compromiso organizativo afectivo en el trabajo de Allen y Mayer (1990); la calidad del servicio percibida (constructo multijerárquico de tres niveles y multidimensional con tres dimensiones y nueve subdimensiones) en el trabajo de Brady y Cronin (2001); y la satisfacción laboral en la aportación de Bloemer y Odekerken-Schroder (2002).

La muestra de los empleados estaba formada por 244 individuos y la de los pacientes por 732. Los cuestionarios fueron revisados por un grupo de seis empleados y seis pacientes de hospitales distintos a los investigados, con el fin de asegurar la comprensión de los enunciados. Ambos cuestionarios estaban formados por preguntas cerradas con ítems medidos en una escala likert de 5 puntos (donde el 1 representaba totalmente en desacuerdo y el 5 totalmente de acuerdo).

A través de la codificación de los cuestionario fue posible identificar y unir los cuestionarios de cada profesional con el de sus tres pacientes encuestados. Estos pacientes recibieron el servicio del mismo profesional al menos en tres ocasiones durante el mismo año. Se aseguró la confidencialidad en la comunicación de los resultados, a pesar de la codificación, con el fin de lograr mayor franqueza en las respuestas.

La tasa de repuesta de la muestra de empleados fue del 60% (244 de 411 trabajadores del servicio de consultas externas). La muestra estaba formada por 132 hombres (54%) y 112 mujeres (46%), con 162 facultativos y 82 diplomados y auxiliares de enfermería. La media de experiencia laboral no superaba los diez años (punto de corte para formar las dos submuestras, 141 trabajadores con menos de diez años de experiencia laboral y 103 empleados con más de diez años). La muestra de pacientes consistió en 392 mujeres (53%) y 340 hombres (47%), con una media de edad de 42 años.

En definitiva, la unidad de análisis de la investigación fue la relación empleado-pacientes. Para contrastar las hipótesis se formaron 244 díadas, con las respuestas de cada empleado y la media de las respuestas de los tres pacientes que éste había atendido. Esta agregación está justificada en trabajos previos (George y Bettenhausen, 1990; Yoon y Suh, 2003). Ahora bien, fue necesario asegurar que las respuestas de los tres pacientes por trabajador sobre la calidad del servicio y el grado de satisfacción eran razonablemente estables. Los estimadores para medir el grado de acuerdo dentro de cada grupo (interrater agreement, intraclass correlation (1) e intraclass correlation (2)) fueron superiores a los valores recomendados (>0.7, >0.12 y >0.6, respectivamente), lo que justifica la agregación de los datos en la relación empleado-pacientes.

#### 4. Resultados

El presente estudio utilizó modelos de ecuaciones estructurales, con el programa EQS 6.1, para el tratamiento estadístico de los resultados. La estimación del modelo se llevó a cabo en dos etapas (Anderson y Gerbing, 1988). En primer lugar, se acometió un análisis factorial confirmatorio para validar las escalas, y posteriormente se contrastaron las relaciones causales.

En la primera etapa, el análisis factorial confirmatorio permitió evaluar la dimensionalidad, fiabilidad y validez (convergente y divergente) de los constructos (ver tabla en el anexo del documento). En el caso de los multijerárquicos, la variable latente se formaba de manera sumativa con los ítems o indicadores. Se confirmó la bondad del ajuste del modelo (p-value=0.060; RMSEA=0.020; CFI=0.99; GFI=0.99; AGFI=0.99), con todos los indicadores por encima de los valores de corte recomendados. Las cargas factoriales fueron superiores a 0.5 y los t-test significativos ( $t > 1.96$ ) para todos los ítems de las variables latentes, por lo que se corroboró la validez convergente. La fiabilidad compuesta se utilizó para medir la fiabilidad de las escalas, todas ellas por encima del umbral mínimo exigido de 0.7. Finalmente, la validez divergente también quedó demostrada, la raíz cuadrada de la varianza media extraída ( $AVE^{1/2}$ ) de cada variable fue mayor que la correlación entre las distintas variables.

Posteriormente, se estimó el modelo estructural para analizar las relaciones planteadas (tabla 1). Los indicadores estadísticos corroboraron la bondad del ajuste (p-value=0.380; RMSEA=0.017; CFI=0.99; GFI=0.99; AGFI=0.98).

TABLA 1  
Relaciones causales

Efectos directos	Pesos (valores estandarizados)	t-Test
H <sub>1</sub> : OMI → Satisfacción laboral	0.81 (*)	21.51
H <sub>2a</sub> : OMI → Confianza en la honestidad	0.43 (*)	7.93
H <sub>2b</sub> : OMI → Confianza en la benevolencia	0.53 (*)	7.95
H <sub>3</sub> : OMI → Compromiso afectivo	n.s.	n.s.
H <sub>4a</sub> : Satisfacción laboral → Confianza en la honestidad	0.53 (*)	9.98
H <sub>4b</sub> : Satisfacción laboral → Confianza en la benevolencia	0.42 (*)	6.51
H <sub>5</sub> : Satisfacción laboral → Compromiso afectivo	0.40 (*)	4.35
H <sub>6a</sub> : Confianza en la honestidad → Compromiso afectivo	0.25 (*)	5.18
H <sub>6b</sub> : Confianza en la benevolencia → Compromiso afectivo	0.28 (*)	5.18
H <sub>7</sub> : Satisfacción laboral → Calidad del servicio percibida	0.08 (*)	5.74
H <sub>8a</sub> : Confianza en la honestidad → Calidad del servicio percibida	0.09 (*)	5.74
H <sub>8b</sub> : Confianza en la benevolencia → Calidad del servicio percibida	0.10 (*)	5.74
H <sub>9</sub> : Compromiso afectivo → Calidad del servicio percibida	0.10 (*)	5.74
H <sub>10</sub> : Calidad del servicio percibida → Satisfacción del cliente	0.93 (*)	49.49
Indicadores de la bondad del ajuste del modelo estructural	Chi-cuadrado= 11.79, g.l = 11, p-value = 0.38, CFI = 0.99, GFI = 0.99, AGFI = 0.98, RMSEA = 0.017	

(\*) Significativo  $p \leq 0.05$

n.s. = no significativo

El análisis de los resultados del modelo verifica el papel antecedente de la OMI sobre la satisfacción laboral (H<sub>1</sub>) y sobre la confianza en la honestidad (H<sub>2a</sub>) y en la benevolencia (H<sub>2b</sub>),

sin embargo no se corrobora su influencia directa sobre el compromiso afectivo ( $H_3$ ). Además, se demuestran las hipótesis que relacionan entre sí las respuestas afectivas del empleado ( $H_{4a}$ ,  $H_{4b}$ ,  $H_5$ ,  $H_{6a}$ ,  $H_{6b}$ ) y las que analizan la influencia de estos afectos sobre la calidad del servicio percibida por el paciente ( $H_7$ ,  $H_8$ ,  $H_9$ ). Finalmente, también se prueba la incidencia que la calidad del servicio percibida ejerce sobre la satisfacción del paciente ( $H_{10}$ ).

A través del análisis multigrupo se evaluó la existencia de diferencias significativas en los resultados de las dos muestras de empleados, según la experiencia laboral (tabla 3). La invarianza de las cargas factoriales fue corroborada ( $\Delta\chi^2=41.34$ ;  $\Delta df=31$ ;  $p=0.101>0.05$ ), por lo que el mismo modelo podría aplicarse a cada una de las dos submuestras. Para corroborar si existen diferencias significativas en las relaciones causales de las dos submuestras se analiza la existencia de invarianza estructural (tabla 2). La diferencia de la chi-cuadrado muestra la existencia de diferencias entre ambas submuestras ( $\Delta\chi^2= 25.83$ ;  $\Delta df=13$ ;  $p=0.018<0.05$ ). En concreto, las diferencias significativas se dan en la influencia que la OMI tiene sobre los dos constructos representativos de la confianza (mayor en los empleados con más experiencia) y en la influencia que la satisfacción laboral tiene sobre estas dos variables de la confianza (mayor entre los trabajadores con menor experiencia).

TABLA 2  
Análisis multigrupo

Efectos directos	Pesos estandarizados, empleados con más experiencia	t-Test	Pesos estandarizados, empleados con menos experiencia	t-Test	$\Delta \chi^2$	p
$H_1$ : OMI $\rightarrow$ Satisfacción laboral	0.84 (*)	18.52	0.78 (*)	12.95	2.20	0.138
$H_{2a}$ : OMI $\rightarrow$ Confianza en la honestidad	<b>0.60</b> (*)	7.67	0.32 (*)	5.54	9.76	<b>0.001</b>
$H_{2b}$ : OMI $\rightarrow$ Confianza en la benevolencia	<b>0.72</b> (*)	9.36	0.42 (*)	5.07	5.30	<b>0.021</b>
$H_3$ : OMI $\rightarrow$ Compromiso afectivo	n.s.		n.s.			
$H_{4a}$ : Satisfacción laboral $\rightarrow$ Confianza en la honestidad	0.34 (*)	4.34	<b>0.65</b> (*)	11.72	13.22	<b>0.000</b>
$H_{4b}$ : Satisfacción laboral $\rightarrow$ Confianza en la benevolencia	0.22 (*)	2.81	<b>0.54</b> (*)	7.37	13.75	<b>0.000</b>
$H_5$ : Satisfacción laboral $\rightarrow$ Compromiso afectivo	0.44 (*)	4.41	0.33 (*)	2.30	2.36	0.124
$H_{6a}$ : Confianza en la honestidad $\rightarrow$ Compromiso afectivo	0.24 (*)	4.64	0.27 (*)	3.56	1.05	0.304
$H_{6b}$ : Confianza en la benevolencia $\rightarrow$ Compromiso afectivo	0.27 (*)	4.64	0.31 (*)	3.56	1.59	0.207
$H_7$ : Satisfacción laboral $\rightarrow$ Calidad del servicio percibida	0.08 (*)	3.95	0.07 (*)	3.63	0.45	0.499
$H_{8a}$ : Confianza en la honestidad $\rightarrow$ Calidad del servicio	0.08 (*)	3.95	0.09 (*)	3.63	0.89	0.343
$H_{8b}$ : Confianza en la benevolencia $\rightarrow$ Calidad del servicio p	0.09 (*)	3.95	0.10 (*)	3.63	1.47	0.224
$H_9$ : Compromiso afectivo $\rightarrow$ Calidad del servicio percibida	0.10 (*)	3.95	0.10 (*)	3.63	0.47	0.493
$H_{10}$ : Calidad del servicio $\rightarrow$ Satisfacción del cliente	0.94 (*)	39.36	0.91 (*)	31.86	2.61	0.106
Indicadores de la bondad del ajuste	Chi-cuadrado = 29.32, g.l. = 22, p-value = 0.14, CFI = 0.98, GFI = 0.98, AGFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.023					

(\*) Significativo  $p \leq 0.05$

n.s. = no significativo

En negrita las cargas con diferencias significativas entre las dos submuestras

## 5. Conclusiones

Las organizaciones de servicios buscan mejorar su posición competitiva a través de adaptar su respuesta a las necesidades de los clientes, lo que les lleva a estimar como factor clave el papel de los trabajadores. Precisamente la adopción de una filosofía marketing en la gestión directiva de los empleados facilita que éstos tengan la actitud y comportamiento necesario para ofrecer un servicio de calidad y con ello satisfacer a los clientes. En este sentido, la presente investigación siguiendo aportaciones previas en la literatura representa esta filosofía a través de la OMI.

En el contexto académico nuestro estudio contribuye a enriquecer la llamada “linkage literature” al corroborar, a través de un metodología diádica, el papel mediador que la satisfacción laboral y la confianza del empleado tienen en la relación entre la gestión interna (OMI) y los resultados externos organizativos (calidad del servicio percibida y satisfacción del paciente). Para tal fin, el estudio toma referentes teóricos como la teoría del intercambio social o la teoría de la equidad. Cabe destacar que es la vez primera que se analiza y corrobora el papel mediador de la confianza en la literatura centrada en el marketing interno. Un contexto de dificultades

económicas y de creciente exigencia interna y externa como el actual hace más necesaria la construcción de relaciones sinceras y próximas entre los dirigentes y sus empleados, relaciones que fomenten la confianza del trabajador, y con ello su mayor compromiso organizativo y mejor desempeño en el trabajo.

Precisamente, a través del análisis multigrupo en función de la experiencia laboral, se demuestra la existencia de diferencias significativas en la influencia que la OMI y la satisfacción laboral tienen sobre las dos dimensiones representativas de la confianza del trabajador. En concreto, la adopción de una filosofía marketing en la gestión con los trabajadores tiene una incidencia significativamente mayor en la confianza entre aquellos empleados con mayor experiencia laboral. En cambio, la satisfacción laboral tiene un efecto significativamente mayor en las dos dimensiones de la confianza entre los trabajadores con menor experiencia. Estos resultados parecen denotar que la confianza de los empleados más experimentados, con más elementos de juicio debido a los años vividos en la organización, están más influidos por el grado de aproximación a la fuerza laboral que demuestran los dirigentes. En cambio, los empleados con menor experiencia y con menos elementos para enjuiciar la labor de los dirigentes basan su confianza en la satisfacción que supone su trabajo.

La investigación también revela que la satisfacción laboral juega un papel destacado como respuesta afectiva del empleado, la OMI ejerce una mayor influencia sobre ella y también es la que tiene un mayor efecto sobre el resto de afectos del trabajador. Es por ello necesario que los dirigentes sean conscientes de lo importante que supone alcanzar las necesidades y exigencias de los trabajadores para lograr su satisfacción y con ello favorecer la mejora en los resultados organizativos internos y externos.

Tan sólo una de las relaciones propuestas no se corrobora, la que describe la influencia directa y significativa de la OMI sobre el compromiso afectivo. Una posible interpretación de este resultado es que la OMI tiene un efecto directo sobre aquellas respuestas afectivas, satisfacción y confianza, que surgen en un horizonte temporal más corto que el compromiso afectivo, que de hecho está influido por estos dos afectos.

Entre las recomendaciones a realizar a las empresas del estudio podemos destacar que deberían adoptar plenamente la filosofía marketing en su gestión con los empleados, con el fin de crear un clima interno de excelencia que reporte mayores resultados en el ámbito externo. Una aproximación a los trabajadores que les permita una mayor integración entre las funciones organizativas. De hecho, las tradicionales barreras entre los distintos departamentos tenderían a desaparecer. En un sentido más práctico, sin la presencia de un instrumento válido para la aplicación del marketing interno resulta difícil que las organizaciones puedan acometer con éxito una aproximación a los empleados. La literatura ha mostrado que la OMI puede ser una representación válida del marketing interno, al facilitar la comprensión directiva de las necesidades de los trabajadores, desarrollar la comunicación bidireccional y favorecer la respuesta adaptada a tales necesidades. Los dirigentes pueden definir las estrategias y tácticas más adecuadas para la implementación de soluciones proactivas.

En este sentido, una vez valoradas las necesidades y sugerencias de los empleados es posible identificar diferentes segmentos o colectivos de empleados con distintas problemáticas, lo que permite adaptar las decisiones y actuaciones más pertinentes para cada colectivo. En el caso de los hospitales analizados, OMI tiene más influencia sobre la confianza de los empleados más experimentados.

Una de las principales limitaciones del estudio es haberse centrado únicamente en el sector sanitario de una misma zona geográfica. Además, se hace uso de datos basados en las percepciones de profesionales y pacientes lo que puede conllevar no tener una visión completamente ajustada de la realidad investigada. No se analizan las posibles diferencias significativas en las relaciones causales por criterios como el género de los empleados, categoría profesional o tipo de hospital (público o privado). Finalmente, el estudio no desarrolla un análisis longitudinal de los resultados.

Entre las posibles líneas de investigación destacamos la posibilidad de generalizar el modelo a más hospitales, otros servicios y sectores de la economía; identificar los posibles antecedentes de la OMI; o incorporar otras variables para medir el resultado externo (objetivas y subjetivas).

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**ANEXO**

**Tabla**

**Dimensionalidad, validez y fiabilidad de las escalas**

Constructo	Items	Media (Desviación Estandar)	Carga factorial (estandarizado)	t-valores	Validez convergente: AVE	Validez divergente		Fiabilidad compuesta
						Raíz cuadrada del AVE de cada factor	Mayor correlación con otro factor	
Subdimensión OMI: Identificación intercambios valor (EXVL) Chi square= 10.62; g.l. = 5; p = 0.060; CFI = 0.99; GFI = 0.98; AGFI = 0.95; RMSEA = 0.06	EXVL 1	3.61 (1.126)	0.79 (*)	13.15	0.65	0.80	0.79 (*)	0.88
	EXVL 2	3.53 (1.141)	0.92	fijo				
	EXVL 3	3.52 (1.145)	0.87 (*)	15.10				
	EXVL 4	3.04 (1.328)	0.66 (*)	10.95				
	EXVL 5	2.76 (1.370)	0.58 (*)	9.39				
Subdimensión OMI: Conocimiento Mercado laboral (LABCN) Chi square= 7.63; g.l. = 3; p = 0.055; CFI = 0.99; GFI = 0.98; AGFI = 0.95; RMSEA = 0.080	LABCN 1	3.10 (1.234)	0.85	fijo	0.77	0.87	0.62 (*)	0.92
	LABCN 2	3.10 (1.215)	0.87	fijo				
	LABCN 3	3.08 (1.225)	0.89	fijo				
	LABCN 4	2.98 (1.182)	0.83 (*)	20.18				
Subdimensión OMI: Comunicación entre dirigentes y empleados (CME) Chi square= 10.81; g.l. = 5; p = 0.055; CFI = 0.99; GFI = 0.98; AGFI = 0.95; RMSEA = 0.06	CME 1	3.56 (1.196)	0.80 (*)	17.98	0.78	0.88	0.79 (*)	0.94
	CME 2	3.48 (1.177)	0.86 (*)	21.80				
	CME 3	3.38 (1.233)	0.91	fijo				
	CME 4	3.37 (1.191)	0.92	fijo				
	CME 5	3.27 (1.210)	0.85 (*)	21.49				
Subdimensión OMI: Comunicación entre dirigentes (CMM) Chi square= 8.71; d.f. = 4; p = 0.069; CFI = 0.99; GFI = 0.98; AGFI = 0.96; RMSEA = 0.07	CMM 1	3.14 (1.227)	0.81 (*)	17.89	0.74	0.86	0.78 (*)	0.91
	CMM 2	3.27 (1.147)	0.84	fijo				
	CMM 3	3.13 (1.147)	0.85	fijo				
	CMM 4	3.13 (1.190)	0.86	fijo				
Subdimensión OMI: Descripción del trabajo (JD) Chi square= 8.88; g.l. = 7; p = 0.261; CFI = 1.00; GFI = 0.99; AGFI = 0.96; RMSEA = 0.03	JD 1	2.80 (1.161)	0.80 (*)	15.24	0.70	0.83	0.79 (*)	0.92
	JD 2	3.17 (1.205)	0.86	fijo				
	JD 3	3.11 (1.168)	0.81 (*)	20.40				
	JD 4	2.89 (1.257)	0.72 (*)	18.64				
	JD 5	2.99 (1.184)	0.75 (*)	18.64				
	JD 6	3.24 (1.211)	0.89	fijo				
Subdimensión OMI: Segmentación mercado interno (INTSG) Chi square= 0.13; d.f. = 1; p = 0.713; CFI = 1.00; GFI = 1.00; AGFI = 1.00; RMSEA = 0.00	INTSG 1	3.29 (1.169)	0.75 (*)	13.91	0.77	0.87	0.79 (*)	0.92
	INTSG 2	3.01 (1.151)	0.93	fijo				
	INTSG 3	3.09 (1.145)	0.90 (*)	17.08				
	INTSG 4	3.00 (1.155)	0.87 (*)	17.40				
Subdimensión OMI: Enfoque mercado interno (INTTG) Chi square= 1.32; g.l. = 3; p = 0.724; CFI = 1.00; GFI = 1.00; AGFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.00	INTTG 1	2.93 (1.128)	0.91	fijo	0.82	0.90	0.79 (*)	0.94
	INTTG 2	2.84 (1.196)	0.87 (*)	22.44				
	INTTG 3	2.80 (1.133)	0.90	fijo				
	INTTG 4	2.81 (1.190)	0.89	fijo				
Subdimensión OMI: Sistema de remuneración (REM) Chi square= 10.10; g.l. = 5; p = 0.073; CFI = 0.98; GFI = 0.98; AGFI = 0.96; RMSEA = 0.06	REM 1	2.04 (1.215)	0.57 (*)	7.99	0.60	0.77	0.55 (*)	0.82
	REM 2	2.43 (1.390)	0.87	fijo				
	REM 3	2.70 (1.411)	0.87	fijo				
	REM 4	3.21 (1.367)	0.57 (*)	7.99				
Subdimensión OMI: Formación (TR) Chi square= 5.27; g.l. = 2; p = 0.072; CFI = 0.99; GFI = 0.99; AGFI = 0.95; RMSEA = 0.08	TR 1	2.88 (1.220)	0.73 (*)	13.98	0.74	0.85	0.77 (*)	0.90
	TR 2	3.04 (1.250)	0.92	fijo				
	TR 3	2.90 (1.213)	0.82 (*)	17.13				
	TR 4	3.03 (1.271)	0.87 (*)	19.22				
Subdimensión OMI: Atención directiva (MNCN) Chi square= 6.48; g.l. = 3; p = 0.091; CFI = 1.00; GFI = 0.99; AGFI = 0.96; RMSEA = 0.06	MNCN 1	3.01 (1.281)	0.88 (*)	26.83	0.88	0.93	0.77 (*)	0.97
	MNCN 2	2.77 (1.247)	0.92 (*)	34.18				
	MNCN 3	2.78 (1.270)	0.97	fijo				
	MNCN 4	2.88 (1.290)	0.97	fijo				
Dimensión OMI: Generación de información interna Chi square= 2.79; g.l. = 2; p = 0.248; CFI = 1.00; GFI = 0.99; AGFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.04	EXVL		0.92	fijo	0.86	0.92	0.85 (*)	0.92
	LABCN		0.92	fijo				
Dimensión OMI: Reparto información interna Chi square= 5.93; g.l. = 2; p = 0.051; CFI = 0.99; GFI = 0.99; AGFI = 0.97; RMSEA = 0.08	CME		0.91	fijo	0.84	0.86	0.85 (*)	0.91
	CMM		0.91	fijo				
Dimensión OMI: Respuesta a la información interna Chi square= 19.67; g.l. = 11; p=0.050; CFI = 0.99; GFI = 0.98; AGFI = 0.96; RMSEA = 0.05	JD		0.95	fijo	0.80	0.89	0.85 (*)	0.95
	INTSG		0.92 (*)	19.19				
	INTTG		0.95 (*)	20.11				
	REM		0.61 (*)	10.38				
	TR		0.88 (*)	17.51				
	MNCN		0.93 (*)	19.14				
Satisfacción laboral (JS) Chi square= 1.52; g.l. = 2; p = 0.467; CFI = 1.00; GFI = 1.00; AGFI = 0.98; RMSEA = 0.00	JS 1	3.65 (0.949)	0.90 (*)	24.94	0.87	0.93	0.87 (*)	0.97
	JS 2	3.68 (1.087)	0.94 (*)	30.23				
	JS 3	3.62 (1.091)	0.95	fijo				
	JS 4	3.64 (1.130)	0.91 (*)	27.13				
	JS 5	3.63 (1.167)	0.86 (*)	22.43				
Confianza en la honestidad (TH) Chi square= 2.78; g.l. = 3; p = 0.430; CFI = 1.00; GFI = 1.00; AGFI = 0.98; RMSEA = 0.00	TH 1	3.49 (1.246)	0.97	fijo	0.90	0.94	0.91 (*)	0.98
	TH 2	3.39 (1.241)	0.95	fijo				
	TH 3	3.42 (1.226)	0.93 (*)	40.08				
	TH 4	3.40 (1.191)	0.93 (*)	34.13				
	TH 5	3.33 (1.193)	0.93 (*)	33.32				

LA ORIENTACIÓN AL MERCADO INTERNO Y SU INFLUENCIA EN LOS EMPLEADOS Y CLIENTES...

Constructo	Items	Media (Desviación Estandar)	Carga factorial (estandarizado)	t-values	Validez convergente: AVE	Validez divergente		Fiabilidad compuesta
						Raíz cuadrada del AVE de cada factor	Mayor correlación con otro factor	
Confianza en la benevolencia (TB) Chi square= 13.48; g.l. = 7; p = 0.061; CFI = 1.00; GFI =0.98; AGFI = 0.95; RMSEA = 0.06	TB 1	3.16 (1.164)	0.93 (*)	28.05	0.91	0.95	0.91 (*)	0.97
	TB 2	3.16 (1.255)	0.94	fijo				
	TB 3	3.12 (1.250)	0.86 (*)	21.55				
	TB 4	3.23 (1.200)	0.84 (*)	20.62				
	TB 5	3.16 (1.196)	0.89 (*)	23.92				
	TB 6	3.26 (1.177)	0.92 (*)	26.31				
Compromiso afectivo (AFCOM) Chi square= 11.03; g.l. = 7; p = 0.140; CFI = 1.00; GFI =0.99; AGFI = 0.96; RMSEA = 0.05	AFCOM 1	3.66 (1.083)	0.88 (*)	24.43	0.86	0.92	0.85 (*)	0.97
	AFCOM 2	3.32 (1.209)	0.86 (*)	23.26				
	AFCOM 3	3.35 (1.203)	0.93 (*)	31.60				
	AFCOM 4	3.42 (1.179)	0.95 (*)	37.85				
	AFCOM 5	3.39 (1.197)	0.95	fijo				
	AFCOM 6	3.36 (1.197)	0.96	fijo				
Subdimensión SQ: Actitud (ATT) Chi square= 2.86; g.l. = 1; p = 0.090; CFI = 0.99; GFI =0.99; AGFI = 0.98; RMSEA = 0.05	ATT 1	4.20 (0.846)	0.93 (*)	50.57	0.89	0.94	0.90 (*)	0.96
	ATT 2	4.14 (0.907)	0.94 (*)	53.83				
	ATT 3	4.13 (0.918)	0.94	fijo				
Subdimensión SQ: Comportamiento (BEH) Chi square= 2.28; g.l. = 1; p = 0.131; CFI = 1.00; GFI =1.00; AGFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.04	BEH 1	4.14 (0.901)	0.95	fijo	0.86	0.92	0.90 (*)	0.94
	BEH 2	3.93 (1.078)	0.84 (*)	38.71				
	BEH 3	4.09 (0.945)	0.96	fijo				
Subdimensión SQ: Experto (EXP) Chi square= 0.33; g.l. = 1; p = 0.564; CFI = 1.00; GFI =1.00; AGFI = 1.00; RMSEA = 0.00	EXP 1	4.29 (1.333)	0.93 (*)	50.86	0.88	0.93	0.74 (*)	0.95
	EXP 2	4.07 (0.971)	0.93 (*)	50.86				
	EXP 3	4.23 (1.384)	0.94	fijo				
Subdimensión SQ: Tiempo de espera (WT) Chi square= 3.35; g.l. = 2; p = 0.190; CFI = 1.00; GFI =1.00; AGFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.03	WT 1	3.35 (1.208)	0.76 (*)	35.69	0.75	0.86	0.69 (*)	0.89
	WT 2	3.50 (1.078)	0.94	fijo				
	WT 3	3.58 (1.084)	0.85 (*)	33.10				
Subdimensión SQ: Valoración objetiva del resultado (OVR) Chi square= 2.47; g.l. = 2; p = 0.290; CFI = 1.00; GFI =1.00; AGFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.01	OVR 1	4.09 (0.899)	0.91 (*)	46.02	0.85	0.92	0.88 (*)	0.94
	OVR 2	3.89 (1.004)	0.93	fijo				
	OVR 3	3.93 (0.964)	0.91 (*)	46.02				
Subdimensión SQ: Valoración subjetiva de la experiencia (SVEC) Chi square= 4.75; g.l. = 2; p = 0.093; CFI = 1.00; GFI =1.00; AGFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.04	SVEC 1	4.04 (0.904)	0.88 (*)	41.21	0.83	0.91	0.88 (*)	0.93
	SVEC 2	3.95 (0.985)	0.93	fijo				
	SVEC 3	3.82 (0.982)	0.89	fijo				
Subdimensión SQ: Condiciones del entorno (AC) Chi square= 2.28; g.l. = 2; p = 0.319; CFI = 1.00; GFI =1.00; AGFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.04	AC 1	4.06 (0.920)	0.90 (*)	42.14	0.81	0.90	0.70 (*)	0.92
	AC 2	3.87 (1.036)	0.97	fijo				
	AC 3	3.63 (1.114)	0.80 (*)	39.14				
Subdimensión SQ: Diseño instalaciones (DES) Chi square= 3.38; g.l. = 2; p = 0.184; CFI = 1.00; GFI =1.00; AGFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.03	DES 1	3.44 (1.169)	0.86 (*)	30.97	0.76	0.87	0.70 (*)	0.89
	DES 2	3.72 (1.115)	0.81 (*)	26.95				
	DES 3	3.41 (1.210)	0.88	fijo				
Subdimensión SQ: Factor Social (SF) Chi square= 4.08; g.l. = 2; p = 0.130; CFI = 1.00; GFI =1.00; AGFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.03	SF 1	3.48 (1.069)	0.69 (*)	20.02	0.67	0.81	0.69 (*)	0.83
	SF 2	3.59 (1.158)	0.84 (*)	27.80				
	SF 3	3.48 (1.056)	0.84	fijo				
Dimensión SQ: Calidad interacción (IQ) Chi square= 0.46; g.l. = 1; p = 0.498; CFI = 1.00; GFI =0.99; AGFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.01	ATT		0.96	fijo	0.88	0.93	0.86 (*)	0.95
	BEH		0.94	fijo				
	EXP		0.90 (*)	47.23				
Dimensión SQ: Calidad del resultado (OQ) Chi square= 0.33; g.l. = 1; p = 0.563; CFI = 1.00; GFI =1.00; AGFI = 1.00; RMSEA = 0.00	WT		0.73 (*)	26.82	0.78	0.88	0.86 (*)	0.90
	OVR		0.93	fijo				
	SVE		0.94	fijo				
Dimensión SQ: Calidad del ambiente (EQ) Chi square= 2.61; g.l. = 1; p = 0.105; CFI = 1.00; GFI =0.99; AGFI = 0.98; RMSEA = 0.04	AC		0.85 (*)	35.21	0.76	0.87	0.74 (*)	0.89
	DES		0.87	fijo				
	SF		0.83 (*)	23.34				
Satisfacción del cliente (CS) Chi square= 4.99; g.l. = 2; p = 0.082; CFI = 1.00; GFI =1.00; AGFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.04	CS 1	4.14 (0.859)	0.88 (*)	49.37	0.84	0.92	0.88 (*)	0.93
	CS 2	3.70 (1.034)	0.86 (*)	49.37				
	CS 3	4.01 (0.944)	0.98	fijo				

\* Significant at p ≤ 0.05

# LA REPETICIÓN DE COMPRA EN EL COMERCIO MINORISTA: EFECTO MODERADOR DEL TIPO DE PRODUCTO<sup>1</sup>

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## RESUMEN

*En el contexto minorista en general las aportaciones miden la lealtad desde la perspectiva actitudinal y son escasos los trabajos que analizan el comportamiento de repetición de compra. Nuestro objetivo es investigar la formación de este tipo de conducta estudiando el efecto directo de la satisfacción, el compromiso, el valor percibido y la conducta de boca-oreja y el efecto moderador del tipo de producto comprado en estas relaciones. A partir de una muestra de 820 sujetos que han comprado en diferentes establecimientos, aplicamos una regresión logística ordinal y concluimos que la satisfacción no influye en la conducta de repetición y que en productos de compra frecuente la satisfacción tiene un efecto menor en la repetición. Se presentan implicaciones interesantes para la gestión empresarial y futuras líneas de investigación para avanzar en la compleja relación entre la satisfacción y la lealtad.*

## Palabras clave:

Repetición de compra, lealtad, satisfacción, compromiso, valor, boca-oreja, regresión logística ordinal.

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## 1. Introducción

El comercio minorista es un sector altamente competitivo en el que la lucha por aumentar la cuota del cliente es un reto importante para conseguir ingresos y beneficios (Hernant *et al.*, 2007). Por ello, la retención de clientes y la repetición de compras se convierten en factores claves para crear lealtad y, consecuentemente, para mejorar la rentabilidad de la tienda (Martos y González, 2009). Especialmente en este contexto de la distribución comercial minorista, la conducta de repetición ha recibido especial atención (Pan y Zinkhan, 2006; Teller y Gittenberger, 2011), ya que el grado en que los clientes vuelven a visitar el establecimiento puede marcar la diferencia entre el éxito y el fracaso de la empresa (Grace y O’Cass, 2005).

La repetición de compra es una de las dimensiones de la lealtad que puede ser abordada desde las perspectiva conductual (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996) o actitudinal (Lovelock y Wirtz, 2007) o ambas (Doherty y Nelson, 2008). La mayoría de los estudios empíricos en el contexto minorista que analizan la relación entre la satisfacción y la repetición de compra se encuentran en la óptica actitudinal y miden la intención de repetición en vez de la conducta de repetición (p.e. Pappas *et al.*, 2014). Sin embargo, pueden existir diferencias importantes (Morwitz *et al.*, 1997; Mittal y Kamakura, 2001; Seiders *et al.*, 2005). Del mismo modo, otras variables que la literatura ha considerado como antecedentes de la lealtad, como son el compromiso (p.e. Cerri, 2012) y el valor percibido (p.e. Nezakati *et al.*, 2014), también se han estudiado midiendo su efecto sobre las intenciones de repetición de compra en la tienda. Igualmente existen evidencias empíricas que muestran que la conducta de boca-oreja, aunque teóricamente es una de las dimensiones de la lealtad (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996), contribuye en las intenciones de repetición (p.e. Hutter y Hoffmann, 2014).

Adicionalmente, en el cuerpo teórico se han propuesto diferentes variables que pueden ejercer un efecto moderador sobre la repetición de compra en los comercios minoristas (p.e. Pan y Zinkhan, 2006). Entre ellas se encuentran factores asociados al contexto de compra como el tipo de producto comprado, sin embargo, los estudios sobre esta variable son escasos y a veces contradictorios (p.e. Seiders *et al.*, 2005).

Ante estas limitaciones empíricas sobre el estudio de la conducta de repetición, nuestro objetivo es analizar la formación de dicha conducta en la distribución comercial minorista investigando la contribución directa que tienen la satisfacción, el compromiso, el valor percibido y la conducta de boca-oreja, así como el efecto moderador que ejerce en estas relaciones el tipo de producto según la frecuencia de compra.

Para abordar este estudio, empleamos la metodología de la regresión logística ordinal ya que partimos de una variable dependiente categórica ordinal. Esto es, trataremos de analizar si las estimaciones de las variables explicativas anteriores son significativas sobre la conducta de repetición a partir de la inversa del logaritmo de la razón de probabilidad, entendida como el ratio entre la probabilidad acumulada hasta cierta categoría de la variable dependiente y la probabilidad de mayores valores de dicha categoría (Hosmer y Lemeshow, 2000). Esta metodología es una extensión del modelo lineal general para datos categóricos con carácter ordinal. Los modelos de regresión logística, y especialmente la regresión logística ordinal, resultan adecuados para el análisis de satisfacción sobre la conducta de repetición, ya que generalmente la información proviene de encuestas donde se emplean escalas de medida ordinal (Eboli y Mazzulla, 2009).

## 2. Revisión teórica

### 2.1. La lealtad a la tienda y la conducta de repetición

La lealtad del cliente puede referirse a un producto, una marca, un fabricante o una tienda. Además, es un constructo multidimensional que se ha definido y medido de diferentes formas en la literatura de marketing (Oliver, 1999). Desde la perspectiva conductual, la lealtad se manifiesta a través del comportamiento de repetición de compra a lo largo del tiempo (Buttle y Burton, 2002), el nivel de gasto realizado (Knox y Denison, 2000) o las recomendaciones a

otros (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996). Desde la óptica afectiva o actitudinal, se refiere a las preferencias y predisposiciones favorables de los clientes hacia el establecimiento (Gremler y Brown, 1996), el compromiso de seguir comprando a lo largo del tiempo (Lovelock y Wirtz, 2007) o la promesa de realizar compras futuras (Berné, 1997). Recogiendo ambos enfoques, la lealtad implica además de la repetición de compra un cierto compromiso o vínculo emocional (Doherty y Nelson, 2008).

En el contexto del comercio minorista, diferentes aportaciones ponen de manifiesto la ambigüedad del término lealtad hacia un establecimiento y destacan la importancia de la conducta de repetición de compra a la hora de definir y medir el concepto. Por ejemplo, Bloemer y de Ruyter (1998: 500) definen la lealtad como una “*respuesta en forma de comportamiento (repetición de visita), expresada a lo largo del tiempo, hacia una tienda entre un conjunto de ellas*”. En el trabajo de Rhee y Bell (2002) realizado en tiendas de alimentación, los autores señalan que los consumidores fieles, aunque visiten varios establecimientos, suelen ser clientes habituales de uno que lo consideran como principal para cubrir sus necesidades de alimentación. Knox y Denison (2000) afirman que los clientes más leales son los que gastan más dinero en la tienda.

Más recientemente, desde el punto de vista práctico también se destaca que la repetición de compra de los clientes es un factor clave para medir la rentabilidad del establecimiento. En esta línea, el estudio de Bellini *et al.* (2011) realizado a gerentes de tiendas revela que la mayoría de ellos sigue utilizando medidas conductuales, como el porcentaje de gasto, frecuencia de visita o gasto medio para conocer la lealtad de sus clientes. Además, la forma de medir la conducta de lealtad es diferente en función de la relación contractual entre el comprador y vendedor (Kumar *et al.*, 2013). En contextos donde existe un contrato formal (p.e. telecomunicaciones o servicios financieros), se puede utilizar la tasa de deserción de clientes para medir la lealtad. Sin embargo, no es posible esta medida en contextos no contractuales como es el caso del comercio minorista, donde la lealtad se puede medir fácilmente a partir de la frecuencia de compra o nivel de gasto en la tienda (Reinartz y Kumar, 2000).

La revisión de la literatura revela que es más sencillo encontrar investigaciones que abordan el estudio de la lealtad desde el punto de vista actitudinal que desde la perspectiva conductual (p.e. Pan y Zinkhan, 2006; Teller y Gittenberger, 2011). Teniendo en cuenta esta diferencia de interés y la importancia que tiene la conducta de repetición de compra para la gestión empresarial del comercio minorista, nos centramos en estudiar la contribución directa que tienen en dicha conducta la satisfacción, el compromiso, el valor percibido y el boca-oreja, así como el efecto moderador que ejerce en estas relaciones el tipo de producto comprado.

## **2.2. La satisfacción con la tienda**

Uno de los antecedentes de la lealtad más importantes y más investigados en la literatura es la satisfacción. Este constructo se ha definido principalmente a partir de dos enfoques: el carácter específico o acumulativo de la transacción (Boulding *et al.*, 1993) y la naturaleza cognitiva y/o afectiva (Oliver, 1997).

Respecto al primer enfoque, la satisfacción con un servicio hace referencia a un conjunto de experiencias acumuladas (Jones y Suh, 2000), por lo que en el ámbito del comercio minorista el consumidor evalúa la capacidad del establecimiento de entregar de manera continuada los beneficios que busca. Así pues, consideramos que la satisfacción en nuestro contexto es la evaluación global que realiza el cliente del conjunto de experiencias de compra en la tienda (Anderson *et al.*, 1994). Respecto al segundo enfoque, la definición clásica de Oliver (1997) utiliza un planteamiento puramente cognitivo al conceptualizar la satisfacción como un juicio sobre el grado de cumplimiento o desempeño de un producto o servicio. Aunque otros autores consideran que la satisfacción es una respuesta más afectiva al tener un gran componente emocional (Lovelock y Wirtz, 1997; Giese y Cote, 2000), la teoría de la desconfirmación de expectativas ha sido la de mayor aceptación en la literatura (Oliver, 1980). Siguiendo otros estudios aplicados en el contexto minorista (p.e. Helgesen *et al.*, 2010), nos suscribimos a este

enfoque en este trabajo y consideramos que el cliente evalúa el grado de cumplimiento de las expectativas que tenía sobre la tienda (Bloemer, 2002).

Numerosas investigaciones recientes confirman el efecto directo que tienen los juicios de satisfacción de los clientes de comercios minoristas en las diferentes dimensiones de la lealtad. En esta línea, la mayoría de las aportaciones ofrece evidencias empíricas sobre la influencia positiva de la satisfacción en las intenciones de repetir la compra y de recomendar la tienda a otros (p.e. Walsh *et al.*, 2008; Binninger, 2008; Vesel y Zabkar, 2009; Helgesen *et al.*, 2010; Nettet *et al.*, 2011; Teller y Gittenberger, 2011; Pappas *et al.*, 2014). Por ejemplo, Teller y Gittenberger (2011) encuentran que la satisfacción con la tienda influye positivamente en la intención de repetición y dicha intención aumenta la conducta de repetición. Sin embargo, son más escasos los trabajos que estudian el efecto directo sobre la lealtad desde el punto de vista puramente conductual, es decir, sobre el comportamiento de repetición de compra. Por ejemplo, Mägi (2003) encuentra un efecto positivo de la satisfacción con la tienda en la conducta de repetición de compra expresada a través de la cuota de gasto y la cuota de visitas. También el trabajo de Cortiñas *et al.* (2010) revela que la satisfacción del cliente aumenta la frecuencia de asistencia al establecimiento. Y Akbar (2013) confirma que la satisfacción aumenta el grado en que el cliente desarrolla una conducta repetitiva. En la línea de estos resultados, planteamos la primera hipótesis de investigación:

*H<sub>1</sub>: La satisfacción del cliente con la tienda está positivamente relacionada con su conducta de repetición.*

La relación entre la satisfacción y la lealtad parece una cuestión obvia, sin embargo, hoy en día todavía es un tema de interés y de debate el análisis de la eficacia de la satisfacción para predecir la lealtad del cliente (Kumar *et al.*, 2013). En esta línea, una de las principales debilidades del vínculo satisfacción-lealtad es la asunción de que la lealtad se expresa y se mide en términos de intenciones de recompra en vez de conducta de recompra (Williams *et al.*, 2011). Diversos trabajos han puesto de manifiesto la limitada influencia que tiene la satisfacción en la conducta e intenciones de repetición de compra (p.e. Szymanski y Henard, 2001; Verhoef, 2003). Un alto grado de satisfacción no siempre conduce a la lealtad (Mittal y Lassar, 1998), por lo que son importantes otras variables que explican mejor estas respuestas (p.e. Agustín y Singh, 2005), como las que se explican a continuación.

### **2.3. El compromiso con la tienda**

Entre las variables que mejoran la estimación de las respuestas de lealtad, el compromiso ha sido un elemento de gran interés en el ámbito del comercio minorista (p.e. Walz *et al.*, 2012). En general las definiciones de compromiso coinciden en señalar que se trata de un deseo continuado del cliente de seguir con la relación con la tienda y una voluntad de realizar esfuerzo para mantener esa relación (Morgan y Hunt, 1994). Se considera que este compromiso es un proceso necesario para que el consumidor se convierta en un cliente fiel, es decir, es una forma de proteger al establecimiento de la pérdida de clientes. Bajo este mismo planteamiento, Oliver (1997) entiende que la lealtad es un profundo compromiso de volver a comprar que causa una conducta de compra repetitiva a pesar de la influencia de los esfuerzos comerciales de la competencia. También Bloemer y de Ruyter (1998) señalan que la lealtad expresada a través de una conducta de repetición depende de un proceso psicológico de evaluación que se deriva del compromiso. Este compromiso se convierte en un factor motivador de las conductas de lealtad (Dean, 2007).

En la literatura el compromiso se puede entender desde diferentes perspectivas: afectiva, de continuidad y normativa (Bansal *et al.*, 2004). El compromiso de tipo afectivo se refiere al sentido de pertenencia e implicación del consumidor con el proveedor del servicio desde el punto de vista emocional. El compromiso de continuidad es la obligación que siente el consumidor de continuar con la relación con el proveedor como consecuencias de los costes sociales o económicos y de la escasez de alternativas. Y el compromiso normativo procede de la obligación contractual que tiene el cliente con el proveedor. Generalmente es aceptado que el



compromiso de carácter afectivo es el que mayor efecto tiene sobre la lealtad (Dimitriades, 2006), y este es el enfoque que asumimos en este trabajo.

A nivel empírico, se pueden encontrar evidencias del efecto positivo que tiene el compromiso sobre las intenciones de repetición (p.e. Wang *et al.*, 2006) y sobre la lealtad actitudinal (p.e. Cerri, 2012). Sin embargo, son menos las que se refieren al efecto sobre la conducta de repetición. Por ejemplo, los resultados de Carpenter (2008) indican que el compromiso que refleja la lealtad actitudinal aumenta el porcentaje de compras que realiza el cliente en relación con la compra en otras tiendas. Walz *et al.* (2012) revelan que el compromiso tiene un efecto positivo y directo sobre la conducta de repetición exclusiva hacia el establecimiento. Por tanto, consideramos que el compromiso que sienta el cliente con la tienda va a favorecer su conducta de repetición de compra, formulando así la segunda hipótesis:

*H<sub>2</sub>: El compromiso del cliente con la tienda está positivamente relacionado con su conducta de repetición.*

#### **2.4. El valor percibido del cliente**

El valor percibido también aporta fundamentos sólidos para explicar la lealtad (Holbrook, 1999). Siguiendo la definición de Zeithaml (1988), es aceptado que el valor es una evaluación global que realiza el consumidor en un intercambio sobre la relación entre lo conseguido (resultados y beneficios deseados) y lo invertido (dinero, tiempo y esfuerzo). En la literatura se han destacado diferentes dimensiones del constructo. Por ejemplo, Sweeney y Soutar (2001) desarrollan una escala de medición del valor percibido denominada PERVAL formada por dos dimensiones: la utilidad derivada de la percepción del cliente sobre la capacidad que tiene el producto de reducir los costes a corto y largo plazo o el tiempo y esfuerzo, y la utilidad derivada de la calidad percibida y el rendimiento esperado del producto. Según Gallarza *et al.* (2011), el valor contiene dos dimensiones: la económica que está unida a la percepción del precio y es conocida como el valor transaccional, y la psicológica que incluye los elementos emocionales o cognitivos que afectan a la decisión de compra. También se ha diferenciado entre el valor utilitario y hedónico (Babin *et al.*, 1994) e incluso se ha estudiado el valor desde la perspectiva experiencial (Holbrook y Hirschman 1982). Tradicionalmente, el valor económico se ha considerado como el principal componente del valor percibido del consumidor (Sullivan *et al.*, 2012), por lo que retenemos esta dimensión en nuestro trabajo para analizar su efecto sobre el comportamiento de repetición.

En la clásica cadena de relaciones “calidad-valor-lealtad” (Parasuraman y Grewal, 2000) ya se pone de manifiesto la influencia que ejerce el valor percibido sobre la lealtad. Así pues, el valor ayuda a comprender diferentes facetas del comportamiento del consumidor anteriores y posteriores a la compra, entre las que se encuentra el comportamiento de repetición (Nison, 1992). En el contexto minorista, existen evidencias empíricas del efecto positivo que tiene el valor percibido en las intenciones de recompra (Cronin *et al.*, 2000; Grace y O’Cass, 2005; Chaudhuri y Ligas, 2009; Cho y Rutherford, 2011; Reynolds *et al.*, 2012; Nezakati *et al.*, 2014) y son más limitados los trabajos que confirman la influencia del valor sobre el comportamiento de repetición. En esta línea, Carpenter (2008) confirma que el valor influye en el porcentaje de compras del cliente, aunque a través de la satisfacción. Considerando estas aportaciones, entendemos que el valor percibido del consumidor va a tener un efecto positivo y directo en la conducta de repetición de compra, por lo que formulamos la siguiente hipótesis:

*H<sub>3</sub>: El valor que percibe el cliente de la tienda está positivamente relacionado con su conducta de repetición.*

#### **2.5. La conducta de boca-oreja**

Los comentarios boca-oreja son una de las dimensiones más relevantes y reconocidas de la literatura sobre lealtad (Carl, 2006). Aunque su estudio tiene su origen en la década de los 60, en los últimos años la investigación académica ha crecido notablemente (WOMMA). Diversas cuestiones sobre la naturaleza de esta conducta son destacables. En primer lugar, las definiciones coinciden en señalar que se trata de una comunicación entre consumidores acerca

de un producto, servicio o empresa y que el emisor de la información es un individuo independiente (Harrison-Walker, 2001; Litvin *et al.*, 2008). Por tanto, el boca-oreja excluye la comunicación formal de los clientes a las empresas (en forma de quejas o sugerencias) y de las empresas a los clientes (mediante las acciones de promoción) (Mazzarol *et al.*, 2007). Además, al ser una conducta, directa, personal y ajena a la empresa, el mensaje es más real y creíble, por lo que su efecto en las decisiones de compra de otros consumidores es mucho mayor al de publicidad o promoción (Sen, 2008). En segundo lugar, el boca-oreja es tanto un antecedente como una consecuencia de la evaluación que realizan los consumidores de una experiencia de compra (Godes y Mayzlin, 2004): en la etapa precompra los individuos pueden buscar información a través del boca-oreja de otros para reducir el riesgo y en la postcompra desarrollan esta conducta para ayudar, vengarse, desahogarse o reducir la disonancia cognitiva (Halstead, 2002).

Partiendo de estas cuestiones conceptuales compartidas, algunos trabajos sugieren que no siempre esta conducta es un componente de la lealtad (Sweeney *et al.*, 2012). En este sentido, en ocasiones no existe consenso sobre si el boca-oreja es una recomendación activa que realiza el consumidor (Gremler y Brown, 1999), si son comentarios extremadamente positivos o negativos relativos a experiencias vividas, originales y memorables (Anderson, 1998) o si es una combinación de ambos elementos (Maxham y Netemeyer, 2002). Teniendo en cuenta el concepto de lealtad (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996), sólo el boca-oreja en forma de recomendación o de intención de recomendar se podría considerar como una dimensión de la lealtad. Siguiendo el enfoque conductual que estamos adoptando en este trabajo, abordamos el estudio de la conducta de boca-oreja y consideramos que contiene dos dimensiones: la acción y el contenido (Gelbrich, 2011). La acción se refiere al grado en que los consumidores hablan positivamente de un producto o empresa y/o lo recomiendan y el contenido representa el grado en que el consumidor habla de las ventajas.

Empíricamente, la conducta de boca-oreja ha sido analizada por lo general como un componente de la lealtad considerando que es una consecuencia de la satisfacción y otros constructos afines (p.e. Nasset *et al.*, 2011). Sin embargo, nuestra intención se centra en el efecto del boca-oreja sobre la conducta de repetición. Esta relación ha sido escasamente investigada en el contexto del comercio minorista y las evidencias empíricas encontradas se centran en las intenciones de repetición. Así, Sivadas y Baker-Prewitt (2000) revelan que las recomendaciones que los clientes hacen de una tienda están relacionadas con el hecho de volver a visitarla. Los resultados de Gauri *et al.* (2008) indican que el boca-oreja positivo tiene más influencia en las intenciones de repetición de compras en tiendas online. En el trabajo de Cho y Rutherford (2011) se confirma que las recomendaciones sobre el establecimiento y su personal aumentan la intención de repetir la compra. Y Hutter y Hoffmann (2014) también encuentran que la intención de boca-oreja de los consumidores influye positivamente en la intención de compra en la tienda. De acuerdo con estos resultados, suponemos que cuantas más recomendaciones haga el cliente mayor será el grado de repetición de compra ya que los individuos tienden a desarrollar conductas coherentes con lo que han contado a otros, estableciendo así la siguiente hipótesis:

*H<sub>4</sub>: El boca-oreja que realiza el cliente sobre la tienda está positivamente relacionado con su conducta de repetición.*

## **2.6. Efecto moderador del tipo de producto en la conducta de repetición**

Aunque el efecto de la satisfacción sobre la lealtad parece obvia, esta relación depende en gran parte del tipo de sector, del tipo de clientes estudiado, de la naturaleza de las variables dependientes e independientes empleadas y de las variables mediadoras y/o moderadoras que se consideren (Kumar *et al.*, 2013).

Partiendo de esta variabilidad y centrándonos en la dimensión de la repetición de compra de la lealtad, en la literatura se han considerado diversas variables que pueden ejercer un efecto moderador, desde las relacionadas con el contexto de compra (p.e. tipo de producto, tienda, grado de competencia, etc.) (Pan y Zinkhan, 2006; Seiders *et al.*, 2005), las relativas a consumidor (p.e. perfil sociodemográfico, nivel de implicación, tiempo de relación, etc.)

(Homburg y Giering, 2001; Mittal y Kamakura, 2001; Seiders *et al.*, 2005) hasta variables metodológicas (p.e. tipo de muestra, escalas, técnicas, etc.) (Pan y Zinkhan, 2006).

En general, estos trabajos estudian el efecto moderador de las variables sobre las intenciones de repetición de compra y no sobre la conducta. Además, algunas variables pueden moderar la relación entre la satisfacción y la conducta de repetición pero no moderar la relación entre la satisfacción y la intención de repetición (Seiders *et al.*, 2005). Matizando esta diferencia, la revisión de la literatura muestra que son escasos los trabajos que abordan el efecto moderador de variables relacionadas con el contexto de compra en la relación entre la satisfacción y la conducta de repetición (Kumar *et al.*, 2013). Dentro de este tipo de variables, el tipo de producto según la frecuencia de compra puede tener un efecto moderador relevante en la conducta de repetición. Sin embargo, la investigación sobre esta variable es bastante limitada, algunas evidencias empíricas son contradictorias y la mayoría hacen referencia a las intenciones de repetición y no a la conducta.

Por ejemplo, según Chandon *et al.* (2005), las intenciones de repetición de bienes de conveniencia son diferentes a las de bienes duraderos. La investigación de Pan y Zinkhan (2006), aunque no analiza el efecto directo de la satisfacción, revela que aspectos como la calidad de servicio y la calidad del producto influyen más en las intenciones de repetición de bienes de especialidad que en las de bienes de conveniencia, ya que en éstos últimos es más probable que se compre por inercia y se ignoren estos aspectos. En esta línea, Kaltcheva y Weitz (2006) concluyen que el efecto de los sentimientos sobre las conductas es mayor en compras de carácter hedónico que en compras de tipo utilitario. Por el contrario, Seiders *et al.* (2005) demuestran que en los productos de compra cómoda que requieren poco tiempo y esfuerzo, la satisfacción influye más en la conducta de repetición.

De acuerdo con estos resultados, consideramos que los determinantes propuestos van a influir de forma diferente en la conducta de repetición en función de la frecuencia de compra del producto. Concretamente, suponemos que en productos de compra frecuente, donde el consumidor actúa más por inercia o por hábito, el efecto de los determinantes en la repetición va a ser menor que en productos de compra esporádica, ya que en este último caso el consumidor realiza cierta evaluación de su experiencia en la tienda, tiene en cuenta su relación con el establecimiento y considera variables de carácter más hedónico. A partir de esta reflexión, formulamos la última hipótesis de la investigación:

*H<sub>5</sub>: El efecto de la satisfacción (H<sub>5a</sub>), el compromiso (H<sub>5b</sub>), el valor percibido (H<sub>5c</sub>) y el boca-oreja (H<sub>5d</sub>) sobre la conducta de repetición es menor en productos de compra frecuente que en productos de compra esporádica.*

### **3. Metodología**

#### ***3.1. Diseño del cuestionario y trabajo de campo***

Se ha desarrollado una investigación de carácter cuantitativo en el contexto de experiencias de compras realizadas en comercios minoristas de alimentación, textil, hogar y productos de electrónica. La distribución de entrevistas se realizó a partir de la selección de una serie de enseñas representativas de distintos formatos de tiendas ubicadas en una ciudad española y su área metropolitana.

El cuestionario definitivo resultante después de realizar la prueba piloto está compuesto por un conjunto de escalas cuidadosamente seleccionadas de la literatura más reciente y adaptadas a nuestro contexto (véase Tabla 1). La escala de conducta de repetición de compra se adaptó de la escala de lealtad conductual de los trabajos de Willems y Swinnen (2011) y Demoulin y Zidda (2009) basados en Osman (1993), seleccionando el ítem relativo a la frecuencia de visita a la tienda (utilizando una medida ordinal desde 1-casi nunca hasta 7-casi siempre). En el resto de escalas se emplearon medidas de tipo Likert también de 7 puntuaciones. La escala de satisfacción, de carácter cognitivo, se midió a partir de la escala empleada en el trabajo de Nettet *et al.* (2011) basada en el trabajo de Fornell (1992). El compromiso se midió con la

escala utilizada por Willems y Swinnen (2011) que fue elaborada a partir de las investigaciones de Morgan y Hunt (1994) y Bloemer y De Ruyter (1998). La medición del valor percibido se adaptó de la escala de Sweeney y Soutar (2001). Por último, la conducta de boca-oreja se ha medido siguiendo el enfoque de Gelbrich (2011) que diferencia la dimensión acción y la dimensión contenido.

TABLA 1  
Escalas de medida

<b>Conducta de repetición</b> Adaptada de Willems y Swinnen (2011) y Demoulin y Zidda (2009)	– ¿Con qué frecuencia visita esta tienda?	
<b>Satisfacción</b> Adaptada de Nettet <i>et al.</i> (2011)	– En general, ¿cuál es su nivel de satisfacción con esta tienda? – Considerando lo que espera de tiendas de este tipo, valore su satisfacción con esta tienda	
<b>Compromiso</b> Adaptada de Willems y Swinnen (2011)	– Me siento comprometido con esta tienda – Tengo una relación cercana con esta tienda	
<b>Valor percibido</b> Adaptada de Sweeney y Soutar (2001)	– En esta tienda los productos tienen un precio razonable – En esta tienda los productos ofrecen valor por dinero – En esta tienda los productos son buenos por el precio que valen	
<b>Boca-oreja</b> Adaptada de Gelbrich (2011)	Acción	– Recomiendo esta tienda a mis amigos o familiares – Si mis amigos o familiares me piden consejo, les digo que vayan a esta tienda – Animo a mis amigos o familiares a que compren productos en esta tienda
	Contenido	– Cuento a otras personas las ventajas que tiene esta tienda – Cuento a otras personas que esta tienda es mejor que otras – Cuento que en esta tienda me tratan mejor que en otras tiendas

Se utilizaron encuestas *ad-hoc* personales interceptando a los compradores a la salida de los establecimientos, de lunes a sábado y en horarios de mañana y tarde. Se utilizó un muestreo dirigido y se consiguió recoger un total de 820 cuestionarios válidos (36.5% procedentes de establecimientos de alimentación, 22% de textil, 22% de electrónica, y 19.5% de hogar). Las principales características sociodemográficas de la muestra son: el 62.8% son mujeres, con edad media de 40.6 años ( $\pm$  14.8 años), el 54.1% afirman estar trabajando, mientras que el 48.7% tiene, al menos, formación universitaria.

### 3.2. Análisis de la fiabilidad y validez de las escalas de medida

Se analizó la fiabilidad y validez de las escalas de medida correspondientes a los constructos satisfacción, compromiso, valor percibido y boca-oreja mediante la estimación de un modelo de medida de primer orden utilizando máxima verosimilitud robusta ( $\chi^2_{\text{Sat-Ben}}=246.91$  (g.l=59) (p-valor=0.000); RMSEA=0.068; CFI=0.976; GFI=0.948; AGFI=0.911). Las escalas alcanzaron niveles satisfactorios de fiabilidad ( $\alpha$  de Cronbach superiores a 0.7) y consistencia interna (fiabilidad compuesta superior a 0.7 y varianza extraída superior a 0.5) (Tabla 2).

TABLA 2  
Estadísticos descriptivos, índices de fiabilidad y correlaciones de las escalas de medida

	Media	D.T.	$\alpha$	$\rho$	AVE	1	2	3	4
1. Satisfacción	5.31	1.27	0.927	0.926	0.863	0.929 <sup>1</sup>			
2. Compromiso	2.58	1.79	0.962	0.962	0.927	0.452	0.963		
3. Valor percibido	5.11	1.20	0.918	0.901	0.752	0.555	0.374	0.867	
4. Boca-oreja	4.18	1.54	0.952	0.949	0.759	0.637	0.570	0.477	0.871

<sup>1</sup> Los elementos de la diagonal principal representan la raíz cuadrada del AVE

Además, las escalas de medida están dotadas de validez: (1) convergente al corroborar que todas las cargas factoriales resultaron significativas al 99% (t-estadístico>2.58) (Steenkamp y Van Trijp, 1991); y (2) discriminante, ya que la correlación lineal entre cada par de escalas es inferior a la raíz cuadrada del AVE de las escalas implicadas (véase Tabla 2). Profundizando en

esta validez, la prueba de diferencias de  $\chi^2=82.09$  (g.l.=6) es significativa al 99% (p-valor=0.000) (Anderson y Gerbing, 1988).

Como todos los indicadores resultaron satisfactorios optamos por usar las puntuaciones factoriales de los constructos analizados como variables independientes para explicar la conducta de repetición en el comercio minorista.

### 3.3. Regresión Logística Ordinal

El primer objetivo del trabajo es analizar la influencia de una serie de variables específicas sobre la conducta de repetición. Esta variable dependiente Y, entendida como “¿Con qué frecuencia visita esta tienda?” se ha medido mediante una escala ordinal desde 1: “casi nunca” hasta 7: “casi siempre”. Al no tratarse de una variable continua no es posible aplicar la estimación de un modelo de regresión por mínimos cuadrados ordinarios. Además, las categorías de la variable admiten ordenación, por lo que es recomendable aplicar un modelo de regresión logística ordinal frente a otros análisis que tratan la variable dependiente como nominal (McCullagh, 1980).

Mediante un modelo de regresión logística ordinal pretendemos estimar los efectos de la satisfacción, el compromiso, el valor percibido y el boca-oreja – variables independientes medidas como las puntuaciones factoriales resultantes de la estimación del modelo de medida – sobre la conducta de repetición. Específicamente para nuestro estudio, el modelo logístico ordinal, utilizando como función de enlace la función<sup>2</sup> Logit, estimará el efecto de las variables independientes sobre el logaritmo de la probabilidad de que la variable dependiente Y asume valores bajos frente a valores altos (Cainarca y Sgobbi, 2005). La relación entre el logaritmo de la razón de la probabilidad con las cuatro variables independientes queda especificada como sigue:

$$\ln\left(\frac{\text{Pr ob}(Y \leq j|X)}{\text{Pr ob}(Y > j|X)}\right) = \alpha_j - \sum_{i=1}^4 \beta_i X_i ; \text{ para } j=1,\dots,6 \quad (1)$$

donde  $\alpha_j$  es el intercepto o valor umbral de la ecuación de la razón u odds de probabilidad para la categoría  $j$  de la variable conducta de repetición que indica que la variable Y toma valores bajos frente a valores altos cuando se anulan todas las variables independientes. La última categoría (conducta de repetición = “casi siempre”) no se asocia a ningún odds, ya que el cociente expresado en la parte izquierda de la expresión (1) es igual a 1 al tratarse de la probabilidad acumulada hasta la mayor categoría. Por ello, el modelo expresado en (1) se denomina como modelo logit acumulado, ya que trata de predecir el logaritmo de las probabilidad acumuladas de la variable dependiente en función de las variables independientes (Homer y Lemeshow, 2000).  $\beta_i$  son los coeficientes que representan los cambios que se producen en el logaritmo de la razón de probabilidad por incremento unitario de la variable independiente  $X_i$ . Por tanto, valores positivos de  $\beta_i$  se corresponden con probabilidad más altas de que la variable dependiente Y asuma valores altos, y viceversa. También señalar que en este tipo de modelización se asume que los coeficientes  $\beta_i$  de la ecuación (1) asociados a las variables explicativas son independientes de las categorías de la variable dependiente, por lo que sólo existe una estimación por variable explicativa. Es decir, la relación entre la satisfacción, el compromiso, el valor percibido y el boca-oreja con la conducta de repetición es independiente de las siete categorías de esta variable ordinal, entendiéndose que los cambios que se producen en las variables explicativas provocan la misma variación en la razón de probabilidad acumulada de todas las categorías (McCullagh, 1980).

Por otra parte, para valorar si el tipo de producto comprado modera los efectos anteriores de la satisfacción, el compromiso, el valor percibido y el boca-oreja sobre el logaritmo del odds de probabilidad de la conducta de repetición ( $H_5$ ), seguimos la metodología diseñada por Cohen *et*

<sup>2</sup> McCullagh (1980) argumenta la idoneidad de esta función enlace para relacionar las variables explicativas con la razón de probabilidad cuando la distribución de la variable dependiente es uniforme a lo largo de sus siete categorías como en nuestro caso (1: 12.3%; 2: 19.3%; 3: 19.3%; 4: 12.8%; 5: 17.9%; 6: 10.1; 7: 8.5%).

al. (2003). Planteamos la estimación de la expresión (1) añadiendo la variable dicotómica sector (1: alimentación; 2: no alimentación)<sup>3</sup>, que denominados modelo 2, y el efecto de interacción del sector en la relación de las cuatro variables independientes sobre la conducta de repetición.

#### 4. Resultados

En este apartado presentamos las estimaciones de los diferentes modelos de regresión logística ordinal planteadas en el anterior epígrafe. La Tabla 3 muestra las estimaciones de los coeficientes así como los índices de ajuste para cada uno de los modelos<sup>4</sup>.

TABLA 3  
Estimaciones regresión logística ordinal e índices de ajuste

	Modelo 1 Efectos directos		Modelo 2 Efecto moderador			
	$\alpha_j$	Estándar error	$\alpha_j$	Estándar error	$\alpha_j$	Estándar error
Y =1	-2.238***	0.115	-2.012***	0.121	-1.997***	0.122
Y =2	-0.917***	0.082	-0.670***	0.093	-0.658***	0.093
Y =3	0.004	0.075	0.270**	0.091	0.280***	0.091
Y =4	0.635***	0.079	0.911***	0.096	0.925***	0.096
Y =5	1.702***	0.099	2.005***	0.116	2.037***	0.118
Y =6	2.684***	0.135	3.015***	0.151	3.072***	0.156
	$\beta$	Estándar error	$\beta$	Estándar error	$\beta$	Estándar error
Satisfacción	0.025	0.084	0.095	0.085	0.247**	0.111
Compromiso	0.400***	0.077	0.389***	0.077	0.330***	0.098
Valor percibido	0.289***	0.079	0.208***	0.080	0.120	0.094
Boca-oreja	0.425***	0.088	0.467***	0.089	0.352	0.110
Sector A			0.717***	0.135	0.702***	0.137
Sector NA (base)			0	---	0	---
Satisfacción*SA					-0.409**	0.175
Satisfacción*SNA (base)					0	---
Compromiso*SA					0.156	0.157
Compromiso*SNA (base)					0	---
Valor percibido*SA					0.297	0.181
Valor percibido*SNA (base)					0	---
Boca-oreja*SA					0.304*	0.184
Boca-oreja*SNA (base)					0	---
	Índices de ajuste					
-2LogLikelihood ( $\beta=0$ )	3002.60		3010.33		3008.95	
-2LogLikelihood Final	2824.89		2802.90		2791.82	
Chi <sup>2</sup> (df) Ratio Loglikelihood	177.70 (4)***		206.05 (5)***		217.13 (9)***	
Chi <sup>2</sup> (df) Pearson	4691.22 (4628)		4748.99 (4657)		4731.97 (4653)	
R <sup>2</sup> Nagelkerke	0.205		0.233		0.244	
Test de líneas paralelas Chi <sup>2</sup> (df)	4.46 (20)		23.41 (20)		32.78 (45)	
Y=conducta de repetición; SA: Sector Alimentación; SNA: Sector No Alimentación; *: significativo al 90% **; significativo al 95%; ***: significativo al 99%						

Si atendemos a las estimaciones del modelo 1, los resultados indican que existe un efecto significativo y positivo del compromiso, el valor percibido y el boca-oreja sobre el logaritmo del odds de probabilidad de la conducta de repetición. Esto es, los coeficientes estimados positivos indican que, por incremento unitario de cada una de estas variables, permaneciendo el resto constante, aumenta la probabilidad acumulada de la razón de probabilidad, o dicho en otras palabras, aumenta la probabilidad de que la conducta de repetición tome valores mayores. Estos resultados nos permiten contrastar de manera afirmativa las hipótesis H<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>3</sub> y H<sub>4</sub>. Sin embargo, la satisfacción no ejerce un efecto significativo sobre la conducta de repetición, por lo que no podemos confirmar el cumplimiento de la hipótesis H<sub>1</sub>. Respecto al ajuste del modelo 1, los índices permiten concluir que es adecuado ya que el contraste global, basado en el

<sup>3</sup> Consideramos que el sector de alimentación agrupa comercios minoristas que comercializan productos de compra frecuente y el sector de no alimentación incluye el resto de establecimientos de la muestra (textil, hogar y productos de electrónica) en los que se venden productos de compra más esporádica.

<sup>4</sup> Antes de estimar los modelos se comprobó que existía correlación no paramétrica entre las variables independientes con la conducta de repetición.

estadístico ratio de  $\chi^2$ , conduce a rechazar la hipótesis nula sobre la falta de influencia conjunta de las variables independientes. También la aceptación de la hipótesis nula soportada por el estadístico  $\chi^2$  de Pearson indica que el modelo ajusta correctamente. Por último, señalar que podemos asumir que sólo existe un coeficiente asociado a cada variable explicativa independientemente de la categoría de la variable conducta de repetición, ya que se acepta la hipótesis nula del test de líneas paralelas ( $\chi^2$  (gl=20)=4.46; p-valor=0.841).

Tras valorar el efecto directo de las variables explicativas, se estimó el modelo 2 para analizar el efecto moderador del sector. En primer lugar, los resultados indican que al introducir la variable dicotómica sector, sigue existiendo un efecto significativo del compromiso, el valor percibido y el boca-oreja sobre la variable dependiente. Además, el sector alimentación incide de manera significativa sobre el logaritmo del odds ratio de la conducta de repetición (0.717\*\*\*), es decir, los clientes que hayan comprado en un establecimiento de alimentación presentarán niveles más altos de conducta de repetición que aquéllos que lo hayan hecho en otro tipo de establecimientos.

Al introducir el efecto de interacción del sector varían en gran medida los resultados. Esto es, el efecto directo de la satisfacción y del compromiso sobre el ratio de la probabilidad de la conducta de repetición es significativo, mientras que las relaciones entre valor percibido y boca-oreja con el odds de probabilidad no son significativas. En relación al efecto de interacción del sector, indicar que esta variable modera de manera significativa la relación entre la satisfacción y la razón de probabilidad de conducta de repetición (-0.409\*\*). El coeficiente negativo indica que entre los clientes que han acudido a un centro de alimentación, al aumentar su nivel de satisfacción disminuye la probabilidad de obtener niveles altos de conducta de repetición. Por tanto, en productos de compra frecuente, a mayor satisfacción es menos probable que la repetición sea mayor, lo que nos permite contrastar de manera afirmativa la hipótesis  $H_{5a}$ . Por otra parte, también existe un efecto moderador significativo al 90% entre el boca-oreja y la conducta de repetición (0.304\*). En esta situación, entre los clientes que han realizado sus compras en el sector de la alimentación, al aumentar el boca-oreja aumenta la probabilidad de alcanzar niveles altos de conducta de repetición. No podemos contrastar que exista efecto moderador del sector en la relación entre el compromiso y el valor percibido sobre la conducta de repetición.

Por último, indicar que los índices de ajuste son adecuados siguiendo las explicaciones realizadas para el modelo 1 y los valores presentes en la Tabla 3, y que de nuevo se asume la igualdad de coeficientes asociados a las variables independientes según el test de líneas paralelas.

## 5. Conclusiones

La literatura sobre la lealtad en el comercio minorista ha prestado mayor atención al componente actitudinal y la mayoría de las evidencias empíricas se basan en medidas relacionadas con las intenciones, preferencias, promesas o probabilidades de desarrollar un conducta (p.e. Lovelock y Wirtz, 2007). En este trabajo hemos abordado el estudio de la lealtad desde la perspectiva conductual centrándonos en la conducta de repetición de compra para comprobar si las relaciones se encuentran en la misma línea. Para ello analizamos, por una parte, la contribución que tiene la satisfacción, el compromiso, el valor percibido y el boca-oreja en la conducta de repetición y, por otra parte, el papel moderador que ejerce en estos efectos el tipo de producto comprado según su frecuencia de compra.

En primer lugar, los resultados muestran que la satisfacción no ejerce un efecto significativo sobre la repetición de compra. Ante esta ausencia de relación entre la satisfacción y la conducta de repetición nos sumamos al debate sobre el complejo vínculo satisfacción-lealtad (Kumar *et al.*, 2013). La mayoría de investigaciones en el contexto minorista confirman el efecto de la satisfacción sobre las intenciones de volver a comprar y/o de recomendar (p.e. Nettet *et al.*, 2011), sin embargo, nuestros resultados indican que esta influencia no se cumple en el caso de la conducta de repetición. Así como la satisfacción es un claro antecedente de la intención, no parece existir la misma relación con la conducta real. En este sentido, diferentes autores han

afirmado que la satisfacción es una vía pobre para predecir la retención efectiva del clientes (p.e. Martínez-Ribes *et al.*, 1999; Verhoef, 2003; Seiders *et al.*, 2005).

En segundo lugar, el grado de compromiso, el valor percibido y la conducta de boca-oreja sí que influyen de forma positiva en la conducta de repetición de compra. Resultados en la misma línea se han encontrado en investigaciones previas que han estudiado también estas relaciones. Cuando los clientes se sienten más comprometidos con la tienda porque tienen cierto vínculo afectivo (p.e. Carpenter, 2008; Walz *et al.*, 2012), perciben mayor valor en relación al precio pagado (p.e. Carpenter, 2008; Nezakati *et al.*, 2014) y realizan más comentarios boca-oreja hablando positivamente de la tienda (p.e. Hutter y Hoffmann, 2014), van a visitar con más frecuencia el establecimiento.

Por último, el tipo de producto se ha revelado como una variable que modera únicamente la relación entre la satisfacción y la conducta de repetición. Concretamente, según los resultados, en productos de compra frecuente la satisfacción influye negativamente en la conducta de repetición. Existen evidencias anteriores del menor efecto que tiene la satisfacción en la repetición de compra de productos de conveniencia (p.e. Pan y Zinkhan, 2006; Kaltcheva y Weitz, 2006) y nuestros resultados confirman esta menor influencia, pues a mayor satisfacción es más probable que la conducta de repetición sea baja. Una posible explicación de este hallazgo es que al tratarse de compras basadas en el hábito donde tienen poca importancia los factores emocionales y hedónicos, la repetición de compras en la tienda no viene condicionada por la satisfacción sino por factores más relacionados con la comodidad, la cercanía o los precios.

Desde el punto de vista empresarial estudiar la conducta de repetición es una cuestión fundamental para identificar a los clientes que efectúan más compras y centrar en ellos los esfuerzos de marketing de forma diferente respecto a los clientes que manifiesten otras conductas de lealtad. En este sentido, las acciones deberían estar encaminadas a aumentar el compromiso afectivo (p.e. mayor personalización del servicio o mejor atención de los empleados) y la percepción de valor (p.e. ofrecer incentivos económicos y mejorar la relación calidad-precio). Del mismo modo, crear experiencias satisfactorias e inesperadas para el cliente (p.e. tratamiento adecuado de las quejas o actividades de animación en el punto de venta) estimularía la conducta de boca-oreja favoreciendo así no sólo la captación de nuevos clientes sino también una mayor frecuencia de visitas. Respecto a la diferente conducta de repetición según la frecuencia de compra, los establecimientos deben diseñar sus estrategias teniendo en consideración los criterios que utilizan los clientes para seleccionar la tienda en función del tipo de producto, ya sean criterios más emocionales o más utilitarios.

Por último, para avanzar en esta línea de investigación, proponemos aplicar el mismo análisis midiendo la conducta de repetición con una escala de intervalos de porcentaje de compras (p.e. Willems y Swinnen, 2011) con el fin de analizar el comportamiento real de compras y observar si existen diferencias respecto a la medida basada en la frecuencia de compra. También sería interesante estudiar el efecto moderador de otras variables relacionadas con el contexto de compra como el formato de tienda (autoservicio *versus* atención personalizada o cadenas de tiendas *versus* tiendas independientes).

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# EXAMINING AN ECONOMIC VALUE-BASED MODEL AND UNOBSERVED HETEROGENEITY FOR UNIVERSITY SERVICES

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## ABSTRACT

*The adoption of a market orientation in innovative service organizations implies that strategies must be designed according to the needs of the different targets. Focusing on the higher education context, this study aims to examine the existence of unobserved heterogeneity in the graduate market through a model of perceived economic value as segmentation tool. Through a PLS-SEM approach, future analyses will try to validate this model, and to identify and profile graduates segments that are different in terms of the intensity and significance of the relationships between perceived economic value, satisfaction, perceived image and identification with the institution. We expect that these potential findings suggest adapted actions to develop or improve long-term relationships with graduates.*

## Keywords:

Perceived economic value, identification, image, heterogeneity, higher education

## 1. Introduction

Given that higher education institutions are competing aggressively for potential students by differentiating their service offerings constantly, a key aim for marketers in this sector is determining how the service they provide is perceived, consumed or enacted (Durvasula et al., 2011). The measurement of people's perceptions of university services remains a major challenge because of the abstract qualities of the service concept in education. In this regard, a critical issue in the evaluation of a university's services is the analysis of perceived value. The importance of this topic is threefold. First, the analysis and assessment of perceived value allow service providers to actively contribute to people's experiences and value creation (Grönroos and Ravald, 2011), which are core factors for institutions to create or maintain a competitive advantage based on organizational distinctiveness (Payne et al., 2008). Second, this analysis also helps to explain the relationship between universities and their main targets (Alves, 2011; Woodall et al., 2012). Third, while students share similar socio-demographic factors (e.g., gender, age, grade point average), not all students with similar characteristics have the same expectations and perceptions (e.g., Angulo et al., 2010); therefore, the analysis of perceptual variables, such as perceived value, is important to identify distinct groups of students, which would allow educational institutions to design differentiated strategies and actions.

A principal dimension for value creation and for building relationships in the service domain is the perceived economic value, which is defined in terms of efficiency and excellence (Holbrook, 1999). Higher education institutions constantly aim for greater efficiency and improved excellence; that is, they try to be competitive in the market by enhancing the perceived economic value of their service offerings. Despite the importance of this type of value for universities, only a small number of studies have analyzed economic aspects of perceived value in the educational context (e.g., Brown and Mazzarol, 2009), which clearly limits the understanding of this phenomenon and the extent to which it may help explain other related factors. This study examines the economic dimension of perceived value in the higher education domain through a model that also comprises satisfaction, perceived image and organizational identification as outcome variables. These outcomes are usually paired with a strategic differentiation in the educational context (e.g., Mael and Ashforth, 1992), and they serve as indicators of a successful marketing strategy. Therefore, the first objective of the current work is to analyze whether perceived economic value determines satisfaction and how this effect accounts for perceived differentiation evaluated in terms of perceived image and organizational identification, using a sample of graduates.

As discussed above, in practice, we cannot assume that people's evaluations and judgments are similar and, consequently, that individuals exhibit similar perceptions of specific phenomena. In the case of higher education, it seems reasonable to believe that the perception of economic value and its impact on other perceptual variables may vary from one group of individuals to another. The evaluation of this potential heterogeneity is thus crucial for universities to compete in the marketplace because it could allow them to adopt effective segmentation and positioning strategies to enhance institutional distinctiveness. Thus, the second objective of this study is to investigate the existence of unobserved heterogeneity within the analyzed sample using the proposed perceived economic value-based model.

## 2. Background

Consistent with their role of creating economically valuable, skilled human resources, higher education institutions are engaged in providing superior services that encourage an ongoing relationship with students. Accordingly, such concepts as the perceived value of services, satisfaction, perceived institutional image or organizational identification are central factors in understanding the overall perception and evaluative judgment of students and graduates of these institutions.

Perceived value has emerged as a crucial tool for the analysis of consumer behavior (Holbrook 1999; Zeithaml 1988). Students and graduates are increasingly demonstrating customer-like behavior and are now demanding even more "value" from institutions (Woodall et al., 2012). Cognitive definitions, whereby value is posited as a trade-off between benefits and sacrifices, have traditionally been prevalent among marketers (Zeithaml 1988). Those conceptualizations have been criticized as being simplistic and narrow (Mathwick et al., 2001). As a consequence, extant research has argued for

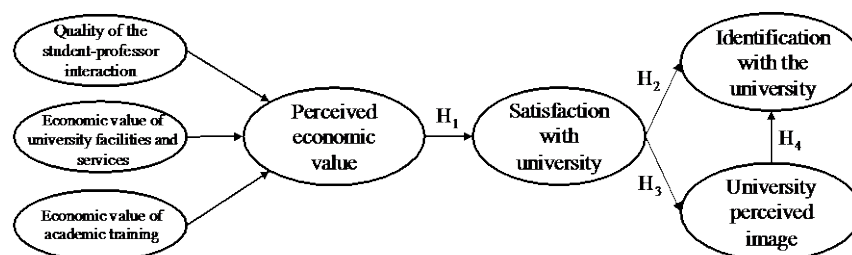
considering a concept in which all the components are integrated under a multidimensional structure, reflecting the cognitive-affective nature of value (e.g., Holbrook, 1999; Ryu et al., 2010). In the higher education domain, most of the definitions are focused on the trade-off approach (Alves, 2011). However, some studies in this context have analyzed the students' perceived value from a multidimensional perspective (e.g., Ledden et al. 2007).

Based on the traditional prevalence of the utilitarian elements of value, such as quality or price, this research examines the economic component of value, which is defined in terms of efficiency — the overall balance of benefits and costs, including the consideration of monetary cost, time, and effort — and excellence — the reactive appreciation of the potential of an object or experience to accomplish a goal or to perform a function, which has similar connotations to the concept of quality — (Holbrook, 1999). Holbrook's conceptualization of economic value has been applied in several works (e.g., Mathwick et al., 2001) and has also been implicitly reflected in recent empirical studies (e.g. Munnukka and Järvi, 2012). To evaluate the economic component of perceived value in higher education, it is necessary to understand the key aspects that compose a university's service offerings. Prior studies stress that the quality of the lecturer-student relationship, the physical plant or facilities, the administrative services, and the training and the outcome of the lecture, are the most influential services or service-related facets of students' evaluative judgments (e.g., Douglas et al., 2006; Hill et al., 2003). Drawing on this classification and Holbrook's (1999) conceptualization of perceived economic value, three dimensions of the concept are delineated in this study: (1) the quality of the student-professor interaction, (2) the economic value of university facilities and services, and (3) the economic value of the academic training.

### 3. Conceptual model

In this study, the authors propose a conceptual model focused on the analysis of the perceived economic value as a multidimensional variable and its contribution to several key outcome variables, using graduates as the unit of analysis. In particular, the model posits a direct influence of perceived economic value on satisfaction with the university. It also suggests the direct effects of satisfaction on perceived image and identification, which are supposed to be linked as well (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1  
Conceptual model based on graduate's perceptions and judgments



Perceived value is conceived as a source for understanding the fundamental role of satisfaction in developing long-term relationships with customers (Wang et al., 2004). Although the distinction — and the link — between value and satisfaction is somewhat critical due to the natural affinity between both concepts (Woodruff and Gardial, 1996), there is a growing recognition that satisfaction is positively influenced by perceived value (e.g., Sakthivel and Raju, 2006). In the particular context of education, authors such as Brown and Mazzarol (2009) argued that value has a significant influence on students' satisfaction. Accordingly, it seems logical to believe that graduates' perceived economic value has a positive effect on satisfaction with the higher institution (H<sub>1</sub>).

Regarding organizational identification, Dutton et al. (1994) argued that when the individual's self-concept has the same attributes that he or she perceives in the organization's identity, a cognitive connection occurs that is defined as company identification. Several social identification researchers have shown that satisfaction with an educational institution's contributions to the accomplishment of the individual's goal influences alumni identification (e.g., Mael and Asforth, 1992). Identification occurs when an individual is influenced to establish or maintain a satisfying relationship with the

organization (see O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986). Therefore, the more satisfied a person is with an organization's offerings, the greater his/her organizational identification (H2).

Prior studies have highlighted the importance of the perceived image of the institution in the educational context (Landrum et al., 1998; Nguyen and Leblanc, 2001). Since some authors stated that customer satisfaction influences corporate image (Hu et al., 2009), we argue that graduates' satisfaction with a university has a positive effect on graduates' perceived image of the university (H3). Indeed, image is viewed as a cumulative construct updated each time the customer experiences the service. Moreover, like Bhattacharya et al. (1995) pointed out, it is expected that graduates are likely to identify strongly with their university not only if they are satisfied with the benefits the institution offers them but also when they perceive the university to have a good external image. According to previous studies (Ahearne et al., 2005) it is expected that an organization with a better image is likely to foster individuals' identification with the organization (H4).

Even if graduates had similar interactions with their university, they can have different perceptions and judgments of these exchanges, which could cause differences in the behaviour of the global model proposed. This potential heterogeneity leads us to define the second objective of this research, which is exploring the extent to which the relationships suggested in the model hold true in different sub-populations using a segmentation technique. Thus, unanticipated patterns in predicting satisfaction, image and identification can be uncovered.

#### **4. Methodology and expected contributions of the study**

We will conduct an empirical research based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) method to test the above model. For our purpose, we initially assembled a questionnaire utilizing measurement items that were sourced from the existing literature and adapted to the educational context. After a qualitative research with a group of faculty members, we administered the preliminary draft questionnaire to a pilot test group of graduates, generating the final questionnaire for the main survey study. Simple random sampling was used to select a sample of 500 graduates from a database provided by the university. The database contained contact information of graduates who obtained the degree from this university two or three years before the research fieldwork was carried out. A market research company performed the data collection using a CATI system to administer each survey. To develop the survey instrument, we used multi-item scales sourced from existing literature and adapted to the context of this study. In particular, the three proposed dimensions of perceived economic value were considered formative components (MacKenzie et al., 2011) and were measured by adapting existing scales (Holbrook, 1999; Ledden et al., 2007). Graduate satisfaction, university image and graduate-university identification were measured adapting previous measures (scales of Fornell, 1992; Nguyen and LeBlanc, 2001; and Mael and Ashforth, 1992; respectively). All items were measured on an 11-point Likert scale in which 0 was "strongly disagree" and 10 was "strongly agree."

To develop our empirical study, we will use the SmartPLS 2.0 (Ringle *et al.*, 2005) software application. We will examine the reliability and validity of the scales of the model and, in a second phase, we will test the proposed relationships in the inner path model, looking for statistically significant levels for explaining the latent endogenous variable. Finally, the FIMIX-PLS module of SmartPLS 2.0 will be applied to graduate segmentation based on the estimated scores for latent variables.

Regarding the expected contributions, the use of a model based on perceptual variables as a segmentation criterion provides a different and more innovative view than does the use of socio-demographic variables in prior segmentation studies in the field of education. If results are as expected, they could help practitioners better understand alumni's rationale for maintaining long-lasting relationships and respond accordingly. In particular, the validation of the proposed model could provide an additional insight about the factors that promote organizational identification in the higher education domain. Uncovering heterogeneity in the graduate's market may also help understand the differences among groups regarding perceptual factors involved in the evaluation of university services and their interrelationships. This type of analysis is critical for universities to reach an enhanced market orientation and create and/or add value for graduates, so it is hoped that this study

can provide a useful tool for higher education institutions to segment and to improve their strategic positioning.

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# IMPROVING CALL CENTERS EXPERIENCE: THE KEY ROLE OF FLUENCY

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## ABSTRACT

*Firms had been using offshored and/or outsourced call centers to provide assistance to their customers as a way of gaining efficiency and reduce costs. However, the loss of customers associated to this service has forced companies such as Telefónica to bring their business back. Traditionally, call center studies focused on service quality. However, this study goes one step back and put the focus on fluency, a key aspect of the interaction. The aim of this research is to analyze the role of fluency during the interaction in a voice-to-voice service encounter. With two samples of 180 and 176 service customers who had contacted a call center, we reach our goals of (1) developing a scale to measure call fluency and (2) measuring the direct effect that call fluency places on anger, interaction satisfaction, and call aversion, as well as its indirect effect on trust and satisfaction with the company.*

## KEYWORDS:

Fluency, call centers, interaction satisfaction, anger, trust , satisfaction with the company

## 1. Introduction

Call centers have existed for a long time now. They have gained attention and popularity since economic and competitive pressures have led firms to search for cost-efficient after-sales service (CSO Insights, 2007). Consequently, many organizations started using call centers as a point of contact with the customers, resulting in a rapidly growing industry (Anton, 2000). Call centers offer companies the possibility to fulfill customers' increasing expectations and demands as well as to standardize their processes to enable employee training and consistent responses to customers' inquiries (Frenkel et al. 1998).

Nowadays, the role of call centers is usually to provide the main, if not the only, customer interface for after-sales service, information, complaint resolution, reservations, and a point of contact for customers to engage with their service provider (Whiting and Donthu, 2006). However, companies have been facing the loss of customers due to call centers poor service. In this sense, in 2012 Telefónica, Orange and Jazztel, after numerous complaints, opened new call centers in Spain to get closer to their customers and improve their service. This is in line with Bharadwaj and Roggeveen's (2008) results. They prove that customers' evaluations are more favorable if both customer and agent are based in the same country. Despite the implications for company success, research on call center encounters from the customers' perspective is very limited. In this paper, we try to fill this gap. Our goal is two-fold. First, we develop a second-order scale to measure fluency during customer-employee interactions in call centers. Second, we integrate the scale into a model that identifies the key factors contributing to caller satisfaction with the company.

## 2. Theoretical background

The concept of processing fluency, i.e. the subjective experience of ease with which people process information, has been shown to influence people's judgments across a broad range of social dimensions (Alter and Oppenheimer 2009). According to processing fluency accounts, stimuli that can be easily processed are generally evaluated in positive terms and inspire favorable attitudes (Reber et al. 2004). Processing fluency is hedonically marked, i.e., fluent processing is experienced as positive (Reber et al. 2004). The general assumption holds that this positive affect is subsequently attributed to the stimulus at hand, inducing positive evaluations.

In our context, we assume that fluency may play an essential role during the interactions between customer and employee in call centers. Thus, we define "interaction fluency" as the degree to which the firm's multiple interfaces facilitate flowing, effortless, and accurate interactions with customers. In that vein, technology applications have been applied to call centers with the purpose of facilitating the interaction with customers (Cassab and MacLachlan, 2006). However, those interactions may not always be successful. Indeed, the ease with which the caller can understand and process the words spoken by the employee on the other end of the line could have an impact on the consumer's evaluation of the experience with the call center. One of the central concepts of such evaluation is customer satisfaction. Since call centers deal with a diverse array of issues ranging from complaint resolution to order taking, call centers have become a critical touch point for managing satisfaction (Dawson, 1998). Consequently, the favorable or unfavorable perceptions of fluency should become apparent in terms of satisfaction with the call:

**H1:** fluency will positively influence interaction satisfaction

Furthermore, fluency should also affect the caller's future intentions. Thus, an easily processed conversation (high fluency) would derive in a higher intention to contact the call center again when needed. However, if the information received from the employee turned out to be difficult to follow and process (low fluency), the customer will avoid contacting the call center in the future. Therefore, we predict:

**H2:** fluency will negatively influence call aversion

In addition to call satisfaction and call aversion, perceived fluency may also induce an emotional reaction on the consumer. The perception that interaction fluency is low will lead the customer to

attribute the lack of fluency to the unskilled employee –external attribution of blame-, which, in turn, facilitates the elicitation of anger (Folkes et al. 1987). On the contrary, the perception that interaction fluency is high would contribute to a reduction in anger. Therefore, we predict that:

**H3:** fluency will negatively influence anger

Literature has demonstrated that anger occurs frequently in call center interactions, as customers are often unfriendly to employees (e.g., Grandey et al., 2004). They generally expect the service to work perfectly and become angry and frustrated when problems arise. The inverse relationship between negative emotions and satisfaction is well grounded in the literature (Phillips and Baumgartner, 2002) so we predict that it will also hold during customer-employee interactions in call centers:

**H4:** anger will negatively influence interaction satisfaction

Call centers, even if they are run by an external firm (settled in South America or India, for example), are sometimes the only point of contact between the customer and the main firm (settled in the USA or Europe). It means that the image of the main company from the customer's eyes can either be demolished or enhanced depending on the evaluation of the interactions with the call center (Whiting and Donthu, 2009). Dissatisfied customers are more likely to spend less, switch to competitors, and spread negative word of mouth when they find troubles with the call centers. Consequently, it should be expected that low call satisfaction will be transmitted to the evaluation of the main company in terms of both satisfaction and trust:

**H5:** interaction satisfaction will positively influence satisfaction with the company

**H6:** interaction satisfaction will positively influence trust in the company

Finally, trust has been proved to be an antecedent of both satisfaction and customers' future intentions (Jarvenpaa et al. 2000; Manganari et al. 2012). Therefore, we predict that:

**H7:** trust will positively influence satisfaction with the company

**H8:** trust will negatively influence call aversion

### 3. Methodology

To develop a reliable, valid scale of call fluency, we follow the process recommended by Churchill (1979) and Gerbing and Anderson (1988). Through a review of the relevant literature, an initial item pool consisting of 16 items was elaborated. Eight personal interviews were carried out with people of different ages and gender who had recently had an experience with a call center service. They provided detailed information about that experience and made comments on the preliminary scale items. As a result, some of them were modified and 5 new items were generated. Then, four marketing expert judges were given the definition of call fluency and were instructed to evaluate the previous 21 items and rate them as "not representative", "somewhat representative" or "very representative". Items with 75% or more agreement as belonging to call fluency were thus retained for further analysis. Based on the judges' evaluation, 5 items were removed and 16 remained.

**First study.**- We ran a pretest of the items with a convenience sample. An electronic questionnaire was elaborated. Its link was sent by e-mail to different contact lists. We managed to collect 180 complete questionnaires of customers from companies pertaining to sectors such as telecommunications, electricity, or insurance, among others, who had called the company and interacted with the call center service. The respondents' average age was 45.63 years old, and 51.1% of them were males.

Call fluency scale consisted of 5-point multi-item Likert questions, ranging from "1=totally disagree" to "5=totally agree". In this questionnaire no additional variables were measured. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using LISREL 8.80 was conducted to assess measurement reliability, and convergent validity. A model with 4 dimensions was tested<sup>1</sup>. Examination of standardized residuals and modification indices suggested that the model could be significantly improved by removing 6

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<sup>1</sup> Alternative models were compared.

items from the original scale. Although the overall chi-square statistic was significant ( $\chi^2=52.61$   $df=29$   $p=0.0047$ ), the observed normed  $\chi^2$  ( $\chi^2/df$ ) for this model was 1.81, which is smaller than 3 as recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). The remaining indices show a good fit (NFI= 0.97, NNFI=0.97, CFI= 0.98, SRMR= 0.043, RMSEA= 0.067, GFI=0.94). Reliability was confirmed with composite reliability index higher than the recommended level of .60 (Bagozzi and Yi 1988) whereas average variance extracted was higher than the recommended level of .50 (Hair et al. 1998). Convergent validity was assessed by verifying the significance of the t values associated with the parameter estimates. All t values were positive and significant.

**Second study.**- We collected a second dataset with the assistance of a marketing research firm. The sample was drawn as a Random Digit Dial telephone survey, using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) format. After its depuration, a sample of 176 usable questionnaires remained. The respondents had an average age of 44.7 years old; the majority were females (65.9%), and 41.5% had university education.

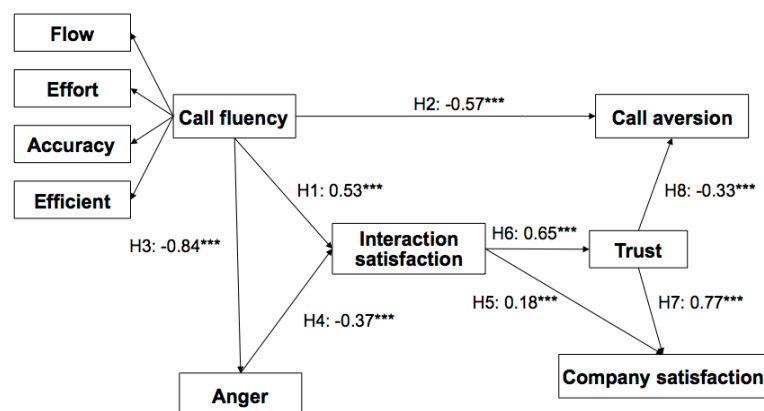
In this questionnaire, besides call fluency, all the variables from our theoretical model were included. All the scales consisted of 5-point multi-item Likert questions, ranging from “1=totally disagree” to “5=totally agree”. Anger was measured using three items adapted from Bougie et al. (2003). Trust was measured using three items adapted from Ranaweera and Prabhu (2003). Call aversion and interaction satisfaction were measured with items adapted from de Ruyter and Wetzels (2000). Finally, a three-item satisfaction measure developed by Cronin et al. (2000) was used.

Then, a CFA using LISREL 8.80 was conducted to assess measurement reliability, convergent and discriminant validity. The previous model with 4 dimensions was tested. The indices show a good fit (NFI= 0.96, NNFI=0.97, CFI= 0.98, SRMR= 0.046, RMSEA= 0.073, GFI=0.94). Again, reliability and convergent validity of the measures were confirmed. Discriminant validity was successfully tested by comparing the average variance extracted by each construct with the shared variance between the construct and the other variables (Fornell and Larcker 1981).

#### 4. Results

The hypothesized relationships were estimated via LISREL 8.80. The results indicated a good fit between the model and the observed data ( $\chi^2=462.49$   $df=263$   $p< .00$ , NFI= 0.96, NNFI=.98, CFI=.98, RMSR=.052; RMSEA=.066, GFI=.83). As shown in Figure 1, all hypotheses were supported.

**Figure 1**  
Empirical findings



The model explained 70.1%, 75.4%, 63.21%, 42.1% and 81.9% of the variance in anger, call satisfaction, call aversion, trust, and company satisfaction, respectively<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> We compared the superiority of this model with two alternative models (more and less restricted).

## 5. Discussion and managerial implications

This research demonstrates that fluency is a key factor in determining customer satisfaction when interacting with call centers. After confirming the second-order structure of fluency and developing a valid and reliable scale for its measurement, the results show that fluency affects customer anger, interaction satisfaction and call aversion directly whereas it has an indirect impact on trust and satisfaction with the main company. These findings entail relevant implications for companies as they identify courses of action to improve their after-sales service. Thus, they should train their employees to engage in fluent conversations with the customers. Facilitating customers' processing of information through an efficient, accurate and effortless conversation would result in favorable emotional responses as well as higher satisfaction.

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# ANÁLISIS DE LOS FACTORES QUE INFLUYEN EN LA UNIDIMENSIONALIDAD DE CETSCALE: UN ENFOQUE META-ANALÍTICO

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## RESUMEN

*CETSCALE (Consumer ethnocentrism tendencies scale), la escala desarrollada por Shimp y Sharma en 1987 para estudiar el comportamiento etnocentrista del consumidor cumplía recientemente 25 años de existencia. Su utilización durante todo este tiempo ha abarcado numerosas aplicaciones en una gran variedad de países, lo que le ha conferido un carácter universal. No obstante, el carácter unidimensional de la escala no se ha mantenido de forma uniforme en el conjunto de la literatura, un aspecto que ha podido venir condicionado por su aplicación en contextos geográficos diferente, por utilizar tipos de muestras distintas o por las diferentes versiones de la escala que han sido utilizadas. Con el objetivo de encontrar una respuesta a esta falta de homogeneidad en la unidimensionalidad de la escala, en este trabajo realizamos un meta-análisis a partir de una amplia selección de trabajos que han aplicado CETSCALE. Los resultados de las estimaciones realizadas considerando tanto efectos directos como moderadores nos aportan evidencia sobre los aspectos que pueden influir en la no unidimensionalidad de la escala y que se concreta en la versión de la escala utilizada junto a que haya sido aplicada en determinados ámbitos geográficos.*

## Palabras clave:

Etnocentrismo, CETSCALE, unidimensionalidad, meta-análisis

## 1. Introducción

En 2012 se cumplían veinticinco años de aplicación de CETSCALE, la escala diseñada por Shimp y Sharma en 1987 para representar las creencias de los consumidores norteamericanos acerca de la idoneidad de adquirir productos extranjeros, y que ha sido utilizada de forma preferente en la literatura para estudiar el etnocentrismo. Según Shimp y Sharma (1987), el etnocentrismo del consumidor se centra en la responsabilidad y moralidad de comprar productos fabricados en el extranjero frente a la lealtad de los consumidores hacia los productos fabricados en su país. Por tanto, para un consumidor etnocéntrico, importar productos de otros países no es adecuado, ya que no es patriótico, y va en detrimento de la economía y el empleo doméstico (Yagci, 2001; Supphellen y Gronhaug, 2003). Como consecuencia de ello, los consumidores etnocéntricos evalúan de un modo diferente los productos fabricados en su país y los fabricados en otras naciones (Huddleston et al., 2000), sobrestimando los atributos y calidad global de los productos domésticos, y subestimando los de los productos extranjeros (Sharma et al., 1995).

Aunque su aplicación original se centró en consumidores de Estados Unidos, posteriormente ha sido validada a nivel internacional por múltiples trabajos (e.g. Netemeyer et al., 1991; Duvarsula et al., 1997; Luque et al., 2000; Supphellen y Rittenburg, 2001; Orth y Firbasova, 2003; Kwak et al., 2006; Nadiri y Tümer, 2010).

Sin embargo, a medida que los parámetros inicialmente propuestos para la aplicación de CETSCALE (ámbito geográfico, tipo de muestra o versión de la escala) han ido variando en los diferentes estudios a lo largo de los últimos años, en un intento de contrastar la aplicabilidad de la escala en otros ámbitos geográficos diferentes y con tipologías de muestras distintas, los resultados han variado sustancialmente, sobre todo por no mantenerse la unidimensionalidad de la escala. De hecho, son múltiples los trabajos que aparecen en la literatura desarrollados en diferentes contextos culturales que cuestionan la existencia de una única dimensión (e.g., Marcoux et al., 1997 [Polonia]; Mavondo y Tan (1999) [Malasia]; Supphellen y Gronhaug (2003) [Rusia]; Douglas y Nijssen (2003) [Holanda]; Bawa (2004) [India]; Saffu y Walker (2005) [Rusia]; Khan y Rizvi (2008) [India]; Wei et al. (2009) [China]). Estos trabajos obtienen dos o, en muchos casos, tres y hasta cuatro dimensiones diferentes que explican el comportamiento etnocéntrico del individuo dentro de un contexto cultural geográfico específico.

Con el objetivo de conocer qué aspectos de los utilizados en las aplicaciones empíricas desarrolladas hasta ahora en la literatura son los que condicionan el carácter unidimensional de CETSCALE, en este trabajo se desarrolla un meta-análisis que nos permita aportar evidencia empírica respecto al comportamiento no unidimensional de la escala. Para ello, utilizaremos como variables de referencia el ámbito geográfico del estudio, el tipo de muestra utilizado y la versión de la escala empleada.

Este trabajo ha sido estructurado en cuatro apartados adicionales. El apartado segundo se dedica a analizar brevemente el comportamiento no unidimensional de CETSCALE en la literatura. En un tercer apartado se analiza la influencia sobre la unidimensionalidad de la escala de los tres factores anteriormente mencionados (ámbito geográfico, tipo de muestra y versión de la escala). A continuación, en un cuarto apartado se describe la metodología del estudio, detallando las diferentes etapas llevadas a cabo para realizar el meta-análisis. Por último, se plantean las conclusiones del trabajo.

## 2. CETSCALE, ¿una escala unidimensional?

Al estudiar en la literatura el comportamiento unidimensional de CETSCALE, encontramos que existen una mayoría de trabajos que confirman esta propiedad de la escala. Estos estudios abarcan países muy diferentes como EE.UU. (e.g., Durvasula et al., 1997; Mittelstaedt et al., 2004; Yoo y Donthu, 2005), Corea del Sur (e.g., Sharma et al., 1995; Kwak et al., 2006), España (Luque et al., 2000), Rusia (Supphellen y Gronhaug, 2003), Turquía (e.g., Kucukerimoglou, 1999; Kaynak y Kara, 2002), China (e.g., Pereira et al., 2002; Qing et al., 2012), Malta (Caruana y Magri, 1996), Islandia (Bandyopadhyay, 2012), Israel (Shoham y Brencic, 2003) o Chipre (e.g., Nadiri y Tümer, 2010).

Sin embargo, numerosos trabajos que sugieren el carácter multidimensional de la escala proceden igualmente de contextos geográficos muy diversos, si bien la mayoría de ellos han sido desarrollados en países asiáticos. Es el caso de China (Wei et al., 2009; Hsu y Nien, 2008), Malasia (Mavondo y Tan, 1999; Ramayah et al., 2011) o India (Bawa, 2004; Khan y Rizvi, 2008). Únicamente en el caso de Rusia (Saffu y Walker, 2005), Holanda (Douglas y Nijssen, 2003) Polonia (Marcoux et al., 1997) y Alemania (Jiménez et al., 2014) nos encontramos con países europeos en los que no se ha confirmado la unidimensionalidad de la escala.

De todos estos estudios cabe destacar el trabajo de Yu y Albaun (2002) que analiza el etnocentrismo del individuo de Hong Kong en dos momentos diferentes del tiempo: hasta julio de 1997 (bajo soberanía



británica) y desde esa fecha (bajo soberanía china). Para ello, utiliza dos escalas diferentes de CETSCALE, la completa de 17 ítems y la versión reducida de 10 ítems. En el primero de los casos (utilizando la escala completa), los resultados confirman la multidimensionalidad de la escala, obteniendo 4 factores antes del cambio de soberanía, y 2 factores después del 1 de julio. Utilizando la escala reducida de 10 ítems, Yu y Albaun (2002) obtienen, igualmente, 2 factores antes del cambio de soberanía. Sin embargo, bajo soberanía China, sí que obtienen un único factor que explica el 62% de la varianza total de la escala.

En relación a la no unidimensionalidad, son mayoritarios los trabajos que indican la existencia de dos dimensiones dentro de la escala. En esta línea se sitúan los trabajos de Yu y Albaun (2002) (en dos de los cuatro análisis que estos autores desarrollan), Douglas y Nijssen (2003), Saffu y Walker (2005), Chryssochoidis et al. (2007), Hsu y Nien (2008), Wei et al. (2009), Ramayah et al. (2011) y Jiménez et al. (2014). En la mayor parte de estos estudios, las dos dimensiones identificadas representan dos perspectivas diferentes del comportamiento etnocéntrico: por una parte, el etnocentrismo del individuo representado en una aversión hacia los productos extranjeros y, por otra, el etnocentrismo del individuo representado por la propensión y defensa de los productos propios o domésticos. Chryssochoidis et al. (2007) y Ramayah et al. (2011) denominan ambas dimensiones como “etnocentrismo duro” y “etnocentrismo suave”, respectivamente. Por su parte, Hsu y Nien (2008) las denominan “proteccionismo” y “patriotismo defensivo”.

Respecto a los trabajos que identifican tres factores encontramos los trabajos de Marcoux et al. (1997), Mavondo y Tan (1999) y Bawa (2004) (en dos de las tres muestras que analizan). Para Mavondo y Tan (1999), CETSCALE es un constructo complejo de segundo-orden que cuenta con tres componentes que reflejan: (1) la animosidad hacia los extranjeros y sus productos; (2) el deseo de la “preservación propia” del grupo a través del desarrollo de acciones económicas, y (3) la obligación moral de apoyar a los productos domésticos. Marcoux et al. (1997) señalan que, de los tres factores, el que representa las tendencias proteccionistas del individuo es el más importante. Por el contrario, el patriotismo es la dimensión que explica en menor medida el comportamiento etnocéntrico del individuo.

Finalmente, Yu y Albaun (2002) (en el caso de la escala completa de 17 ítems entre ciudadanos de Hong Kong aún bajo soberanía británica), Bawa (2004) (en el caso de la muestra de estudiantes universitarios), y Khan y Rizvi (2008), obtienen 4 factores diferentes. Para Khan y Rizvi (2008), la importancia de cada una de las cuatro dimensiones es similar, lo que refleja que CETSCALE es una escala de dimensionalidad cuestionable cuando es analizada fuera del contexto norteamericano.

### **3. Factores que influyen en la no unidimensionalidad de CETSCALE.**

Son diferentes los argumentos utilizados para justificar los resultados obtenidos por los trabajos que apoyan la multidimensionalidad de CETSCALE, y que se encuentran alejados de los planteamientos de Shimp y Sharma (1987). Diversos autores (e.g., Marcoux et al., 1997; Supphellen y Rittenburg, 2001; Bawa, 2004), argumentan que estos resultados responden, principalmente, a las características sociodemográficas de la muestra utilizada, ya que las diferencias de edad y de nivel de educación pueden dar lugar a diferencias en la dimensionalidad de la escala. Este aspecto, sin embargo, parece no confirmarse en la revisión de la literatura que hemos realizado, dado que tanto en trabajos que confirman la unidimensionalidad de CETSCALE como los que no la apoyan, utilizan indistintamente muestras de estudiantes como de población en general. Otro de los argumentos utilizados se relaciona con la versión de CETSCALE que cada estudio utiliza, tal y como se demuestra en el trabajo de Yu y Albaun (2002), anteriormente comentado. Si bien es cierto que de forma mayoritaria CETSCALE se ha aplicado utilizando los 17 ítems originalmente propuestos por Shimp y Sharma (1987), en la literatura se han planteado diferentes adaptaciones con un número de ítems considerablemente menor. Así, son múltiples los trabajos que utilizan la escala reducida de 10 ítems propuesta en el propio trabajo original de Shimp y Sharma (1987), y que concluyen que la escala no es unidimensional. Es el caso de los trabajos de Douglas y Nijssen (2003) y Hsu y Nien (2008). Sin embargo, existen también trabajos que utilizan la misma escala reducida y que sí obtienen un único factor subyacente (e.g., Balbanis y Diamantopoulos, 2004; Mittelstaedt et al., 2004), lo que nos hace dudar acerca de si la utilización de la escala reducida de Shimp y Sharma puede provocar la obtención de resultados multidimensionales.

Por todo ello, y ante la divergencia de planteamientos encontrados en la literatura, en este trabajo hemos optamos por seleccionar tres aspectos que nos parecen más vinculantes o más significativos a la hora de analizar el carácter multidimensional de la escala: ámbito geográfico de aplicación, tipo de muestra utilizado y versión de la escala empleada en cada estudio, a partir de los cuales podamos justificar este comportamiento tan heterogéneo.

### 3.1. *Ámbito geográfico de aplicación de CETSCALE*

Durante estos veinticinco años CETSCALE ha sido aplicada en ámbitos geográficos muy diversos que abarca los cinco continentes. Repasando algunos de los países en los que se ha aplicado la escala, cabe señalar en primer lugar *EE.UU.*, donde por primera vez se aplicó a partir del trabajo original de Shimp y Sharma (1987). No obstante, en años posteriores se ha vuelto a repetir este tipo de análisis con los trabajos de Netemeyer et al. (1991), Duvarsula et al. (1997), Pullman et al. (1997) o Lee et al. (2003). Dentro del continente americano, CETSCALE también se ha aplicado en *Canadá* (Bruning, 1997; Saffu y Walker, 2005) y *México* (Witkowski, 1998; Clarke III, 2001), no teniendo constancia de trabajos en países de Sudamérica.

Europa ha sido también un escenario ideal para la aplicación de CETSCALE. Así, la literatura recoge aplicaciones en *Alemania* (Evanschitzky et al., 2008; Jiménez et al., 2014), *Bélgica* (Steenkamp y Baumgartner, 1995), *Chipre* (Nadiri y Tümer, 2010), *Eslovenia* (Reardon et al., 2005), *Eslovaquia* (Saffu et al., 2010), *España* (Luque et al., 2000; Jiménez y San Martín, 2010), *Francia* (Netemeyer et al., 1991; Javalgi et al., 2005), *Grecia* (Steenkamp y Baumgartner, 1995; Chrysochoidis et al., 2007), *Holanda* (Douglas y Nijssen, 2003), *Polonia* (Good y Huddleston, 1995; Marcoux et al., 1997; Lindquist et al., 2001; Supphellen y Rittenburg, 2001), *Reino Unido* (Steenkamp y Baumgartner, 1995; Balbanis y Diamantopoulos, 2004), *Rusia* (e.g., Supphellen y Gronhaug, 2003; Saffu y Walker, 2005; Thelen et al., 2006) o *Turquía* (e.g., Kaynak y Kara, 2002; Altintas y Tokol, 2007; Erdogan y Uzkurt, 2010) entre otros.

El continente asiático ha sido el área geográfica donde en los últimos años ha tenido lugar un mayor número de estudios, sobre todo en China e India. Repasando brevemente algunos de estos trabajos publicados en los años más recientes, para el caso de *China* encontramos entre otros el de Wang y Chen (2004), Liu et al. (2007), Wong et al. (2008), Chang y Cheng (2011) o Qing et al. (2012), mientras que para la *India*, podemos destacar los trabajos de Bawa, (2004), Kwak et al., (2006) o Khan y Rizvi, (2008). También son numerosos los estudios desarrollados en *Malasia* (e.g., Yeong et al., 2007; Othman et al., 2008; Teo et al., 2011), o *Corea* (Sharma et al., 1995; Kwak et al., 2006), encontrando también en la literatura otros trabajos en países como *Indonesia* (Hamin y Elliot, 2006), *Israel* (Shoham y Brencic, 2003), *Japón* (Netemeyer et al., 1991) o *Jordania* (Al Ganideh y Al Tae, 2012).

Por último, en Oceanía encontramos varios trabajos desarrollados en *Australia* (Philp y Brown, 2003; Poon et al., 2010; Josiassen et al., 2011) y *Nueva Zelanda* (Watson y Wright, 2000; Shergill et al., 2010), mientras que en el continente africano apenas encontramos referencias, destacando los recientes trabajos realizados en *Etiopía* (Mangnale et al., 2011), *Mauricio* (Ramsaran, 2010) o *Túnez* (Ben Mrad et al., 2011).

Por tanto, CETSCALE ha tenido una proyección internacional muy importante siendo un referente indiscutible a la hora de analizar el sentimiento etnocéntrico del consumidor. Aunque en muchos de estos trabajos se ha reproducido el carácter unidimensional de la escala, el hecho de que también haya un número representativo de los mismos que ofrecen unos resultados discrepantes nos lleva a plantear como hipótesis si esta falta de unanimidad responde al hecho en sí del ámbito geográfico de estudio.

En base a ello, planteamos una primera hipótesis en nuestro trabajo:

**H<sub>1</sub>: El ámbito geográfico de estudio tiene una influencia directa sobre la unidimensionalidad de la escala**

### 3.2. *Tipología de la muestra*

El trabajo original desarrollado por Shimp y Sharma (1987) utilizaba una muestra en la que se entremezclaban estudiantes universitarios y población en general. Tomando como referencia esa tipología de muestra, la práctica totalidad de estudios desarrollados con posterioridad han respetado en mayor o menor medida ese patrón, utilizando uno de esos perfiles muestrales o combinándolos. Así, encontramos en la literatura trabajos que utilizan solamente como muestra a la población en general (e.g., Mavondo y Tan, 1999; Luque et al., 2000; Kaynak y Kara, 2002; Balbanis y Diamantopoulos, 2004; Nadiri y Tümer, 2010; Qing et al., 2012), otros, que solamente utilizan a estudiantes universitarios (e.g., Duvarsula et al., 1997; Mittelstaadt et al., 2004; Saffu y Walker, 2005; Khan y Rizvi, 2008), o bien trabajos que utilizan una combinación de ambas muestras (e.g., Supphellen y Gronhaug, 2003; Kwak et al., 2006). De la misma manera que ocurría en el caso del ámbito geográfico de estudio, también encontramos trabajos donde la unidimensionalidad de la escala se ve alterada dependiendo del tipo de muestra utilizada, lo que nos lleva a plantear una segunda hipótesis en nuestro trabajo que intente reflejar si esta falta de unanimidad es una consecuencia directa de la selección de muestra. En base a ello planteamos la siguiente hipótesis:

**H<sub>2</sub>: El tipo de muestra utilizada tiene una influencia directa sobre la unidimensionalidad de la escala**

### 3.3. Versión de CETSCALE

Uno de los aspectos más singulares que encontramos al revisar la literatura es sin duda el referente a las versiones utilizadas de CETSCALE. Aunque en el trabajo original de Shimp y Sharma (1987) se proponía una escala de 17 ítems, estos autores también ofrecían la posibilidad de utilizar una escala reducida<sup>1</sup> de 10 ítems. Si bien la escala de 17 ítems ha sido la más utilizada en la mayoría de trabajos, en la literatura también podemos encontrar numerosos trabajos en los que se utiliza la escala reducida (e.g. Yu y Albaum, 2002; Douglas y Nijssen<sup>2</sup>, 2003; Balabanis y Diamantopoulos, 2004; Mittelstaedt et al.; 2004; Thelen et al., 2006; Hsu y Nien, 2008). El uso de estas escalas “reducidas” es una práctica muy habitual como señalan Li y He (2013), dada la alta correlación interna que existe entre los ítems de una escala cuando estos, como es el caso de CETSCALE, son muy numerosos, siendo además un procedimiento eficaz y fiable como señalan Steenkamp y Baumgartner (1995).

El hecho de que Shimp y Sharma propusieran esta doble versión de CETSCALE abrió la puerta a que en la literatura se propusieran otras versiones alternativas. Así, mientras que en unos casos suponía solamente modificar los ítems de la versión reducida (e.g., Supphellen y Rittenburg, 2001), en otros casos implicaba una escala con un número de ítems diferentes (e.g., Marcoux et al., 1997; Bawa, 2004). En cualquier caso, aquellos autores que deciden no utilizar la escala completa o la reducida de Shimp y Sharma (1987), llevan a cabo una selección de *ítems* que parece responder a la necesidad de adaptación de la escala al contexto geográfico y socio-cultural específico del análisis.

Respecto a los trabajos que utilizan escalas reducidas distintas a la propuesta por Shimp y Sharma, encontramos entre otros el de Marcoux et al. (1997), que utiliza una escala de 14 ítems (elimina los ítems 3, 4 y 5), el de Bawa, que también utiliza una escala de 14 ítems, si bien elimina los ítems 2, 4 y 12, Supphellen y Rittenburg (2001) que utiliza una escala de 10 ítems pero parcialmente distintos a los de la escala original reducida, o Supphellen y Gronhaug (2003) que utilizan una escala de 11 ítems. A la vista de la disparidad de los resultados obtenidos en los diferentes trabajos según se utilicen una u otra versión de CETSCALE, consideramos necesario plantear una tercera hipótesis en nuestro trabajo que intente reflejar si esta falta de unanimidad en la unidimensionalidad de la escala es una consecuencia del tipo de escala utilizada. En base a ello planteamos la siguiente hipótesis:

***H<sub>3</sub>: La versión de la escala utilizada tiene una influencia directa sobre la unidimensionalidad de la escala***

## 4. Metodología

### 4.1. Selección de estudios

La realización de un meta-análisis supone necesariamente desarrollar las mismas seis fases que se requieren para llevar a cabo cualquier estudio empírico. En este sentido, una vez formulado el problema objeto de este trabajo (1ª fase), el siguiente paso consistiría en hacer una búsqueda y selección de estudios empíricos que hayan contemplado la aplicación de CETSCALE (2ª fase), así como una codificación de las características de los mismos (3ª fase). En este sentido, en la Tabla 1 se recogen 46 estudios seleccionados procedentes de 32 trabajos publicados en la literatura. La no coincidencia se debe a que en algunos casos, un mismo trabajo incluye ámbitos geográficos de aplicación distintos.

Una 4ª fase del meta-análisis supone la determinación del tamaño del efecto, es decir, un índice estadístico que permita poner en la misma métrica los resultados de los distintos estudios. Esta necesidad de homogeneizar la unidad de medida de los resultados se debe al hecho de que los diferentes estudios pueden analizar sus resultados de formas muy diversas, como por ejemplo, a través de medias, desviaciones típicas, o pruebas estadísticas diferentes como las pruebas t de diferencias entre medias, las pruebas F de ANOVA o las pruebas Chi-cuadrado de Pearson, entre otras (Sánchez, 2010; Sánchez y Botella, 2010).

En nuestro caso podemos considerar que el número de factores obtenidos al realizar el Análisis factorial de la escala es una medida que permite homogeneizar los resultados de los diferentes trabajos y, por ello, podríamos considerarlo como el tamaño del efecto de cada estudio. Por su parte, respecto a las variables que presumiblemente pueden moderar el tamaño del efecto, es decir, pueden alterar la unidimensionalidad de la escala, tal y como hemos analizados en los apartados anterior, utilizaremos el ámbito geográfico de aplicación, la tipología de la muestra y la versión de la escala utilizada.

<sup>1</sup> Shimp y Sharma (1987, p.283, nota al pie de página 4; *ítems* 2,4,5,6,7,8,11,13,16,17 de la escala original de 17 ítems)

<sup>2</sup> Estos autores añaden, a la escala reducida de 10 *ítems*, un *ítem* adicional relacionado con la compra de productos foráneos cuando no existe disponibilidad doméstica

**TABLA 1**  
**Trabajos seleccionados que analizan la dimensionalidad de CETSCALE**

<b>Estudio (orden cronológico)</b>	<b>País</b>	<b>Tipo de muestra</b>	<b>Versión CETSCALE<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Unidimens.</b>
Shimp y Sharma (1987)	EE.UU.	Pobl. general y estudiantes universitarios	17 ítems	Sí
Netemeyer et al. (1991)	Alemania	Estudiantes	17 ítems	Sí
	EE.UU.		17 ítems	Sí
	Francia		17 ítems	Sí
	Japón		17 ítems	Sí
Sharma et al. (1995)	Corea del Sur	Pobl. general y padres de los estudiantes	17 ítems	Sí
Caruana (1996)	Malta	Población general	17 ítems	Sí
Durvasula et al. (1997)	EE.UU.	Estudiantes universitarios	17 ítems	Sí
	Rusia		17 ítems	Sí
Marcoux et al. (1997)	Polonia	Estudiantes universitarios	14 ítems (1,2, 6-17)	No (3) <sup>c</sup>
Kucukerimoglou (1999)	Turquía	Población general	17 ítems	Sí
Mavondo y Tan (1999)	Malasia	Población general	17 ítems	No (3) <sup>c</sup>
Luque et al. (2000)	España	Población general	17 ítems	Sí
Supphellen y Rittenburg (2001)	Polonia	Población general	10 ítems (1,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,13,14)	Sí
Kaynak y Kara (2002)	Turquía	Población general	17 ítems	Sí
Pereira et al. (2002)	China	Estudiantes	17 ítems	Sí
	India		17 ítems	Sí
	Taiwán		17 ítems	Sí
Yu y Albaun (2002)	Hong Kong (UK)	Población general	17 ítems	No (4) <sup>c</sup>
	Hong Kong (UK)		10 ítems <sup>b</sup>	No (2) <sup>c</sup>
	Hong Kong (China)		17 ítems	No (2) <sup>c</sup>
	Hong Kong (China)		10 ítems <sup>b</sup>	Sí
Douglas y Nijssen (2003)	Holanda	Población general	10 ítems <sup>b</sup> +1 ítem	No (2) <sup>c</sup>
Orth y Firasova (2003)	República Checa	Población general	17 ítems	Sí
Shoham y Brencic (2003)	Israel	Población general	17 ítems	Sí
Supphellen y Gronhaug (2003)	Rusia	Pobl. general y estudiantes universitarios	11 ítems (2,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,14)	Sí
Balabanis y Diamantopoulos (2004)	Reino Unido	Población general	10 ítems <sup>b</sup>	Sí
Bawa (2004)	India	Estudiantes universitarios	11-ítems (1,3,8,9,11-17)	No (4) <sup>c</sup>
		Estudiantes secundaria	14-ítems (1,3,5-11,13-17)	No (3) <sup>c</sup>
Mittelstaedt et al. (2004)	EE.UU.	Estudiantes universitarios	10 ítems <sup>b</sup>	Sí
Saffu y Walker (2005)	Canadá,	Estudiantes universitarios	17 ítems	Sí
	Rusia		17 ítems	No (2) <sup>c</sup>
Yoo y Donthu (2005)	EEUU.	Población general	17 ítems	Sí
Kwak et al. (2006)	Corea del Sur	Pobl. general, estudiantes universitarios	17 ítems	Sí
	EE.UU.		17 ítems	Sí
	India		17 ítems	Sí
Chrysochoidis et al. (2007)	Grecia	Población general	17 ítems	No (2) <sup>c</sup>
Hsu y Nien (2008)	Taipei (China)	Población general	10 ítems <sup>b</sup>	No (2) <sup>c</sup>
	Shangai China)		10 ítems <sup>b</sup>	No (2) <sup>c</sup>
Khan y Rizvi (2008)	India	Estudiantes universitarios	17 ítems	No (4) <sup>c</sup>
Wei et al. (2009)	China	Población general	16 ítems (excepto 16)	No (2) <sup>c</sup>
Nadiri y Tümer (2010)	Chipre	Población general	17 ítems	Sí
Ramayah et al. (2011)	Malasia	Población general	17 ítems	No (2) <sup>c</sup>
Teo et al. (2011)	Malasia	Población general	17 ítems	Sí
Bandyopadhyay (2012)	Islandia	Población general	17 ítems	Sí
Jiménez et al. (2014)	Alemania	Población general	17 ítems	No (2) <sup>c</sup>

**Fuente:** Elaboración propia

<sup>a</sup> Entre paréntesis, ítems de la escala original de Shimp y Sharma (1987)

<sup>b</sup> Shimp y Sharma (1987: 283, nota al pie 4; Ítems 2,4,5,6,7,8,11,13,16,17)

<sup>c</sup> N° de factores en el caso de no ser unidimensional

A partir de los estudios seleccionados en la Tabla 1, podemos llevar a cabo un primer análisis descriptivo sobre los mismos que nos oriente sobre el probable resultado de las hipótesis anteriormente planteadas. En este sentido, en la Tabla 2 podemos observar el número de estudios (en %) en los que la escala presenta un comportamiento unidimensional, considerando las tres variables analizadas (ámbito geográfico, tipo de muestra y versión de la escala) y los diferentes niveles contemplados en cada uno de los casos.

TABLA 2  
Unidimensionalidad de la escala según tipo de variable (%)

	TOTAL (%)	SI-UNI	%	NO-UNI	%
<b>Escala 17 ítems original (ESC17)</b>	33 - (71,7%)	25	75,8	8	24,2
<b>Escala 10 ítems original (ESC10)</b>	6 - (13,0%)	3	50,0	3	50,0
<b>Otras escalas (OTESC)</b>	7 - (15,2%)	2	28,6	5	71,4
	46 - (100%)	<b>30</b>	<b>65,2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>34,8</b>
<b>Población general (POB)</b>	24 - (52,2%)	13	54,2	11	45,8
<b>Estudiantes (ESTU)</b>	16 - (34,8%)	11	68,8	5	31,3
<b>Pob. gral y estudiantes (POB/ESTU)</b>	6 - (13,0%)	6	100,0	0	0,0
	46 - (100%)	<b>30</b>	<b>65,2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>34,8</b>
<b>Continente americano (AME)</b>	7 - (15,2%)	7	100,0	0	0,0
<b>Continente europeo (EUR)</b>	18 - (39,1%)	13	72,2	5	27,8
<b>Continente asiático (ASI)</b>	21 - (45,7%)	10	47,6	11	52,4
	46 - (100%)	<b>30</b>	<b>65,2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>34,8</b>

Como podemos observar en la Tabla 2, en lo que respecta a la versión de CETSCALE utilizada, cuando se trata de la escala de 17-ítems, en un 75,8% de los casos esta es unidimensional; sin embargo, este porcentaje desciende hasta el 28,6% cuando se utilizan otras versiones distintas a las dos propuestas por Shimp y Sharma (1987), mientras que en el caso de la escala reducida de 10 ítems, el porcentaje es el mismo para ambas situaciones (50%).

Si consideramos el tipo de muestra utilizada, se observa que para el caso de la población en general la escala es unidimensional solamente en el 54,2% de los casos; si es una muestra de estudiante alcanza el 68,8% y, finalmente, si es una combinación de ambas, consigue el 100%. Por último, en relación al ámbito geográfico, en los estudios realizados en el continente americano la escala es unidimensional en el 100% de los casos; cuanto se trata de estudios realizados en Europa, este porcentaje baja hasta el 72,2%, mientras que si se refiere a países del área asiática, la escala es unidimensional solamente en un 47,6% de los casos.

A continuación, en la Tabla 3 llevamos a cabo un análisis similar, considerando combinaciones 2 a 2 de los diferentes niveles de las tres variables analizadas.

TABLA 3  
Unidimensionalidad de la escala combinando variables (%)

	ESC17	ESC10	OTESC
<b>POB</b>	75,0	100,0	<b>27,3</b>
<b>ESTU</b>	60,0	100,0	57,1
<b>POB/ESTU</b>	100,0	100,0	100,0
	POB	EST	POB/ESTU
<b>AME</b>	100,0	100,0	100,0
<b>EUR</b>	75,0	60,0	100,0
<b>ASI</b>	<b>27,3</b>	57,1	100,0
	ESC17	ESC10	OTESC
<b>AME</b>	100,0	100,0	0,0
<b>EUR</b>	76,9	100,0	50,0
<b>ASI</b>	64,3	<b>25,0</b>	0,0

Como podemos observar, son tres las combinaciones en las que la unidimensionalidad de la escala alcanza unos porcentajes más reducidos: en primer lugar, sería el caso en el que se utilizan otras escalas distintas a las propuestas por Shimp y Sharma (1987) y, además, se considera como muestra a la población en general (27,3%), si bien sólo representa a tres casos de los 46 seleccionados; en segundo lugar, estarían aquellos estudios que se llevan a cabo en el continente asiático y también se utiliza como muestra a la población en general (27,3%), una combinación que se repite en 11 de los estudios seleccionados; por último, lo completarían aquellos trabajos que también se llevan a cabo en el continente asiático y que utilizan la escala reducida de 10 ítems (25%), pero que sólo se reproduce en cuatro de los estudios.

Estos resultados nos permiten a su vez plantear una nueva hipótesis referente a la existencia de efectos moderadores entre las diferentes variables independientes, de manera que el carácter unidimensional de la escala pueda venir condicionado no sólo por el efecto directo de cada una de ellas (p.ej: un ámbito geográfico determinado, o el uso de la escala de 10 ítems), sino también por el efecto conjunto entre algunas

de ellas. En base a ello, y a la representatividad de las combinaciones anteriores, planteamos una nueva hipótesis:

***H<sub>4</sub>. La realización del estudio en el continente asiático si se utiliza a la población general influye negativamente en la unidimensionalidad de la escala***

#### ***4.2. Especificación del modelo***

A partir de los planteamientos anteriores, y siguiendo con el proceso secuencial del meta-análisis, a continuación especificamos el modelo que posteriormente estimaremos (5ª fase). Dado el carácter categórico de la variable dependiente (unidimensional / multidimensional), hemos estimado un modelo de regresión logístico. Igualmente, el carácter categórico de las variables independientes ha motivado la inclusión de n-1 (siendo n igual al número de categorías en cada caso) variables ficticias para cada una de ellas.

Inicialmente vamos a considerar un modelo que incluya únicamente efectos directos (hipótesis H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>2</sub> y H<sub>3</sub>), y, posteriormente, desarrollaremos un segundo modelo que incluya los efectos moderadores (hipótesis H<sub>4</sub>).

##### ***4.2.1. Modelo de efectos directos***

Para el caso de regresiones con variables dummy en las que, como en este caso, existen más de dos categorías en cada caso, la decisión respecto a qué variables incluir y cuáles dejar como categoría de referencia puede responder a diferentes criterios como señala (Hardy, 1993). Entre estos criterios estaría la consideración de categorías de referencia que estén bien delimitadas, la inclusión como variables de categorías que presenten un mayor número de casos o que conteniendo un número reducido sean muy representativa, en cuyo caso habría que utilizar como categoría de referencia una de las más numerosas.

En base a estos criterios especificaremos el siguiente modelo:

$$F_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ESC17_t + \beta_2 ESC10_t + \beta_3 POB_t + \beta_4 ESTU_t + \beta_5 AME_t + \beta_6 ASI_t + e_t \quad [1]$$

donde:

$F_t$  = Variable dummy que toma el valor 1 si la escala es unidimensional (un único factor obtenido en el Análisis Factorial) y 0 si no lo es.

$ESC17_t$  = Variable dummy que toma el valor 1 si la escala utilizada es la original de 17 ítems y 0 en el resto de casos.

$ESC10_t$  = Variable dummy que toma el valor 1 si la escala utilizada es la original reducida de 10 ítems y 0 en el resto de casos.

$POB_t$  = Variable dummy que toma el valor 1 si la muestra utilizada ha sido sólo población en general y 0 en el resto de los casos.

$ESTU_t$  = Variable f dummy que toma el valor 1 si la muestra utilizada ha sido sólo estudiantes y 0 en el resto de los casos.

$AME_t$  = Variable dummy que toma el valor 1 el estudio se ha realizado en el continente americano y 0 en el resto de los casos.

$ASI_t$  = Variable dummy ficticia que toma el valor 1 el estudio se ha realizado en el continente asiático y 0 en el resto de los casos.

$e_t$  = Término de error.

Según señala Hair *et al.* (1999), en la mayoría de los casos de regresión múltiple, se tiene un número posible de variables independientes entre las cuales elegir para incluirlas en la ecuación de regresión. A veces el conjunto de variables independientes puede estar muy definido, como a priori es en este caso, y el modelo de regresión se usa esencialmente en una aproximación confirmatoria. En otros casos, el investigador puede desear elegir entre el conjunto de variables independientes para conseguir el “mejor” modelo de regresión a través de una aproximación secuencial. No obstante, en el procedimiento de búsqueda secuencial el investigador debe ser consciente de dos posibles inconvenientes: 1) en primer lugar, la multicolinealidad entre variables independientes puede tener un impacto sustancial sobre la especificación final del modelo, por lo que habrá que examinar las correlaciones directas de todas las variables independientes potenciales; 2) en segundo lugar, se deberán emplear umbrales muy conservadores (por ejemplo, 0,01 o 0,05) al añadir o

destruir las variables en los test de significación múltiple que se realizan en el proceso de estimación del modelo.

En este caso, muchas de las variables inicialmente consideradas son eliminadas bien por presentar altas correlaciones con otras variables independientes (existencia de multicolinealidad) como ocurre, por ejemplo, entre las variables POB y ESTU (-0,763) (ver Tabla 4) o bien, por no ser significativas las correlaciones con la variable dependiente, como ocurre con las variables ESC10, POB y ESTU, tal y como podemos observar en la Tabla 5.

TABLA 4  
Correlación Pearson entre variables independientes

Variable	ECS17	ESC10	POB	ESTU	AME	ASI
ESC17	1					
ESC10	-0,675	1				
POB	-0,118	0,242	1			
ESTU	0,053	-0,147	-0,763	1		
AME	0,131	0,016	-0,321	0,199	1	
ASI	-0,103	0,163	0,004	-0,028	-0,388	1

TABLA 5  
Correlación entre la variable dependiente y las independientes

Variable	Índice de correlación (Pearson)	Signif.
ESC17	0,353	0,008*
ESC10	-0,124	0,206
POB	-0,242	0,052
ESTU	0,054	0,360
AME	0,309	0,018*
ASI	-0,339	0,011*

El hecho de que las variables POB y ESTU no sean significativas y, por tanto, queden excluidas del modelo, nos permite obtener un primer resultado de nuestro estudio, dado que la hipótesis  $H_2$ , con la que se pretendía contrastar si el tipo de muestra utilizada tenía una influencia directa sobre la unidimensionalidad de la escala, no va a ser aceptada.

Por tanto, la especificación del modelo [1] inicialmente propuesto cambia sustancialmente, quedando reducido al siguiente modelo final:

$$F_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ESC17_t + \beta_6 ASI_t + e_t \quad [2]$$

A continuación, la Tabla 6 muestra los parámetros estimados del modelo de regresión logística utilizando el *Método paso a paso hacia delante de Wald* (SPSS.21).

TABLA 6  
Parámetros estimados en el modelo de regresión final

Variable	$\beta$	Signif.
ESC17	1,844	0,001
ASI	-1,381	0,030
Chi-cuadrado	14,607	0,001
R <sup>2</sup> Nagelkerke	0,363	

Los resultados obtenidos de la regresión logística nos permiten aceptar tanto la hipótesis  $H_1$  como la  $H_3$  planteadas anteriormente, ya que al ser significativas las variables ASI y ESC17, podemos afirmar que tanto el ámbito geográfico de estudio como el tipo de escala utilizada ejercen una influencia directa sobre unidimensionalidad de CETSCALE.

Respecto a la interpretación que podemos dar a los parámetros estimados, comentar que para el caso de ESC17, significaría que la utilización de la escala completa incrementa en un 184,4% la probabilidad de que la escala sea unidimensional en relación a la utilización de otras escalas distintas a las planteadas por Shimp y Sharma. Por su parte, en el caso de la variable ASI, el hecho de que el estudio se haya desarrollado en un país asiático reduce en un 138,1% la probabilidad de que la escala sea unidimensional respecto a si el estudio se hace en el continente europeo (categoría de referencia).

#### 4.2.2. Modelo de efectos moderadores

A la hora de incorporar los efectos moderadores que nos permitan contrastar la hipótesis  $H_4$  necesitamos como paso previo, conocer el carácter moderador puro o cuasimoderador de cada una de las variables. A partir de la significatividad de los coeficientes de correlación calculados, podemos caracterizar las variables  $ESC17_t$ ,  $AME_t$  y  $ASI_t$  como cuasimoderadoras (pueden tener efectos directos y moderadores) mientras que las variables  $ESC10_t$ ,  $POB_t$ , y  $ESTU_t$ , carecerían de efecto directo y sólo tendría, en su caso, un efecto moderador.

Por tanto, en nuestro caso podríamos incorporar al modelo la siguiente variable adicional con la que contrastar  $H_4$ :  $ASI_t \times POB_t$

La nueva especificación del modelo [3] que incluye los efectos moderadores será finalmente la siguiente:

$$F_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ESC17_t + \beta_2 ASI_t + \beta_3 ASI_t \times POB_t + e_t \quad [3]$$

Al realizar una segunda regresión logística utilizando de nuevo el *Método paso a paso hacia delante de Wald*, obtenemos los resultados que recoge la Tabla 7.

TABLA 7  
Parámetros estimados en el modelo de regresión final

Variable	$\beta$	Signif.
ESC17	1,632	0,001
ASIXPOB	-2,025	0,012
Chi-cuadrado	16,927	0,000
R <sup>2</sup> Nagelkerke	0,410	

Como ocurría en el modelo [2] de nuevo en la estimación del modelo [3] se mantiene la significatividad de la variable  $ESC17$ , ofreciendo unos resultados muy similares a los comentados anteriormente. En cambio, la variable  $ASI$ , al no ser significativa, deja de tener un efecto directo para presentar un efecto condicionado. Esto significa que cuando el estudio se realiza en el continente asiático, si se utiliza como tipo de muestra a la población en general se reduce en un 202,50% la probabilidad de que la escala sea unidimensional. Estos resultados nos llevan a aceptar la hipótesis  $H_4$ , pero en cambio, nos obliga a reconsiderar la aceptación inicial de la hipótesis  $H_3$ , que tras la estimación del modelo con efectos moderadores resulta no aceptada.

## 6. Conclusiones

CETSCALE es, sin lugar a dudas, la escala más utilizada en la literatura para analizar el comportamiento etnocentrista del consumidor. Además, es una escala que ha sido validada en numerosos trabajos en los que ha prevalecido tanto su consistencia interna como su unidimensionalidad. El hecho de que en los últimos años hayan surgido en la literatura algunos trabajos que cuestionan su carácter unidimensional y, con ello, su universalidad, viene a sugerir que CETSCALE se comporta de diferente manera cuando se examina fuera de Estados Unidos, el ámbito geográfico para el que fue diseñada. Por esta razón, Thelen et al. (2006) alertan a los investigadores de la trampa que puede suponer dar por hecho que las escalas desarrolladas en un país o cultura puedan aplicarse a otros países o culturas diferentes.

El meta-análisis realizado en este trabajo, y para el que hemos considerado como variables de estudio la versión de la escala utilizada, el ámbito geográfico y la tipología de la muestra, nos ha permitido determinar algunos factores que condicionan los resultados unidimensionales de la escala. Sin duda, el aspecto más significativo de los resultados obtenidos ha estado en el hecho de que de una forma directa o indirecta todas las variables analizadas tienen una influencia en la unidimensionalidad de CETSCALE.

En este sentido, resulta importante destacar que, por lo que se refiere a la versión de la escala, siempre que se utilice la escala original de 17 ítems planteada por Shimp y Sharma (1987), existirá una mayor probabilidad de que la escala sea unidimensional, lo que le da preferencia sobre el resto de escalas planteadas en la literatura, incluida la propia escala reducida de Shimp y Sharma. Por otro lado, y en lo que se refiere al ámbito geográfico, si el estudio se realiza en un país asiático se reduce de una forma importante la probabilidad de que la escala presente un comportamiento unidimensional si a ello se le añade el hecho de utilizar como muestra a la población general. De nuevo, este resultado viene a alertar de la probable no unidimensionalidad de la escala si el estudio se realiza en ámbitos geográficos distintos al continente americano o europeo. Respecto a otros argumentos planteados en la literatura y que condicionan un comportamiento no unidimensional de la escala a las características socio-demográficas de la población (e.g.



Marcoux et al., 1997; Supphellen y Rittenburg, 2001; Bawa, 2004), destacar que no resultan avalados por los resultados de este estudio al carecer el tipo de muestra utilizado de un efecto directo y, además, negativo, sobre la unidimensionalidad (no aceptación de la  $H_2$ ), limitándose a un efecto moderador y en un ámbito geográfico muy concreto.

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# MODELOS DE GESTIÓN DE INVENTARIOS PARA VARIOS ARTÍCULOS, CONSIDERANDO DEMANDA DETERMINISTA DEPENDIENTE DEL TIEMPO

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## RESUMEN

*Desde la perspectiva del marketing, la clave del éxito de las organizaciones en el mercado descansa en sus habilidades para atraer y retener a sus clientes, mediante la creación, entrega y comunicación de un valor añadido superior. En un contexto de crisis, las empresas orientadas al consumidor han de lograr esos objetivos, reduciendo costes en todos los eslabones del sistema de distribución. La gestión de stocks es una función esencial de la organización que es vital para el desarrollo del proceso de comercialización*

*En el presente trabajo se determinan las políticas óptimas de sistemas de inventarios, considerando múltiples artículos y demandas dependientes del tiempo con patrones potenciales. En primer lugar, se asume que no existen roturas y, a continuación, se admite la presencia de roturas recuperables, obteniendo periodos de gestión y cantidades económicas de pedido que minimizan los costes totales. Finalmente, se presentan ejemplos numéricos que ilustran los modelos analizados.*

## Palabras clave:

*Sistemas de Inventario, Demanda Dependiente del Tiempo, Patrón Potencial, Roturas Recuperables, Período Óptimo de Gestión, Cantidad Económica de Pedido.*

## 1. Introducción

Como es sabido, la economía mundial se encuentra inmersa en un acelerado proceso de transformación. El entorno global se ha convertido en un medio dinámico, extremadamente competitivo y cargado de incertidumbre, en el cual no existen puntos de referencia estables y donde la evolución de los acontecimientos económicos condiciona la adopción de decisiones. La etapa que se desarrolla en la actualidad se caracteriza por la necesidad de afrontar numerosos desafíos en materia de gestión empresarial, existiendo un consenso generalizado en cuanto a que en un contexto de profunda crisis, las organizaciones han de ahorrar con el objetivo de generar ventajas competitivas sostenibles en el tiempo que garanticen su supervivencia.

En el ámbito del marketing se están consolidando algunas de esas tendencias. Así, por una parte, parece reafirmarse el protagonismo de los aspectos financieros y los costes empresariales en el seno de las organizaciones, y por otra, se están desarrollando nuevos métodos y modelos de gestión en el marco de la logística (Lambert et al., 1998; Ballou, 2004; Martínez y Maraver, 2009; Anaya Tejero, 2011) y la distribución comercial (Díez de Castro, 1997; Casares y Rebollo, 2005; Soret Los Santos, 2006; Miquel Peris et al., 2008), orientados a proporcionar eficacia y eficiencia para la consecución de los objetivos, logrando una mejor asignación de los recursos disponibles (Parra Guerrero, 2005).

La mayor parte de los autores coinciden al concebir el marketing como un sistema global de actividades, que incluye un conjunto de procesos mediante los cuales se identifican las necesidades de los consumidores para poder satisfacerlas de la mejor manera posible, promoviendo el intercambio de productos y/o servicios de valor, a cambio de una utilidad o beneficio para la empresa u organización (Cruz Roche, 1991; Martín Armario, 1993; Miquel Peris et al., 1995; Vázquez y Trespalacios, 2002; Kotler et al., 2000; Rufin, 2010). En relación con ello, la distribución comercial minorista es una de las materias que mayor tratamiento ha recibido en la literatura de la gestión empresarial y el marketing, como consecuencia de su importancia estratégica en la eficacia y eficiencia de cualquier sistema económico (Díez de Castro, 1997), así como por la estrecha relación que mantiene con otras áreas de decisión de la empresa. Lógicamente, los esfuerzos de marketing realizados por las organizaciones resultarán ineficaces si, en última instancia, los productos que comercializan no se encuentran a disposición del consumidor (Kotler et al., 2000). De ahí que, la distribución, como instrumento que relaciona la producción con el consumo, tenga como misión principal entregar el producto al cliente final en la cantidad demandada, en el momento en que lo necesite, en el lugar que desee o pueda adquirirlo, y todo ello con el mínimo coste posible (Díez de Castro, 1997; Miquel Peris, 2008).

La adecuada gestión y control de los inventarios ha sido siempre un capítulo estratégico de gran relevancia en la ciencia empresarial, ya que la mayor parte de los autores coinciden en que es una de las áreas de decisión que ofrece mayores posibilidades para conseguir una reducción de los costes (Waters, 1992; Cuatrecasas, 1999; Ballou, 2004; Parra Guerrero, 2005). Su consideración como una inmovilización financiera los convierte en un referente económico determinante para las organizaciones, ya que esas inversiones representan una gran proporción de sus activos y, por tanto, los gastos derivados de mantener productos en stock tienen un protagonismo esencial dentro de los costes empresariales. Desde esa perspectiva, como sostiene Parra Guerrero (2005), ahora más que nunca, se ha de procurar la protección del beneficio empresarial mediante mecanismos distintos del incremento de las ventas y de los ingresos. Tal es así, que probablemente la palabra clave hoy en la gestión empresarial sea la productividad más que el crecimiento, configurándose el control de stocks como una de las parcelas de actividad de la empresa que ofrece mayores posibilidades de reducción en los costes, sin merma en la eficacia.

En el presente trabajo nos proponemos determinar las políticas óptimas de gestión de inventario para varios productos, considerando dos posibles escenarios diferentes. En primer lugar analizamos el modelo de gestión de stocks cuando no se permite la existencia de roturas y, posteriormente, estudiamos el modelo que asume que existen roturas recuperables, teniendo en

cuenta que las mismas pueden ser atendidas con la llegada de la siguiente reposición, es decir, los clientes estarían dispuestos a esperar al suministro de nueva mercancía para satisfacer sus necesidades. En ambos supuestos, formularemos la función de coste total, que engloba los costes relacionados con el mantenimiento, la rotura y la reposición del inventario, determinando cuándo se deberá reponer el stock junto con la cantidad óptima que minimiza su coste total de gestión.

## **2. Los modelos de gestión de inventarios en el ámbito del marketing y la distribución comercial**

La Teoría de Inventarios proporciona un cuerpo de conocimientos que permiten modelar y analizar las operaciones relativas a la gestión de los productos para cubrir las necesidades de los consumidores. Los inventarios se definen como aquellos bienes almacenados, que poseen valor económico y están listos para ser utilizados por los consumidores. Si se considera a los stocks como bienes económicos, éstos tienen su razón de ser en la utilidad que reportan, pues permiten disponer de los artículos atendiendo a los requerimientos del cliente (Parra Guerrero, 2005). Este término se refiere tanto a acumulaciones de materias primas que esperan ser utilizadas en la producción de artículos, componentes, productos semiterminados o almacenados temporalmente durante el proceso de producción como a productos terminados que intervienen en diferentes puntos a lo largo del canal logístico de la empresa (Zermati, 2004; Parra Guerrero, 2005), variando en cantidad con el tiempo, en respuesta al proceso de demanda que los reduce y el proceso de abastecimiento que los eleva.

La gestión, administración y control de los inventarios se deriva de la importancia que tienen las existencias para la empresa, siendo esta actividad un elemento básico en su cadena de valor, y constituyendo uno de los aspectos más complejos para cualquier organización (Cuatrecasas, 1999). El objetivo fundamental consiste en mantener un nivel de stock que permita, a un mínimo costo, proporcionar un máximo nivel de satisfacción a los clientes, asegurando la disposición de los productos en las mejores condiciones para cubrir sus necesidades (Díez de Castro, 1997; Zermati, 2004; Anaya Tejero, 2011).

### **2.1. Políticas óptimas de gestión de stocks y servicio al cliente**

Por tanto, las técnicas de gestión de stocks tienen entre sus principales fines conciliar la minimización de los costes de almacenamiento de los productos, con la adecuada distribución comercial de los artículos para hacerlos llegar al cliente, sin que éste tenga que incurrir en tiempos de espera, o logrando que este tiempo sea el mínimo posible, permitiendo maximizar las ventas y los beneficios (Christopher, 1994; Lambert et al., 1998; Anaya Tejero, 2011). De acuerdo con García Sabater et al. (2005), la gestión de inventarios pretende maximizar la rentabilidad de la compañía, minimizando el costo de capital inmovilizado en el stock y al mismo tiempo satisfaciendo los requerimientos de servicio al cliente. Por ello, su eficiente administración se ha convertido en un factor crítico de la cadena de suministro para lograr los objetivos de gestión de la organización.

El mantenimiento de inventarios es una actividad económica necesaria e imprescindible para atender la demanda actual y futura de los clientes. Si no se atendieran los pedidos realizados por algún cliente en un tiempo prudencial, éste podría dejar de adquirir ciertos productos a la empresa para solicitárselos a la competencia. Además, si no se dispone de un stock adecuado de artículos en el inventario con la finalidad de satisfacer la demanda, se perderían los ingresos correspondientes derivados de las ventas por no tener capacidad de suministrar los productos solicitados. Por tanto, los inventarios permiten atender las peticiones de los clientes, cubriendo las demandas de los productos y suavizando la diferencia que separa la oferta productiva de la demanda en el tiempo.

Podemos hablar de tres tipos de costos generales relacionados con la gestión de los inventarios: el costo de mantener almacenados los artículos, el costo derivado de la falta de existencias y el costo relativo a la reposición de los productos. En el primero de ellos, se recogen todos aquellos

gastos que tienen que ver con el almacenamiento y mantenimiento de los artículos, incluyendo aquí también el costo de oportunidad de realizar otras inversiones alternativas. En el segundo de los costes se recoge la cuantía económica no obtenida debido a la rotura ocasionada cuando los clientes demandan un producto, y el mismo no es suministrado debido a la falta de stock o existencias. Por último, en el tercer costo se aglutinan todos los gastos relacionados con el pedido o la reposición de los productos para cubrir la demanda de los clientes.

En la actualidad, la complejidad de los problemas y la imprecisión de las situaciones ha hecho necesario introducir esquemas matemáticos más flexibles y adecuados al entorno empresarial contemporáneo (Sarabia, 1996). En ocasiones, para la resolución de esos problemas en los sistemas u organizaciones, se utiliza una metodología que se apoya en el proceso de modelización (Rios, 1995), como representación simplificada de algún sistema real (Prawda, 1991), de forma que se pueda trabajar en un marco apropiado que permita buscar las mejores soluciones posibles a los dilemas planteados. Aunque sea menos completo que el sistema al cual sustituye, y a pesar de las dificultades que se pueden originar al representar problemas reales a través del recurso a los modelos, existen múltiples razones positivas para su utilización, entre las cuales destaca el poder entender mejor las condiciones y el entorno que rodea al sistema cuando éste es muy complejo.

Desde los primeros modelos de Harris (1913) y Wilson (1934) hasta nuestros días, han aparecido, en la literatura especializada, un gran número de trabajos de control de inventarios que intentan representar las diferentes casuísticas que se presentan en los sistemas de gestión de stocks. El problema fundamental de la gestión de stocks se centra en determinar cuál debe ser la cantidad que se debe mantener en el almacén para garantizar la satisfacción del cliente, así como el establecimiento de la inversión máxima en existencias, considerando que cuanto mayor sea la cantidad de elementos almacenados, menor será el riesgo de rotura de stocks y mayores serán los costes en los que se incurrirá (Anaya Tejero, 2011), incluyendo el coste de oportunidad derivado de la inmovilización de recursos financieros materializados en existencias.

Desde ese punto de vista, el nivel mínimo de existencias en almacén ha de renovarse al ritmo condicionado por la demanda de los clientes (Zermati, 2004; García Sabater et al., 2005). La decisión que se debe adoptar se centra en decidir entre tener altos niveles de stock, que proporcionarán altos niveles de servicio a los clientes, o tener bajos niveles de stock, que generarán menores costes (Zipkin, 2000;). En ese sentido, las desventajas de poseer bajos niveles de stocks se traducen en que los pedidos no pueden satisfacerse de manera íntegra, lo cual podría llevar a una pérdida, tanto de clientes reales como potenciales. Por su parte, mantener elevados niveles de inventario puede suponer importantes desventajas debido a que el capital almacenado podría estar invertido en otros activos más productivos, a lo que habría que añadir el riesgo de deterioro de los productos, de obsolescencia o de caducidad.

Con respecto a la pregunta sobre la cantidad a pedir, hay diferentes respuestas posibles (Naddor, 1966; Waters, 1992; Rambaux, 1998; Zipkin, 2000; Zermati, 2004). Para determinar la cantidad adecuada que se debería solicitar se ha de calcular el tamaño del lote óptimo, analizando los costes relacionados con el inventario. También, se debe especificar el momento idóneo para ejecutar las órdenes de reposición. La repercusión de esas decisiones sobre los costes de mantenimiento supondrá que a mayor pedido de cierto artículo, mayores serán dichos costes. Por otro lado, realizar un gran número de pedidos en pequeñas cantidades generará un volumen medio más bajo de stocks, pero unos costes de reposición y entrega mayores.

En un entorno económico caracterizado por un exceso de oferta sobre la demanda, en el que las exigencias de los consumidores son cada vez mayores, el mundo empresarial está destinando un gran número de recursos y esfuerzos para atraer, retener y fidelizar al cliente con el fin de mantener relaciones positivas a largo plazo (Kotler et al., 2000), ya que es mucho más fácil conservarlo que ganar un nuevo cliente. En ese sentido, cuando hay rotura de stocks o escasez es complicado que los consumidores esperen por la llegada de la siguiente reposición, ya que algunos de ellos adquirirán sus productos a la competencia, siendo probable que la empresa los pierda como clientes, afectando, además, negativamente a su imagen.

## ***2.2. Los modelos de inventario deterministas con demanda variable en el tiempo y patrón potencial***

Tradicionalmente, en el análisis de los sistemas deterministas se asume que la demanda de los productos es uniforme a lo largo del ciclo del inventario. Sin embargo, en este trabajo estudiaremos un sistema de inventario, considerando varios artículos, donde las demandas de los mismos no son uniformes, sino que pueden variar con el tiempo. Esas demandas de los clientes recogen o modelan situaciones que reflejan la posibilidad de que el tamaño de la cantidad solicitada al comienzo del ciclo de inventario sea grande y luego vaya disminuyendo a lo largo del resto del periodo, o también permiten representar la situación contraria, esto es, la demanda es inicialmente pequeña y va aumentando progresivamente durante el transcurso del periodo de programación.

El patrón de demanda potencial se asume como una función útil para mostrar la evolución del nivel de inventario y modelar la demanda de los consumidores, suponiendo que la misma depende del período del ciclo de pedido y varía con el tiempo (Naddor (1966), Datta y Pal (1988), Lee y Wu (2002), y Dye (2004)). De esa manera, bajo ese patrón se considera no sólo la posibilidad de que la tasa de demanda sea constante durante el ciclo de inventario, sino también se permite caracterizar otras situaciones que reflejan los momentos en los cuales los clientes requieren sus productos.

A la hora de mostrar la aplicabilidad práctica del patrón potencial en los análisis de los modelos de gestión de inventarios, en primer lugar se han de identificar las demandas de productos que reflejan estos supuestos.

En la vida real hay situaciones donde la demanda de un artículo es mayor al comienzo del período de programación. Se pueden dar en el caso de los bienes preparados, tales como panes, helados, dulces, comidas cocinadas listas para su venta, etc., ya que los consumidores quieren productos alimenticios que estén recién hechos. Este tipo de demanda también se puede dar con productos perecederos como el pescado, la carne fresca, las frutas, las verduras, los yogures, etc., porque las ventas se reducen cuando se acerca su fecha de caducidad. Además, la demanda de nuevos productos con un alto componente tecnológico es mayor al principio que al final del período. Por ejemplo, los bienes tales como ordenadores, teléfonos móviles, videojuegos, etc. son más demandados cuando aparecen en el mercado por primera vez, debido a la innovación que representan y a las nuevas aplicaciones, utilidades y servicios que ofrecen.

Sin embargo, al contrario, hay productos donde la demanda es mayor al final del ciclo de inventario. Esta situación se da para artículos como la gasolina, cuya demanda se incrementa cuando el producto escasea. También, hay bienes indispensables para el hogar que pueden entrar dentro de esta categoría, tales como el aceite, la harina, el café, el azúcar, el agua, la leche, etc. Así, se producen aumentos en sus demandas cuando la cantidad en inventario exhibida en los puntos de venta comienza a disminuir debido a su uso diario. Otros ejemplos, adaptados a la oferta de servicios, incluyen la demanda de entradas en los teatros, cines, espectáculos musicales, eventos deportivos, etc., la cual suele ser más alta al final del período, esto es, cuando el evento está a punto de tener lugar.

Por último, hay otros productos en los que la demanda se mantiene más o menos estable a una tasa uniforme a lo largo del período de programación. Los artículos que pueden reflejar ese comportamiento pueden ser, por ejemplo, los aparatos eléctricos, los materiales de construcción, los suministros, los artículos vendidos en una ferretería, los productos de decoración, muebles, artículos para el hogar, productos de limpieza, utensilios de cocina y electrodomésticos, complementos, etc. En general, la demanda de estos productos suele ser constante y no depende de una parte específica del ciclo del inventario.

En la literatura sobre los modelos de inventario, existen diversos trabajos en los cuales se asume que la demanda varía con el tiempo y sigue un patrón potencial. Así, Goel y Aggarwal (1981) formularon un sistema de nivel de inventario con patrón de demanda potencial para artículos con cierto porcentaje de deterioro. Datta y Pal (1988) presentaron un modelo de inventario con patrón de demanda potencial, pero considerando tasa variable de deterioro. Lee y Wu (2002)



estudiaron un modelo de inventario para artículos con posibilidad de deterioro, roturas y patrón de demanda potencial. Dye (2004) amplió el modelo de Lee y Wu contemplando una proporción de roturas que se satisfacen con retraso, la cual es proporcional al tiempo. Recientemente, Rajeswari y Vanjikkodi (2011) estudiaron un modelo de inventario con patrón de demanda potencial, asumiendo deterioro y permitiendo que la rotura no satisfecha se cubra parcialmente en función del tiempo de espera.

En esos trabajos que hemos citado en el párrafo anterior, la demanda sigue un patrón potencial y el período de programación o la duración de cada ciclo de inventario se considera siempre fija. Al ser constante dicho período, el costo total promedio por unidad de tiempo es una función dependiente de una sola variable: el nivel inicial de stock. Sin embargo, en el presente trabajo, el ciclo de reposición no está dado ni está preestablecido y es también una variable de decisión del problema de inventario. Además, en los trabajos previamente citados sólo se considera un producto y se determina la reposición óptima de ese artículo. Sin embargo, en este trabajo se estudia un sistema de inventario para múltiples productos, desarrollándose la política óptima conjunta de inventario.

### 3. Hipótesis y notación

Los fundamentos en los que se basan los sistemas de inventarios que analizaremos en el presente trabajo son los siguientes:

- El sistema de inventario considera  $N$  artículos diferentes. Por tanto, para cada uno de los artículos deberá determinarse la cantidad que se debe pedir para reponer el inventario y cada cuanto tiempo se debe reponer el mismo.
- Los períodos de programación o gestión  $T_i$ , con  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ , representan las duraciones de los ciclos de inventario de los artículos. Son variables de decisión del sistema.
- Al inicio de cada período de programación se repone el inventario de cada artículo hasta el nivel de stock inicial  $S_i$  con  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ . Dichos niveles de stock obtenidos después de la reposiciones son también variables de decisión del sistema.
- El inventario debe ser repuesto cuando el nivel de stock sea igual o inferior a  $s_i$  unidades, con  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$  ( $s_i$  representa el punto de pedido o de reposición). La cantidad  $-s_i$  representa el número de roturas o unidades de demanda a cubrir del artículo  $i$ -ésimo al final del ciclo de inventario.
- El coste de mantener en stock una unidad del artículo  $i$ -ésimo es denotado por  $h_i$ , con  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ . Dichos costes  $h_i$  son constantes y difieren según el artículo considerado.
- El coste de realizar un pedido para reponer el inventario es  $A$ . Dicha cantidad es constante e independiente del número de artículos diferentes solicitados en el pedido y de la cantidad solicitada para cada artículo.
- El coste unitario de incurrir en escasez del artículo  $i$ -ésimo debido a la falta de existencias en el inventario es  $w_i$ , con  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ . Dichos costos son valores constantes y pueden ser diferentes, dependiendo del tipo de artículo.
- La reposición de los artículos se considera instantánea.
- El tiempo de retardo de los artículos es un periodo insignificante, por lo que se considera nulo.
- Los tamaños del lote o cantidad a reponer de cada artículo son denotados por  $Q_i$ , con  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ . Dichas cantidades son valores desconocidos y deben ser determinadas de forma que se minimice el coste total del inventario por periodo de programación. Si las roturas no están permitidas, entonces  $Q_i = S_i$ . En el caso en que haya rotura y la demanda sea diferida en el tiempo, esto es, la rotura se satisface posteriormente a la llegada de la siguiente reposición, entonces  $Q_i$  es la suma del nivel inicial de stock ( $S_i$ ) más el número total de pedidos pendientes en el ciclo de inventario ( $Q_i = S_i - s_i$ ).

- Para el  $i$ -ésimo artículo ( $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ ), sea  $d_i$  la demanda total durante el tiempo de programación  $T_i$ , y sea  $r_i$  la demanda promedio por período, es decir,  $r_i = d_i / T_i$ . Esa demanda promedio por período es determinista, pero la forma en que las cantidades son sacadas del inventario depende del momento en que son retiradas. Así, la demanda  $D(t)$  acumulada hasta el momento  $t$  ( $0 \leq t \leq T$ ) varía con el tiempo y se supone que es

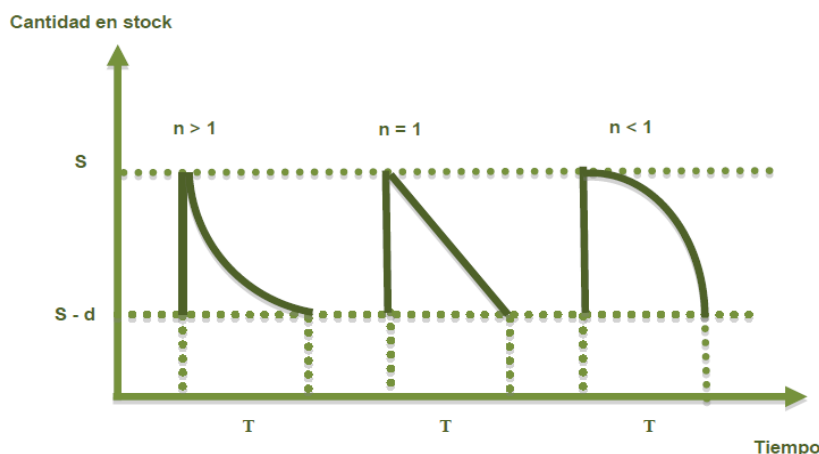
$$D_i(t) = d_i \left( \frac{t}{T_i} \right)^{\frac{1}{n_i}} \quad (1)$$

donde  $n_i$  es el índice de patrón de demanda del artículo  $i$ -ésimo, con  $0 < n_i < \infty$ . La tasa de demanda en el tiempo  $t$  ( $0 \leq t \leq T$ ) para el  $i$ -ésimo artículo ( $i=1,2,\dots,N$ ) es

$$\frac{d_i t^{\frac{1-n_i}{n_i}}}{n_i T_i^{\frac{1}{n_i}}} = \frac{r_i}{n_i} \left( \frac{t}{T_i} \right)^{\frac{1-n_i}{n_i}} \quad (2)$$

Esta expresión de la demanda de los artículos se conoce como patrón de demanda potencial (ver Naddor (1966), Datta y Pal (1988), Lee y Wu (2002)). En la Figura 1, se muestran diversos patrones de demanda potencial.

FIGURA 1  
Patrones de demanda potencial



Así, para cualquier artículo  $i$ , si el índice del patrón de demanda  $n_i > 1$ , significa que una porción mayor de la demanda se produce al comienzo del período. Cuando dicho índice es  $n_i = 1$ , la demanda sigue un patrón uniforme de forma que está igualmente repartida a lo largo del período. Finalmente, cuando  $n_i < 1$ , una parte mayor de la demanda de dicho artículo se produce al final del período.

#### 4. Formulación y resolución de los problemas de gestión de inventario

Teniendo en cuenta los supuestos del sistema de inventario, la cantidad de stock almacenada para el  $i$ -ésimo artículo  $I_i(t)$  en el tiempo  $t$ , para  $0 \leq t \leq T$ , viene dada por el nivel inicial menos la demanda acumulada hasta el instante  $t$ , esto es,

$$I_i(t) = S_i - d_i n_i \sqrt[n_i]{\frac{t}{T_i}} \quad (3)$$

El nivel de inventario  $I_i(t)$  es una función decreciente, continua y diferenciable en el intervalo  $[0, T]$ . Al comienzo del período de programación hay  $I_i(0) = S_i$  unidades en stock y, posteriormente, el nivel de stock se va reduciendo con el tiempo.

Al final del período, el inventario es repuesto instantáneamente hasta el nivel  $S_i$  y, por tanto, comienza un nuevo ciclo de inventario.

En los apartados siguientes estudiaremos las políticas óptimas de inventario tanto para el sistema cuando no se admiten roturas, como para el sistema de inventario en el cual las roturas están permitidas y se recuperan con la llegada de la siguiente reposición.

#### 4.1. Sistema de inventario con patrones de demanda potencial, sin permitir la existencia de roturas

Comenzamos analizando el sistema de inventario con patrón de demanda potencial en el que las roturas de stocks no se permiten. En este caso, el nivel inicial de stock  $S_i$  al comienzo del ciclo de inventario  $T_i$  es igual a la demanda total  $d_i$  durante ese periodo  $T_i$ . Por lo tanto, la cantidad media  $I_1(S_i)$  mantenida en inventario para el artículo  $i$ , con  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ , es

$$I_1(S_i) = \frac{1}{T_i} \int_0^{T_i} I_1(t) dt = \frac{1}{T_i} \int_0^{T_i} (S_i - S_i \sqrt{t/T_i}) dt = \frac{S_i}{n_i + 1} \quad (4)$$

Como no hay roturas, el nivel de stock inicial  $S_i$  es igual a la demanda total  $d_i$ , y dicha demanda es igual a la cantidad  $r_i T_i$ . Por tanto, de (4) obtenemos que la cantidad media del artículo  $i$ -ésimo mantenida en stock es

$$I_1(T_i) = \frac{r_i T_i}{n_i + 1} \quad (5)$$

Antes de proceder con el desarrollo de la ecuación del costo total para este sistema de inventario, veamos que en una política óptima de inventario todos los periodos de programación  $T_i$  deben ser iguales.

En efecto, suponiendo que no lo fueran, habría un artículo  $k$  el cual tendría el menor ciclo  $T_k$  de inventario de entre todos los ciclos de inventario. Consideremos ahora otro artículo  $j$  con  $T_j > T_k$ . Para ese artículo  $j$  tendremos que la cantidad media en inventario es  $I_1(S_j)$ . Ahora bien, si reducimos el periodo de programación del artículo  $j$  al mismo periodo de programación del artículo  $k$ , entonces obviamente de (5) la cantidad media mantenida en inventario se reducirá y, por tanto, el coste de mantenimiento disminuirá. Además como el coste de reposición es independiente de los artículos solicitados, dicho coste seguirá siendo el mismo aún cuando se soliciten al mismo tiempo las reposiciones de los artículos  $j$  y  $k$ . En consecuencia, como el coste de mantenimiento disminuye y el coste de reposición se mantiene, tendremos que el coste total de reposición de los artículos  $j$  y  $k$  se reducirá. Repitiendo el proceso para el resto de los artículos, si disminuimos los periodos de gestión y los hacemos iguales al del artículo  $k$ , obtendremos una reducción del coste total relacionado con la gestión del inventario.

Por tanto, la política eficiente de inventario requerirá que todos los ciclos de inventario de los artículos coincidan. A partir de ahora llamaremos  $T$  a ese periodo común de gestión o ciclo de inventario de los artículos, esto es,  $T_i = T$ , para todo  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ .

Como consecuencia de tener en cuenta que los periodos de programación deben ser iguales, la cantidad media  $I_1(T_i)$  mantenida en inventario para el artículo  $i$  es

$$I_1(T_i) = \frac{r_i T}{n_i + 1} \quad (6)$$

Y el número de reposiciones por unidad de tiempo es  $R(T) = R(T_i) = 1/T_i = 1/T$ . Además, la rotura promedio en inventario es igual a cero debido a que no existen roturas en este sistema.

El costo total de mantenimiento por unidad de tiempo es la suma de los costes de mantenimiento de los  $N$  artículos, esto es

$$C_1(T) = \sum_{i=1}^N C_1(T_i) = \sum_{i=1}^N h_i \frac{S_i}{n_i + 1} = \sum_{i=1}^N h_i \frac{r_i T}{n_i + 1} \quad (7)$$

Además, el costo de rotura es cero y el costo de reposición por unidad de tiempo es  $C_3(T) = AR(T) = A/T$ . Así, el costo total  $C(T)$  por unidad de tiempo es la suma de estos costos y viene dado por la expresión

$$C(T) = C_1(T) + C_3(T) = \sum_{i=1}^N h_i \frac{r_i T}{n_i + 1} + A \frac{1}{T} \quad (8)$$

Para determinar el nivel óptimo que minimiza la función de coste  $C(T)$ , calculamos la derivada de dicha función:

$$C'(T) = \sum_{i=1}^N h_i \frac{r_i}{n_i + 1} - \frac{A}{T^2} \quad (9)$$

Resolviendo la ecuación  $C'(T) = 0$ , encontramos la solución óptima  $T_0$ . Por tanto, el periodo de gestión óptimo es

$$T_0 = \sqrt{\frac{A}{\sum_{i=1}^N h_i \frac{r_i}{n_i + 1}}} \quad (10)$$

Además, el nivel de stock óptimo para el artículo  $i$ -ésimo al inicio del periodo es

$$S_i^0 = r_i T_0 = r_i \sqrt{\frac{A}{\sum_{i=1}^N h_i \frac{r_i}{n_i + 1}}} \quad (11)$$

Obsérvese que las cantidades óptimas  $Q_i^0$  ( $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ ) que se deben pedir para reponer el inventario coinciden con los niveles de stock  $S_i^0$  al comienzo del ciclo del inventario, ya que en este sistema no se permiten roturas.

Sustituyendo  $T_0$  en  $C(T)$  podemos obtener el costo mínimo total por unidad de tiempo, el cual es

$$C_0 = \sqrt{4A \sum_{i=1}^N h_i \frac{r_i}{n_i + 1}} \quad (12)$$

Nótese que el periodo de programación  $T_0$  es un punto mínimo, ya que la segunda derivada de  $C(T)$  es siempre positiva

$$C''(T) = \frac{2A}{T^3} > 0 \quad (13)$$

#### 4.1.1. Casos Particulares

- En el caso especial de que los patrones de demanda de los artículos sean uniformes, esto es,  $n_i = 1$ , para todo  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ , la política de inventario obtenida coincide con la política óptima para un sistema de inventario con varios artículos, demandas constantes y roturas no permitidas (ver Naddor (1966)).
- Por otro lado, si consideramos que  $N = 1$ , esto es, trabajamos con un solo artículo, las formulas (10), (11) y (12) que determinan la política óptima son equivalentes a las formulas de la política óptima del sistema de inventario sin permitir roturas y con patrón de demanda potencial (ver Sicilia y otros (2012)).
- Por último, si consideramos ambas situaciones simultáneamente, es decir,  $N = 1$  y  $n_i = 1$ , entonces la política óptima obtenida equivale a la clásica cantidad económica de pedido (EOQ) ya que trabajamos con un solo artículo y la demanda es uniforme (ver Hillier y Lieberman (2006)).

#### 4.2. Sistema de inventario con patrones de demanda potencial y roturas

A continuación analizaremos el sistema de inventario con varios artículos que siguen patrones de demanda potencial y donde existe la posibilidad de roturas. Dichas roturas se recuperan y los artículos solicitados se suministran cuando se recibe la siguiente reposición.

Para permitir que en el sistema haya un periodo de stock y otro de rotura asumiremos que  $0 \leq S_i \leq r_i T_i$ , para todo  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ . Nótese que si asumiéramos que  $S_i \leq 0$  para algún artículo  $i$ , entonces en el ciclo del inventario de ese artículo sólo habría roturas. También si considerásemos que  $S_i \geq r_i T_i$ , entonces nunca habría roturas y siempre habría stock en el inventario.

Definimos  $\tau_i$  como el instante de tiempo en el cual el nivel de inventario del artículo  $i$ -ésimo se hace cero. Al principio del ciclo del inventario hay stock suficiente porque se han repuesto los artículos, pero a medida que transcurre el tiempo y por efecto de la demanda, el inventario va decreciendo hasta entrar en rotura. Luego se mantiene en rotura hasta que termine el ciclo del inventario y se añada nueva reposición al inventario.

Por tanto, para cada artículo  $i$ , con  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ , en este sistema debemos calcular la cantidad media mantenida en el inventario  $I_1(S_i, T_i)$  y la cantidad media de rotura  $I_2(S_i, T_i)$ . Ambas cantidades dependen de las variables nivel de stock inicial  $S_i$  y periodo de programación  $T_i$ .

La cantidad promedio del artículo  $i$ -ésimo que se mantiene en el inventario  $I_1(S_i, T_i)$  es:

$$I_1(S_i, T_i) = \frac{1}{T_i} \int_0^{\tau_i} I_1(t) dt = \frac{1}{T_i} \int_0^{\tau_i} (S_i - r_i T_i \sqrt[n_i]{t/T_i}) dt = \frac{S_i}{n_i + 1} \left( \frac{S_i}{r_i T_i} \right)^{n_i} \quad (14)$$

La rotura promedio en inventario  $I_2(S_i, T_i)$  para dicho artículo  $i$ -ésimo es

$$I_2(S_i, T_i) = \frac{-1}{T_i} \int_{\tau_i}^T I_2(t) dt = \frac{-1}{T_i} \int_{\tau_i}^T (S_i - r_i T_i \sqrt[n_i]{t/T_i}) dt = \frac{n_i r_i T_i}{n_i + 1} + \frac{S_i}{n_i + 1} \left( \frac{S_i}{r_i T_i} \right)^{n_i} - S_i \quad (15)$$

Teniendo en cuenta que el costo mínimo para el artículo  $i$ -ésimo se obtiene (ver Sicilia y otros (2012)) cuando se cumple la condición

$$S_i = r_i T_i \sqrt[n_i]{\frac{w_i}{h_i + w_i}} \quad (16)$$

tendremos que

$$I_1(S_i, T_i) = \frac{S_i}{n_i + 1} \left( \frac{S_i}{r_i T_i} \right)^{n_i} = \frac{w_i}{(h_i + w_i)} \frac{r_i T_i}{(n_i + 1)} \sqrt[n_i]{\frac{w_i}{h_i + w_i}} \quad (17)$$

y

$$\begin{aligned} I_2(S_i, T_i) &= \frac{n_i r_i T_i}{n_i + 1} + \frac{S_i}{n_i + 1} \left( \frac{S_i}{r_i T_i} \right)^{n_i} - S_i = \\ &= \frac{n_i r_i T_i}{n_i + 1} + \frac{r_i T_i}{n_i + 1} \sqrt[n_i]{\frac{w_i}{h_i + w_i}} \frac{w_i}{h_i + w_i} - r_i T_i \sqrt[n_i]{\frac{w_i}{h_i + w_i}} \end{aligned} \quad (18)$$

Nótese que las cantidades expuestas en (17) y (18) son siempre valores positivos.

Ahora puede probarse un resultado similar al sistema sin rotura estudiado en el apartado anterior. Así, podemos afirmar que en la política óptima de inventario los periodos de programación  $T_i$  deben coincidir. En efecto, si no fuera así, habrá un artículo  $k$  con menor ciclo  $T_k$  de inventario de entre todos los ciclos de inventario. Elijamos ahora otro artículo  $j$  con

$T_j > T_k$ . Para ese artículo  $j$  tendremos que la cantidad media en inventario es  $I_1(S_j, T_j)$  y la rotura media es  $I_2(S_j, T_j)$ . Ahora bien, si reducimos el periodo de programación del artículo  $j$  al mismo periodo de programación del artículo  $k$ , entonces obviamente de (17) la cantidad media mantenida en inventario  $I_1(S_j, T_j)$  se reducirá y de (18) la rotura media  $I_2(S_j, T_j)$  también disminuirá.

En consecuencia, se reducen tanto el coste de mantenimiento como el coste de rotura. Ahora bien, como el coste de reposición es independiente de los artículos diferentes solicitados, si se solicitan al mismo tiempo las reposiciones de los artículos  $j$  y  $k$ , el coste de reposición seguirá siendo el mismo. Por tanto, como disminuyen los costes de mantenimiento y rotura, manteniéndose constante el coste de reposición, tendremos que el coste total de la gestión del inventario correspondiente a los artículos  $j$  y  $k$  se reducirá. Repitiendo el proceso para el resto de los artículos, si se reducen los periodos de gestión de los artículos haciéndolos iguales al del artículo  $k$ , se consigue una reducción del coste total relativo a la gestión del inventario. En consecuencia, la política óptima de inventario requerirá que todos los ciclos de inventario de los artículos coincidan.

A partir de ahora llamaremos  $T$  a ese periodo común de gestión o ciclo de inventario de los artículos, esto es,  $T_i = T$ , para todo  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ .

A continuación, podemos plantear la función de coste total  $C(S_1, \dots, S_N, T)$  relacionada con la gestión de los inventarios. Obviamente, dicha función de coste será la suma de los costes de mantenimiento y de rotura de todos los artículos, junto con el coste de reponer los stocks. Así, tendremos

$$\begin{aligned} C(S_1, \dots, S_N, T) &= C_1(S_1, \dots, S_N, T) + C_2(S_1, \dots, S_N, T) + C_3(T) = \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^N h_i I_1(S_i, T) + \sum_{i=1}^N w_i I_2(S_i, T) + A \frac{1}{T} = \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^N h_i \frac{S_i}{n_i + 1} \left( \frac{S_i}{r_i T} \right)^{n_i} + \sum_{i=1}^N w_i \left[ \frac{n_i r_i T}{n_i + 1} + \frac{S_i}{n_i + 1} \left( \frac{S_i}{r_i T} \right)^{n_i} - S_i \right] + A \frac{1}{T} \quad (19) \end{aligned}$$

Calculando las derivadas parciales respecto a  $S_i$  y  $T$ , tenemos:

$$\frac{\partial C}{\partial S_i} = h_i \left( \frac{S_i}{r_i T} \right)^{n_i} + w_i \left[ \left( \frac{S_i}{r_i T} \right)^{n_i} - 1 \right], \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, N \quad (20)$$

$$\frac{\partial C}{\partial T} = \sum_{i=1}^N h_i \frac{S_i}{n_i + 1} \left( \frac{S_i}{r_i} \right)^{n_i} \left( \frac{-n_i}{T^{n_i+1}} \right) + \sum_{i=1}^N w_i \left[ \frac{n_i r_i}{n_i + 1} + \frac{S_i}{n_i + 1} \left( \frac{S_i}{r_i} \right)^{n_i} \left( \frac{-n_i}{T^{n_i+1}} \right) \right] - \frac{A}{T^2} \quad (21)$$

Igualando a cero estas derivadas parciales, se obtienen las ecuaciones a resolver para determinar la política óptima de inventario. Así, dichas ecuaciones serán:

$$S_i = r_i T^{n_i} \sqrt[n_i]{\frac{w_i}{h_i + w_i}} \quad (22)$$

$$\sum_{i=1}^N h_i \frac{S_i}{n_i + 1} \left( \frac{S_i}{r_i} \right)^{n_i} \left( \frac{-n_i}{T^{n_i+1}} \right) + \sum_{i=1}^N w_i \left[ \frac{n_i r_i}{n_i + 1} + \frac{S_i}{n_i + 1} \left( \frac{S_i}{r_i} \right)^{n_i} \left( \frac{-n_i}{T^{n_i+1}} \right) \right] - \frac{A}{T^2} = 0 \quad (23)$$

Sustituyendo los niveles de stocks dados en (22) en la ecuación (23), nos queda la siguiente ecuación

$$\sum_{i=1}^N (h_i + w_i) \frac{(-n_i) r_i^{n_i} \sqrt[n_i]{\frac{w_i}{h_i + w_i}}}{n_i + 1} \frac{w_i}{(h_i + w_i)} + \sum_{i=1}^N w_i \frac{n_i r_i}{n_i + 1} - \frac{A}{T^2} = 0 \quad (24)$$

Despejando  $T$  se obtiene el periodo de programación óptimo

$$T^* = \sqrt{\frac{A}{\sum_{i=1}^N \frac{w_i n_i r_i}{n_i + 1} \left[ 1 - \sqrt{\frac{w_i}{h_i + w_i}} \right]}} \quad (25)$$

Por tanto los niveles de stock de los artículos al comienzo del ciclo de inventario serán

$$S_i^* = r_i \sqrt{\frac{w_i}{h_i + w_i}} \sqrt{\frac{A}{\sum_{i=1}^N \frac{w_i n_i r_i}{n_i + 1} \left[ 1 - \sqrt{\frac{w_i}{h_i + w_i}} \right]}}, \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, N \quad (26)$$

Obsérvese que las soluciones propuestas cumplen que  $0 \leq S_i^* \leq r_i T^*$ , para todo  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$  y por tanto están dentro de la región considerada.

Además puede comprobarse que el Hessiano  $H$  es siempre positivo. Por tanto, el punto  $(S_1^*, S_2^*, \dots, S_N^*, T^*)$  es un punto mínimo de la función  $C(S_1, S_2, \dots, S_N, T)$ .

El costo total mínimo relacionado con la gestión del sistema de inventario se obtiene sustituyendo (24) y (25) en la función de coste dada en (19).

Haciendo los cálculos correspondientes, obtenemos la expresión del costo mínimo

$$C^* = \sqrt{4A \sum_{i=1}^N \frac{w_i n_i r_i}{n_i + 1} \left[ 1 - \sqrt{\frac{w_i}{h_i + w_i}} \right]} \quad (27)$$

Las cantidades a pedir o tamaños de las reposiciones de los artículos serán

$$Q_i^* = r_i \sqrt{\frac{A}{\sum_{i=1}^N \frac{w_i n_i r_i}{n_i + 1} \left[ 1 - \sqrt{\frac{w_i}{h_i + w_i}} \right]}}, \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, N \quad (28)$$

y los puntos óptimos de pedido  $s_i^*$  se calculan como la diferencia entre los niveles iniciales  $S_i^*$  de stock y los tamaños  $Q_i^*$  de las reposiciones.

#### 4.2.1. Casos Particulares

- En el caso especial de que los patrones de demanda de los artículos sean uniformes, esto es,  $n_i = 1$ , para todo  $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ , la política de inventario obtenida coincide con la política óptima para un sistema de inventario con varios artículos, demandas constantes, donde las roturas son permitidas y los clientes afectados están dispuestos a esperar a la siguiente reposición para recibir sus productos (ver Naddor (1966)).
- Por otro lado, si consideramos que  $N = 1$ , esto es, trabajamos con un solo artículo, las formulas (25), (26) y (27) que determinan la política óptima son equivalentes a las formulas de la política óptima del sistema de inventario donde se consideran roturas recuperables y las demandas siguen un patrón potencial (ver Sicilia y otros (2012)).
- Por último, si consideramos ambas situaciones simultáneamente, es decir,  $N = 1$  y  $n_i = 1$ , entonces la política óptima obtenida equivale a la política eficiente considerada para sistemas de inventario con reposición instantánea y roturas atendidas posteriormente con la llegada de la siguiente reposición de artículos, ya que trabajamos con un solo artículo y la demanda es uniforme (ver Hadley and Within (1968)).

#### 4.3. Resultados numéricos

En este apartado presentamos algunos resultados numéricos que nos sirven de complemento a los desarrollos teóricos expuestos en la sección anterior. Consideremos un sistema de inventario con  $N=5$  artículos. Las razones de demanda  $r_i$ , los costos unitarios de mantenimiento  $h_i$ , los costos unitarios de rotura  $w_i$ , y los índices de los patrones de demanda  $n_i$ , para los cinco artículos ( $i=1,2,3,4$  y  $5$ ) se muestran en la tabla 1.

TABLA 1

Parámetros de entrada de un sistema de inventario con N=5 artículos y coste de reposición A = 50 \$

	Razón de demanda $r_i$	Coste unitario de Mantenimiento $h_i$	Coste unitario de rotura $w_i$	Índice del patrón de demanda $n_i$
<b>Artículo 1</b>	1000 u./año	0.5 \$ / u. y t.	8 \$ / u. y t.	1.5
<b>Artículo 2</b>	80 u./año	2.0 \$ / u. y t.	10 \$ / u. y t.	0.2
<b>Artículo 3</b>	300 u./año	1.5 \$ / u. y t.	6 \$ / u. y t.	1
<b>Artículo 4</b>	40 u./año	3.0 \$ / u. y t.	15 \$ / u. y t.	2
<b>Artículo 5</b>	500 u./año	1.0 \$ / u. y t.	5 \$ / u. y t.	0.8

Presentamos a continuación las políticas de inventario óptimas para los dos sistemas considerados en el presente trabajo.

En el primer sistema de inventario las roturas no estaban permitidas. Así, las soluciones óptimas del problema de inventario siguen las fórmulas propuestas en (10), (11) y (12). En la tabla 2 se muestra la política óptima de inventario obtenida para este ejemplo. Nótese que en la política óptima de inventario, el coste de mantenimiento coincide con el coste de reposición.

TABLA 2

Política óptima para el sistema de inventario con varios artículos, demandas potenciales y roturas no permitidas, considerando los parámetros mostrados en la tabla 1.

	Nivel óptimo de stock inicial $S_i^0$	Periodo óptimo de gestión $T^0$	Longitud del ciclo del inventario (en días)	Tamaño de la reposición $Q_i^0$
<b>Artículo 1</b>	238,89410 u.	0,2388940912 años	87,19635 días	238,89410 u.
<b>Artículo 2</b>	19,11159 u.	0,2388940912 años	87,19635 días	19,11159 u.
<b>Artículo 3</b>	71,66823 u.	0,2388940912 años	87,19635 días	71,66823 u.
<b>Artículo 4</b>	9,55576 u.	0,2388940912 años	87,19635 días	9,55576 u.
<b>Artículo 5</b>	119,44705 u.	0,2388940912 años	87,19635 días	119,44705 u.
	<b>Coste de mantenimiento:</b> 209,29776767934 \$		<b>Coste de reposición:</b> 209,29776767934 \$	
	<b>Coste total mínimo por ciclo de inventario:</b> 418,59553535868 \$			

En el segundo sistema de inventario se permiten roturas o falta de stocks para atender la demanda, y se considera que las mismas se satisfacen con la llegada de la siguiente reposición. En esa situación la política eficiente de inventario se caracteriza por los valores óptimos recogidos en las fórmulas (25), (26), (27) y (28).

En la tabla 3 se expone la política de inventario que debería seguirse para minimizar el coste total de la gestión del inventario. Obsérvese que el periodo de gestión para todos los artículos es el mismo. Sin embargo, para este sistema de inventario las cantidades a pedir para reponer los stocks de productos son diferentes a los niveles iniciales de artículos. Ello significa que la política óptima permite la existencia de roturas, y que no se debe solicitar reponer los stocks hasta que los niveles de rotura de los productos no alcancen a los puntos óptimos de pedido, los cuales se recogen también en la citada tabla.



Ahora intervienen los tres costos generales en la gestión de los inventarios: costo de mantenimiento, costo de rotura o falta de existencias y costo de reposición. En la tabla 3 también se recogen las cuantías de dichos costos para este sistema de inventario con patrones potenciales de demanda. Nótese que en la solución óptima la suma del coste de mantenimiento y el coste de rotura coincide con el coste reposición.

TABLA 3

**Política óptima para el sistema de inventario con varios artículos, demandas potenciales y roturas recuperables, considerando los parámetros recogidos en la tabla 1.**

	Nivel óptimo de stock inicial $S_i^*$	Periodo óptimo de gestión $T^*$	Punto óptimo de pedido $s^*$	Tamaño óptimo de la reposición $Q_i^*$
<b>Artículo 1</b>	211,5813598883	0.220307879	-8,7265194087	220,3078792970
<b>Artículo 2</b>	7,0829436502	0.220307879	-10,5416866936	17,6246303438
<b>Artículo 3</b>	52,8738910313	0.220307879	-13,2184727578	66,0923637891
<b>Artículo 4</b>	8,0445063391	0.220307879	-0,7678088328	8,8123151719
<b>Artículo 5</b>	87,7048230584	0.220307879	-22,4491165901	110,1539396485
	<b>Costo total de mantenimiento:</b> 128,6966758954		<b>Costo total de rotura:</b> 98,2584387358	
		<b>Costo de reposición:</b> 226,9551146312		
	<b>Costo total de gestión por ciclo de inventario:</b> 453,9102292624			

## 5. Conclusiones

Los modelos de gestión de stocks permiten mejorar la eficacia y eficiencia de las operaciones empresariales relacionadas con la comercialización y distribución de los productos. En el análisis desarrollado en este trabajo hemos profundizado en el diseño de diferentes sistemas de inventarios orientados a determinar políticas óptimas, con el propósito de adoptar decisiones encaminadas a minimizar los costes totales y proporcionar un adecuado nivel de satisfacción a los clientes, asegurando la disposición de bienes o materiales en las mejores condiciones para cubrir sus necesidades.

Hemos estudiado sistemas de inventario con múltiples artículos, modificando una de las hipótesis de los modelos clásicos EOQ y EPQ. Ahora la demanda no es constante y depende del tiempo. En concreto, se han desarrollado dos modelos de inventario con demanda variable en el tiempo, asumiendo un patrón potencial que intenta reflejar la concentración temporal de la demanda de los clientes a lo largo del período de programación. En ambos modelos hemos supuesto la existencia de un inventario de productos orientados a satisfacer la demanda que ha de ser reaprovisionado. Además, hemos considerado los costos asociados a las operaciones de almacenamiento y reposición, incluyendo también los relacionados con la rotura. En el primer escenario, hemos determinado la política óptima de inventario sin permitir la existencia de roturas, obteniendo el nivel óptimo de stock y el período de gestión óptimo. En un segundo escenario, hemos estudiado un sistema de gestión de stocks con presencia de roturas recuperables, donde los clientes están dispuestos a esperar a la llegada de la siguiente reposición para satisfacer sus demandas de artículos.

Los modelos presentados en este trabajo generalizan algunos sistemas de inventario estudiados por otros autores. Así, el modelo clásico de cantidad económica de pedido es un caso particular del modelo sin rotura (ver Hadley y Whitin (1963), Naddor (1966)). También, cuando se permiten las roturas y las demandas son diferidas en el tiempo, la solución óptima propuesta generaliza a la política óptima del sistema de inventario clásico donde la demanda pendiente es totalmente satisfecha con la llegada del siguiente pedido (ver Waters (1992), Mathur y Solow (1996) y Zipkin (2000)).

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# EL EFECTO REGIÓN DE ORIGEN EN LA COMPRA DE VINO

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## RESUMEN

*La globalización ha provocado que el origen del producto se haya convertido en un atributo atractivo para la diferenciación de productos agroalimentarios. Por tal razón, la investigación sobre el efecto lugar de origen ha proliferado en las últimas décadas; aunque aún existen lagunas dentro de este campo de investigación, principalmente en lo referente al tópico región de origen y a la influencia de algunas variables moderadoras en dicho efecto.*

*A través de un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales, esta investigación pretende identificar las variables que explican y moderan la intención de compra de los vinos regionales. Los resultados ponen de manifiesto los efectos directos e indirectos que sobre dicha intención tienen la imagen de la región, la imagen de la región como productora de vino, la calidad percibida de los productos regionales y el etnocentrismo. Además se contrasta el papel moderador que ejerce la familiaridad con la categoría de producto.*

## Palabras clave:

Región de Origen, Vino, Intención de Compra, Familiaridad, Imagen, Calidad Percibida, Etnocentrismo



## 1. Introducción

La globalización y el consiguiente incremento del nivel de competencia han hecho que el origen o procedencia del producto se haya convertido en un atributo atractivo para la diferenciación de las marcas, especialmente en algunas categorías de productos agroalimentarios. Por tal razón, la investigación académica sobre el denominado efecto lugar de origen ha proliferado en las últimas décadas. Bilkey y Nes (1982) lo definen como “el grado en el que la procedencia de un producto afecta al comportamiento del consumidor en los procesos de compra”, definición similar a la establecida por Papadopoulos y Heslop (2003) al referirse al “un conjunto de fortalezas y debilidades vinculadas al lugar de origen que incorporan o sustraen el valor suministrado por una marca o servicio al fabricante y/o a sus clientes”. Este valor añadido puede proceder de los factores ambientales y humanos existentes en el lugar, y se suele manifestar de varias formas diferentes: a través de la calidad percibida del producto por parte del consumidor (Han y Terpstra, 1988; Ahmed y d’Astous, 1992, 1996, 2001 y 2007; Verlegh et al., 2005; Veale y Quester, 2009), a través de sus actitudes y preferencias (Bigné y Cuenca, 2000; Van Ittersum et al., 2003; Font i Furnols et al., 2011 y Gracia et al., 2011) o a través de sus intenciones de compra (González y Villanueva, 2000; Cerviño et al., 2005; Montesinos y Currat, 2007; Auger et al., 2010 y Godey et al., 2012).

Los resultados de diversos estudios ponen de manifiesto la existencia de algunas variables antecesoras y moderadoras del efecto lugar de origen, tales como las siguientes:

- La imagen de la región (Johansson et al., 1994; González y Villanueva, 2000; Verlegh et al., 2005; Montesinos y Currás, 2007; Ahmed y d’Astous, 2001; 2007 y 2008; Lee y Lockshin, 2011; Lee et al., 2013), que se refiere a aquella representación mental que poseen los individuos acerca de un determinado lugar, ya sea en relación con aspectos históricos, políticos, culturales, económicos, geográficos o humanos, o en relación con una combinación de todos ellos.
- La imagen de la región como productora de una determinada categoría de producto (Van Ittersum et al., 2003)
- La familiaridad o nivel de conocimiento con la categoría de producto (Maheswaran, 1994; Bigné y Sánchez, 2002; Inch y McBride, 2004; Huitzilín y San Martín, 2010).
- La familiaridad con un lugar y con sus productos (González y Villanueva, 2000; Bigné y Sánchez, 2002; Ahmed y d’Astous, 2001, 2007 y 2008; Lee y Lockshin, 2011; Gázquez et al., 2012).
- El etnocentrismo del consumidor (Shimp y Sharma, 1987; Sharma et al., 1995, Klein et al., 1998; González y Villanueva, 2000; Moon y Jain, 2002; Luque et al., 2004; Dmitrovic et al., 2009), entendido como “aquella creencia de que un producto derivado de tu grupo étnico o cultural es inherentemente superior a productos similares de otros grupos culturales o étnicos” (Myers, 1995).
- La animosidad del consumidor (Klein et al., 1998; González y Villanueva, 2000; Shimp et al., 2004; Huitzilín y San Martín, 2008 y 2010), es decir, “los sentimientos de antipatía hacia un país relacionados con eventos previos o continuos de tipo militar, político o económico, los cuales se reflejarán en el comportamiento de compra de los consumidores en los mercados internacionales” (Klein et al. 1998).
- Algunas variables sociodemográficas (Samiee et al., 2005; Ahmed y d’Astous, 2001, 2007 y 2008), como la edad, el sexo, los ingresos o el nivel de educación.

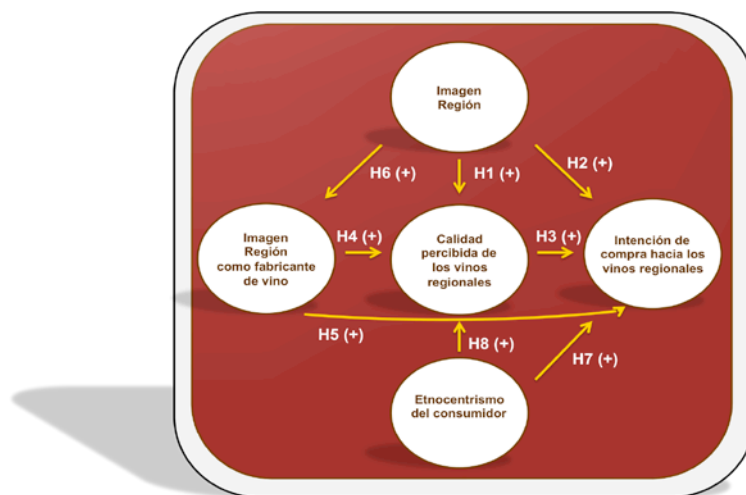
Tras una revisión de la literatura académica, se ha observado que la mayor parte de los estudios que tratan de conocer estas variables que influyen en la existencia de un efecto lugar de origen se han enfocado en el ámbito país (como ejemplo, Godey et al., 2012; Claret et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2013; Lagerkvist et al., 2014), quedando en un segundo plano el estudio del efecto región de origen (tal y como ponen de manifiesto Pharr, 2005, González y Villanueva, 2000, y De Francesco et al., 2012). Sin embargo, existen algunas categorías de productos, especialmente en el sector agroalimentario, donde las características diferenciadoras del producto son generadas por características propias de una región específica de un país. Esta es la razón del auge, especialmente en los países del sur de Europa, de las Denominaciones de Origen Protegidas (DOP) y de las Indicaciones Geográficas Protegidas (IGP) como marcas colectivas de calidad.

La homogeneidad y consistencia de las características de una región, mayores que para el caso de los países, permiten a estos productos transmitir una identidad propia basada en el “saber hacer” de sus gentes, en sus condiciones climatológicas y agrarias y en su tradición. De ese modo se otorga al producto una personalidad e identidad únicas que no se pueden imitar en otras regiones o países que no cuentan con todas esas características unidas al mismo tiempo. Esta circunstancia de los productos regionales hace que las investigaciones que centran su estudio en este tópico suelen tratar el constructo región de origen como un constructo multidimensional formado fundamentalmente por dos dimensiones: factores humanos y condiciones naturales (van Ittersum et al., 2003); a las que en ocasiones se le une una tercera dimensión: las materias primas (Dekhili y d’Hauteville, 2009).

## 2. Propuesta de un modelo sobre el efecto región de origen

A partir de la revisión de la literatura se ha diseñado el modelo estructural que parece en la figura 1, con el objetivo de estudiar el efecto región de origen en el mercado vitivinícola español. En concreto, se pretende conocer las variables que explican y moderan la intención de compra de los vinos regionales. El modelo propuesto plantea los efectos directos e indirectos que sobre dicha intención de compra tienen las siguientes variables antecedentes: la imagen de la región, la imagen de la región como productora de la categoría de producto, la calidad percibida de los productos regionales y el etnocentrismo del consumidor.

FIGURA 1  
Modelo para el estudio del Efecto Región de origen



Ahmed y d’Astous (1996, 2001 y 2007) han demostrado que las percepciones de calidad de los productos estaban influidas por las imágenes que los consumidores tienen de los países de origen de los productos. Resultados similares se han obtenido en otros trabajos, como los de González y Villanueva (2000), Srinivasan et al. (2004) o Verlegh et al. (2005). Por su parte, Van Ittersum et al. (2003), consiguen demostrar la influencia de la actitud de los consumidores hacia una región de origen en las percepciones de calidad, aunque sólo para una de las dos categorías de producto analizadas en su estudio. En el caso concreto del producto objeto de estudio en esta investigación, Lee y Lockshin (2011) también demuestran una fuerte influencia positiva de la imagen de Australia sobre las percepciones sobre los vinos procedentes de ese origen. Por todo lo citado anteriormente, se plantea la siguiente hipótesis:

*H<sub>1</sub>: A mejor imagen general de los consumidores sobre la región, mejores serán sus percepciones sobre la calidad de los productos originarios de dicha región.*

Además del mencionado efecto que la imagen general de un lugar tiene sobre las percepciones de calidad de los productos, varios estudios han demostrado que esta imagen también afecta a las intenciones de compra, es decir, que tiene una influencia directa y positiva sobre la variable final de nuestro modelo (Cordell, 1992; Roth y Romeo, 1992; Johansson et al., 1994; Van Ittersum et al.,

2003; Srinivasan et al., 2004; Verlegh et al., 2005; Ahmed y d'Astous, 2001; 2007 y 2008; Montesinos y Currat, 2007; Lee et al., 2013). Justificada a partir de estos resultados, planteamos la siguiente hipótesis:

*H<sub>2</sub>: A mejor imagen general de los consumidores sobre la región, mayores serán sus intenciones de compra hacia los productos originarios de dicha región.*

Otra de las conclusiones extraída de la revisión de la literatura permite afirmar que las percepciones de calidad de los productos de un determinado origen influyen de forma directa y positiva en las intenciones de compra o preferencias hacia los productos originarios de ese lugar (Erickson et al., 1984; Van Ittersum et al., 2003; González y Villanueva, 2000). Más recientemente, Lee y Lockshin (2011) demuestran en su estudio que las creencias de los consumidores sobre los vinos de un lugar se relacionan de forma positiva con su preferencia de compra. Por tal razón, se plantea la hipótesis:

*H<sub>3</sub>: A mejores percepciones de calidad de los consumidores hacia los productos de la región, mayores serán sus intenciones de compra hacia ellos.*

Como ya hemos mencionado anteriormente, existen varios estudios que analizan el papel de la imagen general de un lugar en el comportamiento de compra de los consumidores hacia sus productos. Sin embargo, Van Ittersum et al. (2003) aseguran que cuando el estudio se centra en una categoría de producto específica, el valor predictivo de esta variable no suele ser alto, por lo que afirman que también es necesario medir la imagen de la región como fabricante de dicha categoría de producto. En este sentido, son pocos los estudios que hasta el día de hoy han introducido esta variable, aun así establecemos la siguiente hipótesis:

*H<sub>4</sub>: A mejor imagen como fabricante de una categoría de producto específica que los consumidores posean sobre la región afectará, mejores serán sus percepciones de calidad hacia los productos de dicha región.*

Además, Van Ittersum et al. (2003) intentan demostrar que esta variable no tiene una influencia directa en la preferencia de los consumidores por los productos de esta región. Sin embargo, no pueden aceptar dicha hipótesis puesto que en una de las dos categorías estudiadas esta hipótesis no se confirma. Por ello, en este trabajo se plantea esta hipótesis:

*H<sub>5</sub>: A mejor imagen como fabricante de una categoría de producto específica que los consumidores posean sobre la región, mejores serán sus intenciones de compra hacia los productos regionales.*

Por otro lado, los citados autores consideran que la actitud o imagen general que tienen los consumidores hacia una región puede influir de forma directa en su imagen como fabricante de una categoría de producto específica. Por ello, en este estudio se trata de contrastar la hipótesis:

*H<sub>6</sub>: A mejor imagen general que los consumidores posean sobre la región, mejor será la imagen que éstos posean sobre la misma como fabricante de una categoría de producto específica.*

Finalmente, se ha incluido en el modelo la variable etnocentrismo del consumidor, pues según los resultados de diversos estudios el etnocentrismo está relacionado positivamente tanto con el comportamiento de compra doméstico, como con la percepción de calidad de los productos domésticos (por ejemplo, Luque et al., 2004 o Dmitrovic et al., 2009). Las hipótesis a contrastar son:

*H<sub>7</sub>: Las tendencias etnocentristas de los consumidores están directamente relacionadas de forma positiva con la intención de compra hacia los productos de su región (comportamiento de compra doméstico).*

*H<sub>8</sub>: Las tendencias etnocentristas de los consumidores están directamente relacionadas de forma positiva con las percepciones de calidad hacia los productos de su región.*

Además de analizar las relaciones entre las variables del modelo estructural, la investigación realizada también pretende conocer el papel moderador que la familiaridad con la categoría de producto puede desempeñar en algunas de las relaciones del modelo. Algunos de los estudios que han incluido esta variable son Maheswaran (1994), Bigné y Sánchez (2002), Inch y McBride (2004) o Srinivasan et al. (2004). Aunque los resultados obtenidos son contradictorios en cuanto a la existencia del efecto moderador y en cuanto a la dirección del mismo, nuestras hipótesis de trabajo han sido (figura 2):

H<sub>9</sub>: La familiaridad con la categoría de producto modera la relación entre la imagen de una región como fabricante la categoría de producto y la calidad percibida de los productos de esa región.

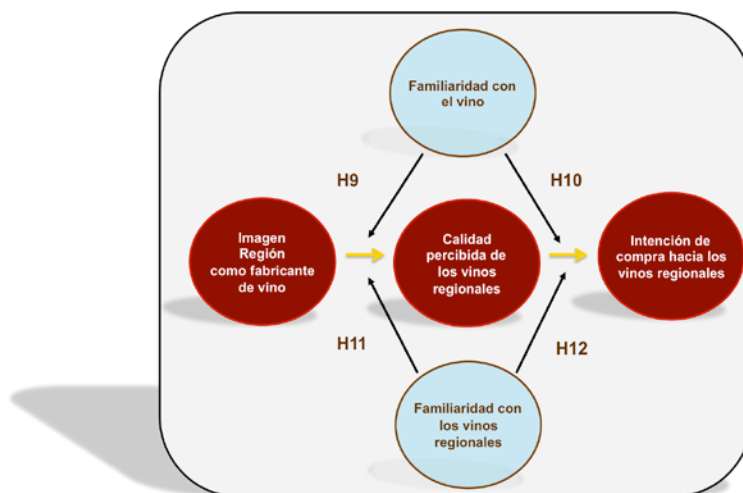
H<sub>10</sub>: La familiaridad con la categoría de producto modera la relación entre la calidad percibida de los productos de una región y la intención de compra hacia esos productos.

Al igual que la familiaridad con la categoría de producto, el nivel de conocimiento de los consumidores sobre un origen o sobre sus productos puede jugar un papel moderador en las relaciones entre las variables del modelo estructural, tal y como han puesto de manifiesto Johansson (1989), González y Villanueva (2000), Ahmed y d'Astous (2008), Lee y Lockshin (2011) o Gázquez et al. (2012). Por tal razón, las dos últimas hipótesis son (figura 2):

H<sub>11</sub>: La familiaridad con los productos de un origen modera la relación entre la imagen de una región como fabricante de una categoría de producto específica y la calidad percibida de los productos de esa región.

H<sub>12</sub>: La familiaridad con los productos de un origen modera la relación entre la calidad percibida de los productos de una región y la intención de compra hacia esos productos.

FIGURA 2  
Efecto moderador de la familiaridad



### 3. Diseño de la investigación

Para contrastar el modelo de relaciones propuesto se ha utilizado la técnica Partial Least Squares o Regresión por Mínimos Cuadrados Parciales (Chin, 1998), a través de la aplicación del software SmartPLS, y se ha realizado una encuesta dirigida a compradores habituales o esporádicos de vino en la región de Extremadura (España). La ficha técnica del estudio se recoge en la tabla 1. El procedimiento de muestreo ha sido el no probabilístico, por cuotas de sexo y provincia de residencia, tratando de conseguir una muestra representativa de la región. El tamaño muestral final fue de 427 individuos.

TABLA 1  
Ficha técnica del estudio

<b>Población</b>	Clientes de entidades financieras mayores de 18 años
<b>Muestra</b>	427 consumidores
<b>Ámbito geográfico</b>	Regional (Extremadura, España)
<b>Tipo de muestreo</b>	No probabilístico por cuotas (sexo y residencia)
<b>Tipo de encuesta</b>	Personal, auto-administrada
<b>Trabajo de campo</b>	Febrero-junio, 2012



El cuestionario incluía diversas preguntas para medir cada una de las variables del modelo. Para medir la imagen general que los individuos poseen sobre la región se ha adaptado la escala propuesta por González y Villanueva (2000) que considera 5 ítems para medir la imagen de un país: calidad de vida, riqueza, nivel tecnológico, nivel educativo y estabilidad política. Este último ítem se ha excluido al tratarse de un estudio sobre el efecto región de origen y considerarse que, en general, no es un elemento diferenciador entre regiones de un mismo país. A estos ítems se le han añadido tres más relativos al atractivo de la región como destino turístico, a la eficacia de la gestión política de la región y un ítem relativo a la imagen de la región en general. De esta forma, la escala final quedó constituida por los siete ítems que debían ser valorados por los encuestados mediante una escala de Likert de 7 puntos.

Para medir la imagen que los individuos poseen sobre la región como fabricante de vinos se ha tomado como referencia el trabajo de Van Ittersum et al. (2003). Según estos autores, la imagen de un país o región como productora de una categoría de producto está constituida por tres dimensiones: el factor humano, el factor climatológico y el factor naturaleza. Los ítems introducidos por los autores hacían referencia a la cualificación de la mano de obra existente en la región, a la cultura y la experiencia de sus habitantes, al clima de la misma, o al tipo de suelo, entre otros. Para el caso de este trabajo se han adaptado algunos de estos ítems al caso concreto del vino. La escala final que se ha utilizado está constituida por siete ítems.

La escala para medir la calidad percibida de los vinos regionales se ha basado en las escalas propuestas por González y Villanueva (2000) y por Klein et al. (1998). Las primeras utilizaban cuatro ítems, de los cuales se han utilizado tres en esta investigación; los referentes a la calidad en general, a la relación calidad-precio y al nivel de confianza que poseen los individuos respecto a la calidad de los vinos regionales. El ítem que no se ha tenido en cuenta hacía referencia al buen acabado de los productos, un aspecto que está asociado a otro tipo de productos industriales, pero no al vino.

La escala propuesta por Klein et al. (1998) incluía los ítems: mano de obra, nivel tecnológico, calidad, fiabilidad, diseño y valor en relación con el precio del producto. La mayoría de ellos no son de aplicación a un producto agroalimentario, pero sí se incluyó el ítem referente a la calidad del producto de la región en comparación al producido en otras regiones. De esta manera, la escala utilizada finalmente estuvo formada por cuatro ítems.

Para medir la intención de compra de los individuos hacia los productos regionales se han unido algunos ítems procedentes de las escalas propuestas por Olsen et al. (1993) y por Klein et al. (1998), eliminando aquellos que no eran de aplicación a un producto agroalimentario como el vino. Finalmente, la escala utilizada para medir la intención y el comportamiento de compra hacia los vinos regionales estuvo formada por cuatro ítems que los encuestados debían valorar según una escala de Likert de 7 puntos.

Para medir el nivel de etnocentrismo de los individuos se ha optado por utilizar la escala CETSCALE, creada por Shimp y Sharma (1987) y validada posteriormente en diferentes países y contextos (por ejemplo, Olsen et al., 1993; Samiee et al. 2005; Klein et al. 1998; Marín y Bigné 1998; González y Villanueva, 2000; Watson y Wright, 2000; Moon y Jain, 2002; Del Río et al., 2003; Luque et al., 2004; Srinivasan et al., 2004; Huitzilín y San Martín, 2008 y 2010; Dmitrovic et al., 2009; Díaz et al., 2011). Está compuesta por 17 ítems medidos mediante escala de Likert de 7 puntos de forma que el valor mínimo de la escala para un individuo serían 17 puntos, mientras que el valor máximo de etnocentrismo se situaría en 119 puntos. En el caso de esta investigación, los ítems de la escala han sido adaptados para referirse al ámbito regional, pues la escala original es de aplicación a países.

La familiaridad de los consumidores con la categoría de producto fue medida a través de cuatro preguntas sobre el proceso de elaboración y los tipos de vino, que permitían evaluar el conocimiento de los consumidores hacia el vino. Los consumidores tenían la posibilidad de marcar una de las tres opciones disponibles: “verdadero”, “falso” o “no sabe”. Este sistema permite dividir a los consumidores en dos grupos: alto y bajo nivel de conocimiento. Para que un consumidor fuera considerado experto en la categoría de producto debía acertar tres preguntas de las cuatro realizadas en el cuestionario. Se consideró que este sistema era más objetivo para evaluar el conocimiento real de

los consumidores sobre los productos que realizar una pregunta de autoevaluación (Ahmed y d'Astous, 1999).

Por último, para medir la familiaridad de los consumidores con los productos de su región se incluyó en el cuestionario una pregunta abierta, en la que se solicitaba a los encuestados que enumerasen las Denominaciones de Origen Protegidas de vino de la región que conociesen. Aquellos consumidores que conociesen la Denominación de Origen *Ribera del Guadiana* serían considerados consumidores con suficiente nivel de familiaridad con el vino extremeño.

#### 4. Resultados

El modelo de medida se ha analizado teniendo en cuenta la fiabilidad individual de los ítems y la validez discriminante de los constructos (Hulland, 1999). En primer lugar se han estimado las cargas de cada ítem respecto a su variable latente, aceptándose como válidos aquellos cuyas cargas tuvieran un valor igual o superior a 0,707, lo que indica que más del 50% de la varianza observada es explicada por el constructo (Carmines y Zeller, 1979). Inicialmente fueron varios los ítems que no alcanzaban este valor de referencia, por lo que se procedió a su eliminación del modelo para posteriormente volver a correrlo y detectar nuevos ítems a eliminar. Tras cuatro depuraciones, fueron eliminados 8 ítems de la escala de etnocentrismo, 4 de la escala de imagen regional, 1 de la escala de imagen de la región como productora y otro de la escala de medición de la calidad percibida (tabla 2).

Los índices relativos a la fiabilidad y la validez convergente (tabla 2), muestran resultados positivos, superando los valores críticos de aceptación. En concreto, el alfa de Cronbach de los cinco constructos presenta valores comprendidos entre 0,696 y 0,93, lo que es indicativo de una buena fiabilidad entre los indicadores de cada constructo. Todos, salvo la imagen Región de Origen, superan el valor de referencia de 0,7; aunque en este caso se encuentra en un valor muy cercano. Además, los índices de fiabilidad compuesta (IFC) de todos los constructos superan con creces el valor de referencia de 0,60 indicado por Bagozzi y Yi (1988). Por su parte, los valores de las medias de la varianza extraída (AVE) superan el valor de 0,5, garantizando de esta forma la validez convergente del modelo (Fornell y Larcker, 1981).

TABLA 2  
Evaluación del modelo de medida

Constructo	Cargas	Alfa de Cronbach	Fiabilidad Compuesta	AVE
<b>Imagen Región de Origen</b>		<b>0,696</b>	<b>0,831</b>	<b>0,622</b>
El nivel educativo de los habitantes de Extremadura es alto	<b>0,828</b>			
Extremadura posee un nivel de tecnología avanzado	<b>0,771</b>			
En general, la imagen que poseo sobre Extremadura es positiva	<b>0,765</b>			
<b>Imagen Región de Origen como productora de vino</b>		<b>0,903</b>	<b>0,925</b>	<b>0,674</b>
Extremadura cuenta con una amplia tradición en la producción de vino	<b>0,787</b>			
En Extremadura existe una profunda cultura vinícola	<b>0,756</b>			
Extremadura posee materias primas adecuadas para producir vino	<b>0,831</b>			
Extremadura posee un entorno natural adecuado para la producción de vinos	<b>0,889</b>			
El suelo y las tierras de Extremadura son idóneos para producir vino	<b>0,827</b>			
El clima extremeño es adecuado para la producción de vino	<b>0,830</b>			
<b>Calidad percibida hacia el vino regional</b>		<b>0,826</b>	<b>0,896</b>	<b>0,742</b>
La calidad de los vinos extremeños es alta	<b>0,843</b>			
La relación calidad-precio de los vinos extremeños es buena	<b>0,839</b>			
Los vinos extremeños son vinos de confianza	<b>0,900</b>			

EL EFECTO REGIÓN DE ORIGEN EN LA COMPRA DE VINOS

<b>Etnocentrismo del consumidor</b>	<b>0,930</b>	<b>0,941</b>	<b>0,640</b>
No es correcto comprar productos de fuera de Extremadura puesto que deja a los extremeños sin trabajo	<b>0,824</b>		
Un verdadero extremeño debería comprar siempre productos hechos en Extremadura	<b>0,830</b>		
Deberíamos comprar productos hechos en Extremadura en vez de permitir que otras regiones o países se enriquezcan a nuestra costa	<b>0,755</b>		
Debería haber muy pocos intercambios o compras de productos de fuera de Extremadura a menos que fuese necesario	<b>0,823</b>		
Los extremeños no deberían comprar productos fuera de Extremadura, porque daña a las empresas extremeñas y provoca desempleo	<b>0,824</b>		
Debería ponerse freno a todas las importaciones	<b>0,773</b>		
No debería permitirse a las empresas de fuera de Extremadura poner sus productos en nuestros mercados	<b>0,817</b>		
Sólo deberíamos comprar de otras regiones y países aquellos productos que no podamos obtener dentro de nuestra propia región	<b>0,742</b>		
Los consumidores extremeños que compran productos hechos en otras regiones o países son los responsables de poner a sus paisanos en el paro	<b>0,807</b>		
<b>Intención de compra hacia el vino regional</b>	<b>0,853</b>	<b>0,901</b>	<b>0,695</b>
Compraré prioritariamente en tiendas que hagan un esfuerzo especial por vender vinos producidos en Extremadura	<b>0,840</b>		
Estoy dispuesto a comprar vinos extremeños siempre que pueda	<b>0,877</b>		
Si dos vinos son similares en calidad, pero uno es de Extremadura y otro no, estaría dispuesto a pagar un 10% más por el extremeño	<b>0,735</b>		
Cuando compro vino, suelo optar por marcas extremeñas	<b>0,876</b>		

Por último, para evaluar la validez discriminante de los constructos se sugiere que ningún ítem presente cargas superiores en otros constructos distintos al que pretende medir (Barclay et al., 1995). De esta forma, un constructo tendrá validez discriminante cuando su AVE sea mayor que el cuadrado de las correlaciones de su constructo con los demás (Fornell y Larcker, 1981). Como se observa en la tabla 3, se constata la validez discriminante por lo que es posible proceder a la evaluación del modelo estructural.

TABLA 3  
Validez discriminante

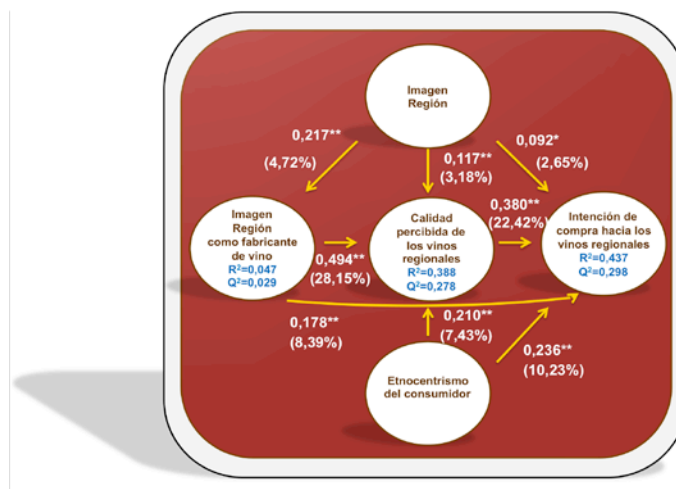
	<b>CalPerc</b>	<b>Etnoc</b>	<b>ImReg</b>	<b>ImRegPro</b>	<b>IntCom</b>
<b>CalPerc</b>	<b>0,8613443</b>				
<b>Etnoc</b>	0,353774	<b>0,80018248</b>			
<b>ImReg</b>	0,27129	0,221835	<b>0,78865899</b>		
<b>ImRegPro</b>	0,569692	0,238042	0,217286	<b>0,82089463</b>	
<b>IntCom</b>	0,589995	0,433374	0,286612	0,470831	<b>0,83389508</b>

Nota: Los elementos de la diagonal muestran la raíz cuadrada de la varianza extraída media (AVE)

En la figura 3 se muestran los resultados de la estimación del modelo estructural. Las flechas indican relaciones causales y el número al lado de cada una de ellas representa su coeficiente estandarizado, figurando entre paréntesis el resultado de la multiplicación entre el coeficiente estandarizado y el coeficiente de correlación entre los dos constructos, expresado en porcentaje (Falk y Miller, 1992). Utilizando la técnica del muestreo “Bootstrap” con 500 sub-muestras se obtienen los valores del test-t

y se verifica la significación de las relaciones causales establecidas en el modelo. Todos los valores del test  $Q^2$  de Stoner Geisser muestran relevancia predictiva, al ser mayores que cero.

FIGURA 3  
Resultados del modelo estructural



\* $p < 0,05$ , \*\* $p < 0,01$ ; ns = no significativo – GoF = 0,196

La calidad percibida del vino regional (22,42%) es la variable que más contribuye a la explicación de la intención de compra, seguida por el etnocentrismo (10,23%) y, en menor medida, por la imagen de la región como fabricante de vino (8,39%) y por la imagen global de la región (2,65%). Si analizamos variable por variable, se observa la influencia de la imagen de la región como fabricante de vinos sobre la calidad percibida (28,15%) y también, aunque en menor medida, su influencia directa sobre la intención de compra hacia los mismos (8,39%). La imagen general de la región juega un papel importante en el modelo, pues a pesar de que los porcentajes son bajos, contribuye a la explicación de tres variables del modelo, la imagen de la región como fabricante de vinos (4,72%), la calidad percibida (3,18%) y la intención de compra (2,65%). Por último, el etnocentrismo del consumidor muestra influencia en las dos variables con las que se relaciona en el modelo, es decir, en la calidad percibida (7,43%) y en la intención de compra hacia los vinos regionales (10,23%). Por tanto, se confirman todas las hipótesis planteadas en el estudio.

El modelo muestra un aceptable nivel predictivo ( $R^2$ ), puesto que contribuye a explicar un 43,7% de la varianza de la intención de compra, un 38,8% de la calidad percibida y un 4,7% de la imagen de la región como fabricante de vinos. El ajuste global del modelo es moderado (Tenenhaus et al., 2005).

Tras el análisis global del modelo se ha realizado un análisis para conocer si la familiaridad moderaba dos relaciones del modelo: concretamente la relación entre *Imagen Región como fabricante de vino* y *Calidad Percibida de los vinos de esa región* y la relación entre esta última y la *Intención de Compra* hacia los vinos de la región. Para ello se dividió la muestra en dos subgrupos de consumidores: los que mostraban un alto nivel de conocimiento y los que mostraban un nivel de conocimiento bajo.

La técnica elegida para la comparación entre los mismos fue el análisis multigrupo propuesto por Chin (2000), el cual ha sido utilizado posteriormente por varios autores (Keil et al., 2000; Sánchez-Franco et al., 2009). En este procedimiento, se calcula un *t*-test de Student usando la ecuación 1. Esta ecuación deriva de una distribución *t* de Student con  $m+n-2$  grados de libertad, donde  $S_p$  (ecuación 2), es un estimador agrupado para la varianza de los errores estándar,  $m$  y  $n$  son los tamaños muestrales de cada uno de los grupos, y SE es el error estándar de cada coeficiente estandarizado del modelo estructural para cada grupo.

Ecuación 1: 
$$t = \frac{\beta_a - \beta_b}{S_p \sqrt{\frac{1}{m} + \frac{1}{n}}}$$

Ecuación 2: 
$$S_p = \sqrt{\frac{(m-1)^2}{m+n-2} SE_a^2 + \frac{(n-1)^2}{m+n-2} SE_b^2}$$

El efecto moderador de la familiaridad con la categoría de producto sólo se confirma para la relación existente entre la imagen de la región como fabricante de vino y la calidad percibida (tabla 3). Se acepta la hipótesis H<sub>9</sub> y se rechaza la H<sub>10</sub>. El valor negativo de las diferencias entre las cargas de los dos grupos indica que, para este caso, la relación entre estas dos variables es más intensa para el grupo con menor nivel de familiaridad con el vino. Es decir, que aquellos consumidores con un menor conocimiento de este producto muestran una relación más intensa entre la imagen que forman en su mente sobre la región como fabricante de un producto y la calidad percibida hacia el producto de esa región. Estos resultados coinciden con la teoría del Efecto Halo y Efecto Resumen (Han, 1989). Según definían Jaffe y Nebenzahl (2001) el Efecto Halo consistía en que “debido a la necesidad de evaluar los productos cuando se tiene información limitada sobre sus atributos, los consumidores utilizan las imágenes o estereotipos que poseen sobre los países de origen para formular actitudes hacia los mismos”. Según estos mismos autores, en el momento en que el consumidor gana familiaridad con los verdaderos atributos de una categoría de producto, la imagen del país pasa a ser un resumen o “summary” de los atributos relativos a las categorías de productos conocidas fabricadas en ese país. En el caso de nuestro estudio, los consumidores poco familiarizados con el vino tienden a formar las evaluaciones de calidad en base a la imagen que poseen de la región como fabricante de vino.

TABLA 3  
Efecto moderador de la familiaridad con el vino

	Sp	βa - βb	t
Imagen de la región como fabricante de vinos > Calidad Percibida de los vinos regionales	0,7055	-0,1435	-1,9548
Calidad Percibida de los vinos regionales > Intención de compra hacia los vinos regionales	0,8757	0,0482	0,5293

Para el caso de la segunda variable moderadora, la familiaridad con los vinos de la región, ocurre lo mismo (tabla 4). El efecto moderador tan sólo se confirma para la primera relación, confirmándose la hipótesis H<sub>11</sub> de este estudio y rechazándose H<sub>12</sub>. Además, los resultados vuelven a confirmar la teoría del Efecto Halo y Efecto Resumen defendida por Han (1989) y Jaffe y Nebenzahl (2001), pues los consumidores menos familiares con los vinos regionales muestran una relación más intensa entre la imagen de la región como productora de vinos y la calidad percibida hacia los mismos.

TABLA 4  
Efecto moderador de la familiaridad con los vinos regionales

	Sp	βa - βb	t
Imagen de la región como fabricante de vinos > Calidad Percibida de los vinos regionales	0,7643	-0,1745	-2,2718
Calidad Percibida de los vinos regionales > Intención de compra hacia los vinos regionales	0,7982	-0,0228	-0,2839

## 5. Conclusiones

Competir en el mercado agroalimentario es cada vez más complejo como consecuencia de una demanda cada vez más exigente y de la mayor competencia empresarial derivada de la liberalización de los mercados. Los pequeños productores regionales tienen que hacer frente hoy en día no solo a la competencia de otros productores nacionales, sino también a un creciente número de competidores

internacionales que penetran en el mercado nacional gracias, sobre todo, a la política de aprovisionamiento de las grandes cadenas de distribución minorista.

En este entorno, la industria agroalimentaria se ve forzada a buscar mecanismos que le permitan acceder a los canales de venta mediante la diferenciación de su oferta frente a los competidores, alcanzando a su vez unos exigentes requisitos de calidad y seguridad alimentaria. Sin embargo, acometer las estrategias y acciones de marketing necesarias para diferenciar sus marcas suele ser muy difícil y costoso para los pequeños productores regionales. Actuar de forma independiente no es del todo rentable, por lo que las opciones pasan por el asociacionismo entre industrias regionales para fomentar la demanda de los productos domésticos de calidad. Se trata, en definitiva, de hacer que el origen del producto sea un elemento clave en la decisión de compra de los consumidores y, por tanto, una fuente de ventaja competitiva para las empresas regionales.

Desde el punto de vista del marketing, una de las medidas asociativas más relevantes es la creación y potenciación de marcas de garantía que amparen de forma conjunta a los productos de todas las empresas asociadas. Las Denominaciones de Origen Protegidas y las marcas “alimentos de...” son dos ejemplos de estas marcas de garantía que combinan criterios de calidad y de lugar de procedencia en la selección de los productos autorizados a utilizarlas.

Las administraciones públicas europeas y, en particular, de las distintas regiones, consideran hoy en día que el apoyo a estas marcas debe ser un eje prioritario de sus políticas comerciales para proteger a su sector agroalimentario. Pero la eficacia de esta política dependerá del valor que los consumidores concedan a estas marcas. Por tanto para diseñar desde la administración pública unas estrategias de promoción óptimas es necesario responder a la pregunta clave: ¿Qué importancia tiene el origen regional en la decisión de compra de los alimentos (efecto lugar de origen)?

Para dar respuesta a esta pregunta, hemos contrastado un modelo de relaciones estructurales que expliquen la intención de compra de vinos regionales. Los resultados del modelo corroboran el efecto directo de la imagen general de la región y de la imagen de la región como productora de vinos sobre la intención de compra, así como sus efectos indirectos a través de la calidad percibida de los vinos regionales. Estos resultados aportan importantes implicaciones gerenciales para los decisores políticos. Por un lado, se confirma el valor de poner en práctica campañas de comunicación que persigan una mejora de la imagen de la región como marca. En otras palabras, se confirma que las marcas regionales colectivas no solo tienen valor como herramientas de promoción exterior, sino también como incentivo para el consumo interno de los productos regionales, especialmente de aquellos consumidores que se consideren más etnocentristas. Se comprueba que una mejora en la imagen general de la región tendrá efectos positivos en la venta de vinos regionales, por lo que la acción conjunta de la administración pública regional y de las empresas vitivinícolas de la región en materia de comunicación acarrearán efectos positivos en términos de comercialización de este producto en los mercados internos.

Algo similar ocurre con la variable imagen región como fabricante de vinos, la cual influye de forma directa sobre la calidad percibida y la intención de compra. Las campañas de concienciación a la sociedad regional sobre la cultura y tradición vitivinícola en la región, así como las posibles acciones de formación de personal cualificado y conservación medioambiental del suelo regional provocarán un aumento de la intención de compra hacia el vino con origen en dicha región.

Por otra parte, en la misma línea que otros estudios previos sobre esta materia (Shimp y Sharma, 1987; Luque et al., 2004; Dmitrovic et al., 2009), se corrobora la relación positiva del etnocentrismo del consumidor sobre la calidad percibida de los vinos y sobre la intención de compra, lo que también da pistas a los responsables de las políticas comerciales de las empresas y de los gobiernos regionales sobre cómo enfocar sus campañas de comunicación. Si el etnocentrismo influye positivamente en estas variables, la estrategia de comunicación puede ir encaminada al ensalzamiento del origen regional del producto, haciendo hincapié en el efecto positivo que tiene la decisión del consumidor de apostar por los productos regionales para apoyar y revitalizar la economía y el empleo en su entorno más cercano.

Otra de las conclusiones más relevantes de este estudio, por su aportación en una de sus lagunas más importantes de la teoría de marketing sobre el efecto origen, es la confirmación de un efecto

moderador por parte de la familiaridad en una de las relaciones del modelo. Como muestran los resultados, tanto la familiaridad relativa a la categoría de producto como la relativa a los productos de un origen, moderan la relación existente entre la imagen región como fabricante de vinos y la calidad percibida hacia los mismos. Además, los resultados son coherentes con la teoría del Efecto Halo y Efecto Resumen (Han, 1989). No se puede corroborar, sin embargo, el efecto moderador de la familiaridad en la relación entre la calidad percibida y la intención de compra hacia los vinos regionales.

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# ¿ES EFICAZ EN TÉRMINOS DE TRANSMISIÓN DE IMAGEN PATROCINAR A UN EQUIPO DE FÚTBOL CON POCO ÉXITO DEPORTIVO?

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## RESUMEN

*El propósito de este estudio es explorar la influencia del éxito deportivo sobre el efecto de la transmisión de imagen en el patrocinio deportivo. Se realizó un estudio cuantitativo en tres equipos de fútbol según su clasificación histórica, repercusión mediática y riqueza. El tratamiento de datos se realizó por medio del modelado de ecuaciones estructurales. Los resultados muestran que la transmisión de imagen se efectúa entre los equipos más laureados. El modelo de transmisión de imagen no funciona en el equipo con menos éxito deportivo. La principal conclusión conlleva replantear el funcionamiento del éxito del patrocinio en función de variables deportivas. Los gestores deportivos deben entonces reconsiderar la relación coste eficacia de la inversión en patrocinio en función de la entidad patrocinadora y el objetivo propuesto.*

## Palabras clave:

Patrocinio, transmisión imagen, deporte, congruencia, actitud

## **1. Introducción**

En las últimas décadas el patrocinio deportivo ha evolucionado considerablemente. Han aumentado las inversiones y el interés por el conocimiento de los beneficios y su eficacia. Desde el punto de vista empresarial como académico. Reuters (“Global sponsorship spending to rise 5.2 pct in 2011,” 2011) informa que el gasto mundial de patrocinio ascendió a 46,6 billones de dólares americanos en 2010, frente a sólo 2 billones de dólares en 1984 (Meenaghan, 1998). IEG (2013) estima que en 2013 el gasto global en patrocinio fue de 53.3 billones de dólares americanos lo que supuso un incremento del 75% desde 2005. El gasto por empresas norteamericanas en patrocinio se incrementó un 5.5% en el año 2013 en detrimento de otros gastos (O’Reilly y Lafrance Horning, 2013).

La principal razón para la inversión en patrocinio es obtener una respuesta de los consumidores (Meenaghan, 2001), tal como el mejoramiento de imagen y el aumento del conocimiento de la marca, lo que teóricamente conlleva un aumento de las ventas (Walliser, 2003). La evaluación de la eficacia de esta herramienta tiene dos propósitos. En primer lugar, proporcionar una medida de valor de un patrocinio determinado (medir su eficacia), y en segundo lugar, servir como propuesta para la venta y financiación de eventos y series deportivas (Crompton, 2004). Sin embargo, hasta ahora no se ha tratado de diferenciar la eficacia del patrocinio en función del tamaño del evento o la eficacia del patrocinio en equipos con diferentes niveles (deportivos o de seguidores). Esto es, las empresas que patrocinan los eventos o equipos deportivos no tienen conocimiento sobre la eficacia de patrocinar un gran evento o un pequeño evento, o un equipo deportivo de éxito o un equipo con peores resultados deportivos excepto el número de impactos.

Este artículo pretende contribuir a la literatura del patrocinio realizando una investigación exploratoria con el objetivo de conocer la eficacia del proceso de transmisión de imagen en función del rendimiento deportivo. Para tal fin se realiza un estudio cuantitativo en tres entidades deportivas de fútbol según el éxito deportivo, riqueza y número de seguidores. La hipótesis es que la transmisión de imagen en el patrocinio no funciona igual en entidades deportivas de gran éxito que en otras de menos éxito. Los resultados teóricos llenarán un hueco existente en la búsqueda de la comprensión del funcionamiento de la transmisión de imagen. En la práctica, los gestores comerciales podrán designar el gasto en patrocinio según el coste y eficacia esperada.

## **2. La transmisión de imagen**

El término transferencia de imagen describe la transferencia de asociaciones relacionadas con una marca o compañía desde el patrocinado al patrocinador (Gwinner, 1997). Se refiere a la asociación realizada por el consumidor del evento o equipo deportivo a la marca patrocinadora. El objetivo es evocar sentimientos y actitudes positivas hacia el patrocinador, vinculando estrechamente un evento que el consumidor valora altamente (Grohs y Reisinger, 2005).

En la literatura de marketing varios autores han hallado evidencias del concepto de transferencia de imágenes para eventos deportivos. En el caso de Stipp y Schiavone (1996), encontraron un efecto positivo y significativo en la influencia de las actitudes de los consumidores hacia los Juegos Olímpicos y la imagen de los patrocinadores del evento. De igual manera Grohs, Wagner, y Vsetecka (2004) comprobaron la transferencia de imagen de un evento deportivo de invierno a los patrocinadores de dicho evento.

En cuanto a la medición y evaluación de la eficacia de la transmisión de imagen, no existe un modelo global para medir la eficacia del patrocinio, ni tampoco una medición que permita expresar lo cuantificable que pueda ser la efectividad de la transmisión de imagen (Choi y Yoh, 2011).

Aquellos eventos que no abordan la eficacia del patrocinio a menudo prestan poca atención a los objetivos de los patrocinadores. Al contrario, las cifras de asistencia y las impresiones de medios son más importantes para el patrocinador (Stotlar, 2004).

También se ha manifestado que la falta de técnicas de medición adecuadas para medir la eficacia es el tema más debatido y el aspecto más difícil del proceso de patrocinio (Meng-Lewis, Thwaites, y Pillai, 2013). El desafío que predomina consiste en la evaluación estandarizada y los procedimientos del patrocinio en relación a la valoración de sus competencias. Además, la intangibilidad puede dificultar la medición por lo que la evaluación del patrocinio aún está algo distante para alcanzar un modelo general que explique la eficacia de la trasmisión de imagen.

La creación de una imagen positiva de una marca resulta ser el principal objetivo de las empresas que se asocian a la hora de participar en eventos sociales. La conexión de una marca con un evento patrocinado debe llevar a las personas y al patrocinado a una influencia positiva hacia la marca y al evento (Gwinner y Eaton, 1999). El patrocinio repercute positivamente en la percepción de las personas sobre la marca cuando esta se asocia con un evento (patrocinado). A través del patrocinio, la gente percibe una conexión adecuada entre el evento y la marca del patrocinador (Crimmins y Horn, 1996).

### **3. Construcción de hipótesis**

#### **3.1. Actitud hacia el patrocinador**

La actitud hacia el patrocinador se podría definir como la evaluación global de un consumidor hacia la organización patrocinadora de un evento (Keller, 2003). Meenaghan (2001) y Dees, Bennett y Villegas, (2008) entendieron este constructo como una disposición favorable hacia el patrocinador. La actitud ha sido una de las variables más usadas para medir la eficacia del patrocinio. Levin, Joiner, y Cameron (2001) adoptaron la variable para comprobar el efecto del tiempo de exposición y el recuerdo al patrocinio. Roy y Cornwell (2003) emplearon la misma medida para evaluar el efecto de la equidad de la marca en respuesta al evento patrocinado. Así mismo, otros autores también han examinado la actitud hacia el patrocinio como medida de la eficacia del patrocinio (Alexandris y Tsiotsou, 2012; Carrillat, 2005; Dees, Bennett, y Villegas, 2008; Kim et al., 2011; Koo, Quarterman, Jackson, y Suh, 2005).

Según Meenaghan (1983) las actividades o eventos están poseídos de atributos de personalidad particulares depositados en la mente del consumidor, y la actividad de patrocinio asocia una actividad o evento en particular con los productos o servicios de la empresa. Los individuos asocian a un promotor con una actividad patrocinada, las imágenes de la actividad se transfieren al patrocinador, es decir, la actitud que se tiene hacia el patrocinado se transfiere al patrocinador.

La estrecha vinculación se logra mediante la presentación del patrocinador de forma simultánea con el evento, que debería traducirse en un contagio de la imagen a la empresa patrocinadora (Grohs y Reisinger, 2005). Por lo tanto se concluye con la siguiente hipótesis:

H1: La actitud hacia el equipo (el patrocinado) ejerce una influencia positiva en la actitud hacia el patrocinador.

#### **3.2. Intención de compra**

De la revisión de la literatura se desprende la preeminencia de los planteamientos teóricos de Fishbein y Ajzen (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen, 1981, 2001, 2008; Fishbein y Ajzen, 1975) a la hora de predecir la conducta humana. Según Ajzen (1991, 2001), las personas actúan de acuerdo con sus intenciones influidas por la percepción de control del comportamiento, las normas subjetivas y las actitudes hacia el comportamiento. Un gran número de estudios han apoyado con sus resultados la creencia de que las intenciones juegan un papel importante en la predisposición del comportamiento real.

Por consiguiente, la intención de compra puede ser un indicador apropiado de la eficacia del patrocinio, particularmente cuando un patrocinador participa en eventos deportivos dirigidos a los aficionados deportivos (Ko, Kim, Claussen, y Kim, 2008), pues su mera presencia puede influir en el individuo que visiona o participa en el evento y en su intención de comprar un producto del patrocinador (Dean, 2002; Pitts, 1998). Diversos estudios han demostrado que la actitud de los consumidores es un importante predictor de las intenciones de comportamiento

(Kim et al., 2011). Por otra parte, Meenaghan (2001) concluyó que las actitudes positivas hacia el patrocinador son antecedentes de las intenciones de compra de los consumidores, y así también de los comportamientos reales de compra.

H2: La actitud hacia el patrocinador influye positivamente en la intención de compra de productos del patrocinador.

### **3.3. Congruencia**

La congruencia es el concepto que mide el “ajuste” de la relación entre patrocinador y patrocinado según la percepción del consumidor. La congruencia relaciona al patrocinador con el evento, y ha sido motivo de estudio de la eficacia del patrocinio deportivo en los últimos años (Chao, 2011; Cornwell, Weeks, y Roy, 2005; Rifon, Choi, Trimble, y Li, 2004). Tal y como cita Chao (2011), son varios los autores que han estudiado la influencia de la congruencia sobre el recuerdo y el reconocimiento de marca (Crimmins y Horn, 1996; Rifon et al., 2004; Speed y Thompson, 2000; Wakefield, Becker-Olsen, y Cornwell, 2007). Para el consumidor, por lo tanto, será más fácil recordar al patrocinador cuando perciba una cierta relación lógica entre el patrocinador y el evento. Por lo tanto, es un factor muy importante que influye en el recuerdo y el conocimiento de los patrocinadores (Chao, 2011; Clark, Cornwell, y Pruitt, 2009; Cornwell et al., 2005). Esta variable es integradora de factores cognitivos como el recuerdo y el conocimiento.

Los estudios sobre la congruencia apoyan su capacidad para mejorar la transferencia de imágenes del evento al patrocinador (Gwinner, 1997), mejorando el recuerdo del patrocinador (Johan y Pham, 1999) y mejorando la actitud de los consumidores hacia el patrocinador (McDaniel, 1999).

El patrocinio congruente crea una mayor diferenciación del producto con el resto de productos del mercado (Amis y Slack, 1999) y puede llegar a aumentar la eficiencia de la promoción de ventas (Chandon, Wansink, y Laurent, 2000). En cambio, una incongruencia en el patrocinio conlleva que la transferencia de imágenes de los valores del evento hacia el patrocinador sea deficiente (Meenaghan, 2001).

Así pues, la evaluación de la congruencia y el ajuste entre el patrocinador y las características propias del evento pueden proporcionar información con respecto a la percepción del consumidor de las marcas patrocinadas y servir como medida de su eficacia.

Citando a Tribou (2011), la incongruencia en la relación de patrocinio puede conllevar dos escenarios. En primer lugar, si la incongruencia no es significativa, entonces el esfuerzo cognitivo llevado a cabo por el consumidor aumenta el impacto del patrocinio, pudiendo incluso llegar a perpetuarlo. El espectador tratará de asimilar el motivo de tal incongruencia, y de lograrlo, la transmisión de imagen persistirá más en el tiempo. En caso contrario, si la incongruencia es percibida como significativa, el patrocinador sufre el riesgo de ser rechazado, y por lo tanto no se efectuará la transmisión de imagen y no habrá retorno de la inversión.

H3: El ajuste percibido por parte del consumidor entre el patrocinador y el patrocinado tiene una influencia positiva en la actitud hacia el patrocinador.

## **4. Transferencia de imagen y éxito deportivo**

En el análisis de (Abreu Novais y Arcodia, 2013) se sugiere que el área del patrocinio deportivo ha seguido siempre la misma tendencia. La mayoría de los estudios se centran generalmente en grandes eventos multidisciplinarios que atraen a una gran cantidad de atención de los medios. Los autores señalan que es esencial un estudio de la transferencia de la imagen de marca en otros tipos de eventos (pequeños eventos unidisciplinarios) para comprender mejor el proceso y para evaluar si se produce en la misma forma que lo hace en los grandes eventos deportivos.

Se escogieron tres equipos deportivos pertenecientes a la categoría de fútbol (soccer) de la Asociación Nacional de Fútbol Profesional (ANFP) de Chile. Para la elección de las entidades deportivas se tuvo en cuenta la clasificación histórica y la repercusión social. En primer lugar,

se ordenaron los equipos por títulos conseguidos (nacionales, internacionales y de segunda categoría) y se calcularon las frecuencias. Se clasificaron como equipos ganadores, equipos competitivos y equipos supervivientes; más de diez títulos (tres equipos), de cuatro a diez títulos (siete equipos), y de uno a tres títulos (ocho equipos). Tres equipos resultaron distanciarse significativamente de la media (8,22) con más de 17 títulos (17, 22, y 44). El primer de ellos fue el Colo Colo. La Unión Española con diez títulos está situado aproximadamente sobre la media. Finalmente, el Ñublense con un título de segunda categoría cierra la elección.

Posteriormente se estableció una segunda clasificación en función del número de seguidores o hinchas que visitan los estadios de cada equipo. En una clasificación desde 1990 hasta el 2013 el Colo Colo ocupa el primer lugar con más de siete millones. La Unión Española se encuadra por debajo de la media y el Ñublense se encuentra en último lugar con menos de medio millón de visitantes.

Por último, se realizó un estudio de impacto de los equipos deportivos nacionales en las redes sociales (Twitter y Facebook son las redes sociales más frecuentadas en Chile). Al igual que en anteriores clasificaciones los resultados mostraron tres equipos con un mayor número de seguidores (más de 3.5 millones en Twitter). El Colo Colo entre ellos. Siete equipos con un número medio de 1.3 millones de seguidores. La Unión Española entre ellos. Y por último el Ñublense con menos de 0.4 millones de seguidores cerrando la lista.

Estos tres indicadores justifican la elección de los clubes en función del rendimiento deportivo y la repercusión social. Ambos índices coinciden.

## **5. Metodología**

### **5.1. Datos y muestra**

La muestra del equipo Colo-Colo es de 490 aficionados, del equipo Unión Española son 292 aficionados y de Ñublense son 200 aficionados. La aplicación de las encuestas contempla el desarrollo de la liga Chilena temporada 2013-2014, la cual se divide en dos semestres, campeonato de transición (primer semestre) y campeonato Petrobras apertura 2013-2014 (segundo semestre).

El periodo de encuestas comenzó en la última semana de octubre y terminó en diciembre del mismo año 2013. Por lo tanto las encuestas estuvieron repartidas en fases iniciales y finales del campeonato.

Para los tres equipos la muestra estuvo compuesta por un 75% de hombres con un rango de edad del 40% entre 31 y 40 años. El ingreso salarial estuvo muy distribuido con cinco rangos del 20% siendo el nivel más bajo el que mostraba un porcentaje inferior. El nivel educativo del 70% de la muestra fue superior al nivel medio o preuniversitario también para los tres equipos. La mitad de la muestra afirmó ser soltero. La muestra final es uniforme en cuanto a las variables sociodemográficas en función de los tres equipos.

### **5.2. Escalas de medida**

La escala para medir la actitud hacia el equipo de los individuos ha sido adaptada de Speed y Thompson (2000). Esta escala fue posteriormente utilizada por otros investigadores como por ejemplo, Martensen, Grønholdt, Bendtsen, y Jensen (2007) o Dhurup y Rabale (2012). ¿El equipo deportivo es muy importante para mí?. ¿Pienso en el equipo deportivo todo el tiempo?. ¿Veo los partidos del equipo deportivo siempre que puedo?.

Para la actitud hacia el patrocinador se ha traducido y adaptado escalas empleadas por autores en investigaciones anteriores como Dees et al. (2008), la cual previamente había sido adaptada de Quester y Thompson (2001), y usada en la investigación de Kutintara (2009). Preguntas utilizadas en la encuesta: en general los patrocinadores del equipo deportivo ¿me gustan?. En general los productos/servicios de los patrocinadores ¿son de calidad?. En general los productos/servicios de los patrocinadores ¿son mejores que los de otras marcas?. En general los patrocinadores del equipo deportivo ¿son marcas prestigiosas?

Para medir la intención de compra de los productos se adaptan las escalas de Smith, Graetz, y Westerbeek (2008), los cuales se basaron en los estudios previos de Speed y Thompson (2000) y empleada por Rodgers, (2004); Dees, Bennett, y Villegas (2008). Preguntas utilizadas en la encuesta: mi actitud general hacia la compra de productos/servicios de las empresas que patrocinan al equipo deportivo ¿es positiva?. ¿Usa productos/servicios de los patrocinadores del club?. ¿Probaría un producto o servicio nuevo de un patrocinador si lo veo en el evento?. ¿Prefiero los productos/servicios de un patrocinador del equipo a los de un no patrocinador?. ¿Estaría dispuesto a pagar más por una marca que apoya una causa que me importa?.

La congruencia ha sido medida mediante la adaptación de dos escalas en un ítem procedentes de Speed y Thompson (2000), y que posteriormente fue utilizada por Roy en el año (2011). Para evitar cualquier identificación con un determinado patrocinador específico, los ítems están redactados en referencia a los patrocinadores de forma genérica. ¿La imagen del equipo deportivo es congruente con sus patrocinadores?.

Para la medición de todas las variables se utiliza una escala Likert, muy de acuerdo/muy en desacuerdo de 1 a 7 puntos.

## **6. Resultados**

Se ha empleado el método de mínimos cuadrados parciales (PLS) en un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales (SEM). Para ello se empleó el paquete de software SmartPLS 2.0.M3 (Ringle, Wende, y Will, 2005) para evaluar tanto el modelo de medida como el modelo estructural.

Varias razones apoyan el uso de la técnica de PLS SEM en esta investigación. En primer lugar, PLS es una técnica SEM con base en el estudio de la varianza que se ha utilizado en la investigación previa (Hulland, 1999) y particularmente en el ámbito deportivo (Howat y Assaker, 2013).

En segundo lugar, ha sido recomendado el uso de PLS cuando el conocimiento teórico sobre un tema es escaso (Petter, Straub, y Rai, 2007). Este estudio examina la transmisión de imagen en equipos con heterogéneos éxitos deportivos y repercusión social. Abarca cuestiones de investigación que no han sido examinadas en la investigación previa, se revela el grado en que la teoría anterior es limitado y entonces la estimación PLS es adecuada.

Tercero, PLS funciona mejor con pequeñas muestras de datos como los empleados en este estudio en comparación con técnicas de SEM basados en la covarianza (Hulland, 1999). A pesar de su tamaño relativamente pequeño, la muestra supere el tamaño mínimo de la muestra necesario para garantizar un nivel adecuado de precisión y potencia estadística (Barclay, Higgins, y Thompson, 1995). Además, PLS es apropiado para esta investigación ya que puede manejar los constructos con solo unos pocos elementos indicadores, tan pocos como dos o incluso uno (Hair, Ringle, y Sarstedt, 2011).

### **6.1. Evaluación del modelo de medida**

En recomendación de Straub (1989) y Chin (2010), se sugiere probar el modelo de medida analizando la fiabilidad individual y de las escalas o consistencia interna, la validez convergente y discriminante.

Para evaluar la fiabilidad individual se procede a examinar las cargas o correlaciones simples de los indicadores sobre sus respectivas dimensiones. La carga estandarizada debe ser superior a 0,707 (Barclay et al., 1995). Este nivel mínimo en las correlaciones simples señala que más del 50% de la varianza del parámetro observado es compartida con la variable (Bollen, 1989). La tabla 1 muestra ciertos valores que no alcanzan el mínimo requerido, sin embargo, (Chin, 1998) señala que valores menores son aceptables para investigaciones exploratorias. No obstante, todas las cargas son significativas y próximas al valor esperado.

Para medir la fiabilidad de las escalas se utiliza la fiabilidad compuesta. Nunnally (2010) sugiere 0,7 como nivel mínimo para una fiabilidad aceptable. Todos los valores muestran valores superiores a los recomendados. Así también sucede para el alfa de Cronbach.

El procedimiento PLS, respecto a la validez convergente, nos permite evaluar el grado en que los ítems de una dimensión explican realmente la misma idea subyacente. Según Fornell y Larcker (1981) el valor de la varianza extraída (AVE) debería superar el valor 0,5. Todos los indicadores superan el umbral mínimo establecido.

TABLA 1  
Evaluación del modelo de medida

Modelo	Constructo	Alfa Cronbach	Fiabilidad compuesta	AVE	Cargas factoriales
Colo Colo	Act equipo	0.894	0.933	0.824	0.889*** - 0.925***
	Act patro	0.814	0.877	0.640	0.755*** - 0.821***
	Int comp	0.756	0.862	0.676	0.784*** - 0.876***
Union	Act equipo	0.813	0.866	0.686	0.677*** - 0.907***
	Act patro	0.800	0.867	0.621	0.692*** - 0.838***
	Int comp	0.802	0.871	0.629	0.745*** - 0.844***
Ñuble	Act equipo	0.886	0.927	0.810	0.879*** - 0.929***
	Act patro	0.814	0.874	0.636	0.753*** - 0.839***
	Int comp	0.826	0.899	0.757	0.598*** - 0.978***

Para evaluar la validez discriminante mediante PLS existen dos métodos: (a) comparar que la varianza media compartida entre un constructo y sus medidas es mayor que la varianza que dicho constructo comparte con los otros constructos del modelo (Barclay et al., 1995) y (b) evaluar que las correlaciones entre los constructos son más bajas que la raíz cuadrada de la AVE (Fornell y Larcker, 1981). Mediante ambos métodos se comprueba que ciertamente las escalas presentan validez discriminante (tabla 2 y 3).

TABLA 2  
Validez discriminante, cargas cruzadas

Colo	Act equipo	Actpat	Intcom	Congruencia
<b>Actequipo</b>	<b>0,909</b>	0,2045	0,388	0,061
<b>Actequipo</b>	<b>0,889</b>	0,1648	0,257	0,006
<b>Actequipo</b>	<b>0,925</b>	0,167	0,284	0,072
<b>ACTPAT1</b>	0,080	<b>0,754</b>	0,478	0,413
<b>ACTPAT2</b>	0,206	<b>0,821</b>	0,437	0,312
<b>ACTPAT3</b>	0,145	<b>0,806</b>	0,474	0,311
<b>ACTPAT4</b>	0,200	<b>0,818</b>	0,615	0,390
<b>INTCOM1</b>	0,272	0,544	<b>0,784</b>	0,519
<b>INTCOM2</b>	0,223	0,544	<b>0,875</b>	0,463
<b>INTCOM2</b>	0,372	0,473	<b>0,804</b>	0,406
<b>Union</b>	<b>Act equipo</b>	<b>Actpat</b>	<b>Intcom</b>	<b>Congruencia</b>
<b>Actequipo</b>	<b>0,907</b>	0,148	0,086	0,019
<b>Actequipo</b>	<b>0,677</b>	0,010	0,070	0,016
<b>Actequipo</b>	<b>0,883</b>	0,132	0,000	0,012
<b>ACTPAT1</b>	0,156	<b>0,779</b>	0,333	0,401
<b>ACTPAT2</b>	0,107	<b>0,834</b>	0,265	0,268
<b>ACTPAT3</b>	0,119	<b>0,838</b>	0,323	0,355
<b>ACTPAT4</b>	0,078	<b>0,692</b>	0,208	0,161
<b>INTCOM1</b>	0,043	0,307	<b>0,745</b>	0,371
<b>INTCOM2</b>	0,088	0,278	<b>0,760</b>	0,382
<b>INTCOM3</b>	0,029	0,290	<b>0,844</b>	0,343
<b>Ñublense</b>	<b>Act equipo</b>	<b>Actpat</b>	<b>Intcom</b>	<b>Congruencia</b>
<b>Actequipo</b>	<b>0,891</b>	0,022	0,007	0,057
<b>Actequipo</b>	<b>0,928</b>	0,027	0,024	0,071
<b>Actequipo</b>	<b>0,878</b>	0,014	0,028	0,013
<b>ACTPAT1</b>	0,053	<b>0,794</b>	0,383	0,265
<b>ACTPAT2</b>	0,013	<b>0,801</b>	0,359	0,378
<b>ACTPAT3</b>	0,018	<b>0,838</b>	0,501	0,366
<b>ACTPAT4</b>	0,013	<b>0,753</b>	0,251	0,191
<b>INTCOM1</b>	0,026	0,251	<b>0,597</b>	0,086
<b>INTCOM2</b>	0,004	0,489	<b>0,978</b>	0,254
<b>INTCOM3</b>	0,004	0,489	<b>0,978</b>	0,254



TABLA 3  
Validez discriminante, criterio de Fornell-Larcker

<b>Colo</b>	<b>Act equipo</b>	<b>Actpat</b>	<b>Intcom</b>
<b>Act equipo</b>	<b>0.907</b>		
<b>Actpat</b>	0,199	<b>0.8</b>	
<b>Intcom</b>	0,348	0,636	<b>0.822</b>
<b>Congruencia</b>	0,053	0,451	0,567
<b>Union</b>	<b>Act equipo</b>	<b>Actpat</b>	<b>Intcom</b>
<b>Act equipo</b>	<b>0.828</b>		
<b>Actpat</b>	0,152	<b>0.788</b>	
<b>Intcom</b>	0,052	0,370	<b>0.793</b>
<b>Congruencia</b>	0,017	0,401	0,457
<b>Ñuble</b>	<b>Act equipo</b>	<b>Actpat</b>	<b>Intcom</b>
<b>Act equipo</b>	<b>0,9</b>		
<b>Actpat</b>	0,025	<b>0,797</b>	
<b>Intcom</b>	0,002	0,489	<b>0,87</b>
<b>Congruencia</b>	0,059	0,394	0,245

### 6.2. Evaluación del modelo estructural

Para la evaluación del modelo estructural se recomienda comenzar por la evaluación del coeficiente de correlación múltiple al cuadrado ( $R^2$ ) (Castro, Carrión, y Salgueiro, 2007). Falk y Miller (1992) señalan que el valor recomendado debería ser superior a 0,1. Los índices mostrados en la tabla 4 superan los valores mínimos recomendados para estudios exploratorios.

### 6.3. Test de hipótesis

Se emplea la técnica de análisis bootstrap con 500 submuestras para estimar la significancia de los coeficientes estructurales (Chin, 1998). La tabla 4 muestra los resultados.

Según Chin (1998) los coeficientes path estandarizados se consideran significativos si adquieren cuanto menos un valor de 0,2, pero deberían alcanzar al menos un valor de 0,3 para ser económicamente significativos. En general, la evaluación indica un poder explicativo satisfactorio para el modelo estructural en los modelos Colo Colo y Unión Española. Sin embargo, para el modelo Ñublense no resulta significativa la relación o hipótesis H1 (Actitud hacia el equipo – Actitud hacia el patrocinador).

TABLA 4  
Evaluación del modelo estructural

Equipo		Relación o dimensión	Path	$R^2$	$Q^2$	GOF
<b>Colo</b>		Actequ- Actpat	0.276***			0.388
		Actpat- Intcom	0.636***			
		Cong-Actpat	0.441***			
Constructo		Actitud hacia patrocinador		0.234	0.142	
		Intención compra		0.405	0.205	
<b>Union</b>		Actequ- Actpat	0.260***			0,263
		Actpat- Intcom	0.371***			
		Cong-Actpat	0.404***			
Constructo		Actitud hacia patrocinador		0.186	0.102	
		Intención compra		0.238	0.085	
<b>Ñuble</b>		Actequ- Actpat	0.049			0.311
		Actpat- Intcom	0.489***			
		Cong-Actpat	0.396***			
Constructo		Actitud hacia patrocinador		0.157	0.088	
		Intención compra		0.239	0.164	

## 7. Conclusiones

### 7.1. Contribución teórica

Los objetivos del patrocinio deportivo han sido principalmente tres: mejorar la imagen de marca, aumentar las ventas y el reconocimiento (Grohs y Reisinger, 2014). Se ha demostrado que la imagen del patrocinado se transfiere al patrocinador en función de su ajuste percibido

(Gwinner y Eaton, 1999). Pero nunca antes se ha realizado un estudio sobre la influencia que el éxito deportivo tiene sobre la eficacia del patrocinio (Abreu Novais y Arcodia, 2013). Las entidades no disponen actualmente de información para valorar la eficacia del patrocinio en función del rendimiento deportivo. La necesidad del estudio es tanto académica como profesional.

Se presenta un modelo de transmisión de imagen para tres entidades deportivas de fútbol. Para la elección de los equipos se ha optado por clasificar el éxito o rendimiento deportivo como el resultado de la consecución de los campeonatos internacionales, de primera y segunda categoría. Adicionalmente, se clasificaron los equipos según su repercusión mediática. Para ello se tuvo en cuenta la hinchada o asistencia a los estadios y además, la repercusión social en las redes sociales. Las tres clasificaciones dieron resultados paritarios. Coincidió como el equipo más laureado el Colo Colo, que a su vez tenía mayor repercusión social e hinchada. Un segundo grupo de equipos tenían un éxito deportivo y repercusión social media, que se escogió como representante a la Unión Española. Por último, el Ñublense representa a los equipos con menos éxito deportivo, menor repercusión en redes sociales e hinchada.

En cuanto a las hipótesis, únicamente la H1 para el Ñublense resultó no significativa. La transmisión de imagen no funciona desde el equipo de fútbol hacia la marca patrocinadora.

La conclusión más relevante es que la actitud hacia el equipo deportivo (Ñublense) no influye en la actitud hacia el patrocinador. Sí afecta a la imagen del patrocinador en equipos más laureados y con mayor repercusión social. Pero la transmisión de imagen en esta competición deportiva particular no funciona en equipos de menor nivel deportivo. La explicación puede estar condicionada en varios sentidos. El concepto *basking in reflected glory* (BIRGing) fue propuesto por (Sloan, 1989). BIRGing es un autoreflejo cognitivo mediante el cual uno mismo siente el éxito de otro como suyo propio. El concepto tiene conexiones con la teoría de la identidad social (Abrams y Hogg, 2012). Es el conocimiento del individuo relativo a la pertenencia a ciertos grupos sociales y que tiene significado emocional y valor en la medida de su adhesión al grupo. Los equipos Colo Colo y Unión Española son ganadores y laureados. El sentido de pertenencia al grupo resulta positivo en la medida que el individuo necesita el éxito. Sin embargo, para equipos deportivos con escaso rendimiento deportivo, el concepto BIRGing no es aplicable. Los aficionados escasas veces pueden verse reflejados en el éxito. (Spinda, 2011) sugiere que los aficionados pueden escoger varios equipos, uno de ellos más ganador para dar más oportunidades a BIRGing. Entonces, si uno predice que su equipo favorito va a perder, hay menos probabilidad de identificarse con él por el miedo al fracaso. Esto apoya que una persona es más probable que participe en BIRGing si su imagen pública está altamente amenazada.

Diversos estudios han confirmado que la identificación con el equipo o evento influye positivamente en la actitud hacia el patrocinador. Pero según la teoría de la identidad social los individuos estarán menos identificados con el equipo perdedor. Entonces, no exteriorizan su actitud hacia el patrocinador. Por ejemplo, los aficionados del Ñublense no se identifican con con el equipo por el miedo a ser identificados a través de los patrocinadores como perdedores. Entonces dicha asociación patrocinado – patrocinador no sucede.

Por otra parte, la identificación con el patrocinador tiende a estar sesgada a favor de las marcas que ocupan un lugar destacado en el mercado (Pham y Johar, 2001). Las marcas con mayor valor apoyan a los equipos con mayor hinchada debido al coste del patrocinio. Aún así, el cuestionario fue construido con todas las marcas. Un nuevo estudio podría revelar la eficacia del patrocinio en función del valor de marca.

Por último, sería relevante conocer el motivo de asistencia y afición al equipo deportivo. Estas variables podría afectar a la actitud hacia el patrocinador y patrocinado. Según el estudio de las motivaciones de asistencia a los eventos deportivos (Alonso Dos Santos y Montoro Rios, 2014; Izzo et al., 2011; Kim y Trail, 2010) la socialización y la implicación con el deporte podrían ser las variables que explican que no se cumpla el proceso de transmisión de imagen en los equipos con menor éxito deportivo.

## 7.2. Implicaciones empresariales

La empresa debería establecer unos objetivos claros y definidos sobre el patrocinio para poder posteriormente medirlos. En Chile como en España por ejemplo, las empresas cuentan con beneficios fiscales por patrocinio deportivo. Si el objetivo del patrocinador es mejorar el valor o imagen de marca debería seleccionar equipos deportivos con mayor repercusión social y éxito deportivo. El patrocinador de Ñublense, Copelec Eléctrica, opera en situación de monopolio en la región de acción del equipo deportivo. Es decir, el gasto en patrocinio y la consecuente elección del patrocinado debe ser coherente con el objetivo del patrocinio. En este caso concreto, si el objetivo es reducir impuestos el objetivo del patrocinio es eficaz. Si el objetivo es aumentar la actitud hacia la marca no.

En segundo lugar, la congruencia efectivamente ha sido soportada como hipótesis para los tres modelos. La empresa patrocinadora, previamente a decidir si patrocinar un deporte, evento o equipo, deberá tener en cuenta el público objetivo al que quiere dirigirse, el mercado y los atributos asociados con el deporte, equipo o evento en particular. Se sugiere localizar patrocinados congruentes con el sector y región de actividad de la empresa. Así mismo con los valores intrínsecos de cada institución. En este sentido, las comunicaciones integradas de marketing pueden ayudar a establecer o fortalecer el vínculo entre el evento y el patrocinador (Grohs y Reisinger, 2014).

## 8. Limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación

Aunque la transferencia de imágenes y la congruencia es un modelo válido para medir la eficacia del patrocinio (Abreu Novais y Arcodia, 2013; Grohs y Reisinger, 2005; Smith, 2004), el ajuste funcional entre patrocinado y patrocinador no necesariamente debe ser tomada en cuenta. Un patrocinador puede elegir un deporte cuya imagen no se corresponde con la percibida por los consumidores y, de hecho, asociar eficazmente la marca con el deporte como ha sucedido en diversos casos (tómese de ejemplo McDonald's con los Juegos Olímpicos o Carlsberg con la UEFA Champions League) a costa, eso sí, de un mayor esfuerzo y empleo de recursos.

La implicación con el deporte y con el equipo además de la identificación deben ser variables a incluir en posteriores investigaciones con el objetivo de esclarecer los motivos por los que la transmisión de la actitud no es producida en equipos de inferior nivel deportivo. Esto podría determinar como afectan tanto a la congruencia como al proceso de transmisión de imagen.

Sería interesante para posteriores trabajos valorar el motivo por el cual el individuo pertenece a un equipo u a otro según su nivel deportivo. Según investigaciones anteriores sobre motivación (Alonso Dos Santos y Montoro Rios, 2014) la conexión con el entorno y la socialización son importantes motivos de asistencia a los espectáculos deportivos de fútbol.

En general, este estudio contribuye significativamente a la comprensión de la medición de la eficacia del patrocinio. Sin embargo, investigaciones confirmatorias deberían llevarse a cabo en otras regiones, culturas y disciplinas deportivas para confirmar los resultados.

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# THE MEDIATION EFFECTS OF TRUST AND CONTRACTS ON KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND INNOVATION. EVIDENCE FROM THE EUROPEAN MACHINE TOOL INDUSTRY

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## RESUMEN

*This research analyzes the impact of trust and contracts on knowledge exchange between industrial buyers and suppliers and its effect on innovation. From a survey to 202 European machine tool firms acting as buyers and sellers, we propose and evaluate a structural equation model. Results confirm the complementary thesis, and show that firms that develop high levels of trust also make a more intensive use of contracts. Those firms with both high levels of trust and contracts develop more knowledge exchange routines and reinforce their innovation capability based on buyer-supplier interaction. These results, and mainly the fact that contracts and trust are used as complements, can be valid for managing interfirm governance mechanisms in other industries with similar characteristics (long term investments, high specificity, high level of investment) and in other regions with legal institutions that are similarly effective for regulating business activity.*

## Palabras clave:

Trust; Contracts; Knowledge Exchange; Innovation; Machine tool industry

## 1. Introducción

Today, the idea that innovation has become vital for growth and survival is commonsense. Innovation involves the application of significant new technologies in order to find new market opportunities (Tushman and Nadler, 1986, cited by Li et al. 2009), bringing solutions to same or different problems.

Along with the problems or needs, knowledge is a necessary ingredient for innovation. Customers and suppliers are an important source for identifying problems and gaining knowledge to solve them, in other words, to innovate. This is particularly true in relationships among the members of the supply chain, or the marketing channel, where firms commonly offer complex products and services very closely tailored to other firms' circumstances (XXX & YYY 2010, 2013). In the case of relationships with suppliers, these can have an important positive influence on the buyer's innovative capacity and its ability to offer high quality and value-added products down the supply chain (Dyer and Nobeoka 2000, Bessant 2004, Wagner 2006). At the same time, collaboration relationships with customer firms can also be a source of creativity and new ideas, as well as an effective way of ensuring loyalty to the seller. In this context there is a need to configure and maintain long-term relationships (Anderson and Naurus 1990, Bidault and Castello 2009, Gila 2009, Grönroos 1983, Jap and Ganesan 2000, Noordevier et al. 1990) and to find mechanisms for there to be an effective diffusion of needs and knowledge among customers and suppliers.

Different studies have brought to light the positive relationship between *Knowledge sharing* and *Innovation performance* for the members of the supply chain (XXX & YYY, 2010, 2013, Li et al. 2009, Lin et al. 2012, Tsai 2009) pointing to the idea that firms that share more knowledge tend to benefit from more valuable innovations. However, sharing information can also bring risks, to the extent that it can lead to a loss of exclusive knowledge that is fundamental for the firm. Therefore, of particular importance are the means organizations dispose of in order to ensure that these actions of knowledge sharing do help them to gain competitive edge without turning against them. Contracts and trust are two well-known instruments of guarantee and control to this end (Williamson, 1985, Dyer and Singh, 1998), ensuring the transaction or interchange of knowledge in this case.

However, current research in the field has not reached a consensus either on which of these two mechanisms is more adequate for its use in the context of engendering innovation in the customer-supplier realm, *or* on how they have to be employed. Does increasing the degree of contract formalization delimiting firms' innovation compromise have an influence on innovation performance? Is it the same effect for an increase in trust? Are both trust and the use of contracts mutually exclusive with respect to the aim of improving innovation performance, or do they reinforce? How do they combine in their mediating role on the effect of knowledge sharing on innovation? These are the questions this study aims to respond, in the context of innovations from the customer-supplier relationships among European machine-tool manufacturers.

In order to accomplish our aim, we have gathered data from a sample of 202 European firms in the machine tool industry. In this industry, customers and providers are the main source of innovation (Carlsson, 1995; Chuma, 2001; Lissoni, 2001, Lissoni and Pagani, 2003; Chen, 2006; Otero, 2010), but those same buyers and suppliers are also a channel of potential knowledge spill-over to competitors (Chen, 2006; Chuma, 2001; Lissoni and Pagani, 2003; Otero, 2010; Wengel and Shapira, 2004). This makes this industry particularly interesting for the research of exchange governance mechanisms.

The paper is organized as follows. After this introduction, we set up the hypothesis based on a review of the literature on trust and contracts and their impact on knowledge exchange and innovation. In the third section, we explain the methodology followed in our study, and the main results of it. The fourth section presents our conclusions and looks at the theoretical and



practical implications of this research. We conclude by highlighting the limitations of the study and the areas that remain open for further research.

## **2. Literature framework**

### ***2.1. Knowledge-sharing routines and innovation***

Dyer and Singh (1998) define knowledge-sharing routines among firms as regular patterns of inter-firm relations that permit the transfer, recombination and creation of specialized knowledge. With regard to customer-supplier relationships, in buying or selling complex assets or services, both firms develop capabilities to absorb mutual knowledge. In this form of inter-organizational learning, a firm acquires the capacity to recognize and assimilate valid knowledge for its interests from its relationship partner (Dyer and Singh, 1998).

Partners in dyads with unique fine-grained information exchange may gain a competitive edge by elevating their cognitive capacities and information processing abilities from those of bounded rationality to expert rationality (Gulati and Sitch, 2007; Uzzi, 1997). As innovation is an uncertain process lacking reliable information about latent needs, suppliers can benefit from customer innovation knowledge to generate novel ideas early in the process (Bonner and Walker 2004; Noordhoff *et al.* 2011). Intense information and knowledge-sharing between buyers and suppliers increases the probability of discovering new ways to enhance performance (Dyer 1997) and can also be a key factor for process innovations (Lin 2007; MacDuffie and Helper 1997).

We may therefore infer that the fact of sharing and exploiting knowledge is linked to its necessary condition of transfer, requiring efforts to be made and resources to be dedicated — for example, smooth and easy communication, interlocutors who can be asked for or given information, access to technical information that can be given by the employees of the customer (supplier) to the supplier (customer), or the fact of using technical resources for communication that are compatible with the other party's. From these efforts to share information and gain knowledge, greater product innovation performance can be anticipated, as expressed in the following hypothesis:

H1: A high degree of knowledge-sharing effort in the customer-supplier relationship is positively related to greater product innovation performance.

### ***2.2. Trust, knowledge exchange and innovation performance***

The literature on business-to-business relationships highlights numerous ways in which trust enhances buyers and suppliers' levels of performance in exchange relationships. Considering the goal of our research, we are going to focus on the literature that links trust, knowledge exchange and innovation.

Trust between buyer and supplier can be defined as the expectation that the other part may be relied upon to fulfil its obligations, to behave predictably, and to act and negotiate fairly even when the possibility of opportunism is present (Zaheer, McEvily, and Perrone, 1998, p.143), irrespective of the ability to monitor or control the other party (Mayer *et al.* 1995; Joshi and Stump, 1999)

When buyers and suppliers have trust in one another, they are more willing to engage in open communications and share information (Jap, 1999; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Villena *et al.*, 2011; Zaheer *et al.* 1998). Effective learning between partners is facilitated (Gulati, 1995; Lane *et al.* 2001; Selnes and Sallis, 2003) and innovation performance is enhanced (Wang *et al.* 2011)

Trust influences not only the extent of knowledge exchanged, but also the kind of knowledge transferred between parties. When buyers and suppliers believe they will not be harmed or put at risk by actions of the other party, they are more likely to share fine-grained tacit knowledge (Dyer and Singh, 1998; Uzzi, 1997) and even organization specific, proprietary and sensitive information (Uzzi, 1997; Zaheer et al. 1998; Carey et al, 2011; Selnes and Sallis, 2003). Trust can also help to evaluate and better understand the knowledge exchanged between buyers and suppliers (Lane et al. 2001), as “social relationship imbues information with veracity and meaning beyond its face value” (Uzzi, 1997).

In long term relationships, such as those between buyers and suppliers in our sample, uncertainty and risks in terms of the final results and the resources needed are high. Trust plays a critical role in the development of those long term relationships, covering expectations about what the other part will do in circumstances that are very difficult to cover in a written contract (Blomqvist et al, 2005). In addition, disagreements might occur in different moments of long term relationships. High levels of trust enable both parties to find joint problem-solving arrangements and work out problems “on the fly” (Uzzi, 1997); to have the freedom to disagree, find productive resolutions to disagreements and produce novel insights from shared ideas (Moorman et al., 1992; Morgan and Hunt, 1994).

As regards to business performance and innovativeness, it has been found that there is a strong positive relation between interorganizational trust and performance (Wang *et al.* 2011, Zaheer *et al.* 1998), suggesting that the former intervenes to smooth negotiation costs, reducing the transaction costs of interfirm exchange (Zaheer *et al.* 1998), and enhancing innovation (Molina-Morales *et al.* 2011). When environment uncertainty is high, it is trust instead of contracts, the governance mechanism that should be used to manage the supply chain relationship (Wang *et al.* 2011). However, it is more clear in cases of high partner behaviour uncertainty, than of environmental uncertainty, where the effect of trust on alliance performance is particularly positive (Krishnan, Martin and Noorderhaven (2006).

The role of trust acting either as an antecedent or as a mediation effect of knowledge exchange has been profusely studied in the Business-to-Business literature. However, previous research stressing on the mediation role of trust *from* knowledge exchange *to* innovation performance has been scarce. Trust as a resulting factor has been more commonly studied in the consumer research phenomena, such as the case of social word of mouth in e-commerce and social commerce (Hajli et al. 2013), in organization and human resource management (Van Zolingen et al. 2006), or among information technology R&D team members (Wang et al. 2006), to mention but a few examples.

Trust can develop from knowledge mutually gained in the relationship, exercised by means of “iterative cycles of dialogue” (Ballantyne 2004). In the supplier-manufacturer relationship, the establishment of embedded ties enables de creation of informal coordination mechanisms with the resulting elements of trust, commitment or joint problem solving (Huang and Chang, 2008).

In long-term buyer-seller relationships characterized by a high level of servicing, it is plausible to expect a non-recursive relation where not only trust enhances the exchange of knowledge, but also this variable acts positively on trust. Therefore, our hypotheses on trust as a variable that is positively linked to knowledge exchange and innovation performance, as described above, are as follows:

H2a. In a customer-supplier relationship, a greater presence of knowledge-sharing routines is positively associated with a higher degree of trust.

H2b. In a customer-supplier relationship, a greater presence of trust is associated with a higher degree of innovation performance.

The linkage of these two hypotheses allows us to account for the mediation effect (Baron and Kenny, 1986; Cheung, 2007; Hayes, 2013) of factor trust in the relation between knowledge sharing and innovation performance. Hence the following hypothesis:

H2c. The effect of knowledge-sharing routines on innovation performance is positively mediated by trust.

### ***2.3. Contracts, knowledge exchange and innovation performance***

Empirical evidence with respect to the sign of the linkages between the use of contracts, knowledge exchange and innovation has been not found conclusive. On the one hand, it has been argued that contracts help delineate the rights and obligations of buyers and suppliers and reduce the risk of opportunism. As a consequence, contracts can improve coordination and commitment of partners (Jap and Ganesan, 2000), enhance their cooperation (Sivadas and Dwyer, 2000), encourage the discussion and documentation of unspoken assumptions (Cannon et al., 2000), bring a level of transparency to information exchanges (Noordhoff et al. 2011), clarify expectations and obligations relating to innovation performance, enhancing buyer firms' innovation performance and cost improvement (Carey et al. 2011) and, as a consequence, facilitate knowledge transfer and improve innovation performance (Wang et al. 2011).

According to Noordhoff et al. (2011) contracts between firms often foresee and establish future communication activities completed at key points in the innovation process. This means that valuable information that may have been overlooked in a less formalized relationship is included and that information is more structured and refined when shared (Noordhoff et al. 2011). Formalization should also reduce trivial and repetitive informal flows of information that feed a sense of redundancy (Noordhoff et al. 2011).

Contracts also provide a way to manage conflict during knowledge transfer. Thus, the costs and risks associated with knowledge exchange and with collaborative innovation across the supply chain are reduced (Wang et al. 2011).

On the other hand, too-detailed and complex contracts between buyers and suppliers can be as harmful to the knowledge transfer process as too-little detailed ones (Wang et al., 2011). Over-detailed, explicit and complex contracts may provide little flexibility to both parties (Jap and Ganesan, 2000), hamper information exchange between the manufacturer and its suppliers in a limited area because of clear, contractual specification of what is and is not allowed (Wang et al. 2011) and limit the exchange of informal knowledge (Noordhoff et al. 2011). Furthermore, because explicit contracts signal to the supplier that the buyer does not trust it, the supplier is likely to be wary of the buyer, which results in lower levels of commitment (Jap and Ganesan, 2000) and lower levels of tacit knowledge exchange (Wang et al. 2011). Hence, the excessive use of contracts in a manufacturer–supplier relationship may hinder knowledge transfer and collaborative innovation (Wang et al. 2011).

Traditionally, previous studies like these here discussed have accounted for the causal link of the use of contracts on knowledge exchange. However, even the chronological relation between factors in order to infer causation does not stand very clearly in the case of relationships lasting for long time on a repetitive basis, or those entailing a selling operation of a complex product requiring a continuous revision of clauses and further corrections in a contract. Given these positive and negative effects cited by the literature, our hypotheses on the links between contracts and knowledge exchange are as follows:

H3a. A more intensive level of exchange of knowledge is linked to a greater use of contracts that set out the terms of the relationship between buyers and suppliers.

H3b. A more intensive level of exchange of knowledge is linked to a lower use of contracts that set out the terms of the relationship between buyers and suppliers.

H3c. The intensity in the use of contracts is linked to a greater presence of innovation performance.

H3d. The intensity in the use of contracts is linked to a lower presence of innovation performance.

Finally, as it was previously reasoned for the case of hypothesis H2c with respect to H2a and H2b, the study of a serially combined link of knowledge on the use of contracts and from these on innovation performance, is equivalent to a mediation role of the second in the relation between the two other factors. Therefore, our mediation effect hypotheses state as follows:

H3e. The effect of knowledge-sharing routines on innovation performance is positively mediated by trust.

H3f. The effect of knowledge-sharing routines on innovation performance is negatively mediated by trust.

#### ***2.4. Contracts and trust. Do they substitute or complement each other?***

The relation between trust and contracts has been viewed from two different perspectives: as substitutes or complements. A substitution view argues that trust reduces the need for formal contracts (Gulati, 1995; Ghoshal and Moran, 1996; Dyer and Singh, 1998; Uzzi, 1997; Zaheer et al., 1998; Adler, 2001; Wuyts and Geyskens, 2005; Yang et al. 2011). Proponents of the substitution point of view argue that firms should not apply trust and contracts simultaneously, since both strategies are costly in terms of time and effort (Wuyts and Geyskens, 2005) and it may be redundant to invest in two strategies that serve the same goal of reducing opportunistic behaviour (Dyer & Singh, 1998). Thus, when there are high levels of trust between buyers and suppliers it is unnecessary to specify or monitor contractual clauses (Dyer & Singh, 1998) and it is possible to reduce transaction costs by “replacing contracts with handshakes” (Adler, 2001). Also, it is argued that exchange partners mutually adjust their contractual obligations to changes in the external environment by means of “bilateral expectations of willingness to make adaptations”, rather than keeping them to original terms (Heide and John, 1992).

Some scholars even argue that contracts and trust are not only redundant, but counter-effective to each other. Trying to reduce opportunistic behaviour drafting too detailed contracts, with coercive terms, clauses and sanctions may be interpreted as a signal of distrust (Jap and Ganesan 2000). Ghoshal and Moran (1996) argue that formal control signals that parties are neither trusted nor trustworthy to behave appropriately without such controls, leading to distrust that breeds more distrust and “pathological spiralling relationships”. Similarly, high levels of trust and cooperation between buyers and suppliers can undermine the effectiveness of explicit contracts, because parties can be reluctant to severely enforced contractual details (Antia and Frazier 2001).

By comparison, many researchers propose a complementary effect of trust and contracts (Ring and van de Ben, 1994; Cannon et al, 2000; Poppo and Zenger, 2002; Luo, 2002; Reuer and Ariño, 2007; Liu et al. 2009; Carey et al. 2011). Because of their formal specification of a long-term commitment to exchange, and given that they reduce the risk of opportunistic behaviour and promote expectations that the other party will behave cooperatively, contracts contribute to trust development, and in a reverse complementary relation, trust enables the refinement of contracts (Poppo and Zenger, 2002). Secondly, it has been found that previous cooperation between parties, before forming a joint venture, not only breeds trust, but also bolsters contractual adaptability and contract completeness, nurturing cooperation between the same partners (Luo, 2002). When both contracts and trust are used jointly, relationship performance improves more significantly and opportunism is more effectively restrained than when used separately (Liu 2009). There is also empirical evidence showing that, by virtue of clarifying obligations and expectations of the parties, contractual agreements help ensure the continuity of the exchange when buyers and suppliers share relational norms (Cannon et al. 2000). Lastly, it has been found that contract enforcements help to ease movements of buyers into exchanges with new sellers, reducing the hazards of initiating new exchanges, particularly in situations of high environmental uncertainty about encountering the optimal exchange partners (Lazzarini et al. 2008)

The coexistence of empirical studies that support opposite hypotheses of the joint effect of contracts and trust is explained, to a great extent, by the fact that trust and contracts play different roles, and are not equally effective for regulating business activities in the different industries and regions where prior research has been conducted. For example, Yang *et al.* (2011) warn that the generalization of their results supporting the substitution view was not possible in their study, given that these are influenced by the Chinese culture and a rather ineffective legal system. Given that the sectorial and cultural context in which buyers and suppliers are embedded influence the effectiveness of trust and contracts as governing mechanisms, we consider that research to test the complementary or substitute views should focus on key regional industries.

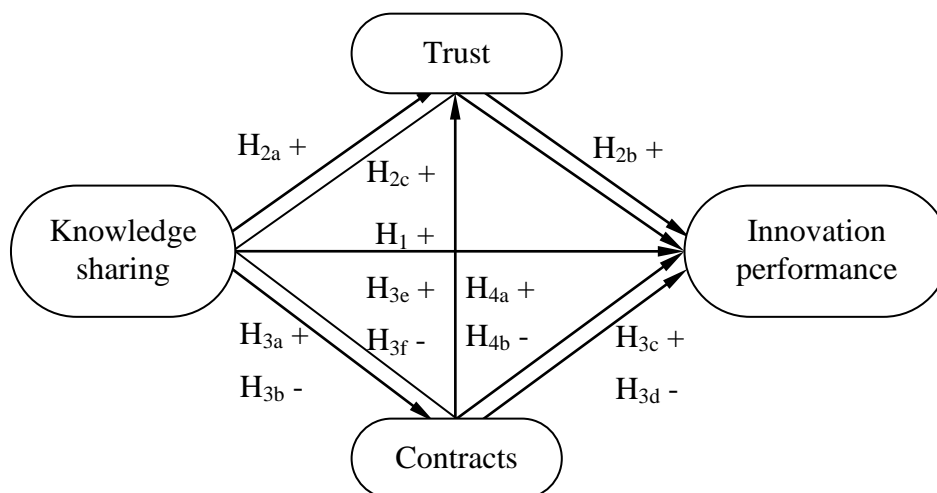
In summary, there appear to be different but equally logical arguments for interpreting the seemingly contradictions that have been found in the joint effect of contracts and trust, namely the complexity of contractual provisions, as well as sectorial or regional factors. Therefore, in order to find out which of those two views prevail, we advance the two following hypotheses:

H4a. The intensity in the use of contracts is linked to a greater presence of trust.

H4b. The intensity in the use of contracts is linked to a lower presence of trust.

The proposed hypotheses are illustrated as follows:

FIGURE 1  
Conceptual framework



In addition to the formulated hypotheses, the illustrated model may point out to all the indirect effects (Hayes, 2013), with both mutual trust and the use of contracts intervening as mediators of the relation between the exchange of knowledge and innovation performance. Two of these indirect relations are set by hypotheses H<sub>2c</sub>, and H<sub>3e</sub> or H<sub>3f</sub> but also, the adjusted results (in table 5) consider explicitly the mediation effect of trust in the influence from contracts to innovation performance.

### 3. Empirical Study

#### 3.1. Definition of the population and sample selected

The empirical study was conducted on a sample group of European companies from the Division 28: “Manufacture of machinery and equipment not elsewhere classified”, groups 28.4

“Manufacture of metal forming machinery and machine tools”, and 28.9 “Manufacture of other special purpose machinery”, according to the list of codes from NACE Rev. 2 (2006)<sup>1</sup>.

The information was gathered by means of telephone interviews with sales, production or management representatives. These were conducted between May and July 2010 by an external firm hired for the purpose. The sampling framework consisted of a list of companies from the two aforementioned sub-industries, drawn up using Bureau van Dijk's AMADEUS database, valid to March 2010. In order to attain a greater level of robustness in the model and confirm measurement invariance and sameness of results both in the supply and the distribution channels, we divided the total sample in two approximately equal subsamples consisting of buyer and seller firms of machinery. The profile of contacted managers resulted from a respondent election criterion depending on the selection of a company acting as a buyer or a seller firm of machinery equipment or machinery parts. Respondents were asked to focus on a particular relationship with a selling (or buying) firm, preferably from a recent buying (or selling) operation, consisting of the transaction of a machine or a fixed asset which features some sort of innovation *due at least in part to the relationship with that particular client or supplier*. Table 1 describes the main features of the sample gathered as regards the relationship role (buyer or seller firm), country, years of relationship, and number of employees.

TABLE 1  
Descriptive values obtained from the sample

Variable		Result
<b>Relationship role</b>	As sellers	97
	As buyers	105
<b>Years of relationship</b>	Since 2008	5.0%
	Since 2006-2007	4.5%
	Since 2003-2005	11.3%
	Since 2000-2002	17.3%
	Since before 2000	61.9%
<b>Industries with which they are mainly involved</b>	Industrial equipment and machine industry in general	35.3%
	Motor and motor parts industry	11.3%
	Dies and moulds	6.0%
	Food industry	5.3%
	Textile industry	4.0%
	Aero-space construction	2.3%
	Wood	2.3%
	Plastic materials	1.3%
	Other	32.2%
<b>Country</b>	Germany	73
	Italy	38
	Portugal	22
	Spain	16
	Switzerland	14
	France	15
	UK	7
	Austria	5
	Finland	4
<b>Company size by No.of employees</b>	<i>Small</i> : Less than 100	95
	<i>Large</i> : Equal or more than 100	107

### 3.2. Preparation and testing of the questionnaire

<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1893/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 establishing the statistical classification of economic activities NACE Revision 2 and amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 3037/90 as well as certain EC Regulations on specific statistical domains. Official Journal of the European Union, 30.12.2006.

In the case of *Product innovation performance*, we formed a scale based on Gemünden, Ritter and Heydebreck (1996), Ritter and Gemünden (2004) and Salomo, Weise and Gemünden (2007). For the case of *Knowledge-sharing routines*, we drew on the original ideas from Dyer and Singh (1998), Dyer and Nobeoka (2000) —although these two seminal works do not propose scales of measurement. We drew on Song et al.’s (2005) concept of *Knowledge application*. From this theoretical basis, we drew up an initial proposal of items, with the collaboration of a group of 26 teachers and PhD students. The improved proposals were then successively subjected to the judgment of two different research groups. This allowed us to improve and refine the initial list of items, leaving an initial number of 5 items.

To measure the *Trust* factor, we took the scale developed by Jap (1999), which she calls as *Beliefs in Interpersonal Trustworthiness*. For the case of the construct *Contracts*, we drew on Cannon et al. (2000)’s *Legal Bonds* factor. The measurement scales were devised in order to be interpreted correspondingly depending on whether the interviewed firm was the selling or the buying agent in a machine-tool selling operation. In each question, the alleged effects of the cited aspect focused either on the respondent’s own firm (i.e. the selling or buying part), or on the relationship as a whole.

### 3.3. Test of the measurement model

Table 2 shows the reliability measures of the items that were finally taken for the measurement model. Factor loadings, Cronbach’s Alpha, average variance extracted (AVE) and construct reliability measures are extracted with discrete to good values depending on the factor. For the case of the Knowledge-sharing factor, neither the Cronbach’s alpha minimum mark of 0.70, recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), nor Fornell and Larcker’s (1981) recommended minimum measurement of 0.50 for the average variances extracted (AVE), and of 0.70 for the composite reliability are reached. However, the Anderson and Gerbing’s (1988) Chi-square difference test result indicates that there is discriminant validity among the factors, as general convergence results obtained from setting the highest correlation to 1 give an adjusted result which is worse than that from the obtained correlation. Also, Anderson and Gerbing (1988) confidence interval test for the bivariate factor correlations do not include the value of 1 in any of their confidence intervals (Table 3, lower left part). Finally, the square roots from any AVE value obtained (Table 3, principal diagonal values) give values that are higher than any correlation from their corresponding row or column (Table 3, upper right part). Therefore, convergent and discriminant validity among the obtained factors is ascertained.

TABLE 2  
Adjustment results of factors used

	Standzd. Loadings	Cronbach’s alpha	AVE	Comp. reliability
<b>Innovation performance</b>				
<b>INP1:</b> Thanks to the innovations incorporated, the product sold to this customer/purchased from this supplier allows us to reach exceptional qualities or utilities in the sector.	0.723			
<b>INP2:</b> Thanks to the innovations incorporated, the machine sold/purchased provides us with a significant competitive edge.	0.852	0.763	0.624	0.768
<b>Knowledge-Sharing routines</b>				
<b>KSR1:</b> Our technical experts provided a lot of information and specific knowledge to our customer/supplier, which was of great use in order to improve our product.	0.632			
<b>KSR2:</b> We believe that good innovative ideas followed from the suggestions or demands that we make or made on our customer/supplier.	0.579			
<b>KSR3:</b> We have or had frequent interviews with this customer/supplier, at which we put forward worthwhile information				

for improving the machine that we sold/purchased.	0.673	0.663	0.396	0.662
<b>Third-party enforcement mechanisms (contracts)</b>				
<b>CO1:</b> We have/had written agreements, which detail the obligations of both parties.	0.963			
<b>CO2:</b> We have written, specific and detailed agreements with this customer/supplier.	0.960			
<b>CO3:</b> We have/had a detailed contract, specifying the innovation that the product had to feature, with this customer/supplier.	0.757	0.919	0.807	0.854
<b>Trust</b>				
<b>TR1:</b> Both the customer/supplier and our company try to help each other mutually.	0.643			
<b>TR2:</b> Both companies trust each other.	0.766	0.677	0.500	0.665

ML MEASURES:  $\chi^2 = 46.097$  ;  $p = 0.02295$ ; 29 d.f. ; Standardized RMSEA = 0.056; 90% C.I.RMSEA (0.021, 0.086); SRMR=0.043 ;CFI=0.981;  
ROBUST MEASURES: Satorra Bentler  $\chi^2 = 37.099$  ;  $p = 0.14372$ ; 29 d.f.;Bentler-Bonett NFI = 0.955;Bentler-Bonett NNFI=0.984; CFI=0.989;Bollen's IFI=0.990;RMSEA=0.039; 90% C.I.RMSEA (0.000, 0.072)

TABLE 3  
Validation of the final measurement model – Discriminant validity

	Innovation performance	K-S Routines	Contracts	Trust
Innovtn. performance	<b>0.790</b>	0.622 <sup>***</sup>	0.312 <sup>***</sup>	0.690 <sup>***</sup>
K-S Routines	(0.446;0.818)	<b>0.629</b>	0.383 <sup>***</sup>	0.624 <sup>***</sup>
Contracts	(0.145;0.479)	(0.193;0.573)	<b>0.899</b>	0.620 <sup>***</sup>
Trust	(0.535;0.845)	(0.434;0.814)	(0.491;0.749)	<b>0.707</b>

Notes: \*p , 0.05; \*\*p , 0.01; \*\*\*p , 0.001. Diagonal represents the square root of the average variance extracted; above-diagonal values are factor correlations, and below diagonal values are the confidence intervals of factor correlations.

Our determination to obtain a robust resulting model led us to its application both in relationships with respect to suppliers, from a buying firm's point of view, and relationships with respect to buyers, from a seller firm's perspective. If a measurement scale is to be used in different subpopulations as is the case, it has to ensure that the observed variables or scales are invariant across populations (Mellenbergh 1989, Meredith 1993). There are three increasingly restrictive levels of measurement invariance, namely, weak measurement invariance, strong measurement invariance, and strict measurement invariance (Meredith 1993).

According to some references (Byrne, 1989; Byrne, 2006, p.241-246; Hair et al. 2006, p.823; Muthén & Christofferson 1981), weak measurement invariance is held if equality of factor loadings is ascertained for at least two items per factor. As regards the case of the used scales, the results of the incremental Chi-square values obtained ascertain the non-significance in the general adjustment Chi-square value due to the restriction of equal factor loadings between seller and buyer firms (Table 4). This means that weak measurement invariance between the buyer and the seller sub-samples is ascertained.



TABLE 4  
Tests of measurement invariance

	$\chi^2$ †	$\chi^2_{S-B}$ ††	<i>df</i>	$\Delta\chi^2$	$\Delta df$	<i>p</i>	$\Delta\chi^2_{S-B}$	<i>p</i> S-B	RMSEA(90% CI)	SRMR	CFI	TLI(NNFI)
<b>Single groups:</b>												
Buyers (n=95)	45.937	33.265	29						0.081(0.030,0.123)	0.067	0.967	0.948
( <i>p</i> )	(0.024)	(0.267)										
Sellers (n=97)	50.944	37.281	29						0.093(0.048,0.134)	0.059	0.943	0.912
( <i>p</i> )	(0.007)	(0.139)										
<b>Measurement invariance:</b>												
Equal form	96.882	70.529	58						0.087(0.055,0.116)	0.063	0.957	0.933
( <i>p</i> )	(0.001)	(0.125)										
Equal factor loadings	99.896	74.105	64	3.014	6	0.807	2.739	0.841	0.080(0.047,0.108)	0.067	0.960	0.944
( <i>p</i> )	(0.003)	(0.182)										

Note: N=202. RMSEA, root mean square error of approximation; 90%CI, 90% confidence interval for RMSEA; SRMR, standardized root mean square residual; CFI, comparative fit index; TLI, Tucker-Lewis Index; NNFI, Bentler-Bonnet non-normed fit index

† Maximum-Likelihood adjusted Chi-Square values; ††Satorra-Bentler adjusted Chi-Square values

### 3.4. Results

We used structural equation modelling to test the hypotheses of the proposed model as set in Figure 1. The results of these contrasts are summarized in Table 5. Hypotheses H<sub>1</sub> to H<sub>2b</sub>, H<sub>3a</sub> to H<sub>3d</sub> and H<sub>4a</sub> to H<sub>4b</sub> are assessed by means of the decomposition of total effects into the direct effects of their respective antecedent over its consequent. Hypotheses H<sub>2c</sub>, H<sub>3e</sub> and H<sub>3f</sub>, and lines (1) to (3) contain all the possible indirect effects existing among the factors from the model<sup>2</sup>.

Overall, the obtained regression coefficients explaining the hypotheses do not vary from the total sample to the buying and the selling firm groups. Results in detail show, firstly, that there is a positive significant direct relation between the sharing of knowledge and innovation performance, supporting hypothesis H<sub>1</sub>. Also, there is a positive significant relation between knowledge sharing and mutual trust, meaning that hypothesis H<sub>2a</sub> is supported. Thirdly, we found that there is a significant positive relation between trust and innovation performance. Therefore, hypothesis H<sub>2b</sub> is also supported.

The proposed model also shows to full extent the mediation effects of both trust and the use of contracts in the relationship between knowledge exchange and innovation performance. An interesting interpretation of these relations is found analyzing the mediating role of trust, formalized in hypothesis H<sub>2c</sub>. In particular, for the cases of the total sample, and the selling companies subsample, this mediation effect is significantly positive<sup>3</sup>, meaning that interfirm trust accounts, albeit partially, for the positive relation existing between knowledge-sharing and innovation performance. This positive sign in the mediation effect is also ascertained for the case of buying firms, albeit it falls short of significance.

Contrary to the reasoning that we put forward in hypotheses H<sub>3c</sub> and H<sub>3d</sub>, in any case the use of contracts does not seem to have any significant effect, positive or negative, on innovation performance. Therefore, none of these two alternative hypotheses is supported. On the contrary, a more intensive level in the exchange of knowledge seems to be positively related to a higher level in the use of contracts, as posed in hypothesis H<sub>3a</sub>. This result holds only in the case of the whole sample, although it is also almost statistically significant at 5% in the cases of the buying and the selling sub-samples.

A more complete idea on this relation is given by the mediation role of contracts between knowledge sharing and trust, as seen in line (2). Again, the regression slope of this indirect effect is significantly positive in the case of the total sample, meaning that a significant amount in the positive effect of knowledge exchange on trust is due to the use of contracts. However, contracts seem to show a negative, albeit non-significant, mediating role in the relation between knowledge sharing and innovation performance. Along with the result from hypotheses H<sub>3c</sub> and H<sub>3d</sub>, and in combination with the results from its relation with trust, it seems that the role of contracts is a dual one, positively related with trust and the exchange of knowledge, on the one hand, but with a negative, although non-significant effect on innovation performance, on the other.

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<sup>2</sup> Note: However, an important limitation of this procedure is that there could be non-linear effects among factors, such as the case of an inverted 'U'-shaped relation between the use of contracts and innovation performance, in which both too little or too detailed contractual terms correspond to low levels of innovation performance (Wang et al. 2011). The same could happen to the level of use in contracts with respect to knowledge sharing. In this respect, we have to mention that we have also examined the effect of any possible quadratic effect of factor contracts, or a non-linear relation of these with knowledge sharing or with trust, finding no significant effects. These results are not shown here for brevity reasons.

<sup>3</sup> In the case of buying companies, it is positive with a significance level of 8.1% .

## 4. Discussion

The obtained results do not seem to back the idea of contracts and trust as alternative customer-supplier relationship governance mechanisms. On the contrary, their relation seems to be in accordance with the literature linking both as complementary (Ring and van de Ben, 1994; Cannon et al, 2000; Poppo and Zenger, 2002; Luo, 2002; Reuer and Ariño, 2007; Liu et al. 2009; Carey et al. 2011). Both elements perform different roles under the general aim of achieving relationship governance. From these results, it is plausible to understand, on the one hand, that contracts are a necessary ingredient for the development of trust. But on the other hand, only trust does exert a positive influence on innovation performance. The specification of the relationship's mutual obligations under a contract favors mutual trust and relates positively with the exchange of knowledge between the parties, but is not on its own an antecedent factor contributing in a direct manner on innovation performance. For such an effect, it is necessary to bolster mutual trust in the relationship.

Secondly, it must be stated that the high level of correlation obtained between trust and contracts could lead us to suspect that there is a positive and significant interaction effect between both constructs in their mutual effect on innovation performance (Baron & Kenny, 1986, Hayes 2012). In particular, we must clear that this possibility was empirically checked and discarded<sup>4</sup>

## 5. Conclusions

Up to the present, the study of the roles of trust and party enforcement mechanisms (i.e., contracts) in relationship governance has brought interpretations of different sign. The here presented empirical analysis brings more clarity to the nature of the mutual relationship between these two factors and their individual and shared mediation effects on the causal link existing from knowledge sharing to innovation performance. A clear conclusion from these results lays in the fact that companies should propitiate both the use of contracts and mutual trust in the relation, and discard the idea that the use of one undermines the other.

Thus, the positive relation between these two factors is confirmed. Trust within the relation mediates partial but significantly in a positive in the linear effect from knowledge-sharing to innovation performance. Therefore, this means that a relationship based on trust is not simply necessary, but rather, inherent, for the exchange of relevant information and knowledge to take place.

It is not the same case for the use of contracts. Although the use of contracts seems to have a positive relation as a consequent factor of knowledge sharing and very specially, as an antecedent of trust, our results show that contracts by themselves do not act as a stimulus for innovation performance to take place. Rather, it is only trust the factor that seems to have a positive effect on it. Therefore, companies willing to improve their innovation capabilities from working out the relationship will have to, first, use contracts with the aim of providing guarantees for trust to develop, and second, cultivate trust within the relation in order to favor the positive effect that the exchange of valuable information and knowledge bring on innovation performance.

Last but not least, these conclusions are obtained from even more robust relations, with the evidence of sameness both in the case of buying firms with respect to their sellers, and in the case of selling firms. Traditionally, previous research has been solely based either from the perspective of the selling firms or from that of the buying ones. To our best knowledge there is no other empirical research in the literature confirming the hypothesized relations among the analyzed factors using simultaneously two subsamples with selling and buying firms.

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<sup>4</sup> On this respect, see the second footnote.

## **6. Limitations and implications for future analysis**

This empirical study also has some limitations that is necessary to mention in order to advance in the future. Firstly, we have taken into our sample only companies belonging to the machine-tool and related industries. This industry is particularly characterized by relations of a very long term basis, between companies demanding or producing complex tailor-made products for which servicing becomes capital. Also, these relations tend to span through the producing life of the machine or installation. It is also a peculiar sector in terms of the web of relations in the form of weak ties (Granovetter 1973) downwards in the value-adding process, upwards along the supply chain, and horizontally with other sets of agents belonging to the industrial district in which the company is located (Marshall, 1890). In this context, not only trust but also other elements contributing to the government of the relationship, such as the reputation or the word-of-mouth, become also very relevant. Future studies comparatively incorporating these effects among different industries should be accomplished.

Another limitation that we faced in the empirical study was during the validation process of the measurement scales. The condition of weak measurement invariance across the two used populations (Mellenbergh 1989, Meredith 1993) compelled us to discard a number of items to a minimum of two for the case of the constructs of innovation performance and trust (Table 2).

Finally, it must be pointed out that the interrelations among the here analyzed factors and other ones that have been discarded, tend to evolve in a dynamic process usually spanning a number of years. A cross-sectional study as the one here explained can only show some of these relations in a very limited and static manner. It is necessary to point out the abovementioned fact that the order of causality in some of the relations set forward in the model is an important aspect that we think it cannot be fully ascertained in a cross-sectional empirical analysis for the case of long-standing buyer-seller relations. In particular, for our study, we assumed that after a long period of time, it becomes difficult to distinguish the direction of causality between knowledge-sharing and the use of contracts, or between the latter and trust. Nevertheless, we could obtain significant slopes, exclusively in the form of recursive effects. Maybe an empirical analysis on a lon-sectional basis could bring more light to the true relations among these factors.

TABLE 5  
Regression Coefficients, *t* values, and Model Summary Information for the Serial Multiple Mediator Model depicted in Figure 1:

Hypothesis	Total	Total sample ‡		Multi-sample model ‡•					
	Direct and indirect effects	Stand. Coeff.	<i>t</i>	Buyers		Sellers		Δ(Stand. Coeff.)	<i>p</i> (from two-tailed <i>t</i> values, <i>df</i> =1)
				Stand. Coeff.	<i>t</i>	Stand. Coeff.	<i>t</i>		
<b>H<sub>1</sub></b>	<i>KnowShar</i> → <i>InnPerf</i>	0.311	2.379**	0.487	3.493***	0.460	3.493***	0.027	0.983
<b>H<sub>2a</sub></b>	<i>KnowShar</i> → <i>Trust</i>	0.585	4.397***	0.557	3.837***	0.393	3.411***	0.055	0.965
<b>H<sub>2b</sub></b>	<i>Trust</i> → <i>InnPerf</i>	0.616	3.149***	0.510	2.045*	0.345	2.149*	0.165	0.896
<b>H<sub>2c</sub></b>	<i>KnowShar</i> → <i>Trust</i> → <i>InnPerf</i>	0.266	2.546**	0.229	1.762	0.136	2.546*	0.093	0.941
<b>H<sub>3a</sub>   H<sub>3b</sub></b>	<i>KnowShar</i> → <i>Contracts</i>	0.318	2.996**	0.182	1.907	0.212	1.907	-0.030	0.981
<b>H<sub>3c</sub>   H<sub>3d</sub></b>	<i>Contracts</i> → <i>InnPerf</i>	-0.170	-1.591	-0.041	-0.217	-0.048	-0.358	0.007	0.996
<b>H<sub>3e</sub>   H<sub>3f</sub></b>	<i>KnowShar</i> → <i>Contracts</i> → <i>InnPerf</i>	-0.054	-1.348	-0.008	-0.196	-0.010	-0.318	0.003	0.998
<b>H<sub>4a</sub>   H<sub>4b</sub></b>	<i>Contracts</i> → <i>Trust</i>	0.482	4.558***	0.595	4.453***	0.479	3.411***	0.116	0.926
<b>(1)</b>	<i>Contracts</i> → <i>Trust</i> → <i>InnPerf</i>	0.297	3.031	0.304	1.914	0.165	1.805	0.139	0.912
<b>(2)</b>	<i>KnowShar</i> → <i>Contracts</i> → <i>Trust</i>	0.154	2.335*	0.108	1.680	0.101	1.531	0.007	0.996
<b>(3)</b>	<i>KnowShar</i> → <i>Trust</i> → <i>Contracts</i> → <i>InnPerf</i>	0.094	2.063*	0.055	1.330	0.035	1.317	0.020	0.987

‡  $\chi^2_{S-B}$  (df=29) = 37.099 (*p* = 0.144); RMSEA= 0.039 (0.000, 0.072); CFI = 0.989 ; TLI = 0.984

‡•  $\chi^2_{S-B}$  (df=67) = 75.885 (*p* = 0.214); RMSEA= 0.039 (0.000, 0.076); CFI = 0.990 ; TLI = 0.987

\* *p*<0.05; \*\* *p*<0.01; \*\*\* *p*<0.001; Two-tailed *t* test values.

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# TRANSFERENCIA DE CONOCIMIENTO ENTRE EMPRESAS Y CENTROS DE INVESTIGACIÓN: CONTRIBUCIÓN DE LA CAPACIDAD DE ABSORCIÓN AL DESEMPEÑO DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN<sup>1</sup>

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## RESUMEN

*La capacidad de absorción constituye un concepto clave para la asimilación y explotación del conocimiento externo que los grupos de I+D y las empresas obtienen de su interacción mutua. En el tejido empresarial español, caracterizado por la fuerte presencia de pymes, se revela especialmente interesante esta colaboración interorganizativa para la generación y difusión de nuevo conocimiento. Este trabajo analiza empíricamente el efecto de la capacidad de absorción de los grupos de investigación sobre su capacidad para crear productos y generar conocimiento para la agricultura, a partir del establecimiento de proyectos de investigación con empresas privadas, moderado todo ello por el carácter tácito del conocimiento. El escenario empírico utilizado es el del clúster agroindustrial hortícola del sudeste español. Los resultados evidencian diferencias en cuanto al desempeño de los proyectos de investigación implementados para las empresas y los grupos de investigación participantes.*

## Palabras clave:

Transferencia de conocimiento, Capacidad de absorción, Carácter tácito, Clúster hortícola

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## 1. Introducción

La innovación se concibe como el resultado de un complejo conjunto de relaciones entre los actores del sistema, que incluye las empresas, las universidades y los centros de investigación. En las economías actuales basadas en el conocimiento, el establecimiento de relaciones con la industria resultan esenciales para el desarrollo y el progreso económico (Ahrweiler et al., 2011).

La emergencia de los denominados clústeres de innovación regional (Yu y Jackson, 2011), pone de manifiesto que las industrias que participan en clústeres fuertes, alcanzan un mayor nivel de crecimiento, innovación y desarrollo (Delgado et al., 2012).

En particular, la intensidad de las interacciones entre las empresas privadas y las universidades y otras instituciones públicas de investigación, resulta particularmente importante para la eficiencia de la empresa (Fritsch y Slavtchev, 2011). Además, esta cooperación a menudo significa un importante beneficio para el entorno económico y tecnológico (Breznitz et al., 2008).

Normalmente, este tipo de actividad, cuando se encuentra localizada en un mismo área geográfica responde a lo que se denomina un clúster geográfico (Becattini, 1990). Este clúster resulta especialmente interesante en relación con la generación de conocimiento y el desarrollo de innovaciones en la industria agroalimentaria (Phillips et al., 2013). La creación de conocimiento constituye un factor clave para la innovación y el éxito en la industria agroalimentaria. Sin embargo, las pymes y las empresas de las industrias tradicionales disponen de bajos niveles de capacidad de absorción y necesitan ayuda externa en este sentido procedente de los centros de investigación (Spithoven et al., 2011). Los agricultores, las empresas productoras y las empresas de distribución minorista se benefician del establecimiento de relaciones de colaboración con organizaciones creadoras y difusoras de conocimiento, como los grupos de investigación. Esta estrategia es utilizada habitualmente por las pequeñas y medianas empresas (pymes) como la mejor manera de generar innovación y crecimiento económico, a través del desarrollo de vínculos sociales y de conocimiento (Rodríguez-Pose y Comptour, 2013).

Las redes de negocio y cooperación han sido destacadas por sus implicaciones para la innovación (Pitaway et al., 2004). Además, las perspectivas comportamentales proporcionan explicaciones útiles para la disposición de las empresas a innovar. A nivel empresarial, la teoría basada en los recursos (RBT) (Barney, 1991; Grant 1996) analiza cómo los recursos y capacidades de la empresa afectan al desarrollo de ventajas competitivas. En particular, la visión del conocimiento (KV) (Grant, 1996: 114) define el conocimiento como el recurso más significativo desde un punto de vista estratégico para la empresa. Este enfoque defiende que el conocimiento posee el mayor potencial con vistas a la generación de ventajas competitivas (Eisenhardt y Martin, 2000, Grant, 1996; Winter, 2000). Las capacidades están normalmente protegidas por distintos mecanismos de aislamiento que dificultan su imitación (Spender y Grant, 1996). Dado que la protección de las capacidades está determinada por la ambigüedad causal (Reed y DeFillipi, 1990), la transferencia entre los socios se ve afectada negativamente por el grado de ambigüedad del conocimiento (Simonin, 1999).

En este contexto, la capacidad de absorción (Cohen y Levinthal, 1990) constituye un concepto adecuado para identificar, asimilar y explotar el conocimiento externo que los grupos de I+D obtienen de las empresas agrícolas, incluyendo los vínculos entre la capacidad de absorción y el rendimiento (Lane et al., 2001). Sin embargo, la mera posesión del conocimiento por parte de los grupos de investigación y las empresas especializadas, no garantiza por sí misma que una empresa sea capaz de explotar las fuentes de esta ventaja. Así, Grant (1996: 114) sostiene que "si la mayoría del conocimiento relevante para la producción es tácito, la transferencia de conocimiento entre los miembros de la organización resulta excepcionalmente difícil".

Existen diferencias entre el conocimiento tácito y el explícito (Polanyi, 1966). El conocimiento explícito es codificable y transmisible, si bien la mayor parte del cuerpo del conocimiento se conforma a partir de conocimiento tácito. La literatura basada en el conocimiento llega a la conclusión de que el carácter tácito de tal conocimiento puede limitar el uso y el alcance de este conocimiento entre las empresas (Martin y Salomom, 2003).

Con estos antecedentes, en el tejido empresarial español, caracterizado por la fuerte presencia de pymes, se revela especialmente interesante la colaboración entre empresas. Este trabajo presta atención a las relaciones entre los grupos de investigación y las empresas miembros de un clúster agroindustrial. En particular, este estudio se centra en la industria auxiliar hortícola del sudeste español, considerado como un clúster industrial agroalimentario (Galdeano y Céspedes, 2008, Pallares-Barbera, 2002). Así, esta investigación analiza empíricamente el efecto de la capacidad de absorción de los grupos de investigación sobre su capacidad para crear productos y generar conocimiento para la agricultura, moderado todo ello por un mayor o menor carácter tácito del conocimiento.

El presente trabajo analiza los efectos de la capacidad de absorción del grupo de investigación sobre el desempeño del proyecto, tanto para el propio grupo como para la empresa contratante. Además de los efectos directos, nuestro objetivo es contrastar si la característica del conocimiento transferido (es decir, el carácter tácito) modera la influencia de la capacidad de absorción sobre los resultados del proyecto. Asimismo, pretendemos evaluar si existen diferencias entre ambas partes del intercambio.

## **2. Revisión de la literatura e hipótesis**

Según Carlsson et al. (2002), un sistema de innovación posee varias dimensiones, como la geográfica, sectorial, tecnológica o la temporal. Las relaciones, como uno de los componentes más importantes del sistema, implican la transferencia o adquisición de tecnología. Las industrias intensivas en conocimiento (Yam et al., 2011), la modularidad del producto o el conocimiento distribuido a lo largo de las organizaciones son determinantes externos de la necesidad de colaborar con otras empresas (Baldwin y Clark, 2003; Pittaway et al., 2004). Los descubrimientos y las innovaciones ya no se encuentran localizados en una empresa específica (Powell et al., 1996), por lo que la cooperación para innovar constituye en la actualidad una práctica habitual (Stremersch y Van Dyck, 2009).

La creación de conocimiento es un factor clave para la innovación y el éxito en la industria agroalimentaria. Con frecuencia, la actividad relacionada con la industria agroalimentaria se encuentra situada en una misma área geográfica, conocida como clúster geográfico o distrito industrial marshalliano (Becattini, 1990). Estos clústeres se consideran especialmente atractivos para generar conocimiento e innovación en general (Maskell, 2001; Maskell y Malmberg, 2007), y en la industria agroalimentaria en particular (Phillips et al., 2013). Los agricultores, las empresas de la industria auxiliar (semillas, maquinaria, etc.) y las de distribución detallista, se benefician todas ellas de la colaboración con organizaciones generadoras y difusoras de conocimiento, como son los grupos de investigación y desarrollo. Esta estructura territorial es generalmente adoptada por las pymes como la mejor manera de generar innovación y crecimiento económico a través de los vínculos sociales y el conocimiento (Molina-Morales y Martínez-Fernández, 2010; Rodríguez-Pose y Comptour, 2013).

La colaboración con centros e incluso individuos de investigación, de cualquier tamaño y tipo, se ha convertido en un patrón cada vez más utilizado para el fomento de las innovaciones (Huston y Sakkab, 2006). Las empresas pueden mejorar su rendimiento mediante la explotación de los conocimientos y tecnologías propiedad de la universidad (George et al., 2002). La cooperación entre empresas y universidades contribuye positivamente al éxito, y posee un alto impacto sobre la innovación en productos (Un et al., 2010). El sistema hortícola del sudeste español ofrece una alta concentración de invernaderos de horticultura y un sistema auxiliar notablemente destacado. Ambos factores definen un sistema de clúster hortícola complejo, con una continua transferencia de conocimiento y tecnología entre la industria y la academia (Pérez-Mesa y Galdeano-Gómez, 2010).

Los investigadores acumulan habilidades, conocimientos y relaciones para participar en futuros proyectos de investigación (Bozeman y Corley, 2004). Nuestro argumento es que esta acumulación de conocimiento inicialmente aumenta la capacidad de absorción del grupo de investigación, y es más probable conseguir un mejor rendimiento del proyecto de investigación. Sin embargo, los investigadores académicos con frecuencia son sometidos a una dependencia de su trayectoria histórica (i.e., "path dependence") que induce un desarrollo curricular particular (Ambos et al., 2008). Esto hace que los investigadores académicos se centren principalmente en los estudios con resultados

cuantitativos que pueden aportar más sobre cuestiones relativas al "cómo" y "por qué" de una teoría, y en las revistas de mejor ranking (Rothaermel et al., 2007).

De esta manera, la carrera académica se ve afectada por una dependencia de la trayectoria que refuerza la orientación y los patrones de publicación académicos (Ambos et al., 2008). Más aún, los investigadores más veteranos pueden preferir no modificar el "sistema" (Markides, 2007). Las evidencias sobre la comercialización del conocimiento académico muestran que los investigadores más académicos son menos propensos a formar parte de las actividades industriales y a obtener un resultado comercial del proyecto (Ambos et al. 2008). Además, en general, las ganancias no constituyen un incentivo válido para el emprendimiento universitario (Astebro et al., 2013).

La capacidad de absorción es la "habilidad de reconocer el valor de la información nueva, asimilarla y aplicarla a fines comerciales" (Cohen y Levinthal, 1990: 128). Una característica particular de la capacidad de absorción es la dependencia de la trayectoria que induce a través de la generación de nuevo conocimiento (Cohen y Levinthal, 1990: 136): "el conocimiento previo permite la asimilación y explotación de nuevos conocimientos". Los grupos de investigación que poseen conocimientos valiosos sobre ciertas tecnologías pueden generar nuevas ideas y productos. Los grupos de investigación con mayores niveles de capacidad de absorción tienen más probabilidades de aprovechar los conocimientos de otros campos. Deben tener la capacidad de absorber los inputs a fin de poder generar outputs (Tsai, 2001), siendo la ausencia de esta capacidad una de las principales barreras para la transferencia de conocimiento de una unidad a otra (Szulanski, 1996).

Puesto que una empresa puede perseguir diferentes objetivos simultánea o secuencialmente, las reacciones a la retroalimentación sobre el desempeño difieren dependiendo de la configuración de la capacidad de absorción (Be-Oz y Greve, 2012).

El carácter acumulativo del conocimiento permite a la organización predecir con mayor precisión los cambios en el entorno y, a su vez, influye su desempeño innovador. Como Cohen y Levinthal (1990: 137) defienden: "las empresas con mayores niveles de capacidad de absorción tenderán a ser más proactivas, explotando las oportunidades ofrecidas por el entorno, independientemente del actual desempeño".

*H<sub>1a</sub>: Existe una relación lineal positiva entre la capacidad de absorción y el desempeño de la empresa.*

*H<sub>1b</sub>: Existe una relación lineal positiva entre la capacidad de absorción y el desempeño del grupo de investigación.*

Aunque el conocimiento explícito es codificable y transmisible, representa sólo el "iceberg de todo el cuerpo de conocimiento" (Nonaka et al., 1994). Polanyi (1966) señala que la mayor parte del cuerpo de conocimiento se compone de conocimiento tácito. La literatura basada en el conocimiento postula que el carácter tácito de tal conocimiento puede limitar el uso y el alcance de este conocimiento entre las empresas (Martin y Salomom, 2003). Por lo tanto, este carácter tácito puede dificultar la transferencia de conocimiento entre las actividades de I+D y las empresas agroalimentarias. Proponemos en este sentido las siguientes hipótesis:

*H<sub>2a</sub>: Existe una relación lineal negativa entre el carácter tácito del conocimiento y el desempeño de la empresa.*

*H<sub>2b</sub>: Existe una relación lineal positiva entre el carácter tácito del conocimiento y el desempeño del grupo de investigación.*

A partir de los anteriores argumentos podemos postular también que si el carácter tácito del conocimiento es suficientemente elevado, los efectos positivos de la capacidad de absorción pueden verse compensados y neutralizados. Formulamos así las siguientes hipótesis:

*H<sub>3a</sub>: Cuando el carácter tácito del conocimiento a transferir es alto (bajo), se genera un efecto negativo (positivo) de la capacidad de absorción sobre el desempeño del proyecto para la empresa.*

*H<sub>3b</sub>: Cuando el carácter tácito del conocimiento a transferir es alto (bajo), se genera un*

*efecto negativo (positivo) de la capacidad de absorción sobre el desempeño del proyecto para el grupo de investigación.*

Una hipótesis alternativa sería que la capacidad de absorción y el desempeño tienen una relación no lineal. Uno de los problemas de la hipótesis H1 es que implica que el desempeño siempre aumentará con los niveles de capacidad de absorción más altos. Sin embargo, esta implicación puede dejar de reconocer que aunque aquellos grupos de investigación y empresas que colaboran en un proyecto de I+D deberían compartir los mismos objetivos sobre el proyecto, el grupo de investigación también puede tener otros objetivos relacionados con sus resultados de la investigación (Ambos et al., 2008). De hecho, la capacidad de absorción afecta la formación de expectativas, y estas condicionan el incentivo para invertir en la capacidad de absorción, generándose así un ciclo de auto-refuerzo (Cohen y Levinthal, 1990). Y la naturaleza de auto-refuerzo del aprendizaje vuelve atractiva para un individuo u organización el sostenimiento del enfoque actual. La mayor familiaridad con un dominio operativo existente aumenta la absorción organizativa y puede conducir a una "trampa de la familiaridad" que hace que la adopción de actividades diferentes resulte menos atractiva (Levinthal y March, 1993). En la interacción entre las trayectorias académica e industrial, los grupos de investigación pueden necesitar disminuir los esfuerzos en la investigación industrial/académica, en beneficio de los objetivos académicos/industriales. Este argumento ha sido considerado en la literatura sobre la orientación al mercado, prediciendo una relación en forma de U invertida con el desempeño (Atuahene-Gima et al., 2005).

El contexto académico y el industrial tienen diferentes ajustes preferenciales que les proporcionan un acceso diferente a los recursos e infraestructuras. Los investigadores académicos difieren de los investigadores de la industria en términos de su propensión hacia los incentivos, no resultando muy significativos para los grupos de investigación los incentivos económicos (Agarwal y Ohyama, 2012). Las tensiones emergen en relación con la difusión de los resultados, la propiedad del conocimiento (Clancy y Moschini, 2013) o los conflictos entre los fines comerciales de la empresa y los objetivos de publicación del grupo de investigación. Además, los problemas relativos a la percepción de equidad pueden impedir la cooperación entre los grupos de investigación y las empresas (Burg et al., 2013). Más aún, los investigadores académicos poseen una mayor "preferencia por los rendimientos no pecuniarios" (Agarwal y Ohyama, 2012). De hecho, no siempre el conocimiento científico conduce a una innovación y práctica de valor (Gittelman y Kogut, 2003).

Por lo tanto, aunque existe un efecto positivo de la capacidad de absorción sobre el desempeño, un sobre-exceso de la capacidad de absorción conduciría a un distanciamiento no deseado de los objetivos académicos. Proponemos así la existencia de una relación en forma de U invertida entre la capacidad de absorción y el desempeño de los objetivos de investigación de las empresas:

*H<sub>4a</sub>: Existe una relación curvilínea, cóncava y hacia abajo entre la capacidad de absorción y el desempeño del proyecto de investigación para la empresa*

*H<sub>4b</sub>: Existe una relación curvilínea, cóncava y hacia abajo entre la capacidad de absorción y el desempeño del proyecto para el grupo de investigación.*

### **3. Metodología**

#### **3.1. Datos y medida de las variables**

Para el contraste de las hipótesis planteadas, se ha seleccionado como escenario empírico de este trabajo el área del sudeste español (provincias de Almería y Murcia), que representan la mayor concentración de invernaderos a nivel mundial.

En la provincia de Almería la superficie bajo invernadero es de 28.576 hectáreas, lo que representa una producción total de 3.051.027 Tm (campaña 2012-2013). En Murcia existen 4.410 hectáreas de invernaderos, con una superficie total de horticuultura de regadío de 48.733 hectáreas, generando una producción total de 1.504.684 Tm (campaña 2010-2011) (Fundación Cajamar, 2012, 2013). Desde el punto de vista productivo, este área constituye un sistema agroalimentario industrial caracterizado por el uso intensivo de los recursos y el conocimiento (Aznar-Sánchez y Galdeano Gómez; Sánchez-Pérez

et al., 2001). Se trata de una industria altamente internacionalizada, que exporta la mayor parte de su producción a Europa.

Los datos han sido obtenidos a partir de 143 proyectos de I+D entre empresas agroalimentarias y grupos de investigación académicos. Los proyectos fueron previamente identificados a través de los registros de la Oficina de Transferencia de Resultados de Investigación de los centros de investigación de la zona, esto es, las universidades de Almería, Murcia, Politécnica de Cartagena y el IMIDA (Instituto Murciano de Investigación y Desarrollo Agrario y Alimentario). Con el fin de evaluar el desempeño de cada proyecto, se exigió que ninguno de los proyectos se encontrara en fase de ejecución, es decir, que todos ellos hubieran ya finalizado. Después de las correspondientes llamadas y reuniones con los investigadores principales de cada proyecto, se acordó que éstos rellenarían un cuestionario electrónico (publicado en una página web segura). La literatura académica ha empleado con anterioridad datos basados en proyectos financiados por el Consejo de Investigación, utilizando las percepciones de sus investigadores principales para contrastar la probabilidad de comercializar la investigación académica (Ambos et al., 2008).

Las escalas utilizadas para la medición de las distintas variables se detallan en el Anexo. La capacidad de absorción es una adaptación de la propuesta utilizada por Jiménez-Barrionuevo et al. (2011). El desempeño del proyecto se obtuvo a través de diferentes medidas para el grupo de investigación y la empresa. Para el caso de los resultados relativos al grupo de investigación, conscientes de la diversidad de dimensiones consideradas, se han utilizado escalas multi-ítem. Se espera que cada ítem mida una dimensión con niveles satisfactorios de validez predictiva (Bergkvist y Rossiter, 2007; Drolet y Morrison, 2001; Wanous et al., 1997). Los ítems se midieron con escalas que van de 0 (totalmente en desacuerdo) a 10 (totalmente de acuerdo). En el caso de las variables relativas al carácter tácito del conocimiento, se utilizó una escala de 7 puntos, donde 1 significaba "de forma escrita" (no tácito en absoluto) y 7 significaba "completamente tácito" para introducir variaciones en la dinámica potencial del entrevistado que podría conducir a un sesgo del método común (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

### 3.2. Análisis y resultados

Siguiendo la propuesta de Aiken y West (1991), las variables independientes fueron centradas con respecto a la media, para reducir al mínimo la amenaza de multicolinealidad en las ecuaciones donde introduzcamos los términos de interacción. La Tabla 1 muestra el resultado de la estimación realizada.

TABLA 1

**Análisis de regresión para los efectos de la capacidad de absorción y el carácter tácito del conocimiento sobre el desempeño de la empresa y del grupo de investigación, con efectos cuadráticos e interactivos**

Variable	Valores para la empresa		Valores para el grupo de investigación	
	Coefficiente no estandarizado	t-valor	Coefficiente no estandarizado	t-valor
Constante	0,106	1,002	0,168	1,393
Capacidad de absorción	0,293	4,040*	0,310	3,739*
Carácter tácito	-0,053	-1,114	-0,004	-0,073
Capacidad de absorción <sup>2</sup>	0,114	-1,499	0,068	-2,143**
Carác. Tácit. X Capac. Absorc.	-0,078	3,037*	-0,127	1,584
R <sup>2</sup> (adj. R <sup>2</sup> )	0,225 (0,202)		0,178 (0,154)	
F <sup>prob</sup>	10,001 <sup>0.000</sup>		7,478 <sup>0.000</sup>	

\* p<0,01; \*\*p<0,05

Los resultados confirman las hipótesis H<sub>1a</sub> y H<sub>1b</sub>, en la medida que la capacidad de absorción influye significativamente el desempeño derivado del proyecto para ambos socios (empresa y grupo de investigación) ( $\beta_{1r}=0,293$ ,  $p<0,01$ ;  $\beta_{1g}=0,310$ ,  $p<0,01$ ). Para el caso del carácter tácito del conocimiento, no es posible soportar desde un punto de vista empírico la existencia de efectos negativos, lo que nos lleva a rechazar las hipótesis H<sub>2a</sub> y H<sub>2b</sub>. En relación con la tercera de las hipótesis planteada, los resultados indican que mayores niveles de capacidad de absorción provocan que la relación entre la capacidad de absorción y el desempeño del grupo de investigación se vuelva negativa ( $\beta_{3g}=-0,173$ ,  $p<0,01$ ), lo que viene a confirmar H<sub>3b</sub>. Los resultados no permiten soportar la

existencia de esta relación para el caso del desempeño de la empresa (rechazándose así  $H_{3a}$ ). Por último,  $B_{4r}=0,114$  ( $p<0,05$ ) es significativo, pero con el signo contrario al esperado, lo que sugiere que los efectos negativos del carácter tácito del conocimiento no permiten compensar los efectos de absorción positivos sobre el desempeño del proyecto de I+D para la empresa. Por último, no existe ningún soporte para la hipótesis  $H_{4b}$ .

#### 4. Conclusiones

En primer lugar, los resultados muestran que los grupos de investigación pueden tener diferentes objetivos sobre el proyecto que las empresas agrícolas que demandaron acometer la investigación, si bien tales objetivos pueden ser también diferentes respecto a cuestiones como proporcionar conocimiento básico para el campo de la investigación, su propia valoración ó calificación científica, o la imagen de los investigadores. En particular, los resultados de la estimación realizada ponen de manifiesto el efecto positivo de la capacidad de absorción del grupo de investigación a la hora de obtener buenos resultados.

Se observan por otra parte diferencias en cuanto al desempeño de un proyecto de investigación para la empresa y para el grupo de investigación participantes, si bien en ambos casos la capacidad de absorción ejerce un efecto positivo sobre los resultados derivados del proyecto (es decir, tanto para la empresa como para el grupo de investigación). Por otra parte, los efectos del carácter tácito del conocimiento se ven contrarrestados con la capacidad de absorción de las empresas/grupos de investigación. La capacidad de absorción ejerce además un efecto en forma cóncava hacia abajo sobre el desempeño del proyecto para el grupo de investigación.

Se observa en general cómo los resultados difieren dependiendo de si se tienen en cuenta los beneficios para la empresa o para el grupo de investigación. Así, un resultado derivado de este trabajo alude al hecho de cómo los efectos positivos de la capacidad de absorción del grupo de investigación se vuelven negativos cuando tal capacidad alcanza niveles superiores. Sin embargo, los niveles elevados de capacidad de absorción pueden superar y compensar el efecto negativo asociado al carácter tácito del conocimiento.

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## **Anexo. Escalas de medida**

### **A. Variables dependientes**

#### *Desempeño para la empresa*

---

1. Consecución del objetivo de investigación pretendido en la memoria del proyecto
2. Creación de un producto, proceso o tecnología que mejora la competitividad del sector agroalimentario

#### *Desempeño para el grupo de investigación*

---

1. Resultados económico-monetarios para los miembros del grupo de investigación
2. Resultados en patentes
3. Resultados aplicados exitosos en nuevos productos, procesos o empresas

### **B. Variables independientes**

#### *Capacidad de absorción*

---

##### • Adquisición

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 1. | Se producía un intercambio continuo de información y conocimiento |
| 2. | Tenían interacciones personales continuas con la empresa          |
| 3. | Había una gran confianza mutua                                    |
| 4. | Había altos niveles de reciprocidad                               |

##### • Asimilación

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 1. | Su grupo y la empresa "compartían el mismo lenguaje"                    |
| 2. | La empresa y su grupo tenían recursos y capacidades muy complementarios |
| 3. | La "cultura" de su grupo y la de la empresa eran altamente compatibles  |
| 4. | Los estilos de gestión de ambos eran muy compatibles                    |

##### • Transformación

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 1. | Todo el grupo tenía acceso a la información de la empresa  |
| 2. | Se identificaba rápidamente la utilidad que el conocimiento nuevo procedente de la empresa aportaba al conocimiento previo del grupo     |
| 3. | Se analizaba sistemáticamente las consecuencias que el nuevo conocimiento procedente de la empresa tenía sobre la evolución del proyecto |

##### • Explotación

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 1. | El proyecto se modificaba rápidamente a la luz de la información proveniente de la empresa                      |
| 2. | Existía en el grupo una gran habilidad para explotar la información y el conocimiento proveniente de la empresa |
| 3. | El conocimiento proveniente de la empresa se aplicó a nuevas ideas para este proyecto                           |
| 4. | El conocimiento proveniente de la empresa se ha aplicado en otros proyectos                                     |

#### *Carácter tácito del conocimiento*

---

Forma que adoptó la transferencia de tecnología o resultados del proyecto desde el grupo de investigación hacia la empresa:

De forma escrita ----- De forma tácita

100/0

80/20

60/40

50/50

40/60

20/80

0/100

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

# FACTORES COMPORTAMENTALES QUE INFLUYEN EN LA ELECCIÓN DE LA CARTERA DE PRODUCTOS DEL CLIENTE BANCARIO

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## RESUMEN

*Actualmente existen ciertas tendencias en el contexto bancario centradas en la mejora de las relaciones con los clientes. Dichas tendencias se basan en el fortalecimiento de las relaciones con los clientes existentes a través de la excelencia en la calidad del servicio o el desarrollo del customer-centric banking, que anima a los bancos a ser más competitivos, especialmente desde el inicio de la crisis financiera actual. Por tanto, el presente trabajo pretende analizar los principales factores comportamentales y sociodemográficos que influyen en el proceso de elección de la cartera de productos del cliente bancario, con el objetivo de ofrecer una guía para optimizar el nivel de competitividad del banco ayudándole comprender a su cliente y de este modo, a satisfacer de una forma más adecuada las necesidades del mismo.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE

*Comportamiento del consumidor, Modelo de elección, Lealtad, Longitud de la Relación, RFM, Cross-buying, Nivel de uso de productos bancarios, Balance, Marketing sector bancario.*

## 1. Introducción

Este trabajo propone un análisis de los factores comportamentales relativos a la lealtad del cliente, a la compra cruzada (*cross-buying*) y factores socio-demográficos que afectan a la elección de la cartera de productos del cliente bancario. El interés de este estudio reside en que ofrece ideas sobre los factores que llevan al cliente bancario a elegir aquellos productos que configuran su cartera, de este modo se persigue ofrecer una guía que ayude en el fortalecimiento de las relaciones con los clientes existentes, por ejemplo a través de la excelencia en la calidad del servicio o el desarrollo del *customer-centric banking*. Todas estas herramientas favorecen el aumento de la competitividad de los bancos, la cual es fundamental para la supervivencia de las entidades bancarias especialmente desde el inicio de la crisis financiera actual.

Investigaciones previas sobre los factores que influyen en las elecciones del cliente se han centrado en otros sectores, como el consumo de aceite de oliva (Gázquez-Abad y Sánchez-Pérez, 2009), el consumo de lácteos (Barreiro *et al.*, 2004), la elección de la marca privada frente a la de fabricante respecto de la categoría de producto yogurt (Cuneo *et al.*, 2012) o el consumo de detergentes (Arindam, 2004), entre otros. Por su parte, es escasa la literatura que analiza los factores que influyen la elección de productos bancarios, en especial considerando la totalidad de productos que ofrece el banco y que configuran la cartera de productos que poseen los clientes, tal y como indica nuestra propuesta de análisis. A este respecto se ha detectado una línea de investigación muy concreta que analiza especialmente los determinantes relativos a características socio-demográficas de los clientes (e.g., nivel educativo, ingresos, ocupación, nacionalidad, religión) que afectan a la elección de determinados productos bancarios (centrándose especialmente o bien en productos de crédito, o bien en productos de ahorro) en países con ciertas dificultades de acceso a este tipo de productos, como es el caso de Ghana (Akpanjar *et al.*, 2013), Estonia (Kulikov *et al.*, 2007), Bosnia Herzegovina (Chen y Chivakul, 2008) o considerando conjuntamente varios países con economías en transición (Beck y Brown, 2011). En muchos de estos casos, la principal fuente de datos utilizada ha sido la encuesta. Aunque estos estudios son capaces de considerar una amplia variedad de antecedentes de la elección de la cartera de productos, tienen ciertas limitaciones (Xue *et al.*, 2011), en particular: (i) analizan un conjunto de datos de *cross-section* o de corte transversal, no pudiendo examinar factores o variables que varían con el tiempo, y (ii) se basan en percepciones de los clientes en lugar de en datos observados, hecho que introduce error de medida y limita los resultados del estudio a aquellos que son perceptibles por los clientes. En este sentido, el presente trabajo pretende ofrecer un diagnóstico completo, considerando la totalidad de productos que ofrece el banco al cliente no empresarial, de los factores comportamentales (obtenidos de una base de datos de la empresa) que llevan a los consumidores a realizar sus elecciones, así como las variables sociodemográficas que definen a los clientes que eligen uno u otro producto. De este modo, este trabajo contribuye a la literatura incipiente sobre el uso doméstico de los servicios bancarios formales.

El resto del trabajo se organiza como indicamos a continuación. En la sección 2 revisaremos la literatura más relevantes sobre los determinantes de la elección de la cartera de productos del cliente bancario y formularemos la hipótesis de investigación. A continuación, se describen los datos y la metodología propuesta. Finalmente, se hace una breve reseña de las principales conclusiones que se derivarán de este estudio.

## 2. Determinantes de la elección del *portfolio* del cliente bancario

### 2.1. Lealtad

Cuando un cliente es leal, este continuará comprando la misma marca, tenderá a comprar más y recomendará la marca a otros (Hepworth y Mateus, 1994). Desde las primeras investigaciones sobre lealtad del cliente, al menos tres han sido las perspectivas propuestas para definir y operar con el concepto, en particular se trata de: (i) el enfoque actitudinal, (ii) el enfoque comportamental y (iii) el enfoque compuesto (Jacoby y Chestnut, 1978). Para medir la lealtad es más adecuado trabajar con los datos de la base de datos de la empresa (Wong y Chung, 2008), como es nuestro caso con una base de datos de un banco, ya que los registros de compras e interacciones con el cliente grabados en este tipo de bases de datos recogen la lealtad comportamental real y observada de los mismos.

Para esta investigación hemos seleccionado tanto la longitud de la relación, como la triada RFM (R de recencia, o número de meses que transcurren entre una compra-cancelación y la siguiente; F de frecuencia en la adquisición de productos; y M de valor monetario del cliente) para medir la lealtad comportamental de una forma completa (Chang y Tsay, 2004; Kumar *et al.*, 2006; Li *et al.*, 2011) y comprobar si afectan al proceso de elección de la cartera de productos del cliente bancario.

Desde hace décadas muchas empresas perciben el tema de la lealtad y la retención de los clientes como algo central en su gestión y en sus decisiones de marketing, en especial en el contexto bancario (Van den Poel y Larivière, 2004). Este énfasis en la lealtad y la retención se basa en que existe una fuerte asociación entre la retención de los clientes y la rentabilidad de los mismos. Los clientes cuya relación con la empresa se ha desarrollado en el largo plazo compran más y son menos costosos de mantener (Ganesh *et al.*, 2000; Hwang *et al.*, 2004), mucho menos que los clientes nuevos. Tales clientes nuevos, por el contrario, son mucho más difíciles de conseguir y más costosos de mantener en el corto plazo (Colgate y Danaher, 2000), principalmente porque dichos clientes nuevos son más vulnerables a las acciones de la competencia, más sensibles al precio y tienen unos costes de cambio bajos. A este respecto algunos productos bancarios concretos, como los seguros de los depósitos, se han identificado como una herramienta para crear confianza (y por tanto, fuente potencial de lealtad de los clientes) en el sistema financiero, especialmente para los pequeños ahorradores (Beck y Brown, 2011). Del mismo modo, las mejoras en los sistemas de pago y un más amplio alcance físico de los bancos, por ejemplo a través de la puesta a disposición del cliente de los cajeros automáticos y las tarjetas de crédito y débito para operar a través de ellos, pueden reducir la barrera geográfica de los hogares para acceder a los servicios bancarios (Beck y Brown, 2011), lo cual puede ser también fuente de retención y lealtad de los clientes. Por tanto, analizaremos qué productos bancarios a los que puede acceder el cliente no empresarial se ven influenciados por la lealtad del mismo a la empresa.

**Hipótesis 1:** Una mayor longitud de la relación tiene un impacto positivo en la elección de productos bancarios.

Respecto de la famosa triada RFM, R de recencia, F de frecuencia en la adquisición de productos y M de valor monetario del cliente, los estudios que las utilizan ponen de relieve que son un importante conjunto de predictores que reflejan la repetición en las compras (Baesens *et al.*, 2002). En este sentido, Hughes (1996), y más recientemente Liang (2010), explican que los clientes que más recientemente han comprado de un vendedor (menor recencia), los que compran muchas veces de un vendedor (mayor frecuencia) y los que gastan más recursos monetarios con un vendedor (mayor valor monetario) suelen ser los clientes más valiosos para la empresa y por tanto, los mejores clientes a quienes ofrecerles nuevas ofertas. Por tanto,

**Hipótesis 2a:** Una mayor recencia en la compra tiene un impacto negativo en la elección de productos bancarios.

**Hipótesis 2b:** Una mayor recencia en la cancelación tiene un impacto negativo en la elección de productos bancarios.

**Hipótesis 3:** Una mayor frecuencia en la adquisición de productos bancarios tiene un impacto positivo en la elección de productos bancarios.

**Hipótesis 4:** Un mayor valor monetario del cliente tiene un impacto positivo en la elección de productos bancarios.

## 2.2. Cross-buying

Tanto el *cross-buying* (desde el punto de la demanda) como el *cross-selling* (desde el punto de vista de la oferta), persiguen conseguir la adquisición por parte de los clientes actuales de un mayor número de productos de la empresa procedentes de múltiples categorías (Gupta y Zeithaml, 2006). Mientras que el *cross-selling* es una acción de la empresa que se emplea para ampliar relaciones con los clientes, el *cross-buying* se refiere a la propensión de un cliente para hacer compras cruzadas (Reinartz y Venkatesan, 2008). El *cross-buying* o compra cruzada ha sido asociado con mayores niveles de retención de los clientes, mayores ingresos y lealtad. En particular, Donkers *et al.* (2003 p. 21) evidenció que los clientes eran más propensos a permanecer en la empresa cuando compraban más productos (en particular, más pólizas de seguro). Al examinar la relación ente el *cross-buying* y la

lealtad comportamental, Reinartz *et al.* (2008) descubrieron que el *cross-buying* es realmente una consecuencia y no un antecedente de la lealtad comportamental, ya que dicha lealtad impulsa tanto el número de categorías de las que una persona compra como el nivel de dispersión del gasto a través de esas categorías. Por lo tanto, los directivos cada vez más reconocen que la retención del cliente no es suficiente para tener éxito y muchos están tratando de mejorar el valor de sus clientes mediante la ampliación de la gama de productos y servicios que compran de la empresa (Blattberg y Deighton, 1996; Rust *et al.*, 2000 p.46). De esta forma, y siguiendo las sugerencias de Reinartz *et al.* (2008), para esta investigación hemos seleccionado tanto el nivel de uso de productos bancarios, como el balance en activos y pasivos para el medir el *cross-buying*. De esta forma se analiza si estos factores comportamentales afectan a la elección de productos bancarios. Por tanto,

**Hipótesis 5:** El uso de un mayor número de productos bancarios (histórico o anterior) tiene un impacto positivo en la elección de productos (futuros).

Haenlein *et al.* (2007) definen dos condiciones bajo las cuales un cliente se considera activo (o por el contrario inactivo) en un contexto bancario, en particular: (condición 1) todos los clientes que poseen un producto de ahorro, un producto de financiación de una vivienda, un préstamo o un seguro, se definen como activos debido a los flujos de ingresos regulares (e.g., ahorro, pago de intereses, cuotas de seguros) como resultado de cualquiera de estos productos; y (condición 2) todos los clientes que poseen cuentas corrientes y depósitos se definen como clientes activos cuando estas cuentas muestran un saldo positivo de un mínimo de 100 euros o al menos una transacción se ha realizado durante los tres últimos meses (en el caso de las cuentas corrientes) o últimos doce meses (en el caso de los depósitos). En este sentido, tanto el balance en productos de pasivo como el balance en producto de activo ofrecen información sobre el nivel de actividad de los clientes con la empresa (Haenlein *et al.*, 2007). Por tanto, si el cliente es un sujeto activo en su relación con la empresa, la elección de otros productos bancarios será más probable,

**Hipótesis 7a:** Un mayor balance en productos de activo (histórico) tiene un impacto positivo en la elección de productos bancarios (futuros).

**Hipótesis 7a:** Un mayor balance en productos de pasivo (histórico) tiene un impacto positivo en la elección de productos bancarios (futuros).

### 3. Metodología de la investigación

#### 3.1. Contexto de investigación

El contexto seleccionado para desarrollar esta investigación es un banco español que opera a nivel nacional. Hemos seleccionado este contexto ya que actualmente los mercados financieros se han vuelto mucho más competitivos entre otros motivos, por la madurez del sector (Prinzie y Van den Poel, 2006), la desregulación y la aparición de nuevos competidores procedentes de sectores tan diversos como los seguros y el sector del automóvil (Haenlein *et al.*, 2007). Como consecuencia, el número de nuevos participantes en el sector de la banca minorista ha aumentado, provocando la mercantilización de los productos bancarios básicos, tales como los depósitos, las hipotecas y las extensiones de crédito. Así mismo, esto ha generado cierta disminución de los márgenes de beneficio y una diferenciación en ocasiones borrosa entre bancos, aseguradoras y casas de bolsa (i.e., la banca universal). Por si esto no fuera poco, la situación del sector fue duramente dañada por la denominada *crisis subprime* (BusinessWorld, 2007; The Washington Post, 2007), lo que ha generado un entorno aún más crítico para los bancos. En este sentido, y con objeto de superar las dificultades a las que se enfrenta el sector en la actualidad, se hace necesaria cierta revisión del papel que juegan los clientes en las entidades. Por tanto, este trabajo pretende arrojar luz a los procesos de mejora de las relaciones con los clientes, en general en las empresas y en particular en el sector bancario, analizando los drivers que afectan a la elección de la cartera de productos.

#### 3.2. Datos

Como ya se ha indicado anteriormente, un banco español ha provisto la base de datos para realizar el presente estudio (véase Tabla 1). Originalmente la base de datos estaba compuesta por una muestra aleatoria de clientes del banco, con observaciones mensuales relativas a la propiedad y al uso de los



diferentes productos que ofrece el banco, así como determinadas variables sociodemográficas de los clientes. Se realizó una primera etapa de pre-procesamiento de datos, eliminando aquellos registros no necesarios para el presente estudio. Así mismo, se llevó a cabo un completo análisis de datos perdidos. En particular, se ha seleccionado la técnica de imputación múltiple (utilizando el software SPSS v.21) para imputar valores a aquellos registros que aparecían como perdidos. De esta forma se consiguió una muestra compuesta por un total de 2.187 clientes, con un total de 24 meses de información (en particular, el periodo de observación de datos comprende desde Diciembre de 2010 hasta Noviembre de 2012), obteniendo un total de 40.992 registros de datos. Todos los clientes empezaron su relación con el banco durante este periodo. En particular, nos centramos en la elección del productos bancarios llevada a cabo por la unidad decisora hogar, no incluyendo empresas en la muestra, de esta forma y a partir de los resultados obtenidos, comprenderemos qué factores afectan al cliente bancario cuando realizan sus elecciones, lo que ofrecerá información valiosa que ayudará al banco a comprender las elecciones realizadas por sus clientes, así como a detectar clientes prospecto para futuras promociones u ofertas de productos.

Tabla 1. Descripción de la base de datos

<b>Datos</b>	Panel
<b>Categorías de productos</b>	Participación en capital social del banco, Tarjeta de crédito, Tarjeta de débito, Seguro de ahorro, Seguro de hogar, Seguro de vida no vinculado (a hipoteca), Seguro de vida vinculado (a hipoteca), Otros seguros, Cuenta corriente, Cuenta vivienda, Depósito, Fondo de inversión, Plan de pensión, Valores, Préstamo consumo, Préstamo micro-consumo, Hipoteca, Crédito.
<b>Contexto</b>	Entidad bancaria que opera a nivel nacional.
<b>Periodo</b>	2 años: Diciembre 2010 - Noviembre 2012.
<b>Clientes</b>	Clientes no empresariales que empezaron su relación con el banco al comenzar el periodo de observación (Diciembre 2010).
<b>Tamaño</b>	2.187 clientes, 24 meses, 40.992 registros.

### 3.2. Modelo empírico

Para testear las hipótesis propuestas sobre los factores que influyen en la elección de la cartera de productos de los clientes bancarios, proponemos el uso de un modelo de elección multivariable (e.g., Barreiro *et al.*, 2004; Cuneo *et al.*, 2012; Gázquez-Abad y Sánchez-Pérez, 2007). Esta metodología relaciona a las variables explicativas (incluyendo variables individuales y *time-varying*) con la elección del producto, siendo la elección de cada uno de los productos la variable dependiente en el modelo medida como una variable binaria ( $Y_i = 1$  si el cliente elige el producto  $i$ , por el contrario  $Y_i = 0$  si el cliente no elige el producto  $i$ ).

En nuestro caso, siendo  $i$  cada uno de los productos considerados:

$$Y_i = L\beta_1 + PR\beta_2 + CR\beta_3 + F(cb)\beta_4 + M\beta_5 + AMA\beta_6 + AML\beta_7 + Q_{TOTAL}\beta_8 + AGE\beta_9 + GENDER\beta_{10} + INCOMI$$

Los dos modelos de elección binaria más comunes son el modelo Logit y el modelo Probit. La principal diferencia entre ellos es la función de distribución acumulativa que se asume, que asegura que las probabilidades de respuesta estimadas se mueven estrictamente entre cero y uno. En el modelo Logit, la función de distribución acumulativa es la función logística y en el modelo Probit, es la función de distribución normal estándar (Wooldridge, 2009). En la práctica, el modelo más utilizado es el Logit (Keane, 1992), sin embargo este modelo sufre de la propiedad denominada “*the independence of irrelevant alternatives*” (IIA), ignorando las similitudes entre las alternativas en conjunto de elección de un individuo, característica no realista en muchos contextos de comportamiento del consumidor (Chintagunta, 1992). Contrariamente al modelo Logit, el modelo Probit alivia el supuesto de IIA (Elrod y Keane, 1995) y en general, tiene mucho atractivo para la representación de los procesos de elección. Sin embargo, el modelo Probit se ha utilizado como modelo de elección en contadas ocasiones debido a la complejidad en su estimación como consecuencia de cálculo de múltiples integrales (Keane, 1992). Sin embargo, la evolución reciente de

los métodos de simulación, tales como SML (*simulated maximum likelihood*) o MSM (*method of simulated moments*), así como la estadística Bayesiana, han planteado un renovado interés en el modelo Probit como un modelo de elección (Chintagunta, 1992; Geweke *et al.*, 1994).

#### 4. Conclusiones

Este trabajo propone un análisis de los factores relativos a la lealtad y al *cross-buying* que influyen en la elección de la cartera de productos del cliente bancario. Para ello se propone utilizar una muestra de clientes bancarios españoles de los que se dispone de dos años de datos.

Las implicaciones para la gestión derivadas de este trabajo pueden ayudar a las empresas a conocer qué clientes son más propensos a elegir cada uno de los productos analizados, de esta forma y a partir de los resultados obtenidos, conoceremos qué factores afectan al cliente bancario a la hora de realizar sus elecciones, lo que ofrece información valiosa que ayuda al banco a comprender las elecciones realizadas por sus clientes, así como a detectar clientes prospecto para futuras promociones u ofertas de productos.

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# EL USO DE LAS REDES SOCIALES EN EL PROCESO DE TOMA DE DECISIONES

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## RESUMEN

*Las redes sociales, tras surgir como una herramienta de comunicación, han alcanzado una elevada popularidad entre sus usuarios que ha llevado a las empresas a identificarlas como un medio para establecer y mantener relaciones con los clientes, definiendo nuevas estrategias de marketing que permiten influir en el proceso de toma de decisiones del cliente. En este estudio se pretende analizar el uso de páginas de marca en redes sociales como una herramienta a través de la cual los clientes pueden percibir beneficios, tanto por parte de la empresa como de la red social en sí misma. Para ello, se plantea una clasificación de dichos beneficios percibidos (utilitarios, simbólicos y hedónicos), así como los efectos que éstos generan en la intención de compra del cliente a través de la creación o mejora del conocimiento y del valor de marca.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE:

Beneficios Relacionales, Gratificaciones, Conocimiento de Marca, Valor de Marca, Intención de Compra, Redes Sociales

## **1. Introducción**

En los últimos años han surgido nuevas formas y tendencias de comunicación sociales que han modificado sustancialmente el modo en el que las personas se comunican. Entre los diferentes tipos de medios de comunicación sociales que existen destacan las redes sociales (RS), que se consideran aplicaciones que permiten a los usuarios conectarse entre sí mediante la creación de perfiles personales, invitar a amigos y compañeros a tener acceso a dichos perfiles, enviarles correos o mensajes instantáneos (Boyd y Ellison, 2008; Kaplan y Haenlein, 2010). Debido a la popularidad que las RS han alcanzado entre sus usuarios, han recibido una especial atención por parte de investigadores, docentes, profesionales y políticos (Boyd y Ellison, 2008) y las empresas han identificado la participación en las mismas como una oportunidad para establecer y mantener relaciones con los clientes, definiendo nuevas estrategias de marketing. Además, en el contexto de las RS, las actividades de marketing se asocian al uso de las denominadas páginas de marca (Zaglia, 2013), que son perfiles específicos de instituciones, empresas, marcas, personajes públicos o causas (Dholakia, Bagozzi y Pearo, 2004) a través de los cuales los clientes pueden construir y mantener relaciones entre ellos mismos y con las empresas (Hennig-Thurau y otros, 2010). De este modo, el denominado marketing de RS ofrece la posibilidad de conectar marcas y consumidores a través de un canal personalizado que se centra en el usuario y la interacción social (Chi, 2011). En este sentido, diferentes estudios han identificado la utilidad de las RS como herramienta de marketing (Moretti y Tuan, 2013). Sin embargo, teniendo en cuenta el rápido crecimiento que han experimentado las RS en el corto plazo junto al hecho de que su aparición no haya sido fruto de un proceso gradual, se considera necesario identificar cómo las empresas pueden gestionar sus páginas de marca en RS del modo más apropiado en función de sus objetivos una vez que han decidido participar en las mismas. Es por ello que en este trabajo planteamos un modelo para identificar qué efecto tienen los beneficios que el usuario de RS percibe de las páginas de marca sobre la intención de compra, a través del conocimiento y el valor de marca que dichos beneficios crean en el usuario.

## **2. Las páginas de marca en redes sociales: beneficios para el usuario**

Las páginas de marca en RS se consideran un medio de comunicación entre usuarios o entre empresas y clientes (Zaglia, 2013) que se utiliza por parte de las empresas como una herramienta de marketing relacional (Moretti y Tuan, 2013). Algunos estudios establecen que tanto los medios de comunicación (televisión, Internet, comunidades virtuales, etc.) como las herramientas de marketing relacional (programas de fidelización) proporcionan a sus usuarios una serie de beneficios (Dholakia y otros, 2004; Yi y Jeon, 2003). En base a ello en este trabajo consideramos que los usuarios de páginas de marca en RS pueden percibir principalmente dos tipos de beneficios, derivados de: 1) el uso de un medio de comunicación (la red social), denominados gratificaciones y 2) una herramienta de marketing relacional, denominados beneficios relacionales. A continuación, se exponen cada una de las categorías de beneficios.

### **2.1. Beneficios Relacionales**

Las páginas de marca son utilizadas por las empresas como herramienta de marketing relacional ya que, al igual que los programas de fidelización, su objetivo es establecer relaciones con sus clientes. Tradicionalmente, para cumplir su objetivo de desarrollar vínculos con los clientes, los programas de fidelización han ofrecido una serie de incentivos, recompensas o beneficios a los mismos (Yi y Jeon, 2003). Así, aunque existen diversas clasificaciones de los beneficios que se pueden ofrecer a través de un programa de fidelización, Mimouni y Volle (2010) establecieron que los clientes pueden percibir hasta tres tipos de beneficios de los programas de fidelización. En primer lugar, los beneficios utilitarios se basan en ventajas financieras, como el ahorro económico en forma de descuentos. En segundo lugar, los beneficios simbólicos son las ventajas en relación a las necesidades de expresión personal, la autoestima y la aprobación social; se relacionan con el reconocimiento cuando los clientes sienten que la empresa los trata mejor que a otros. Por último, los beneficios hedónicos se consideran no instrumentales, experienciales, emocionales y personalmente gratificantes, y se pueden conseguir mediante la exploración y el entretenimiento. Teniendo en cuenta lo anterior, planteamos que los usuarios de páginas de marca pueden percibir los tres tipos de beneficios relacionales que ofrece un programa de fidelización: utilitarios, simbólicos y hedónicos.

## **2.2. Gratificaciones de la red social**

Las RS se consideran herramientas de comunicación y, al igual que ocurre con otros medios de comunicación interactivos como las comunidades virtuales, la teoría de los usos y las gratificaciones puede explicar cuáles son las motivaciones de la gente a la hora de utilizar las RS (Katz y Foulkes, 1962). Así, según esta teoría, los usuarios de RS se exponen ante este medio con la motivación de obtener una gratificación –o beneficio- que satisfaga sus necesidades. Atendiendo a las distintas clasificaciones planteadas sobre los beneficios que proceden de los medios de comunicación (Flanagin y Metzger, 2001; Dholakia y otros, 2004) hemos establecido una clasificación con tres tipos de beneficios con una nomenclatura similar a la de los beneficios relacionales. Así, los beneficios utilitarios consisten en obtener, compartir y proporcionar información a otros, así como de persuadir para alcanzar un fin deseado; los beneficios simbólicos proporcionan identificación personal (conocerse mejor a uno mismo), integración social (mantener contacto con otras personas) y reconocimiento (conseguir la aprobación y la aceptación de otros) y los beneficios hedónicos se identifican con la diversión y relajación, a través de juegos e interacciones con otros individuos.

## **3. Efecto directo de los beneficios de las páginas de marca sobre el conocimiento y el valor de la marca**

Tanto las actividades de marketing relacional como las de marketing interactivo desempeñan diversas funciones para los clientes, permitiéndoles aprender sobre el producto, la empresa o sobre lo que la marca representa (Keller, 2009). Es por ello que las acciones de marketing se han asociado tradicionalmente con la creación de conocimiento de marca y con el valor de marca (Chang y Tseng, 2005; Keller, 2009). Así, mientras el conocimiento de la marca se define como el significado personal que tiene una marca en la memoria del consumidor (Keller, 2003), el valor de marca es la evaluación subjetiva e intangible de la marca por parte del cliente (Lemon y otros, 2001) y se considera la diferencia para el consumidor entre un producto de una marca conocida y un producto sin marca, teniendo ambos productos las mismas características (Yoo y otros, 2000). Por ello, en el ámbito de las RS las páginas de marca que ofrecen beneficios al usuario como herramienta de marketing pueden también tener efectos sobre ambas variables. Así, los beneficios utilitarios de la red social como medio de comunicación, que se identifican principalmente con la información suministrada a través de la página, pueden generar en el usuario un conocimiento sobre dicha marca, ya que los usuarios de medios interactivos buscan la información que les proporciona dicho medio para satisfacer sus necesidades de aprendizaje, aumentar su conocimiento (Stafford y otros, 2004; Chung y Kim, 2008) y llevar a cabo las decisiones de compra de productos (Stafford y otros, 2004). Por otro lado, al igual que las promociones de ventas tienen un efecto positivo sobre el conocimiento de la marca (Palazón y Delgado, 2005), los beneficios relacionales utilitarios, relacionados con ventajas económicas, también pueden tener un efecto en el conocimiento de la misma. Por tanto, planteamos:

*H1: Los beneficios utilitarios percibidos a través de las páginas de marca favorecerán la creación de conocimiento de marca en el usuario*

Además, tanto investigadores como profesionales han puesto de manifiesto la importancia del entretenimiento y la diversión en el proceso de aprendizaje (Waiguny y otros, 2012), así como la vinculación de las actividades de exploración con la búsqueda de un nuevo conocimiento, recursos y capacidades (Aspara y otros, 2011). Ello implica que cuando el usuario experimente un estado de entretenimiento o exploración en su relación con la marca, su conocimiento respecto a la misma pueda aumentar. Por ello, teniendo en cuenta que los beneficios relacionales hedónicos se asocian con experiencias placenteras de exploración y entretenimiento y que los beneficios hedónicos de la red social se asocian con la diversión que proporciona la página en sí misma, planteamos:

*H2: Los beneficios hedónicos percibidos a través de las páginas de marca favorecerán la creación de conocimiento de marca en el usuario*

Actividades de marketing tales como la creación de comunidades de marca y la realización de eventos se han asociado a la creación de valor de marca (Muniz y O'Guinn, 2001; Zarantonello y Schmitt, 2013), debido a que ofrecen a sus usuarios la posibilidad de conocer a otras personas con intereses hacia la misma marca. Los beneficios simbólicos procedentes de la red social se identifican con la

comunicación interpersonal, la identidad personal y el prestigio social. Por otro, aquellos que proceden de la empresa se asocian al reconocimiento por parte de ésta y la aprobación social que ello implica. Así, ambos beneficios se pueden identificar con las relaciones que se establecen entre el usuario y la empresa o entre los mismos usuarios. Por ello, podemos plantear la hipótesis:

*H3: Los beneficios simbólicos percibidos a través de las páginas de marca favorecerán la creación de valor de marca en el usuario.*

Existen diferentes estudios en los que se han relacionado las dimensiones del conocimiento de la marca con las del valor de marca; por lo que el valor de marca se deriva del conocimiento de la misma (Keller, 2003). Además, el modelo original de Keller, en el que se plantea que el conocimiento de la marca es un antecedente del valor de marca, ha sido ampliamente utilizado por diferentes autores para su aplicación en la investigación en marketing (Palazón y Delgado, 2005). Así, esperamos que el modelo creación de valor de marca se pueda aplicar al ámbito de las RS, planteando la hipótesis:

*H4: El conocimiento de la marca generado a través de las páginas de marca favorecerá la creación de valor de marca.*

#### 4. Efecto indirecto de las páginas de marca sobre la intención de compra

La intención de compra hace referencia al estado mental en el proceso de toma de decisiones en el que el consumidor ha desarrollado una intención real de adquirir un objeto o marca (Dodds y otros, 1991). De forma previa a la decisión de compra, es necesario que los clientes adquieran conocimiento sobre la marca (Yasin y otros, 2007). De hecho, varios estudios establecen que la intención de compra está positivamente influenciada por el conocimiento de la marca y el valor de marca (Broyles y otros, 2009; Dodds y otros, 1991; Yasin y otros, 2007). En base a lo anterior planteamos que:

*H5: El conocimiento de marca creado a través de las páginas de marca en redes sociales favorecerá la intención de compra del cliente.*

*H6: El valor de marca creado a través de las páginas de marca en redes sociales favorecerá la intención de compra del cliente.*

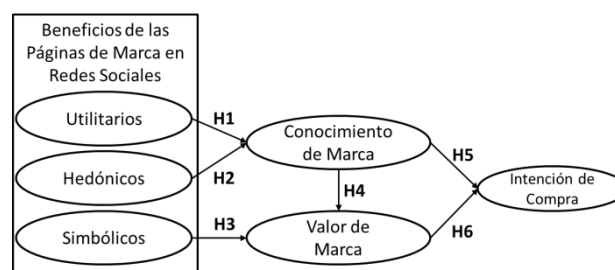


FIGURA 1

#### Modelo Propuesto

#### 5. Metodología y resultados esperados

La muestra objeto de estudio está compuesta por usuarios frecuentes de, al menos, una red social que, además, sean seguidores de una página de marca. Para asegurar que los participantes realmente sean usuarios de redes sociales, la metodología de investigación se desarrollará a través de un cuestionario online que será distribuido a través de redes sociales. Se solicitará que los participantes respondan el cuestionario basándose en su página de marca favorita. Por tanto, la primera pregunta requerirá que los participantes escriban el nombre de una empresa o marca de la que sean seguidores en redes sociales. La segunda pregunta hará referencia al nombre de la red social en la que está presente la empresa. En adelante, se solicitará a los participantes que respondan algunas preguntas relacionadas con los beneficios percibidos por el usuario como consecuencia de la participación de la empresa en la red social (utilitarios, simbólicos y hedónicos), el conocimiento y valor de marca generado en el usuario tras seguir a la empresa en la red social y la intención de comprar el producto que la empresa o marca comercializa. Para ello se utilizarán seis constructos que se medirán con escalas previamente validadas de la literatura. Además, se recogerán algunos datos demográficos como género y edad.

## 6. Conclusiones previsible

En este trabajo se propone que el uso de redes sociales como herramienta de marketing tiene efectos en la toma de decisiones del cliente, especialmente en la generación de intención de compra, a través de la percepción de beneficios y de la creación de conocimiento de marca y valor de marca. Sin embargo, tal y como se plantea en las hipótesis, se espera que el efecto sea diferente en función del tipo de beneficio. Se espera que el modelo propuesto ayude a las empresas a definir su actuación a través de las redes sociales, identificando qué efectos genera cada uno de los beneficios en el conocimiento y/o el valor de marca, y si los mismos repercuten en la intención de compra del cliente.

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