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# Tourism value VS barriers to booking trips online

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is twofold. Firstly, this study examines the influence of economic, social, physical, and technological attributes associated with tourism on the role played by personal characteristics such as anxiety, perceived risk and experience in booking trips online on online purchase intention and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). Secondly, this study analyzes the moderating effect of use contexts (desktop computer vs. smartphone/tablet). Results revealed that the values attributed to tourism anxiety, risk, and experience positively affected online purchase intention and e-WOM, therefore confirming the proposed moderation effect.

## 1. Introduction

Spain has become the world's second most popular tourism destination while France retains the top spot. In this sense, it comes as no surprise that tourism is one of the main economic drivers in Spain. The revenue from tourism activities reached 95,911 million dollars in 2017 (Ministry of Energy, Tourism and Digital Agenda, 2018), in consonance with data from Exceltur (2017), the growth of the tourism industry in 2018 saw a 2.0% increase in the GDP (Gross Domestic Product). With regard to forecasts for 2019, a 1.7% growth in the GDP related to tourism activities is expected; a figure below the average for the Spanish economy for the second year running. The tourism industry in Spain will continue to face a dwindling growth in 2019 in a scenario of international economic deceleration. The sector is also negatively affected by the increasing market share that competitors in the Eastern Mediterranean basin are gaining. Also, the issues related to Brexit have an impact on the performance of the sector in Spain. (see Table 1)

New technologies play an increasingly significant role with regard to travel purchasing. According to the latest report from the National Observatory for Telecommunications and the Information Society (ONTSI, 2017), sales through websites and apps have reached 34.4%. In this regard, tourism products are among the top trending product categories to sell online (hotel reservations have settled as the first product category and travel tickets as the fourth) (ONTSI, 2017). In addition, the rise of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) entails drastic changes in multiple areas of the market, including the development of tourism (Gretzel and Fesenmaier, 2009). The massive use of Internet constitutes an unprecedented opportunity for the evolution of the tourism sector, transforming the industry and affecting consumer behavior in many aspects (Jensen, 2012).

Conducted in a context where technological innovations pose a significant importance, the aim of this study approaching consumers' online purchase of tourism products is twofold: Firstly, the present study examines the factors that affect consumer intentions in relation to behavior and positive e-WOM with regard to online tourism products and services. Among these factors, this study considers the economic, social, technological, and physical values attributed to tourist destinations as well as the personal characteristics of the online buyer, such as previous experience, anxiety associated with the transaction, and perceived risk on online shopping. The present study identifies and fills a gap in the body of knowledge regarding this subject matter: understanding the importance of tourism and the personal barriers acting as barriers to booking trips online.

The research questions we aim to address in this study are the following:

RQ1: Do extrinsic or intrinsic factors affect more consumer online buying intention and positive e-WOM toward tourism products and services?
RQ2: Does the use context (desktop computers, smartphones and tablets) moderates the intention to book trips online and word-of-mouth?

The extant literature on tourism value neglects electronic purchases

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**Table 1**
Recent research studies approaching SET in tourism.

| Authors | Sample | Purpose |
|---|---|---|
| Moyle et al. (2010) | 30 in-depth interviews with community and tourism stakeholders | Explore the cultural interaction between communities and visitors to islands using the social exchange theory to improve the understanding of the experience on the island. |
| Wang and Chen (2015) | 464 participants | Investigate if local residents' sense of identity with regard to the destination could affect their attitudes toward tourism |
| McCartney and Weng In (2016) | 351 participants | Investigate and measure Macao residents' attitudes toward tourism and their acceptability of different development options |
| Wang and Pfister (2008) | 436 participants | Analyze perceptions of personal benefits derived from tourism |

and the perceived disadvantages of traveling to certain tourism destinations from the viewpoint of travelers. Likewise, neither do studies on experience, anxiety, and risk as barriers to the electronic booking of trips consider the impact of tourism value on the purchase process (Amaro and Duarte, 2015). In addition, most studies in the literature approaching the perceived value of tourism focus on the residents at the destinations (Abdollahzadeh & Sharifzadeh, 2014; William & Lawson, 2001) and not on the travelers.

Secondly, the present study aims to analyze the moderating effect of use contexts (desktop computers, smartphone and tablets) with regard to intention to purchase online and e-WOM when booking trips online. The proposed moderating effect in this research has not been previously analyzed in the scientific literature on the tourism industry. The present study also contributes further knowledge on the use of mobile devices to book trips online.

The second section of this study approaches a literature review to achieve the proposed objectives and puts forward the hypotheses. After introducing the global research model, the third section focuses on the methodological aspects of the research. Lastly, the fourth section discusses the conclusions, limitations, managerial implications and avenues for future research.

## 2. Theoretical background and hypotheses development

In the context of online behavior, perceived value has been considered as an essential variable to evaluate marketing performance (Hsin Chang and Wang, 2011; Sabiote-Ortiz, Frías-Jamilena & Castaneda-Garcia, 2017). This variable is also a fundamental construct with regard to competitive advantage (Lee et al., 2005) due to its marked relevance in consumer behavior (Gallarza and Gil-Saura, 2006). The literature review on this subject reveals that most definitions of perceived value in terms of traditional and online media focus on just one of the two stages of the purchasing process: the purchase phase or the consumption phase (Lin and Peng, 2006). On the other hand, a general assessment of perceived value yields a thorough understanding by measuring the different values before, during and after the actual purchase takes place (Zeithaml, 1988). In the case of the present study, perceived value is analyzed through the Social Exchange theory developed by Ekeh (1974) and Turner (1974), highlighting a four-level value system: economic value, social value, physical value and technological value.

On the other hand, previous experience regarding online booking of trips generates positive e-WOM toward this type of products. In this sense, the scientific literature proposes that the positive experience of consumers from past purchases will generally improve their future intention (Palau-Saumell et al., 2019).

### 2.1. Evaluation of tourism

#### 2.1.1. Social exchange theory

Assessing the perceived value of tourism on an individual basis can help mitigate the possible negative effects on the industry while implementing feasible investment-orientated policies (William & Lawson, 2001). The Social Exchange Theory (SET) developed by Ekeh (1974) and Turner (1974) is a general sociological theory examining the exchange of resources between individuals and groups in an interaction context. The social exchange theory is perhaps the best-known interaction-based theory with regard to tourism (Moyle et al., 2010). Participants seek to increase positive exchanges while suppressing negative experiences in a way that if the benefits of the exchange exceed the costs, it is probable that they will maintain their behavior over time (Cook et al., 1993).

This theory has frequently been approached in the field of tourism (Andereck et al., 2005; Wang and Pfister, 2008; Moyle et al., 2010) to assess residents' perceptions of tourism in an area that may be exploited by the tourism industry through an established presence of travelers. In addition, this theory is also approached to analyze how residents' perceptions affect individual intentions and behaviors. However, the present study could not find a single research in the extant literature using the social exchange theory to understand the value attributed to tourism by travelers who are not residents at a particular tourism destination or when they use Internet to search for information and book trips online. The following table summarizes the main researches on tourism approaching the social exchange theory (SET) in the past decade.

#### 2.1.2. Perceived value theory

Previous studies approached the perceived value theory (Zeithaml, 1988) to prove the effect of perceived value on the experience of booking trips online (Chang et al., 2014; Chen and Chang, 2018; Kim et al., 2019). In this sense, perceived value can be defined as customers' global evaluation of the usefulness of a product on the basis of their perceptions (Zeithaml, 1988).

In this sense, users' perceptions are referred to as "relative advantages" in IDT. These relative advantages are defined for the purposes of this study in terms of economic, social, physical, and technological values that tourism provides. However, it is not only the opinions of residents on the value of tourism that are relevant, but also the opinions and the perceptions of travelers who make their way to a destination and perceive a particular value. Thus, in the field of tourism and e-commerce, a positive relation has been confirmed between these perceived advantages and online purchase intention, as suggested in previous research from Amaro and Duarte (2015), Jensen (2009), Lu et al. (2011) and Lin et al. (2017).

The scientific literature usually explains perceived value on the basis of different dimensions (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). In this regard, previous research studies validated a 4-variable approach to customers' perceived value (Turel et al., 2007; Walsh et al., 2014). Their findings reveal significant factors such as quality, consumer emotion, price/economic value and social values. Firstly, quality refers to the practical or technical benefits associated with the adoption of a particular service. Secondly, consumer emotion refers to customers' psychological needs and the perceived utility derived from the emotions related to the purchase of a particular service. Thirdly, economic value reflects purchase satisfaction based on the cost of a service and the time and effort needed to acquire it. Lastly, social value refers to a social utility such as the perceived prestige derived from the use of a particular service (Walsh et al., 2014). The table below summarizes the main studies assessing perceived value in tourism.

### 2.2. Purchase intention and e-WOM

e-WOM, commonly known as electronic word-of-mouth, is considered as an informal, person-to-person communication between a non-

commercial communicator and a receiver with regard to a brand, a product, a company or a service (Harrison-Walker, 2001). This type of communication usually happens in most purchasing processes and exerts a considerable influence on consumers' purchasing decisions (East et al., 2005; San Martín et al., 2015b). Positive ratings with regard to previous visits to a destination usually serve as the most reliable sources of information for potential tourists. In addition, e-WOM is one of the most appreciated and approached types of information for people interested in traveling (Chi and Qu, 2008; Yen and Tang, 2019). In this sense, e-WOM is defined as "any positive or negative statement made by potential, current, or former customers regarding a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet" (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004: 39).

The reasons that lead consumers to provide this type of feedback to other potential consumers are the object of interest in the fields of marketing and communication (Harrison-Walker, 2001; Baber et al., 2016; Wien and Olsen, 2017) since e-WOM contributes an especially high market value to the tourism industry due to the intangible nature of tourism services (Casaló et al., 2015; Sánchez-Fernández et al., 2019).

On the other hand, the extant literature is scarce with regard to the variables driving the intention to use Internet to book a trip, a key factor that may positively influence the recommendation of online purchases to other costumers since users are usually encouraged to share and rate their experience based on their intention to purchase. This effect has been examined and supported by different authors such as Olaru et al. (2008), Leung et al. (2015), Abubakar and Ilkan (2016) and Uslu and Karabulut (2018). Therefore, it is highly probable that consumers with a clear intention to purchase online will recommend this kind of travel purchase to others. In light of these findings, the following research hypothesis is put forward:

**H1**. Online purchase intention positively influences e-WOM about the tourism product.

On the basis of the two theories mentioned above, Social exchange theory and Perceived value in tourism, this study analyzes the four principal dimensions used to examine tourism in previous research: economic value, social value, physical value, and technological value (Abdollahzadeh & Sharifzadeh, 2014).

The economic value of tourism springs from a formal and frequently contractual economic exchange, thereby establishing an easily measurable cost-benefit system. Over time, multiple studies have demonstrated that individuals benefitting economically from tourism tend to have a favorable perception of the activities associated with tourism (Deccio and Baloglu, 2002; Teye et al., 2002), and that their perception leads them to maintain a significant more positive attitude toward its development (Milman and Pizan, 1988; Lepp, 2007). These benefits are perceived by the residents in the growth of employment and the higher level of investments and demand with regard to local businesses. At the same time, tourists can also perceive that they will be benefiting from a better touristic service. In this sense, if the traveler perceives an economic value when searching a particular trip online, they will have a higher intention with regard to online buying. In this sense, the present study puts forward the following hypothesis:

**H2**. The economic value attributed to tourism positively influences online purchase intention

Regarding social value, it has been proven that individuals who believe in the positive social effects of tourism are more likely to support the development of tourism in their home town (Liu and Var, 1986). These positive effects include improvements to the quality of life, more possibilities for entertainment, the organization of exhibitions, historical and cultural events, cultural exchanges, and a stronger cultural identity positively impacting the intention to book trips online (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001; Kim et al., 2013; Xia et al., 2019). In this light, the following hypothesis is put forward:

**H3**. The social value attributed to tourism positively influences online purchase intention

The study conducted by Abdollahzadeh and Sharifzadeh (2014) assessed the physical factors that are affected by tourism, the study revealed that these factors model the physical structure and the landscape of the area. This type of analysis can be used to examine the impact of tourism on local investments, infrastructures and services. The influence of physical factors has also been corroborated by other researchers such as Chu and Lu (2007), Ryu et al. (2008) and Chiang (2014) who reported a positive effect on the intention to purchase. Therefore, the present study posits that travelers will perceive the quality of the infrastructures and services of tourism destinations when they search information online. In this sense, users perceiving a high level of quality are more likely to book trips online. In light of these findings, the following hypothesis is put forward:

**H4**. The physical value attributed to tourism positively influences online purchase intention

In addition to the dimensions assessed above, technological value is also included as a variable in this study in line with previous research conducted by Nunkoo and Ramkisoon (2009) suggesting that a new concept must be developed within the theory of social exchange to be able to differentiate the complex attitudes and the behaviors toward tourists. It is also a response to the recommendations from Woosnam et al. (2009) who criticized this theory for being overly focused on economic benefits. Since the present study focuses on online purchases, the authors have considered the technological value of tourism, including the factors affecting the technological and digital development of tourist destinations, such as investment in new technologies.

Academics and professionals have recognized that electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) marketing is an effective communication strategy (Chu and Kim, 2011) closely related to perceived value. In particular, when users realize the benefits of approaching a particular online platform to improve their profits and consequently their perceived value, they will also provide a positive e-WOM (Ip, 2018; Wang et al., 2019). On the other hand, the present study examines the perspective of the tourist with regard to a highly technological context (booking trips online) in order to test the possible impact of the perception of the technological value of tourism on intention to purchase and e-WOM. With regard to the contexts in which perceived tourism value is a relevant mediator, this study posits that the influence on e-WOM is indirect through a higher intention to purchase. In this light, the following hypothesis is put forward:

**H5**. The technological value attributed to tourism positively influences online purchase intention (H5a) and e-WOM (H5b).

### *2.3. Previous experience with online purchases*

Previous experience with the Internet is a significant factor when analyzing the intrinsic and personal variables that can affect the intention to purchase products and services online.

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) indicated that customers' past positive experiences with a product or service will have a decisive influence on their future behavior. Various studies have analyzed the premise that previous experiences with online purchases will impact the desirability of a future purchase (Kim et al., 2006; Olaru et al., 2008). San-Martín et al. (2015a, b) found a differential effect with regard to the impact of experience on loyalty in the context of mobile purchases. In this sense, the most experienced buyers built their loyalty based on their past experiences with online purchases (including both repurchase intention and positive e-WOM). In fact, as Mallat et al. (2008) posit, experience is one of the strongest predictors of intention to purchase online. Therefore, the present study posits that this premise is also true in the case of booking travels online.

Likewise, previous experience in purchasing travels online is

expected to positive e-WOM toward this type of purchase. The impact of previous experience has been assessed in various studies (Li and Liu, 2014; Zhang et al., 2017; Kim, 2017; Shaikh et al., 2018; Silva et al., 2019) proving its influence on the intention to continue using a particular communication channel and leading to behaviors such as generating e-WOM or leaving negative feedback and objections. This possible behavior in relation to e-WOM has been explained as a direct effect of the quality of the experience (Jalilvand et al., 2017).

In this regard, the following hypothesis is put forward:

**H6**. Previous experience in purchasing travels online positively influences online purchase intention (H6a) and e-WOM (H6b).

### 2.4. Anxiety and perceived risk in online purchases

The anxiety that consumers feel when using Internet-based technologies is reinforced in the case of online shopping (Celik, 2016). In this case, perceived risks and threats also encompass safety and privacy concerns (Gupta and Arora, 2017). These perceptions may imply a behavioral change in online buyers of products and services. The anxiety of consumers derived from the use of new technologies is specifically focused on customers' standing with regard to their actual capability and willingness to use technological innovations (Meuter et al., 2003; Yang and Forney, 2013).

Anxiety in online purchases is defined by transient feelings of fear and apprehension which an individual may experience when contemplating the use of electronic devices or when they are using an online purchasing platform (Celik, 2016). In fact, customer anxiety devising or actually experiencing a negative emotion will diminish the likelihood of that individual using new technology services (Lu and Yu-Jen, 2009; Jang and Namkung, 2009). In short, it has been demonstrated that the anxiety provoked by the use of new technologies is a strong inhibitor when using a computer to make online purchases (Xu, 2016; Joiner et al., 2005) or, in a similar way, in the use of hospitality booking services through a smartphone (Park et al., 2017). At greater levels of anxiety, customers show a significantly low disposition to use new technologies for making purchases (Faqih, 2016). In this sense, the effort required to carry out the task increases, hindering the completion of the transaction (Saade & Kira, 2006; Pappas et al., 2013; Jin et al., 2018) and the probability of recommending online purchases to others. Along these lines, research from Ha and Jang (2010) confirmed that customers' emotional responses toward their purchase experiences affect the intention to use new technologies and mediate the way in which e-WOM is communicated.

In light of these findings, the following hypothesis is put forward:

**H7**. Anxiety derived from the use of technology negatively influences online purchase intention (H7a) and e-WOM (H7b).

Perceived risk was first analyzed by Bauer (1960) through two dimensions: uncertainty (insufficient consumer knowledge of what may happen during the purchase making process) and the possible negative consequences of the purchase. In the same vein, the study also affirmed that consumer behavior always involves risk. In this way, since future consequences are unknown; perceived risk is therefore a possible barrier to the adoption of new forms of trading (Lian, 2015).

Perceived risk is present in the vast majority of purchasing decisions and lead consumers to adopt techniques to avoid financial loss while mitigating the perception of risk, especially in online contexts (Slade et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2017; Casado-Aranda et al., 2018). It has also been demonstrated that consumers are more inclined to recommend a product if the product has a good quality-price ratio, an attribute that mitigates the perception of risk in the purchase (Olaru et al., 2008). This finding concludes that purchases associated with a low perceived risk are more likely to generate positive e-WOM. Amaro and Duarte (2015) proposed a negative effect of perceived risk on online purchase intention whilst Jensen (2012) found it in the case of booking trips. However, customers' are not expected to recommend that type of online purchase if they perceive a high risk associated with the transaction. Therefore, the higher the perceived risk (Agag and El-Masry, 2017; Singh & Srivastava, 2018), the lower the intention to book trips online, which in turn hinders the generation of positive e-WOM (Lin an Fang, 2006; Su et al., 2015).

In this light, the following hypothesis is put forward:

**H8**. Perceived risk in the use of Internet to make purchases negatively influences online purchase intention (H8a) and e-WOM (H8b).

### 2.5. Analysis of the moderating effect of use contexts between online purchase intention and e-WOM when booking trips online

Barnard et al. (2007) described a context as a set of user conditions or different states of mind which may influence the interactions between users' and technology. At present, there is a wide range of Internet-enabled technological devices on the market (computers, smartphones, tablets, etc.) with which travelers may make purchases online. In addition, the rise of the smartphone has turned these devices into essential tools in the modern day society for any personal or professional activity and with a significant level of acceptance among consumers (Hwang et al. 2007). Along these lines, Liébana-Cabanillas (2012) reviewed over a hundred articles trying to detect the more relevant qualities of mobile commerce. In that regard, the most significant advantages were: use mobility and ubiquity, a consequence of the nature of mobile commerce, the usefulness of the system, and its ease of use. With regard to the inconveniences, users' perception of security and the cost of implementation may hinder the implantation and the development of mobile commerce in today's society.

In the present study, use context refers to the different possibilities in which the user may interact while booking a trip online. In this sense, various authors propose comparisons between the technological contexts respective of each purchase (Chang, 2015). Chang (2015) compared different use contexts (web vs. mobile) and suggested that users had greater perceptions of performance in web applications as opposed to the limited performance perceived with regard to mobile applications.

Lee et al. (2005) analyzed the use context of mobile Internet services and found that contextual factors had significant correlations with specific types of mobile services. In addition, Choi et al. (2008) investigated the differences between online commerce and mobile commerce, concluding that the most representative differences, in line with Samuelsson and Dholakia (2004), are the type of connection and the devices employed to use the Internet in order to complete the purchase. Mobile commerce was considered superior to online commerce as it favors provider location-, customer-, personalization-, presence-, and context-based services. Mallat et al. (2008, 2009) also suggested that mobility and contextual elements play a key role in the adoption of mobile services. Lee et al. (2005) analyzed the different use contexts of Internet and smartphones and found that the mobile context was more favorable for users in a large number of services. Chung and Holdsworth (2012) and Chang (2015) posit that building mobile consumer loyalty is especially important and difficult. Rodríguez-Torrico, Cabezudo, and San-Martín (2017) studied the role of the hardware devices in the decision-making process in an omnichannel context and reported the difference with regard to the use context (online and mobile channels) which consumers approached to purchase clothes. In line with the present study, Liang and Yeh (2011) concluded that contexts act as moderating factor in the assessment of consumer behavior. Precisely, Natarajan, Balasubramanian and Kasilingam (2018) found a moderator role of use contexts (PC vs. mobile) in the impact of perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment on the intention to use mobile shopping applications based on the type of hardware device used to purchase. It is expected that consumers approaching smartphones for online shopping will generate more e-WOM about their most recent travels since this

context is characterized by improved immediacy, ubiquity, flexibility, interaction, mobility, and personalization compared with a desktop PC context (Jimenez et al., 2016). In this sense, mobile users' behavior is more impulsive and they are likely to enjoy the interactions associated with the use of online contexts for purchasing (Rodríguez-Torrico et al., 2017; Natarajan et al., 2018).

In light of all of the above, the following hypothesis is put forward:

**H9**. The impact of intention to purchase on e-WOM is greater in a mobile context than in PC web-based contexts regarding booking trips online.

Fig. 1 shows the research model for this study, based on the above discussion.

## 3. Empirical study

### 3.1. Measurement of variables

Based on the literature review, the most reliable indicators to measure the variables approached by this study were identified and adapted (economic value, social and technological value, perceived physical value of tourism, global perceived risk, experience, anxiety, online purchase intention, and e-WOM). The following studies were used as a reference: a) research from Abdollahzadeh and Sharifzadeh (2014) to measure the economic, social, technological and perceived physical value of tourism (conceptualized as formative constructs, since the indicators form the constructs, see Rasoolimanesh, Md Noor & Jaafar, 2019); b) the studies conducted by Mitchell (1999) and Cunningham et al. (2005) in order to assess global risk; c) research from Loureiro et al. (2013) regarding experience; d) Gelbrich and Sattler (2014) examining anxiety; e) Namkung and Jang (2009) and Grewal et al. (1998) for online purchase intention; and, lastly, f) research from Dolen et al. (2007) with regard to positive e-WOM (conceptualized as reflective constructs, since thy type of constructs imply that the measurement items are similar and interchangeable). See the appendix for further details on the indicators. Following Krótki (1989) suggestion to ensure readability and clarity, the English-Spanish translation was completed for the final version of the questionnaire in Spanish. In this sense, 5-point Likert-type scales were used, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". In addition, following recommendations from Podsakoff et al. (2003) to help avoid the usual problems associated with this common method, respondents' anonymity was ensured. Also, the indicators were corrected and specified following a pre-test with 10 individuals (who regularly booked trips online) while all respondents were informed that there were no correct or wrong answers. The predictor variables were separated from the endogenous variables and the questionnaire length was reduced to help respondents complete the survey (see Table 2).

Primary information was gathered through personal surveys with tourists who affirmed that they had booked their last trip online. The sampling was semi-probabilistic, through the random selection of different tourist sites in three Spanish cities (tourist information points, bus and train stations, airports, and/or public places). Potential participants were approached to identify those who complied with the requirement of having made their last purchase through online channels while expressing their willingness to respond to the questionnaire with regard to their last online purchase of a trip to a particular tourist destination. In this light, a valid sample of 382 tourists was obtained. Bartlett, Kotrlik and Higgins (2010) posit that ten observations for each indicator is recommended when determining an appropriate sample size. In this sense, since 382 surveys were collected, the sample size of this research is considered adequate for a successful analysis through Partial Least Squares structural equation modeling. The details are shown in the technical sheet (see Table 3).

With regard to online purchases of trips to a particular tourist destination, 69.4% of participants used a desktop PC or a portable computer, 26.4% used a mobile device, and only 4.2% purchased through a tablet. The predominant socio-demographic profile in the sample consisted of women (64.7%) with an average age of 24 years (80.6%), residents in Spain (89.52%) and averaging a monthly income between 900 and 1500 euros (53.4%). The characteristics of the sample in our study are similar to those of the national profile, according to recent data from the Spanish National Institute of Statistics (INE, 2017). It is worth noting that according to the INE (2017), tourists who buy tourism services and products through online channels are in their majority women (54%), with an average age of 25 years (55.7%) and residents in Spain (54.8%).

First, Harman's single factor test was used to avoid the possible existence of bias in the common method. Following the recommendations of Pan et al. (2015) and Podsakoff et al. (2003), a principal-axis factor analysis was conducted showing how a single factor explained 16.52%

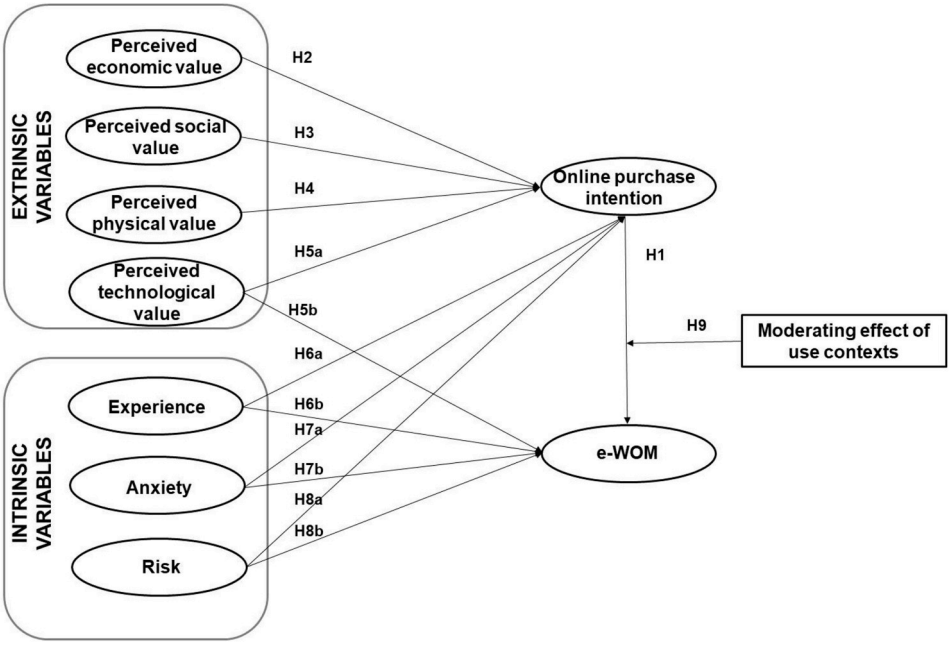


**Fig. 1.** Research model.

**Table 2**
Recent research on perceived value in tourism.

| Authors | Dependent variable | Independent variables |
|---|---|---|
| Wang and Wang (2010) | Mobile hotel reservation adoption | Information quality, System quality, Service quality, Technological effort, Perceived fee, Perceived risk and Perceived value |
| Llach, Marimon, del Mar Alonso-Almeida and Bernardo (2013) | Online booking loyalties for the purchasing of airline tickets | Efficiency, Hedonics, Loyalty and Perceived value |
| Ponte et al. (2015) | Book trips online | Predispositions, Security signals, Trust antecedents and Perceived value |
| Chen and Chang (2018) | Purchase intention on Airbnb | Rating Volume, Review, Information Quality, Media Richness, Satisfaction and Perceived value |
| Liang et al. (2018) | Repurchase intention of Airbnb Consumers. | Perceived Authenticity, e-WOM, Price Sensitivity, Perceived Risk and Perceived value |
| Pham and Nguyen (2019) | Repurchase intention regarding Online Travel Agencies | Information quality, Security, Service quality, Ease of use, Visual appearance, Price, Brand image, and Perceived value |
| Jeng and Lo (2019) | Purchase intention when using airlines' websites. | Lowest price guarantees and Perceived value |

**Table 3**
Technical specifications sheet.

| Characteristics | Survey |
|---|---|
| Universe | Buyers of tourism products and services through online channels. |
| Sample size | 382 valid questionnaires were collected from 427 attempts (response rate of 89.46%). |
| Sampling error | ±5.5% for the most unfavorable case (p = q = 0.5) at a confidence level of 95%. |
| Period | January and June 2017. |

of the variance, a percentage that is significantly lower than 50% (commonly accepted as a value associated with possible method-related bias). Second, following Hair et al. (2011), none of the correlations between the variables exceeded the value of 0.9. Third, the full collinearity test proposed by Kock (2015) and Kock and Lynn (2012) allowed the present study to consider the model free of common method bias since VIFs resulting from the test are lower than 3.3 (see Table 4).

### 3.2. Analysis

As this study includes formative and reflective scales with few indicators, the analysis approached a Least Squares (PLS) method for the estimation of the model (Ringle et al., 2010; Chin, 2010; Henseler et al., 2016; Hair et al., 2014). Classic and contemporary studies on PLS path modeling posit that the presence of formative and reflective indicators is one of the most prominent justifications with regard to the use of PLS to assess the measurement model (Chin, 2010; Hair et al., 2014; Hair et al., 2017).

A staged procedure advanced by Hair et al. (2014) was followed, in which the measurement model was established and the relations between the indicators and the constructs were evaluated. Subsequently, the relations between the constructs were tested and the proposed hypotheses were either accepted or rejected. Table 5 shows the factor loadings (for the reflective scales) and the weights (for the formative scales). The level of statistical meaning of the coefficients was determined by a resampling procedure (with *bootstrapping* of 5000 samples). In addition, the table also shows Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha > 0.6$), composite reliability ($CR > 0.7$), average variance extracted ($AVE > 0.5$), and the Variance Inflation Factor ($VIF < 5$). All indicators complied with the values required to determine the reliability and the convergent validity of the measurement model for reflective constructs, as well as those required to avoid problems of multicollinearity between the indicators of the formative constructs (Hair et. al., 2011, 2014; Diamantopoulos et al., 2008) (Table 5). Likewise, the observed values of the Heterotrain-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio were under 0.85, to avoid problems of discriminant validity between the reflective constructs (Henseler et al., 2016) (Table 6).

Once the measurement model was validated, the recommendations of Henseler et al. (2016), Hair et al. (2011), and Falk and Miller (1992) were followed to determine the acceptability of the global fit of the model ($SRMR < 0.047$) and the variance of the endogenous variables explained by the predictors, as well as the predictive relevance of the model. Specifically, $R^2 > 0.1$ and $Q2 > 0$ were observed for each endogenous variable ($R^2_{\text{Purchase intention}} = 0.24$, $R^2_{\text{WOM}} = 0.32$, $Q^2_{\text{Purchase intention}} = 0.14$ and $Q^2_{\text{WOM}} = 0.23$). Lastly, Fig. 2 shows the variable relation coefficients, the t value and the potential significance of the proposed relations.

Having verified the relations of the proposed model, this study analyzed the moderating effect of use contexts between online purchase intention and e-WOM with regard to booking trips online. To do so, a multi-group analysis (MGA test) was performed that analyzed the device used to make the online purchase (desktop PC or a mobile/tablet). The respondents' device used to make the online purchase was operationalized by a dichotomous variable (PC web = 1 vs. mobile = 2) to split the sample into two subgroups (62.3% purchased through a desktop PC while 37.7% booked trough mobile/tables). Then, this study approached the Henseler method (Sarstedt et al., 2011), by which the probability of the parameter estimated for one group being greater than the parameter estimated for the other group was calculated for each of the proposed relations. The results of the MGA test suggest that the moderating effect of use contexts (PC web vs. mobile) between online purchase intention and e-WOM was verified ($\beta_{PC} = 0.519$ ($p < 0.01$); $\beta_{mobile} = 0.676$ ($p < 0.01$); $\mu_{diff} = 0.157$; $p < 0.05$).

**Table 4**
Full collinearity VIFs.

| | F1 | F2 | F3 | F4 | F5 | F6 | F7 | F8 | F9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| F1 | – | 1.179 | 1.248 | 1.192 | 1.108 | 1.013 | 1.200 | 1.261 | 1.262 |
| F2 | 1.089 | – | 1.114 | 1.110 | 1.076 | 1.107 | 1.101 | 1.098 | 1.112 |
| F3 | 1.176 | 1.206 | – | 1.196 | 1.204 | 1.186 | 1.167 | 1.185 | 1.192 |
| F4 | 1.152 | 1.207 | 1.207 | – | 1.198 | 1.146 | 1.218 | 1.212 | 1.217 |
| F5 | 1.356 | 1.348 | 1.403 | 1.279 | – | 1.322 | 1.085 | 1.328 | 1.334 |
| F6 | 1.110 | 1.154 | 1.131 | 1.112 | 1.089 | – | 1.136 | 1.110 | 1.147 |
| F7 | 1.374 | 1.368 | 1.424 | 1.317 | 1.098 | 1.378 | – | 1.350 | 1.392 |
| F8 | 1.687 | 1.685 | 1.691 | 1.687 | 1.697 | 1.695 | 1.694 | – | 1.301 |
| F9 | 1.467 | 1.471 | 1.477 | 1.462 | 1.418 | 1.478 | 1.460 | 1.109 | – |

F1: Perceived economic value of tourism, F2: Perceived social value of tourism, F3: Perceived technological value of tourism, F4: Perceived physical value of tourism, F5: Risk, F6: Experience, F7: Anxiety, F8: Online purchase intention, F9: e-WOM.

**Table 5**
Measurement model.

| Variable | Item | Average | Standard deviation | Loading | Weights | α | CR | AVE | VIF |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Perceived economic value of tourism | E1 | 4.59 | 0.69 | – | 0.43 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 1.29 |
| | E2 | 4.54 | 0.70 | – | 0.52 | | | | 1.35 |
| | E3 | 3.42 | 9.17 | – | 0.32 | | | | 1.35 |
| Perceived social value of tourism[a] | S1 | 3.94 | 5.35 | – | 1 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 1 |
| Perceived technological value of tourism | T1 | 3.22 | 7.49 | – | 0.54 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 1.35 |
| | T2 | 3.80 | 5.35 | – | 0.62 | | | | 1.35 |
| Perceived physical value of tourism [a] | F1 | 3.82 | 7.50 | – | 1 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 1 |
| Risk | R1 | 3.16 | 1.20 | 0.84*** | – | 0.80 | 0.90 | 0.82 | 1.82 |
| | R2 | 2.60 | 1.11 | 0.97*** | – | | | | 1.82 |
| Experience [a] | E1 | 2.49 | 9.11 | 1 | – | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Anxiety | A1 | 1.93 | 1.01 | 0.78*** | – | 0.76 | 0.87 | 0.78 | 1.60 |
| | A2 | 1.87 | 0.99 | 0.97*** | – | | | | 1.60 |
| Online purchase intention | I1 | 4.21 | 0.88 | 0.83*** | – | 0.76 | 0.86 | 0.67 | 1.60 |
| | I2 | 4.06 | 0.90 | 0.88*** | – | | | | 1.75 |
| | I3 | 3.70 | 1.02 | 0.75*** | – | | | | 1.40 |
| e-WOM | R1 | 3.56 | 1.01 | 0.86*** | – | 0.86 | 0.92 | 0.78 | 2.02 |
| | R2 | 3.55 | 1.08 | 0.91*** | – | | | | 2.53 |
| | R3 | 3.41 | 5.35 | 0.88*** | – | | | | 2.19 |

[a] Mono-item; ***p < 0.01; N/A: Not applicable.

**Table 6**
Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio.

| | Anxiety | Experience | Online purchase intention | Risk |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Experience** | 0.223 | | | |
| **Online purchase intention** | 0.289 | 0.272 | | |
| **Risk** | 0.622 | 0.279 | 0.082 | |
| **e-WOM** | 0.156 | 0.164 | 0.690 | 0.145 |

As observed in Fig. 2, all the hypotheses were confirmed with the exception of the three that assumed links between experience and e-WOM, anxiety and e-WOM, and risk and intention to purchase.

Although it was not the main objective of this research, the full mediation was established following Hair et al. (2013). Specifically, a significant direct effect was present for perceived economic value of tourism ($\beta = 0.125$, $p < 0.05$) and perceived technological value of tourism ($\beta = 0.180$, $p < 0.05$) on e-WOM. In addition, the effect of perceived economic value of tourism and perceived technological value of tourism on e-WOM became non-significant when intention to purchase online was included in the model ($\beta = 0.070$, $p > 0.05$; $\beta = 0.054$, $p > 0.05$, respectively). On the other hand, the indirect effects are significant, and the strength of the mediation effect is assessed by using Variance Accounted For (VAF) ($VAF_{\text{perceived economic value of tourism}} = 66.5\%$; $VAF_{\text{perceived technological value of tourism}} = 54.2\%$) indicated that more than 50% of the two-perceived value of tourism is explained by intention to purchase as a mediator.

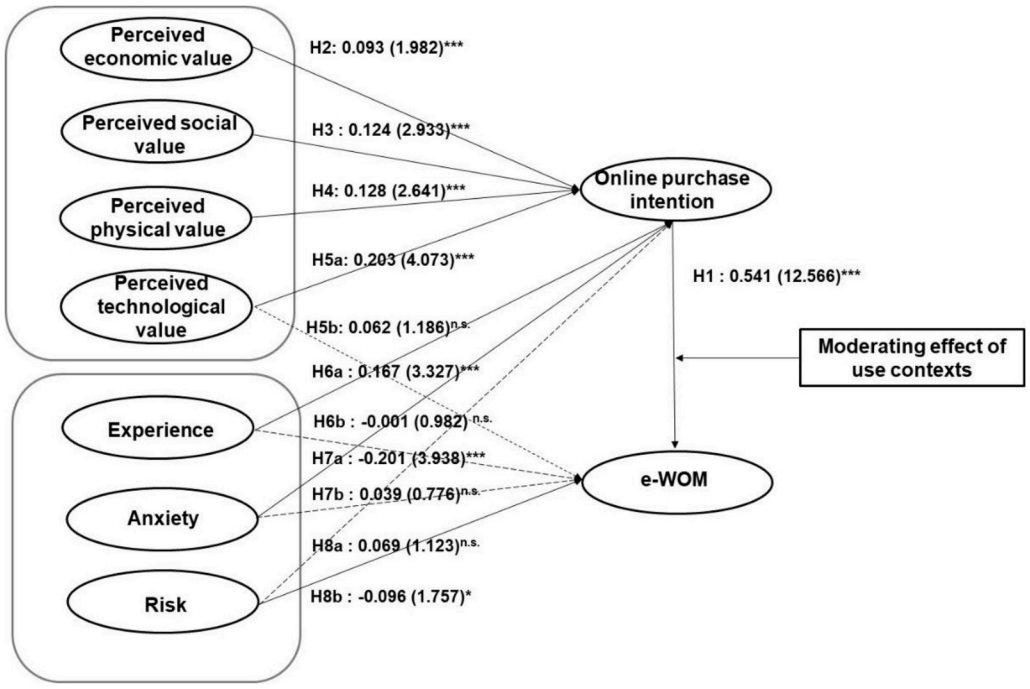


**Fig. 2.** Results of the proposed modelNumber
of hypotheses: β (t value); ***p < 0.01; **p < 0.05; *p<0.10; [n.s]p>0.10.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. Theoretical implications

Given the importance of tourism with regard to the economy of almost any country and the relevance of technology when booking trips, the objectives of this work were, first, to understand the influence of the value attributed to tourism and the personal factors that can increase (experience) and reduce (risk and anxiety) intention to purchase and e-WOM regarding booking trips online; second, to know if the purchasing device or use context (pc vs. mobile/tablet) makes a difference in the generation of online purchase intention and e-WOM.

This study has several theoretical implications. First, this study has contributed to the academic literature by providing a pioneering model that combines the value attributed to tourism with personal factors that impact intention to purchase and e-WOM of travels purchased through online channels. In this sense, no previous study in the extant literature has combined both aspects. Second, the obtained results have to a great extent corroborated the proposed hypotheses, which in turn have corroborated the initial proposals of this study. Third, regarding RQ1, the extrinsic variables have a greater effect on intention to book trips online in a direct way and on e-WOM in an indirect way through intention. Finally, in relation to RQ2, the importance of smartphones in this field has been demonstrated on the basis of the moderating effect of use contexts between intention to purchase and e-WOM when booking trips online. All these contributions are based on an empirical study with a wide sample of representative tourists that have already used Internet to book trips.

Following the social exchange theory, results obtained from the present study indicate that economic, social, technological and physical value that the consumer attributes to aspects of tourism have a positive and a direct impact on intention to book trips online and an indirect one on the e-WOM of that type of purchase on others. In fact, the perceived value of tourism in the proposed model is greater than some personal aspects such as risk and anxiety over purchasing and e-WOM. This finding corroborates the importance of the perceived impact of tourism that has been pointed out in other studies such as those by Deccio and Baloglu (2002) and Teye et al. (2002), although it is especially centered on the perspective of residents more than on the perspective of current or future tourists. In addition, given that the intention to purchase trips through online channels means that the tourist recommends those purchases to others, the fact of valuing the economic, social, technological, and physical attributes of the tourism experience will ultimately lead to a positive e-WOM with regard to the trip. Hartline and Jones (1996) had previously related the perceived values of the product for the consumer with the intention of the consumer to recommend that product, although the present study demonstrates that the same relation for the online purchase of travel is an indirect one through intention to purchase. This result is especially true for the case of perceived economic and technological value of tourism, where their effects on positive e-WOM generation are mediated by intention to purchase.

With respect to eminently personal factors, previous experience in online purchases exercises a positive effect on the intention to repeat a purchase, corroborating the importance previously underlined in other works by Kim et al. (2006), Olaru et al. (2008), and Mallat et al. (2008). In addition, results from the present study referring to the negative influence of anxiety on online purchase intention is found to be consistent with the works of Lu and Yu-Jen (2009), Jang and Namkung (2009), Xu (2016), and Joiner et al. (2005) who suggested that negative emotions developed by an anxious buyer will reduce the intention to book trips online. With regard to perceived risk, although it is a significant barrier to online purchases (Liu et al., 2017), in this research that negative relation with intention to purchase was not found. On the other hand, this research found a reductive power on the e-WOM of online purchases to others, as Olaru et al. (2008) suggested.

Results indicate that the perception of risk in online purchasing is not sufficient for consumers not to be willing to book trips using the new technologies. It is however relevant so that no e-WOM to book trips online is made to others. In this sense, San-Martín et al. (2010) found that perceived risk in online transactions (covered in this study) does not influence the involvement of the consumer with products and services that are sold online. It is possible that the perceived risks do not prevent the positive assessment of other advantages of online purchases and that the e-WOM implies that the person making the purchase has a certain commitment not to defraud (or to warn) the recipient. Thus, the perception of risk can mean that individuals behave more prudently, reducing the e-WOM they generate when risk is perceived. However, anxiety and experience have some influence on intention to book trips online, but not on e-WOM. It may be deduced from the results that anxiety and experience are perhaps considered rather personal aspects and the responsibility of each consumer. In this regard, the tourist who is not comfortable with booking trips online, in other words, an anxious individual, will not purchase through technological channels that imply such problems, but this fact will not entail the generation of positive e-WOM or the recommendation of booking trips online to others. Likewise, previous experiences of the tourist can lead to continued online booking of trips. However, if there are no other positive factors that prompt the e-WOM, previous experience alone is not sufficient to recommend that purchase to others, an aspect that should be studied further in future research. In a similar vein, perceived technological value of tourism is not a determinant of recommend purchase tourism products and service online. Thus, e-WOM activity of electronic consumers might be conditioned more by negative intrinsic aspects (i.e., risk) than extrinsic positive aspect (i.e., perceived technological value of tourism).

Finally, the moderating effect of use contexts between intention to purchase and e-WOM in the online purchases of travel is also confirmed through this research. Thus, we found that the relationship between intention to purchase and e-WOM is greater in the case of smartphones than in the case of desktop computers, which reinforces the arguments arising from the investigations of Liébana-Cabanillas (2012).

### 4.2. Managerial implications

This research also implies a contribution to professional practice given the managerial implications that can be drawn from its results. In this sense, firms must highlight the impact, not only to residents but also to travelers that search and buy online, that tourism generates in a particular area: the economic impact on employment and the income, creation of infrastructure, culture and social activities as well as the effects on the use of technologies to purchase travels. By raising a greater awareness of the value that tourism can contribute, the traveler will be more likely to buy trips to a particular destination and to recommend that destination to potential travelers.

Firstly, companies wishing to improve their online buying intention should incorporate offered value in the e-commerce platform design and make efforts to promote and improve perceived technological value, perceived physical value, perceived social and economic value so that users increase online shopping and consequently improve the positive e-WOM that they generate.

Moreover, the firms that sell trips through the Internet should not forget the obstacles that still exist for certain people when they try to use technology to book trips. Thus, while experience in online purchases is an essential element to book trips using technologies, anxiety in that use or perceived risk will reduce intention to purchase and WOM. Firms should try to reduce that anxiety, seeking to design simple websites with tutorials that help book trips online and calling for the possible help of other members of their reference groups that already know how to make purchases online and perceive neither anxiety nor risk. On that matter, the publicity of social networks encouraging group purchases or showing subscribers who purchase through those channels may be effective. Likewise, public initiatives that train people of all ages in the

use of online technologies, so that they can navigate, search, communicate and buy online, are of immense assistance to reduce the anxiety associated with Internet technologies and their use when booking trips. Companies can also use inbound marketing strategies to access buyer personas in a non-intrusive way, making the target customers less anxious when navigating websites. The firm can equally reduce perceived risk by offering guarantees, consumer attention services, and a good post-sales service that can reduce cognitive dissonance and negative WOM, in this case with regard to booking trips online. Finally, firms in the sector should be aware of the implications that mobile technology entails in the search for information and the purchase of travel, especially when they make their business in mobile commerce as consumer behavior is not comparable to that in online commerce.

### 4.3. Limitations and avenues for future research

Among the limitations of the present work, it is worth noting that the results are limited to a particular sample (mainly conformed by young users and digital natives), for which reason they should not be extrapolated. Future research should test the interactive role of the different characteristics of the sample (age or generation) and context (mobile vs. traditional PC websites) with regard to the effect of intrinsic variables and e-WOM. In other words, a future line of research could offer some answers to explain why experience or anxiety do not disturb e-WOM activity on young users and digital natives in function of the device they are using to book trips online. In addition, an additional scale with more indicators would be desirable with regard to personal factors such as experience. As future lines of improvement, this study proposes to delve further into the results obtained to detect the cause of the influence of some personal aspects on intention and not on WOM, or vice-versa. Also, the authors of this research also propose to perform further complementary analysis (e.g., redundancy analysis). In this sense, conceptually equivalent construct measured with reflective indicators for formative constructs should be considered in the survey design stage. Finally, it would be advisable to include additional factors in the model referring to the companies selling the trips (e.g., reputation, website design), which can also be decisive with regard to intention to purchase and WOM.

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## Appendix

| Variable | Item | Description* |
|---|---|---|
| Perceived economic value of tourism | E1 | Tourism creates employment. |
| | E2 | Tourism increases income in the zone. |
| | E3 | Tourism creates opportunities for new businesses. |
| Perceived social value of tourism | S1 | Tourism favors knowledge of the culture, the heritage, and the customs of the destination. |
| Perceived technological value of tourism | T1 | Tourism increases investment in new technologies (e.g. Websites). |
| | T2 | Tourism stimulates the use of new technologies (e.g. Travel Apps.). |
| Perceived physical value of tourism | F1 | Tourism increases investments in tourism infrastructures (e.g. hotels). |
| Risk | R1 | I am concerned that I might not obtain the expected results in the online purchase of tourism products/services. |
| | R2 | I perceive a lot of risk in the online purchase of tourism products/services. |
| Experience | EX1 | I have a lot of experience in the online purchase of tourism products and services. |
| Anxiety | A1 | I feel anxiety when purchasing tourism products and services online. |
| | A2 | I feel uncomfortable when purchasing tourism products and services online. |
| Intention to purchase | I1 | I have a general intention to use online sales channels again to purchase tourism products and services. |
| | I2 | I will use online sales channels again to purchase tourism products and services. |
| | I3 | Next time that I travel, I will use the same online sale channel to purchase. |
| e-WOM | R1 | I speak highly of tourism products and services purchased online. |
| | R2 | I say to others that I recommend tourism products and services online. |
| | R3 | I recommend tourism products and services through online channels to my friends and families when they ask me. |

*All the indicators were measured with regard to the last online purchase of travel to a particular tourist destination.

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