

Culture moderates the intention to purchase tourist accommodation online

La cultura modera la intención de compra en línea de alojamiento turístico

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Abstract

The origin of the models of culture in electronic commerce is aimed at explaining the factors that influence the acceptance of this purchasing system, which is why they contemplate cultural differences of the consumer according to their nationality. Therefore, this research analyzed studies that have implicit models with moderating effects applied by Hofstede, (1980) *cultural values*. A questionnaire was administered to 500 buyers of tourist accommodation. Carrying out a descriptive study of the sociodemographic variables with the purpose of verifying the moderating effect of culture, a Multigroup Analysis -AMG-. Subsequently proceeding to contrast the structural model from the three antecedents raised theoretically -attitude, subjective norm and perceived control- which turned out to have a direct impact on the purchase intention.

Attitude, Subjective norm, Perceived control

Resumen

El origen de los modelos de cultura en el comercio electrónico está encaminado a explicar los factores que influyen en la aceptación de este sistema de compra, por lo que contemplan diferencias culturales del consumidor de acuerdo a su nacionalidad. Por ello, esta investigación analizó estudios que llevan implícitos modelos con efectos moderadores aplicados por Hofstede, (1980) *valores culturales*. Se administró un cuestionario a 500 compradores de alojamiento turístico. Realizando un estudio descriptivo de las variables sociodemográficas con el propósito de verificar el efecto moderador de la cultura, un Análisis Multigrupo -AMG-. Procediendo posteriormente a contrastar el modelo estructural a partir de los tres antecedentes planteados teóricamente -actitud, norma subjetiva y control percibido- lo que resultó tener un impacto directo sobre la intención de compra.

Actitud, Norma subjetiva, Control

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Introduction

The factors involved in the acceptance of innovation in e-commerce purchasing are those related to culture, as culture represents a set of shared values that can influence consumer intentions, attitudes, preferences and acceptance (Correia, 2011; Cleveland and Chang, 2009; Dinev et al., 2009; Manrai and Manrai, 2011; Moghadam and Assar, 2008; Pookulangara and Koester, 2011; Ruiz-Mafe et al. 2013; Sabiote et al. 2012). It is therefore important to understand the influence of culture on consumer decision-making. However, the influence of culture on the acceptance of a technology still suffers from a lack of attention from researchers (Pookulangara and Koester, 2011; See-Pui, 2013).

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to propose an integrative model that captures the existing relationships between attitude, subjective norm and perceived control towards the intention to purchase tourist accommodation on the Internet and the moderating effect of culture; in a representative sample of 240 Mexican tourists and 260 Spanish tourists, in the period from August to December 2022.

Likewise, in the methodology, a descriptive analysis was carried out to contrast the theoretical hypotheses proposed, studying the goodness of the psychometric properties of the measuring instruments used, using the technique of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA); once the goodness of the instrument was accepted, it was analysed using the Structural Equation Model, also known as the Covariance Structure Model (SCM), to conclude with the Multigroup Analysis (MGA). Finally, the results and conclusions of the study, the recommendations drawn from it, as well as proposals for future lines of research are presented.

Theoretical assumptions

The impact of culture and cross-cultural differences on purchase intention has re-emerged in the marketing literature (Putit and Arnott, 2007). Therefore, the aforementioned authors concluded in their study that social influence has a positive impact on attitudes, beliefs and values and is therefore well accepted for studying services offered in E-Commerce. In their results they have homogenised national culture with Hofstede's cultural dimensions and Triandis' syndrome.

Thus, it is argued that some societies are multicultural as would be Malaysia and assume that the national one is fundamentally monocultural.

The micro and intra-national culture hypothesis impacts on consumer behaviour and has been explored in conceptual work that integrates the cultural variable into the purchase intention model based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and the Theory of Reasoned Behaviour (TRA) models. Currently behaviour has been supported by the mediating role of intention between antecedents of behaviour and current behaviour and Internet purchase intention has been selected as the dependent variable. It is argued that the analysis of TPB and TRA, five antecedents of intention to adopt technology were identified: attitude, social norm (subjective), perceived control, self-efficacy and technological innovation.

In their model Zhou et al. (2007) study the relationship between consumer characteristics (demographic variables, culture, purchase orientation, perceived outcomes, normative beliefs and attitude) and online purchase intention. The authors concluded that the existing differences in this type of purchase between men and women have been decreasing and that in the future it will even be surpassed by this group (women). In addition, culture is a factor that directly and positively influences normative beliefs and perceived outcome, thereby reinforcing the attitude and intention to buy online.

Methodology, analysis and discussions

Descriptive sample analysis

The analysis of the results begins with a descriptive analysis of the information, aimed at characterising the sample used in this research in terms of the following socio-demographic variables: gender, age, occupation, educational level and income. Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of the variables for the total sample (n=500), and for the subsamples of Spain (n=260) and Mexico (n=240).

Variable	Levels	N Total = 500	n Spain = 260	n Mexico = 240
Gender	Male	51,8%	52,6%	51%
	Female	48,2%	47,4%	49%
Age	Up to 24	33,7%	13,5%	54%
	25-34	24,9%	29,9%	20%
	35-49	27,6%	36,3%	19%
	50-64	11,2%	16,5%	6%
	>= 65	2,4%	3,8%	1%
Studies	Basic-Primary-Secondary	17,4%	16,9%	18%
	Bacalaureate -FP-BUP-COU	42,6%	40,8%	44,4%
	Univ. media	18,1%	12,5%	23,7%
	Univ. superiors	21,8%	29,8%	13,9%
Occupation	Student	19,6%	8,9%	30,3%
	Trab. x c/p	13,2%	11,3%	15,2%
	Trab. x c/a	46,7%	55,4%	38%
	Retired	4,4%	6,8%	2%
	Household chores	8,4%	5,3%	11,5%
	Unemployed	7,6%	12,3%	3%
Revenue	Below average	24,5%	22,3%	26,7%
	Similar to the average	40,1%	37,5%	42,8%
	Above average	28%	32,4%	23,6%
	Well above average	7,3%	7,8%	6,9%

Table 1 Socio-demographic variables

Source: Own elaboration

As can be seen, with respect to the distribution of the gender variable - 51.8% of men - there is proportionality in the characterisation of the sample. There is a significant proportion of individuals up to 24 years of age (33.7%), followed by those between 35 and 49 years of age (27.6%). Generally speaking, education is average -Bachillerato-FP-BUP and COU- (42.6%) or university education (39.9%). With regard to current occupation, a significant percentage of the subjects analysed are employees (46.7%), which, together with the 13.2% of self-employed workers, means that almost two thirds of the sample analysed is employed; furthermore, 19.6% of the individuals are students. In relation to the income level of their household, 40.1% of the subjects are classified as middle class, with 28% claiming to have an above-average level of income.

In relation to each of the sub-samples, in the case of Spain, there is a predominance of the 25-49 age range (66.2%), mainly employed workers (55.4%), with a fairly high level of education (42.3% with university studies) and medium (37.5%) or medium-high (32.4%) incomes. In the case of Mexico, a large percentage of the sample belongs to the under 35 age group (74%), with an average education (44.4% with Bachillerato-FP-BUP and COU studies), and with an average income level (42.8%), with a significant percentage of below-average income (26.7%).

Analysing and contrasting the moderating role of culture

The data analysis process consists of testing the proposed model, referring to the influence of culture on purchase intention. To this end, we proceed to analyse the moderating role played by culture in purchasing behaviour. In order to test this moderating effect, a Multigroup Analysis (MGA) is carried out. The model to be tested is a structural model in which the three theoretically proposed antecedents - attitude, subjective norm and perceived control - have a direct bearing on purchasing behaviour. Figure 1 shows the Model.

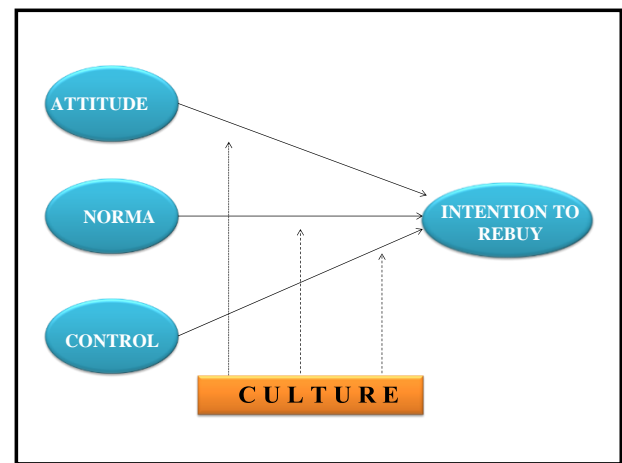


Figure 1 Model Culture and TPB

Source: Own elaboration

To validate the measurement instrument, a confirmatory factor analysis was carried out by EQS 6.2 using robust maximum likelihood estimation (Satorra and Bentler, 1988).

To ensure convergent validity, items whose factor loadings were non-significant or below 0.60 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) or for which the Lagrange multiplier test suggested significant relationships on a factor other than the one for which they were indicators (Hatcher and Stepansky, 1994) were eliminated. Specifically, the observed variables NORM1 and INTC3 were eliminated. After elimination, the measurement model presented a good fit - BBNFI= 0.900; BBNNFI=0.951; CFI=0.959; IFI=0.959; RMSEA=0.035-, confirming the convergent validity of the measurement model (see Table 2).

Regarding reliability, all Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach, 1951) exceeded the recommended value of 0.70 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The composite reliability index was also calculated, which was higher for all factors than the recommended value of 0.70, and the average variance extracted (AVE) showed values above 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) (see Table 2).

Dimension	Indicator	Load	t robust	Average loads	α Cronbach's	Composite reliability	AVE
Attitude	ACT11	.799	17.899	.83	.89	.90	.69
	ACT12	.887	18.372				
	ACT13	.858	17.060				
	ACT14	.768	14.598				
Standard	NORM2	.751	17.401	.74	.71	.72	.56
	NORM3	.725	11.996				
	CONT1	.829	20.397				
Control	CONT2	.895	17.792	.83	.87	.87	.70
	CONT3	.780	15.803				
	INT1	.707	14.913				
Purchase intention	INT2	.840	21.762	.77	.82	.82	.60
	INT4	.774	17.658				
	S-B χ^2 (df = 47) = 81.0012 (p < 0.000); NFI = .96; NNFI = .97; CFI = .98; IFI = .98; RMSEA = .040						

Table 2 Reliability and convergent validity of the model measurement instrument

Source: Own elaboration

Regarding discriminant validity (see Table 3), it was found (1) that none of the 95% confidence intervals of the estimates of the correlations between each pair of factors contained the value 1 (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988) and (2) that the shared variance between each pair of constructs (squared correlation) was lower than their corresponding extracted variance ratios (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

	1	2	3	4
1. Attitude	.69	.47	.61	.30
2. Standard	[.38;.58]	.56	.48	.51
3. Control	[.55;.70]	[.39;.60]	.70	.44
4. Intention	[.25;.52]	[.53;.82]	[.46;.70]	.60

Note: The diagonal represents the average extracted variance AVE. Above the diagonal is the variance shared by each pair of factors (squared correlation). Below the diagonal is the 95% confidence interval for the estimate of the correlation between the factors.

Table 3 Discriminant validity of the proposed model measurement instrument

Source: Own elaboration

Analysis of causal relationships: contrasting the proposed theoretical model

The proposed model (illustrated in Figure 1), which has also been estimated using robust indicators (Satorra and Bentler, 1988), proposes that the intention to purchase tourist accommodation has three direct antecedents: attitude (H3), subjective norm (H1) and perceived control (H2).

Table 4 shows the testing of the hypotheses, the standardised coefficients of the tested structural relationships with their associated t-value, as well as the fit of the proposed model.

Hypothesis	Sign	Relation	Standardised coefficient	Robust t-value
H3	+	Attitude \rightarrow Intention	.145*	2.138
H1	+	Norma \rightarrow Intention	.414**	4.510
H2	+	Control \rightarrow Intention	.274**	2.908

S-B χ^2 = 82.9985; gl = 48; p = 0.000; BBNFI = .93; BBNFI = .95; CFI = .96; IFI = .96; RMSEA = .056
**p < .01; *p < .05.

Table 4 Hypothesis testing of the proposed model.

Source: Own elaboration

Again, it is found that the intention to book/purchase has three direct antecedents: attitude ($\alpha = 0.145$; $p < 0.05$; acceptance of H3), perceived control ($\alpha = 0.274$; $p < 0.01$; acceptance of H2) and subjective norm, with the latter variable having the strongest influence on purchase intention ($\alpha = 0.414$; $p < 0.01$; acceptance of H1). The moderating role of culture in these relationships is then analysed.

The moderating role of culture

A step prior to carrying out the multi-group analysis (MGA) was to divide the total sample into two groups (Iglesias and Vázquez, 2001): the first group formed by Mexican Internet users who bought tourist accommodation (240 individuals) and the second group formed by Spanish Internet users who bought tourist accommodation (260 individuals).

The MGA is an analysis that has been developed in two distinct steps (Byrne, 2006; Brown, 2006).

First, the model was estimated for the two groups separately in order to test the significance of the structural relationships.

In the second step of the AMG, the model was tested jointly for the two groups, including the restriction that the standardised coefficients in the structural model are equal in both groups.

To test whether there are significant differences in the causal parameters between the two groups, the variation of the χ^2 statistic was observed by removing the restriction in the restricted model to equal a given parameter in the two groups. The Lagrange multiplier test provided such information. If the removal of a constraint leads to a significant change in the χ^2 it means that allowing that parameter to be different in the two groups significantly affects the fit of the model. In that case it is assumed that there is a moderating effect of the variable considered to divide the sample into two groups.

Table 5 shows the standardised coefficients of the structural relationships of the model estimated for the two groups separately, the χ^2 difference associated with each restriction of the joint model, as well as the goodness-of-fit indicators of the joint model.

Hip.	Relation	Mexico β (t)	Spain β (t)	Dif. χ^2 (df=1)	p
H10c	Attitude → Repurchase intention	.256 (2.702)	.049 (.498)	4.64	.025
H10a	Standard → Repurchase intention	.421 (3.292)	.378 (3.602)	4.70	.029
H10b	Control → Repurchase intention	.341(2.211)	.460 (4.723)	15.15	.000

Multisample model: S-B χ^2 (df = 99) =159.9598(p<0.00); NFI=.92; NNFI=.96; CFI=.97; IFI=.97; RMSEA=.049

Table 5 Hypothesis testing for the two groups.

Source: *Own elaboration.*

As can be seen through the significance of the χ^2 difference, and as predicted in the moderation hypotheses, the subjective norm has a stronger influence on purchase intention in the group of Mexican Internet users than in the group of Spanish Internet users (acceptance of H10a). This fact allows us to affirm that the positive relationship between norm and intention to book/purchase tourist accommodation is stronger in collectivist, normative cultures with a high degree of distance from power.

On the other hand, perceived control has a stronger influence on purchase intention in the sample of Spanish Internet users than in the sample of Mexican Internet users (acceptance of H10b), which again allows us to confirm that the relationship between both variables is stronger in individualistic cultures, more pragmatic and with less distance to power.

In relation to attitude, we found that its effect on intention is not significant in the case of Spain ($B=.049$; $p<0.01$), although it is significant in the case of Mexico ($B=.256$; $p<0.01$). This result leads us to reject H10c, which can be explained by the greater degree of experience of using the Internet as a shopping channel in the Spanish case and by the greater degree of indulgence in Mexico. Attitude in the Spanish sample takes a very high value (4.5 out of 5), so it is no longer a variable to consider when considering online purchase intention.

Results: conclusions and proposals for future studies

As can be seen in the list of results presented in this study, culture is one of the factors that has a considerable influence on online shopping attitudes. Culture allows us to present a set of highly relevant conclusions. Thus, the fact that Spain is more individualistic, pragmatic and with less distance from power means that perceived control has a stronger effect on the intention to book/purchase tourist accommodation than in the case of Mexico.

This shows that the Spanish sample has greater skills, resources and knowledge to be able to make purchases on the Internet, depending more on themselves to carry out the process/purchase, basing their behaviour on their own experiences. These tourists are more open to change and innovation, to try new products and new technologies, and are quicker to use electronic tools (Ruiz-Mafe et al. 2013; Yoon, 2009).

In relation to the subjective norm, the difference between the two countries can be explained by the degree of individualism/collectivism that exists. The subjective norm-intention relationship of 500 booking/purchase of tourist accommodation is stronger in the case of Mexico than in the case of Spain.

The literature review highlights that members of collectivist and normative societies, as is the case in Mexico, are more concerned with the opinion of their belonging group and society in general, than with their own ideas (Putit and Arnott, 2007). In a more individualistic and pragmatic society, such as Spain, people tend to make decisions based on their own criteria and not so much on the opinions of third parties.

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This fact leads to a number of studies showing that the influence of subjective norm on the intention to carry out a behaviour is less in individualistic societies than in collectivist societies (Abbasi et al. 2011; Dinev et al. 2009; Kim et al. 2012; Pookulangara and Koester, 2011; Ruiz-Mafe et al. 2013; Yoon, 2009).

Annex

	Construct	item description	Reference scale	
TPB	Attitude	Using the Internet to book/purchase tourist accommodation.	Taylor & Todd (1995); Bhattacharjee (2002); George (2004).	
		It's an idea I like		
		I think it's a smart idea		
		It's a good idea		
	Perceived control	I think it's a positive experience	Taylor & Todd (1995); Bhattacharjee (2002); George (2004).	
		Using the Internet to book/buy tourist accommodation is something I have mastered		
		I have the resources, knowledge and skills to use the Internet to book/buy tourist accommodation.		
	Standard subjective	I am capable of using the Internet to book/buy tourist accommodation	Taylor & Todd (1995); Venkatesh y Davis (2000); Bhattacharjee (2002); George (2004).	
		People whose opinions I value approve of me using the Internet to book/buy tourist accommodation.		
		The people who influence my behaviour expect me to use the Internet to book/buy accommodation, rather than other means (physical agencies...)		
	PURCHASE INTENTION	Purchase intention	People who are important to me think that I should use the Internet to book/buy tourist accommodation.	Taylor & Todd (1995); Gefen & Straub (2000); Herrero et al. (2006).
			I plan to continue to use the Internet to book/purchase accommodation in the coming year.	
I expect to do some booking/purchasing of accommodation via the Internet in the coming year.				
I will not use the Internet again to book/purchase tourist accommodation				
		I am likely to use the Internet again to book/purchase accommodation in the next year		

Table 6 Construct for the development of the culture model.

Source: Own elaboration.

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