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**ANÁLISIS DE LOS HÁBITOS DE LA ‘GENERACIÓN Y’ EN LA  
PLANIFICACIÓN DE VIAJES EN UN CONTEXTO MULTICANAL**

**ANALYSIS OF ‘GENERATION Y’ TOURISM PLANNING HABITS IN A  
MULTICHANNEL CONTEXT**

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# ANALYSIS OF “GENERATION Y” TOURISM PLANNING HABITS IN A MULTICHANNEL CONTEXT

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## resumen

*Esta investigación analiza la evolución en el periodo 2014-2016 del comportamiento de la ‘Generación Y’ en la planificación de viajes en un contexto multicanal. Utilizando la escala Self-Report Habit Index (SRHI) se analizan tres diferentes comportamientos en la planificación de un viaje: el hábito de dirigirse a la agencia de viajes, el hábito de dirigirse al ordenador y el hábito de utilizar el smartphone. Los resultados muestran que la llegada del nuevo canal móvil no ha provocado efectos canibalizadores en el sistema de distribución turístico. Durante el periodo 2014-2016 el hábito de los jóvenes a acudir a las agencias de viajes tradicionales y el hábito de buscar información a través de su PC para la planificación de viajes se ha mantenido estable. En cambio, sí se observa en el año 2016 un incremento del hábito en el uso del dispositivo móvil para la planificación de viajes. De este trabajo se derivan importantes implicaciones prácticas para las empresas del sector.*

**Palabras clave:** *hábito, planificación turística, smartphone, multicanalidad, comportamiento del consumidor*

## abstract

*This research analyses the evolution over the period 2014-2016 of “Generation Y” behaviour in travel planning in a multichannel context. Using the Self-Report Habit Index (SRHI) three different travel planning behaviours are analysed; the habit of going to a travel agency, the habit of using a personal computer and the habit of using a smartphone. The results show that the arrival of the new mobile channel has not caused cannibalizing effects in the tourist distribution system. During the period 2014-2016 the habit of young people of going to traditional travel agencies and the habit of searching for information on their PCs for travel planning has remained stable. On the other hand, in 2016 an increase in the use of mobile devices was observed over the previous two years. This work has important theoretical and managerial implications for companies in the sector.*

**Keywords:** *habit, tourism planning, smartphone, multichannel, consumer behaviour*

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## 1. introduction

The sudden explosion of distribution channels that has taken place in the tourist industry as well as the rapid adoption of these channels by consumers has revolutionised the tourist distribution system. Since the late 1990s, providers and tourist intermediaries have recognised the need to design a multichannel distribution channel to respond to changes in tourist behaviour. Thus, traditional tourism distribution channels - those that operated before the arrival of the Internet, such as travel agencies, global distribution systems and reservation centres - now coexist with the online world (Vallespín-Aran and Molinillo, 2014). In addition, in recent years ways of accessing online channels have also been changing. The tourist no longer only accesses the network of networks for planning trips using his computer or laptop, but now has a wide range of devices with Internet connection, such as the *smartphone* or tablet.

In this regard, Gretzel and Jamal (2009) consider that these mobile devices support the expansion of a new type of modern tourist, the "creative tourist class", characterised by the capturing, constructing and sharing of their experiences in a continuous way. Wang, Xiang and Fesenmair (2014) also discuss the use of mobile phones by tourists, concluding that the *smartphone* has the potential to substantially transform the tourist experience in the pre-trip phase, during the trip and in the post-trip phase.

The consequences and effects of a new channel of distribution are issues that have been previously considered in the academic literature. Yang, Lu and Chau (2013) comment that these interactions usually focus on two perspectives: synergistic effects and displacement effects. From the studies that analyse the synergies between the channels we deduce that these are complementary. Therefore, channel satisfaction with one channel favours customer behaviour towards the other channel (Yang et al., 2013). In our case, one might think that satisfaction with the online channel accessed through the computer (hereinafter PC) or satisfaction with the traditional channel would encourage the adoption of the mobile device for travel planning. Conversely, displacement or cannibalizing effects represent an opposite concept to synergy (Yang et al., 2013). This suggests that positive attitudes towards channel A are transferred to negative attitudes towards buying on channel B, which implies that channels are substitutive rather than complementary (Wang, Song and Yang, 2013). In this regard, Okazaki and Hirose (2009) argue that if competition is very intense and one medium is superior to others in terms of gratification, the most powerful medium will appropriate the place of others (an unusual situation); on the other hand, if this appropriation is only partial, it will be possible to speak of a displacement effect, but in which case both would continue to coexist. In our case, and adopting this perspective, it could be thought that the arrival of the mobile device would cause a decrease in the use of the PC to access the online channel and a decrease in the use of the traditional channel.

Consequently, this work aims to analyse the multichannel purchase behaviour of young people when planning their trips. In particular, the intent is to study the changes in the habits of Generation Y members, with special attention being given to the synergistic or cannibalizing effects of mobile devices. Using the self-report habit index (SRHI), the ingrained habits of young people are compared when they begin a search for tourist information or to reserve a tourist product. To do this, we analyse changes in habits over the period 2014-2016 in relation to three different behaviours: the habit of going to the travel agency (hereinafter TA), the habit of using a PC and the habit of using the *smartphone*.

Although there are different studies that analyse the behaviour of the tourist with mobile commerce, as far as our knowledge goes there is no study that analyses it from the perspective of habit. In addition, this work focuses on the study of Generation Y. According to Sun et al. (2016), Generation Y is those consumers born between 1980 and 1994, so the focus of this study is on analysing the adoption of an emerging technology for those who could be considered "digital natives". That is, we will analyse the consumption habits of a generation that has been the first to adopt online channels and is notable for its great future potential (Sun et al., 2016).

In order to achieve this objective, this work is structured as follows. In the first place, the theoretical framework is developed around the concept of habit and the habits of tourists are analysed when planning their trips. Second, the methodology is presented. Third, the results are described and, finally, the conclusions and practical implications of the research are presented.

## 2. travel planning habits

### 2.1. the habit as the antecedent of the use

As Martín del Río (2009) points out, most of the models that try to explain the intention to use or the use of a technology are based on the principle that the user carries out a reasoning process and exerts voluntary control. But when making a trip will we deliberately think about which purchasing medium we use or will our customs and habits also have influence?

To define the concept of habit we can cite James (1890), probably one of the first authors to point out the importance of habits in our daily life:

"There is no more miserable human being than one in whom nothing is habitual but indecision, and for whom the lighting of every cigar, the drinking of every cup, the time of rising and going to bed every day, and the beginning of every bit of work, are subjects of express volitional deliberation" (James, 1890, p. 122).

Habit is formed through the repetition of certain behaviours, initially executed in a rational way and with a

purpose (Polites and Karahanna, 2013, Limayem and Hirt, 2003, Venkatesh, Thong and Xu, 2012). With the passage of time and in a stable context these behaviours become habits producing an association and take place automatically, without us being fully aware of them.

Thus, each time an individual wishes to plan a trip, there will be an association between the objective (planning the trip) and the action (for example, going to the TA). If that behaviour produces satisfaction and the individual remains in a stable context, that action will be repeated and the association between goal and action will be reinforced. All of this will create a habit that will result not only in an increase in the probability of visiting the TA but will also diminish the motivation to consider other options (Martín del Río, 2009).

In the special edition of the Journal of the Association for Information Systems "Quo Vadis TAM - Issues and Reflections on Technology Acceptance Research" (Hirschheim, 2007), habit as a "new theoretical concept" was presented as a valuable possible step towards progress in technology adoption model research (Bagozzi, 2007, Venkatesh, Davis and Morris, 2007; Venkatesh et al., 2012). In fact, a few decades earlier, some authors had warned that Reasoned Action Theory (TRA) had limitations when it comes to explaining habitual behaviours where the decision process is not as conscious (Herrero, 2005).

Thus, some few years ago and after these calls for research, we see greater attention paid to the habit construct, although, according to Polites and Karahanna (2012), this is still scarce. In this regard, the first model on technology adoption to incorporate habit was the UTAUT2 model (Venkatesh et al., 2012). In this model the habit rooted in the use of the *smartphone* to connect to the Internet is considered a determinant of the intention to use and use. From a sample of 1,512 consumers, the authors validate the UTAUT2 model, concluding that habit exerts a direct influence on the use of the Internet through the mobile and indirect through the intention to use.

In the context of the tourism sector, Morosan and DeFranco (2016) show that the habit of using a mobile device to settle an account is among the main factors that explain the intention to use NFC technology for mobile payment in hotels. Also, Pereira et al. (2016), in the context of online TAs, demonstrate that the routine or habit of using a website plays an important role in online satisfaction and, indirectly, in online loyalty.

## 2.2. multichannel behaviour and Generation Y

Today the consumer can already be considered multichannel since during the purchasing process he uses different media and / or channels. For example, when planning a trip, the tourist can obtain information from a website, evaluate the alternatives with the help of a TA, buy through his mobile device and conduct post-purchase behaviour through social networks.

The following are three possible habits ingrained in tourist consumers when planning their trips: the habit of going to the TA, the habit of using the PC and the habit of using the *smartphone*.

### 2.2.1. habit of going to the TA for travel planning

Some researchers argue that although the volume of online travel sales continues to increase, travellers still trust and will continue to rely on traditional channels (Huang, Song and Zhang, 2010). In this regard, even if we refer to the TA as a traditional intermediary, we have to take into consideration how they are evolving. Thus, innovative TAs have emerged with "new business approaches and models" with agents acting as true advisors (Hosteltur, 2017, p.39). Travel planning can be a very stressful and confusing due to the wide choice on offer so the option to go to a TA can gain followers.

However, the results of the prospective study of Vallespín-Arán and Molinillo (2014) in the Spanish market differ from those observed in the American market. These authors examine in their work the current panorama of intermediation in the tourism sector and make a prospective analysis of the changes that will occur due to the impact of information and communication technologies (ICT). They analyse the opinions of a group of experts in the sector. One of the conclusions highlighted was that the experts believe that traditional intermediaries will lose some importance in the distribution channel, although they will continue to occupy a prominent place. In addition, these same authors suggest that the biggest changes in tourist distribution channels will come about because of the *smartphone*. Then, although both channels will coexist, there may be a change in consumer habits, with a transfer from traditional channels to online channels.

Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: The habit of visiting a TA for travel planning is lower among university students in 2016 than in 2014.

### 2.2.2. habit of using a PC for travel planning

According to Statista (2015) it is estimated that Business-to-Consumer (B2C) e-commerce will double its turnover in the world in the period 2013-2018. In addition, in 2014, global Internet penetration reached 40.4 users per 100, although there are important differences between geographical areas, such as North America (84.36%) and the countries of North Africa (35.76) (International Telecommunication Union, 2014). In Spain, in 2015, 78.7% of the population between 16 and 74 years old accessed the Internet in the previous three months (Fundación Telefónica, 2016). If only the segment of young people between 16 and 24 years old is considered, the proportion increases to 98.5% (Fundación Telefónica, 2016). Therefore, the Internet

has become an indispensable means of accessing information in all areas of life.

The development of the Internet has revolutionized the way the tourism industry operates (Theodosiou and Katsikea, 2012). A particularly important aspect has been its impact on marketing channels. Few industries have exploited the possibilities of E-commerce as readily as the tourism sector (Novak and Schwabe, 2009). The network of networks has become the most important sales route for most tourist companies (Varini, Scaglione and Schegg, 2011).

Due to its advantages as a medium of information and as a sales channel (access speed, wide information, interactivity, flexibility, etc.), the net has also modified the way tourists look for information (Jani, Jang and Hwang, 2014). In this regard, in the last few years, the Internet has become one of the most important means of accessing tourist information (Okazaki and Hirose, 2009). In fact, in Spain, TAs and tour operators, as well as airlines, represent the branches of activity with the largest share of electronic commerce turnover (16.2% and 10.3%, respectively) (National Commission of Markets and Competition, 2015). As a result of this extensive tourist use, research on the Internet as a means of tourism planning has received a great deal of attention from academia and business (Okazaki and Hirose, 2009). For example, Sun et al. (2016) study the most commonly accessed sources of online information by Generation Y in Hong Kong, concluding that vendor websites, intermediary websites and social networks are the most commonly accessed online sources. They also find that while the websites of intermediaries are most often used to search for information, social networks are more often used for reservations.

Based on the displacement effect and the review of the literature, we believe that the arrival of a new Internet access device such as the mobile phone may cause a decrease in the habit of using the PC for travel planning. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: The habit of using the PC for travel planning is lower among young university students in 2016 than in 2014.

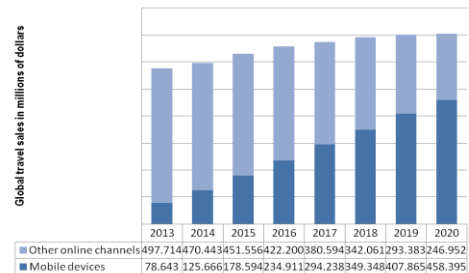
### 2.2.3. habit of using a smartphone for travel planning

Global access to the Internet through mobile devices already generates 33% of IP traffic and is expected to reach 50% by 2018 (Fundación Telefónica, 2015). In Spain, the connection through the *smartphone* is the most used in Spanish households, through which 88.3% of Internet users access the network. Among the youngest, the mobile connection surpasses the PC as an access device by 17.1% (Fundación Telefónica, 2016).

In this way, the arrival of mobile devices is causing changes in the practices and activities of their users. For

example, they socialise or share and seek information differently (Oulasvirta et al., 2012). In addition, *smartphones* have the potential to create new habits related to the use of the Internet. In this regard, Oulasvirta et al. (2012) argue that the commonly accepted notion of mobile phone addiction is simply a misunderstanding of frequently performed operations (e.g. e-mail checking).

Figure 1: Global travel sales 2013-2020



Source: Hosteltur (2017)

In the context of the tourism sector, Vallespín-Arán, Molinillo and Muñoz-Leiva (2015) find an inverted U relationship between age and intention to use mobile channels for travel planning. That is to say, those consumers who make the greatest use of these new technologies are not, in fact, the youngest, but are between the ages of 25 and 44. On the other hand, according to a recent report published by Hosteltur (2017), on the basis of data gathered by Euromonitor International, mobile devices are going to gain future market share in relation to other devices with online access (see Figure 1). Consequently, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: The habit of using a smartphone for travel planning is higher among young university students in 2016 than it was in 2014.

## 3. methodology

For the empirical evaluation of the proposed hypotheses, we have used data from a survey of young university students who during the last year have made at least one trip and who have a *smartphone*.

Table 1. Technical datasheet

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Sample population      | Young university students who during the last year made at least one trip and who have a <i>smartphone</i> . |
| Data collection method | Online survey  |
| Type of sampling       | Non-Probabilistic Convenience Sampling   |
| Size of sample         | 330  |
| Date of fieldwork      | May 2014 and May 2016  |

Source: Own design

A convenience sampling procedure was employed. The questionnaire was completed by students of the University of Málaga studying for a degree in Marketing and

Market Research, during the months of May 2014 and 2016. During both periods the characteristics of the samples were similar. The students were studying the following subjects: "Consumer Behaviour" in their first year, or "Market Research II" in their third year. The data were collected through an online survey answered by 157 students in 2014 and by 173 students in 2016.

After the questionnaire was designed, a pre-test was carried out with 5 tourism consumers. Their comments were valuable in improving the language used. Subsequently, the questionnaire was reviewed by seven experienced researchers from the Marketing and Market Research departments of different Spanish universities. When measuring habit using the SRHI, we used as a base a seven-point Likert scale, where the lower value (1) corresponds to "Strongly disagree" and the higher value (7) to "Strongly agree". These scales have been adopted from the works of Verplanken (2006), Gutiérrez-Sánchez and Pino-Juste (2011), and Lee (2014).

Table 2. Habit scale employed

| Questions  |        |   |  |
|--|--------|---|--|
| 1) When I want to plan a trip (that is, to look for information about a tourist product - hotels, flights, tourist attractions, etc. - and / or, if necessary, to book or buy), going to a TRAVEL AGENCY is something that ...                                       |        |   |  |
| 2) When I want to plan a trip (that is, to look for information about a tourist product - hotels, flights, tourist attractions, etc. and / or, if necessary, book or buy), I go to my PC and connect to the Internet (to search and / or book) is something that ... |        |   |  |
| 3) When I want to plan a trip (that is, search for information about a tourist product - hotels, flights, tourist attractions, etc. ... and / or, if necessary, book or buy), going to my SMARTPHONE is something that ...   |        |   |  |
| Construct  | Code   | Question                                | Reference  |
| HABIT  | HAB_1  | I do frequently                         | Verplanken (2006); Gutiérrez-Sánchez and Pino-Juste (2011); Lee (2014) |
|  | HAB_2  | I do automatically                      |  |
|  | HAB_3  | I do without thinking                   |  |
|  | HAB_4  | If I did not do it I would feel "weird" |  |
|  | HAB_5  | Failure to do so would require effort   |  |
|  | HAB_6  | I do without thinking                   |  |
|  | HAB_7  | Part of my routine                      |  |
|  | HAB_8  | I would find it difficult not to do it  |  |
|  | HAB_9  | I do it without thinking                |  |
|  | HAB_10 | I have been doing it for a long time    |  |
|  | HAB_11 | Typical of me                           |  |
|  | HAB_12 | I begin to do it without realising      |  |

Source: own design

Gutiérrez-Sánchez and Pino-Juste (2011) explain, based on Verplanken (2006), the limitation in the great majority of scales when evaluating habit by measuring the frequency of the studied behaviour. Instead, they argue that the habit "should be considered as a mental construct that implies automaticity, lack of awareness, the difficulty of controlling behaviour and mental efficiency" (Gutiérrez-Sánchez and Pino-Juste, 2011, p.364). These same authors explain that the SRHI (Self-Report Habit Index) developed by Verplanken (2006) is more effective because: 1) the SRHI understands that there must be repetition in the behaviour but also automaticity; 2) the SRHI measures the self-reported habit by asking the respondents themselves.

#### 4. results

First, the sociodemographic and behavioral characteristics of the sample are described. The 2014 sample is formed of 42.7% men and 57.3% women, with a mean age of 23.33 years and of which 35% usually travel about 2 times a year for leisure. In addition, approximately 55% of the respondents say that they are connected to the Internet for more than 30 hours a week. On the other hand, the sample from 2016 comprises 47.4% of men compared to 52.6% of women, with a mean age of 21.71 years. 34.7% say they travel an average of 2 times a year for leisure. Also, almost 50% of the sample claims to spend more than 30 hours a week connected to the Internet. Therefore, the characteristics of the samples over the two periods are similar.

Table 3. Sociodemographic profile of the respondents

|                                       | 2014<br>(n= 157) | 2016<br>(n= 173) |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Gender                                |                  |                  |
| -Men                                  | 67 (42,7%)       | 82 (47,4%)       |
| -Women                                | 90 (57,3%)       | 91 (52,6%)       |
| Mean age                              | 23.33            | 21.71            |
| Leisure trips taken p.a.              |                  |                  |
| -None                                 | 3 (1,9%)         | 4 (2,3%)         |
| -One                                  | 45 (28,7%)       | 46 (26,6%)       |
| -Two                                  | 55 (35%)         | 60 (34,7%)       |
| -Between 3 and 4                      | 40 (25,5%)       | 45 (26%)         |
| -More than 5                          | 14 (8,9%)        | 18 (10,4%)       |
| Hours connected to Internet per week. |                  |                  |
| Less than 1                           | 1 (0,6%)         | 1 (0,6%)         |
| Between 1 and 4                       | 17 (10,8%)       | 13 (7,5%)        |
| Between 5 and 10                      | 21 (13,4%)       | 27 (15,6%)       |
| Between 11 and 30                     | 32 (20,4%)       | 52 (30,1%)       |
| Between 31 and 60                     | 40 (25,5%)       | 33 (19,1%)       |
| More than 60                          | 46 (29,3%)       | 47 (27,2%)       |

Source: Own design

Second, we went on to examine the travel planning habits of these young people. On the one hand, we check the dimensionality and reliability of the measurement scale used for the Habit construct (see Table 4). The KMO test (Keizer-Meyer-Olkin) yields a value of 0.94 ensuring that the variables are highly correlated and thus it is appropriate to reduce the scale. After performing a factorial analysis of the main components and a Varimax rotation, following the criterion of eigenvalue greater than 1, we obtain 3 factors capable of explaining 72.15% of the variance. The first factor explains 28.29% of the variance and represents the habit of using the *Smartphone*; the second factor explains 22.37% of the variance and represents the habit of going to a TA; finally, the habit of using a PC explains 21.48% of the variance in the third factor. Regarding the reliability analysis, values higher than 0.7 are observed in Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ), thus, its reliability has been demonstrated.

Table 4: Dimensionality and reliability analysis

KMO= 0,94 Bartlett sphericity test  $X^2$  (630)=13322.58 ( $p=0,000$ )  
Residuals =12%

| SRHI scale  |                  | Factor loadings |
|---|------------------|-----------------|
| TA habit<br>22.37%<br>$\alpha= 0,947$                   | Hab_AAVV1        | 0.783           |
|   | Hab_AAVV2        | 0.848           |
|   | Hab_AAVV3        | 0.825           |
|   | Hab_AAVV4        | 0.744           |
|   | Hab_AAVV5        | 0.611           |
|   | Hab_AAVV6        | 0.854           |
|   | Hab_AAVV7        | 0.856           |
|   | Hab_AAVV8        | 0.881           |
|   | Hab_AAVV9        | 0.659           |
|   | Hab_AAVV10       | 0.813           |
|   | Hab_AAVV11       | 0.878           |
|   | Hab_AAVV12       | 0.877           |
| PC habit<br>21.48%<br>$\alpha= 0,976$                   | Hab_PC1          | 0.698           |
|   | Hab_PC2          | 0.781           |
|   | Hab_PC3          | 0.781           |
|   | Hab_PC4          | 0.748           |
|   | Hab_PC5          | 0.726           |
|   | Hab_PC6          | 0.794           |
|   | Hab_PC7          | 0.788           |
|   | Hab_PC8          | 0.779           |
|   | Hab_PC9          | 0.796           |
|   | Hab_PC10         | 0.773           |
|   | Hab_PC11         | 0.818           |
|   | Hab_PC12         | 0.764           |
| <i>Smartphone</i><br>habit<br>28.29%<br>$\alpha= 0,983$ | Hab_Smartphone1  | 0.897           |
|   | Hab_Smartphone2  | 0.917           |
|   | Hab_Smartphone3  | 0.889           |
|   | Hab_Smartphone4  | 0.877           |
|   | Hab_Smartphone5  | 0.868           |
|   | Hab_Smartphone6  | 0.915           |
|   | Hab_Smartphone7  | 0.914           |
|   | Hab_Smartphone8  | 0.917           |
|   | Hab_Smartphone9  | 0.903           |
|   | Hab_Smartphone10 | 0.905           |
|   | Hab_Smartphone11 | 0.913           |
|   | Hab_Smartphone12 | 0.911           |

Source: Own design

On the other hand, following verification of the validity and reliability of the scale, we analysed the evolution of habits in the search of information for trip planning. As can be seen in table 5, young university students: 1) barely use TAs; 2) the channel most used for travel planning is the PC; and 3) after the PC comes the habit of using the *smartphone*.

Once these means have been calculated, the Student's T test is used for the comparison of independent samples (see Table 5). The results do not show significant differences between the year 2014 and the year 2016 for the habit of going to a TA or the habit of using the PC (H1 and H2 hypotheses cannot be supported). However, there are statistically significant differences for the habit of using the *smartphone*, this being greater in 2016 (H3 hypothesis is supported).

Table 5. Travel planning habits. Comparison of means

|                  | Mean Year 2014 | Mean Year 2016 | T (328g.l) | Sig.  |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|-------|
| Hab_TA1          | 2.19           | 2.05           | 0.87       | 0.38  |
| Hab_TA2          | 1.90           | 1.95           | -0.30      | 0.76  |
| Hab_TA3          | 1.74           | 1.75           | -0.08      | 0.92  |
| Hab_TA4          | 1.79           | 1.87           | -0.52      | 0.59  |
| Hab_TA5          | 2.08           | 1.93           | 0.94       | 0.34  |
| Hab_TA6          | 1.64           | 1.65           | -0.08      | 0.93  |
| Hab_TA7          | 1.64           | 1.64           | -0.03      | 0.97  |
| Hab_TA8          | 1.70           | 1.72           | -0.11      | 0.90  |
| Hab_TA9          | 2.06           | 1.80           | 1.57       | 0.11  |
| Hab_TA10         | 1.97           | 1.95           | 0.12       | 0.90  |
| Hab_TA11         | 1.72           | 1.72           | 0.02       | 0.98  |
| Hab_TA12         | 1.55           | 1.65           | -0.83      | 0.40  |
| Hab_PC1          | 6.20           | 5.98           | 1.64       | 0.10  |
| Hab_PC2          | 6.08           | 5.91           | 1.03       | 0.30  |
| Hab_PC3          | 5.22           | 5.37           | -0.72      | 0.46  |
| Hab_PC4          | 4.97           | 4.91           | 0.34       | 0.73  |
| Hab_PC5          | 4.54           | 4.88           | -1.57      | 0.11  |
| Hab_PC6          | 5.17           | 5.31           | -0.67      | 0.50  |
| Hab_PC7          | 5.19           | 5.13           | 0.28       | 0.77  |
| Hab_PC8          | 5.24           | 5.19           | 0.22       | 0.82  |
| Hab_PC9          | 5.55           | 5.41           | 0.76       | 0.44  |
| Hab_PC10         | 5.55           | 5.48           | 0.42       | 0.67  |
| Hab_PC11         | 4.71           | 5.54           | 0.95       | 0.34  |
| Hab_PC12         | 4.99           | 5.14           | -0.78      | 0.43  |
| Hab_Smartphone1  | 4.15           | 4.81           | -3.13      | 0.002 |
| Hab_Smartphone2  | 4.02           | 4.57           | -2.52      | 0.012 |
| Hab_Smartphone3  | 3.71           | 4.45           | -3.38      | 0.001 |
| Hab_Smartphone4  | 3.41           | 4.06           | -2.97      | 0.003 |
| Hab_Smartphone5  | 3.50           | 4.20           | -3.25      | 0.001 |
| Hab_Smartphone6  | 3.80           | 4.17           | -1.67      | 0.095 |
| Hab_Smartphone7  | 3.77           | 4.25           | -2.08      | 0.037 |
| Hab_Smartphone8  | 3.66           | 4.15           | -2.26      | 0.024 |
| Hab_Smartphone9  | 3.84           | 4.24           | -1.76      | 0.078 |
| Hab_Smartphone10 | 3.75           | 4.28           | -2.33      | 0.020 |
| Hab_Smartphone11 | 3.85           | 4.28           | -1.85      | 0.064 |
| Hab_Smartphone12 | 3.70           | 4.25           | -2.45      | 0.015 |

Source: Own design

## 5. conclusions and practical implications

This research analyses the use that Generation Y consumers make of the information channels in the planning of their trips. To do this, the changes in habit



over the period 2014-2016 are evaluated in relation to three different behaviours: the habit of going to a TA, the habit of using a PC and the habit of using a *smartphone*. An analysis of data from a survey of 330 young people makes relevant contributions to research and management in the tourism sector.

First, the results show that this generation makes little use of TAs for their trip planning. That is to say, it is observed that Generation Y, being precisely the "digital natives", does not find many advantages in this traditional channel. The habit of using TAs did not decline over the period under investigation (2014-2016) but it did not increase as it did in other countries (Hosteltur, 2017). Therefore, usage has not been reduced over the period, perhaps because the average level is already low and future reductions will occur more slowly, or perhaps because it may be a signal indicating a trend change in line with other countries.

Second, as expected, young people make greater use of online channels, both through the PC and through the *smartphone*. This result is consistent with previous studies that have shown that consumer behaviour is evolving along with new and emerging distribution channels (Sands et al., 2016).

Third, it is observed that in just two years the habit of these young people of seeking tourist information through the smartphone has increased, but the habit of connecting through the PC has not decreased. The fact that young people are making more use of smartphones as a means of connecting to the Internet for tourism planning may be due to circumstances related to infrastructure but also because of the availability of tourist information; for example, increased access speed, increased availability and access to different data tariff ranges, greater ease of use through a greater variety of mobile tourist applications or better adaptation of the web to mobile devices, among others.

Fourth, considering habit as an antecedent of use (Venkatesh et al., 2012), it is observed that there are no cannibalizing effects as a consequence of the use of mobile devices. This may be because the appropriation could be only partial (Okazaki and Hirose, 2009) because access through the mobile device for travel planning may not be noticeably superior to the other options considered. In contrast, there is a progressive trend towards multichannel consumption, that is, the use of both the Internet (through the PC or smartphone) and the TA channel. This is due to the fact that each channel has its advantages and disadvantages so that, according to the time and requirements, one or other of the channels or devices could be considered more appropriate (Arce-Urriza and Cebollada, 2013). For example, for Generation Y, the traditional TA channel can offer a more personalised and less stressful option, while the mobile device offers greater immediacy and the online channel,

through the PC, can have the advantage of better navigation quality and visualisation of content.

There are important implications in this research for companies in the sector that target young people. First, we propose there is a need to offer different purchase options across multiple channels and devices in order to meet the requirements of the multichannel client. Second, companies should pay special attention to the online channel, given the important habit of its use for travel planning. Third, the online channel should be adapted to mobile devices, paying attention not only to the adaptation of the contents to the characteristics of the device, but must also develop mobile marketing strategies. In this regard, companies can carry out actions that favour immediacy (e.g. offers), geolocation, personalisation or sharing of experiences in real time (e.g. in Instagram). Fourth, the TA channel retains some attraction for young audiences so innovative ways to facilitate synergies with the online channel should be developed. On the other hand, TAs can try to customise their offer and become true travel consultants, designing products differentiated from those which the consumer can easily access online. In addition, it would be of interest to understand in more detail the experience of the US market to identify the best practices that have allowed this channel to occupy an important position among young people.

Finally, this paper has certain limitations that must be taken into account in the interpretation of the results. In particular, the convenience sampling carried out as well as the small sample size limit the extrapolation of the results. Future research could use a probabilistic sampling procedure across the population of Generation Y, as well as increasing the sample size.

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