

# THE EFFECTS OF TRAVELLING REASONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCES AND TOURIST EXPECTATIONS

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## RESUMEN

*Esta investigación tiene como objetivo examinar la relación de las fuentes del contenido generado por el usuario (UGC) en las redes sociales, que proviene generalmente de fuentes de lazos fuertes y fuentes de lazos débiles, en la generación de expectativas turísticas sobre los recursos básicos y los recursos o factores de apoyo de los destinos. También se analiza el efecto moderador de las razones para viajar en la relación de las fuentes UGC y las expectativas turísticas. Para esta investigación, se recogieron 375 encuestas. Los resultados señalan que las razones o motivos del viaje son un factor importante a considerar en la generación de las expectativas turísticas, y en nuestro caso, el UGC que provenía de las fuentes de lazos débiles influyen de manera significativa en la generación de expectativas del turista cuando viaja por motivos de trabajo.*

## Palabras clave:

Contenido generado por el usuario, redes sociales, expectativas de los turistas, fuentes de lazos débiles, fuentes de lazos fuertes

## ABSTRACT

*This research aims to examine the relationship of user generated content (UGC) sources in social media which is provided by strong-tie sources and weak-tie sources on tourist expectations on core resources and factor supporting of the destinations, and also analyze the moderate effect of the reasons of travelling on the relationship of UGC sources and tourist expectations. 375 samples were collected. The results demonstrate that travelling reasons is an important factor to consider about the origin of tourist expectations. The UGC that was provided by weak-tie source has influence on tourist expectations when they travel with business reason.*

## Keywords:

User-generated content, Social media, Tourist expectations, Weak-tie sources, Strong-tie sources

## 1. Introduction

Communication through social media now becomes the most popular channel. Different sources demonstrate the statistical figure of the active users on various social media, for example, the latest information presents on 26th February 2017 that there are about 1,900 billion user around the world use Facebook, 1,000 billion people use Youtube. Via mobile phone, there are 1,200 billion people use Whatapp, following by 1,000 Facebook messenger users (Kallas, 2017; Statista, 2017). Consequently, user-generated content (UGC) via social media is also raising its role especially in tourist industry, however, academically, UGC in tourism sector is in the early stage and still need to investigate (Zeng & Gerritzen, 2014).

Various authors confirm the impact of UGC on tourism cycle process. It affects to both tourism enterprises and tourists which can be found before and after travelling, or even while tourists are traveling (Nezakati, 2015; Del Chiappa, 2011). According to various authors, UGC can influence to tourist behaviour since tourist may use social media as a searching tool to complete their travel plan (Xiang, Magnini & Fesenmaier, 2015; Nezakati, et al., 2015; Del Chiappa, 2011). It also have a tendency to be a supported information for making a purchasing decision especially with tourism product (Lyu & Hwang, 2015; Xiang et al., 2015; Nezakati et al., 2015; Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Moreover, according to Del Ciappa (2011), the information received from social media can encourage people to make a decision and go travelling.

UGC in social media can be provided from different sources. It can be done by someone who has high involvement with the user for example friends or family. In contrast, it can also be produced by low involvement group such as acquaintance or stranger. The communication though social media allows the user can interchange or interact with others even though they are not real-life friends. The interchange or interact among users will enrich the information (Flanagina, et al, 2014). The information produced by friends and family is considered reliable information as it is usually produced with a wish for sharing knowledge or experiences (Nezakati et al., 2015; Yoo & Gretzel, 2011; Yoo et al., 2009). Zeng and Gerritzen (2014) added that potential tourists are also pleased to seek tourist information from the experience of other people. Especially travel blogs that give information about tourist experience (Bosangit et al., 2015) and also an image of the destination (Tsenget al., 2015). The information which received in post-travelling period may help tourists to develop and shape the expectations on travelling to the destinations.

According to some authors such as Hidalgo et al., 2014; Yoo & Gretzel, 2011; Prebensen, Skallerud & Chen, 2010, the potential tourists use the information to organize and plan their holiday. Nevertheless, holiday is not the only one reason of the journey. The purpose of the journey may come from different reasons such as business reason, study reason, health reason, etc. This study will only concentrate on two principal objectives which are the journey for holiday and for business.

Consequently, the aims of the study are to analyze the effect of UGC sources on the expectations of tourist regarding the destinations. In addition, it examines a role of journey's reasons, holiday and business, as moderator in relation to the relationships between UGC sources and tourist expectations.

## 2. Theoretical background

There are some theories should pay attention for this study. Word of mouth (WOM) is a kind of communication that affect to consumer attitude and behavior (Koo, 2016), and it is inevitable to avoid an influence of other consumers' opinions before making a purchasing decisions (Tseng et al, 2015). Therefore, shared information or UGC on social media can be considered as an electronic word of mouth (eWOM). In consequence, UGC which is related to travelling experience of other tourists also have an important role to expectations of the other potential tourists before deciding to buy tourism products or services.

Based on the traditional word of mouth (WOM) theory, the sources of WOM were categorized into two groups which are strong-tie sources and weak-tie sources (Duhan et al., 1997). Strong-tie source is where WOM is provided by friends, family or relatives. Another WOM source is created by acquaintances or unknown people called weak-tie source. Consequently, eWOM refers to the posted contents on Internet which can be also provided by strong and weak ties. Both WOM and eWOM are opinions or recommendations from previous customers regarding products or service, it can be both pros and cons reviews (Tseng et al., 2015) that affect to thoughts and behavior of consumers. No matter the information is from strong ties or weak ties, it was proved by different studies that such information is more reliable than the information provided by marketer since it has no financial interest in selling products or service (Koo, 2016; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008).

In addition, social reference group theory should be focused. According to Bearden and Etzel (1982), reference group is person or group of people that has an exceptionally effect on the behavior and thought of an individual. These people normally orient themselves to others in determining behavior and evaluation (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). These reactions of individuals generally have similar model, however, they may vary in each individual (Hayakawa & Venieris, 2016) particularly when they have to make a purchasing decisions. Based on the social influence theory, informational influence group is recognized as trustworthy information for making a decision than utilitarian influence group and value-expressive influence group Bearden and Etzel (1982). Kaplan & Miller (1987) added that the informational influence derived from the recognition of information from others as facts of truth. This reflects that when the shared information of group discussion is revealed, for example, group's opinion about product evaluations, it establishes informational influence on group member's judgments.

Kaplan and Miller (1987) proposed that not only information influences that affect to other's behavior or decision making process, but normative influences also has strong influence. Normative influence is related to a desire to merge with the expectations of others (Kaplan & Miller, 1987). The normative influence is similar to social identity theory since both deals with the opinions of group members. Normally the members of each group usually have parallel perspectives, they think and act in a similar point of view (Stets & Burke, 2000), or individuals will tend to anticipate others' judgments and adjust their opinion to be viewed favorably by other group members (Bearden & Etzel, 1982).

### **3. Liturature review**

#### ***3.1.1 User-generated content sources***

Some evidences demonstrate an important of UGC in social media, particularly in tourism industry, since UGC in social media is accepted to be credible techniques in sharing information or images from one user to others which it allows the user can on describe about their own travelling experiences and other information (Nezakati et al 2015; Flanagan, et al, 2014). Many researchers studied the effects of UGC, for example, the studies about tourist's purchasing decisions or their intention to buy (Nezakati et al., 2015; Cox et al., 2009; Gretzel & Yoo, 2008), others such as a developing of travelling plan (Luo & Zhong, 2015), motivations of sharing UGC (Munar & Jacobson, 2014), etc. However, the studies about UGC are still need to investigate (Zeng & Gerritzen, 2014). Regarding to the aspects about sources of UGC in tourism, some studies investigate UGC sources based on the applications or sites of social media. For instance, the papers that consider about an effect or the importance of UGC on tourism in Facebook (Isacson & Gretzel, 2011; Stankov et al., 2010), Twitter (Sotiriadis & van Zyl, 2013; Hay, 2010), tripadvisor (Amaral et al., 2014; Ayeh et al., 2013), Youtube (Reino & Hay, 2011). Some papers mix different applications (Smith et al., 2012; da Cruz, et al., 2011). Unfortunately, there is no literature treats with UGC sources based on UGC providers or UGC writers.

Based on WOM theory, two types of WOM sources were classified, strong ties (friends and family) and weak ties (acquaintances and strangers) (Duhan et al., 1997). Consequently, the information provided by population as UGC in social media can be categorized in strong ties and weak ties. In our case, strong tie group is friends and family who provide information or UGC on social media. Different studies agreed that as it is a real relationship, it is perceived to be quality information (Sigala, 2008) and it can be used as an opinion leader (Turcotte, et al., 2015). The benefits of real-life relationships

are it allows personal communication and trustworthy on the providers (Sigala, 2008). Turcotte et al. (2015) confirmed that recommendations from real-life friends through social media are able to augment a level of trust on their content. Furthermore, Duhan et al., (1997) added that strong-ties are not only provide general information but they are more likely to influence on affective characteristics. For example, sometimes strong-tie group may judge places to travel or not to travel.

Hence, the social influence theory and social identity theory explain that belong to one group is being like others in the group (Stets & Burke, 2000). That means the opinions of group influence on the opinion of individual, and finally all members will have same or similar opinions. Especially on judgments or making decisions since the information is accepted as evidence about reality (Kaplan & Miller, 1987). Additionally and with regard to organize journeys, intention in recommendation is one of motivation that encourage people to use social media in planning their trips, particularly the recommendations and inspire from friends and family (Parra Lopez et al., 2011).

Regarding weak tie source, it treats with UGC that is provided by acquaintances or strangers. UGC that appears on social media can be also provided by this group. The exchange data or shared information about their previous experiences allows one user compare that information with other users, and with that information, individual can create their expectations on the destination, including using the information to evaluate and to make a purchase decision for tourism products. Therefore, the information or others' experience information is an appropriate support for making a judgement for travelling (Zeng & Gerritzen, 2014). This occur can be explained by the reference group theory, Bearden and Etzel (1982) remarked that the reference group deals with comparative and normative influences for a making purchase decision. They stated that both verbal interaction and observing the behavior among groups' members can determine an evaluation or decision of individuals. Especially, weak-tie sources have a tendency to be more originators for information than strong-tie source, so that it is used as informational source. Moreover, weak-tie source provide better information regarding information about technical and performance oriented (Duhan et al., 1977). Nezakati, et al (2015) supported that social media offer better knowledge about the destinations and things to do on the trips.

Thus, when normal UGC in social media transform into electronic word of mouth (eWOM), it will has a strong influence on travel planning and decision process (Nezakati, et al., 2015; Cantallops & Salvi, 2014) including the expectations on the destinations.

### ***3.1.2 User-generated content sources and tourist expectations on destinations***

The definitions of expectations are very broadly. In general, customer expectations were defined as beliefs about product or service which work as reference points in pre-consumption period (Olson & Dover, 1979; Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, A., 1993; Evrard, 1993). Oliver (1980) mentioned that expectations are idea that perform as a frame of reference when need to make a comparative judgment. Normally the expectations were established by consumer's external factors such as Internet (Castañeda, et al., 2007), thus, having received information from UGC on social media, tourists can create expectations on the destinations, and base on that expectations, they can decide where to travel by selecting the places where are the most well-matched to what they expected.

In relation to tourist destinations, various studies categorized general elements of destination. For example, Jackins (1999) classified the elements of tourist destination into physical or functional characteristics, and psychological characteristics. Crouch and Ritchie (1999) differentiated the elements of the destination in core resources and attractor, destination management, supporting factors and resources, and qualifying determinants. Crouch (2011) developed his study by adding destination policy, planning and development aspect.

Base on the studies above, our study focus on two principal elements; core resources and supporting/psychological factors. Firstly, core resources are described as key appeal that was offered at the destination. They act as main reasons of the decision in choosing one destination and not others (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). It consists of different components for example, physical or tangible components, culture and history (unique, interesting culture/history; artwork, handicrafts, performances, etc.), activities and special events (different types of tourism programs, festivals, events

such as sports competitions, exhibitions, etc.), and tourism superstructures (well-known architecture, popular cuisine, accommodation facilities, food services, transportation facilities, etc.). Secondly, supporting/psychological factors, normally are abstract characteristics (Jackins, 1999), which consists of hospitality (friendliness of the local people, community's attitudes towards visitors), service quality (reliable, responsive and highly customized service for visitors), and safety/security (visitors feel safe and secure at all times during their stay).

As the received information or UGC can assist potential tourists to plan their trips; how to travel, where to stay, what to do, etc (Del Chiappa, 2011; Nezakati, et al., 2015), UGC sources in social media, both strong-tie source and weak-tie source may also have an influence on the tourist expectations regarding two elements of tourist destinations; core resources and supporting factors. Consequently, the following hypotheses are designed;

H<sub>1.1</sub>: User-generated contents of strong-tie sources in social media influence directly and significantly on tourists' expectations on core resources of a destination.

H<sub>1.2</sub>: User-generated contents of strong-tie sources in social media influence directly and significantly on tourists' expectations on supporting factors of a destination.

H<sub>2.1</sub>: User-generated contents of weak-tie sources in social media influence directly and significantly on tourists' expectations on core resources of a destination.

H<sub>2.2</sub>: User-generated contents of weak-tie sources in social media influence directly and significantly on tourists' expectations on supporting factors of a destination.

### ***3.1.3 Reasons of travelling***

Normally when people travel, they may have one or more purposes (Cooper, et al, 2000) motivations. As the destinations consist of different tourism attributions, there are various the reasons of travelling. Some literature reviews (Pearce, 1982, Dayour & Adongo, 2015; Esichaikul, 2012; Cooper, et al., 2000) focus on tourist motivations as reasons for visiting destinations. For example, in the paper of Dayour and Adongo (2015), these authors highlight different motivations as novelty seeking, search for cultural experience, adventure, social contact, escape from routine environments, relaxation, and destination's attractions. Esichaikul (2012), for his part, and in a similar sense, explain about relaxation, excitement, social interactions with friends, adventure, family interactions, status physical challenges and escape from routine or stress. Pearce (1982) adapted the Maslow's needs hierarchy to tourist motivations and behavior, and informed that tourist were attracted to destinations for the possibility of fulfilling self-actualization, love and belongingness, and physiological needs. Cooper, et al. (2000) classified purposes of trip in detailed points which are conventions, business, recreation, touring, culture and sports, visiting friends, personal matters, shopping, study, and health. After these considerations, we consider that the reasons of travelling of tourist are multifaceted and should be considered as a whole, rather than considering them in isolation as understanding the reasons of travelling or the behavior of tourists in terms of their motivations is broadly and complex. Therefore, our study will only concentrate on two main reasons of travelling; business and holiday.

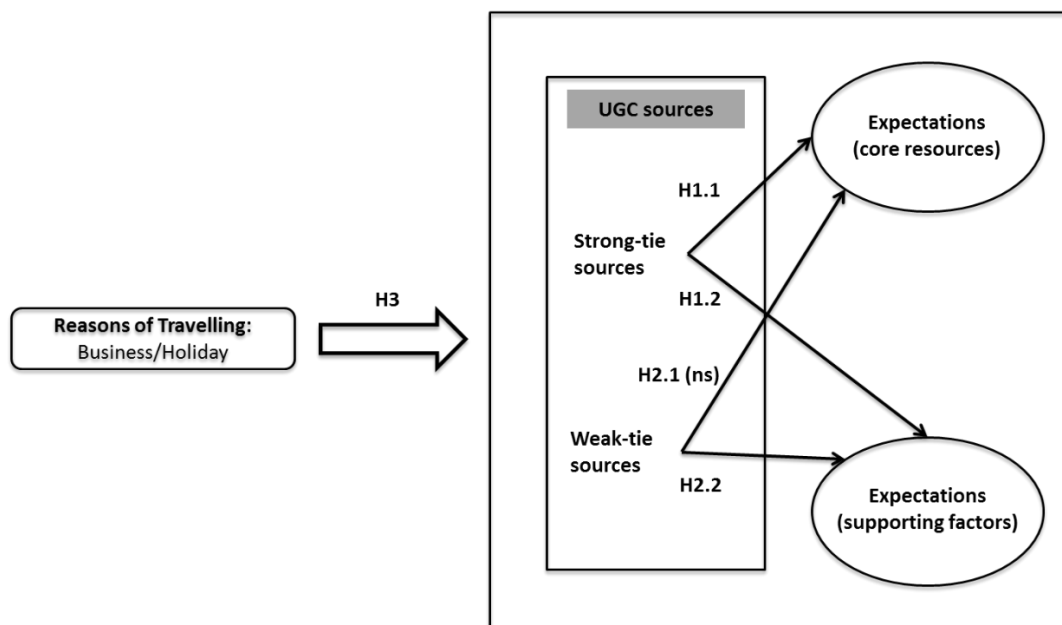
The review of the literature points out that tourist motivation is a precursor of destination selection and travelling decision. UGC in social media is a good reference for obtaining interesting information about the destinations for prospective tourist before travelling. However, Ayer, Au and Law (2013) added that several Internet users do not use UGC for planning their trips, moreover and academically; there is lack of studies about the relevant factors determining UGC usage on social media for the specific purpose of travel planning. Therefore, our study will analyse the effect of travelling reasons on the relationships between UGC sources and tourist expectations. The next hypothesis is proposed as follow.

H3: Reasons of travelling (business and holiday reasons) have some moderating effects over the relationships between (a) UGC of strong-tie sources and tourists expectations on a destination

specifically on its core resources (b) UGC of strong-tie sources and tourist expectations on a destination specifically on its supporting factors (c) UGC of weak-tie sources and tourists expectations on a destination specifically on its core resources (d) UGC of weak-tie sources and tourist expectations on a destination specifically on its supporting factors

Based on above justifications, the model of the study was designed as shown in figure 1.

FIGURE 1  
The model of the study



## 4. Research methodology

### 4.1. Data Collection

Research questionnaire was designed to achieve the objectives. It contains different kinds of questions, for instance, multiple choices questions and five points Likert scale which 1 is represented absolutely disagree and 5 is represented absolutely agree. Data was collected by structure personal interview based on the questionnaire in various places in Valencia, Spain such as airport, city centre, museums, etc. Our target group was focused on tourists who had searched tourist information on social media before travelling to Valencia, and finally, 375 valid questionnaires were collected.

Regarding to measurement scale, different studies were used as a base of our measurement scale. For example, the studies about WOM and eWOM of Duhan et al. (1997), Presi et al. (2014), Parra Lopez et al. (2011), Cox et al. (2009), Hays et al. (2013), and Stankov, et al. (2010) were used to be as a base for measuring social media sources. We also developed items to measure tourists' expectations from Crouch (2011), Kim (2014), Crouch and Ritchie (1999), Vengsayi (2008), Žabkar, Brenčič & Dmitrović (2010). Reasons of travelling are adapted from Pearce, (1982), Dayour & Adongo, (2015), Esichaikul, (2012), Cooper, et al., (2000).

With respect to tourists' expectations, we concentrated on two main characteristics, core resources and supporting factors. Core resources represents the key attractions of the destinations which can be substantial objects, buildings, culture, history, activities, special events including tourism superstructures. Supporting factors refer to attitudes and emotions for instance, the attractiveness of the destinations, kindness and hospitality of local people, the performances and service quality of tourism establishments, image and security.

## 4.2. Analysis Method

The items in our expectations are the items that share the same dimension. They were averaged for forming composite measure (Bandalos & Finney, 2001; Bou-Llusar, Escrig, Roca, & Beltrán, 2009; Landis, Beal, & Tesluk, 2000). In consideration of validating the items, the composite measures of expectations are an integration of the items, to create score aggregates under the confirmatory factor analyses (CFA), together with the rest of the scales concerned in the study.

The reasons of using the confirmatory factor analysis are to acquire better results for the normal-distribution assumption of maximum likelihood estimation. Moreover, it also provide results in more thorough as it reduces the number of variances and covariances to be estimated, therefore, increasing the stability of the parameter estimates, improving the variable-to sample-size ratio and decreasing the impact of sampling error on the estimation process (Little, et al., 2002; Bandalos & Finney, 2001; McCallum, Widaman, Zhang, & Hong, 1999; Bagozzi & Edwards, 1998).

The study use structural equation model (SEM) for its analysis as it is used for examining the relationships between all constructs, our case; it is used for discovering the relationships of user generated content's sources and tourists' expectations, Furthermore, it is used to demonstrate the confirmatory or the rejection of research hypotheses. According to Anderson and Gerbing (1988), two-steps structural equations methodology was suggested. Firstly, reliability and validity of the measurement scales need to be analyzed and later concentrating on the causal model by using SEM. Finally, the analysis ended with a multivariable analysis to find out about the moderate impact of travelling objectives on the relationships of user generated content sources and tourist expectations. Thus, the existence of significant differences in the causal relationships is estimated. For doing this, the pertinent restrictions, the  $\chi^2$  of the restricted and unrestricted structural models were analyzed.

## 5. Results and discussion

### 5.1 The Reliability, Dimensionality and Validity of the Measurement Model

Basically, the measurement model first needs to be submitted to SEM analysis, as this will demonstrate the reliability, dimensionality and (convergent and discriminant) validity of the measurement model (Garrigós, Palacios, & Narangajavana, 2008). Therefore, CFA was selected to examine and to confirm that the selected model constructs are the most suitable ones.

With the CFA, two dimensions were obtained for expectations. As can be observed in Table 1, the probability associated with chi-squared reaches a value higher than 0.05 (0.70817), indicating an overall good fit of the scale (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1996). The convergent validity is demonstrated in two ways. First, because the factor loadings are above 0.6 in every item (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006) and significant because the t-values of all the items are between 10-16, higher than 1.96 (Veasna et al. 2013); and second, because the average variance extracted (AVE) for each of the factors is higher than 0.6 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The reliability of the scale is demonstrated because the composite reliability indices in each of the dimensions obtained are higher than 0.7 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

TABLE 1.

**Analysis of Dimensionality, Reliability and Validity of all measurement scales (Fully standard solution)**

	Factor loading	T-value
<b>EXPECTATIONS (after receiving information from social media) (Core Resources) (AVE= 0.62; CR= 0.79)</b>		
Culture and History (unique, interesting culture/history; artwork, handicrafts, performances, etc.).	0.71	10.19
Activities and special events (different types of tourism programs, festivals, events such as sports competitions, exhibitions, etc.).	0.74	11.92
Tourism Superstructures (well-known architecture, popular cuisine, accommodation facilities, food services, transportation facilities, etc.).	0.78	11.31
<b>EXPECTATIONS (after receiving information from social media) (Supporting Factors)</b>		

<b>(AVE= 0.64; CR= 0.81)</b>		
Hospitality (friendliness of the local people, the Valencian Community's attitudes towards visitors).	0.74	11.22
Service Quality (reliable, responsive and highly customized service for visitors).	0.78	15.90
Safety/Security (visitors feel safe and secure at all times during their stay).	0.77	14.51

**Note:** the model fits Chi-square: 3.7670; df: 6; p: 0.70817; RMSEA: 0.029; CFI: 0.988; NNFI: 0.969

AVE is the average variance extracted, CR is the composite reliability

We determined the discriminant validity of the measured constructs by comparing the square root of the AVE with each Pearson correlation between each pair of constructs (see Table 2). The results are in accordance with what Fornell and Larcker (1981) mentioned, and demonstrate that the square root of the AVE estimates is greater than the corresponding inter-construct correlation estimates; thus, there is discriminant validity.

TABLE 2.  
**Discriminant validity of all the constructs considered for the model**

	<b>Expectations (Core Resources)</b>	<b>Expectations (Supporting Factors)</b>
<b>Expectations (Core Resources)</b>	0.78	
<b>Expectations (Supporting Factors)</b>	0.69	0.80

**Note:** Diagonal: correlation estimated between the factors. Diagonal: square root of AVE.

### 5.2 Hypothesis Results and the Fit of the Model

To answer the research hypotheses and to analyze the fits of the model, we examined the causal relationships (see Table 3). Firstly, the relationships between three groups of social media UGC resources (strong-ties and weak-ties) and the expectations about the core resources and the supporting factors at the destination were analyzed. The results agree with the literature that strong-tie sources of UGC have a direct and significant effect on expectations (both core and supporting resources of the destination) with  $\beta=0.19$  ( $t=2.45$ ) and  $\beta=0.19$  ( $t=2.46$ ) respectively, so H1.1 and H1.2 are accepted. This can be explained by the social influence theory, whereby the opinions or perspectives of one member affect the rest of the members of the same group. Consequently, the expectations about the destination of a member can be created by the shared information of other members. As more members agree with this opinion, it tends to easily predispose the rest of the members to have the same perspectives.

In relation to the weak-tie sources of UGC and expectations, the previous literature referred to reference group theory, according to which the information received from the reference group in the process of creating expectations and making decisions is fundamental, as it works as comparative and normative references. However, in our case, we specifically examined the expectations about core resources and supporting factors separately. Yet, we found that the theory cannot be applied with the influences of weak-tie sources of UGC on the expectations about core sources, since the results demonstrate  $\beta=0.11$  ( $t=1.55$ ); in contrast, it does affect the expectations about the supporting factors, with  $\beta=0.18$  ( $t=2.72$ ). Thus, the results support the statement according to which the weak-tie sources are likely to be more a transmission of the information oriented to technical and performance aspects (Duhan et al., 1977), as the supporting factors include service quality and hospitality, which are the results of service performance. Hence, H2.1 was rejected while H2.2 was accepted.

TABLE 3:  
**Structural model relationships obtained**

	<b>Relationships</b>	<b>T-value</b>	<b>Results</b>
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<b>H1.1 UGC strong-tie sources □□ Expectations (Core Resources)</b>	0.19	2.45	Supported
<b>H1.2 UGC Strong-tie sources □□ Expectations (Supporting Factors)</b>	0.19	2.46	Supported
<b>H2.1 UGC Weak-tie sources □□ Expectations (Core Resources)</b>	0.11	1.55	Not supported
<b>H2.1 UGC Weak-tie sources □□ Expectations (Supporting Factors)</b>	0.18	2.72	Supported

**Model fit:** Chi-square: 19.7993; df: 15; p: 0.17977; RMSEA: 0.033; CFI: 0.985; NNFI: 0.973

Finally, differences related with the objective of the journey were analyzed. Two groups were created, by one hand the people that made the trip for business, and by other hand the people that travel for holidays. Table 4 shows the differences in the relations between the two groups. A significant difference were obtained, the effect of UGC Weak-tie sources (comments of unknown people) over Expectations (Core Resources) is significantly higher when the objective of the trip was for business than for holidays.

TABLE 4:  
Multisample Analysis

	<b>Business</b>	<b>Holiday</b>			
	<b>B (t)</b>	<b>B (t)</b>	$\Delta\lambda^2$	<b>P</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>UGC strong-tie sources □ Expectations (Core Resources)</b>	0.19 (2.29)	0.18 (3.35)	0.540	0.462	No supported
<b>UGC Strong-tie sources □ Expectations (Supporting Factors)</b>	0.20 (2.41)	0.17 (3.47)	0.791	0.374	No supported
<b>UGC Weak-tie sources □ Expectations (Core Resources)</b>	0.15 (2.19)	0.07 (1.57)	4.677	0.031	Supported
<b>UGC Weak-tie sources □ Expectations (Supporting Factors)</b>	0.19 (3.23)	0.16 (3.18)	2.023	0.155	No supported

**Model fit:** Chi-square: 32.6326; df: 28; p: 0.24954; RMSEA: 0.034; CFI: 0.985; NNFI: 0.970

## 6. Conclusion, limitations, and recommendations

Before buying or making purchasing decision, the expectations on products or services are very important especially for tourism sector. New information technologies changed the way people receive information to create their expectations. Different studies confirmed an effect of online reviews for acquiring tourism information, especially the contents from social media has significant effects (Bilgihan et al., 2016; Hudson et al., 2015; Chung & Koo, 2015; Ayeh et al., 2013; Zhang, Wu, & Matilla, 2014; Nezakati et al., 2015; Ye et al., 2011; Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). As the online review or UGC is based on other tourists' real experiences and the reliability of the contents and the contents' providers, it can assist tourists in a decision-making period since the previous real experiences can create travelling expectations close to the reality (Gretzel & Yoo, 2008; Hidalgo et al., 2014).

The study contributes some new facts. First of all, regarding the originator of the expectations on tourist destination, the study confirms the influence of UGC on social media that was generated by strong-tie sources on tourist destinations in all expectations dimension. This means the comments of someone who has high involvement or has strong relationship with the user such as friends or family affect on the expectations of core resources, as same as the expectations on supporting factors. As the information about core resources are related to facts of the attractions, and the information related to

supporting factors are about opinion or attitude, this reflects that friends or family provide both informative and emotional information.

Regarding weak-tie sources, our results found out that it does not influence on the expectations on the destination's core resources but it does affect on its supporting factors. This can be observed that both strong and weak tie sources provide information about the hospitality and attitude of local people towards tourists, service quality of tourism companies, and security in the destination. It may explain that the information of strong ties and weak ties are usually opinions of previous tourists who have had travelled to the destination before, and normally opinions typically include attitude in the evaluation. Additionally, almost all supporting factors are abstract or intangible objects, normally people are likely to consider and believe the opinions from the people who they can trust especially from family or friends (strong-tie sources), or leastwise from other people who had experienced before (weak-tie sources).

Moreover, our study also figures out that the incidence of travelling objectives which is an important factor to be considered about the origin of tourist expectations. Base on our study, objectives of travel have some moderate effect on the relationships of UGC sources and tourist expectations. Although the reasons of travelling do not affect on the relationships of strong-tie sources and tourist expectations on core resources and supporting factors, but the objectives of travel have an effect on the relationships between weak-tie sources and tourist expectations on core resources. It can be concluded that the UGC that was provided by weak-tie source has influence on tourist expectations when business is a reason for the trip. Probably, when people travel for professional or business motives, the main reason and its result are conditioned for a whole trip so that they are more interested in UGC particularly from other people who had travelling experiences on the destinations before. Moreover, Adam (2010) supported that groups in social media such as in Facebook constitute the weak ties as we interact because of some common interests. Consequently, the business trips in many occasions are done as a result of the interests.

In relation to the limitations of the study, the period of the empirical study may be the cause. Since our data were collected during low season (from December to March) in Valencia, Spain, where is well-known for sun and beach tourism, it may reason of the data deviation in term of tourists' expectations. As for the future lines of research, we pay more attention at an interest on the importance of weak tie sources in social media with the generation of contents (UGC) and the process of decision of tourist destination, or analyze the moderating effect of different types of UGC such as images, text or videos as it may influence the final decisions of the tourist destination.

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