

## Incidence of variables in the Transfer of Tacit Knowledge of Marketing in the hotel sector of Playa del Carmen city, Mexico.

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**Abstract:** This research provided the validation of a model of the influence of marketing learning intention, personal motivation and absorptive capacity of marketing knowledge on the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge and this in turn on the transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing between the employees of small and medium size hotels in the city of Playa del Carmen, Quintana Roo, in Mexico. Through a quantitative and transversal investigation, 229 employees of the hotel sector were integrated. The results showed that personal motivation and the intention to learn marketing positively intervene in the acquisition of tacit knowledge of marketing and, influenced by the capacity of absorption of marketing knowledge, directly affect the transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing.

**Keywords:** Tacit knowledge transfer; Marketing; Hotels; Absorptive capacity.

### Incidencia de variables en la Transferencia de Conocimiento Tácito de Marketing en el sector hotelero de la ciudad de Playa del Carmen, México

**Resumen:** Esta investigación permitió validar un modelo de influencia de la intención de aprendizaje de marketing, motivación personal y capacidad de absorción de conocimiento de marketing en la adquisición de conocimiento tácito de marketing y esto a su vez en la transferencia de conocimiento tácito de marketing entre los empleados de pequeñas y medianas empresas hoteleras en la ciudad de Playa del Carmen, Quintana Roo, México. A través de una investigación cuantitativa y transversal, se integraron 229 empleados del sector hotelero. Los resultados mostraron que la motivación personal y la intención de aprender marketing intervienen positivamente en la adquisición de conocimiento tácito de marketing y, con influencia de la capacidad de absorción del conocimiento de marketing, impactan directamente la transferencia de conocimiento tácito de marketing.

**Palabras Clave:** Transferencia de conocimiento tácito; Marketing; Hoteles; Capacidad de absorción.

### 1. Introduction

The transfer of knowledge is a key mechanism for the social creation of knowledge (Collins & Smith, 2006; Nahapiet, & Ghoshal, 1998). In this sense, some research maintains that the development of an innovative potential requires the company to be able to combine appropriately the human resources management practices to develop a learning orientation that legitimizes the value of knowledge and its exchange in the organization (Shipton, Fay, West, Patterson, & Birdi, 2005; Shipton, West, Dawson, Birdi, & Patterson, 2006). Knowledge creation therefore occurs through the transformation into new knowledge of existing perceptions and ideas, and human resource practices favor the employee's skills, motivation, and opportunities to access and mobilize their knowledge to other employees (Kang, Morris, & Snell, 2007). Thus, through these links are generated the transformation and expansion of new knowledge and ideas (Krylova, Vera, & Crossan, 2016).

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Knowledge transfer can be applied in the different areas of an organization, since it has become essential to generate and share knowledge through the collaborators within a company (Nonaka, Takeuchi, & Kocka, 1999). In order to integrate this to the intra-organizational knowledge already existing and transform it into skills oriented to innovation (Tsai, 2001; Zágara & García-Falcón, 2003). Knowledge can be divided into two types according to its capacity to be structured and codified, in such a way that explicit knowledge is more structured and expressed in a formal language, whereas tacit knowledge is subjective and difficult to express in a language formal (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). The interaction of both types of knowledge conforms the organizational knowledge (Easterby-Smith & Prieto, 2008). Particularly, this research deepens the transfer of tacit knowledge in marketing as a process by which employees with knowledge in the discipline transfer to others what they have learned, thereby forming a possible source of sustainable competitive advantage for the company (Ambrosini & Bowman, 2001).

Some authors (Mohamad, Ramayah, & Hathaivaseawong, 2010) consider that it is relevant to deepen the variables that impact on the transfer of marketing knowledge, since it is an intangible asset that firms of different sizes must exploit to be more competitive. Further, in spite of the fact that the tacit knowledge predominates in the hospitality industry, the literature shows that there has been little study on the transfer of this type of knowledge (Cooper, 2006), particularly in small organizations (Shaw & Williams, 2009). Therefore, this research responds to this call, by contributing to a greater understanding of the transfer of tacit intraorganizational marketing knowledge in small and medium hotels located in the city of Playa del Carmen, México. This research contains five sections: an introduction, a review of the literature that supports the hypotheses raised, the description of the methodology used the analysis of the results of empirical work, and finally, the discussion and conclusions of the research are presented.

## 2. Review of the literature and hypothesis approach

### 2.1 Transfer of tacit marketing knowledge

Knowledge as tacit assets are difficult to buy and sell, therefore, they must be built within the company. The nature of this type of knowledge can be associated with technical knowledge and skills, but especially with the experience gained in performing specific tasks (Stone, Hunton, & Wier, 2000). Tacit knowledge is intuitive, informal, non-articulated, involves know-how and good judgment, and is learned through personal and collaborative experiences, making it difficult to be codified and formalized (Okumus, 2013). Being mainly in organizational and social processes (Quintas, Lefrere, & Jones, 1997).

One of the characteristics of the hospitality industry is the high labor mobility, which is why the transfer of tacit knowledge is significant (Hjalager, 2002). In developing innovations that incorporate tacit knowledge and are difficult to imitate or unique, creates a sustainable advantage (Vila, Enz, & Costa, 2012). Their transfer in this industry is mainly through observation, imitation practices and informal discussions fostering mental models and practical skills (Okumus, 2013). However, despite the relevance of tacit knowledge management and the need to stimulate their transfer within hotels. A study in Greece (Sigala & Chalkiti, 2007) found that there is little familiarity with the issue and its implications for the Organizational performance. However, others (Jacob & Groizard, 2007), have identified that some hotels benefit from tacit knowledge through the imitation of services offered by multinational hotels and if people have skills and aspects necessary to transfer, when implemented, can contribute to the expansion of hotels (García Almeida, 2004).

On the other hand, several studies have found that a great amount of marketing knowledge is tacit, embodied in people, and therefore difficult to transfer (Bennett, 1999; Simonin, 1999; Archibugi y Pietrobelli, 2003). An additional peculiarity is that marketing knowledge is often acquired in specific cultural contexts and is by nature based on experience (Simonin, 1999). In addition to the characteristics of the hotel sector (Hjalager, 2002), organizations should strive to intensify efforts to promote this type of transfer of knowledge and use it to create a sustainable competitive advantage.

### 2.2 Influence of marketing learning intent on the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge.

Learning intention can be interpreted as the measure of the desire and willingness of hotel staff to acquire marketing knowledge of multinational hotel personnel to strengthen knowledge and skills within the company (Hau & Evangelista, 2007). According to the findings of Wu, Hsieh and Lu (2015), learning intention is related to recent experiences of learning, satisfaction and intention to further learning. From Ajzen's (1991) approach, intention is the determinant of behaviors directed to a goal; insofar as the behavior corresponds to the will of each person.

On the other hand, the acquisition of knowledge is a social process based on intra or inter-organizational relations (Kogut & Zander, 1992) and can be exploited to obtain a competitive advantage (Yli-Renko, Autio, & Sapienza, 2001). Acquiring knowledge can be captured through such things as valuing attitudes and opinions, encouraging employees to improve their skills, retaining capable employees, partnering with clients, and market research (Darroch, 2005). For the above, it is possible to affirm that the intention to learn is a determining factor for the acquisition of knowledge and to facilitate the transfer of knowledge in the organization (Hamel, 1991; Easterby-Smith, Lyles, & Tsang, 2008). Therefore, under a marketing approach, it is possible to state that:

*H1a. The intention of marketing learning is positively related to the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge.*

*H1b. The intention of marketing learning indirectly affects the transfer of tacit marketing knowledge, through the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge.*

### **2.3 Influence of personal motivation on the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge.**

The experience that can acquire the personnel in the companies that operate in dynamic environments, where the changes happen with very periodicity, is very valuable. The ability to apply their knowledge to the activities of the organization motivates employees to form on their own, to learn new tools and to create new processes or ways of doing things. This motivation of personal character is reinforced to know that their opinions and suggestions to acquire an external knowledge, are taken into account (Zapata, 2005).

Employees who are intrinsically motivated to share knowledge find their own activity interesting, enjoy it, encourage them (Foss, Minbaeva, Pedersen, & Reinholt, 2009) and participate in the exchange for their own good (Lin, 2007). Through the exchange of knowledge, employees can show a sense of approval for the demonstration of altruism in helping others. They may also gain the satisfaction of recognizing their ability to provide valuable knowledge that is useful to the organization (Kankanhalli, Tan, & Wei, 2005).

This is especially relevant in the exchange of high-quality knowledge as circumstantial behavior that can only be encouraged and facilitated rather than forced (Bock, Zmud, Kim, & Lee, 2005). In fact, the relevance of intrinsic motivation in the exchange of knowledge is well established and supported by consistent and strong empirical evidence, as Wiig (1997) points out that the motivation of employees to innovate, learn lessons, and thus obtain a new and better knowledge, will provide the company with an improvement in its competitiveness. Since the motivation of employees to share knowledge could be influenced by the conditions in which they perform in their areas of work, it is possible to propose the following hypothesis:

*H2a. In small and medium hotels in the city of Playa del Carmen, personal motivation has a positive influence on the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge.*

*H2b. Personal motivation indirectly affects the transfer of tacit marketing knowledge, through the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge.*

### **2.4. Influence of the absorptive capacity of marketing knowledge on the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge.**

Absorption capacity implies the ability to recognize, acquire, assimilate, use and even take advantage of available knowledge outside the organization to generate innovations or improve organizational performance (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990; Tsai, 2001; Tortoriello, 2015). Therefore, the absorptive capacity requires the attitude to admit external procedures to carry out activities within the firm. It is very common for someone to understand and absorb new knowledge, but not to use it for various reasons such as lack of respect or trust in the source, pride, stubbornness, lack of time, lack of opportunity and fear of running risks (Davenport & Prusak, 2001).

There is a relationship between absorptive capacity and knowledge acquisition at both the individual and organizational levels (Pacharapha & Vathanophas Rachtham, 2012, Bilgili, Kedia, & Bigili, 2016). Knowledge acquisition changes the cognitive structure of the receptor, which depends on its ability to assimilate new knowledge (Pacharapha, et al., 2012). When organizations identify the influence and benefits of this link, they tend to become even more committed to having their members and the firm itself acquire knowledge and use them (Yli-Renko, et al., 2001).

The current hotel situation demands the need for constant learning (Rodríguez Antón, Oliva, & Laguna, 2003); therefore, by stimulating the absorptive capacity, incorporating new knowledge and applying them in the operation, the organizational performance can be promoted. The high employee turnover rates in the hotel sector (Hjalager, 2002), could affect the retention of information and knowledge existing in the organization. Staff contact with customers is a source of fundamental information about the markets and the business itself, so the turnover rate is harmful and can cause significant loss of knowledge. Therefore, another reason is presented so that the knowledge management and the transfer is implemented in a professional way in the hotel sector (Yang & Wan, 2004; Gjelsvik, 2002). For this reason, it is proposed that:

*H3a: In small and medium hotels in the city of Playa del Carmen, the absorptive capacity of marketing knowledge influences positively the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge.*

*H3b. The absorption capacity of marketing knowledge influences directly and positively the transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing.*

## 2.5. Influence of the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge on the transfer of tacit marketing knowledge.

The process of acquisition and transfer of knowledge certainly involves several key people, one of whom is the holder of knowledge and another is the recipient of knowledge. The outcome of knowledge acquisition depends on the effort of both parties from which the receivers can play a more important role. Especially in the case of adults learning who need to be “sufficiently motivated so that their desire and their intention to learn are at the necessary level that impels them to invest time and effort, so that the learning transcends” (Phipps, Prieto & Ndinguri, 2013, p. 21). However, the acquisition of marketing knowledge has been relatively little investigated (Simonin, 1999; Waranantakul & Ussahawanitchakit, 2012).

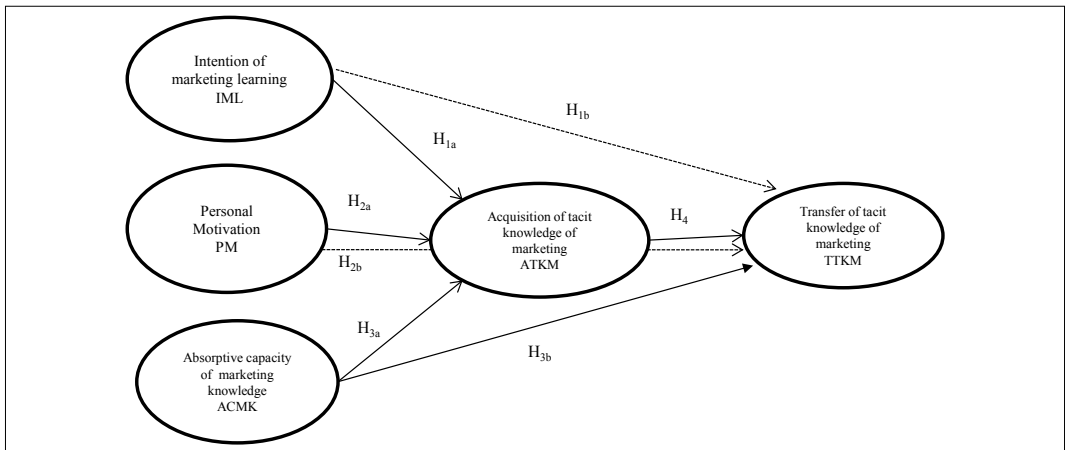
In order to motivate the acquisition, the knowledge content of a receiver and a source of knowledge must be perceived as valuable knowledge and a source of valuable knowledge (Desouza, Awazu, & Wan, 2006; Ford & Staples, 2006). The value of knowledge content is derived from its potential benefit to a recipient. Since acquiring knowledge, learning from others requires interaction between a receiver and a source, the characteristics of a source of value send signals to a receiver. The prominence of value from a source of knowledge and knowledge content are different for those who are experts or novices in a particular domain of knowledge (Desouza et al., 2006).

The acquisition of tacit knowledge requires continuous and intensive contact between employees (Kale, Sing, & Perlmutter, 2000), as well as the learning capacity of individuals working in a company is very important because the acquisition of knowledge depends on knowledge is only learned, it is not transferred in its original form (Brockmann & Anthony, 1998). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H4. Acquiring tacit marketing knowledge positively influences the transfer of tacit marketing knowledge.*

The conceptual model (Figure 1) represents the relational links between the constructs represented by IML, PM and ACMK and the acquisition of tacit knowledge of marketing (ATKM), and in turn with the transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing (TTKM). It also indicates the hypothetical relationship between the variables, that the arrows indicate significant causal relationships.

**Figure 1: Conceptual model of transfer of tacit marketing knowledge**



## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Census and data collection

The type of applied research was quantitative, explanatory and cross-sectional. Data collection was based on a census (Hair, Bush, & Ortinau, 2010) reported by the Riviera Maya Tourism Promotion

Bureau (Fideicomiso de promoción turística de la Riviera Maya, 2015). This Bureau reported 172 small and medium size hotels in the city of Playa del Carmen. Study subjects included the manager of each establishment, marketing manager, sales manager or, where appropriate, the head of reception. For the data collection, the technique of the personal survey face to face was used (Hair et al., 2010). In addition, a questionnaire about the constructs related to transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing in the personnel that perform functions related to marketing in small and medium hotel establishments was applied during the months of September to November 2015.

A total of 229 surveys were collected from 141 hotels which agreed to respond the survey and were located in the city of Playa del Carmen, Mexico. This hotels represented a coverage of 81.9% of the total of establishments in the area (N=172). There was a participation in the study of 45 % of women and 55% of men, of whom 43% had a time of seniority in the hotel of up to one year, 37.6% said to have a seniority between 2 and 5 years in the hotel.

Regarding the category of hotels surveyed, the majority had a category between 2 and 3 stars (19.9% and 49.6% respectively). The hotels of one star accounted for 16.3% of the establishments and those of 4 stars made up 14.2%. Regarding the educational level of the staff surveyed (Table 1), just over half (55%) had undergraduate studies and about 40% had undergraduate studies.

**Table 1: Descriptive data of the respondents.**

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	126	55
Female	103	45
Total	229	100
<b>Permanence in the hotel industry in years</b>		
Until a year	99	43.2
de 2 a 5	86	37.6
De 6 a 9	28	12.2
De 10 a 13	10	4.4
De 14 a 17	5	2.2
De 18 a 21	1	0.4
Total	229	100
<b>Hotel Type</b>		
One star	23	16.3
Two stars	28	19.9
Three stars	70	49.6
Four stars	20	14.2
Total	141	100
<b>Education level</b>		
Secundaria	7	3.1
Bachillerato	126	55
Bachelor's degree	91	39.7
Master's degree	5	2.2
Total	229	100
<b>Department where work</b>		
Sales Manager	149	65.1
Marketing Manager	49	21.4
Chief receptionist	31	13.5
Total	229	100

**Table 2: Descriptive analysis of the constructs and internal consistency**

Construct	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation	Cronbach Alpha
<b>Intention of marketing learning</b> (adapted from Hau & Evangelista, 2007).					
One of the objectives of the administration is the acquisition of mkt knowledge of the personnel.	1.00	7.00	5.1397	1.81795	0.896
Hotel management encourages local staff to learn and gain knowledge of mkt.	1.00	7.00	5.3100	1.74842	
The hotel management has provided necessary resources to support the acquisition of mkt knowledge	1.00	7.00	5.2140	1.74028	
The local staff wants to imitate the way they perform mkt in other hotels	1.00	7.00	5.1135	1.79063	
Local staff feel they need to learn about mkt techniques applied by staff abroad	1.00	7.00	5.4629	1.66614	
Local staff have a keen interest in learning mkt techniques applied by staff abroad	1.00	7.00	5.6725	1.68902	
<b>Personal motivation</b> (adapted from Szulanski, 1996, & Zapata L., 2004).					
The experience I get at the hotel is very valuable to me.	1.00	5.00	4.3668	1.06620	0.930
The experience I get at the hotel is very valuable to the company.	1.00	5.00	4.2096	1.04701	
At the hotel, opinions of employees are taken into account.	1.00	5.00	4.0087	1.10815	
There is support for the employee to apply the knowledge he acquires.	1.00	5.00	4.0611	1.07022	
The activities that take place in the hotel allow us to devise new ways to do things.	1.00	5.00	4.0568	1.15899	
We like the work we do at the hotel.	1.00	5.00	4.3450	1.04241	
<b>Absorptive capacity of Marketing knowledge</b> (adapted from Bennett, Moutsley, & Ali-Choudhury, 2008).					
I am always willing to adopt and use the marketing knowledge provided to us	1.00	7.00	5.2969	1.87762	0.932
I quickly assimilate knowledge and integrate it into my operations	1.00	7.00	5.4105	1.60511	
Implement measures to develop the knowledge they provide	1.00	7.00	5.4760	1.57156	
It does not take me long to learn the marketing methods we have been given	1.00	7.00	5.4236	1.63019	
<b>Acquisition of tacit knowledge</b> (adapted from Hau & Evangelista, 2007).					
Interact closely with foreign personnel with knowledge of MKT.	1.00	7.00	4.5677	2.03931	0.943
Collaborate closely with foreign people with knowledge of MKT	1.00	7.00	4.7991	1.85997	
Observing how foreign personnel solve Marketing problems	1.00	7.00	4.7249	1.90529	
Adoption of intuitive approaches used by foreign staff working in the hotel in solving marketing problems.	1.00	7.00	4.8210	1.89836	
<b>Transfer of tacit marketing knowledge</b> (adapted from D.B. Arnett, C.M. Wittmann, 2014 & Eng, 2006).					
Employees with knowledge of MKT teach others	1.00	7.00	5.4716	1.72325	0.874
Employees with knowledge of MKT willing to pass on knowledge	1.00	7.00	5.5459	1.64473	
Employees with knowledge of MKT share lessons / experiences without success	1.00	7.00	5.2926	1.73382	

### 3.2. Scales

The instrument used in the research comprises 23 items, which correspond to questions designed to obtain the necessary information that allows responding to the objective proposed in the work. The original scales were used with 5 and 7 points, this in order to maintain the scale's psychometric properties. According to Rusolillo (2012) it is possible to use different measurement scales to apply SmartPLS. Cronbach's alpha-set-of the measured variables was 0.937.

In the analysis of the dimensions it was found that the standard deviation in all the items is superior to 1 (table 2); on the other hand, in the Cronbach alpha where internal consistency was evaluated, the first "marketing learning intention" construct yielded a marginal alpha of 0.896. Garson (2010) comments that in the social sciences the alpha cut must be 0.80 or higher for a set of elements to be taken into account for a scale, but it is possible to use 0.70 as acceptable for a confirmatory investigation. Cronbach (1951), Numally (1978) and Thiétart (2001) establish that for the construct to be reliable it must present a Cronbach alpha coefficient equal to or greater than 0.7. In the second construct, "personal motivation", yielded an alpha of 0.930, in the third construct "absorptive capacity of marketing knowledge", gave an alpha of 0.932, in the fourth construct "acquisition of tacit knowledge of marketing", he an alpha of 0.943 and in the fifth and final construct "transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing", yielded an alpha of 0.874.

**Table 3: Loads of reflective indicators (n = 229).**

Construct	Variable	Model 1		Model 2		AVE
		Loads**	Loads**	Percentil 0.025*	Percentil 0.975*	
Acquiring tacit marketing knowledge	ACT26	0.904	0.904	0.858	0.940	0.855
	ACT27	0.927	0.927	0.885	0.961	
	ACT28	0.937	0.937	0.904	0.961	
	ACT29	0.931	0.930	0.899	0.954	
Absorptive capacity of marketing knowledge	BC1	0.916	0.917	0.885	0.943	0.835
	BC2	0.921	0.920	0.877	0.949	
	BC3	0.927	0.925	0.880	0.953	
	BC4	0.890	0.889	0.829	0.930	
Intention to learn marketing	IAM34	0.822	0.824	0.760	0.877	0.658
	IAM35	0.852	0.851	0.795	0.898	
	IAM36	0.867	0.866	0.814	0.909	
	IAM37	0.818	0.816	0.741	0.877	
	IAM38	0.744	0.744	0.624	0.832	
	IAM39	0.756	0.754	0.644	0.836	
Personal motivation	MP45	0.794	0.791	0.692	0.866	0.755
	MP46	0.845	0.843	0.773	0.895	
	MP47	0.906	0.906	0.869	0.936	
	MP48	0.887	0.888	0.824	0.930	
	MP49	0.906	0.906	0.880	0.928	
Transfer of tacit marketing knowledge	TCT23	0.924	0.925	0.894	0.950	0.802
	TCT24	0.938	0.937	0.906	0.958	
	TCT25	0.821	0.816	0.703	0.896	

\*Significant with a 0.05 alpha for a two tailed test.

\*\* Standard.

### 3.3 Analysis of results

Measurement model. For the statistical analysis of the data, the procedure of the Structural Equation Modeling (MEC) technique was followed to examine complex models with a large number of constructs, indicators and relationships (Garthwaite 1994; Barclay, Higgins & Thompson, 1995), because PLS allows to work with small samples and has less stringent assumptions about the distribution of the data (Chin & Newsted, 1999).

In PLS-SEM, the model is described by two components: 1) the measurement model, which relates the manifest variables to the latent variable and 2) the structural model, which shows the relationship between the latent variables (Tenenhaus, Vinzi, Chatelin, & Lauro, 2005). The relationship of each manifest variable is presented for each construct in Table 2. The structural models are validated in two stages: 1) review of the measurement model through various procedures and 2) validation of the structural model (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics 2008).

Based on Hulland's (1999) rule of preserving items with loads of 0.7 or more, those indicators of reflective measurement models that did not reach the acceptable level of reliability (Table 3) were eliminated. The convergence validity was evaluated with the AVE, which should be greater than 0.5 (Fornell-Larcker Criterion) (Seidel & Back, 2009).

In the final model (model 2, table 3), the reflective constructs have a minimum value above the limit (0.65) (Table 3). The convergence validity is also demonstrated when the items load high on their associated factors (load greater than 0.5) and these must be higher in the assigned construct than in any other.

In table 4, the cross loads of the reflective indicators are shown; All of them show a greater load in absolute value in the construct to which they have been assigned, in relation to any other reflective construct (Seidel & Back, 2009).

**Table 4: Cross loads of the reflective indicators model 2 (n=229).**

Ítem	Constructs				
	ACTM	CACM	IA	MP	TCTM
ATKM26	0.904	0.342	0.514	0.400	0.479
ATKM27	0.927	0.371	0.517	0.506	0.469
ATKM28	0.937	0.315	0.509	0.405	0.524
ATKM29	0.931	0.314	0.499	0.466	0.439
ACMK1	0.367	0.916	0.472	0.422	0.387
ACMK2	0.320	0.921	0.344	0.366	0.319
ACMK3	0.325	0.927	0.340	0.375	0.302
ACMK4	0.309	0.890	0.372	0.368	0.371
IML34	0.507	0.361	0.822	0.418	0.397
IML35	0.470	0.343	0.852	0.556	0.418
IML36	0.498	0.370	0.867	0.496	0.431
IML37	0.431	0.269	0.818	0.385	0.300
IML38	0.383	0.322	0.744	0.408	0.212
IML39	0.365	0.397	0.756	0.432	0.259
PM45	0.293	0.469	0.461	0.794	0.369
PM46	0.370	0.448	0.481	0.845	0.357
PM47	0.451	0.301	0.492	0.906	0.372
PM48	0.458	0.331	0.499	0.887	0.436
PM49	0.473	0.343	0.486	0.906	0.388
TTKM23	0.473	0.381	0.418	0.448	0.924
TTKM24	0.477	0.347	0.372	0.445	0.938
TTKM25	0.439	0.288	0.347	0.285	0.821



The Rho coefficient of Dillon-Goldsteins (composite reliability index) is used to evaluate the internal consistency (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In the model, the composite reliability index for reflective constructs is greater than 0.88 (Table 5), exceeding the acceptable minimum value of 0.70 (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & William 1998; Seidel & Back, 2009). As for discriminant validity, Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggest that a score of 0.5 for the AVE, indicates an acceptable level of discriminant validity. The mean of the variance extracted for the reflective constructs varies between 0.65 and 0.85 (Table 3). Such validity for reflective measurement models is also demonstrated when the root mean of extracted variance (AVE) of each construct is greater than the correlation with any other latent variable (Seidel & Back, 2009; Delić & Lenz, 2008).

Table 5 compares the AVE root on the diagonal of the tables with the upper triangle of the matrix containing the correlations between constructs. The AVE root is larger than the correlation for each column and respective row of the reflective constructs, suggesting discriminant validity (Seidel & Back, 2009; Duarte & Raposo, 2010) and acceptable convergence (Duarte & Raposo, 2010). Chin (1998), Seidel and Back (2009), agree that discriminant validity is met by comparing the cross loads of the indicators assigned to the reflective construct, against the rest of them. In the model, there are no problems of discriminant validity, since all the indicators show higher loads in their respective constructs with respect to other reflective constructs (Duarte & Raposo, 2010). Cross loads are shown in Table 4.

**Table 5: Matrix of correlations between constructs and AVE root greater than the correlations and Dillon-Goldsteins Rho index of model 2 (n = 229).**

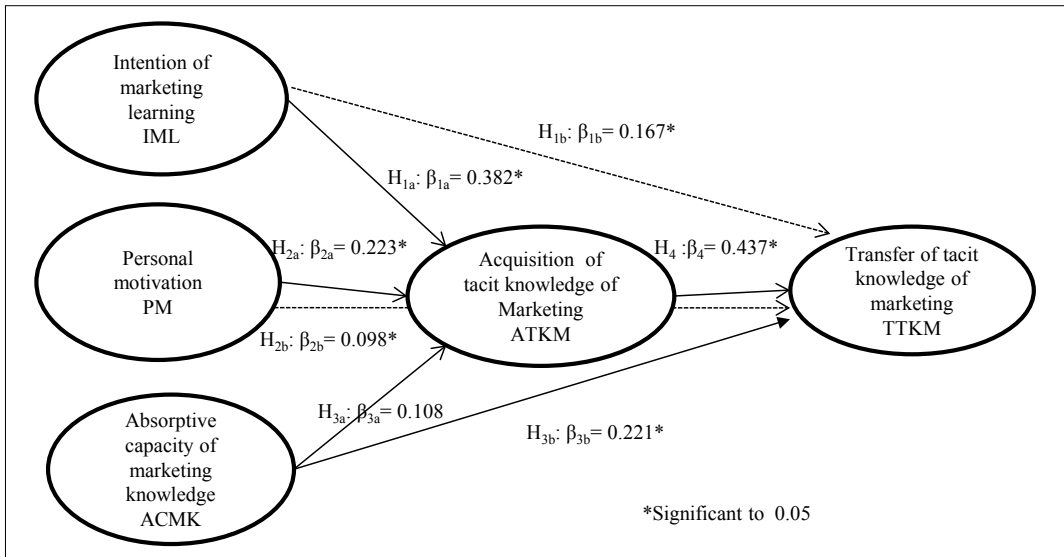
	ATKM	ACMK	IML	PM	TTKM	Rho de Dillon Goldstein
ATKM	<b>0.92</b>					0.94
ACMK	0.36	<b>0.91</b>				0.93
IML	0.55	0.42	<b>0.81</b>			0.90
PM	0.48	0.42	0.55	<b>0.86</b>		0.93
TTKM	0.51	0.38	0.42	0.44	<b>0.89</b>	0.88

**Structural model.** The significant results of the structural model are presented in Figure 2. The model explains 31.0% of the TTKM variance ( $R^2 = 0.31$ ), directly through ATKM and CACM and indirectly by IML and PM (H1b, H2b). The bootstrap technique with 200 subsamples was used to estimate the significance of the path coefficients in the model and to compare the estimators statistically. The results of the proposed model (figure 2) support 85% of our hypotheses, with a confidence level of 95%.

The results in Figure 2 show that the hypothesis 1a regarding the direct and positive relationship of the Marketing Learning Intent (IML) on Acquisition of Tacit Knowledge of Marketing (ATKM), was significant and in the expected direction ( $\beta_1 = 0.382$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). In relation to the hypothesis 2a, the results indicate that personal motivation (PM) directly and significantly affects the Acquisition of Tacit Knowledge of Marketing (ATKM) ( $\beta_2 = 0.223$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), supporting the hypothesis. However, no statistical evidence was found to support the hypothesis 3a, which holds that the absorptive capacity of marketing knowledge affects the Acquisition of Tacit Knowledge of Marketing ( $\beta_{3a} = 0.108$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

In addition, the results show that there is a direct, positive and significant effect of the Acquisition of Tacit Marketing Knowledge (ATMK) on the Transfer of Tacit Knowledge of Marketing (TTKM) ( $\beta_4 = 0.437$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). In the same way, a positive and significant direct effect between absorptive capacity of marketing knowledge (ACMK) and TTKM ( $B_{3b} = 0.221$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), supporting the hypothesis.

When testing the indirect effects on knowledge transfer, we found a positive indirect effect of the Marketing Learning Initiation (IML) on the Transfer (TTKM) ( $\beta_1 * \beta_4$ ) of 0.167 ( $p < 0.05$ ), being verified H1b. Similarly, Personal Motivation (MP) indirectly supported the Transfer of Tacit Knowledge of Marketing (TTKM), with an effect of 0.098 ( $p < 0.05$ ), being verified H2b.

**Figure 2: Final model of transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing.**

### 3.4. Discussion

In the empirical test, it was found that the intention of marketing learning, personal motivation, acquisition of tacit knowledge of marketing and the absorptive capacity of marketing knowledge, influence positively the transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing in small and medium Hotels, while the absorption capacity of marketing knowledge does not contribute significantly in the acquisition of tacit knowledge of marketing.

The results confirmed the hypothesis that the intention of marketing learning is positively related to the acquisition of tacit knowledge of marketing and the transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing among the personnel linked to this area in small and medium hotels in the city of Playa del Carmen, in Quintana Roo, Mexico. The intention of learning implies a willingness to acquire knowledge (Hau & Evangelista, 2007). As supported by other studies (Hamel, 1991; Easterby-Smith, et al., 2008), it has been corroborated that marketing learning intent is a powerful antecedent of two behaviors, acquisition and transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing. In the hospitality industry, it is common for employees of different nationalities and with different experiences, so it is advisable to take advantage of the different marketing skills to solve problems and detect new market opportunities.

On the other hand, it was found that personal motivation is a force that contributes positively, both in the acquisition of tacit knowledge of marketing and in the transfer of tacit knowledge in marketing staff in small and medium hotels in the city of Playa de Carmen. Employee motivation can lead to feelings of satisfaction and well-being associated with recognition of the value of gaining marketing knowledge techniques and their transfer (Kankanhalli et al., 2005).

Contrary to other research (Pacharapha & Vathanophas Rachtham, 2012, Bilgili, et al., 2016), the impact of the absorption capacity of marketing knowledge on the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge was not verified in ours, a possible explanation is the nature of the absorptive capacity that implies the capacity to assimilate and take advantage of the new knowledge that comes from external sources (Tortoriello, 2015). However, there is a positive, direct and significant relationship with the transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing, as presented in many other research (Park & Vertinsky, 2016; Ferreras-Méndez, Fernández-Mesa & Alegre, 2016). The lack of this dynamic capacity will diminish the acquisition of knowledge, its transfer and, therefore, the performance of the firm (Yli-Renko et al., 2001; Pacharaha et al., 2012). The transfer of tacit knowledge of the marketing will be more effective if the employee has the necessary disposition to acquire relevant knowledge about the area of performance. That is, if it is able to adopt and apply this new knowledge to the activities that are already developed, activities in which this knowledge may be important for its growth.

#### 4. Conclusions

Tacit intraorganizational knowledge is considered a strategic aspect for the success and good organizational performance. If the small and medium size hotels want to gain a competitive advantage by using marketing tacit knowledge, they should promote the transference of it. This research contributes to understand that intention of marketing learning and personal motivation affect the acquisition of tacit knowledge and indirectly the transfer of tactic knowledge of marketing. However, absorptive capacity of marketing does not influence directly in the acquisition of knowledge but it does in transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing.

The literature emphasizes two mean areas of marketing knowledge in the hospitality sector (Line & Runyan, 2012): function and environment of marketing. Thus, it is expected that transference of marketing knowledge improves the functions of management, planning, strategy, electronic marketing, public relations and internal marketing.

#### 5. Limitations

Like all research, it also has limitations. Since the study was applied as a census, but not all establishments participated, only 81.9%, the results can not be deduced from the population. It is recommended that future studies consider the influence of these variables on the explicit knowledge of marketing in small and medium hotels in the city of Playa del Carmen. It would also be pertinent to study the impact of the variables studied in this research on the transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing through a multigroup analysis, separating national and foreign collaborators from the areas related to the marketing of the hotels studied.

#### 6. Managerial implications

The study also argues that the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge is directly influenced by marketing learning intent and personal motivation; and together with the ability to absorb marketing knowledge facilitate the transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing among employees of small and medium hotels in the city of Playa del Carmen. Therefore, the information obtained from this sector provides entrepreneurs with a frame of reference to determine what they need to know and how to implement actions that favor the exchange of tacit marketing information among employees and enable them to be more competitive in their businesses, Confidentiality of marketing information as established by empirical evidence in terms of terminology.

For these reasons, the acquisition of tacit knowledge of marketing and the effects that the previously mentioned constructs, have on it can be postulated as the necessary condition for the transfer of tacit knowledge of marketing.

Managers working in small and medium hotels can benefit from the results of our study by understanding the importance of tacit knowledge transfer of marketing. We argue that actions should be favored and implemented to foster the intent of marketing learning, personal motivation, and the ability to absorb knowledge, which will directly affect the acquisition of tacit marketing knowledge and, at the same time, increase the effectiveness of tacit marketing knowledge transfer mechanisms, fostering learning and promoting ad hoc performance in the competitive environment.

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