

**ANTECEDENTS OF TOURIST TRIP-PLANNING
AUTONOMY: THE MODERATING EFFECTS OF A
GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS**

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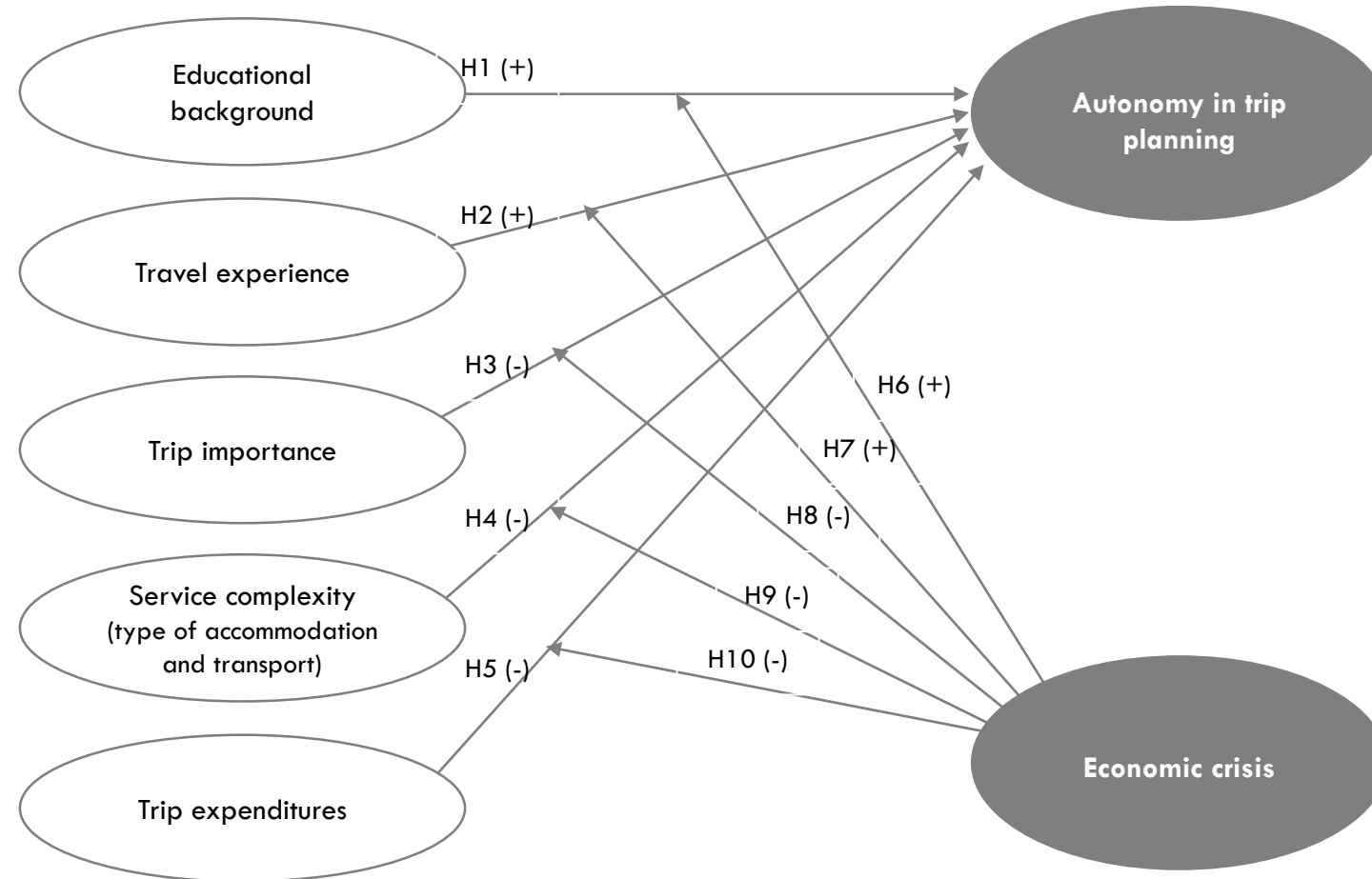
Antecedents

- Autonomy as a critical phenomenon for the tourism market
- Economic crisis as a disruptor of tourism activity

Objectives

- To identify potential antecedents of autonomy in trip planning, related to tourists' characteristics and trip characteristics
- To analyze the moderating role of the economic crisis in the relationships between the antecedent factors and autonomy in trip planning

Model



Methodology

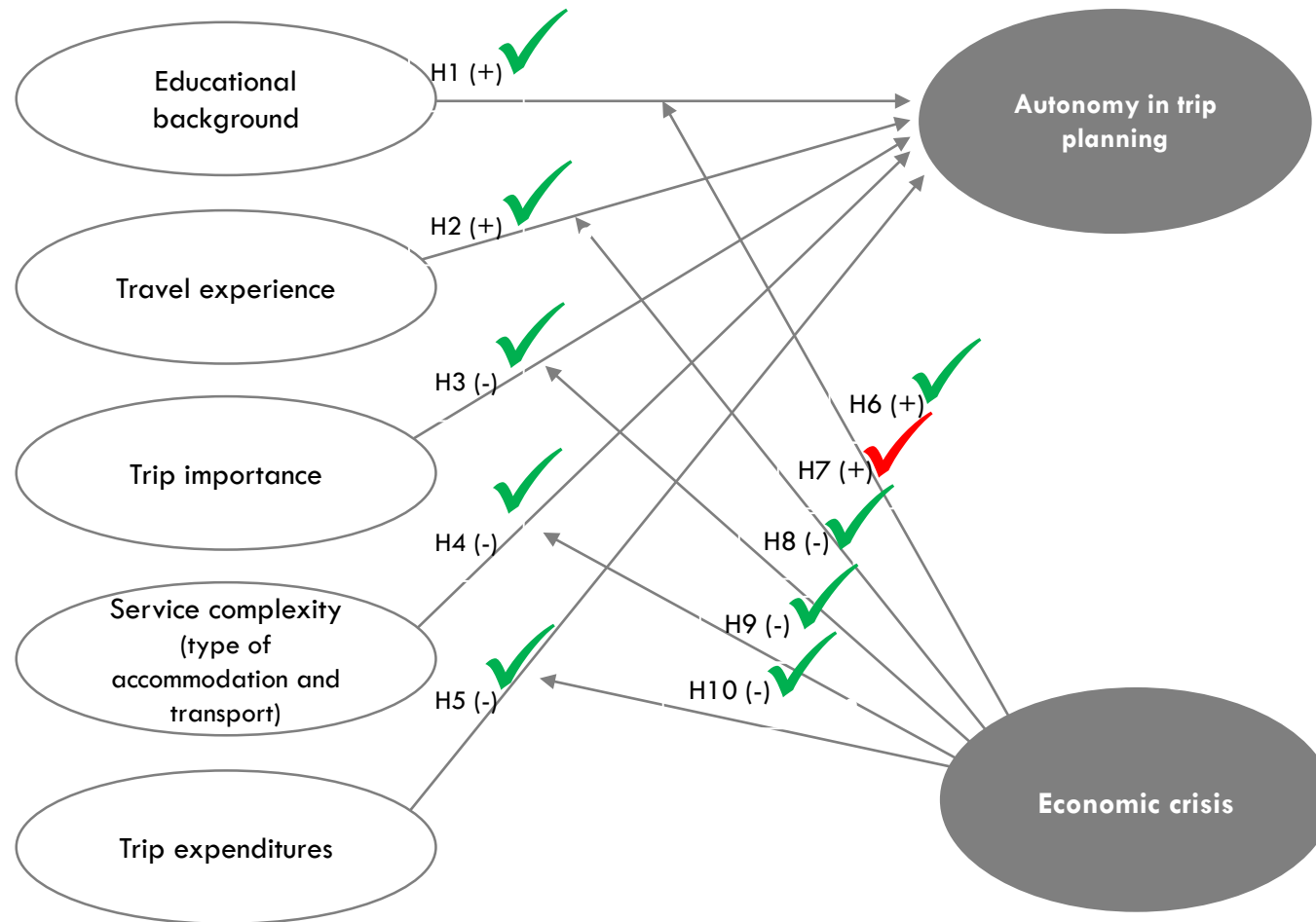
Data collection

- Annual survey on Spanish tourists residents behaviour, FAMILITUR 2006-2011 panel
- Official data Government of Spain
- 20.121 entries (trips)

Measures

- Autonomy: Internet usage intensity
- Crisis: period, 2006-2011 reflecting the onset and escalation of the crisis in Spain
- Educational background (university education), trip importance (long weekend...), accommodation (hotel), transport (airline), total trip expenditure

Analysis and Results



Conclusions and implications

- We identify five antecedent factors related to both tourists' and their trips:

EDUCATION +

EXPERIENCE +

TRIP IMPORTANCE -

SERVICE COMPLEXITY -

TRIP EXPENDITURES -

- Most educated and most experienced tourists plan their trips by themselves, reflecting their travel knowledge or skills
- When perceptions of risk or uncertainty increase, tourists tend to be more conservative in choosing the distribution channel, relying less on their own autonomy
- If the vacation is more important or has a longer duration, tourists are less likely to use the Internet
- As investments increase, tourists stop planning their trip autonomously
- The most common transportation method in our sample is a flight (which requires prior booking), which involves greater use of the Internet than other, less common alternatives

Conclusions and implications

- This study reveals a moderating influence of the last global economic crisis on the relationships among several antecedent factors and autonomy

The economic crisis enhances or intensifies some tourist behaviors:

- It potentiates autonomy: as the economic crisis progresses, tourists become more autonomous, using the Internet to find the most efficient tourism solutions
- Intensifies the relationships of some antecedents with autonomy: namely, education, trip importance, transport, and trip expenditures
- During economic crises, certain skills, such as the efficient use of the Internet, and specific feelings, such as the need for security or to minimize the risk, become accentuated

Conclusions and implications

Some insights for tourism managers:

1. The tourism industry should **optimize online offerings**, to address the differences in tourists' skills, abilities, and experience
2. As consumers progressively become more skilled and experienced with trip planning, tourism agents should enable **greater adaptation and personalized content**
3. Tourism agents should **provide more information and more guarantees** for trips that evoke higher perceptions of risk and uncertainty
4. Traditional tourism intermediaries could benefit specifically from **needs for advice or security** when tourists must make particularly complex decisions
5. Tourism providers should realize that the economic crisis intensified consumers' economizing efforts, including their autonomous trip planning. **BAR. Transparency.**

Thank you for your attention

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