



Entrepreneurship in Tourism

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Abstract – Entrepreneurship in tourism plays a vital role in fostering economic growth, employment generation, innovation, and sustainable development, particularly in regions rich in natural, cultural, and heritage resources. The tourism sector offers diverse opportunities for entrepreneurial activities such as accommodation services, travel agencies, tour operations, transport services, event management, eco-tourism, adventure tourism, and community-based tourism enterprises. Tourism entrepreneurs act as catalysts by identifying market gaps, mobilizing local resources, adopting innovative business models, and enhancing visitor experiences while contributing to regional development. This study examines the concept, scope, and significance of entrepreneurship in tourism, with emphasis on its contribution to income generation, poverty alleviation, and inclusive growth. It also explores the factors influencing tourism entrepreneurship, including government policies, infrastructure, access to finance, technological advancement, skill development, and socio-cultural environment. Furthermore, the study highlights emerging trends such as digital tourism platforms, sustainable and responsible tourism practices, and experiential tourism, which are reshaping entrepreneurial opportunities in the sector. The abstract underscores the challenges faced by tourism entrepreneurs, such as seasonality, high competition, regulatory barriers, environmental concerns, and vulnerability to external shocks like pandemics and geopolitical conflicts. The study concludes that strengthening tourism entrepreneurship through supportive policies, capacity building, innovation, and sustainability-oriented strategies is essential for enhancing the resilience and long-term competitiveness of the tourism industry.

Keywords – Entrepreneurship in Tourism, Economic Growth, Sustainable Tourism, Innovation, Employment Generation, Inclusive Development, Digital Tourism, Tourism Resilience.

I. BACKGROUND OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TOURISM

Entrepreneurship in tourism refers to the process of creating, developing, and managing businesses that provide goods and services to travelers. It plays a vital role in shaping the tourism industry, driving innovation, generating employment, and contributing to local and national economies. Historically, tourism entrepreneurship began with small-scale, family-run establishments such as inns, restaurants, and travel services catering to travelers and pilgrims. With the growth of global trade, transportation, and communication, tourism evolved into a major economic sector, giving rise to a wide range of entrepreneurial ventures — from travel agencies and tour operators to eco-lodges, adventure tourism, and digital travel platforms. In developing countries, tourism entrepreneurship emerged as a tool for economic diversification, poverty reduction, and regional development. Governments and international organizations have since encouraged small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in tourism due to their capacity to create local employment and preserve cultural heritage. The rise of technology and digitalization in the 21st century has further transformed the landscape. Online booking systems, social media marketing, and platforms like Airbnb and TripAdvisor have empowered entrepreneurs to reach global audiences with minimal resources. Additionally, the focus on sustainable and responsible tourism has created opportunities for eco-entrepreneurs and social enterprises promoting environmental conservation and community-based tourism. Today, tourism entrepreneurship is recognized as a dynamic and innovative field that combines business acumen with

creativity, cultural sensitivity, and sustainability principles. It continues to evolve with trends in digital transformation, experiential travel, and environmental awareness.

II. RESEARCH GAPS IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TOURISM

Micro foundations of tourism entrepreneurial decision-making

Why it's a gap: Many studies describe outcomes (e.g., firm growth) but few explain the cognitive, social and experiential processes that lead people to found tourism ventures.

Role of digital platforms on micro-entrepreneurship dynamics (beyond listing effects)

Why: Platform effects (Airbnb, OTAs) are documented at macro levels, but little on how platforms change entrepreneurial business models, work organization, and resilience in small tourism ventures.

Entrepreneurial ecosystems in rural and peripheral destinations

Why: Most ecosystem research focuses on urban tech hubs; rural tourism entrepreneurship has unique actors, resources and constraints that are understudied.

Social entrepreneurship vs commercial entrepreneurship trade-offs in community tourism

Why: Literature often treats social and commercial objectives separately; there's a gap on how entrepreneurs balance/transform between these goals and performance trade-offs.



Measurement and outcomes of sustainable entrepreneurship in tourism

Why: Sustainability is widely discussed, but consistent metrics linking entrepreneurial practices to ecological and socio-economic outcomes are scarce.

Gender, migration and inclusivity in tourism entrepreneurship

Why: There's evidence of gendered barriers and migrant entrepreneurship, but fewer studies on intersectional experiences, power dynamics, and policies that successfully promote inclusivity.

Crisis response, adaptability and entrepreneurial resilience (post-COVID and beyond)

Why: COVID-19 stimulated work on resilience, but many studies are descriptive and short-term. Longitudinal evidence on adaptation strategies and durable changes is limited.

Financing models and informal finance in nascent tourism ventures

Why: Access to formal finance is a known issue, but alternative mechanisms (crowdfunding, pay-as-you-go, local rotating funds) in tourism contexts need systematic evaluation.

Cultural entrepreneurship: commodification vs authenticity tensions

Why: Cultural tourism entrepreneurship intersects with heritage management, but empirical work linking entrepreneurial strategies to authenticity perceptions and community consequences is thin.

Interplay between regulation and entrepreneurial innovation

Why: Regulation (zoning, licensing, short-term rental rules) shapes entrepreneurship, but research rarely examines how entrepreneurs co-construct regulations or circumvent them with novel business models.

Value chains and linkages: from informal suppliers to global markets

Why: Tourism depends on many upstream and downstream actors (food suppliers, craftspeople). The role of entrepreneurial linkages in upgrading local value chains is underexplored.

Methodological gap: more mixed-method and longitudinal studies

Why: Cross-sectional surveys dominate; they limit causal claims about entrepreneurship processes and outcomes.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A Study on Entrepreneurship in Tourism

Research Design

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design. The descriptive design is used to understand the existing status, characteristics, and nature of entrepreneurial activities in the tourism sector, while the analytical design helps in examining the relationships between entrepreneurial factors and tourism development outcomes. The study follows a mixed-method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques, to obtain a comprehensive understanding of tourism entrepreneurship. The research is cross-sectional in nature, as data are collected from respondents at a single point in time.

Study Area

The study is conducted in selected tourist destinations (heritage, eco-tourism, or cultural tourism sites) within the chosen region/state/country. These locations are selected due to their significant tourism potential and presence of tourism-related entrepreneurial activities.

Population of the Study

The population consists of:

- Tourism entrepreneurs (hotels, homestays, travel agencies, tour operators, transport providers, event organizers)
- Supporting stakeholders such as tourism officials and local community representatives (for qualitative insights)

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology explains the systematic procedures followed to achieve the objectives of the study.

Sources of Data

Primary Data

Primary data are collected directly from tourism entrepreneurs using:

- Structured questionnaires
- Personal interviews
- Field observations

Secondary Data

Secondary data are collected from:

- Research journals and books
- Government reports (Ministry of Tourism, UNWTO, WTTC)
- Tourism policy documents
- Previous theses and dissertations



- Official tourism websites

Sampling Design

- Sampling Method:
- Stratified random sampling / purposive sampling (depending on availability of entrepreneurs)
- Sample Size:
- A sample of 100–300 tourism entrepreneurs (can be adjusted based on scope and resources)

Tools for Data Collection

- Structured questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale
- Interview schedule for qualitative data
- Observation checklist

V. RESULTS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Entrepreneurship in Tourism

Results of the Study

The analysis of data collected from tourism entrepreneurs reveals several important trends regarding the nature, performance, and challenges of entrepreneurship in the tourism sector.

Profile of Tourism Entrepreneurs

- A majority of tourism entrepreneurs are small and micro-enterprise owners operating hotels, homestays, travel agencies, tour operations, transport services, and local experience-based businesses.
- Most entrepreneurs entered the tourism business due to availability of local tourism resources, self-employment motivation, and income opportunities.
- The sector shows increasing participation of youth and women entrepreneurs, especially in homestays, eco-tourism, and handicraft-linked tourism activities.

Nature of Tourism Enterprises

- Most tourism enterprises operate on a small-scale basis with limited capital investment.
- Seasonal demand significantly affects revenue and employment generation.
- Informal and family-run businesses dominate the tourism entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Major Findings of the Study

Based on the analysis, the following key findings emerge:

- Tourism entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in local economic development and income generation.
- Small and micro enterprises dominate the tourism entrepreneurial landscape.
- Access to finance remains a major constraint for tourism entrepreneurs.
- Government support mechanisms are underutilized due to lack of awareness and procedural complexities
- Digitalization positively influences business performance and competitiveness.

- Tourism entrepreneurship supports inclusive growth by involving women, youth, and local communities.
- Seasonality and external shocks significantly affect business stability.
- Sustainable and eco-friendly practices are increasingly recognized but not uniformly implemented.

Discussion of Results

- The results of the study align with existing literature on tourism entrepreneurship, which emphasizes its role as a driver of regional development and employment generation. The dominance of small-scale and family-run enterprises confirms the labor-intensive and decentralized nature of the tourism industry. The limited access to formal finance and low awareness of government schemes highlight structural challenges faced by tourism entrepreneurs, particularly in developing economies. These findings support earlier studies that point to institutional gaps and policy implementation issues in tourism development. The positive impact of digital tools on entrepreneurial performance reflects the growing importance of technology in modern tourism. Entrepreneurs who embraced online platforms were better able to cope with competition and market volatility, especially during periods of demand fluctuation. The discussion also reveals that while tourism entrepreneurship contributes to inclusive growth, its sustainability depends on improved infrastructure, skill development, policy support, and resilience-building strategies. The vulnerability of tourism enterprises to crises such as pandemics, natural disasters, and geopolitical events underscores the need for diversification and risk management in tourism entrepreneurship.

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations Entrepreneurship in Tourism

Summary of the Study

The study examined the concept and significance of entrepreneurship in tourism, focusing on its role in economic development, employment generation, innovation, and sustainable growth. Tourism entrepreneurship encompasses a wide range of activities including accommodation services, travel and tour operations, transport services, eco-tourism, adventure tourism, and community-based tourism enterprises. The study analyzed the factors influencing tourism entrepreneurship such as access to finance, government support, infrastructure, entrepreneurial skills, innovation, and technology adoption. It also explored the challenges faced by tourism entrepreneurs, including seasonality, limited financial resources, regulatory complexities, high competition, and vulnerability to external shocks. The findings highlight the growing importance of digitalization and sustainable tourism practices in shaping entrepreneurial success in the tourism sector.



Conclusions of the Study

Based on the analysis, the following conclusions are drawn:

- Entrepreneurship in tourism is a key driver of economic growth and local development, particularly in tourism-rich regions.
- The tourism sector provides substantial opportunities for self-employment and small business creation, especially for youth and women.
- Small and micro enterprises form the backbone of tourism entrepreneurship, contributing significantly to employment generation.
- Access to finance and institutional support remains a major constraint for tourism entrepreneurs.
- Government initiatives and tourism policies have the potential to strengthen entrepreneurship, but their effectiveness depends on awareness and ease of implementation.
- Adoption of digital technologies enhances competitiveness, market access, and business sustainability.
- Sustainable and responsible tourism entrepreneurship is essential for long-term environmental and socio-cultural preservation.
- The tourism sector's vulnerability to crises highlights the need for resilience and diversification strategies among entrepreneurs.

Recommendations of the Study

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are suggested:

Policy and Government Support

- Simplify procedures for licensing, registration, and financial assistance for tourism entrepreneurs.
- Enhance awareness of tourism-related entrepreneurship schemes through targeted outreach programs.
- Promote public-private partnerships to support tourism startups.
- Technology and Innovation
- Promote the use of digital platforms for marketing, bookings, and customer engagement
- Support innovation in experiential, eco-friendly, and community-based tourism products.

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Appendices

Study on Entrepreneurship in Tourism

- Appendix A: Questionnaire for Tourism Entrepreneurs
Section I: Profile of the Entrepreneur 1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other 2. Age group: ☐ Below 25 ☐ 26–35 ☐ 36–45 ☐ 46–55 ☐ Above 55 3. Educational qualification: ☐ School ☐ Graduate ☐ Postgraduate ☐ Professional 4. Type of tourism enterprise: ☐ Hotel ☐ Homestay ☐ Travel agency ☐ Tour operator ☐ Transport ☐ Other 5. Years of experience in tourism business: ☐ Below 3 ☐ 3–5 ☐ 6–10 ☐ Above 10
Section II: Business Characteristics 6. Nature of ownership: ☐ Sole proprietorship ☐ Partnership ☐ Company ☐ Cooperative 7. Source of initial capital: ☐ Own savings ☐ Bank loan ☐ Government schemes ☐ Informal sources 8. Scale of operation: ☐ Micro ☐ Small ☐ Medium

- Section III: Entrepreneurial Factors (5-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree) 9. I possess adequate entrepreneurial skills to manage my tourism business. 10. Access to finance influences the growth of my enterprise. 11. Government support schemes are helpful for tourism



entrepreneurs. 12. Innovation improves competitiveness in tourism business. 13. Digital platforms increase customer reach and revenue.

Section IV: Challenges and Opportunities 14. Major challenges faced (tick all applicable): ☐ Seasonality ☐ Finance ☐ Infrastructure ☐ Competition ☐ Regulations 15. Tourism entrepreneurship contributes to local employment generation. ☐ Yes ☐ No

Appendix B: Interview Schedule (for Key Stakeholders)

1. What are the major opportunities for entrepreneurship in the tourism sector?
2. What challenges do tourism entrepreneurs commonly face?
3. How effective are current government policies in promoting tourism entrepreneurship?
4. What role does innovation and technology play in tourism enterprises?
5. What measures can strengthen sustainable tourism entrepreneurship?

Appendix C: Variables of the Study

- Independent Variables: - Entrepreneurial skills - Access to finance - Innovation - Government support - Infrastructure - Technology adoption

Dependent Variables: - Business performance - Income growth - Employment generation - Sustainability of tourism enterprises

Appendix D: Consent Form

• I hereby give my consent to participate in the research study on Entrepreneurship in Tourism. I understand that the information provided by me will be used strictly for academic purposes and my identity will remain confidential.

• Name of Respondent: _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____

General Objectives of Entrepreneurship in Tourism

To Promote Economic Growth and Development

Tourism entrepreneurship stimulates local and national economies by creating new businesses, attracting investment, and increasing income generation through tourism-related activities.

To Generate Employment Opportunities

One of the key objectives is to create direct and indirect job opportunities in sectors such as hospitality, transportation, entertainment, handicrafts, and food services.

To Encourage Innovation and Competitiveness

Entrepreneurs introduce new ideas, products, and experiences that enhance the quality and diversity of tourism services, making destinations more competitive in the global market.

To Support Sustainable and Responsible Tourism

Entrepreneurship in tourism aims to balance economic benefits with environmental protection and social well-being by promoting eco-friendly, culturally sensitive, and community-based tourism ventures.

To Enhance Local Community Participation

Tourism entrepreneurship empowers local communities by encouraging them to participate in tourism activities, helping them benefit directly from the industry and preserve their cultural heritage.

To Diversify Tourism Products and Services

Entrepreneurs develop niche markets such as adventure tourism, wellness tourism, rural tourism, and heritage tourism, broadening the range of offerings available to travelers.

To Improve Infrastructure and Service Quality

Entrepreneurial initiatives often lead to improvements in infrastructure, accommodation, transportation, and hospitality standards within destinations.

To Foster Regional and Rural Development

By establishing tourism enterprises in less-developed or rural areas, entrepreneurship helps reduce regional inequalities and supports inclusive growth.

To Strengthen International and Domestic Tourism Linkages

Tourism entrepreneurs build connections between local attractions and global markets, enhancing the flow of visitors, culture, and trade.

To Encourage Skill Development and Capacity Building

Entrepreneurship promotes training, education, and the development of managerial and technical skills essential for sustaining growth in the tourism sector.

Specific Objectives of Entrepreneurship in Tourism

- a) To identify and develop innovative tourism products and services



Encourage entrepreneurs to create unique attractions, experiences, and packages that cater to diverse tourist interests and emerging market trends.

b) To promote sustainable business practices in tourism enterprises

Ensure that tourism activities minimize environmental impacts, conserve natural and cultural resources, and support long-term destination sustainability.

c) To empower local communities through tourism ventures

Facilitate community-based enterprises that allow local residents to participate directly in tourism operations and benefit economically and socially.

d) To improve the quality and competitiveness of tourism services

Foster excellence in service delivery, customer satisfaction, and brand reputation through entrepreneurial initiatives and professional management.

e) To enhance the use of technology and digital platforms in tourism

Support the adoption of e-commerce, online marketing, booking systems, and social media tools to increase accessibility and global reach.

f) To attract domestic and foreign investment in tourism enterprises

Encourage financial and institutional support for startups and small-scale businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector.

g) To generate employment and self-employment opportunities

Promote entrepreneurship as a means of job creation, especially for youth, women, and marginalized groups in both urban and rural areas.

h) To strengthen linkages between tourism and other sectors

Encourage collaboration between tourism and related industries such as agriculture, handicrafts, transport, and cultural industries to maximize economic benefits.

i) To promote training, education, and skill development

Develop entrepreneurship training programs and tourism education initiatives to enhance managerial and operational competencies.

j) To contribute to regional development and poverty alleviation

Utilize tourism entrepreneurship as a strategic tool for reducing regional disparities and improving living standards in economically weaker areas.

Significance of the Study of Entrepreneurship in Tourism

The study of entrepreneurship in tourism holds great importance for understanding how innovation, business development, and sustainable practices contribute to the growth of the tourism sector. It provides insights into the ways entrepreneurial activities can transform destinations, create employment, and stimulate inclusive economic development.

i. Promotes Economic Development

Studying tourism entrepreneurship helps identify how new businesses and ventures contribute to income generation, investment attraction, and overall economic progress at local, regional, and national levels.

ii. Encourages Innovation and Competitiveness

The study highlights how entrepreneurs introduce innovative tourism products, services, and experiences that enhance destination competitiveness and attract a wider range of visitors.

iii. Supports Sustainable and Responsible Tourism

Understanding entrepreneurship in tourism encourages the adoption of sustainable business models that balance economic growth with environmental conservation and social responsibility.

iv. Empowers Local Communities

Research on tourism entrepreneurship demonstrates how community-based ventures can empower local populations by providing livelihood opportunities, preserving culture, and ensuring equitable distribution of tourism benefits.

v. Facilitates Policy and Planning

The study provides valuable data and insights for policymakers and tourism planners to design effective support systems, training programs, and financial incentives for entrepreneurs.

vi. Enhances Employment and Skill Development

By analyzing entrepreneurial trends and opportunities, the study underscores the role of entrepreneurship in generating employment and promoting vocational and managerial skill development in the tourism sector.



vii. Bridges Academia and Industry

It helps educational institutions, researchers, and industry professionals collaborate to foster entrepreneurship education, innovation, and research-based solutions in tourism.

viii. Contributes to Regional and Rural Development

The study reveals how entrepreneurship can drive growth in rural and underdeveloped areas by promoting eco-tourism, agro-tourism, and heritage-based tourism ventures.

ix. Encourages Adaptation to Market Changes

In a rapidly changing global environment, studying entrepreneurship helps understand how tourism businesses adapt to technological, social, and economic shifts, such as digital transformation or post-crisis recovery.

x. Builds a Foundation for Future Research and Policy

The study serves as a foundation for future academic research and policymaking by identifying challenges, best practices, and emerging trends in tourism entrepreneurship.

The significance of studying entrepreneurship in tourism lies in its potential to drive innovation, sustainability, community empowerment, and economic growth, while shaping the future of global and local tourism industries.

VI. REVIEW OF LITERATURE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TOURISM

Social entrepreneurship in tourism: applying sustainable livelihoods approaches

This study is based on the paradigm of social constructionism, assuming that “people create social reality(ies) through individual and collective actions” and exploring “what people at a particular time and place take as real, how they construct their views and actions, when different constructions arise, whose constructions become definitive, and how the process ensues” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 189). A qualitative approach, as is being applied here, is particularly useful in circumstances where a detailed understanding of a given issue is required, where extensive information about processes, experiences, and stakeholders is of interest, and where mostly nonnumerical information is available (Bazeley, 2007). Qualitative research has three main goals: to understand subjective meanings of actions and actors, to explore the context of actions, and to reconstruct the frameworks and structures that generate actions and meanings (Lüders & Reicherts, 1986). Due to these focal points, Löblich and Pfaff-Rüdiger (2011) argue that a qualitative methodology is particularly applicable to

network-related questions, as it enables researchers to analyse three dimensions of a network: “(1) the actors themselves and their subjective perspective [...], (2) the relations between the actors while disclosing the patterns of relations as structures and (3) the context of each network since qualitative research always includes the context of acting” (p. 636). As this research explores complex interrelations and interdependencies between SEs, destination communities’ livelihood assets, as well as related transforming structures and processes, these can be considered network-related questions.

Tourism and its key role in economic development

Attention of policy makers and planners in the country’s tourism industry as an economic development strategy, cultural, political, security and it is more focused and the effects of economic and cultural considered the various nations and governments. Tourism industry is Kind of indirect foreign investment in each country and its effects on all sectors of economic expansion.

Tourism industry and its contribution to the national economy, including important topics that are of interest to the owners of closely related industries such as hotel management, transportation, and travel industry, restaurant industry, Agriculture etc. The main function of this industry is foreign currency income, redistribution of income, creating jobs, sell goods and services required by tourists and especially crafts, transport development and economic prosperity.

Promoting female entrepreneurship in tourism for sustainable development

Introduction- Nowadays, female entrepreneurship is a developing sector in the global business environment. In many countries, it is a real driving force for the economy. Female employment rates are high in services and especially in tourism. Many women try to start their own business in tourism, while many countries promote it.

In Armenia, tourism has a very significant role in economic development. According to the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia (RA), 1894377 tourists arrived in Armenia in 2019 (increased by 14.7% as compared to 2018) (Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, 2019). In 2020, the number of incoming tourist visits to Armenia was only 360338, there was a decline by 81% compared to 2019. In 2021 the sphere began to restart slowly, and 870308 incoming tourists visited Armenia (Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, 2021).

In 2019 the total contribution of tourism in the GDP in Armenia was 1.8 billion US dollars or 872.1 billion Armenian dram (12.9% of the GDP). In 2020 during pandemic the total contribution of tourism in the GDP in Armenia decreased to 446.9 million US dollars or 216.8 billion Armenian dram (3.4% of the GDP) (WTTC, 2021). The total contribution of tourism to employment amounted



to 107.4 thousand people in 2020 compared to 137.8 thousand in 2019 (11.2% of the employed) (WTTC, 2021). In 2020, the number of the employed population in Armenia was 1060.1 thousand people, 46.2% or 489.9 thousands of which were female. 70% of female workers were 35-64 years old. Only 3% of employed women are working in the accommodation sector and food service activities, 2% in arts, entertainment and recreation, 20% in agriculture, forestry and fishing, 10% in manufacturing, 19 % in education, 10% in human health and social work activities, etc. (Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, 2021).

For Armenia, it is essential to promote female entrepreneurship in tourism. Indeed, it would lead to sustainable development due to solving gender issues and equitable regions' development. Moreover, female entrepreneurship contributes to social, economic, and environmental development. There are many problems for women to start a business in tourism. The problems are connected with the lack of finance, necessary knowledge, skills, etc.

The article aims at exploring the main competencies and needs of sustainable entrepreneurship and female entrepreneurial skills in the tourism sector. The results could be the basis to promote sustainable female entrepreneurship in tourism.

Literature Review- The past 30 years have seen critical changes within women entrepreneurs' status and political weight. Besides, there was an increase in interest and research on the topic. By the end of the 1990s, female entrepreneurship had been established as a well-respected and defined area of academic inquiry. It had become a popular argument for the media and political debates on employment and labour markets (Minniti and Naude, 2010).

Female entrepreneurship is an increasing global trend in developed, developing, and even less developed nations. Female entrepreneurship is very important for communities and nations as it is connected with income generation, increased quality of local life, higher employment rates, human capital accumulation, and balanced wealth generation (Pinar, 2021).

Women in rural areas, where men mainly dominate the population, have an opportunity to gain money and to be independent economically (Vukovic et al., 2021). To find out if there are gender differences in entrepreneurial behaviour, Minniti (2010) has researched people from 34 nations. The results showed that GDP per-capita levels are associated with the gender gap in entrepreneurial behaviour. However, subjective perceptions have their role as well. This study revealed that individual demographic and economic conditions have no significant importance. A survey in Macedonia showed that the perception of women towards taking part in tourism entrepreneurship

differs from the perceptions of men. Women think that their participation in tourism is low and needs to be changed (Serafimova and Petrevska, 2018). A study by Serafimova and Petrevska (2018) showed the problems women face when they are employed in the tourism sphere. Between 70% and 98% of respondents denoted presence from a medium to the high level of intensity: lack of an established system of support and understanding by the employer; job specifics (working time is not fixed); inadequate competencies for the workplace; unequal possibilities in payment, career advancement, participation and professional development of women; and the case when the woman is a single parent. Four-fifths of the respondents identified the 'Difficulties in establishing a confidential relation' as medium significance. The key factors of female entrepreneurship in tourism in 30 European countries were explored. The study results showed a long-run cointegration among female entrepreneurship, GDP, receipts from tourism, and other variables (Ghosh, 2020). According to research in Catalonia, the most significant factors of becoming a woman entrepreneur in tourism are 'fear of failure' and 'perceived capabilities' (Noguera et al., 2013). According to a study in Germany, while promoting women's entrepreneurship, it is important to consider the gaps in the societal, political environment, which may restrict the interest of females in entrepreneurship (Welter, 2004). Thus, some studies show that female entrepreneurship has a significant role in the economy. In this case, institutional steps should be taken to promote it.

VII. MAPPING THE OUTCOMES OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND TOURISM ON HOST COMMUNITIES: A THREE-DIMENSIONAL APPROACH

Introduction

Capitalist tourism development models are known to result in less than the anticipated benefits for host communities, and produce unexpected problems associated with irresponsible tourism operations (Brookes et al., 2014). Likewise, there is little indication that neoliberal policies have delivered sustainable outcomes or uplifted the socio-economic status of marginalised sectors involved in tourism (Dredge, 2017). Such circumstances have motivated recent calls for action to develop alternative strategies that will address industry challenges, and make tourism more inclusive and equitable for host communities (HigginsDesbiolles, 2020).

Social entrepreneurship is being promoted as an alternative development strategy for tourism and host communities that will enable the creation of more sustainable futures (e.g. Ateljevic, 2020). Simply defined, social entrepreneurship is "an entrepreneurial activity with an embedded social purpose" (Austin et al., 2006, p.1), initiated by social entrepreneurs or individuals employing their entrepreneurial talent to pursue altruistic goals



(Seelos & Mair, 2005). Through the establishment of social enterprises or business ventures with primary social missions, social entrepreneurship aims at addressing social problems (e.g. poverty, lack of job opportunities, poor public health) by balancing the delivery of financial sustainability and social impacts for beneficiaries and communities (e.g. Austin et al., 2006). This widely recognised and applied notion of social entrepreneurship is what Newey (2018) called, 'compensatory social entrepreneurship.' However, not all social enterprises exist to compensate for market and institutional failures. Some social enterprises recognise that the global capitalist system does not work for the best interest of society (and the environment), and that this system must be transformed. This latter form pertains to 'transformative social entrepreneurship,' an alter-globalisation movement that stimulates grassroots innovations, alternative economies, and systemic change (Newey, 2018).

Given that tourism is widely recognised as a socio-economic development strategy adopted in capitalist societies, the tourism industry is considered as a fertile ground for social entrepreneurs (e.g. Aquino et al., 2018). Similarly, the notions of compensatory and transformative social entrepreneurship are reflected in present conceptualisations of social entrepreneurship through tourism, or commonly known as, tourism social entrepreneurship (TSE):

a process that uses tourism to create innovative solutions to immediate social, environmental and economic problems in destinations by mobilizing the ideas, capacities, resources and social agreements, from within or outside the destination, required for its sustainable social transformation. (Sheldon, Pollock, et al., 2017, p. 7) At the surface level, the foregoing definition resonates with compensatory social entrepreneurship, as TSE is positioned to combat persistent social ills that exist in destinations (e.g. Sheldon, Pollock, et al., 2017). By implementing conscious and responsible practices, tourism social enterprises lean towards eliminating negative externalities or the undesirable consequences of doing business (e.g. Newbert & Hill, 2014), which are more likely to occur in the traditional capitalist development models. However, TSE is also promoted as a tool to positively transform destinations and the way tourism is developed (e.g. Sheldon, Pollock, et al., 2017); hence, TSE can also be transformative and has the potential to change the current tourism system. Several scholars advocate for the latter movement, as they promote TSE as an alternative to capitalist forms of tourism development placing local communities at the centre of the social entrepreneurial agenda (e.g. Aquino et al., 2018; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020). Thus, investigating the outcomes of tourism social enterprises helps us ascertain the transformative potential of TSE.

Entrepreneurship in the tourism industry

Introduction Since 1959, the Malaysian government has been officially involved in the tourism industry with the establishment of the first tourism department under the Ministry of Trade and Industry. However, the role of this department was limited because during that period, the government focused more on the agricultural and mining sectors. In the 1970s, the government showed higher interest in the tourism industry with the establishment of the Tourism Development Corporation (TDC) under the Parliament Act promulgated on 10 August 1972. In the same year, Malaysia organised the 21st Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) annual conference in Kuala Lumpur, which has been recognised as a platform for Malaysia to involve itself in tourism aggressively.

Since then, the tourism industry has contributed significantly in terms of income to the country. Based on the record for the period 1998–2008, the number of tourist arrivals in Malaysia showed an increase of 300% (from 5.5 million to 22.0 million), while the amount of tourist receipts demonstrated an increase of 478% (from 8580.5 million in 1998 to 49561.2 million in 2008). In terms of the number of hotels and rooms in Malaysia, data for the 10-year period showed an increase of 66.3% (from 1419 hotels in 1998 to 2360 hotels in 2007) for hotels and 49% for rooms (from 107,791 rooms in 1998 to 160,327 rooms in 2007).

The establishment of the Ministry of Culture, Art, and Tourism on 19 May 1987 brought many significant changes in promoting Malaysia as a tourism destination. This ministry has implemented many strategies to promote tourism at the national and international level. Every state also organises its own tourism department to look into tourism-related issues, and all these ministries cooperate to promote Malaysia. At the federal level, the ministries launched the 'Zoom Malaysia' amount of tourist receipts demonstrated an increase of 478% (from 8580.5 million in 1998 to 49561.2 million in 2008). In terms of the number of hotels and rooms in Malaysia, data for the 10-year period showed an increase of 66.3% (from 1419 hotels in 1998 to 2360 hotels in 2007) for hotels and 49% for rooms (from 107,791 rooms in 1998 to 160,327 rooms in 2007).

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Kelantan, Terengganu, and Pahang are three states located in the East Peninsular Malaysia. Collectively they are



known as the ‘heartland of Malay culture’ where traditions are still preserved amidst a rustic lifestyle. Among the popular tourism products are stunning islands, beaches, hill resorts and national parks; culture; food; cottage industries; traditional activities like kite-flying; and eco-tourism-related activities such as scuba diving. Aside from having various attractions, these SMHEs cannot operate all-year round because of their location, which is oriented facing the South China Sea. These states are affected by the monsoon season from November to March, which causes strong, big waves, heavy downpours and floods. However, the number of international and national tourists visiting these states has increased every year. In 2008, the number increased by 35% from 9,387,633 in 2007 to 12,663,918 in 2008.

Literature Review- Tourism is traditionally a small- and medium-sized enterprise (Morrison, 1998; Page et al., 1999; DTI, 2003; Bastakis et al., 2004), as the great majority of tourist facilities are run by small- and medium-sized businesses (Avcikurt, 2003). According to Morrison (1996), there are several reasons justifying the high number of small-sized hotels in the tourism industry: (1) low capital and lack of specific qualifications and professional requirements needed to start a business; (2) demand is very localised and segmented, enabling small accommodation providers to offer a wide range of products, facilities, and special services to a niche market; (3) the nature of a small firm allows an owner-manager to respond quickly to customer needs and expectations; and (4) small hotels are normally owned and managed by families, making them economically viable.

Researchers normally define the size of a hotel in terms of the number of workers and rooms. Moutinho (1990), Wong (1991), and Buhalis and Main (1998) define SMHEs as enterprises offering less than 50 rooms and employing fewer than 10 staff. Ingram et al. (2000) define hotels more specifically: a small hotel has 50 rooms, a medium-sized hotel has 51–100 rooms, and a large hotel has over 100 rooms. According to Middleton (1998), SMEs employing less than 250 people are dominant in the industry, which covers approximately 99% of all tourism businesses.

VIII. THE NATURE OF ETHICAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TOURISM

Introduction- The research purpose is to develop a deeper understanding of ethical entrepreneurship in tourism through examining narratives of individual tourism entrepreneurs commended for their ethical business conduct. This research contributes to the scant literature at the academic juncture of ethics, tourism and entrepreneurship. Walle (1995) contends that mainstream business ethics do not meet the ‘special needs’ demands of the tourism sector. He argues that the tourism industry’s

“...economic power and its impact create moral and ethical responsibilities” (Walle, 1995, p.264). Additionally, Williams, Shaw & Greenwood (1989) seminal work on tourism entrepreneurship highlights the peculiarities of the symbiosis of consumption and production. The idiosyncratic nature of tourism entrepreneurship thus demands a tailored lens for examining ethics. This highlights the theoretical significance of this research.

The research is idiographic in nature, looking at the personality and ethics of individual entrepreneurs. An idiographic study does not aim to develop general laws; but instead to compose meaningful descriptions of unique events (Rychlak, 1981). Therefore, a Weberian Ideal-Type construct of an ethical tourism entrepreneur is developed. In a Weberian sense, this constitutes what is objectively possible, rather than representative (Rogers, 1969). This establishes a distinguishing ontological perspective with personal constructs and human experiences as its central tenets (Botterill, 1989). Weber’s Ideal-Type emphasises the individual actor in interpretivist research (Rogers, 1969). The Ideal-Type is mirrored in Personal Construct Theory, which sees the individual person as a unique event (Kelly, 2003). Personal Construct Theory (or PCT hereafter) thus forms this research’s methodological foundation.

The actors in this research are individual tourism entrepreneurs, with entrepreneurship being understood as a form of behaviour (Drucker, 1985), and entrepreneurs’ actions as based on a unique moral compass (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991). Their primary focus is to found and run a for-profit, commercial business in an ethical and responsible way (Wempe, 2005). The business itself is the centre of operations. This is unlike social entrepreneurs, whose primary focus is to pursue a social mission using a commercial entity as a conduit to achieve this social mission. This marks a crucial selection criterion for this research.

IX. ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TOURISM

Introduction- Defining tourism is a difficult matter because there is no completely standardised definition of the concept. Tourism is a creative industry, an industry of services that creates memorable experiences for individuals (tourists). This activity evolves continually and is influenced by the changes in our contemporary society, integrating in the general process of development.

Tourism is a key-concept of European economy. It encompasses a wide range of products and destinations and involves several parties differently interested – both public and private – with fields of competence that are much decentralised at regional and local levels. Tourism industry in the EU generated more than 5% of EU GDP; it includes 8 million enterprises and about 9.7 million jobs. If we take into account the related sectors, the estimated



contribution is much larger: 10% of the EU GDP and 12% of the labour force. In these conditions, we can say that tourism industry can be looked at as a mixture of organisations actively involved in the development, production and trading of products and services that can meet tourist needs (Londkipanidze, 2002). What matters in the development of this industry is entrepreneurship, SMEs and innovation enhancement. These are the factors that ensure the development of the industry at global, regional, national, and local levels.

Literature Review- Ndabeni and Rogerson note that tourism entrepreneurship benefited from few studies and researches. Intensive literature review shows there have been few studies regarding tourism entrepreneurship in tourism and small enterprises in the tourism industry (Jaafar, Aishah and Mohd, 2010).

Tourism entrepreneurship concerns all commercial enterprises or activities, no matter if micro- or macro-, in urban or rural areas, owned by small individual entrepreneurs, business partner groups or private or public companies with limited liability providing a wide range of services in the tourism industry (Lordkipanidze, 2002).

These services include transport, hotel industry, catering industry, travel agencies, tour-operators, entertainment activities, production and marketing of art and handicraft works, sports tourism, and zoos and botanical gardens. Thus, the tourism industry can be seen as a mixture of public and private organisations actively involved in the development, production and marketing of products and services that can meet tourist needs.

Tourism entrepreneurship is defined (Saayman and Slabbert, 2001) as activities related to the development and operation of legal tourism enterprises, i.e. those enterprises that operate on a profitable basis and that aim at meeting tourist and visitor needs. These enterprises include, among others, hotels, guest houses, travel agencies, and tour-operators. This means that people selling tourists goods or services such as handicraft are also tourism entrepreneurs.

The tourism development process is seen as a way of increasing local economies. In this context, the contribution of small, innovative firms in tourism has been particularly significant. These firms are, in fact, closely related to the development of creative products and to the innovative entrepreneurship spirit (Ateljevic and Page, 2009). The tourism industry depends on both local involvement (employees or entrepreneurs) and local host good will towards tourists (Blackstock, 2005).

One of the four elements of a mechanism of economic growth, successful entrepreneurial economy, is represented by a financial system acceptable from a functional point of view, a system able to direct the funds of savings depositors to fund users, particularly entrepreneurs. Thus, in a successful entrepreneur economy, it should be enough

easy to start a business with no costly and long-lasting bureaucratic formalities (Baumol, Litan and Schramm, 2009).

According to van Zyl and Mathur-Helm (2008), to advance successfully to high performance, the owners of small tourism enterprises should make sure their business are strategically positioned to be able to compete on the tourism market. They should be ready to risk and innovate, and to filter everything from the perspective of other people making things happen through people (technical dimension), to develop an environment favourable to firm activities for both employees and customers (psychological dimension) and, last but not least, to rely on moral values (ethical dimension).

Social entrepreneurship and tourism in Cambodia: advancing community engagement

Introduction- Social entrepreneurship, pursuing a dual mission in achieving both financial sustainability and social impact, has been identified as an important contributor to economic development and social change in local communities (Alvord, Brown, & Letts, 2004; Doherty, Haug, & Lyon, 2014; Mair & Marti, 2006). Tourism scholars agree that social entrepreneurship has an important role to play in the adoption of financially sustainable strategies to achieve social aims and the responsible development of tourism (Alegre & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016; Altinay, Sigala, & Waligo, 2016; Laeis & Lemke, 2016; Mottiar, Boluk, & Kline, 2018; Power, Di Domenico, & Miller, 2017; Sheldon & Daniele, 2017; Sigala, 2016; Von der Weppen & Cochrane, 2012). Initiatives in social entrepreneurship are deemed successful only if supported by key stakeholders including government, private sector organizations, tourists and local communities (Daye & Gill, 2017; Khieng & Dahles, 2015b). As an increasing number of studies address the need for adequate government policies to promote engagement of the tourism industry and NGOs in supporting social entrepreneurship (Dredge, 2017). As one of Cambodia's core industries, second after the garment industry, tourism is a major source of income and an engine of economic growth. However, tourism poses challenges that often outweigh the benefits, such as dislocation of local communities, environmental degradation and human trafficking (Carter, Thok, O'Rourke, & Pearce, 2015; Mao, DeLacy, & Grunfeld, 2013). The solution to such problems is sought in advancing approaches that contribute to sustainable development. Recent initiatives in ecotourism, for example, have the potential to provide revenues to rural populations, diversifying income opportunities and diffusing the rural exodus to the city. But rarely are such initiatives developed and operated by local people (Biddulph, 2018; Mao, Grunfeld, DeLacy, & Chandler, 2014). As a consequence, Cambodia's revenue leakage to overseas agents and investors, estimated at 40% in 2017, is one of the highest in Asia (World Bank Group, 2017, p. 52). Therefore, more effort has to be invested in



developing initiatives that advance local participation in the Cambodian tourism industry.

Literature Review- In the burgeoning literature on social entrepreneurship (for a recent review of the relevant literature, see Choi & Majumdar, 2014), consensus is gathering that the defining characteristic of a social enterprise is the dual mission of financial sustainability and social purpose. Hence, the widely shared definition that a social enterprise is an organization that applies commercial strategies to create social value (Doherty et al., 2014, p. 417). Such ventures do not fit neatly into the conventional categories of private and public, profit and non-profit organizations (Dees, 1998). The quest for financial sustainability follows the logic of the market, whereas social objectives aim to meet the needs of communities (Mair & Marti, 2006) and advance social change (Alvord et al., 2004). Social enterprises, in search of financial support and opportunities to achieve their social objectives, mobilize a wide range of financial resources and apply a variety of business models to accommodate seemingly incompatible objectives (Peredo & McLean, 2006). A particular challenge for social enterprises is to grow their social impact by increasing their reach or deepening their community engagement through social and economic empowerment (Desa & Koch, 2014).

This resonates with the literature on social entrepreneurship in tourism. Burns (1999) was among the first to point out that, in tourism, traditional sectoral boundaries create a dichotomy between the “development first” approach and the “tourism first” approach. While the former focuses on tourism as an instrument in achieving social development goals led by the non-profit sector, the latter is about market-led industry expansion, which supposedly spawns economic growth. Separately, neither approach achieves sustainable development at community level. The non-profit sector, while having community interests at heart, may lack relevant business expertise to develop commercially viable tourism products. Conversely, private sector-led initiatives rarely encourage community participation in business ventures. TSEs, on the other hand, apply market-based strategies to address social problems and, as a result, may offer pathways to innovations to create sustainable solutions for all stakeholders involved (Aquino et al., 2018; Giang, Whitford, & Dredge, 2017).

As recent research shows, there is a rapid growth in TSEs, in particular in low- and middle-income countries where tourism is a key economic sector (Altinay et al., 2016; Von der Weppen & Cochrane, 2012). It is assumed that due to their hybrid character, social enterprises are particularly well equipped to effectively mobilize financial resources and ensure the cooperation of multiple stakeholders. As TSEs favour tourism where consideration for the economic, social and environmental impact prevails, they are committed to create value for local communities without jeopardizing the environment and contribute to

sustainable regional development (Kline, Shah, & Rubright, 2014). In the context of low-income countries where the tourism industry is foreign dominated creating income leakage (Mao et al., 2013), where local people lack financial resources and skills to operate a business (Mao et al., 2014), and where government institutions are too weak to enforce appropriate regulations to support local communities, social enterprises may create the necessary infrastructure and mechanisms for local participation (Biddulph, 2018).

Development-focused social entrepreneurship has a natural affinity with tourism addressing a variety of social and environmental issues as such initiatives pursue mission-related impacts and the creation of social value. In recent years, social enterprises have come to play an increasingly prominent role in projects that promote, for example, ecotourism, sustainable tourism, community-based tourism (CBT) or inclusive tourism (see Sheldon and Daniele, 2017). Most of such innovative approaches advocate tourism development that generates greater economic benefits for and enhances the well-being of local communities in myriad of ways including education, advocacy and capacity building. This, however, does not necessarily imply that local people actively participate in the operation and management of such ventures (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018, p. 6). Current literature offers a variety of overlapping concepts that capture ways in which communities may participate in TSE-led tourism development. This variety can be described in terms of a continuum ranging from marginal to comprehensive participation in tourism planning and management (Tosun, 2006). Table 1 outlines this continuum. The remainder of this section elaborates the diverse approaches to, and the level of, community participation, as discussed in literature to date.

The entrepreneurship factor in sustainable tourism development

Introduction- This article is designed to emphasize the entrepreneurship factor in sustainable tourism development and to identify ways of enhancing entrepreneurship in tourism. The study is based on an M.Sc. thesis titled “Enhancing Entrepreneurship in Rural Tourism for Sustainable Regional Development: The case of So”dersla” tt region, Sweden” [1], for the programme of Environmental Management and Policy in the International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics (IIIEE) at Lund University. The research question addressed is “How to stimulate and promote entrepreneurship for sustainable tourism development?” Sustainable tourism development is envisioned as the “management of all resources in a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural heritage, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems” [2]. The Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism stresses the benefits that tourism can bring to rural areas. This requires a long-term perspective and



careful consideration of the ways in which tourism and environment interrelate [3].

The trends observed in tourism indicate an increased demand for small-scale, nature-related and rural tourism. Tourism is one of economic sectors in which a great degree of involvement is needed by the entrepreneurial sector due to its rapid international market growth [4]. An entrepreneurial orientation with respect to rural development should be based on stimulation of local entrepreneurs thus, creating jobs and adding economic value to a region and community and at the same time keeping scarce resources within the community [5]. Moreover, what is needed is an environment that enables responsible entrepreneurial development, taking the demands of sustainable development as points of departure.

Case study- The case study represents the So" dersla" tt region, which is situated in the southwest corner of Ska" ne, the southernmost part of Sweden. It is a newborn tourist destination and one of the most agriculturally intensive areas in Sweden. The area has a great variety of natural and cultural assets as well, which can be considered as a potential for rural entrepreneurship development. The proposition is that entrepreneurship, developed in a sustainable way, can make a positive contribution to rural development of this region and can help to sustain and improve the quality of life in the area. What is needed is an environment that enables entrepreneurial development in the area, taking into consideration the demands of sustainable development.

Tourism Entrepreneurship – Review and Future Directions
Introduction- Driven by increasing wealth and economic development, tourism is one of the most rapidly growing industries worldwide, with annual growth rates reaching 10 % (Menon, 2010). This development calls for entrepreneurs and new business start-ups to serve growing markets (Lordkipanidze, Brezet, & Backman, 2005) and thereby contributes to value creation. Tourism as an industry is subject to changes due to shifts in consumer preferences and emergence of new technology (Hall & Williams, 2008). In particular, the structural change and transition to more experience-based products in tourism (Sundbo, Orfila-Sintes, & Sørensen, 2007) demand entrepreneurial behaviour to implement needed innovations. Traditional hospitality services related to accommodation, transport and food services are being supplemented and partly replaced by experience-based services and products (Alsos, Eide, & Madsen, 2014). Established firms and larger firms have, to a limited extent been, able to innovate and develop their offerings to meet an increasing demand for unique experiences creating memories, engagement and emotional involvements for tourists. Hence, the tourism industry is largely dependent on new firms both to serve market growth and to support innovation and industry transformation towards the offering of experience-based products. Consequently,

entrepreneurship has also been in focus for policies directed towards developing the tourism industry with the aim of increasing innovation and value creation. Furthermore, tourism has increasingly been described as a strategy for economic development in weak regions (Jóhannesson & Huijbens, 2010), and several countries support new business start-ups within tourism, particularly in less developed areas.

Mainstream Entrepreneurship and Tourism Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship as a research field involves multiple definitions, perspectives and disciplines, and the task of defining mainstream entrepreneurship research is not straightforward. However, the last decade has witnessed considerable progress towards the achievement of conceptual clarity regarding the distinctiveness of entrepreneurship research (Davidsson, 2008). Broadly, at least three views of entrepreneurship can be identified (Alsos, 2007). First, the innovation-based perspective on entrepreneurship relates to the work of Schumpeter (1934). He regarded entrepreneurs mainly as innovators, who combine resources in new ways to create innovations and introduce them to the market, thereby differentiating themselves from other companies (Landström, 2000). Second, the business formation perspective views entrepreneurship as the creation of new business organisations (Gartner & Carter, 2003). In this view, entrepreneurship is regarded as the process from the entrepreneurial intention to the development and establishment of new organisations. Both innovating and imitating new businesses result from entrepreneurial action, although they may play different roles in society (Aldrich & Martinez, 2001). Third, the opportunity-based perspective places the pursuit of an opportunity at the core and defines entrepreneurship as the discovery and exploitation of business opportunities (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). The opportunities in question are related to bringing future goods and services into existence (Venkataraman, 1997). Opportunities are seen as recognised, discovered or created by entrepreneurs (Sarasvathy, Dew, Velamuri, & Venkataraman, 2011) and are then exploited to bring products and services to the market. There are different possible modes of exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities, including new business start-ups and exploitation through existing firms (Wiklund & Shepherd, 2008). Hence, the opportunity-based view broadens the focus from new business start-ups only to additional ways of organising opportunity exploitation. The broadening of entrepreneurship as a field of research has also led to several new subtopics, such as sustainable entrepreneurship (Dean & McMullen, 2007; Shepherd & Patzelt, 2011), social entrepreneurship (Dees, 2001; Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum, & Shulman, 2009), community entrepreneurship (Cooney, 2008; Johannisson & Nilsson, 1989) and institutional entrepreneurship (Garud, Hardy, & Maguire, 2007); all of these topics have received attention as topics for special issues of the leading entrepreneurship journals in recent years.



Understanding the Challenges of Refugee Entrepreneurship in Tourism and Hospitality

Introduction- The number of refugees all over the world has substantially increased in recent years. As a sociological term, the word “refugee” is used to describe people who are in urgent need of a new state of residence because they would be persecuted or risk their physical security if forced to return or stay where they are (Gibney, 2004). According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), by June 2017, the number of refugees around the world had reached over 22.5 million (UNHCR, 2017a).

Notwithstanding that refugees are traditionally viewed as a source of strain for their host countries, some refugees possess various skills, knowledge and experience, and are financially independent, and even wealthy enough to invest and actively contribute to the economy of the host countries.

Entrepreneurship is recognized as a key driver for growth and regeneration of economies (Nissan, Galindo, & Méndez, 2011; Wong, Ho, & Autio, 2005; Wennekers & Thurik, 1999). From an ethnic perspective, studies have found that entrepreneurship rates are usually higher among foreigners than natives (Fairlie & Woodruff, 2004; Clark & Drinkwater, 2000), and that entrepreneurs belonging to minority ethnic groups are generally more successful.

Entrepreneurship and Integration of Syrian Refugees in Turkey

The civil war in Syria since 2011 has resulted in one of the largest global displacement of people and has created one of the worst humanitarian crises (IRC, 2016). Various interventions and peace talks aiming to find a solution have failed. So far between 400,000 and 470,000 Syrians have died; 7.6 million have been displaced and 4.8 million have been registered as refugees (Woods & Kayali, 2017). In all, more than 11 million people were forced from their homes and around seven million have sought refuge beyond Syrian borders particularly, in the neighbouring countries of Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

The international community failed to respond effectively to the refugee crisis, and Turkey as the gateway to the West became a major host country owing to the open-door policy that was adopted during the crisis (Ostrand, 2015). At the beginning, it was uncertain whether refugees would stay permanently in Turkey; therefore, some temporary solutions were arranged by governmental bodies to provide basic needs and services for refugees at the refugee camps in border cities (Yazgan, Utku, & Sirkeci, 2015; Baban et al., 2017). However, continuing political and social crises in Syria have grown worse, increasing the number of new arrivals and blocking the return option.

Entrepreneurship in tourism firms: A mixed-methods analysis of performance driver configurations

Introduction- Entrepreneurial behaviour is key to the financial performance of tourism firms. Tourism research has thus increasingly identified and explored the role of entrepreneurial behaviour. One stream of this research analysed the role of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial networks in destination development, while another identified specific types of tourism entrepreneurs such as growth-oriented or lifestyle entrepreneurs and family firm owner-managers. A third stream focused on investigating the relevance of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) for tourism firm performance. Despite the gained knowledge on the importance of tourism entrepreneurship for firm performance, a comprehensive analysis of key performance factors of tourism firms and their linkage is still missing. Therefore, this article aims to identify causal configurations of drivers of higher tourism firm performance, which originate in an organization's structure and environment. Entrepreneurial behaviour is a key determinant of firm performance. An entrepreneurial firm is “... one that engages in product market innovation, undertakes somewhat risky ventures, and is first to come up with ‘proactive’ innovations, beating competitors to the punch describing an EO with its sub-dimensions of innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-taking.

Women entrepreneurs in tourism in a time of a life event crisis

Introduction- Female entrepreneurship contributes significantly to socio-economic prosperity, especially in countries of the Global South (Ramadani et al., 2015), where it often provides the only source of household income, thus reducing local poverty and inequality (Rosca et al., 2020). For example, in Morocco, women entrepreneurs run hospitality enterprises in remote, rural destinations employing a considerable number of local people (Alonso-Almeida, 2012). Likewise, female entrepreneurship represents an important driver of the tourism industry in Uganda whereby women enhance the socio-economic well-being of local communities by providing employment opportunities, especially to those considered disadvantaged, such as residents of rural areas (Katongole et al., 2013). Lastly, evidence from Kenya pinpoints how women entrepreneurs recycle solid waste, thus not only conserving the environment but also providing a means of livelihood for local low-income groups (Climate and Clean Air Coalition, 2018). These examples showcase women entrepreneurs as enablers of the world's transition towards the goal of socio-economic and even environmental sustainability, particularly in disadvantaged and resource-scarce communities (Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016). Empowerment of women to develop and maintain entrepreneurial skills has therefore become a policymaking priority (Foss et al., 2019). Female entrepreneurship as a driving force for achieving the goals of sustainable development has been repeatedly recognised



by many (inter)national organisations, including the United Nations.

Literature Review- Motivations of women to become entrepreneurs can be explained by Maslow's Theory of Needs (Lee, 1996). This theory advocates that people are motivated to satisfy their needs in a hierarchical order i.e., starting with basic, or lower-order, towards more sophisticated, or higher-order, needs. The basic needs are attributed to moneymaking required for immediate household support (Ganesan et al., 2002). The more sophisticated needs usually occur once the basic needs have been satisfied. For example, once the enterprise becomes sufficiently profitable for comfortable living, women entrepreneurs may begin thinking of other business and personal goals (Winn, 2005).

Lee (1996) posits that women entrepreneurs can be driven by such higher-order needs as achievement; affiliation; autonomy; and dominance. Achievement is explained by desire to showcase individualized effort and obtain extra rewards, such as increased business profits or public recognition (Sadi & Al-Ghazali, 2010). Affiliation is associated with willingness to help local communities or build close(r) relationships with them (Alonso-Almeida, 2012). Autonomy (sometimes defined as independence) suggests desire to be non-dependent on others' opinions or resources (Tajeddini et al., 2017). Lastly, dominance is attributed to willingness to execute power, become a leader, and control others, such as employees (Kourtesopoulou & Chatzigianni, 2021). Importantly, by satisfying these higher-order needs, women entrepreneurs do not only develop their business enterprise, but can also build a stronger "self" (Badzaban et al., 2021). This underlines the importance of supporting progression of women entrepreneurs from basic to more sophisticated needs as this will facilitate their professional growth, but also personal development.

One of the main critiques of Maslow's Theory of Needs when applied to the context of entrepreneurial motivation is the assumption of linearity of needs i.e., if basic needs have not been met, then an entrepreneur is unlikely to move on to satisfy more sophisticated needs (Cavada et al., 2017). Empirical evidence from the field of female entrepreneurship demonstrates that the more sophisticated needs can in fact coexist with the basic needs. For instance, Nakamura and Horimoto (2020) show that women entrepreneurs in Japan make money while aiming to enhance the well-being of local communities. Similar findings are revealed by a study of women entrepreneurs in Morocco (Alonso-Almeida, 2012). Another critique of Maslow's Theory of Needs is its ethnocentrism (Hofstede, 1984) as its ideas originated in the west, thus not accounting for the potential effect of other factors, most notably national culture, on entrepreneurial motivation in other geographies. This highlights the need to better understand what motivates women entrepreneurs in non-western contexts.

X. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TOURISM

The conceptual framework explains how various factors influence tourism entrepreneurship and how, in turn, tourism entrepreneurship affects economic, social, and environmental outcomes. It highlights the relationships among antecedents, entrepreneurial processes, enterprise performance, and destination-level impacts.

Antecedent Factors (Inputs)

These are the conditions and influences that shape the emergence and success of tourism entrepreneurs:

a. Individual-Level Factors

- Entrepreneurial motivation (profit, lifestyle, social mission)
- Skills and competencies (management, hospitality, innovation)
- Prior experience in tourism/hospitality
- Risk-taking ability
- Personal networks and social capital

b. Environmental and Contextual Factors

- Tourism demand and market trends
- Availability of natural, cultural, and heritage resources
- Local infrastructure and accessibility
- Government policies, regulations, and incentives
- Technology adoption and digital platforms
- Socio-cultural environment and community support

c. Financial and Institutional Support

- Access to credit, microfinance, and investment
- Training programs and entrepreneurship development schemes
- Support from tourism boards and NGOs

Entrepreneurial Processes (Core Activities)

These are the actions and strategies taken by entrepreneurs in tourism:

- Opportunity identification and innovation- (Recognizing tourism gaps and creating unique experiences)
- Business model design and planning
- Resource mobilization- (Finance, labour, local suppliers, partnerships)
- Product and service development- (Accommodation, tours, cultural experiences, adventure services)
- Marketing and digital engagement- (Social media, online booking platforms)
- Sustainable and responsible practices- (Eco-friendly services, cultural preservation, community involvement)

Conceptual Framework Summary (Narrative)

Entrepreneurship in tourism is driven by a combination of individual motivations, environmental opportunities, and



institutional support. Entrepreneurs engage in opportunity recognition, innovation, resource mobilization, and sustainable practices to create tourism products and services. Their actions influence business performance outcomes such as profitability, customer satisfaction, and innovation. Over time, these outcomes contribute to destination-level impacts including economic growth, community development, cultural preservation, and sustainable tourism expansion.

Theoretical Framework for Entrepreneurship in Tourism

Tourism entrepreneurship is influenced by individual decision-making, resource availability, institutional conditions, and socio-cultural factors. The theoretical framework integrates concepts from entrepreneurship theory, tourism studies, and sustainability studies to explain how entrepreneurial behaviour develops and how it affects tourism outcomes.

This framework is built around five major theories:

Schumpeter's Theory of Innovation (Entrepreneur as Innovator)

Core idea: Entrepreneurs drive economic development by introducing new products, ideas, and processes.

Relevance to tourism:

Tourism entrepreneurs innovate by creating new experiences, adventure activities, eco-tourism models, digital booking systems, and niche tourism services.

Use in framework:

Explains innovation, product development, and destination competitiveness.

Resource-Based View (RBV)

Core idea: A firm's unique resources and capabilities (skills, knowledge, relationships, location advantages) create competitive advantage.

Relevance to tourism:

Tourism ventures rely on intangible resources like hospitality skills, local cultural knowledge, natural attractions, and digital capabilities.

Use in framework:

Explains how entrepreneurial resources influence business performance.

Social Capital Theory

Core idea: Social networks, relationships, trust, and community connections support entrepreneurial success.

Relevance to tourism:

Tourism enterprises depend on networks with local communities, suppliers, guides, and online reviewers for reputation and market access.

Use in framework:

Explains community-based tourism, collaboration, and market access.

•Institutional Theory

Core idea: Entrepreneurial behaviour is shaped by the regulatory, cultural, and social environment.

Relevance to tourism:

Tourism ventures operate within government policies, licensing rules, heritage protection laws, and cultural norms.

Use in framework:

Explains how policies, regulations, and destination context enable or constrain entrepreneurship.

• Sustainable Tourism Theory

Core idea: Tourism must balance economic benefits with environmental protection and community well-being.

Relevance to tourism:

Entrepreneurs adopt eco-friendly practices, cultural preservation measures, and community participation initiatives.

Use in framework:

Explains sustainable practices and long-term destination impacts.

Integrated Theoretical Framework (Narrative)

Entrepreneurial behaviour in tourism can be understood as the outcome of interaction between individual resources (RBV), social networks (Social Capital Theory), and institutional conditions (Institutional Theory). Entrepreneurs use these resources to create innovative tourism experiences (Schumpeter's Innovation Theory). Their activities are influenced by sustainability considerations (Sustainable Tourism Theory), which guide responsible use of natural and cultural resources.

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 Global Tourism & Entrepreneurship-Relevant Statistics

1. Number of Tourism Businesses Worldwide

- There were about 621,677 tourism businesses globally in 2024. This number is expected to grow to 638,379 businesses in 2025, with a compound annual growth rate of around 4.4% from 2020–2025. The tourism business sector has been growing at an average rate of around 3.9% year-on-year.

Economic and Employment Impact

- The tourism and travel sector supported about 330 million jobs globally (roughly one in every ten jobs) before the pandemic, and its contribution to economic output was around 10.3% of global GDP.
- Data indicate that tourism accounts for approximately 10% of global employment, making it one of the most labour-intensive sectors in world economies.

MSME/Entrepreneurship Context

- In the tourism industry, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) account for the vast majority of businesses — often around 80–90% of all tourism firms, especially in developing and emerging destinations.
- These MSMEs are key drivers of local entrepreneurship (e.g., local guides, homestays, small tour operators), and they frequently generate 70%+ of employment in many countries.

Job Creation and Business Contribution

- For every direct job in travel and tourism, nearly two additional indirect or induced jobs are created in related sectors — showing the multiplier effect of tourism entrepreneurship.

Gender and Workforce

- Women contribute significantly in tourism — often making up over 50% of the workforce — and female entrepreneurship is particularly strong in tourism and hospitality sectors, though leadership disparities remain.

IN India Tourism Statistics (Contextual Entrepreneur Impact)

Contribution to the Indian Economy

- The Indian travel & tourism sector's economic contribution is expected to exceed ₹22 trillion (₹22 lakh crore) in 2025, highlighting how tourism entrepreneurship fuels revenue growth nationally.

Employment Potential

- Employment in India's travel and tourism industry is projected to surpass 48 million jobs in 2025, underlining the sector's role in job creation and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Policy-Driven Entrepreneurship Support

- State tourism departments (e.g., Kerala Tourism) are launching entrepreneurship support schemes such as subsidized loans for women to start tourism enterprises, showing emerging policy support for inclusive tourism entrepreneurship.

Summary

As of 2024–2025, the global tourism industry comprises over 620,000 businesses and supports over 330 million jobs worldwide, contributing roughly 10% to global GDP. Micro and small entrepreneurship dominates the sector, especially in services like accommodation, tour operations, and digital travel platforms, generating significant employment and economic growth. In India alone, the tourism sector's contribution is projected to exceed ₹22 trillion and provide more than 48 million jobs in 2025.”

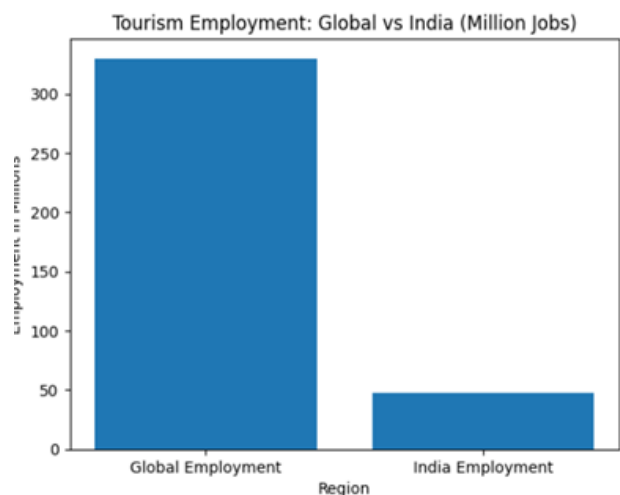


 Table 1: Global Tourism Entrepreneurship Statistics

Indicator	Value
Number of tourism businesses (2024)	621,677
Global tourism employment	330 million
Contribution to global GDP	10.3%
Share of MSMEs in tourism businesses	80–90%
Employment multiplier	≈ 2 indirect jobs per direct job



IN Table 2: India Tourism Entrepreneurship Statistics

Indicator	Value
Tourism GDP contribution (2025)	₹22 trillion
Tourism employment (2025)	48 million jobs