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# **Lifestyle entrepreneurship innovation and self-efficacy: Exploring the direct and indirect effects of marshaling**

## **Abstract**

Lifestyle entrepreneurs play a key role in the destination sustainable development by providing more authentic and innovative experiences. However, the determinants of the innovation generated by these entrepreneurs are not fully understood. This study explores the key factors influencing Innovation and entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (ESE) in Lifestyle entrepreneurs. Survey data allowed to identify the effect of marshaling, place familiarity, and communication on innovation and ESE. Findings reveal several direct and indirect relationships between these variables. The results indicate that marshaling has a significantly positive and direct effect on both ESE and communication. Communication has a direct and positive relationship with innovation. Place familiarity perception has a significantly positive and direct relation to communication and innovation on ESE. It was also found an indirect link between marshaling and innovation via communication as a mediator.

**Keywords:** Innovation; Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy; Marshaling, Place Familiarity; Destination Management.

## **1. Introduction**

Lifestyle Entrepreneurs are often associated with many small tourism firms (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Getz & Petersen, 2005; Williams *et al.*, 1989) and they represent an important role in the tourism business innovation (Thomas, Shaw, & Page, 2011; Dias *et al.*, 2020b). Marchant and Mottiar (2011) state that, researchers who have been studying about the topic of tourism entrepreneurship gain some curiosity with the concept of lifestyle entrepreneurs. The literature considers them different from most entrepreneurs because, Lifestyle Entrepreneurs match on the description of wanting to be their own boss, independent, creative, and having an interesting job (Bredvold & Skalén, 2016). Entrepreneurs are seen as economic agent who are “working towards the maximization of economic profit” (Bredvold & Skalén, 2016, p. 97) while Lifestyle entrepreneurs are primarily focused on having a good quality of life and having an income that allows them to survive (Carlsen *et al.*, 2008)

Lifestyle entrepreneurs play an important contribution in the destination development and competitiveness, providing more authentic and innovative experiences (Marchant & Mottiar,

2011; Dias et al., 2020a; 2021a). Previous research has also drawn the attention to many other beneficial impacts of these entrepreneurs in the local economies (Shaw & Williams 1987). This vision is shared by Ateljevic and Doorne, (2000) who highlighted the importance of lifestyle entrepreneur in the creation and introduction of innovative products and in the stimulation of the regional development. Bredvold and Skálén (2016) differentiated lifestyle entrepreneurs from other entrepreneurs based on their entrepreneurial identity and how this identity forms their managerial and entrepreneurial actions in different ways. Carlsen, Morrison and Weber (2008) alerts that these particularities must be recognized in policy making, namely the “need to incorporate lifestyle related goals and measures as important components within tourism destination development policy” (p. 261). Although there have been considerable studies regarding small firms in tourism, the development of this topic, over the years, has been much slower than expected (Thomas, et al., 2011). Both studies of Getz and Carlsen (2005) and Li (2008), agreed saying that the volume of research about lifestyle entrepreneurship, in the tourism literature, is still scarce. For Thomas, et al. (2011) it is surprising how limited the engagement is in the research for such topic having in mind the importance of this sector in job creation, destination competitiveness and development (Tinsley & Lynch, 2001), and for the creation of significant social benefits (Kokkranikal & Morrison, 2002). Moreover, Dias et al. (2020a) recognizes the need of academic research focused on innovation in the context of lifestyle entrepreneurship.

To address this gap, the aim of this study is to contribute to expand existing knowledge about the drivers of innovation generated by lifestyle entrepreneurs. Thus, this study considers the following research objectives: (i) to extend existing knowledge about this group of entrepreneurs by understanding the key role of marshaling on innovation and ESE; (ii) to identify the key role of communication on the relationship between marshaling and innovation; (iii) to identify the factors influencing Innovation and ESE in this groups of entrepreneurs. The researchers conducted a quantitative study through a survey of 115 Lifestyle entrepreneurs to demonstrate the relationship between constructs and to test the conceptual model. This method allowed collecting quantifiable information for statistical analysis of the population sample that it will be further analyzed in the study.

The article is structured as follows. Section two presents the literature review and the conceptual model under study. Section three describes the research methodology, as well as the research setting, research design, population, sampling, data collection, and data analysis. Section four presents the results and findings. In section five we discuss the empirical findings.

Finally, the conclusions are presented, including the theoretical contributions, managerial implications, and limitations and future research.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Key concepts**

#### *2.1.1. Innovation*

Innovation is a familiar term, although, when describing, the authors seem to have been struggling to define it. Trott (2016) states that innovation is a very broad concept that has multiple definitions. Drucker (1985) recognizes Innovation has a specific tool where entrepreneurs transform an opportunity in business which should be taught and practice as a discipline. For the author, entrepreneurs need to explore sources of Innovation, the changes and their symptoms that show that, there are opportunities for successful Innovation, and they need to know how to apply the principles to be successful.

According to Schumpeter (1947) innovation is an essential tool to be competitive and it's in the center of economic change. Pointed by the author, Innovation is a process that revolutionizes the structure of the company destroying the old one and creating a new. For Porter (1990) one of the strategies to achieve competitive advantage is through Innovation and it can be manifested in several ways. In a new product design, in a new marketing approach or even in a new production process. Porter's vision is shared, in some way, by Christensen (2021). The first author considered Innovation as a creation and implementation of new processes, products, services, and methods which result in significant improvements, while Christensen, (2021) state that the concept of Innovation refers to a change in the technology that companies use to transform labor, capital, material, or information into products and services with the purpose of generating greater value in future. Not only entrepreneurs but also companies, are adopting Innovation to have better solutions or new products that will contribute to a better performance of their business (Damanpour, 1991). For Trott (2016) innovation has been studied for many years because of its importance on enterprises. According to the author this concept can be achieve through products and services in different sectors of the economy (Trott, 2016).

Since this definition isn't quite clear and can lead to different interpretations, regarding the topic, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) wrote that "innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process, a new marketing method, or a new organizational method in business practices, workplace organization or external relations" (Oslo Manual, OECD, 2005, p. 46). The OECD

identifies four types of innovation: product innovation, process innovation, marketing innovation, and organizational innovations (Oslo Manual, OECD, 2005)

### *2.1.2. Communication*

According to Keller (2001) Marketing Communications are how firms attempt to inform, persuade, incite, and remind consumers – directly or indirectly - about the brands they sell. Additionally, the author shares that no area of marketing has seen more changes, over the last few years, than Marketing Communication. Those changes are mostly because of the emerge of new Communication strategies that have more impact on consumers than the previous ones, as well as consumers being more informed than before Keller (2001).

Nowadays, we are live in technology world where the online channel became an essential tool to communicate with the audience. Kotler *et al.*, (2019) believes new technologies will help enterprises to reach smaller customer segments with tailored messages. For Schultz (1998) this changes allowed companies and customers to communicate more directly. According to the author this forced ventures to have two different approaches, through the traditional communication channels and through new communication tools. Varey (2002) divided marketing Communication in two parts as well but with a different perspective regarding the concept. For the author, the first part consists about understanding the consumer, gathering data about their behavior, understanding their needs and interests to plan their marketing action. While in the second part, according to Varey (2002), it should be about providing information concerning the product that they are selling, and/or organization.

An important element in today's marketing communications is to identify firm's target Kotler *et al.* (2019). According to the authors, companies are developing focused marketing campaigns to build a closer relationship with customers. By finding the target audience, company will quickly determine the most appropriate channels to use in their campaign and transmit it in a clear and understandable way Kotler *et al.* (2019). This vision is shared by Lindon and Jallat (2004), who considered Marketing Communication has a set of volunteer signals from company to target audience. Weerawardena (2003) considers communication has a central concept for the organization and management theory, and companies who possess this trait are closer to gain competitive advantage.

In case of lifestyle entrepreneurs, Tinsley and Lynch (2001) highlighted the three main network links for the small tourism business: (i) exchange network, (ii) communication networks and (iii) social networks.

### *2.1.3. Entrepreneur Self-Efficacy*

The concept of self-efficacy has been researched for quite a long time for clinical and health related areas (Chen *et al.*, 1998). Only in the end of the 80's and beginning of the 90s it has been expanded to entrepreneurship sphere (Boyd & Vozikis 1994; Krueger & Brazeal 1994). In fact, Entrepreneur Self-Efficacy is one of the most significant concepts that have emerged from entrepreneurship research in recent years (Forbes, 2005). This concept has received, over the past two decades, considerable attention among entrepreneurship researchers because studies suggest that an individual's confidence in their ability to be successful, influence their intention to set up new businesses (Boyd & Vozikis, 1994; Chen *et al.*, 1998; Forbes, 2005; Krueger & Brazeal 1994; McGee *et al.*, 2009).

Entrepreneur Self-Efficacy (ESE) refers to the strength of an individual belief that he or she can successfully undertake the roles and tasks of an entrepreneur in each environment (Boyd & Vozikis 1994; Mauer *et al.*, 2009). In contrast to this statement, numerous researchers define this concept as the ability to deal effectively with surroundings, reminiscence and to master awareness (Chen *et al.*, 1998). Krueger and Brazeal (1994) proposed that ESE constitutes one of the key prerequisites to be a potential entrepreneur which means, individuals with higher ESE are more likely to become entrepreneurs than individuals with lower ESE. This notion is shared by Chen *et al.* (1998), who conducted a study based on two surveys in the USA. The authors pointed out the importance of ESE has an essential trait and attribute for an entrepreneur. In their research, it was identified that entrepreneurs and/or founders of new companies typically, present different levels of ESE relative to managers of existing businesses. Which means, establishing a new company requires different types of skills when compared with managing an ongoing enterprise (Mcgee & Peterson, 2017).

In the context of lifestyle entrepreneurs, self-efficacy considers that the venture "performance is subjectively perceived through a combination of financial and nonfinancial indicators" (Dias et al., 2020a, p. 6), and is highly influenced by place identity (Hallak et al., 2015). Additionally, self-efficacious entrepreneurs will more likely possess the necessary capabilities to master difficult situations that will arise in the start-up phase of the venture (Mcgee & Peterson, 2017). Furthermore, Hallak et al. (2015) found that entrepreneurs with a higher of self-efficacy tends to "develop the confidence to take risks, set higher objectives, deal with adversity, and pursue tasks required to succeed in business" (p. 46). The results of Chen *et al.* (1998) study also led the authors to conclude that ESE can be used to understand the avoidance of entrepreneurial business, meaning that, some individuals avoid entrepreneurial activities not because of their lack of skills but because they don't believe in themselves.

#### *2.1.4.Marshaling*

The concept of marshalling is related to the way the entrepreneur organizes and exploits the firm resources, a key ingredient for new ventures success (Hanlon & Saunders, 2007). Mueller and Goic (2003) define Marshaling as a phase of bringing a company into reality. The authors state that, without entrepreneur's perseverance and hard work, the business is only "on paper" and by Marshaling the necessary resources such as capital, labor, suppliers, and customers the venture will be set up. Without this agent a company cannot exist or sustain itself (Mueller & Goic, 2003).

Roberts *et al.* (2006) and Ladd, et al., (2019) define entrepreneurial tasks within a venture creation in a four-phase model: (i) searching, corresponding to the opportunity recognition phase; (ii) planning, in which the entrepreneur converts an idea into detailed actions; (iii) marshaling, when the entrepreneur assembles the necessary resources, and (iv) implementing, related to the application of the resources to a specific plan. As such, marshaling is how we conquer our goal, and it refers to assembling necessary resources to launch a new business enterprise (Mcgee & Peterson, 2017).

#### *2.1.5. Place Familiarity*

Place Familiarity Perception has gained considerable attention in recent years (e.g., Low & Altman, 1992). Scannell and Gifford (2010) define the concept as a bond that occurs between individual and a meaningful environment, and certain places may create a sense of meaning and stability in people's lives (Gustafson, 2001). These feelings may be at the individual level or collective level, it depends whether the place is meaningful for personal reasons or determined by group members (Scannell & Gifford 2010).

Previous studies have shown the impact of Place Familiarity Perception in the formation of environmental preferences (Craig *et al.*, 2012). Place Familiarity Perception has been defined by Hammit *et al.* (2006), p. 25 as, "the ability to describe a place based on images, memories, perceptions, location's size, distance and physical attributes". Place familiarity is also known to affect tourists' behavior, such as his loyalty regarding the local and his intention to visit again (Tan & Chang 2015). Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001) describe Place Familiarity Perceptions as a positive or negative emotional bond that an individual has, regarding a certain location.

## **2.2. Hypothesis development**

High Self-efficacy refers to an individual who has been capable of achieving a specific duty or a job. Research indicates that the level of ESE influences positively enterprise's creation and may impact its performance (McGee *et al.*, 2009; Mueller & Goic 2002). High levels of ESE may reveal perseverance and high efforts from a certain group of individuals (McGee &

Peterson 2017; Dias et al., 2020a). Like ESE, marshaling also contributes positively to venture creation as this concept involves bringing the business idea into reality (Mueller & Goic, 2003). Chen *et al.* (1998) pointed that entrepreneurs and/or founders of new companies typically, present different levels of ESE relative to managers of existing businesses. In their research, the authors concluded that ESE score differs from Entrepreneurship students to management and organizational psychology students. ESE was positively related to the intention to set up own business and that, “*business founders had higher self-efficacy in innovation and risk taking than non-founders*” (Chen *et al.*, 1998, p. 296). Additionally, self-efficacious entrepreneurs will more likely possess the necessary capabilities to master difficult situations that will arise in the start-up phase of the venture. These individuals, instead of complaining, will find a way to persuade their goal by being more efficient with their day-to-day challenges, learning by their mistakes, and marshaling their resources and assets. (Mcgee & Peterson, 2017). The result of McGee *et al.* (2009) research, using Mueller and Goic (2003) framework, shown high correlations between ESE and Marshaling.

For Grand *et al.* (2004), to reach a successful innovation it is necessary to marshal the sufficient knowledge resources. The authors added that Marshaling and Innovation are an important ally to pursue continuous discovery, knowledge creation and technical development. Without the ability to have an effective marshaling and innovation, organizations will have difficulties keeping up with their competitors and reaching customers.

Firms with effective communications strategies will have better financial outcomes as compared with those who only focus on operational capabilities (Kamboj *et al.*,2015). This concept allows organizations to communicate with clients the difference between its products from their competitors and, an effective marketing communication may help firms achieve competitive advantage (Weerawardena, 2003). Ahmadi *et al.* (2014) found in a study in India that recent establish enterprises benefited with marketing communication when transmitting its product advantages. McGee *et al.* (2009), when refining the concept of ESE, measured Marshaling as the ability to get customers to identify with the vision and plans for the business and, be able to explain the ideas for the business clearly and succinctly. Thus, based on the theoretical analysis and facts above, we formulated the following hypotheses:

H1a: Marshaling has a positive relationship with Entrepreneur Self-Efficacy.

H1b: Marshaling has a positive relationship with Innovation.

H1c: Marshaling has a positive relationship with Communication.

The link between communication and innovation has been study for few decades. For Clark and Fujimoto (1981) the quality of internal and external communication, during the innovation process, is highly related with the performance of new product development. In fact, Souder and Moenaert (1992) pointed that innovation operations may be defined as processes of communication and information processing. Both marketing communications and innovation may help firms to enhance business performance and reach competitive advantage (Porter 1990). In a paper about the lessons from Australia and Vietnam O'Cass and Ngo (2011) argues that successful organizations who conduct Communication and Innovation activities simultaneously increase marketplace performance.

Stated by Dubcová, Grančičová and Hrušovská (2016) innovation affects all areas of company activity and, although marketing is associated with innovation, this link is mostly due to the changes in marketing environments. Such as new technologies, which are an essential tool to keep in touch with the audience. Compared with few years ago, this is an upgrade in communication activities.

Kivimäki *et al.* (2002) identified the difficulties to evaluate the importance of different aspects of communication to a successful innovation. In their research, the authors suggest that innovative performance is related with several aspects of internal and external communications. Independently of these differences, it seems to be accepted that innovation and communication are related to one another. Thus, based on the theoretical analysis and facts above, we formulated the following hypothesis:

H2: Communication has a positive relationship with Innovation.

The concept of place familiarity is an important topic for tourism marketing researchers (Needham & Little, 2013; Tsai, 2011). Marketing communications can associate a brand with a specific person, experience, or a place (Keller 2001). The importance of the concept of place familiarity perception, in the tourism sector, is also revealed in the communications strategies by 'selling the place' (Dias et al, 2020a). For this study we adopted Tan and Chang's (2016) definition of place familiarity as the perception of how much an entrepreneur knows about a destination. Several authors suggested that people tend to maintain a proximity to certain locals (Hernandez & Hidalgo 2001). This type of affiliation with places can exist at different levels such as neighborhood, village, or a bigger area (Low & Altman, 1992). A study conducted by Lardies (1999) regarding the "European entrepreneurial migrants to Catalufia and Langudoc" found that one of the main reasons to start a tourism business was the location. For Baloglu (2001), place familiarity has a significant importance for individuals when choosing their

tourist destination. The author states that this concept represents an essential marketing variable for “segmenting and targeting certain groups and developing a marketing action plan, including product, distribution, pricing and promotion decisions” (Baloglu 2001, p. 127). Regarding the communications strategies of lifestyle entrepreneurs, their familiarity with the place allows to develop tourism products and experiences associated with the place’s traditions and identity, representing a source of differentiation when compared to the offering of large companies (Dias et al., 2020b; Dias & Silva, 2021a). Thus, based on the theoretical analysis and facts above, we formulated the following hypothesis:

H3: Place Familiarity Perception has a positive relationship with Communication.

Innovation has often been characterized by, taking risks, and dealing with uncertainties and, individuals with high levels of ESE tend to deal better with those uncertainties, risks, and hardships (Chen *et al.*, 1998; Mcgee & Peterson, 2017). Recent research has shown that entrepreneurship promotes innovation (de Wit & de Kok, 2014) and entrepreneurs who manifest higher ESE are keener to have innovative orientated goals and express an innovative behavior (Chen & Zhou, 2017; Drnovsek & Glas, 2002). ESE has also been proved to have a positive correlation with innovation associated with entrepreneurship (Chen et al., 1998; Dempsey and Jennings, 2014). Wei *et al.* (2020), match up with previous authors statement, by affirming that ESE has beneficial impacts on entrepreneurship activities. In research of two hundred and forty-nine Chinese entrepreneurs, Wei *et al.* (2020) pointed out for the positive relationship that ESE has on innovation behavior, and that ESE is one of the main drivers for innovation. Thus, based on the theoretical analysis and facts above, we formulated the following hypothesis:

H4: Innovation has a positive relationship with Entrepreneur Self-Efficacy.

This study is suggesting that Communication mediates the influence of Marshaling on Innovation. Moreover, the literature has highlighted the importance of firm’s capabilities (e.g Marshaling, Innovation and, Communication) in launching new enterprises, gaining/maintaining competitive advantage and, having high business performances (Damanpour, 1991; Mueller & Goic, 2003; Porter 1990; Weerawardena, 2003). However, as recognized by Dias and Silva (2021b) the conversion of local knowledge and resources through marshaling into innovative tourism experiences demands a previous step, namely the transformation of those traditions and stories it into new narratives and meaningful destination-specific experiences. Furthermore, O’Cass and Ngo (2011) argue that there is a complementary relationship between innovation and communication in enhancing the performance of certain organizations. Mueller and Goic (2003), labeled the entrepreneurial activities in four phases.

The authors proposed that the ability of being innovative, marshaling the necessary resources to bring the venture into existence and, applying good business skills (e.g innovation, marketing communication and, marshaling) as fundamental for entrepreneurial activities. Thus, based on the theoretical analysis and facts above, we formulated the following hypothesis:

H5: Communication mediates the relationship of Marshaling with Innovation.

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### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 . Research Context and Design**

The target population of this research is Lifestyle Entrepreneurs who operates in Portugal and Spain. This group of entrepreneurs was selected based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) had/has a tourism related business, and (2) follows non-financial motives and financial motives. Participants that only state, as a motive for their business, financial reasons were excluded from this study. This study is concerning Lifestyle Entrepreneurs, and this group of individuals is primarily focused on quality of life rather than financial growth (Peters *et al.*, 2009).

After reviewing the literature and to provide a contribution to this topic, the researcher used as methodology a quantitative approach. The questionnaire was developed through a review of the literature. Participants were asked several questions concerning their happiness, why they started this business, what attracts them in this place about, the connection with the community and their knowledge regarding the industry where they are established. Overall, the survey consists in ten parts where each part could have from three up to fourteen questions. Participants answered with a five/seven-point Likert scale. To increase the confidence of the participants, the surveys were all confidential and answered anonymously. These results were included in the analysis. Having in mind the essential points to be included and how to approach them, these steps allowed the development of the study framework.

#### **3.2. Data collection and treatment**

The target population for the quantitative study was Portuguese and Spanish Lifestyle Entrepreneurs who meet the inclusion criteria previously mentioned. The respondents were selected using a purposive sampling procedure, since it was difficult to obtain a sampling frame. Moreover, this technique was used to ensure that participants are indeed Lifestyle Entrepreneurs. Respondents were selected by one researcher during three entrepreneurship

meetings (i.e., Tourism-up, Taste-up, and Green up). The questionnaire was developed through a review of the literature followed by a two-step approach. Firstly, we consulted with a panel of academic experts in the field to assess the content validation of the scales. Secondly, a revised version of the questionnaire was pilot tested using face-to-face semi-structured interviews with five Lifestyle Entrepreneurs to validate the wording, the survey design, and eliminate ambiguities and errors.

Therefore, and to test the proposed research hypotheses, which is the most important information for the accomplishment of the objectives of the work, an internet-based questionnaire was used for the data collection. According to Sun and May (2013), lab-based experiments generally do not carry problems that take place in field experiments, as the conditions for the experiment can be controlled, and it is possible to employ facilities for the collection of high-quality data. The final internet-based questionnaire was sent via email to 115 Lifestyle Entrepreneurs, and 115 complete questionnaires were collected. The data was gathered between February 2019 and October 2019.

Concerning the sample of this study, 66% were male, and 62 % were born in the place where they currently run their business. Most of the participants were from Portugal (85%), center region to be more precisely, and the remaining from the Andalucía autonomous community, Spain. Regarding the socio-demographic characteristics, 7.5 % were “less than 30 years old”, 12.5 % were between 30 and 40 years old, 25.6% were between 40 and 50 years old, 44.4% were between 50 and 60 years old, and the remaining were older than 60. Furthermore, concerning the firm size, 68% of Lifestyle Entrepreneurs had 10 or less employees, 16.6 % had between 11 and 20 employees, and the remaining had more than 20 employees working for them. On average, participants have their business for 7.26 years, the standard deviation was 5.47 years, and the minimum was 1 year and maximum 43 years. Regarding the type of tourism business 49% were rural tourisms, 28% were bed & breakfast, 20% were tour operators and 3% develop other activities.

With the participant’s answers, the researcher retrieved several variables where five of them were under study. Before analyzing the results obtained, the gathered data was prepared. The dataset was checked for missing data and outliers. All the data that deviate markedly from others were considered outliers (Aguinis, Gottfredson & Joo, 2013). Furthermore, the data was analyzed and treated, using statistical software SmartPLS.

### **3.3 Variables**

This research adopted validated scales to measure the five variables appearing in the structural model. Innovation and Communication were measured using four and five items,

respectively. The items used to measure the first two variables were adapted from Kropp *et al.* (2006). Place Familiarity Perception was measured using four items scale that were adapted from Besser and Miller (2001). To measure Entrepreneur self-efficacy (ESE), a four-item scale was used, adapted from Zhao *et al.* (2005). The fifth and last variable, marshaling was measured through a three-item scale, adapted from Mcgee *et al.* (2009).

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Research Findings

The conceptual model was tested using a structural equation modeling (SEM). To be more precise, it was used partial least squares (PLS) through Smart PLS 3 (Ringle *et al.*, 2015). PLS is a variance-based structural equation modeling technique and was found to be appropriate for the research objectives of this study. To analyze and understand the results, it was first evaluated the reliability and validity of the model, and then it was examined the structural model.

To assess the quality of the model, we followed Hair *et al.* (2017) recommendations and examined the individual indicators of reliability, convergent validity, internal consistency reliability, and discriminant validity. To validate the individual indicator of reliability we investigated the standardized loadings. The results showed that all items were greater than 0,6 and significant at  $p < 0.001$ , hence there is evidence for the individual indicator (Hair *et al.*, 2017). Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values are all above 0.7, which confirmed internal consistency reliability (Hair *et al.*, 2017).

The Convergent validity has also been confirmed because all constructs presented CR and average variance extracted (AVE) values higher than 0.70 and 0.50 respectively (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Regarding the discriminant validity, it was used two approaches. First, we used the Fornell and Larcker criterion. To fulfil this criterion, the square root of AVE for each construct needs to be higher than the highest correlation between the constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 1 shows that this criterion is satisfied for all five constructs. For the second approach, we used the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) criterion (Hair *et al.*, 2017; Henseler *et al.*, 2015). The values presented on table 1 are within the suggested parameters (less than 0.85) (Hair *et al.*, 2017; Henseler *et al.*, 2015). With these indicators, we consider that there is evidence of discriminant validity.

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First, before assessing the structural model, we tested for the collinearity. The VIF values ranged from 1.020 to 1.188, which is below the critical value of 5 (Hair *et al.*, 2017), therefore there is no collinearity. The coefficient of determination  $R^2$  for the three endogenous variables of communication, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and innovation were 20,8%, 58%, and 43,1%, respectively, exceeding the value of 10% (Falk & Miller, 1992; Hair *et al.*, 2019).

The results in table 2 shows the descriptive statistics and correlation matrix of the variables. There are several statistically significant relationships, among the variables under study, although not all of them were significant, thus not supported. Moreover, the results reveal that Marshaling has a significantly positive effect on communication ( $\beta = 0.349$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and on entrepreneurial self-efficacy ( $\beta = 0.329$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). These results provide support for H1a and H1b, respectively. On the other hand, the direct effect of marshaling on innovation ( $\beta = 0.180$ ,  $p < n.s.$ ), is not significant. Thus, this result doesn't support H1c.

The direct effect of communication on innovation is positive and significant ( $\beta = 0.565$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), providing support to H2. Place familiarity perception has a significantly positive relation with communication ( $\beta = 0.248$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), which supports H3. The effects of Innovation on entrepreneur self-efficacy were also significantly positive and significant ( $\beta = 0.569$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), providing support to H4.

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Table 3 presents the results of the indirect effects of marshaling on innovation via the mediator of communication. To test this mediation hypothesis, we followed Hair *et al.* (2007; p. 232) recommendation. The author suggests using a bootstrapping procedure to test the significance of the indirect effect through a mediator (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Although there isn't a direct relationship of marshaling on innovation, the indirect effects of marshaling on innovation, via the mediator communication, is significant with ( $\beta = 0.198$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). These results provide support for the mediation hypothesis H5.

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## 5. Discussion

The results of the present study suggest several positive relationships that are in line with previous research, and one relationship that contradicts previous studies. These findings represent an expansion and update of the current of knowledge. First, our study aligns with the results of Mueller and Goic (2003), and Mcgee *et al.* (2009), who recognize the role of marshaling on both ESE and communication. The first two authors highlighted Marshaling and ESE as positively contributing to venture creations and bringing the business into reality. However, none of these studies were focused on tourism industry nor lifestyle entrepreneurs. As such, our study expands existing knowledge in tourism entrepreneurship and, in particular, tourism lifestyle entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, Mcgee *et al.* (2009) focused on the importance of both marshaling and communication to engage with clients and get them to know the vision and plans of the business. These positive and direct links are aligned with previous research. This study, however, is the first of its kind to go further, and test the direct relationship of these constructs in a tourism lifestyle entrepreneurship context.

In relation to the connection of communication on innovation, the findings demonstrate a positive and direct relationship. This notion is in line with previous research in other industries (c.f. Weerawardena, 2003) and in the tourism industry (c.f. Dias et al., 2020a). For Souder and Moenaert (1992), the quality of innovation is highly related with communication. The author also highlights the influence of these concepts in the creation of a new products or improving existing ones. It is assumed by O'Cass and Ngo, (2011) and Porter (1990) that being able to implement these concepts, will help to improve business performance and reaching competitive advantage in certain markets. Considering the specific case of tourism lifestyle entrepreneurs, previous research highlighted the role of communication in innovation (Dias et al., 2020a). The current study builds on this finding and provides a more complete perspective by adding the marshaling dimension, which is very important for destination competitiveness since it will bring an optimization of the local tourism resources and stimulate a spillover effect.

Regarding the relationship of place familiarity perception on communication, the results suggest a positive and direct link. The concept of place familiarity perception is not only important for the tourism marketing researchers (Needham & Little, 2013; Tsai, 2011; Dias et al., 2021a), but also for marketing communications. Keller (2001) states that marketing communications can associate a brand with a certain place. Our study not only aligns with previous research, since we found that place familiarity perception plays a considerable role the firm and destination communication strategies (Baloglu, 2001), but also expands existing knowledge by stablishing a link between place familiarity and communication within the context of tourism firms, thus confirming the need for developing communication skills within

small tourism firms to enhance innovation outcomes (Yachin, 2019). To Baloglu (2001) this concept represents a marketing variable because segments and targets certain groups. In this sense, previous studies have been already analyzed this direct and positive relationship. This study, however, is the first to test this relationship in a lifestyle entrepreneurship context.

The results of the quantitative study allowed us also to suggest that innovation has a direct and positive link on ESE. This relationship had already been identified and studied before and is in line with previous research who recognizes the direct link of innovation on ESE (Wei *et al.*, 2020, Chen *et al.*, 1998, Drnovsek & Glas, 2002). For these authors, innovation is one of the main drivers of ESE, and entrepreneurs who tend to have higher levels of ESE are closer to have innovative orientated behavior. In the entrepreneurship literature, innovation and ESE are two concepts highly praised for being essential for an entrepreneur (c.f Krueger & Brazeal 1994). Besides being an important expertise for entrepreneurs, establishing a new venture requires a different set of skills than managing an existing one (Mcgee&Peterson, 2017). Chen *et al.* (1998) concluded in their research, that entrepreneurs present different levels of ESE when compared with managers of existing businesses. In the tourism entrepreneurship field, and more specifically, in the context of tourism lifestyle entrepreneurs, the found relationship between innovation in ESE aligns with previous research (e.g. Sun et al., 2020). Furthermore, our results build on the study of Marchant and Mottiar (2011) by stablishing the importance of innovation linked to local knowledge on perceived performance. This, in turn, contributes for the ability of the destination to retain these types of entrepreneurs, a valuable asset for destination innovation and competitiveness (Dias et al., 2021a).

Lastly, the final finding of this study concerns the relationship between marshaling and communication. Grand *et al.* (2004), stated that marshaling has a positive relationship on innovation. However, the results from the quantitative study don't indicate a direct but rather, an indirect link between these two constructs via the mediator communication. It was shown that communication enhances this relationship. This finding provided a contribution to the current knowledge and literature since it was never studied in the context of Entrepreneurs or Lifestyle Entrepreneurs.

## **6. Conclusions**

### **6.1 Overall findings**

This study was mainly focused on providing an update of the existing literature about Lifestyle Entrepreneurs. Having in mind the importance of this group of individuals (e.g on rural economies, creation, and introduction of innovative products (Shaw & Williams 1987;

Tinsley & Lynch, 2001; Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000), and to increase existent data, it was conducted a quantitative study on a sample of 115 Portuguese and Spanish Lifestyle Entrepreneurs. The results from this research identified a positive and direct relationship of marshaling on entrepreneur self-efficacy and innovation, as well as a direct link of communication on innovation. Furthermore, it was also found two other direct relationships, place familiarity perception on communication, and innovation on entrepreneur self-efficacy. Finally, it was discovered that marshaling doesn't have a direct relationship on innovation, but an indirect relation through communication. These findings provided a general understanding and framework of how these variables relate with each other.

## **6.2 Theoretical contributions**

This study has contributed theoretically by providing evidence of the importance of innovation, communication, entrepreneur self-efficacy, place familiarity perception, and marshaling on Lifestyle Entrepreneurs.

First, it is one of the few empirical studies to research factors influencing innovation and entrepreneur self-efficacy on Lifestyle Entrepreneurs. From their point of view, and based on empirical evidence from Portugal and Spain, we were able to develop a model in which is emphasized the importance of those factors. Second, by exploring the relationship of the constructs mentioned above, this study expands and provided an update regarding the Lifestyle Entrepreneurship literature. Although it was identified in previous studies the direct relationship of Innovation on ESE (Wei *et al.*, 2020), or Marshaling on ESE (McGee *et al.*, 2009) this research extended the existing knowledge by exploring the link between marshaling on communication or marshaling on communication. Third, to our best knowledge, this is the first study to analyze the construct of marshaling in tourism lifestyle entrepreneurship. By doing so, our study makes an important contribution both for small businesses and destination competitiveness. By enhancing the role marshaling on innovation and performance, our model highlights the effect of this construct for the development of efficient firms and for innovation leadership.

This study also contributes to lifestyle entrepreneurship literature by presenting the mediating effects of communication. Our study tested a novel indirect relationship where communication contributes to leverage the effect of marshaling in innovation, contributing with this new knowledge both for tourism marketing and entrepreneurship fields.

## **6.3. Managerial Implications**

This research is also relevant for managerial implications and practices involved with entrepreneurship. Above all, based on our results, this study offers new data and suggestions on what Lifestyle Entrepreneurs can implement in their businesses.

Based on our findings, firms should collaborate and invest in their self-efficacy capabilities. We support McGee *et al.* (2009) and Mueller and Goic (2002) arguments that both marshaling, and ESE are vital traits to venture creation and to managerial performance. Our study also suggests that these two concepts are directly connected. It is approached that Lifestyle entrepreneurs who manifest a high ESE are closer to have innovative orientated goals, and an innovative behavior, which is crucial to be a successful entrepreneur (Drnovsek & Glas, 2002; Chen & Zhou, 2017).

Having in mind the importance of local decision makers in building an entrepreneur atmosphere and creating supportive conditions, it would be important that these groups of individuals have a contribution to the local identity. One of the main reasons to start a business is the location (Lardies 1999; Dias *et al.*, 2021a). Investing in local marketing, creating initiatives, such as fairs and events would enhance and promote a certain destination which, consequently, would bring entrepreneurs and customers. This strategy, however, should be focus on a group of individuals who praises a particular lifestyle rather a mass market (Dias *et al.*, 2021a; Dias *et al.*, 2021b). Our study is aligned with the previous statement and suggests that marketing communications has a positive and direct relationship with Place Familiarity Perception.

#### **6.4 Limitations and future research**

This research presents several limitations and points out for opportunities in future studies. First, this research uses non-probabilistic convenience sampling procedure for the survey, which may cause difficulties regarding the representation of the population. Therefore, it should be taken into consideration, the generalization of the results. Secondly, the sample of this study was based on Portuguese and Spanish lifestyle entrepreneurs. Although the sample surpasses the threshold value of 10 times rule, meaning that the sample size should be 10 times superior the number of links pointing to the latent variables (Hair *et al.*, 2017), a bigger sample could bring additional support.

Having a sample from just two countries, may not represent well this group of individuals on other countries. With these two limitations, it could be explored, in a future research, data from other countries, and a probabilistic sample procedure. Finally, our study found that there is no direct relationship between marshaling and innovation, but there is an indirect relationship

between these two constructs through communication. It would be interesting to explore this topic and understand the reasons behind this result.

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## Appendix

### Items loadings, T- Statistics and P Values

	Loading	T Statistics	P Values
<b>Communication</b>			
I am comfortable when meeting new people	0,690	9,262	0,000
I put people at ease when meeting them	0,791	19,486	0,000
I maintain relationships with existing customers	0,813	19,938	0,000
I listen carefully and patiently to people	0,817	14,872	0,000
I patch up relations with difficult customers	0,839	21,213	0,000
<b>Place Familiarity</b>			
When I amble through this place I feel very strongly that I belong here	0,862	13,217	0,000
This place is very familiar to me indeed	0,756	7,194	0,000
This place is very important for my daily life	0,868	16,643	0,000
I experience this place very intensively every day	0,838	14,251	0,000
<b>Innovation</b>			
I solve problems in an innovative way	0,928	53,571	0,000
I am creative in the use and control of resources	0,919	34,046	0,000
I develop creative solutions to difficult problems	0,806	13,422	0,000
<b>Marshaling</b>			
I get others to identify with and believe in my vision and plans for a new business	0,896	37,970	0,000
Network—i.e., make contact with and exchange information with others	0,764	10,308	0,000
I clearly and concisely explain verbally/in writing my business idea in everyday terms	0,884	30,063	0,000
<b>Self-Efficacy</b>			
I successfully identify new business opportunities	0,770	14,351	0,000
I create new products	0,818	15,700	0,000
I think creatively	0,818	14,671	0,000
I easily commercialize an idea or new development	0,786	21,938	0,000