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Measuring the impact of tourism lifestyle entrepreneurship on the tourist experience - Scale Development

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Master in Business Administration

Professor Álvaro Lopes Dias, Assistant Professor at ISCTE Business School,  
Department of Marketing, Operations and General Management

November, 2022

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## **RESUMO**

A seguinte dissertação desenvolve uma escala com quatro itens para medir o impacto de um empreendedor de estilo de vida turístico na experiência turística e para compreender de que forma, o turista se apercebe, através do que lhe é fornecido, que quem está do lado do gestor não é um “empreendedor comum”. Após a geração de itens, foram recolhidos dados de dois inquéritos com 200 respostas válidas e realizadas análises fatoriais exploratórias e confirmatórias para testar a validade discriminatória e nomológica. A correlação entre as variáveis é significativa no nível 0.01 e os coeficientes entre as escalas são positivos. O Alfa de Cronbach é aceitável, tendo um valor de 0.736. Os resultados complementam a literatura existente sobre este tópico e permitem uma maior investigação para medir a percepção turística em relação a estes empreendedores.

**Palavras-chave:** Empreendedor de estilo de vida turístico, percepção, turista, escala

**Classificação JEL:** Empreendedorismo (L26); Turismo e Desenvolvimento (Z32)

**ABSTRACT**

This dissertation develops a four-item scale to measure the impact of a tourism lifestyle entrepreneur on the touristic experience and seeks to understand to what extent the tourist perceives, through what is provided, that the tourism business owner, is not a “common entrepreneur”. After an item generation, data was collected from two different surveys with 200 answers, and exploratory and confirmatory factorial analyses were performed to test discriminant and nomological validity. The correlation between the variables is significant at level 0.01 and the coefficients are positive. Cronbach’s Alpha is acceptable with a value of 0.736. Results complement the existing literature on this topic and allow further research to measure the tourist perception of tourism lifestyle entrepreneurship.

**Keywords:** Tourism lifestyle entrepreneur, tourist’s perception, scale development

**JEL Classifications:** Entrepreneurship (L26); Tourism and Development (Z32)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

During the last few years, different authors have been studying the concept of lifestyle entrepreneurship in the tourism context and to what extent these entrepreneurs differ from others. It seems that opinions diverge and are not always consensual. However, it is possible to see that it is a topic which has been gaining increasing attention. (Masurel & Snellenberg, n.d.). The main reason for this disagreement is the variety of methods and approaches used.

Tourism entrepreneurship is not a recent field of study. In fact, the first articles were published in 1946 and the concept has gained different highlights throughout the years. In the past, the main association was with sustainability and environmental concerns, cultural and heritage linkages, and lifestyle reasons. Moreover, these reasons were a focus as well to the researchers that looked to show the strong desire of lifestyle entrepreneurs to have a good quality of life and to balance work and family life. Entrepreneurship was seen as a result of most small and medium businesses that were in the eco-tourism, sustainability, or agricultural sectors. It is not common to find research about large tourism providers when talking about tourism entrepreneurs, there is bigger attention to small firms. As regards the present, most studies focus on technology innovation, family business, and digital value co-creation. The use of technology allows these entrepreneurs to use consumers' opinions and recommendations to upgrade their businesses, hence creating value together. Concerning future research, sharing economy, collaborative economy and artificial intelligence are some topics that will be studied. Tourism entrepreneurship is increasingly becoming a more holistic perspective since there is a strong concern about having a direct relationship not only with the experience provided but also including elements of innovation and technology. There are several paths to follow regarding future research, since these entrepreneurs are strongly related to their families, it would be interesting to understand more about how the family firms work (López-Fernández et al., 2016). Yet, there are multiple options to explore concepts.

Lifestyle entrepreneurs are business owners that develop a firm within the tourism sector to achieve a certain lifestyle, improve their quality of life, and contribute to local development. The terminology of entrepreneurship encompasses the meaning of ambition and risk-taking associated with innovation and creativity. Tourism lifestyle entrepreneurs can be usually found in rural places due to these places' specificities where guests and hosts have a positive relationship, due to the curiosity to teach and to learn respectively (Gössling & Mattsson, 2002), to the commonly appreciated characteristics such as "sunny

climate, quality of air, tranquility, rich cultural life and landscapes” (Saleilles & Gomez-Velasco, 2007). Even though these entrepreneurs face other challenges in rural locations, there are opportunities to create unique tourism experiences, and be innovative and different from the large firms. (Bosworth & Farrell, 2011)

There is a relationship between lifestyle entrepreneurship and life quality since these individuals create businesses based on their personal interests and values. Instead of providing a service or product, these entrepreneurs are more concerned with serving their families and communities and adding value somehow (Marcketti et al., 2006). Moreover, literature has proven that the presence of lifestyle entrepreneurs is more life and leisure-oriented, and family oriented. (Alina & Daniel, n.d.) Profit and economic growth are not a concern to these entrepreneurs, they keep away from the idea of developing their business not only because there is a lack of education regarding management and planning but also because those are not the main goals. Governments’ awareness of these questions has grown, and different initiatives are being developed to improve the standards of these businesses since a lot of reports show the importance of investing in training and staff development. (Hollick & Braun, n.d.).

On the other hand, some authors have stated that the rejection of economic growth and business development is often related to sociopolitical ideology and does not mean necessarily “financial suicide or stagnation” but, consists of an opportunity to “engage with niche market consumers” (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000).

This involvement of lifestyle entrepreneurs with tourists has been studied through the years by different authors and from different perspectives. It is possible to find studies about the relationship between lifestyle entrepreneurship and place attachment (Schilar & Keskitalo, 2018); how creative tourism can improve rural areas of developed countries and their communities (Blapp & Mitas, 2018); destination competitiveness (Dias, González-Rodríguez, et al., 2021b). From the examples above, it is clear that this topic has generated discussion and has been developed from different points of view, not only from the community’s perspective, but also in terms of a destination position in the market. In the following chapters, it will be possible to see the different layers these entrepreneurs impact. With this said, there is an important part of this process that is underexplored which is the tourist’s perception of these entrepreneurs. This question will be the main objective of this dissertation, to understand if the tourists realize during their experiences that behind their business, there is not a common entrepreneur but a tourism lifestyle entrepreneur, and that way the experience is different.



The research existent on the tourists' perspective is scarce, although their role has changed, from a "passive observer to an active consumer of experiences" (Richards, 2014); (Dias, González-Rodríguez, et al., 2021a). Furthermore, a scale will be developed to measure this perception.

There are seven chapters in the present dissertation. In the first one, there is a brief introduction to the topic, in the second chapter, a literature review of the main concepts can be found. The third chapter will present the research methodology. Following a careful analysis, the data obtained, and respective results will be presented. Finally, a discussion will take place about the results obtained, followed by the main conclusions of the present dissertation, alongside suggestions for future research.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Entrepreneurship**

The expression *entrepreneur* is of French origin meaning the subject who takes risks, and initiates something in which he is a pioneer. Some authors believe that defining entrepreneurship can be a difficult task due to the complexity of the term. Entrepreneurship can be found in multiple fields and cannot be considered a singular concept. Although some scholars are concerned about not having a strong definition of entrepreneurship and what that can cause, others consider it an opportunity to develop new research, theory, and practices. (Audretsch, 2012). After gathering diverse definitions from different researchers, some topics remain, mainly “creativity and innovation, resource identification, acquisition and marshaling, economic organization, and the opportunity for gain or increase under risk and uncertainty.” It is not enough to purchase an existing company to affirm there is entrepreneurship, it must occur the creation of something new. Resources are important this way, accompanied by the ability to find and turn them into something attractive. Regarding risk and uncertainty, both are mandatory to consider the presence of entrepreneurship, while the risk is about the volatility of outcomes, uncertainty refers to the estimates of the entrepreneur. (Dollinger, 2008)

Entrepreneurial firms are essential to the economy. On one hand, they regenerate the process and define market economies. On the other hand, they bring innovation to the structure, which triggers “technological changes and productivity growth,” turning market economies dynamic. (Kuratko, 2011)

### **2.2. Tourism Entrepreneurship**

The world has undergone countless transformations for short periods, revolutionizing people's lifestyles. Thus, given these aspects, some administrative concepts predominated, in sociopolitical, cultural, and technological development contexts. It is the "Age of Entrepreneurship" that created labor relations, new jobs, and broke with the old paradigms. Moreover, the creation of companies has nowadays a key role in the economy's growth.

Associated with economic growth, another concept stands out - Tourism which is affected by the same factors as entrepreneurship such as social, cultural, and economic factors (Castaño et al., 2015). There are some definitions of tourism, however, it is not an established concept and has been changing through the years. Tourism was seen as the movement of a person from his or her normal environment for at least 24 hours for leisure or work. Nowadays, it is a more developed definition, being characterized as a social,

cultural, and economic phenomenon by the World Tourism Organization (The World Tourism Organization, n.d.)

Tourism entrepreneurship has been a very neglected area of study for years (Carmen & Meza, n.d.). However, there was an increase in studies on this topic, between 2000 and 2006, 40 articles were identified, while 96 articles were published during the period between 2007 and 2012. (Solvoll et al., 2015) The awareness of this issue is clear as a result of economic and non-economic inputs (Fu et al., 2019), and even more important to destinations that look for a way to differ from each other and attract more tourists to continue to improve their economies.

Most tourism entrepreneurs are associated with lifestyle motivations to develop a business, they seek a balance between work and life instead of looking for profit and growth. Therefore, these entrepreneurs constitute most small and medium firms in tourism. Lifestyle-oriented entrepreneurs are flexible in decision-making, independent and satisfied, attributing quality of life as the top priority in their life. (Peters et al., 2019). Small businesses, and specifically entrepreneurs have associated sustainable practices with innovation to develop tourism destinations. (Sun & Xu, 2020).

Differentiation is an essential imperative for the competitiveness of tourist destinations (Yachin, 2019a) and is attached to the concept of tourism entrepreneurship that through innovation, creates unique experiences able to sell a service or product (Dias & Silva, 2021). There are several studies about how tourism entrepreneurship can diversify rural locations and the tourist offer (Solvoll et al., 2015), as well as studies about the public policy to support entrepreneurship in the tourism sector, there are case studies where it is possible to observe this intention of the governments to help small and medium enterprises such as rural tourism in Israel, where farmers receive financial resources to renovate their farms into B&B units (Fleischer & Pizam, 1997). Governments pretend to include the local communities in the process of planning and developing measures to prevent disorder and negative consequences (Jaafar et al., 2015). However, sometimes, governments constitute a barrier to tourism entrepreneurship because of divergent motives to do business (Power et al., 2017).

Tourism entrepreneurship is guided by informality and flexibility, differing from the characteristics of the usual business tourism environment (Power et al., 2017), which is looking for growth and profit. Small and medium enterprises emerge with the purpose to live a life with quality and away from crowded

markets, while creating a service or product that meets their values and interests (Bosworth & Farrell, 2011) and at the same time, attracting people who want an authentic experience.

It is in this context that entrepreneurship is recognized as a crucial tool that can act decisively in the process of stimulating tourism activities. Besides entrepreneurship, other factors can influence the potential of the offer, regarding activities. The place itself is important due to its resources, which will also impact its competitiveness (Dias & Silva, 2021), in fact, (Jaafar et al., 2015), argues that tourists search for remote and distant places. However, this it is not the only aspect that can lead to a successful business. Tourists nowadays are more interested in a deep experience, where they can engage with the community, add their value, be involved in the culture they are visiting, and experience authenticity. There is a symbiosis between the local community and tourism entrepreneurship, because of the local knowledge that the entrepreneurs end up absorbing due to their contact with the locals and the surroundings in the place where they are, which consequently will influence the tourist experience (Dias et al., 2020). Plus, the local community benefits from the presence of tourists, which end up contributing to the development and improvement of certain infrastructures and services (Hall, 2004), to make sure that the destinations are ready to receive tourists and to give them the best experience possible. Along with entrepreneurship, creative tourism can impact poor communities by helping them develop sources of income. For instance, it is a way to achieve economic sustainability that results from different factors such as market access, an increase in business skills and the reputation of the destination (Dias, González-Rodríguez, et al., 2021a). Likewise, politics and economic systems try to create conditions to encourage citizens to become entrepreneurs, to improve their living conditions (Alvarez-Torres et al., 2019). This is viewed by some authors as a methodology and not as a situation influenced by the environment, so destinations must seek creativity and innovation (Obschonka et al., 2017).

Local communities' engagement plays a key role in achieving the 3 pillars of sustainability regarding social, economic, and environmental issues. When a destination becomes more attractive and consequently receives more tourists, there is a concern about the sustainability goals that government seem to ignore on behalf of economic growth (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018). However, research also shows the willingness of the communities to adopt eco-friendly measures to preserve both their cultural and natural assets (Kokkranikal & Morrison, 2002). Tourism Lifestyle Entrepreneurship brings a balance against mass market tourism which is addicted to growth and does not match sustainability goals (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018).

### **2.3. Tourism Lifestyle Entrepreneurs**

Tourism Lifestyle Entrepreneurs can be defined as owners of companies that are motivated primarily by reasons of style and quality of life and, as such, their businesses are operated through the integration of non-financial factors (Dias, Patuleia, et al., 2021). These types of entrepreneurs can be residents or migrants who move to a certain location to start a tourism business and are focused on preserving both the local lifestyle and the environment and traditions of the local community (Bredvold & Skålen, 2016). The same author, identified different identities of these entrepreneurs: the modern lifestyle entrepreneur who wants to discover new opportunities and follow trends without leaving the tradition behind, networking is important in this sense; the loyal lifestyle entrepreneur who is more business oriented regarding keeping his/her firms for a long time, but remains connected to the traditions and look for a way to do business with a purpose; the freedom-seeking lifestyle entrepreneur, who wants to manage by his/her own and want help neither from friends or family (Bredvold & Skålen, 2016).

Lifestyle entrepreneurs offer tourists more creative and genuine experiences and promote an effect of innovation in destinations. The most recent studies related to this theme reported that the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic identified that entrepreneurial creativity and innovation are becoming increasingly relevant for the development of destinations (Dias, Patuleia, et al., 2021). The entrepreneur is considered an innovator, who could change the economy and create a new value, specifically concerned with the process of change and the attraction of more visitors (Richards & Marques, 2012). However, the contribution of entrepreneurship in tourism can go beyond creating an atmosphere desired by the client, the tourist entrepreneur has a strong ability to act directly for the economic and social well-being of the community (Zhao et al., 2011). Furthermore, Tourism is recognized as a relevant industry to locals, because not only impacts the economy but interferes with the quality of life of a place (Kibler et al., 2015).

The enterprises managed by lifestyle entrepreneurs are evaluated by a set of variables of diverse nature. Not only quality of life, community, and environmental improvement are important but also social, cultural, and ideological goals are relevant objectives to these entrepreneurs. The lack of experience and education in business is not an obstacle to seeking their dream of changing (Peters et al., 2009).

Tourism represents a source of income and lifestyle entrepreneurship where one seeks to earn a living through activities that provide them with pleasure and fun, these entrepreneurs are classified as scarce creative resources, innovators, and people with modern views of the world (Wang et al., 2019). According

to the authors, lifestyle entrepreneurs focus their business on their personal goals and value the experiences they offer on those motives. Plus, the way they communicate with their customers (Sun & Xu, 2020), is strongly related to the contact with the community (Dias et al., 2020).

In this sense, small tourism companies seek social networks and long-term cooperation, and the behavior of the social network in tourism is often motivated by the needs of the community and by the sustainability plan to develop the destination (Kallmuenzer et al., 2019). In this respect, (Romero & Molina, 2011) defined the cooperation process as a formal relationship between two or more entities that involves time, commitments, high levels of trust, and access to each other's resources to achieve a common goal.

A social network that connects individuals is considered a factor that influences the development of tourist destinations as facilitators, through the transfer of knowledge, business activity, and communication, support to the community, as well as the planning, development, and implementation of projects (Kallmuenzer et al., 2019). In this context, the balance between the support of quality of life and the attraction of tourists and visitors in a certain amount that supports the place is essential to create an environment favorable to tourist activities (Daly et al., 2021).

The context also plays an essential role in the development of tourism entrepreneurship, and elements like competitive intensity, degree of cohesion, legal framework, and seasonality influence entrepreneurial activity. According to (Schilar & Keskitalo, 2018), the selection of the place and destination to live equivalently engages for personal or business reasons, which represents a success factor for tourism entrepreneurship. In the process of creating value, environmental resources play a facilitating or inciting role to help increase the number of entrepreneurs in a specific region, as they can provide the conditions for such a process (Lang et al., 2014). Tourist activity provides a prominent context for lifestyle entrepreneurs, and tourist destinations associated with nature and a strong cultural or identity load are more likely to attract lifestyle entrepreneurs (Wang et al., 2019).

Entrepreneurs and their contexts form a unit that supports new businesses. In describing the elements of lifestyle entrepreneurs (Stam, 2015) and (Stam & van de Ven, 2021) presented a three-layer model of elements, structural conditions, systemic conditions, and outputs. Structural conditions represent the "heart" of lifestyle entrepreneurs who determine the success of ecosystems. Outputs describe the

entrepreneurial activity that results from the functioning of the system and that leads to regional effects such as jobs and economic prosperity.

Several studies have highlighted that networks are an essential part of systemic conditions, i.e. networking is crucial, as entrepreneurs identify new situations and organize networks according to their needs (Alvedalen & Boschma, 2017). These networks are used to identify businesses and opportunities and provide resources, creating social capital among tourism companies and contributing to trust, lower transaction costs, and greater dispersion to share knowledge (van der Zee & Vanneste, 2015). "Especially in tourism, networks contribute to entrepreneurial activity and innovation, and destinations with strong networks are therefore considered more competitive" (Kofler et al., 2018).

Other equally crucial elements are a talented workforce, financial means for entrepreneurial activity, and support organizations or intermediaries as business consultants. In tourism, the customer contributes significantly to the tourist product. (Prebensen et al., 2013). Entrepreneurial activity is perceived as an integral part of institutional contexts, which encourage network development and learning (Spigel & Harrison, 2018). In this sense, characteristics of the context as the business-friendly administration of a region or tax benefits (Spigel, 2017) will attract these entrepreneurs.

Most of the theoretical models used in the study of entrepreneurship performance emphasize motivation as one of the main elements in the success of small businesses. According to (J.-S. Lee, 2010), "motivation is an internal state that instigates, directs, and maintains behavior."

A set of studies discussed the importance of freedom and flexibility as the main lifestyle-oriented objective among many small independent businesses in tourism and hospitality in which it is the owner who operates in these contexts (Kallmuenzer et al., 2019). These studies have shown that a lifestyle business can bring significant personal benefits in terms of flexibility for the owner.

According to (Ratten, 2020) tourism entrepreneurship is an attractive and stimulating study theme that includes the analysis of entrepreneurial characteristics in a captivating environment and multidisciplinary concepts such as the impact of technology, economic geography, cultural contact, and international relations. Thus, due to the identification of the characteristics of tourism entrepreneurs with lifestyle factors, most of the literature analyzed the concept of lifestyle entrepreneur based on case studies and tourism small and medium enterprises, associating elements such as the promotion of new products, destinations and forms of tourism (Tejada & Moreno, 2013).

The area of sustainable entrepreneurship in tourism is changing rapidly, both in research and in practical action. For more than two decades, there has been an increase in the number and diversity of studies in this field, however, only recently the scientific community and professionals have developed more solid methodological models on sustainable entrepreneurship in association with lifestyle entrepreneurs (Crnogaj et al., 2014).

At the same time, another part of the literature perceives entrepreneurship as a dynamic phenomenon defined in broader terms (Mastroberardino et al., 2020). Some specificities such as needs, attitudes, impulses, beliefs, and values are considered when changing the focus for social and cultural characteristics. In this broader view, entrepreneurship stands out for the importance of the context, associating cultural, economic, geographical, political, and social aspects. In general, the tourism lifestyle entrepreneur wishes to gain a respectable life, achieve greater personal freedom, and spend quality time with family and friends (Thomas et al., 2011).

The authenticity of the experience is a key issue in the hospitality environment, although empirical studies are still scarce, in the context of rural tourism, for example, this authenticity is inserted in the space-cultural identity of rural areas (Ye et al., 2018).

By using the narrative understanding of the construction of entrepreneurial identity, it allows us to problematize the sense of self-being of the proletarians as entrepreneurs and their conduct of values and beliefs. In this sense, many theories about entrepreneurship are important to identify a socially constructed, common construction of the entrepreneur who seeks profit and the accumulation of capital along with a healthy lifestyle (Power et al., 2017).



### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Procedure

To develop a measure for the tourist perception of the tourism lifestyle entrepreneur (TLE), the procedure was based on the approach of Churchill, 1979. Regarding this study, the following steps were followed: identification of the domain for the construct; item generation through existing literature and experts interviews; initial data collection; exploratory factor analysis to identify the relevant items using SPSS; new data collection with the addition of comparable variables; confirmatory factor analysis to test nomological and discriminant validity.

The domain for the construct development is the intention to develop a measure that helps to understand the impact of tourism lifestyle entrepreneurs on the tourist experience and consequently their perception of these entrepreneurs.

Most of the items generated in this study were based on the existing literature regarding tourism lifestyle entrepreneurship. To choose the most relevant articles, the “Scimago” platform was used to find out if the papers fit within the first and second quartile, which were the two suggested for the purpose. This way, it was possible to base the item generation on significant articles for this study instead of reviewing all the literature.

Plus, two interviews with experts were conducted to take item generation one step further, one of them is the Head of Tourism at *Universidade Lusófona*, who contributes to research in multiple tourism fields regarding creative and cultural tourism, and the other is responsible for teaching tourism in different institutions and has contributed a lot to train tourism guides. The interviews began with a brief presentation of the objective of the dissertation and the need to initiate that discussion. Notes were taken on both to highlight the keywords and key points to include some more items in the scale. At the same time, these interviews served to purify the scale achieved so far since both interviewees are experienced in this field. In the following table, it is possible to see the summary of the items generated and used for the first survey.

**Table 1 - Item generation**

<b>Items</b>
A TLE is someone who has a tourism business and is looking for a different lifestyle to achieve a better quality of life.
A TLE is someone who cares about the environment and uses local resources.
A TLE offers more genuine and different experiences due to local knowledge and contact with local communities.
For the TLE, lifestyle, and quality of life are more important than profit and economic growth.
The TLE's choice of where to live is emotional, because of the connection they have with it, namely by having a second home.
The TLE's choice of where to live is emotional, because of the connection they have with it, namely with their family.
The TLE is in places with quality social, environmental, and physical resources.
The TLE is in places with an attractive climate.
TLE is in places surrounded by nature.
Some of the TLE have their personal and professional lives concentrated in the same space.
The TLE has a strong connection with the community, helping them by buying local products.
The TLE seeks a balance between work and leisure.
The TLE works and lives in the same place, avoiding commuting
The TLE has a low level of education and little management experience.
The TLE seeks to have enough income to support themselves.
The TLE moves from place to place in search of the desired lifestyle.
The TLE offers a unique experience to tourists, through contact with the local community and activities.
The TLE contributes to the development of poor communities through the development of tourism activities that generate employment, and investment opportunities, among others.
The TLE tends to continue their activity even after retirement.
Some of the TLEs develop their work with ancient arts and materials they find in the space they have occupied, for example, tiles, ceramics, and ancestral art.
The price to be paid for these activities or products is a symbolic and fair value.

Subsequently, a draft questionnaire was presented including the items generated in the previous step and demographic factors were included to further analyze the universe of study. Despite some amendments have been made, none of the items was removed. The questionnaire was distributed to people who could be identified as potential tourists. Respondents were asked to access the different statements with a five-point Likert Scale, where 1 corresponded to strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 neither agree nor disagree; 4 agree and 5 strongly agree. In terms of respondents, 203 answers were found complete and able to be used to further analysis. Below, table 2 presents a summary of the respondents' profiles. It is possible to see that there are more answers from the younger age group, however, there are as well feedback from the older group ages. Regarding the level of education, people with a bachelor's degree have the biggest frequency and immediately afterward, people with a secondary school are represented. Although the Lisbon region represents the higher frequency of response in this survey, the Centre Region emerges as the second most frequent. Finally, in concerns the job area of the respondents, there are a lot of people from tourism and hospitality, along with management and education.

*Table 2 - Summary of the sample*

<u>Respondents type</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
<b>Age</b>		
18-25	75	36,9
26-35	30	14,8
36-45	47	23,3
46-55	39	19,2
56-65	9	4,4
>65	3	1,5
<b>Level of Education</b>		
9 <sup>th</sup> Year	15	7,4
Secondary School	66	32,5
Bachelor's Degree	98	48,3
Master's Degree	24	11,8

<b>Residence Area</b>		
North Region	3	1,5
Centre Region	30	14,8
Lisbon	158	77,8
Alentejo	5	2,5
Algarve	2	1,0
Açores	2	1,0
Madeira	1	,5
<b>Job Area</b>		
Tourism	37	18,3
Psychology	8	3,9
Restaurants	5	2,5
Management	11	10
Education	9	4,4
Other	133	60,9

Succeeding the first data collection, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was made at SPSS, using the principal component analysis. Regarding rotation, varimax was selected to minimize the number of variables and simplify the interpretation of the factors. For that reason, it was necessary to define criteria in terms of factors and loadings. Four factors were established and for the loadings, it was determined 0.50 was the minimum. Every item below the established loading would be eliminated from the scale since it meant that “surface attributes are influenced weakly by the factor”, (Book Exploratory Factor Analysis, n.d.) This analysis allows an understanding of how the items behaved between them and inside each dimension. Thus, from 21 initial items, 10 items remained to proceed to a new survey, and this time, it included variables from another scale in the confirmatory analysis as can be observed in table 3 to further compare and test nomological validity. It was important to have a scale within common objectives, which measures something related to the one that is being developed. In this case, the scale chosen measures how service providers can turn a tourist experience, memorable and authentic, in on-site conditions, in the context of sightseeing tours (Zatori et al., 2018). Even though this scale has multiple dimensions, social involvement was selected, since it was more related and appropriate to the purpose of this dissertation.

Next, another survey was shared to collect new data with the items from the previous table, and another exploratory factorial analysis was made. Then, to verify the goodness of fit for the model and to test nomological validity, it was made a confirmatory exploratory analysis (CFA). The results from the survey were reorganized to proceed and 13 items remained.

**Table 3 - Items remained from the first EFA and items from another scale**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Items</b>
Q1_1	A TLE is someone who cares about the environment and uses local resources.
Q1_2	A TLE offers more genuine and different experiences due to local knowledge and contact with local communities.
Q1_3	The TLE's choice of where to live is emotional, because of the connection they have with it, namely by having a second home.
Q1_4	The TLE's choice of where to live is emotional, because of the connection they have with it, namely with their family.
Q2_1	The TLE is in places with an attractive climate.
Q2_2	TLE is at places surrounded by nature.
Q2_3	The TLE has a strong connection with the community, helping them by buying local products.
Q2_4	The TLE works and lives in the same place, avoiding commuting.
Q2_5	The TLE has a low level of education and little management experience.
Q3_2	The TLE offers a unique experience to tourists, through contact with the local community and activities.
<b>Code</b>	<b>Items added from Zatori et al., 2018</b>
Q4_1	In a tourist experience, I value being able to enjoy the presence of people
Q4_2	In a tourist experience, I value a pleasant environment
Q4_3	During the tourist experience, I value being able to interact
Q4_4	Interactions during a tourist experience are enriching

**4. RESULTS**

**4.1. Measurement analysis**

Succeeding an EFA, the items were exposed to CFA. In the model used, four factors allow the items to correlate freely, even though each item was restricted to load on its pre-specified factor. CFA allowed a scale purification and from 21 initial items, the results show 3 dimensions and a total of 9 items, but both the second and third dimensions are rejected because of the low and few loadings, as can be seen in table 4, only the first dimension is accepted and that way, 5 items persist. The alpha corresponds to 0.74 which can be considered a consistent value and it brings consistency and reliability to the scale. As figure 1 shows, one more item will be eliminated since the loading is below 0.6, while the others provide a good convergent validity (Shi & Maydeu-Olivares, 2020). Besides, the other items have enough significant standardized loadings to survive. This way, the final scale will have 4 items, which appears to be an interesting result since it is a brief scale and can be used when time and resources are limited. (Wallace & Poulson, n.d.). The chi-square for this model is significant ( $\chi^2 = 82.834$  df, p-value <0.05). Additional fit indices were assessed because the chi-square statistic is sensitive to sample size and the number of factors can go up. (Dash & Paul, 2021). For that reason, the normed fit Index (NFI), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) were calculated. The NFI of this model is 0.711 and SRMR is 0.098 which can be considered acceptable (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

*Table 4 - CFA matrix component*

**Component Matrix  
Component**

	1	2	3
<b>Q1_1</b>	,684		
<b>Q1_2</b>	,757		
<b>Q1_3</b>		,572	
<b>Q1_4</b>	,629		
<b>Q2_1</b>			,721
<b>Q2_2</b>			,555
<b>Q2_3</b>	,636		
<b>Q3_3</b>			
<b>Q2_5</b>		,714	
<b>Q3_2</b>	,678		

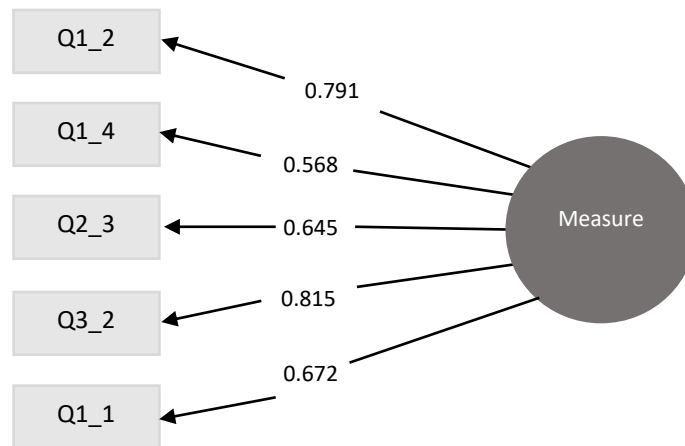


Figure 1 – Standardized coefficients of CFA

#### 4.2. Nomological validity

Concerning nomological validity, measures were tested concerning other constructs and the expectation is to be theoretically related but not exactly equal otherwise it will measure the same and that is not the purpose. This way, as stated before, 4 items were created from another scale, belonging to the factor “social involvement” to test nomological validity. The correlations between them work well, moreover, at the two ends, the correlation is significant at level 0.01. All the coefficients are positive which allows concluding that tourism perception of TLEs and social involvement are associated, as a result, the nomological validity of this measure is supported. Finally, the Cronbach’s Alpha is 0.736.

## 5. DISCUSSION

This dissertation advances with items for a scale that measures the tourist perception of the tourism lifestyle entrepreneurs, and expectantly will help on further research. Existing literature contributed to developing the items and based on two data samples, the results are satisfactory, and the final scale is presented below:

- A TLE is someone who cares about the environment and uses local resources.
- A TLE offers more genuine and different experiences due to local knowledge and contact with local communities.
- The TLE has a strong connection with the community, helping them by buying local products.
- The TLE offers a unique experience to tourists, through contact with the local community and activities.

The first item of the scale is related to sustainability concerns and the attachment to local resources. There are several authors who show how these topics are related to TLEs. It is clear that these entrepreneurs impact positively the “local economy and the sustainable development of the regions” (Cunha et al., 2020), moreover the same author states the potential of TLEs to promote rare local resources, such as local products. In fact, this aspect is related to sustainability and their aspiration to contribute to a better environment (Bosworth & Farrell, 2011), which is the reason why they care about teaching tourists about agriculture, the countryside, and its preservation (Aileen Boluk & Mottiar, 2014). TLEs want to create something without changing or affecting the environment where they are inserted. Additionally, the value proposition of products and services is based on this sustainable way of thinking, by using networking to create something innovative (Boons & Lüdeke-Freund, 2013). The scale also allows an understanding of the impact of entrepreneurship on communities, which consequently provides an improvement of local economies, not only through the development of new jobs but also by increasing local incomes and wealth (Henderson, n.d.) through local products’ purchase (Kastenholz et al., 2016).

The items from the scale can confirm the importance of the communities to the tourists and consequently to the tourism lifestyle entrepreneur since they are able to “create social capital and strengthen place local identity” (Idziak et al., 2015), turning places more attractive because they provide what tourists want, involvement with the locals, “with the local culture, environment, way of life and traditions” (Hrvatska & Kilipiris, 2005).



Innovation is one of the most important factors to allow this phenomenon because people are looking for different and authentic experiences that can be found within these communities. The scale presented previously shows a strong association of the community to the TLE. Even the poorest communities, who have difficulties competing with other destinations, can offer an authentic experience even if it only means participating in locals' daily life activities because they have a strong culture and TLEs have that knowledge to differentiate themselves from others. The local resources and environment have characteristics that allow the development of new experiences and contribute to a "unique involvement" between the tourists and the place they are visiting. (Dias, González-Rodríguez, et al., 2021)

This connection to the community appears as if they belong to it, which might be an advantage once both the entrepreneur and the community can co-create experiences. The knowledge present in the place contributes as well to developing this uniqueness that the tourists are looking for, having a strong impact on the value proposition of a destination, which ends up in "selling" it (Yachin, 2019). The same author states that TLEs' perception is influenced by their knowledge regarding the ability to imagine resources as products, creative thinking, and social network. That can show why local resources and communities relate to the tourist perception. The local contribution of tourism and more specifically tourism entrepreneurship has impacted making an environment more appealing, especially due to TLEs who use creativity and the willingness to change their lifestyle to develop something with impact and memorable (Brouder, 2012).

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

This study conceptualizes the development of a scale and contributes to the existing literature in several ways. Firstly, research is a lot focused on tourism perceptions regarding costs and product features which will impact the overall satisfaction and willingness to return to a place and spread the message to friends and family (Athula Gnanapala, 2015). Moreover, there are several studies to measure tourists' satisfaction related to a destination, i.e on service perception, on tourists' perceived safety (H. Lee et al., 1991; Rani, n.d.; Xie et al., 2021). The present dissertation expands the research in this sense, turning to a topic that has gained more relevance in recent years., which is the tourism lifestyle entrepreneurship present in most small and medium firms within tourism. This scale is important to help researchers in the future to measure this perception and that way, develop other conclusions and expand studies.

The importance of these entrepreneurs has been proven in the literature review, as well as the positive impact on communities and destinations. For that reason, based on this research, it will be possible to understand if tourists perceive who is managing a business and if that is related to their choice regarding their experiences, which might allow governments to develop measures to help and bet on these entrepreneurs to make tourism sustainable. Additionally, business owners can understand what tourists value the most and look at an experience, which can change their path to satisfy their customers. This scale advises managers to be concerned with the environment, use local resources, offer genuine experiences associated with engagement with the local community, consume local products and differentiate from other firms due to local knowledge. In fact, these measures give guidance to business owners to improve their offer and their firm's success. Also, policymakers can take advantage of this scale, through self-assessment and benchmark purposes.

Regarding the limitations of the study, the sample size could be bigger to achieve more certainty about the results, moreover, it would be interesting if the two surveys were applied to the exact same people. In addition, the sample profile could be more defined to have a more cohesive return.

For future research, it would be interesting to apply this scale and measure the perception across different countries, i.e., developed and developing countries to see if the impact is different and that way, conclude on how and what can be done to improve destinations. Future research may try to develop a scale with different dimensions to streamline the analysis and make it even more complete.

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