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Unpacking lifestyle entrepreneurship intentions in tourism through self-determination theory

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Abstract

This study explores the drivers behind lifestyle entrepreneurship in the tourism sector through the lens of Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 156 tourism lifestyle entrepreneurs across India through non-probability sampling. Descriptive analyses and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) revealed that intrinsic motivations—particularly the "labour of love"—exert a stronger influence on entrepreneurial intention than the desire for autonomy. Self-identity emerged as a key mediating factor, closely aligned with passion but not with autonomy. Interestingly, autonomy showed no significant direct effect, suggesting the influence of collectivist cultural values that emphasize interdependence over individual agency. Additionally, while a sense of belonging significantly predicted entrepreneurial intention, it did not operate through self-identity, implying that social connectedness may shape action through emotional support and community embeddedness. These findings underscore the need for tourism-focused entrepreneurial support programs that foster identity alignment, passion-led

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