

Emotional intelligence and its relationship to the development of entrepreneurial intention among women in Tunisia's sustainable tourism.

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in economic development, and women entrepreneurs are key actors. However, their engagement in specific sectors like sustainable tourism (IE) can be influenced by various factors, including entrepreneurial motivation (ME), emotional intelligence (IE_m), and their perception of governance and anti-corruption efforts (PSP). The study employed a quantitative research approach, utilizing a structured questionnaire to collect data from 300 women entrepreneurs in Tunisia. Analysis involved descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS SEM) to test the hypothesized relationships. The results show that entrepreneurial motivation and emotional intelligence have a significant impact on their intention to launch businesses in this sector. Moreover, the perception of anti-corruption efforts plays a moderating role, reinforcing the positive effect of entrepreneurial motivation.

Keywords: sustainable tourism, entrepreneurial intention, emotional intelligence, governance and anti-corruption efforts, women entrepreneurs.

Introduction

The durable adoption of the development objectives by the United Nations in 2015 marked a major turning in the way in which the company approaches the development. Since then, there was an increasing awakening of the importance of durability, not only on the environmental level, but also from the economic and sociocultural points of view. The efforts aiming at reaching “triple environmental, economic and sociocultural result” became a central objective in many fields, including tourism. Certain recent research thought of other kinds of destination’s tourism like coastal/insular tourism, educational tourism, Community tourism. tourism, spiritual tourism, and patrimonial tourism. Since tourism was largely shown to facilitate the propagation of new coronavirus ([Sharma and al., 2021c](#)), research on tourism started to concentrate on the aspect durability of the tourist activities since the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tourism is a largely required development strategy because of its many advantages for the wellbeing. According to Moscardo and al. (2017), it contributes directly or indirectly to increase the wellbeing of the populations. The Worldwide organization of tourism (OMT, 2013) underlines her potential to stimulate the economy, to promote environmental durability and to support an inclusive progress. Several tourist initiatives are adopted like development's alternatives mainly in rural areas (Park and al., 2015). However, the interests concerning the tourism's harmful effects led to increased research on durable tourism (Moscardo and al., 2017).

Sustainable tourism (ST), as defined by Streimikiene and al. (2020), aims at having a favourable ecological effect while boosting economic as well as social durability. It integrates the safeguarding of the environmental, social, economic and cultural aspects (Sari and al., 2023). This concept emerges in answer to the problems associated with the tourism development, such as the environmental damage and the loss of the traditional culture. The stress that sustainable tourism is regarded as a positive solution, offering significant benefit while preserving the resources for the future generations.

The entrepreneurship is an important of economic development and social engine, offering innovation's appropriateness, job creation and economic growth. Women entrepreneurs play a crucial role in this process through bringing a single prospect and innovative solutions to the sustainable development's challenges. However, their engagement in specific sectors, like sustainable tourism, can be influenced by various factors, particularly their entrepreneurial motivation, their emotional intelligence and their perception of the governorship and the fight against corruption.

Women entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial motivation for durable tourism can be a key factor to determine their intention to begin in this sector. In the same way, their emotional intelligence can play a big role in their capacity to manage the challenges, and the pressures associated with the creation and management of a company in a durable context. Moreover, their perception of the fight against corruption can influence their confidence in the sector and their will to begin there.

Thus, in this context, we are interested to answer the following problems: to what point do the entrepreneurial motivation and the emotional intelligence influence women entrepreneurs' intention to begin in sustainable tourism? How does the efforts' perception of fight against corruption influence these relations?

Review of literature

According to Passafaro (2020), the definitions of durable tourism led to a comprehensive view which defines it as tourism which takes care of the respect of the environment, meets the needs for the human leisure, protects and preserves the mediums of reception, and ensures the economic and

social objectives of all its actors. Now, the development of durable tourism aims at preserving the durability of the natural resources (water, air, ground, biological diversity, etc). The objective is to prevent the impacts which could call in question the same bases of the development, such as the destruction of the ecosystems, the attack with the cultural heritage, the modifications of the traditions and the lifestyles, as well as competition for the access to the utility services and the infrastructures. Several studies, such as Pan and al. (2018), presented divergent prospects for the durable tourism's definition. According to them, durable tourism is defined as tourism which ensures, in the long run, an economic, social and environmental equilibrium to satisfy all the tourist requirements while offering opportunities for sustainable development for the future.

To satisfy the local community and the tourists, like offering vast possibilities of development in the future. Various opinions suggest that the application of the durability's principle is extremely complex, and that also applies to tourism, because it must consider balance between the resources' exploitation and the safeguarding of the environment and socio-culture (Nguyen and al., 2019). Durable tourism's concept is encouraged by the problems involved in tourism, such as ecological harm, traditional culture as well as the economy. The concept's basic principles include understanding plannings and policies coming from the economic, environmental and social fields. This evolution's objective is preserving the coming productivity, natural environment, cultural heritage as well as balance and justice. At the sustainable development's beginning, the priority was given to the environment's safeguarding. But, in addition, the economic and social conditions and play a quite crucial part in the realization of durability. Thus, the notion of durability is understood like a design of the three essential components: the social, the environmental and the economic ones which play a pivotal role as a total system. The latter includes all the life aspects in sustainable development. It is essential to regard sustainable development of systems: an environmental system which preserves the living resources and a social system which aims at promoting equity and an economic system which aims at improving the effectiveness of the use of the resources (Year and Alarcón, 2020).

According to (Bird, 1988), intentions help the contractors sail in the new company's development and guide them in the objectives' definition, the effective communication, their work's organization and their engagement towards various types of related requests like action's model. Indeed, (Bird, 1988,) believes that entrepreneurial intention is “a frame of mind directing the person's attention(experiment and action) towards a specific objective (goal) or a way to carry out something (average)”. Gatewood and Coll (2002) affirm that, although it is about a disconcerting idea, a possible reason to bind the decision-making process (choosing to start a company) with

psychological features in the entrepreneurship's field is like the stress laid on the leaders' characteristics that are found in the literature concerning the leadership.

Entrepreneurial intention is essential to initiate and maintain entrepreneurial projects. It is influenced by personal, environmental and sociocultural variables. It guides the individuals' action towards the company's creation (Baskaran and al., 2020). Early studies by (Shukla and Kumar (2024) based on the intention examined the factors of personality (self-confidence, taking risks capacity, need for success and control's place), cognition, perception and the intention. According to Liao et al. (2022), personal attitudes are essential to the IE. In the literature the Entrepreneurial knowledge significantly boosts car-effectiveness, which is crucial for building self-confidence in the early stages of a company.

Entrepreneurial motivation transcends the simple will to start a company, the political support plays a crucial role by offering a financial support and not - financier, such as formations, the reinforcement of commercial competences, the assistance with the realization of market research and the preparation of plans of businesses. Moreover, the use of data coming from information centres in the decision-making process is essential. These forms of support are key elements to help the contractors to make enlightened decisions and to succeed in their company.

For these reasons, Amofah and Saladrignes (2022) propose to carry out activities such as formations, conferences, workshops and courses with the choice, to promote and reinforce the entrepreneurial spirit among the men and women, by defining that as the creation of an organization based on the search and the exploitation for an opportunity (Tripopsakul et al., 2022), and thus generate social transformations and economic, taking into account the positive relation between the entrepreneurial spirit and the future creation of companies. In addition to undertaking studies on the role of kind largely documented in the literature, it is necessary to recognize the existing differences between the entrepreneurial intention of the men and the women (Amofah and Saladrignes, 2022).

The concept of emotional intelligence combines emotions and intelligence, taking Thorndike's social intelligence as a starting point to define emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive, control and use one's own emotions as well as those of others. This intelligence has been associated with the evaluation, regulation and adaptive use of emotions, in parallel with the personal intelligences. Brett (2025). sees it as a set of emotional and social skills, while the other focuses on personal and social skills. Abdullah and Gull (2024) consider it to be a personality characteristic, linking behaviors and perceptions to emotional abilities. Although it is capable of recognizing, including/understanding, managing and using emotions, it is interpreted according to different

models. The diversity of these models, the energy of emotional intelligence as a simple mental skill with a combination of mental skills and personality characteristics.

The performance models and capacities of car-evaluation to measure the quotient of emotional intelligence are similar conceptually. However, they differ in their mode from evaluation. (Park and Kim, 2021) said that in the performance model, quotient IE is evaluated through tests measuring the correct and incorrect answers, such as “Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test”.

Emotional intelligence predictive potential on the entrepreneurial behaviour draws the researchers' attention. Ingram and al. (2017) noted that the emotional intelligence interpersonal dimensions—the emotions' perception and management - influence directly the companies' performance and the small companies' owners in the United States. Senathiraja and Gunasekera (2019) found that women entrepreneurs have a high level of emotional intelligence high level of emotional intelligence. Kovid et al. (2024) highlight a positive and significant association between emotional intelligence and women's entrepreneurial success. They also point out that the spirit of innovation plays a partial moderating role in this relationship, while entrepreneurial experience strengthens the link. Age, on the other hand, does not appear to have a moderating effect.

In the former studies concerning the relation between the governorship and the relationship to incoherent findings. In their studies, Nistotskaya and Cingolani (2015) affirmed that bureaucratic structure has an indirect impact on the entrepreneurship's rates thanks to the regulation's better quality. They estimated that a higher percentage of recording and companies' entry was observed in the countries with a better governorship. The effectiveness of the government and the law rule are other agents that are considered as determinants for the countries' entrepreneurial activities. The countries which have an effective government, and a considerable law rule recorded a high number of new companies' entries and an economic growth. Sasmaz and Sagdic (2020) found that transition's countries revealed that only the government's effectiveness influences the level of the companies' entry. Zhou and al. (2020) revealed that the movements' effectiveness and the law rule largely contribute to influence the companies' development by accelerating the economic growth. In the history, the first research on the female entrepreneurship goes back to the years 1970, mainly in the United States and in England, but this population remains largely under-studied (Carrier and al., 2006). Previous literature has clearly demonstrated the need for sound government policies for gold “institutions” to promote and to support entrepreneurship in the country. This paper's purpose is to explore the role of one such institution - political stability - in entrepreneurial booster pump endeavours. Politically stable nations will cut lower risk and transaction/contracting costs, higher levels of government transparency, predictability, and accountability. Thus, the paper expects that

with greater political stability there should be greater dismantles of entrepreneurial activity (Dutta and al., 2013). Besides, this study's aim is analysing the governance indicators' effect on entrepreneurship.

The relation between the businesses' environment and the entrepreneurial activity was shown by Klapper and al. (2007). They condescend governorship as the principal pillar of the businesses' environment. Besides, they estimated that a higher percentage of recording and entry of companies' entry are observed in the countries that have a better governorship. Additionally, they considered political stability. The relative influence of the governorship's indirect factors on the entrepreneurship can be mediated via the existing differences in economic evolution between the countries. The governorship's framework of the countries, which have a high economy, stimulates that the entry in entrepreneurs more formal than abstract (Thai and Turkina, 2014). That implies that many contractors who enter in the low-income countries' market belong to abstract categories. Dau and Cuervo-Cazurra (2014) shared this idea. Added to that, they noted that good institutional arrangements influence positively the entrepreneurship. As far as the economic development's level is concerned, owing to a better governorship, the interference in the entrepreneurship's development is not always dependant. Nyarku and Oduro (2017) affirmed that bureaucracy, an incoherent political climate, unfavourable customs and regulations, monetary and restrictive credit policies, tax corruption and practices, labour and work's excessive regulations were noted to have a negative impact on the new companies.

1. Material & Methodology

This study explores the key factors influencing women's entrepreneurial intentions in the field of sustainable tourism. To better understand these influences, a conceptual model is developed, incorporating several core variables. The main variables include Entrepreneurial Motivation, which reflects the reasons and drivers that encourage women to engage in sustainable tourism ventures; Emotional Intelligence, representing women's ability to understand and manage their own emotions and those of others; and Perception of Anti-Corruption Efforts, assessing how women entrepreneurs perceive the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures in their professional environment. The study investigates the relationships between these variables, focusing particularly on how anti-corruption perceptions mediate the link between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial intention in the sustainable tourism sector.

Table 1: Variables of the conceptual model

Variables	Entitled	Authors and dates
Intention IE	Entrepreneurial intention in sustainable tourism	Fayolle (2004).
Obtuseness emotional	Perception of oneself Expression of oneself Interpersonal interactions	Bar one (1997)
Motivation entrepreneurial ME	Tourist training of the contractor	Tounès (2006); Boissin and al. (2007)
	Structures of accompaniment in place	Salhi and Boujelbene (2013); Messegem et al., 2013.
	Public policies of the entrepreneurship and lawful Infrastructure in place	Camus and al. (2010). Covin and Slevin (1990).
Fight against corruption	Effectiveness of the government Control corruption	The World Bank (2021a, 2021b)

Source: worked out by the authors

1.1. Assumptions of research

H1: There exists a positive relation between of women entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial motivation for sustainable tourism and their intention to engage in this sector.

H2: Women entrepreneurs' emotional intelligence is positively related to their intention to begin in sustainable tourism.

H3: The relation between women entrepreneurs' emotional intelligence and their intention to begin in sustainable tourism is mediated by their fight against corruption perception.

H4: Fight against corruption mediated the relation between women entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial motivation for sustainable tourism and their willingness to endow in this field.

1.2. Techniques of data analysis

The data analysis for this research was conducted using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique, with the help of SmartPLS 3 software. This flexible tool allows the examination of complex causal relationships between multiple constructs (Kline, 2016). PLS-SEM is a multivariate analytical approach particularly well-suited for data that do not follow a normal distribution, for small to medium sample sizes, and for testing relationships involving latent variables, which are often untestable using traditional statistical methods (Hair et

al., 2017). This approach facilitates the analysis of relationships between constructs and helps assess the predictive power of the target constructs. Therefore, PLS-SEM is considered appropriate for addressing the objectives of this study.

1.3. Variables Operationalisation

To conduct the study, validated measurement items from the literature were adapted, drawing on theories related to planned behaviour, sustainable tourism, emotional intelligence, and political stability. A five-point Likert scale was used, ranging from 1 ("strongly agree") to 5 ("strongly disagree"). The questionnaire was tested and distributed to 250 Tunisian women entrepreneurs in 2024, with a response rate of 88%, resulting in 220 completed surveys. Most respondents were between 20 and 40 years old, with varying educational backgrounds. Data collection was conducted via social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and email. To ensure statistical robustness, the sample size followed recommendations by Hair et al. (2006) and Kline (2016), which suggest a minimum of 200 respondents for structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). With 250 responses, the sample size was sufficient for reliable analysis.

2. Results

2.1. Evaluation of the measurement model

The evaluation of the measurement model consists of checking internal reliability, convergent and discriminating validity of our model.

Internal reliability

In this paper, we used the coefficient alpha of Cronbach and composite reliability to examine internal reliability. According to (To hate and Tatham, 2006), the values of alpha of Cronbach as well as composite reliability must be higher than 0,70 to guarantee a pleasant reliability.

The table presents coefficient alpha of Cronbach and composite reliability calculated to evaluate intern reliability. We note that all built posted alpha of Cronbach 0.822 and 0.914, which is higher than the value recommended of 0,7.

Table 2: Internal reliability and Reliability and validity of built

Loads externs						
	Items	Values	Alpha of Cronbach	Rho-A	Composite Friability	AVE
Intention entrepreneurial in sustainable tourism	IE1	0.884	0.868	0.877	0.910	0.717
	IE2	0.780				
	IE3	0.826				
	IE4	0.892				
Motivation entrepreneurial in sustainable tourism	ME1	0.794	0.822	0.825	0.883	0.653
	ME2	0.775				
	ME3	0.825				
	ME4	0.836				
Intelligence emotional	IEm1	0.903	0.914	0.918	0.939	0.795
	IEm2	0.912				
	IEm3	0.867				
	IEm4	0.882				
Perception of political stability and fight against corruption among women	PSPC1	0.838	0.841	0.862	0.893	0.676
	PSPC2	0.843				
	PSPC3	0.751				
	PSP4	0.854				

For Hair and al., 2014, convergent validity refers to the degree to which a measurement element has a strong positive correlation with other elements. First, to measure the convergent validity we examined the significance of each item's factorial contribution to the measurement of built. Then, we evaluated it through the index of the extracted average variance (AVE). Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that each item's factorial contribution (Loading) and AVE's acceptable values should be at least 0,50 to ensure the built's convergent validity.

Table 2 shows that the factorial contribution's values of each item (Loading) of all built going from 0.751 to 0.912 and the AVE's values vary from 0.653 to 0.795. This is higher than the thresholds recommended. Consequently, the convergent validity's condition of our research model is satisfied.

Discriminating validity

Discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each latent variable with the squared correlations between that variable and the other latent variables. According to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the AVE square root of each construct should be greater than its correlations with other constructs. In the latent variable correlation matrix, the bold diagonal values represent the square roots of AVEs, and each exceeds the off-diagonal values in the corresponding rows and columns. This indicates that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs, confirming discriminant validity.

Table 3: Discriminating validity measured by the average variance extracted (AVE) squared

Criterion of Fornell-Larcker	IE	IE _m	ME	PSP
IE	0.847			
IE _m	0.563	0.891		
ME	0.636	0.507	0.808	
PSP	0.777	0.390	0.566	0.846

Table 3 reveals that the AVE's square root for each variable is higher than the correlation's square between this variable and the other model's latent variables. Then, the criterion's results of Fornell-Larcker show that each variable is more distinct from the others. They also have a discriminating validity. The AVES' square roots for each variable are larger than the other variables' correlations. Hence, we concluded that the requirements to ensure the discriminating validity of all the built reflexive ones of the model are filled.

2.2. Validation of the structural model

The results (table 4) show that. In the same way for the variable's mediator. Consequently, the assumptions suggested were accepted.

Table 4: Results of the Checking of the assumptions

Assumption	Initial sample (O)	Standard deviation	T-value	p-value	
H1	0.324	0.099	3.273	0.001	Accepted
H2	0.474	0.088	5.356	0.000	Accepted
H3	0.154	0.067	2.297	0.022	Accepted
H4	0.390	0.077	5.034	0.000	Accepted

Hypotheses Testing Results

- **H1:** *Entrepreneurial motivation* has a significant positive effect on women entrepreneurs' intention to engage in sustainable tourism. The estimated path coefficient is **0.324** (T = 3.273, p = 0.001), confirming a statistically significant relationship at the 95% confidence level (p < 0.05).

- **H2:** *Emotional intelligence* is positively associated with the intention to engage in sustainable tourism. The coefficient is **0.474** ($T = 5.356, p = 0.000$), indicating a strong and significant relationship.
- **H3:** The relationship between *entrepreneurial motivation* and *intention to engage in sustainable tourism* is mediated by the *perception of political stability and anti-corruption efforts*. The mediation effect is significant with a coefficient of **0.154** ($T = 2.297, p = 0.022$), supporting the hypothesis.
- **H4:** The relationship between *emotional intelligence* and *entrepreneurial intention* is mediated by the *perception of anti-corruption efforts*. The estimated coefficient is **0.390** ($T = 5.034, p = 0.000$), indicating a significant mediating effect.

These results suggest that both emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial motivation play crucial roles in shaping women’s entrepreneurial intentions in sustainable tourism, with the perception of political stability and anti-corruption efforts acting as important mediating factors.

Table 5: Coefficient of determination (R^2)

R^2	R fitted square		
Perception of political stability and fights against corruption among women	0.808		0.805
Entrepreneurial Intention for sustainable tourism	0.423		0.418

1. **Perception of political stability and fight against corruption among women entrepreneurs, $R^2 = 0.808$** indicates that 80.8% of political stability’s perception variance and the fight against corruption among women entrepreneurs are explained by the model’s independent variables.
2. **Entrepreneurial intention for sustainable tourism, $R^2 = 0.423$** means that 42,3% of the entrepreneurial intention’s variance in sustainable tourism are explained by the model’s independent variables.

In short, these coefficients of determination show that the models have a reasonable explanatory capacity for the examined dependant variables, for the entrepreneurial intention in sustainable tourism, where more than half of the variance is explained. That suggests that the variables considered in the models are relevant to explain political stability’s perceptions, the fight

against corruption and the entrepreneurial intention in sustainable tourism among women entrepreneurs.

The index of the size of the F effect of Cohen or F²

The size of the effect F² makes it possible to evaluate the impact of each variable the exogenic tent on the variables the endogenous tent in connection with the change of the R² (Chin, 1998). According to Cohen (1988) (Hair and al., 2017), values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 mean Successive sizes of effects: weak, average and broad, while a value lower than 0.02 means absence of size of effect.

Table 6: Size of the effect F²

Relationship	Effect Size	Interpretation
IEm → IE	0.105	Average effect (close to 0.15)
ME → IE	0.020	Small effect
PSP → IEm	1.680	Very great effect
PSP → ME	0.349	Great effect

To improve the Intention Entrepreneurial with durable tourism (IE), it can be more effective to concentrate on the factors mediators such as Perception with the fight against the corruption (PSP), which strongly influences the independent variables (IEm and ME). This approach would make it possible to obtain a more significant impact on the Intention Entrepreneurial

The coefficient of Stone-Geisser (Q²)

Also called the index of redundancy in crossed validation, the coefficient of Stone-Geisser (Q²) is the test of the validation crossed between the manifest variables of a variable the endogenous tent and the whole of the manifest variables of the latent variables explaining the aforementioned endogenous latent variable by using the estimated structural model (Chafik and Bennaceur, 2019). Calculated by the procedure of blindfolding, if this last is positive, then the model has a predictive validity on the other hand if it is negative, the studied model presents an absence of validity predictive and thus unacceptable (Fernandes, 2012). In the table presented below. All the indices are positive what shows that our model has a pre

Table 7: Coefficient of Stone-Geisser (Q²)

Construct	Q ²
IE	0.549
PSP	0.257

- IE (Entrepreneurial Intention): Q^2 of 0.549 indicates a good predictive validity for this construct.
- PSP (Perception with the fight against corruption): Q^2 of 0.257 watch also a predictive validity acceptable for this construct.
- The positive Q^2 indices for built the IE and PSP show that the model has a satisfactory predictive validity, in accordance with the criteria of cross validation mentioned by Chafik and Bennaceur (2019) and Fernandes (2012).

Total quality of the model: index of Goodness off the FIT (GoF):

In PLS-SEM, there is no overall model fit index as in covariance-based SEM. To address this limitation, Tenenhaus et al. (2005) proposed the **Goodness-of-Fit (GoF)** index as an operational solution. This index takes into account both the **measurement model** and the **structural model**. It is calculated as the geometric mean of the (AVE) and the **average R² values** of the endogenous variables. This index provides an overall assessment of model quality by balancing both the reliability of the measurement and the explanatory power of the structural paths.

Table 8: index of Goodness off the FIT (GoF)

Calculation	Values
Average of the AVES	$(0.717 + 0.653 + 0.795 + 0.676) / 4 = 0.710$
Average of the R ²	$(0.808 + 0.423) / 2 = 0.616$
GoF	$\sqrt{(0.710 * 0.616)} = \sqrt{0.437} = 0.661$

Thus, the goodness of fit index (GoF) of the model is 0.661. The measurement model has good internal reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity. The structural model is validated with significant relationships between variables, and the coefficients of determination indicate reasonable explanatory power. The (GoF) value suggests that the model fits well and can be considered robust in explaining relationships in the context of sustainable tourism entrepreneurship among women.

3. Discussion of the results and implication

3.1 Discussion of the results

Our research's results confirm all the advanced assumptions. First, with regard to Assumption 1 on the entrepreneurial Motivation and the intention to engage in durable tourism, we observe a significant positive relation. That indicates that when the women have a strong entrepreneurial motivation, they are more likely to intend to engage in projects of durable tourism. While

supporting and by encouraging this motivation among women, we could thus support their implication in durable tourism. The entrepreneurial intention is influenced by factors such as the attitude towards the behaviour, the subjective standard and perceived behavioural control, in accordance with the model of behaviour planned of Ajzen. This is valid by several former studies like Bored-Sánchez and Atienza-Sahuquillo (2017) or Lang and Liu (2019) who confirmed that the motivation is a critical factor for the Intention entrepreneurial. Moreover, Al-Jubari and al. (2023) provided a positive bond's evidence among the motivation and the entrepreneurial intention or the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that plays both a big role in the explanation of the individuals' will to launch out in the entrepreneurial adventure. In addition, any person can launch out in durable tourism on the condition of adapting her project to the city's tourist potential and to her own technical and financial means. Moreover, small entrepreneurs will be more likely to succeed in sustainable tourism thanks to the control of the trade chosen, with the sites' geographical proximity, the important relational wallet with the customers and the suppliers (Torrès, 2009).

Secondly, regarding Assumption 2 on the emotional Intelligence and the intention to engage in sustainable tourism, we note a significant positive relation between women entrepreneurs' emotional intelligence and their intention to engage in sustainable tourism. That stresses the importance of competences in emotional intelligence for this sector. To form and to reinforce the emotional intelligence among women entrepreneurs could increase their engagement in sustainable tourism. The emotional intelligence, which includes the capacity to identify, use, include/understand and manage the emotions, is recognized like a key factor in entrepreneurial success. This competence can improve decision making and the interpersonal relationships, two essential components in the entrepreneurship. What confirms our results is that Nwibe and Ogbuanya (2024) suggested that the emotional intelligence can help the contractors with better managing uncertainties and the emotional challenges related on the creation and the management of a company. Moreover, studies on the emotional intelligence revealed that it had a significantly positive effect on the entrepreneurial intention when it is evaluated in an isolated way (without covariance with the mediators). This is consistent with the previous studies' results (Ingram and al., 2017).

Lastly, for Assumptions 3 and 4, we observe a significant positive effect of the mediation of the perception of the fight against corruption between the emotional intelligence and the intention to engage in durable tourism, like between the entrepreneurial motivation of the women and their intention to engage in durable tourism. These observations stress the crucial

importance of a transparent and ethical environment to support the engagement of the women entrepreneurs in durable tourism. The corruption acts' perception is like a mediator in the relation between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial intention. That suggests that women, who perceive a less corrupted environment, feel safer to exploit their emotional competences in favour of entrepreneurial initiatives, especially in a sector that is influenced by the ethical practices such as sustainable tourism. The more effective the countries control corruption, the more successful they are in attracting new companies and maintaining the existing ones. This has its own implications for the business world's actors. Our results are on line with Shumetie and Watabaji (2019) and Avnimelech and al. (2014) studies which declared that in a company where the corruption's control is unimportant, that involves an increase in the businesses' cost and in new entrants' number on the market. The countries that suffer from a weak and unsatisfactory entrepreneurship are known for their weak scores as regards corruption's control. In another research, Firozjaini (2012) said that corruption has a regressive impact on the entrepreneurship's development, as it makes the country's system benefit from some existing and better-connected companies and creates negative incentives for the contractors. However, the countries which have a flexible system of entrepreneurial governorship, the entrepreneurial development appropriateness is not important for contractors. Shumetie and Watabaji (2019) and Johnson (2015) supported this implication. They affirmed that political instability in each country involves a reduction in the extent of the companies' innovation and new companies' entry on the market.

3.2. Implication

This study's conclusions highlight important managerial consequences for the actors implied in the promotion of the female entrepreneurship in the field of sustainable tourism, particularly in Tunisia. The development of special programs to reinforce women's entrepreneurial motivation, to develop their competences in emotional intelligence and to sensitize them with the governorship's stakes and fight against corruption is essential for the organizations which support entrepreneurship. Regarding public institutions, their role can be crucial by supporting a favourable framework with the female entrepreneurship in this field, while putting in place policies that support the companies' creation, transparency and fight against corruption, by facilitating the access to the financing and resources. Lastly, the tourist sector's companies have also a responsibility to assume while giving their support for women entrepreneurs by establishing partnerships, in their subcontracting 's occasions and their products and services'

marketing. While working with women entrepreneurs in a proactive way, these actors can support their autonomy and support the sustainable development of tourism in Tunisia.

Conclusion

Sustainable tourism can be beneficial to achieve the development objectives and to lead to sustainable cities and communities (SDG-11) through a sustainable production and consumption (SDG-12). This is done by focusing on ST to promote local culture and to create jobs. (SDG-12.b). It can also be fulfilled via the spiritual tourism's means, tourism of nature, rural tourism, tourism of adventure, etc., because these activities aim at minimizing the damage caused with the place and produce positive tests to the inhabitants.

This research underscores the crucial role of emotional intelligence in fostering entrepreneurial intention among women in Tunisia's sustainable tourism sector. Our findings confirm that emotional intelligence, alongside entrepreneurial motivation, significantly drives women's engagement in this field. Specifically, the ability to perceive, understand, and regulate emotions empowers women entrepreneurs to navigate the complexities of sustainable tourism, adapt to market fluctuations, and build resilient businesses.

The positive correlation between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial intention highlights the need to prioritize its development. As demonstrated by Alotaibi and Badawi (2023) and Bagheri et al. (2024), higher emotional intelligence enhances entrepreneurial success by enabling effective leadership, strong professional relationships, and the ability to transform challenges into opportunities. Similarly, Nassif and Garçon (2024) emphasize its role in building resilience, a vital trait for success in the dynamic tourism sector.

Moreover, our study reveals that the interplay between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial intention is strengthened by a transparent and ethical business environment. The perception of a robust fight against corruption acts as a crucial mediator, allowing women to fully leverage their emotional intelligence and motivation. This highlights the importance of implementing policies that promote good governance and support a level playing field.

Based on the findings of this study, strategic interventions are warranted to fully realize the potential of women entrepreneurs within the sustainable tourism sector. Firstly, the integration of emotional intelligence development into existing and future training programs is paramount. Such programs should equip women with the necessary competencies to effectively manage emotions, cultivate robust professional relationships, and exercise effective leadership. Secondly, the creation of supportive ecosystems is essential. This necessitates the fostering of ethical and transparent business environments that actively encourage and facilitate women's participation. Thirdly, the provision of targeted resources is crucial. This includes the offering

of accessible financing options, mentorship programs, and networking opportunities, all specifically designed to address the unique challenges and needs of women entrepreneurs in sustainable tourism.

Future research should delve deeper into the impact of public policies on women's entrepreneurship in sustainable tourism. Specifically, examining the effectiveness of existing policies and identifying persistent challenges will inform the development of more targeted and impactful support mechanisms. By adopting a multidimensional approach that prioritizes emotional intelligence, ethical governance, and targeted support, we can unlock the full potential of women entrepreneurs in driving sustainable tourism in Tunisia.

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