

Sustainable Tourism Entrepreneurship: Challenges and Opportunities

Summary

Tourism entrepreneurship was first studied academically in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in business economics. Tourism papers rarely addressed entrepreneurship issues until recently. Consumer tastes and new technologies can revolutionize the tourism industry. This study examines global tourist entrepreneurship, focusing on innovation, sustainability, and how entrepreneurial possibilities and orientation promote sustainable tourism. This study identifies new issues for sustainable tourism enterprises to guide future research. The thematic map comprises sustainability effects economic and social effects, entrepreneurial orientation, innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem, entrepreneurial possibilities in tourism, and sustainable tourism development. We also offered a conceptual framework through thematic analysis that shows how entrepreneurial prospects in the tourism sector led to an entrepreneurial attitude and when paired with disruptive innovation and the industry's socio-economic impact, can help maintain the industry.

Track- Entrepreneurship

Word count (excluding table and references) - 1971

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1. Introduction

Over the years, tourism has evolved and diversified to become one of the world's fastest-growing economic sectors. It is closely related to growth and comprises an increasing number of new destinations. Tourism has risen to the rank of a vital driver of socioeconomic improvement as a result of these processes. This evolution needs entrepreneurs and new business start-ups to serve rising markets, contributing to value creation while also being sustainable (Saura *et al.*, 2022a). Sustainability, which includes environmentalism, social equity, and economic development, has become a global issue, and many industries, including tourism, are changing processes and products to achieve sustainable goals. Tourism is a dynamic sector due to altering consumer preferences and the advent of new technology. Virtual reality (VR), artificial intelligence (AI), drones, and the internet of things (IoT) are all becoming more popular tools in the tourism industry to provide immersive, interactive experiences for visitors (Ferreira *et al.*, 2021). Tourism's transformation process and shift to experience-based products require entrepreneurial action to implement sustainable innovations (Kumar *et al.*, 2022).

Sustainable tourism involves environmental, economic, and socio-cultural challenges, according to the UNWTO (UNWTO, 2016). It aims to improve the host people's living standards, meet tourist needs, and conserve the environment (Işık *et al.*, 2022). Like most academic subjects, sustainable tourism has two schools of thought. ST opponents believe that tourism is not always sustainable because to too many competing interests and trade-off decisions that always favor one interest over another (Ratten, 2020). The amount of tourists, or the number who can be accommodated, remains a major worry due to the negative effects of excess tourism on the destination's sustainability (Nguyen *et al.*, 2020). Despite the challenges, many academics believe sustainable tourism is possible in all destinations, for both mass and small-scale tourist, because sustainability is a long-term aim. Destinations must reconsider tourism's goals from selfish, individualistic, and hedonistic to educational, cross-cultural, ecological, and spiritual (Bichler *et al.*, 2020).

2. Background of the study

With the two schools of thought and the COVID-19 pandemic, sustainable tourist expansion faces new challenges (Streimikiene *et al.*, 2021). Given this, tourism planning and development should be done consciously, sustainably, and with new and innovative issues, problems, regulations, and methods. This important research is advancing rapidly. To that aim, most sustainability research in the industry is contemporaneous or forward-looking (Job *et al.*, 2017), although new work has examined the evolution and history of sustainable tourism by evaluating the role of entrepreneurs (Jones *et al.*, 2016).

Prior research attempted to summarize the topic's literature. For instance, in a more or less descriptive (bibliometric) manner, Andrade-Valbuena *et al.* (2022) reviewed economic well-being with environmental, social, and cultural sustainability in hospitality and tourist studies. Belias *et al.* (2022) conducted another comprehensive study on social tourism entrepreneurship and tourism industry sustainability. However, studying 20 articles on the topic is insufficient to advance the discipline. While Ratten (2020) covers tourist entrepreneurship study although, whereas Santos *et al.* (2021) discusses sustainability and innovation, but not entrepreneurship. These startling results and the lack of a holistic strategy indicate that further research is needed

in this area, which is consistent with the growing interest in sustainable enterprises. Indeed, there are several significant gaps in our understanding, such as the unique motivations, challenges, preferences, and benefits that various parties (e.g., government, public and private sector enterprises, and individuals) would encounter.

3. Objectives of the study

In order to solve these research gaps and integrate the fragmented findings of the previous literature. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the relevance of global tourist entrepreneurship, concentrating on the roles of innovation and sustainability in this sector, and how entrepreneurial possibilities in tourism and entrepreneurial orientation contribute to sustainable tourism growth. By highlighting novel hypotheses and challenges for the development of sustainable tourism enterprises, the current study hopes to give direction for future research. Based on the results of this research, it is clear that a new, worldwide strategy for sustainable tourism is necessary to create a robust future path.

The structure of the paper is as follows: The next section goes through the review strategy (data and methodology). Section 5 presents the findings and outcomes, including descriptive and thematic findings. Section 6 provides future research agendas. Section 7 concludes the study along with a way ahead.

4. Research methodology

In order to produce new theoretical frameworks and viewpoints, the research approach of this study is based on a comprehensive review strategy of integrative review reviews (Klarin and Suseno, 2021). In order to present a clear picture of search and selection criteria, we conducted our research utilizing an integrative review methodology and a computational tool based on Bibliometrics (Bansal, Nangia, *et al.*, 2022). Using a PRISMA diagram, we have illustrated the entire data collecting process procedure (Figure 1). The search was carried out in September, 2022. The entire process has been divided into four steps: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. Using search terms such as "tourism entrepreneur*" and "sustainable", 215 papers were discovered during the identification phase. For the purpose of further refining the database, 75 papers were removed on the basis of pertinent topic areas, such as environmental studies, environmental sciences, management, business, economics, sociology, and physiology. In the phase of screening, there are two steps of screening: records and title/abstract. Documents were initially evaluated on the basis of document category and English language proficiency. As we only included articles and review articles, three papers were eliminated, leaving 137 results. Based on titles, abstracts, and keywords, 12 papers were excluded from 137. Four tourism-unrelated articles were rejected during the eligibility process. During inclusion, 121 papers were selected for final analysis.

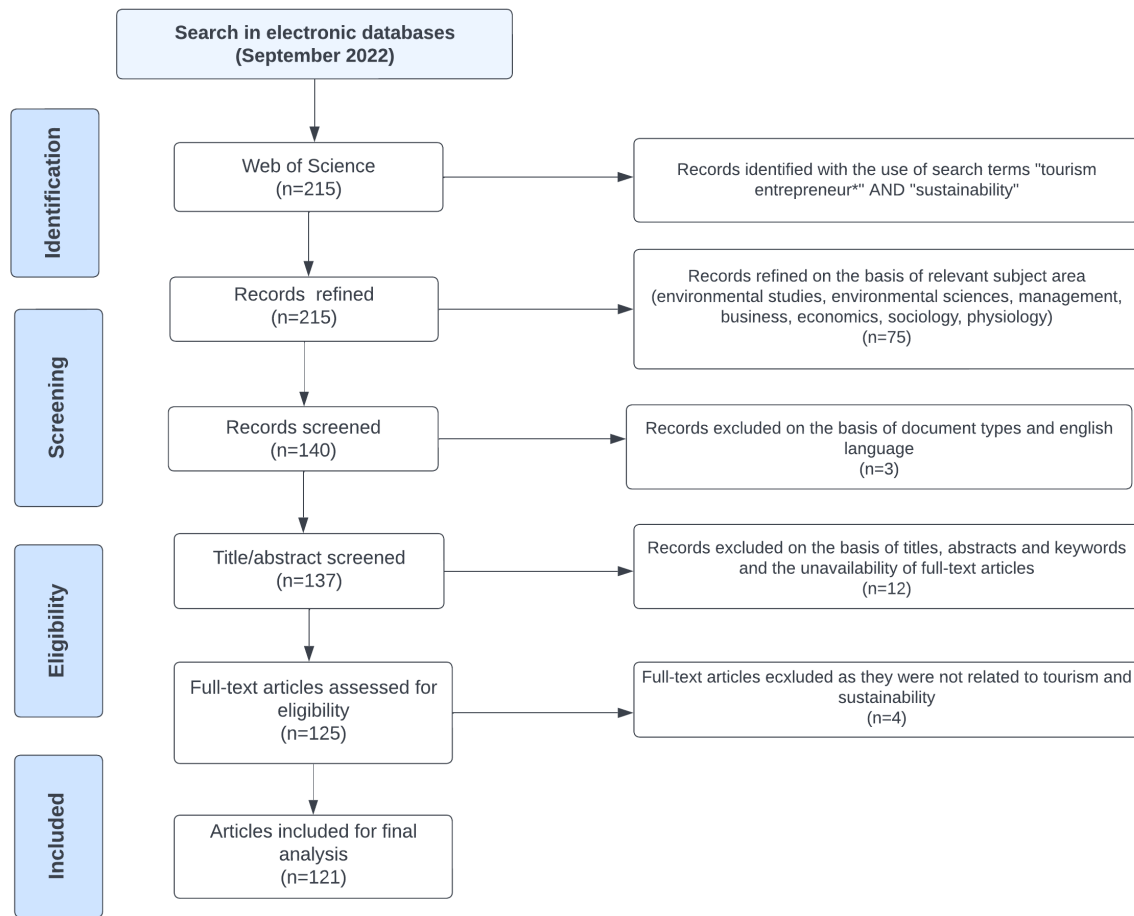


Figure 1. PRISMA Diagram

5. Results and Findings

5.1. Descriptive findings

This section shows the descriptive findings of the study on the basis of publication and growth trend (Figure 2), country collaboration map (Figure 3), and keyword co-occurrence (Figure 4).

5.1.1. Publication and growth trend

From 2002 to 2022, Figure 2 illustrates the annual production and citation trend within the field of tourism entrepreneurship and sustainability. Due to the collaboration of service innovation (Peng and Lin, 2016) and social entrepreneurs (Mottiar, 2016) in the tourism industry, the number of published articles has increased significantly from one in 2002 to seven in 2016 from 44 sources, with an average publication age of 2.84 years. Similarly, citation trends indicate that 2022 will have 2068 citations, with an average of 15.74 per document and 3.638 per year.

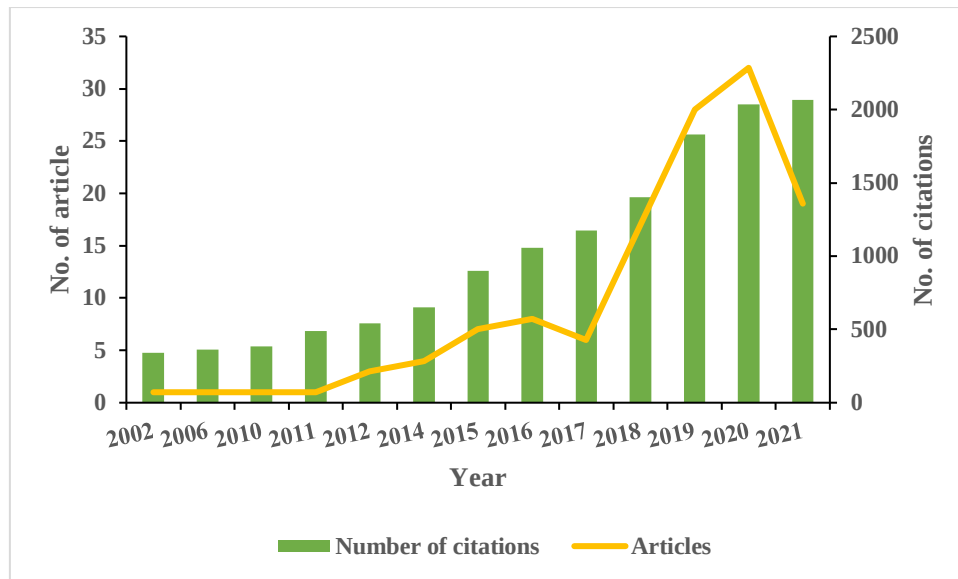


Figure 2. Growth over the years

5.1.2. Country collaboration map

Figure 3 shows 53 nations that have advanced sustainable tourism entrepreneurship. Different shades of blue indicate global cooperation. Countries with more publications are darker blue. Spain (42), the US (32), and Portugal (32) collaborate most (20). Gray areas are irrelevant to our research because they have not contributed to sustainable tourist entrepreneurship. Notable themes in the Spain are entrepreneurial vocation (Arranz *et al.*, 2017); in USA, it is emotional solidarity (Arranz *et al.*, 2017); in Portugal they are entrepreneurial skills (Daniel *et al.*, 2017).

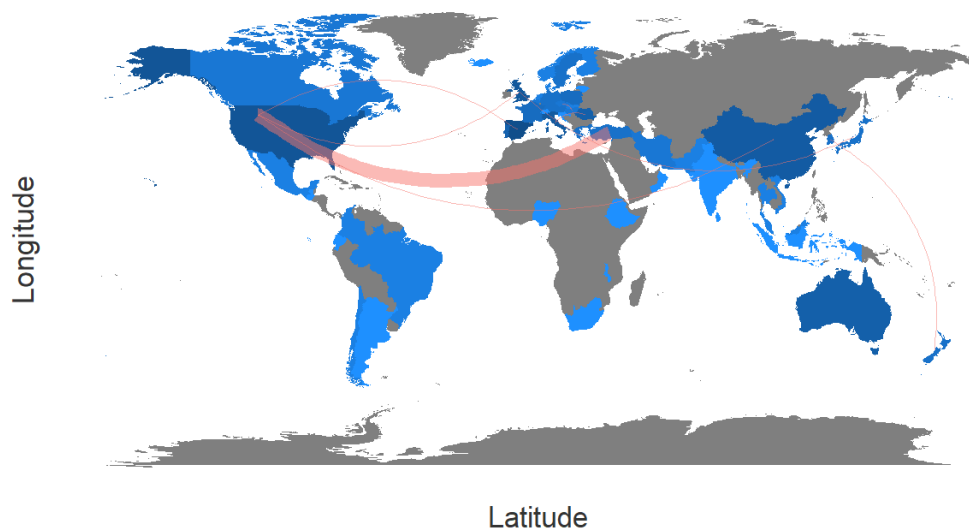


Figure 3. Country collaboration map

5.1.3. Keyword co-occurrence

Figure 4 depicts keyword co-occurrence in entrepreneurial sustainable tourism. Keyword size indicates frequency in published works (Bansal, Singh, *et al.*, 2022). Each node linking keywords forms a cluster that boosts the study's importance (Bamel *et al.*, 2020). On the map, five significant clusters have emerged. The map shows five prominent clusters. The first cluster (orange) shows how ecotourism affects lifestyle enterprises' sustainability (Ngoasong and Kimbu, 2016). The second cluster (brown) shows how intellectual property and intangible items affect entrepreneurship (Wigger and Shepherd, 2020). Entrepreneurial orientation and social innovation impact sustainable development and community-based tourism in the third cluster (red) (Aquino *et al.*, 2018). The circular economy, tourism, and hospitality are linked in the fourth cluster (blue) (Saura *et al.*, 2022b). Environmental, social, and economic sustainability and corporate social responsibility are examined in the fifth cluster (green) (Kumar *et al.*, 2022).



Figure 4. Keyword co-occurrence

5.2. Thematic findings

Figure 3 shows how the reviewed literature was manually analyzed to create a strategic/thematic field map. Six clusters were created using keywords from over 450 authors to show a 20-year progression. "motor," "fundamental/basic," "niche," and "emerging/declining" divide the map. Density shows how many topics are connected, whereas centrality shows how effectively one topic links to others (Aparicio *et al.*, 2019). There are six main themes that stand out, and they were chosen for their significance and rate of growth.

Basic themes are important but unexplored. Our strategic diagram emphasizes sustainability and economic and social impact. "Sustainability perspective" comprises "nature tourism," "lifestyle entrepreneurs," "resources," "risk management," and "eco-tourism." This topic discusses tourism's positive and negative impacts on sustainability. Tourism can cause overcrowding, economic instability, and environmental damage (Maldonado-Erazo *et al.*, 2022). "Economic and social impacts" encompasses "circular economy," "quality of life," "hospitality," "self-efficacy," and "social capital." This subject is crucial because it estimates how a community might change in response to tourism activities (Ferreira *et al.*, 2021).

"Entrepreneurial orientation" and "innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem" dominate the *motor quadrant*. Entrepreneurial orientation—which includes "business," "intellectual property," "knowledge," "tourist management," "corporate social responsibility," and others—is the most developed issue. The second driving theme, "innovation and entrepreneurial

ecosystem," includes "covid-19," "innovation," "family business," "tourist destinations," "green innovation," and "eco-innovation." Previous research has explored the tourism industry's sustainability and innovation (Asadi *et al.*, 2020; Crespi-Vallbona and Mascarilla-Miró, 2021).

"Entrepreneurial opportunities in tourism" is the *niche theme* in the upper left quadrant. "Encouraging women entrepreneurs," "income generation," "employment opportunities," and "rural economic development" are the issues. Tourism, one of the world's fastest-growing sectors, is driven by people's basic needs, unquenchable wanderlust, and the commercial opportunities that come from gratifying their ever-changing demands and curiosities (Nikraftar and Hosseini, 2016). "Sustainable tourism development" is the only *emerging/declining theme* from this research. Our analysis suggests this theme will become either basic or motor. Tourism offers long-term, equitable improvement due to its expanding economic, social, and cultural importance at the national and international levels (León-Gómez *et al.*, 2021).

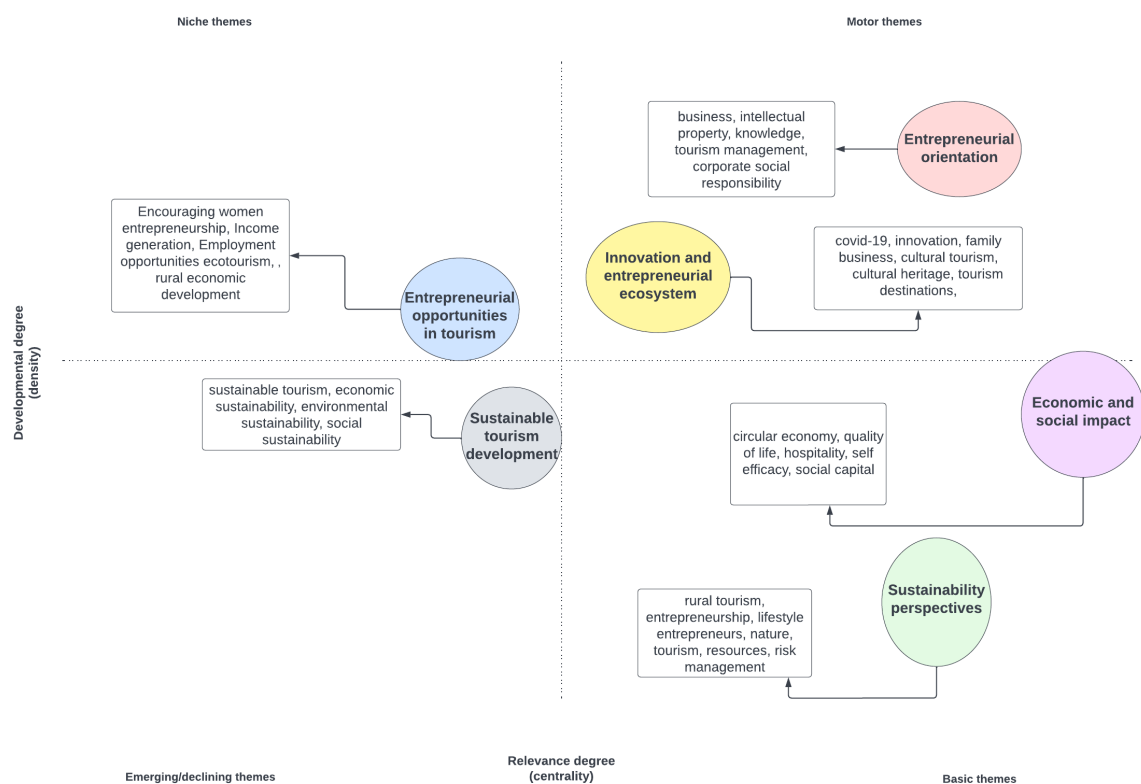


Figure 5. Thematic Map

6. Future research directions

We propose possible future research agendas in the form of thematic propositions while the study is still in its developmental stage (Table 1).

Table 1. Future research directions

Research themes	Future research questions
Sustainability perspective	What new business models may be developed to encourage sustainability and tourist entrepreneurship?

	• How do community members have a role in creating and sustaining tourist projects that prioritize sustainability? • To what extent do entrepreneurs in the tourist industry play a part in advancing environmentally friendly policies and bringing about constructive change?
Economic and social impact	• Does tourism entrepreneurship help boost the local economy? • What effects does tourist entrepreneurship have on society, economy, and culture? • What is the impact of tourism entrepreneurship on local communities, companies, and the environment? • What is the potential for tourist entrepreneurs to create jobs and support economic development?
Entrepreneurial orientation	• What are the difficulties and opportunities for tourist entrepreneurs and the best strategies for conquering them? • What entrepreneurial tactics do entrepreneurs in the tourist industry employ, and what are their success and failure rates? • What is the role of education and training in supporting and growing tourist businesses?
Innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem	• What effect do technologies like artificial intelligence and data analytics have on startup businesses in the tourist industry? • What is the significance of technology in the tourist business and its influence on entrepreneurial activities? • How have digital technologies and new media changed the dynamics of business in the tourist industry?
Entrepreneurial opportunities in tourism	• Do government policies, laws, and incentives play a part in encouraging tourism-related business startups?
Sustainable tourism development	• How digital tools may be used to help promote eco-friendly tourism and business ventures? • How entrepreneurs may design and execute ecologically and financially solvent practices for the tourism industry? • How can more inclusive, fair, and sustainable tourism practices be developed, particularly for minority and underprivileged communities?

7. Conclusion and way ahead

This study offers preliminary findings from a review of the literature and adds considerably to the current body of knowledge. To begin, this research illuminated the subject of sustainable tourism entrepreneurship. This research investigates worldwide tourist entrepreneurship, with an emphasis on innovation and sustainability, as well as how entrepreneurial opportunities and orientation foster sustainable tourism. This research identifies new issues for sustainable tourism firms, which will help drive future research. We will attempt to present a conceptual framework for understanding how entrepreneurial possibilities in tourism and entrepreneurial orientation lead to sustainable tourist growth based on our findings.

Comments and input on all areas of the study are welcome, from critiques of the literature and research methodology to preliminary findings and conclusions.

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