

Entrepreneurial strategies and tourism industry growth

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the relationship between entrepreneurship strategies and industry growth. Drawing on a longitudinal database of 481 tourism strategic planning documents, a sampling framework is used to map tourism strategies, tourism entrepreneurship strategies and tourism entrepreneurship strategic themes to tourism region by year (across a 10-year cycle), as well as to compile corresponding tourism jobs and visitation growth data. Exploratory bibliometric visuals and logistic regression reveal that regions with a tourism strategy and targeted strategies to support entrepreneurs predict tourism growth, specifically strategies for human capital development and tourism incubation programs. Future research should focus on the efficacy of tourism incubation programs for stimulating entrepreneurial activity in regional areas and as a mechanism to stimulate recovery from global crises.

1. Introduction

Since the turn of the millennium, a key question that has captivated researchers at the intersection between strategic management and entrepreneurship is whether entrepreneurship strategies generates wealth creation (Hitt, Ireland, Camp, & Sexton, 2001; Sternberg & Wennekers, 2005). The link between entrepreneurship and growth initially emerged with Schumpeter (1934), with two independent branches of literature subsequently evolving. The first body of knowledge is centred on studies which capture whether entrepreneurship strategies influence firm growth (Leibenstein, 1968). The second parallel stream is focused on empirical studies which seek to provide evidence that entrepreneurship strategies and institutions implemented and fostered by government and industries stimulate economic growth (Acemoglu, Johnson, & Robinson, 2005; North, 1990). While the former has been the most common, increasingly the literature is contemplating how institutions shape economic growth (Acs, Estrin, Mickiewicz, & Szerb, 2018). Despite this focus the relationship between institutions, entrepreneurship strategies and economic growth is considerably underexplored and conceptually underdeveloped (Bjørnskov & Foss, 2016). Increasing our understanding of these complex relationships will add considerable value to the vast literature on economic development arguing for government intervention to simulate entrepreneurial ecosystems to deliver regional growth (Stam, 2015).

Prior research generally confirms a relationship between

entrepreneurship and economic growth of a region or country (Aparicio, Urbano, & Audretsch, 2016; Martínez-Fierro, Biedma-Ferrer, & Ruiz-Navarro, 2016; Minniti & Lévesque, 2010). Several researchers have found a U-shaped relationship between entrepreneurship and economic growth (Carree, Van Stel, Thurik, & Wennekers, 2007; Valliere & Peterson, 2009; Wennekers & Thurik, 1999; Wong, Ho, & Autio, 2005). However, it is important to understand context, as a negative relationship is often found between entrepreneurship and economic growth in developed countries (Blanchflower, 2000; Van Stel, Carree, & Thurik, 2005). More generally, studies have shown that an increase in entrepreneurship leads to lower levels of unemployment (Audretsch & Thurik, 2000; Martin-Rios & Parga-Dans, 2016). National level studies have also shown there to be a positive relationship between government indicators and entrepreneurial activity (Aidis, Estrin, & Mickiewicz, 2008). Urbano, Aparicio, and Audretsch (2019) argue that entrepreneurship is a “conduit between institutions and economic performance” (pg. 25), which encompasses gross domestic product, national income, productivity, employment and regional economic growth.

A number of studies have explored the intersection between entrepreneurship, institutions and the economic growth of countries, generally finding a significant positive relationship (Bjørnskov & Foss, 2013; Martínez-Fierro et al., 2016). However, the relationship does not consistently hold (Ferreira, Fayolle, Fernandes, & Raposo, 2017) and significant debate has focused on the role of entrepreneurial strategies

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in delivering consistent economic growth, as well as the nature and appropriateness of government intervention (Martínez-Fierro et al., 2016; Martín-Ríos & Erhardt, 2017). Given the contradictory findings in the field, Autio, Kenney, Mustar, Seigel, and Wright (2014) have called for more systematic analysis of data that addresses different dimensions of entrepreneurship strategies, such as specific countries, regions or industries. One area that is relatively under-considered in the literature is whether the relationship between entrepreneurial strategies delivers growth for a specific industry sector (Gomezeli, 2016).

One industry that relies on entrepreneurship, business start-ups and innovation for growth, competitiveness and value creation is tourism (Ateljjevic & Page, 2017; Russell & Faulkner, 2004). Tourism is conducive to entrepreneurship as it is a sector dominated by small businesses and has relatively few barriers to entry (Lado-Sestayo, Vivel-Búa, & Otero-González, 2017; Nybakk & Hansen, 2008). Despite the recent events stimulated by COVID-19, tourism has traditionally been one of the most rapidly growing industries in the world and has seen the development on innovative tourism products like Airbnb and Uber (Saner, Yiu, & Filadoro, 2019). Although demonstrated to be an obvious sectoral context to research entrepreneurship strategies, the tourism management literature tends to underplay the importance of entrepreneurship (Phillips & Moutinho, 2014). To date, there have been very few studies that have considered the strategic development of tourism entrepreneurship (Li, 2008). Importantly, while there is significant literature considering tourism policy and planning discourses (see Dredge & Jamal, 2015; Moyle, McLennan, Ruhanen, & Weiler, 2015) there is a dearth of studies considering entrepreneurial discourse in tourism policy and planning documents and how these strategies relate to tourism growth. Consequently, the aim of this research is to: 1) explore the entrepreneurial strategic discourse in tourism strategic planning documents; and, 2) to identify broad tourism entrepreneurial strategies that are significantly related to tourism growth. Australia was selected as the case study to achieve the aims and objectives of this research, with a longitudinal database of strategic planning documents available for bibliometric analysis across local, regional, state and national levels (Moyle et al., 2015).

2. Strategic entrepreneurship in tourism

Considerable research has explored the relationship between economic development and entrepreneurship (Acs, Autio, & Szerb, 2014; Audretsch & Keilbach, 2004; Van Stel et al., 2005; Wong et al., 2005; Galindo, Méndez, & Alfaro, 2010). Researchers investigating the relationship between entrepreneurship, institutions and economic development are increasingly turning to evolutionary economics, and its closely related field institutional economics, for theoretical frameworks. Institutional economics provides insights into how both formal and informal institutions facilitate or constrain entrepreneurship (Aidis et al., 2008; Begley, Tan, & Schoch, 2005; Salimath & Cullen, 2010; Thornton, Ribeiro-Soriano, & Urbano, 2011; Turró, Urbano, & Peris-Ortiz, 2014; Urbano & Alvarez, 2014; Van Stel, Storey, & Thurik, 2007; Veciana & Urbano, 2008). Institutions are defined as “collective human designed action, such as government strategies, plans, policies or laws, business or industry norms, social norms, cultural beliefs or the general patterns of consumer behavior” (McLennan, Ritchie, Ruhanen, & Moyle, 2014, p. 107).

The literature argues that institutions impact growth, with institutions considered the primary driving factor determining growth (Acemoglu et al., 2005; Rodrik, Subramanian, & Trebbi, 2004). Institutions can reduce uncertainty, provide incentives for production and facilitate economic growth (Bjørnskov & Foss, 2013). Autio et al. (2014) argue that there is a need “for more fine-grained evaluation of the effectiveness of policy instruments” (p. 1106). Mok (2005) argues that government can play a critical role in facilitating and supporting entrepreneurship. Indeed, governments have often sought to develop entrepreneurial education, reduce regulation or apply targeted policies

(e.g. for women, youth or disadvantaged groups) to boost entrepreneurship (Autio et al., 2014). Given the likely importance of government strategies, plans and regulations in influencing entrepreneurship and delivering economic growth, it is surprising how very limited research there is in this space (Moyle, Moyle, Ruhanen, Bec, & Weiler, 2018). The literature suggests that the institutional and policy contexts affect the ability of an industry to facilitate entrepreneurial ethos, such as cultural practices, social context, government leadership and place management (Hart, 2003; Hayton, George, & Zahra, 2002; Uhlaner & Thurik, 2007). Harper (2003) argues that entry decisions relate to individual skills and national economic context. Holmes Jr, Zahra, Hoskisson, DeGhetto, and Sutton (2016) argue for the importance of technology policy in stimulating entrepreneurship.

Lordkipanidze, Brezet, and Backman (2005) emphasizes the importance of entrepreneurship policy and the role of governments in stimulating an entrepreneurial culture and assisting businesses to overcome barriers. Indeed, Klein, Mahoney, McGahan, and Pitelis (2010, 2013) note that policy decision-makers and public sector agents can be entrepreneurial themselves. Xing, Liu, and Cooper (2018) extend the argument stating that institutional entrepreneurs can foster regional entrepreneurial ecosystems. Further, the literature suggests that institutions appear to be related to economic growth through entrepreneurship (Urbano et al., 2019).

Similarly, in the tourism literature, Dredge (2017) holds the position that governments can contribute to creating conditions that facilitate tourism entrepreneurship by developing policies that support and encourage tourism social enterprises and creating the institutional environment needed to legitimize and synergize social entrepreneurship. While tourism often relies heavily on government for leadership, the tourism strategic management literature has tended to underplay the importance of entrepreneurship (Phillips & Moutinho, 2014). To date, there have been very few studies that have considered the strategic development of entrepreneurship in tourism (Li, 2008) and a distinct absence of studies considering the strategic discourse in government policy and planning documents relating to entrepreneurship (Moyle et al., 2014). Moreover, it remains unclear whether there is a direct relationship between government entrepreneurial strategies and tourism growth.

Consequently, the aim of this research is to explore the prevalence and focus of entrepreneurial strategic discourse in Australia's tourism strategic policy and planning documents. Critical engagement with policy and planning documents allows for an objective determination of the influence of tourism entrepreneurship strategies on tourism growth. Achieving this objective contributes to the literature through a granular evaluation of the effectiveness of government policy in facilitating entrepreneurship in the tourism sector, detailing how strategies, plans and regulations contribute to economic growth.

3. Method

3.1. Sampling

This study draws on a database of 481 Australian national, state, regional and local level tourism strategic planning documents spanning the period 2000 to 2014 (a fifteen-year policy period). Publicly available strategic planning documents are adopted as the primary data sources as “official strategy documents as vehicles through which specific social and societal changes are promoted, legitimized and naturalized” (Vaara, Sorsa, & Pälli, 2010, pg. 699). Initially collected until 2011 and then regularly updated, the database has been analyzed by Moyle et al. (2014); however, it has never been analyzed for discourse on strategic entrepreneurship. To ensure geographical coverage, a state, regional and local sampling framework was developed to search for strategies for each individual state, region and local area in Australia using the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2017) Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) enabling checking on individual

organisational websites. To guarantee coverage, if a particular area or level of government did not have strategy, email contact was made with representative organizations in the region to check availability. The comprehensive sampling strategy follows the work of < removed for blind peer review > and involves initial Google keyword searches using a combination of the keywords “tourism”, “strategy”, “plan” or “policy” with only Australian results being included.

Identified documents were filed as Adobe PDF documents. If multiple strategies were obtained for a particular area or level of government, all strategies were included. If a date of publication was not explicitly stated, the strategy date of the document was set to the first year of the planning period. Tourism strategies and plans produced by tourism agencies (e.g., Brisbane Marketing), government (e.g., Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism), statutory authorities (e.g., Tourism Australia) and industry bodies (e.g., Tourism and Transport Forum) were included for balanced policy perspectives. Peak industry bodies were included in the scope as they are highly influential in the tourism policy space in Australia (Airey & Ruhanen, 2013) and the policy process is about dynamic cooperation of the various policy actors (Dredge & Jenkins, 2007).

Each document was manually scrutinized by two independent researchers for inclusion in the database using the criterion that the strategy or plan was produced by a tourism government agency or relevant association (Eton et al., 2013). Further, to ensure that tourism policy discourse was captured rather than generic or other-sector strategies, the strategic document was required to have either the term “tourism” in the title or to have the term “tourism” as a major component of the strategy or plan, which was defined as more than 20 occurrences within the text. This frequency statistics approach follows the approach of Angus, Rintel, and Wiles (2013) for analyzing large text data. If the strategy or plan did not satisfy these criteria it was deleted from the database as it was not likely to be a “tourism” strategy or plan.

3.2. Text mining of the strategies

The keywords “entrepreneur*”, “start-up”, “incubator*” and “new/emerging business” were searched throughout the 481 strategies using Adobe’s PDF’s ‘Advanced Search’ tool, resulting in 167 strategies being identified with entrepreneurial discourse. Whole paragraphs, sections or documents with entrepreneurial discourse were identified and recorded in an MS Excel file, resulting in over 26,500 words being selected for analysis. Analysis involved text mining in Leximancer v.4 on the selected sample of text, combined with detailed content and bibliometric analysis was undertaken in STATA v.15 (Canosa, Moyle, & Wray, 2016). These visual methods and forms of analysis are recognized and commonly employed in applied studies relating to tourism planning (Hall & Valentin, 2005; Moyle et al., 2014; Ruhanen, Breakey, & Robinson, 2012).

The content analysis of the discourse aimed to identify the key strategic issues and strategies discussed relating to entrepreneurship across the database of tourism strategies. As detailed codes and information on the strategies was required, the data reduction process involved manually reading and coding each emergent issue or concept into key themes, while retaining the detail and specific strategies (Van Dijk & Kirk, 2007). This manual process took considerable time to reach literal replication with no new codes developed after the 114th document (Bradley, Curry, & Devers, 2007). Regardless, even though saturation was reached, all 167 documents were coded. To enhance the reliability of the results, an independent researcher cross-checked the coding, resulting in minor modification to the overarching codes (Hall & Valentin, 2005).

The bibliometric analysis in STATA v.15 adapts similar approaches applied in textual analysis studies in the strategic management literature, such as Kabanoff and Brown (2008). The method involved undertaking exploratory principal components factor (PCF) analysis on the strategic themes to determine broad strategies. The factor loadings

from the PCF analysis were rotated using orthogonal varimax rotation with the Kaiser normalization turned on (Hors, 1965), specifying a cut off of 0.47. Relationships arising from the exploratory factor analysis were then validated using confirmatory factor analysis (Lahey et al., 2012). For strategic themes that fell into the same factor a new variable was created to flag documents containing the broad strategies using the factor loadings from the CFA to generate the scores. The results of the EFA and CFA, as well as the code for creating the factor variables are at Appendix A.

3.3. Outcome variables and analysis

Two outcome variables measured the outcome of the strategies, specifically overnight international and domestic visitation, and persons employed in tourism, which are both common growth outcome variables used in tourism research (Carmignani & Moyle, 2019; Dogru & Sirakaya-Turk, 2017). Visitation data from 2005 to 2016 was sourced from Tourism Research Australia’s (TRA) (2017a) Online International and National Visitor Survey databases. As the visitation outcome data were only available at the tourism region level, the local level strategies were grouped with the regional strategies and reported at the regional level to correspond with the outcome data. Employment data was also sourced from TRA (2017b). The Tourism Satellite Account provides state and national level employment data for the financial years ending 2007 to 2016, requiring the data to be modelled to the regional level. Subsequently, Local Government Area (LGA) labor force data from 2010 to 2016 was sourced from the Department of Employment’s (2017) Small Area Labor Markets databases. Similarly, 2006 regional labor force data was obtained from ABS (2016) Census data and aggregated to the LGA level. Values for the years 2005, 2007, 2008 and 2009 were modelled using a linear relationship between the 2006 and 2010 data. Modelling tourism employment to the LGA level involved allocating the state tourism employment estimates to the LGAs using a total employment factor for each LGA by year. The LGA tourism employment estimates were then aggregated to the tourism region level using the ASGS tourism region correspondences. As growth was of interest, the visitation and employment outcome data were converted into a percentage change figure (where strategies in 2014 corresponded to the percentage change between 2013 and 2014) and the outcome data was also lagged by a year (where strategies in 2014 corresponded to the percentage change between 2014 and 2015). Using the growth (percentage change) variables rather than the raw outcome variables meant that a period of data was lost. All outcome variables were then standardised for analysis.

The standardised outcome variables were combined into a new continuous variable called ‘growth’ by taking the average of the visitation and jobs outcome growth variables: This was appropriate as there was a significant correlation found between the two variables ($r(841) = 0.122, p < .001$). This provided 1300 observations across 79 tourism regions. Then, using the outcome growth variable as the dependent variable and the binary broad and specific strategy variables arising from the factor analysis as the independent variables, pooled ordinary least squares regression was undertaken against all regions with and without tourism strategies controlling for overall growth between the 2006–2009 or 2010–2014 periods. The standard errors from the regression were reported to allow for intragroup correlation, which relaxes the assumption that the observations are independent by specifying the tourism region which each observation belonged.

4. Results

4.1. Entrepreneurial strategic discourse

Entrepreneurial discourse was evident in 165 (or 34%) of the 481 tourism strategies. Around 90% of the tourism regions had a tourism strategy and 70% of the tourism regions had entrepreneurial strategies

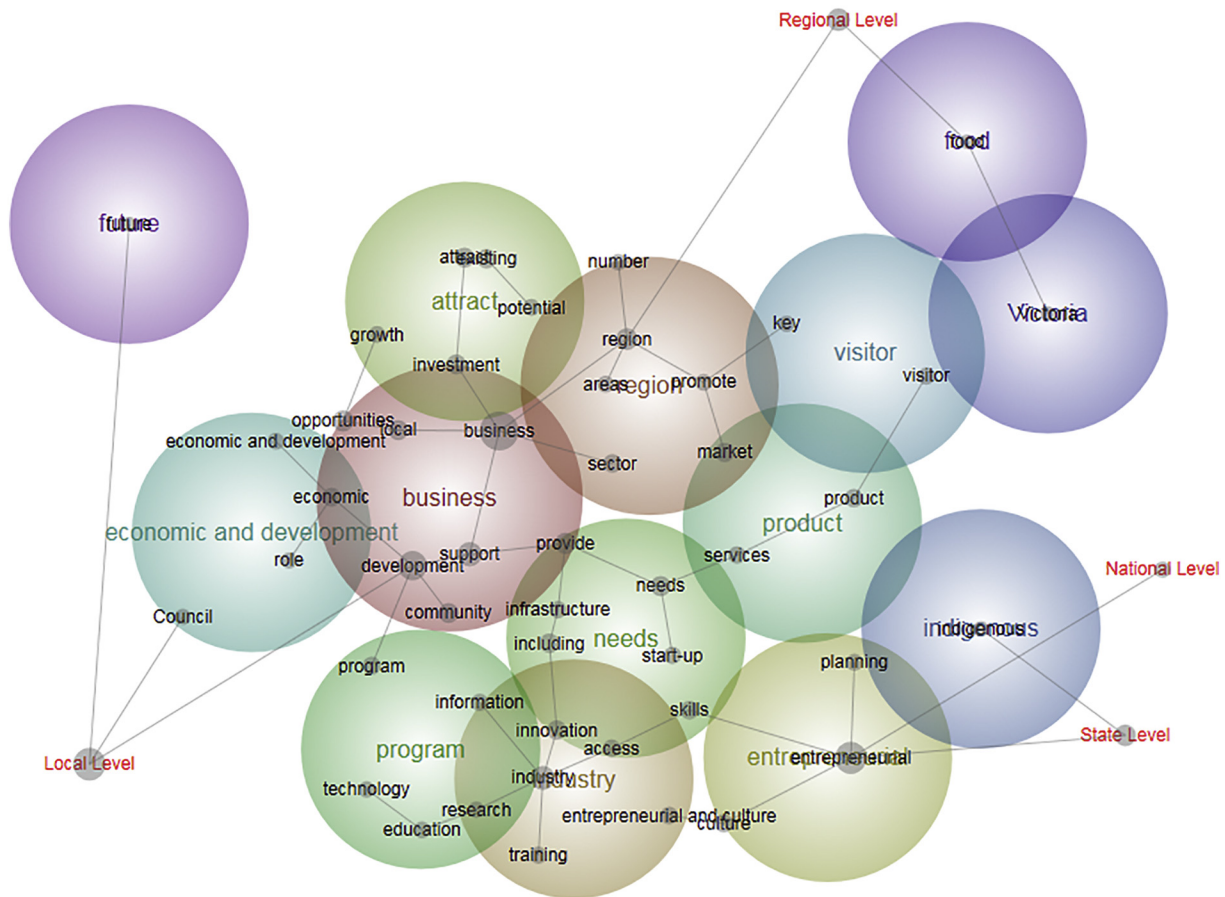


Fig. 1. Tourism Entrepreneurship Strategic Themes with clustering by policy level.

in the tourism strategy. Of these 165 strategies, 58% mentioned 'new/emerging business', 53% mentioned the keyword 'entrepreneur*', 14% mentioned 'start-ups' and 14% mentioned 'incubator*'. Across the time series, the number of tourism strategies with entrepreneurial discourse remained steady with no significant change over time ($y = -0.001 \times + 0.372$; Pearson $\chi^2(14, 481) = 20.14, p = .126$). Considering the policy level, 43% of local level tourism strategies had entrepreneurial discourse, compared with 36% of national, 32% of regional and 29% of state level tourism strategies. The local level was significantly more likely than strategies at other policy levels to have a focus on entrepreneurship ($\chi^2(1, 481) = 5.55, p = .018$).

Text analysis of the entrepreneurial strategic discourse using Leximancer revealed that the national and state level entrepreneurial strategic discourse was associated with entrepreneurship, planning, skill development and indigenous integration, while local strategies were associated with economic development and the future (Fig. 1). Detailed content analysis of the strategic discourse within the tourism planning documents revealed 20 entrepreneurship strategic themes with various underlying strategies proposed or implemented (Table 1). The primary theme to emerge was development of new products and experiences, followed by networks and clustering.

4.2. Do entrepreneurial strategies lead to tourism growth?

Data reduction on the entrepreneurial strategic themes was undertaken using exploratory principal components factor (PCF) analysis followed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) see Appendix A. The results of the CFA indicates that the four models had a good fit across multiple model fit indices, including a non-significant χ^2 (chi-square) test statistic, a comparative fit index (CFI) greater than 0.95 and the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) less than 0.06 (Hu &

Bentler, 1995). The results of the factor analysis illuminate four broad entrepreneurial factors: 1) strategic approach to entrepreneurial ecosystems; 2) collectivism approach; 3) address the barriers and, 4) focus on strengths.

Using the 'growth' variable that combines the visitation and jobs growth into a single measure as the dependent variable, and the strategies as the independent variables, we undertook regression to explore the factors driving the growth. The results of the logistic regression with clustered standard errors are displayed in Table 2. The findings show that having a tourism strategy facilitates tourism growth, but it does not matter whether the tourism strategy has entrepreneurial strategies. The beta scores in the Table show the standardised regression coefficients, which makes the relative strength of the various predictors in the model comparable. The results show that having a tourism strategy is one of the strong predictors of tourism growth, with a beta of 0.082. This can be interpreted as a one standard deviation increase in having a tourism strategy would yield a 0.082 standard deviation increase in tourism growth. The other key finding from the regression was that regions with collectivism entrepreneurial strategies have a significant relationship with growth and that this effect is slightly stronger than just having a tourism strategy (beta coefficient = 0.083). There was also a weaker relationship between addressing barriers and tourism growth, with a beta coefficient of 0.059. The other variables were found to not be significant predictors of growth. This entire modelling process was also replicated on one period lead data (that is, 2014 strategies correspond with 2015 tourism jobs and visitor growth data and so forth), with no significant results being found.

Regression with clustered standard errors was also run on the individual entrepreneurial strategies in regions with tourism strategies to see what entrepreneurial strategies were influencing tourism growth. The results are displayed in Table 3. The findings show that the main

Table 1
Entrepreneurship Strategic Themes arising in the Tourism Strategies.

Theme	Freq.	Description
New Products or Experiences	44	Develop new tourism products/experiences/business ideas to respond to increasing market pressure, capitalize on new business models, new marketing and distribution channels, new emerging international markets. Tourism is inherently entrepreneurial and dynamic which contributes to the development of innovative products/experiences.
Collaboration	35	Collaboration, coordination, cooperation and whole of government approach to foster entrepreneurship. Strategies: encourage /develop/build partnerships, B2B connections & joint ventures, greater engagement between organizations, establish links between businesses, industry, government and universities, partner and integrate with universities (e.g., business forum between businesses and academics, 'Curtin City', MoUs), business networks and associations (e.g., Business Enterprise Centers, Small Business Development Corporation, Department of Industry & Technology, Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Organizations), mentoring and coaching programs (e.g., the Enterprise Development Centre's mentoring and training services, startups learning from established businesses), cross-sectoral industry development forums, conferences/seminars/workshops to develop new business opportunities and relationships e.g. Startup workshops, Stepping Stones workshops
Marketing & Communication	33	National and regional marketing campaigns assist entrepreneurs establish new businesses, while entrepreneurs can also be used for promotion of regions and product development e.g. Food and wine entrepreneur campaign, Local Heroes Campaign, stories of entrepreneurial people (i.e., Chinese, Aborigines). Marketing also attracts new businesses, residents and visitors to regions e.g. develop investor kids and welcome packs/activities. Provide and disseminate clear business information to assist entrepreneurs to identify joint-ventures, information services, business resources, funding and online portals (e.g. the 'Business Entry Point', the 'Small Business Field Officers' who provide free advice, Councils to act as information brokers)
Research & Strategy	32	Destination management planning. Develop a Tourism Research and Development Futures strategy to act as growth catalyst (e.g. Digital Economy Plan /Policy). Increase research and development (e.g. maintain databases on new and existing businesses, best practice case studies). Ensure new opportunities/business ideas are informed by research, planning, pilot tests, reviews, feasibility studies, market testing to ensure economic viability
Entrepreneurial culture	26	Develop entrepreneurial spirit/culture (e.g. 2020 visitor economy, develop vibrant SME sector, improve business confidence /promote success stories, embrace change, increase knowledge sharing, connect industry with ideas, increase integration into global economy, identify products with export potential), government needs to be proactive/actively support entrepreneurship
Funding & Risk Capital	23	Investment attraction/funding (e.g. hypothecation, venture capital funds, business angels, attract investors, implement business retention/expansion initiatives, enhance destination competitiveness, the Business Eureka Pack (BEP) program, implement priority investment projects/growth poles to encourage business investment, invest in commercial precincts, ensure region is 'investor ready', Queensland Capital Raising Pipeline). Strategies for increasing access to finance e.g. reduce business costs, improve business productivity, make smaller investments to avoid overextending resources, identify external investors
Human Capital Needs	22	Address skill shortages to encourage entrepreneurship e.g. create 'smart jobs', temporary visitors/migrants employment, promote employment of older workers and young people (i.e. STEPS, Workskills). Training to improve business skills, entrepreneurship and capacity of workforce e.g. Business Expansion/Retention Campaign, Aussie Host, the Small Business Entrepreneurship Program, encourage businesses to provide traineeships and apprenticeships, encourage universities to implement entrepreneurship courses, involvement in university steering committees, encourage businesses to view training as long-term investment rather than short-term cost.
Support new high-growth businesses	21	Support and assist the growth and maintenance of new and existing high-growth successful businesses, encourage and facilitate entrepreneurs to uptake innovative solutions, technology and product innovation, encourage the commercialization of new ideas, develop linked attractions, offer advice and incentives, establish awards to promote and encourage entrepreneurship
Barriers to development	19	Assist businesses to overcome barriers to entrepreneurship and innovation, including availability and cost of land, public liability insurance, fear of litigation, lack of access to capital and business start-up loans, no overall/shared vision on tourism, lack of suitable infrastructure, lack of skilled labor, complexity and cost of government regulation, competitive pressures, lack of market research, poor coordination between government programs. Strategies: appropriate zoning/town planning, review business regulations and policies, assist businesses to identify suitable business sites, provide sufficient staff resources within Council, provide traffic management and safety, provide appropriate infrastructure (i.e. land, utilities, transport access), provide a supportive regulatory environment that supports new investment, ensure reliability and quality of electricity supply.
Incubation Programs	18	Implement incubation programs (e.g. develop incubators and affordable workspaces, establish a tourism technology incubator, develop and promote business incubation programs aimed at filling strategic gaps or value-add, existing businesses as tourism incubators, develop precincts to promote clustering, encourage technology transfer). Business incubation programs have been successful (e.g. Ballarat Business Incubator, InnovationXchange Trusted Intermediary initiative, Enterprise Connect, Australian Business Week National Competition, Gold Coast Innovation Centre).
Support all small businesses	16	Support small businesses by providing and promoting greater access for tourism operators to business programs, assist new businesses to access program and incentives, develop a micro business program, facilitate access to research, development, commercialization programs, government incentive arrangements to support businesses, encourage pop-up shops). Programs include the Innovation Start-up Scheme, the Competitive grants program, the Innovation Start-up Scheme, teQstart, the Smart Small Business Strategy.
Tourism drives economic development	16	Tourism diversifies regional economies and provides opportunities for new business, expansion of existing businesses and economic development, generates employment, attracts new businesses, creates entrepreneurial ecosystem in regions – strategically target tourism for growth and diversification.
Indigenous Entrepreneurship	15	Mobilize the indigenous community to grow Aboriginal tourism entrepreneurship e.g. provide motivational speakers, shared tourism vision, help indigenous start-ups become established with existing attractions/activities, assist indigenous tourism entrepreneurs access new markets, develop a regularly updated start-up kit for indigenous tourism businesses (e.g. QuickStart, the Financial Management Guide – the Business of Indigenous Tourism, Tourism Investment Kit), mentoring and advice for Indigenous tourism businesses (i.e. Business Ready Program for Indigenous Tourism, Small Business Program, Smart Business training coacher program, the Koori Business Network (KBN), State-wide Aboriginal tourism development officer)
Infrastructure Needs	14	Develop infrastructure that supports local entrepreneurs and private sector investment e.g. sustainable water supply, high-speed telecommunications etc. - Improve access to high-speed telecommunication services, (affordable) broadband and mobile applications (e.g. national broadband network), etc.
Government as Entrepreneur	14	Government as entrepreneur, leader and change instigator (this particularly occurs in rural/remote areas). Strategies: employ a Manager of strategic development, Economic Development Units, targeted use of government resources, providing relevant business information to new and existing businesses, facilitating/developing networks, relationships and clusters, assisting local businesses to capitalize on growth opportunities offered by major projects, government to provide vision/strategy, undertaking advocacy, assisting businesses to relocate, being a central point of contact and conduit for business development, ensure new business formation and strategic management of tourism is underpinned by research. Government can take a more balanced sustainable perspective to tourism driven economic growth (Gold Coast is a successful example).

(continued on next page)

Table 1 (continued)

Theme	Freq.	Description
Youth or Young People	11	Support young people to be innovative and entrepreneurial, promote and support entrepreneurship as an option for young people, retaining youth in regions is important for facilitating entrepreneurship, help young people can the skills they need to be entrepreneurial and business minded, young people help develop an entrepreneurial culture (e.g. Regional Development Australia (RDA) Far West Creative Industries and Technology Incubator Enterprise Sites (CITIES) initiative is a technology dependent project that introduces programs and recreational events to young people to develop skills relevant to the region).
Regulatory Framework	11	Cut red tape and create regulatory/planning environment that encourages tourism innovation, entrepreneurship and investment (e.g. establish 'fast track rezoning process', review regulations, appoint a tourism planner, adopt the stance of Business Advocate rather than regulator, provide checklist for new businesses to help them address regulatory and business planning processes, gradual enforcement of regulations). Encourage operators to comply with accreditation, regulation and industry standards to improve the customer experience/destination reputation.
Focus on strengths	8	Identify and capitalize on regional and industry-specific comparative advantages / strengths e.g. new tourism businesses opening around areas of competitive advantage, adapt existing experiences for new markets
Social Entrepreneurship	8	Collective/social entrepreneurship and sustainability focus in tourism e.g. collective good, community centric entrepreneurship
Demographic Change	5	Population growth and demographic change influences tourism investment, entrepreneurial activity and economic growth

entrepreneurial strategies that drive tourism growth are incubation programs, and to a lesser extent, human capital needs strategies, removing barriers to development, and funding and risk capital. Strategies that decreased tourism growth included research and strategy, as well as focusing on tourism as a central driver of economic development. The control for overall growth between 2010 and 2014 and 2006–2009 was non-significant. Again, the modelling was replicated on one period lead data (that is, 2014 strategies correspond with 2015 tourism jobs and visitor growth data and so forth), with no significant results being found.

5. Discussion

This research contributes to the growing literature on tourism entrepreneurship. The results demonstrate that entrepreneurial discourse has been a consistent and significant topic in Australian tourism strategies. Combined with the finding that tourism, rather than entrepreneurship, strategies significantly predict tourism growth, suggests that this may be because tourism is inherently entrepreneurial. Power, Di Domenico, and Miller (2017) note that entrepreneurship is inherent in the tourism as the industry is made up of small businesses. However, an emphasis is placed on the concept of ethical entrepreneurship, which involves business integrating into the ethos of the communities and ensuring sustainable benefits for local stakeholders, which may be critical for growth outcomes. Indeed, this very concept formed part of the most common entrepreneurial strategic theme relating to the development of new products / experiences. Concomitantly, this paper supports the assertion that indicates that entrepreneurship can drive tourism growth (Stam, 2015), although some entrepreneurial strategies are more effective than others.

Besides the development of new products or experiences

entrepreneurial themes to emerge from discourse embedded in the strategies were collaboration, marketing and communication, research and strategy, developing an entrepreneurial culture, funding and risk capital, and human capital needs. Several of the key strategic themes fell into categories that closely aligned with Malecki's (1993) general entrepreneurial policies of human capital needs, financial needs, infrastructure needs and, networking needs. However, Adiyia, De Rademaeker, Vanneste, and Ahebwa (2017) notes skills and attitudes are the most critical for developing a culture of entrepreneurship designed to stimulate economic growth, especially in rural and remote regions. All the same, the results of this research suggest that the tourism sector, in many ways, tends to follow the broader entrepreneurial strategies developed for economic growth.

Results indicate that the local level tourism strategies tend to place a greater emphasis on harnessing entrepreneurship for economic development, growth and planning for the future. In contrast, the national and state levels have used targeted tourism entrepreneurship programs to address matters of equality, such as indigenous self-employment. Therefore, local government may possibly play a greater role in stimulating entrepreneurial ecosystems in tourism in Australia, suggesting local level policies may be more effective for generating economic development. Lindh and Thorgren (2016) argue local-level strategies engage communities and businesses throughout the planning process and thus may be more effective in stimulating economic growth.

A key finding of our results is that it's necessary to have a broad collectivist approach to entrepreneurial strategies for tourism. Specifically, these strategies relate to addressing human capital needs, supporting small businesses, collaboration, supporting indigenous entrepreneurship and reducing barriers to tourism development. Support networks for entrepreneurs are a focus of governments across the globe, with Moyle et al. (2018) arguing it is critical for regional areas to tap

Table 2
Regression of tourism growth with broad entrepreneurial strategies.

Dependent: Growth	Continuous growth variable					Beta
	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	z	P > z		
Tourism Strategy	0.120	0.061	1.99	0.051	*	0.082
Tourism Entrepreneurship Strategy	−0.149	0.149	−1	0.322		−0.070
Strategic Approach to Entrepreneurial Ecosystems	0.084	0.128	0.66	0.511	***	0.030
Collectivism	0.269	0.127	2.11	0.038	**	0.083
Address Barriers	0.175	0.095	1.84	0.070	*	0.059
Focus on Strengths	−0.114	0.132	−0.87	0.388		−0.035
Growth in sector: 2006–2009 v 2010–2014	0.018	0.044	0.42	0.677		0.012
Constant	−0.088	0.023	−3.9	0.000	*	.

*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .10$

Obs = 1209, $F(7, 79) = 2.74$, Prob > $F = 0.0135$, $R^2 = 0.0175$, Root MSE = 0.71.

Akaike's information criterion = 2614.137, Bayesian information criterion = 2654.918.

Note: The standard error was adjusted for 80 region clusters.

Table 3
Logistic regression of tourism growth with specific entrepreneurial strategies.

Dependent: Growth	Continuous growth variable					Beta	Corresponding Broad Strategy
	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	z	P > z			
Research & Strategy	−0.318	0.123	−2.59	0.012	**	−0.07	Strategic Approach
Infrastructure Needs	−0.259	0.23	−1.13	0.263		−0.039	Strategic Approach
Incubation Programs	0.441	0.156	2.83	0.006	***	0.073	Strategic Approach
Entrepreneurial culture	0.051	0.101	0.51	0.615		0.01	Strategic Approach
Government as Entrepreneur	0.11	0.142	0.78	0.439		0.016	Strategic Approach
Support new high-growth businesses	0.109	0.145	0.76	0.452		0.02	Strategic Approach
Human Capital Needs	0.461	0.206	2.24	0.028	**	0.086	Strategic Approach, Collectivism
Support small businesses	0.167	0.231	0.72	0.471	***	0.026	Collectivism
Collaboration	0.031	0.093	0.33	0.741		0.007	Collectivism
Indigenous Entrepreneurship	−0.224	0.221	−1.01	0.315		−0.035	Collectivism
Barriers to development	0.513	0.2	2.57	0.012	**	0.089	Collectivism, Barriers
Funding & Risk Capital	0.261	0.149	1.76	0.083	*	0.05	Strategic Approach, Barriers
Demographic Change (affecting investment)	−0.02	0.176	−0.12	0.908		−0.002	Barriers
Marketing & Communication	−0.104	0.127	−0.83	0.411		−0.024	Barriers
Regulatory Framework	0.234	0.246	0.95	0.345		0.03	Barriers
Social Entrepreneurship	−0.405	0.324	−1.25	0.214		−0.046	Barriers
Youth or Young People	−0.1	0.211	−0.47	0.637		−0.013	Barriers, Strengths
Tourism as a driver of economic development	−0.303	0.133	−2.27	0.026	**	−0.047	Strengths
Focus on strengths	−0.041	0.181	−0.23	0.819		−0.005	Strengths
New Products or Experiences	−0.07	0.118	−0.6	0.552		−0.018	Strengths
Growth in sector: 2006–2009 v 2010–2014	0.015	0.046	0.33	0.746		0.01	Strengths
Constant	−0.045	0.029	−1.57	0.121			Strengths

***p < .01, **p < .05, *p < .10

Obs = 1209, F(21, 79) = 6.02, Prob > F = 0.000, R² = 0.0295, Root MSE = 0.71079

Akaike's information criterion = 2627.342, Bayesian information criterion = 2739.488.

Note: The standard error was adjusted for 80 region clusters.

into existing networks to facilitate sustained economic growth. Substantial prior research has considered the importance of networks and collaboration in providing entrepreneurial support (Dubini & Aldrich, 1991; Hoang & Antoncic, 2003) with evidence suggesting that regions with well-developed entrepreneurial support networks are better able to disperse knowledge, learn, innovate and adopt new approaches (Amin & Cohendet, 2000; Kenney & Patton, 2005; McLennan, Becken, & Watt, 2016). Prior research has highlighted the importance of community entrepreneurs, who have high social capital, proactively collaborate and drive the delivery of new projects (Taylor, Frost, & Laing, 2019; Zhao, Ritchie, & Echtner, 2011). Likewise, Perkins and Khoo-Lattimore, 2020 argue that collaboration can assist businesses to overcome barriers but highlight the complexity and challenges of collaboration. Our results align with this, suggesting that collaboration delivers outcomes.

Conversely, our broad results suggest that taking a strategic approach to entrepreneurial ecosystems, overcoming barriers, and focusing on tourism strengths are not significant predictors of tourism growth in the Australian context, although these strategies may deliver other important outcomes or be important in certain contexts. This suggests that it is more important to foster collaboration and collectivism, rather than just developing strategies. Despite Australia tending towards an individualistic society, this research suggests regions with high levels of collectivism are more likely to have successful outcomes, which supports research by Hofstede and Bond (1988) who found that collectivists' emphasize group membership and social relationships as facilitators of action and economic growth. Hence, it may be the balance between approaches in the regions that lead to success and this is an important area of future research. Lastly, there was no lag effect present for the broad entrepreneurial strategies, suggesting that the change effect is immediate at this broad strategic level. That is, improve collectivism and the effect on growth occurs quickly.

Considering the individual entrepreneurial strategies in regions with a tourism strategy, the main entrepreneurial strategies that drive growth are human capital needs strategies and incubation programs, and to a lesser extent reducing barriers to development. The important

role of developing human capital to deliver tourism growth follows broader literature that argues that human capital improvements lead to economic growth by enhancing productivity (Habib, Abbas, & Noman, 2019), as well as the narrative relating to the importance of developing the skills of the workforce to deliver a 'knowledge-based' economy (Florida, Mellander, & Stolarick, 2008). As indicated in Table 1, the strategies relating to human capital related to addressing skills shortages and improving entrepreneurial training to encourage and facilitate further entrepreneurship.

Similarly, prior research in a number of different countries has found that incubation programs significantly increase entrepreneurial intentions (Zreen, Farrukh, Nazar, & Khalid, 2019) and contribute to business growth and job creation (Schutte & Direng, 2019). The argument is that a small number of firms contribute disproportionately to economic growth and job creation, therefore support their rapid development can more effectively deliver economic outcomes (Coad, Daunfeldt, Hözl, Johansson, & Nightingale, 2014; Mian, Lamine, & Fayolle, 2016). Hjalager (2010) reviewed tourism innovation policies and suggest that incubation facilities can be effective at the destination level, which supports our findings.

6. Conclusion

This paper explored the prevalence and nature of the entrepreneurial strategic discourse in Australia's tourism strategic policy and planning documents between 2000 and 2014. In addition, the manuscript sought to determine if there was a relationship between the tourism entrepreneurial strategies and tourism growth using a panel of Australian regions and policy levels. There is evidence of entrepreneurial discourse in 165 (or 34%) of the 481 strategies. Importantly for policy makers, results indicate having a tourism strategy leads to economic growth irrespective of having a focus on entrepreneurship. However, importantly for practice, growth in regions with tourism incubation or entrepreneurship programs was significantly larger, indicating these strategies accelerate growth. The main entrepreneurial strategies that drive growth are human capital

needs strategies and incubation programs, and to a lesser extent the regulatory framework. These results have implications for other regions and industries as they suggest that focusing on these forms of strategies can accelerate tourism entrepreneurship, as well as tourism more generally.

In addition to the importance of this research for practice, this paper also contributes to knowledge on the entrepreneurial strategies that lead to tourism growth. Specifically, this research provides much needed conceptual clarity surrounding the connection between entrepreneurship and existing models of economic change, particularly in a branch of economics known as evolutionary economics. By empirically demonstrating the importance of strengths and competitive advantage as well as new product and experience development as essential for projected industry growth from tourism entrepreneurship strategies, this research has harnessed the ability of the field to blend discourse from modern entrepreneurship with traditional economic theory. In turn, this can be used as a barometer in future studies seeking to develop and/or test conceptual frameworks blending entrepreneurship and economic development, particularly in regional areas."

Future research could seek to expand the keywords to include broader innovation terms such as "learn*", "innovat*", "invest*", "develop*" and "transform*". In addition, further research may aim to incorporate other measures of tourism and regional growth, as well as explore the effectiveness of entrepreneurial strategies instigated by certain levels of government. Future research should explore whether strategies aimed at overcoming funding and demographic risks could deliver tourism jobs and visitor growth. Importantly, there is a need for future research to ensure that regional entrepreneurial strategies are monitored to facilitate evidence-based decision-making. Lastly, social entrepreneurship was found to perfectly predict growth one year following the strategy and this requires further exploration. Given the focus in recent years on sustainable tourism, this strategy might be critical in ensuring tourism growth. This would be an important finding that would align with hypotheses by Lordkipanidze et al. (2005), but in the current study, constrained by the context and method, the result remains ambiguous and requires further investigation.

There are limitations of the method employed in this study, including that the coverage of Australia's tourism policy documents may not be exhaustive due to the inability to capture hard copy or internal planning documents. The frequency approach to the bibliometrics can be criticized, but analyzing over 481 documents is a difficult and time-consuming exercise and requires considered methodological strategies to ensure it is achievable. Future research could seek to replicate the research to determine if similar relationships exist in different contexts or data so as to find further evidence of the relationship found in this research.

Author Credit Statement

Dr Char-lee Moyle undertook the data collection and analysis, as well as drafted and revised the manuscript.

A/Professor Brent Moyle played an integral role in the conceptualisation, data collection, interpretation of the research findings and drafting of the manuscript.

Dr Henri Burgers focused on conceptualisation, guidance and revisions of the manuscript, particularly around the theoretical contributions within innovation and entrepreneurship.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2020.100708>.

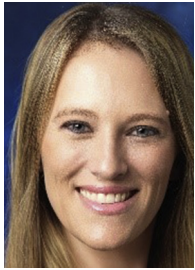
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