

# The Specific Characteristics of Entrepreneurship Process in Tourism Industry

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## ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the entrepreneurship process in general businesses and focuses on the differences unique to tourism and hospitality industry in comparison which the related literature review is inefficient as is. Thus by focusing on these differences, the study tries to recognize and distinguish the specific characteristics of tourism and hospitality industry entrepreneurship process, thus tries further, to group them under sub categories of homogeneous characteristics for effective and efficient management applications. In order to forecast the future ones, the paper also covers the real entrepreneurial processes in hospitality and tourism industry which lead to new tourism types and applications like: local gastronomy tourism, rural adventure tourism specific to local attractions, sustainable and regional eco-tourism packages, local dark tourism examples, volunteer tourism types and applications of specific local events, etc.

The study is a conceptual paper composed of a comprehensive literature review with brief examples and real life example on the topic of entrepreneurship process in hospitality and tourism. Originality and value of the paper lies in the area of the entrepreneurship process in tourism and hospitality industry as a means for innovation of new tourism products, effective marketing, efficient communication and creative small and medium sized enterprises (SME) applications in the industry. It is understood that tourism is one of the economic sectors in which a great degree of entrepreneurship involvement is needed due to characteristics of the industry as; high (SME) proportion within, motive, goal and values, attitudes, strategies and business applications. Tourism industry entrepreneurs differ from other industries' entrepreneurs, and processes are accepted as a form of consumption rather than production. Also it is realized that the tourism entrepreneurship process is very vulnerable to rapid change in tourist behavior, tourist preferences and industry trends. Yet, it is also understood that tourism entrepreneurs seem to be highly motivated by life-style, quality of life (QOL) issues, locational preferences and other non-economic motives which are not common in general business entrepreneurs whose main motive seem to be profit maximization and financial independence.

**Keywords:** Tourism entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship process, tourism entrepreneur characteristics, steps in entrepreneurship, successful entrepreneur.

## Turizm Sektöründe Girişimcilik Süreci ve Sektöre Özgü Özellikler

### ÖZ

Bu çalışma turizm ve otelcilik sektöründe girişimci özellikleri ve girişimcilik sürecini derinlemesine literatür tarama, günlük yaşamdan kesitler ve örnek uygulamalarla irdeleyen, turizm sektör çalışanlara başarılı yönetim uygulamaları için yön gösterici örnekler sunmaya çalışan bir kavramsal derlemedir. Çalışmada genel işletmecilikte yer alan girişimcilik sürecini aşamaları ve süreçte faaliyet gösteren girişimcilerin özelliklerini detaylı bir literatür taraması ile inceleyerek, literatürde üzerinde çok çalışılmamış olan turizm ve otel sektörüne özgü farklılıklara uygulayıcılara başarılı yönetim modelleri için temel sunmak amacıyla kıyaslamalı odaklanılmaktadır. Bu kapsamda, turizm sektörü girişimcilik sürecinin kendine özgü özellikleri toplanmış ve sınıflanmış, daha verimli uygulamalar için homojen alt gruplamalar kümelenecek ve sektörde bireysel ve grup olarak gerçekleştirilen girişimcilik süreçleri sonrasında orta çıkan yerel gastronomi turizmi, bölge özelindeki çekiciliklerle gerçekleştirilen yerel macera turizmi, sürdürülebilir bölgesel eko turizm paketleri, yerel karanlık turizm türleri, gönüllü turizm çeşitleri, yerel olay ve festivallere gibi yeni turizm türleri ve uygulamaları gelecek eğilimlerin belirlenmesinde yardımcı olmak amacıyla belirlenmiştir.

Çalışmanın orijinalliği ve literatüre katkısı turizm ve otelcilik sektöründe yer alan girişimcilik süreçlerinin özelliklerinin ve ortak noktalarının belirlenmesidir. Bunlar; yeni turizm ürünleri, etkin pazarlama, verimli iletişim, yaratıcı küçük ve orta ölçekli işletmelerde uygulamalar olarak yaratıcı bir şekilde sektörde ortaya çıkmaktadır. Çalışma sonucunda: turizme özgü farklı girişimcilik uygulamalarının ve modellerinin karşılaştırmalı incelemesi sonucunda; bu sektörde uygulamada oldukça fazla miktarda KOBİ işletmesinin faaliyet yaptığı ve girişimcilik katılımının oldukça fazla rastlandığı ekonomik bir sektör olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Bu bağlamda başarılı yönetsel sonuçlar için girişimsel faaliyetlerin turizm sektörü girişimcilik süreci bir üretim şeklinden çok tüketim şekli olarak algılanması ve girişimcilik sürecinin turist davranışı, turist tercihleri ve sektör eğilimlerinden çok hızlı etkilenmesi hususlarına özellikle dikkat gösterilmesi gerekmektedir. Ayrıca, turizm girişimcilerinin diğer girişimcilerin birincil motivasyonları olan kar maksimizasyonu ve finansal özgürlüğün önüne geçen hayat tarzı, hayat kalitesi seviyesi, yöresel yaşam koşulları gibi ekonomik olmayan pek çok motivasyona sahip olduğu görülmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Turizmde girişimcilik, girişimcilik süreci, turizm girişimcisinin özellikleri, girişimcilik sürecinin aşamaları, başarılı girişimci.

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## Introduction

Tourism and hospitality is a huge global industry with high employment rates at all positions for various qualified and unqualified skill levels. It, also, has considerable economic benefits and employment opportunities to many other sub-sectors and related industries. It is not only a very dynamic sector providing endless new opportunities to already existing SME's (small and medium-sized enterprises), but it also welcomes many entrepreneurial and innovative new ventures and different forms of news businesses. Thus, from all these perspectives, it is quite appropriate to gather that tourism and hospitality goes beyond the classical norms of management by being suitable to creative entrepreneurship processes with unique marketing and new management application approaches specific to the industry which is a missing point in the literature.

Therefore, the study takes a specific angle to the entrepreneurial process by identifying, grouping and clustering the industry specific characteristics the impacts of these entrepreneurial processes since they lead to quite impressive positive results like; the creation of new tourism services and achievement of higher managerial efficiency and effectiveness levels yielding to better living standards and innovative destination applications for the societies the tourism entrepreneurs operate within. These unique characteristics of tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship process are grouped under homogeneous sub categories for easier management applications. The chapter also covers the new tourism types and applications resulting from the real life time experiences regarding individual or group entrepreneurial processes in hospitality and tourism industry.

### 1. The entrepreneur and entrepreneurship process

The word entrepreneur was first used by Cantillon in 1755 in French as "entrepredrea" (Agca & Yoruk, 2006: 158; Ercan & Gokdeniz, 2009: 67) The word "entrepredrea" was formed by the combination of two words; 'entre' (to enter, to start) and 'prendre' (to take on, to commit) meaning overall to accomplish it (or just do it) (Meydan, 2010, Meltem & Cavusoglu, 2010: 48). In business and economics literature, the word entrepreneur has many definitions today, though the common denominator in micro or individual businesses perspective focuses on the different personal characteristics and activities of the entrepreneur as; accomplishing new things, optimizing new opportunities in the market, bringing out the new ventures (Stevenson, 1998), creating new services and undertaking informal investments. Thus, all these activities are carried out by taking related risk and focusing on new ways of doing things by means of innovation and creativeness (Gartner, 1988; Baron, 2007). From organizational or macro perspective, the entrepreneurship process is accepted as a force for economic growth (development) generator which emphasizes on issues of; risk taking, innovation, creativeness, formation of new ventures, application of new management and marketing techniques and adaptation to industrial trends and changes (Agca & Yoruk, 2006; Ercan & Gokdeniz, 2009; Cavusoglu, 2010).

#### 1.1. Literature review and definition of The Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurship Process

The entrepreneurship process term contains two main words for various concepts. One of them is the word entrepreneur which stands for the person or the group producing and delivering the entrepreneurship activities. The other is the process itself standing for the procedural activities of entrepreneurship for accomplishment (Gartner, 1988; Blawatt, 1998). Though these two terms possess their unique characteristics, they are interdependent and interrelated (Kang & Uhlenbruck, 2006).

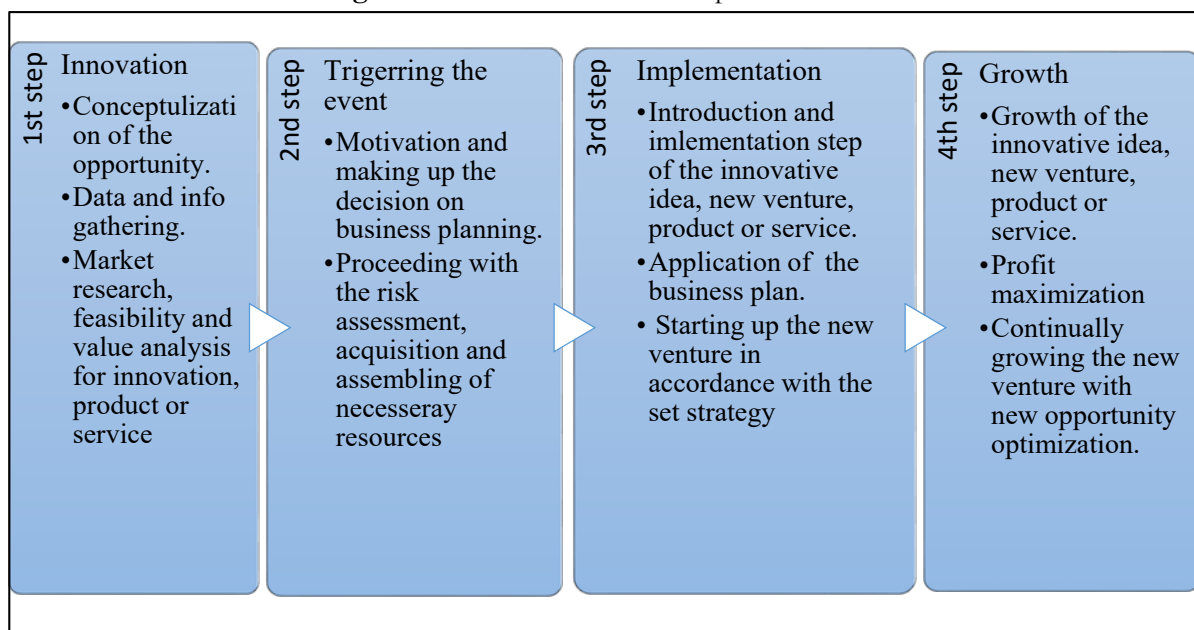
Related to entrepreneurial process, entrepreneurship is defined as a context-dependent social process which starts with the originating and marketing of new businesses where the common motive is profit maximization (Low & Abrahamson, 1997). Whereas the individuals in entrepreneurship process optimize market opportunities through creative actions and differentiated applications in production and management systems (Mazubane, 2009:8). The environment, process, and event of entrepreneurship activities require a holistic analysis for successful operations. Thus, the creativity, risk-taking, innovation, and market-niching of many entrepreneurs are the indications of the entrepreneurship process (Carton, Hofer & Meeks, 1998; Blawatt, 1998). Throughout the process entrepreneurs produce and market

differential products or services which provide differential advantages to them while creating beneficial value to society.

According to Peter Drucker, entrepreneurship process occurs when a novel or different and unique part, component or version is added to already existing production process or service delivery. If no new venture or different way of achieving things is added to the process, then a new business investment is only the extension of already existing business but the term entrepreneurship process may not be valid for such a case. Within this regard, if a married couple opens up a similar second ethnic restaurant at the already operated same place, this activity may be regarded as a new business opening, but cannot be accepted as an example for novel entrepreneurship process (Dees, 1998).

The entrepreneurship process is defined by Bygrave and Hofer (1991:14) as “involving all the functions, activities, and actions associated with the perceiving of opportunities and the creation of organizations to pursue them”. Yet, by Bygrave and Zacharakis (2007) the process was characterized in a model consisting of a sequential 4 set stages being; the idea or conception of the business, the event that triggers the operations, implementation of the activities and growth, consequently. These steps which are following each other are shown in figure 1. Bygrave (2004) states that each of these steps in the model consist of vital aspects forming the entrepreneurship development of the business. The personal attributes, social, organizational and environmental impacts affect and shape the entrepreneurial traits related during the process (Kang & Uhlenbruck, 2006). Following up this model, Baron (2008) also mentioned that affect also influences some aspects of entrepreneurs' cognition leading to alterations as a cause on the elements of the entrepreneurial process.

**Figure 1.** The Model of the Entrepreneurial Process



**References:** Hisrich, R. D. & Peters, M. P., (2002). *Entrepreneurship*, Fifth Edition, McGraw-Hill/Irwin, New York. and Kang, E., & Uhlenbruck, K. (2006). A process framework of entrepreneurship: from exploration, to exploitation, to exit. *Academy of Entrepreneurship Journal*, 12(1), 47-71. and Bygrave, W. D. and Zacharakis, A. L. (2007). *Entrepreneurship*. NY: Wiley & Sons.

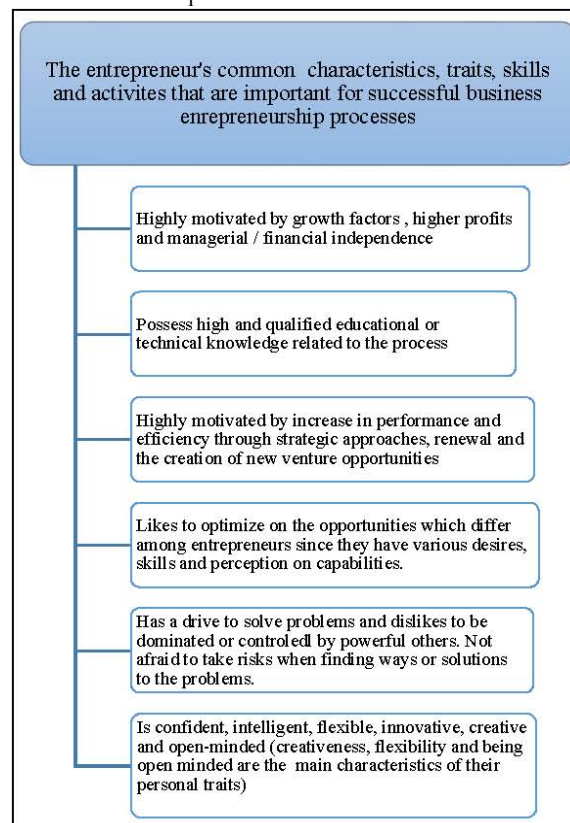
As mentioned before, it is quite obvious that entrepreneur and entrepreneurship are interrelated yet different concepts (Nassif & GhobrilSilva, 2010:215). Though many studies describe the entrepreneur and related process from a static or snapshot approach; it indeed is a dynamic process (Bygrave, 1993) As the model in figure 1 shows, the focus is on the entrepreneur being a central force but during the process, the individual, the group or the organization as an entrepreneur may exit, stay in or re-enter to investment making the entrepreneurial process quite a dynamic series of activities (Bygrave & Hofer, 1991; Blawatt, 1998; Haber& Reichel, 2007).

### 1.2. The characteristics and traits of successful entrepreneurs within their entrepreneurship processes

The entrepreneurship process is about creation, evaluation, application and commercialization of the new ideas for new products and innovative services. The process consists of sequential entrepreneurial activities like; idea generation, market and opportunity research, initiation, resource mobilization, resource allocation, legal establishment, social organization, operational start up and management (Ruef, 2005). It includes idea discovery (identification, conceptualization and recognition) (Ardichvili, Cardozo & Ray, 2003) and evaluation and implementation of the available opportunities (Lumpkin & Lichtenstein, 2005:451). Thus, one of the main important entrepreneurial characteristics needed for successful processes is related to educational qualifications since these technical knowledge qualifications contribute directly to the positive growth of new businesses (Shah and Tripsas (2007).

Regardless of the type, ownership structure and size of the firm, the entrepreneurship process is applicable to many types of businesses (Rimington, Williams & Morrison, 2009: 9). Though there are many various forms of businesses, surprisingly, it was found being innovative and creative all through the process are main common motives and the characteristics of all the entrepreneurs. But possessing educational qualifications and necessary theoretical knowledge, being innovative and creative are not the only traits and characteristics of successful entrepreneurs. The main characteristics, traits, skills and activities of the entrepreneurs operating within successful entrepreneurship processes are shown in the figure 2 below.

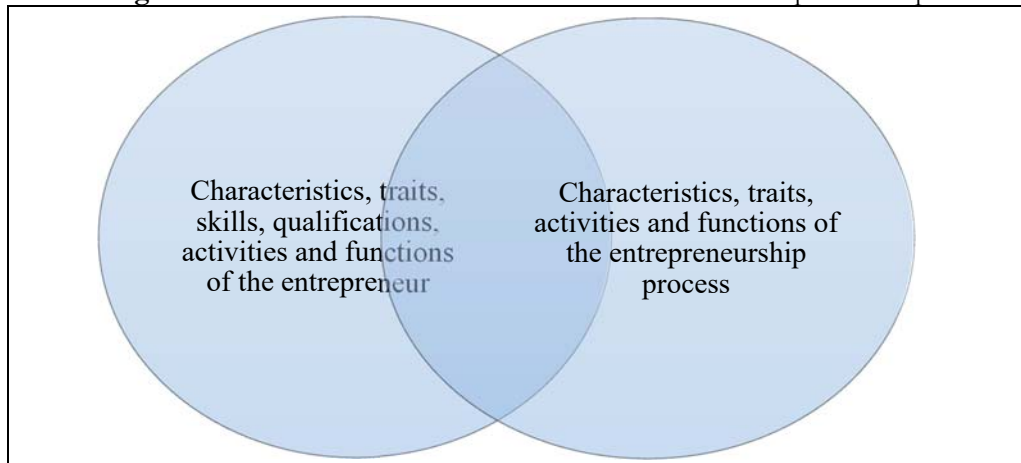
**Figure 2.** The Successful Entrepreneur's Common Characteristics, Traits and Skills



**References:** McClelland, D. C. (1987). Characteristics of Successful Entrepreneurs. *The journal of creative behavior*, 21(3), 219-233. and Lumpkin, G.T. and Lichtenstein, B. B. (2005), *The Role of Organizational Learning in the Opportunity-Recognition Process. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 29: 451–472 and Littunen, H. (2000). Entrepreneurship and the characteristics of the entrepreneurial personality. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 6(6), 295-310.

It is already mentioned that though the words the entrepreneur and the process are different than each other they are interdependent and highly related for successful applications. In order to define the term entrepreneurship process properly, it is very important that these two words are very interdependent and interrelated (Kang & Uhlenbruck, 2006). This fact is also emphasized on the figure 3, indicating the alteration of the classical entrepreneurship approach which used to focus only on the characteristics, traits, activities and functions of the entrepreneur but leaving out the specifics and characteristics of the process itself (Bygrave and Hofer, 1991:16).

**Figure 3.** New and Revised Definition of the Field of Entrepreneurship



**Reference:** Bygrave, W. D. & Hofer, C.W., (1991). Theorizing about entrepreneurship, *Entrepreneurship Theory And Practice*, Winter 1991: 16, Baylor University

It is important to consider the characteristics, skills, traits, qualifications and functions of entrepreneurs together with the characteristics and functions of the entrepreneurship process for healthy analysis and research procedures on the entrepreneurial process studies. To conclude from this perspective, the common characteristics of the entrepreneurship process are derived and stated as follows (Bygrave and Hofer, 1991:17; Getz, Carlsen, & Morrison, 2004; Morrison:2006);

- The focus power and the central point is the entrepreneur.
- It involves a change of state an alteration of procedures during the process.
- There are many impacts of entrepreneurs since they are usually creative, flexible, open-minded risk-taking and innovative.
- It is a holistic process.
- It is a dynamic process.
- It is a unique process meaning each process has its own characteristics and procedural specifics.
- It involves sequential steps as creation, evaluation, application and commercialization of the new ventures, innovative ideas and like. The steps of the process are rephrased by some authors as: discovery, evaluation and implementation and growth of the available opportunities.
- It is influenced and shaped by the personal attributes and cognitive conditions of the entrepreneur.
- It is influenced and shaped by the social, organizational and environmental impacts that the business operates within.
- It involves dynamic interaction of a complex and multi-dimensional set of system factors it operates within.
- The conditions and circumstances it operates within are subject to entrepreneurs' characteristics, skills, traits and attitudes.

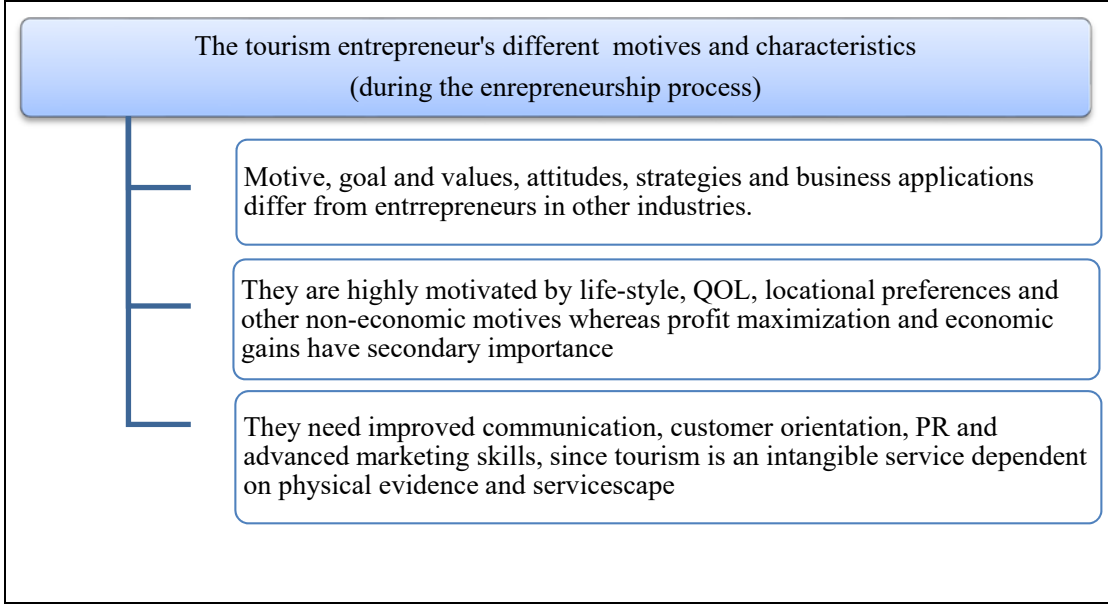
## 2. Applications in tourism

From family based enterprises to innovative SME's like sustainable local business, agri-tourism farms, organic food restaurants, family style restaurants and cafes, pensions, bed and breakfast operations, economy hotels, boutique hotels, home stays, local gift shops, independent travel agencies and rent-a car companies, farm attractions and retail outlets serving to the specific needs of various types of tourists, tourism entrepreneurship processes take place in many various types and different forms in practice (Lordkipanidze, Brezet & Backman, 2005; Lee-Ross & Lashley, 2010). Thus, the continuous change in tourist motivations and preferences, ongoing nature of tourism trends development, increase in the demand for new tourism products and services, improvement in the number of new tourists and finally increase in the severe industrial competition, make tourism entrepreneurship a survival necessity for tourism and hospitality companies (Pirnar and Bulut, 2012).

When compared with other businesses, the tourism and hospitality industry traditionally demonstrated, yet, characterized with the low involvement in entrepreneurial approaches (Koh & Hatten, 2002) Historically, these rare entrepreneurial examples were mainly found in small or moderate sized family tourism businesses (Morrison, 2006:193) but during the last decade entrepreneurship has become a common practice for not only global tourism chains but also for SMEs. Entrepreneurship is also very common among SME's which specialize on ethnic niche tourism in the rural regions where local cultural knowledge is a necessity for tourism success. SME entrepreneurship is, also, highly needed during the early stages of regional urban tourism development when global hotel chains and international franchises are not keen to invest in these untouched areas (Chang, 2011).

### 2.1. The challenging uniqueness of tourism entrepreneurs

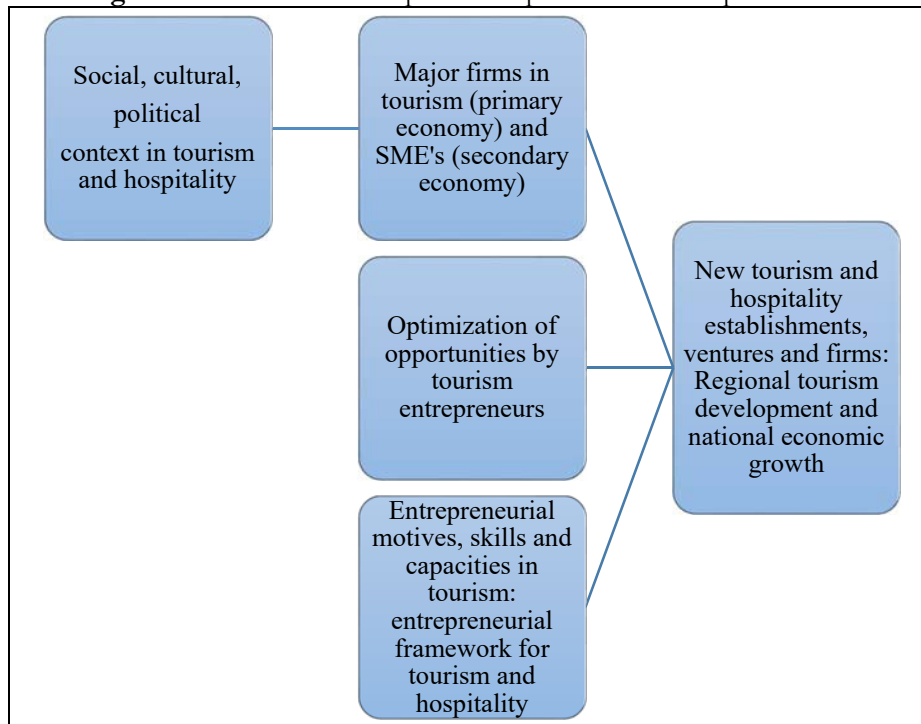
When compared with the entrepreneurship process of the other industries, tourism entrepreneurs seem to share a remarkable yet, challenging uniqueness (Pirnar & Bulut, 2012). They seem to be highly motivated by "lifestyle and non-economic motives which had been recognized as significant stimuli for tourism entrepreneurship and growth of the small-business sector" (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000: 379 ; Haber & Reichel, 2007:119). The research on the tourism entrepreneurship process indicates that (Marchant ve Mottier, 2011) tourism entrepreneurs have characteristics and traits like; risk taking, financial independency tendency, strategic vision, innovativeness, focus on customer orientation and will for adaptation. These traits are very similar to traits of entrepreneurs operating in the other industries (McGehee ve Kim, 2004). Tourism and hospitality entrepreneurs seem to differ from others in issues like; owning specific social, PR, marketing and communication skills (Hollick& Braun, 2005) and orientation traits for high quality service performance (Fajedini, 2010). Therefore, innovative managerial and marketing abilities and distinguished communication skills of the entrepreneurs have a huge positive impact on successful applications of tourism entrepreneurship processes (Moriarty, Jones, Rowley & Kupiec-Teahan, 2008). Figure 4 implies the same fact, since it is obvious from the figure that the motives of the tourism entrepreneurs differ from others since their motives are more to the achievement of higher living standards (lifestyle issues) than profit maximization.

**Figure 4.** The Tourism Entrepreneur's Different Motives and Characteristics

**References:** Getz, D., Carlsen, J., & Morrison, A. (2004). The family business in tourism and hospitality. CABI. and Jaafar M., S. A. Maideen ve S. Z. Mohd Sukarno (2010). Entrepreneurial characteristics of small and medium hotel owner-managers, World Applied Sciences Journal 10 (Special Issue of Tourism & Hospitality): 54-62, 2010 and Pirnar I. & Bulut C. (2012). "Turizm sektorunde girisimcilik ve girisimci ozellikleri", *Girisimcilik Iklimi*, 1/2:32-34. (<http://www.girisimcilikiklimi.com/Sayilarimiz.aspx?main=2>)

Entrepreneurship process, not only brings many positive outcomes to individuals and companies, but also provides direct tourism contributions to regions' development process when introduced to the destinations. Thus, it seems there is a positive and direct relationship between regional local entrepreneurship applications and regional tourism development (in economic and social aspects) as the following figure 5 related to the global entrepreneurship monitor conceptual model and the case study indicates.

Figure 5. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Conceptual Model



Adapted from: Lee-Ross, D., & Lashley, C. (2010). *Entrepreneurship and small business management in the hospitality industry*. Routledge:14.

Tourism entrepreneurship process is very inclusive of the industry's specific characteristics. Due to this fact some authors accept the tourism entrepreneurship process as a form of consumption rather than production mentioning that the research on the topic indicates that "previous occupational experience and of access to capital only provides a partial explanation of entrepreneurship" (Williams, Shaw & Greenwood, 1989).

It is also a fact that, novel tourism entrepreneurship processes leads to the production and introduction of many new tourism types and innovative applications in the tourism and hospitality market. Local gastronomy tourism, rural adventure tourism (specific to local attractions), sustainable regional eco-tourism packages, local dark tourism, applications of specific local events and festivals, soft tourism, soft food move, agri-tourism farms, authentic and ethnic family based restaurants are some popular examples which were brought to the market as outcomes of innovative tourism entrepreneurship processes (McGehee & Kline, 2008:125; Rimmington, Williams, & Morrison, 2009).

## 2.2. Case study example: Şirince Village

Şirince Village case example chosen for entrepreneurial process is an interesting one, since it started up as an individual investment of a tourism entrepreneurship process which lead to a global success case study representing regional tourism entrepreneurship process (Colak, 2009), One tourism entrepreneur had started an individual bed and breakfast operation servicing local food and wine while trying to protect a heritage house he inherited in Şirince village in Turkey. This idea of renting the heritage houses as B&B pensions and promoting / selling the locally produced fruit wine as an entrepreneurship process became so successful that it was soon applied by many resident villagers. With the conceptualization and commercialization of this specific individual entrepreneurship process, the village has become a global success story (in terms of sustainability), some years after. In addition, as an accompanying sub sector, local fruit wine production was increased leading to Şirince fruit wines to become an important national brand (Beker, 2002).



As a result of this entrepreneurship process, “Sirince Village was designated as a “Historic Site” due to the traditional pattern of the settlement and the architectural features of the traditional houses settled within this area in 1984. In addition to this improvement, 125 historic buildings were registered as cultural assets by the Conservation Council. Following these achievements, the Conservation Plan for Sirince was prepared by Ministry of Culture and Tourism and it was approved by Izmir Provincial Special Administration in 2006” (Akdogan).

Thus, as a success story originating from an individual entrepreneurship process in hospitality, this small village, famous for heritage tourism, cultural tourism and specific fruit wine tourism is a globally popular destination today. Provided that entrepreneurial small firms innovate, fill market niches, increase competition and promote economic efficiency during their activities within the process, this case proves true the assumption of Lee-Ross and Lashley (2010:14), which argues entrepreneurship process applications being vital for regional economic growth.

### 3. Conclusion and Suggestions

When historically compared with other industries like manufacturing or other service industries like medicine or financial services, it is seen that the tourism and hospitality industry traditionally demonstrated a lower involvement in entrepreneurial approaches. Although entrepreneurship has relatively increased for both global tourism chains and for SMEs during the last decade, still they are not very common and need to improve due to the economic and social benefits entrepreneurial approaches bring to people, firms and destinations. For the entrepreneurial improvement and more widespread applications within the tourism industry, it is important to identify the specific unique characteristics of the process.

When this specific structure is analysed, it is understood that there exists a high SME proportion within the tourism industry, rapid changes in industry trends and rapid change in tourist behaviour and preferences. In addition, the motive, goal and values, attitudes, strategies and success requirements all differ for tourism entrepreneurs. Yet tourism entrepreneurs seem to be highly motivated by life-style, QOL, locational preferences and other non-economic motives which are not common in general business entrepreneurs whose main motive seem to be profit maximization and financial independence. Also, the nature of the process is varied since entrepreneurship processes are accepted as a form of consumption rather than production in tourism and hospitality. Therefore, tourism entrepreneurs need advanced marketing skills like improved communication, customer orientation, PR and such since tourism is an intangible service dependent on physical evidence and servicescape for image management, positioning and quality assurance.

Novel tourism entrepreneurship processes usually leads to the production and introduction of many new tourism types, diversification of tourism products and innovative applications in practice. Local gastronomy tourism, rural adventure tourism (specific to local attractions), sustainable regional eco-tourism packages, local dark tourism, applications of specific local events and festivals, slow tourism, slow food move, agri-tourism farms, authentic and ethnic family based restaurants are some popular examples which were brought to the market as outcomes of innovative tourism entrepreneurship processes. Therefore, compliance of the new and novel tourism types to market trends for successful entrepreneurial process is essential but not enough since continuous updating is also, necessary. This is a challenge, which needs to be supported more by related project funds and managerial applications like partnerships and strategic alliances leading to synergy and cost reduction.

It is, also, predicted that the tourism entrepreneurship process has a dual positive impact, since it not only brings many positive outcomes to individuals and companies in the industry, but also provides direct tourism contributions to regions’ development process when introduced to the destinations. Thus, it seems there is a positive and direct relationship between regional local entrepreneurship applications and regional tourism development (in economic and social aspects), which implies that the positive incentive measures for tourism entrepreneurs should be supported by governments and local authorities.

#### 4. Research limitations and practical implications

Time limit is being the first constraint and the reliance on the secondary data is the second constraint of the study. Primary data usage and application of a quantitative research on the same topic is recommended for further studies. It may be stated as a practical implication that when compared with general business applications the tourism and hospitality industry entrepreneurship process, though having many common points, has its own and unique differences. Thus, for better and more efficient applications it may be suggested to practitioners to take that into consideration the unique tourism industry specifics.

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