

# Artisan entrepreneurship: A question of personality structure?

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## **Artisan entrepreneurship: A question of personality structure?**

### **ABSTRACT**

#### **Purpose**

This paper seeks to examine the role of culture in artisan entrepreneurship. It is argued that culture plays a critical role in entrepreneurial behaviour as culture is a key determinant of what it means to be a person. The concept of culture is explored from a micro level of analysis therefore, conceptualizing culture from the perspective of the individual entrepreneur's personality. The relationship between an entrepreneur's personality and the likelihood of starting and/or running an artisan business venture is then explored within this paper. The main research question being investigated within this paper is whether artisan entrepreneurs share common personality traits with other entrepreneur groups, using the five factor personality model (FFM) as the basis of the conceptual model presented herein.

#### **Design/methodology/approach**

A literature review on the emerging field of artisan entrepreneurship followed by a review of the literature on personality theory and entrepreneurship. Then, drawing upon the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality, a conceptual framework is introduced which proposes a relationship between the big five personality traits and four dimensions of artisan entrepreneurship such as, cultural heritage, community entrepreneurship, craftsmanship and innovation, developed from concepts derived from extant literature.

#### **Contribution**

The theoretical contribution is in the form of propositions. Four propositions have been formulated around the entrepreneurial personality of artisan business owners for each of the four dimensions: cultural heritage, community entrepreneurship, craftsmanship and innovation.

#### **Originality/value**

The paper is the first to propose a relationship between the Big Five personality dimensions and the likelihood of starting and/or running a business among an entrepreneur group rather than explain personality differences among entrepreneur and non-entrepreneur groups. The focus of the paper is specifically on artisan entrepreneurs and it has been proposed that the personality trait of agreeableness is important in the decision to start a cultural-based business. It has also been proposed that artisan entrepreneurs possess personal characteristics of openness to newness and openness to innovation that are integral to regional development.

## INTRODUCTION

The psychology of the entrepreneur as a field of study within entrepreneurship has been making a resurgence. This is due to critical developments in the application of the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality (McCrae & John, 1992) and the development of sophisticated statistical methods of analysis, that more accurately surmise the effects of personality variables on behaviour (Seibert and DeGeest, 2017). In addition, of growing interest is the trend towards more cultural-based businesses and the increased emphasis on local and handmade goods that are linked to the culture and tourism of a region (Ratten and Ferreira, 2017), referred to as artisan entrepreneurship. Artisan entrepreneurship involves the making of handcrafted goods or services such as organic locally grown food, craft beers and handmade clothes that are linked to the entrepreneur's cultural heritage (Tregear, 2005). Few studies have explored the role of culture in artisan entrepreneurship (Porfírio, Carrilho and Mónico, 2016). Extant research on the role of cultural entrepreneurship stories in gaining legitimacy (Lounsbury and Glynn, 2001) and beekeeping as a family artisan entrepreneurship business (Ramdani et al., 2017), have highlighted a research gap on cultural, artisanal forms of business ventures. There is much we do not understand about how culture influences decisions to start and run artisan businesses.

In this paper, culture is examined from a micro level of analysis therefore, conceptualizing culture from the perspective of the individual entrepreneur's personality. It is argued that culture plays a critical role in entrepreneurial behaviour as it refers to the shared values, beliefs and norms that provide the blueprint for perceiving, believing, evaluating, communicating, and acting among a collection of interconnected people (Chiu and Hong, 2007; Triandis, 1996). Thus, influencing the manner in which we learn, live and behave (Hofstede, 1994; Spencer-Oatey, 2008). Theorists of culture and personality school (see reviews by Church, 2000; Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003; Markus & Kitayama, 1998; Triandis & Suh, 2002) argued that culture is an

important shaper of personality, asserting the effect of culture to personality is that people who are born and bred in the same culture share common personality traits (Benedict, 1934; Benet-Martínez and Oishi, 2008; Mead, 1928). The main research question being investigated within this paper is whether artisan entrepreneurs share common personality traits with other entrepreneur groups, using the five factor personality model (FFM) as the basis of the conceptual model presented herein.

For years, entrepreneurship research has explored the person in entrepreneurship. Focusing on the person of the entrepreneur, asks 'why' questions - why do certain individuals start firms when others, under similar conditions, do not? (Gartner, 1988). Researching 'why' has resulted in answers around a special person who possesses a certain inner quality or qualities. As a result, the majority of work on the person in entrepreneurship has focused on either what personality traits affect an individual's likelihood of becoming an entrepreneur (Gartner, 1988), or the differences between entrepreneurs and managers (e.g. Stewart Jr. and Roth, 2001; Stewart and Roth, 2007). Extant literature has therefore, suggested that entrepreneurs share common personality traits.

However, few researchers have considered how personality traits affect an individual's likelihood of becoming an artisan entrepreneur. Given that the role of culture for this particular type of entrepreneurship differs based on the cultural context being examined, the personality traits of artisan entrepreneurs may also differ based on the entrepreneur's idiosyncratic cultural heritage. Analysing differences in personality traits is critical in that, understanding and describing such differences can provide new insights into the effects of personality variables on entrepreneurial behaviour.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper explores the question of: how culture, devolved as an individual's personality traits, influences the likelihood of starting and/or running artisan businesses. First, a review of the literature on the emerging field of artisan entrepreneurship is presented. This is then followed by a review of the literature on personality theory and entrepreneurship to understand the interconnections that form the basis for the development of the conceptual framework and propositions for this study. The extensive literature on the personality traits of entrepreneurs is reviewed from as early as 1960 by starting with baseline personality traits of need for achievement. For this review, studies on personality traits were searched in databases such as J-Stor, Emerald, Science Direct/Elsevier, ProQuest and EBSCOHost using keywords such as 'personality', 'traits' and 'orientation' as well as specific trait names most commonly used (e.g. self-efficacy, over-optimism, internal locus of control and risk-taking propensity).

The extant literature on the Big- 5 model of personality is then reviewed due to the fact that much of the research on personality traits from 2000 onwards gravitated towards a more robust measure of personality provided by the Big-5 model (Kerr, Kerr & Xu, 2017). For this review, the main concern was on the relationship between the Big-5 dimensions and entrepreneurial outcomes related to starting a business in keeping with the main research question of this paper on the influence of an individual's personality traits, on the likelihood of starting and/or running artisan businesses. Drawing upon the contributions of the Five Factor Model (FFM) to entrepreneurial personality, a conceptual framework which proposes a relationship between the big five personality traits and four dimensions of artisan entrepreneurship such as, cultural heritage, community entrepreneurship, craftsmanship, and innovation, developed from concepts derived from extant literature, is introduced. The theoretical contribution of this paper takes the form of propositions for future research.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Artisan entrepreneurship*

The artisan entrepreneur is largely absent from the entrepreneurship literature (Gordini and Rancati, 2015). Entrepreneurship as a concept and as a field of study is a multifaceted phenomenon that cuts across many disciplinary boundaries (Low & Macmillan, 1988). It is regarded by Kirzner (1997) as the mechanism through which temporal and spatial inefficiencies in an economy are discovered and mitigated. The artisan entrepreneur fits into general notions of entrepreneurship within the sub-topic of tourism entrepreneurship (Morrison et al., 1999). Tourism research has tended to focus on the conceptualisation of entrepreneurship informed largely by economic analysis (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000). Entrepreneurs under the economic school have traditionally been seen as disruptive innovators in terms of the Schumpeterian perspective (Schumpeter 1934) or alert to profitable opportunities by Kirzner (1973). These perspectives emphasise the “heroic” nature of entrepreneurs as change makers, or savvy business pioneers engaging in arbitrage.

Small and medium-sized entrepreneurs within the tourism industry do not tend to share these typical characteristics as they are often viewed as lifestyle entrepreneurs, pursuing a low or non-growth orientation (Woo et al., 1991). These types of entrepreneurs have also been identified by different terminologies including: “classical entrepreneur,” or “artisan entrepreneur”. Within tourism, increasing attention has been given to the artisan type (Shaw, 2004). This form of entrepreneurship is increasing as people focus more on cultural-based business ventures (Lounsbury and Glynn, 2001) that emphasise the creation and sale of local and handmade goods that are linked to the culture and tourism of a region (Ratten and Ferreira, 2017).

Artisans are characterized as individuals practising certain types of trade in which manual techniques take precedence, for example textiles and metal ware (Herrigel, 1996; Illeris, 1992). However, most artisan entrepreneurs also tend to be found in the clothing and food industries as they prefer to make their own products that are linked to their cultural heritage (Tregear, 2005). Moreover, often referred to as a craftsman or craftsperson, artisans are regarded as possessing certain technical skills derived from experience or apprenticeship that set them apart from other types of manual workers (Tregear, 2005).

Much of the existing research on artisan entrepreneurs has examined the goals of individual artisans (e.g. Cooper and Artz 1995; Hornaday, 1990; Stewart et al. 1998). These goals have usually been found to be geared towards co-operation and community involvement. Individual gain is sacrificed for collective good (Marshall, 1961), and the desire to engage in trade practice or the honing of their craft, is generally stronger than that of building a firm for the artisan entrepreneur (Smith, 1967).

Other research avenues have examined the role of the artisan entrepreneur in regional development. Entrepreneurship has long been viewed as the engine of economic growth (Caree & Thurik, 2003; Wennekers & Thurik, 1999). The advent of the globalisation era saw entrepreneurship become the engine for local processes of economic, social and cultural development throughout the world (Karlsson, Johansson & Stough, 2010). Entrepreneurship has therefore, acquired central importance among the processes that affect regional economic change (Fischer & Nijkamp, 2009). An entrepreneur is essentially an agent of change and the role of the entrepreneur in society is to accelerate the creation, diffusion and application of new ideas, new products, services, processes, ways of organizing, or markets (Shane and

Venkataraman, 2000). Regional development is the result of entrepreneurial activity in which innovations (new or improved products and processes, new management styles, locations) are key factors.

In terms of contribution to regional development, because of their proclivity to co-operation and community involvement, artisans have often been viewed as problematic to regional development, 'possessing the wrong mix of personal characteristics and ambitions for the kind of firm building and expansionist orientations conducive to economic growth' (Ray, 1993; Tregear, 2005:3). However other research (e.g. Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000) indicates that lifestyle entrepreneurs can be instrumental in the creation and introduction of innovative products to the wider industry. These entrepreneurial outputs tend to embody and articulate values of sustainability and sustainable development within a specific cultural space or community. Furthermore, Ateljevic & Doorne (2000) contend that these types of entrepreneurs can ultimately also stimulate regional development and reproduction of niche market products.

Extant research on artisanship has therefore, either explored the behavioural tendencies of artisan entrepreneurs or their role in regional development. There has been little research on entrepreneurial personality and link to artisan businesses in tourism development. Researching entrepreneurial personality of artisan entrepreneurs and how that influences their entrepreneurial intentions can advance the body of knowledge around artisanship as topics such as, personality and entrepreneurial intentions are part of the mainstream of entrepreneurship. Thus, widening the scope of research around artisanship to include mainstream topics can increase its legitimacy as an important area of study.



### *Personality Theory and Entrepreneurship*

Entrepreneurship takes shape through the interaction of micro and macro-level factors (Fischer & Nijkamp, 2009). Extant literature on the entrepreneurial event has primarily focused on the micro factors, such as the characteristics of an individual to become an entrepreneur and to start a new venture. Under this approach, the entrepreneur is the basic unit of analysis and the entrepreneur's traits and characteristics are a key component in explaining entrepreneurship as a phenomenon, under the assumption that the entrepreneur 'causes' entrepreneurship (Gartner, 1988). Some of these studies have focused on the role of personality, educational attainment and/or ethnic origin (Lee, Florida and Acs, 2004). Personality studies have found that entrepreneurship is associated with characteristics such as, alertness to business opportunities; entrepreneurial vision and proactivity (see Chell, Hawarth and Brearly, 1991). Research on personality, has however, generally compared entrepreneurs with non-entrepreneur groups and found that entrepreneurs exhibit greater individualism than non-entrepreneurs do (McGrath, MacMillan and Scheinberg, 1992).

Empirical research on the personality traits of entrepreneurs dates back to McClelland's (1961) achievement motivation theory. The notion that entrepreneurs have a high need for achievement was researched by several scholars (e.g. Begley and Boyd, 1987; Sexton and Bowman, 1984; Shaver and Scott, 1991). However, the findings were largely inconclusive (Brockhaus, 1982). Besides the need for achievement, there are four other traits that have come to be regarded as the hallmarks of entrepreneurial personality (Ciavarella et al., 2004). They are, locus of control, risk-taking propensity, tolerance of ambiguity and type A behaviour (Begley and Boyd, 1987; Brockhaus and Horowitz, 1986).

However, as with research on need for achievement, the validity and reliability of measures of personality such as risk propensity could not be guaranteed, and without valid and reliable instruments, the psychological characteristics of the entrepreneur could not be plausibly operationalized (Johnson, 1990). Thus, by the late 1980s, scholars came to the conclusion that there was no consistent relationship between personality and entrepreneurship and further arguments based on the trait paradigm were often discredited (e.g., Brockhaus & Horwitz, 1986; Gartner, 1988). Other variables such as, self-efficacy (Wang et al., 2016; Zhao, Siebert and Hills, 2005) and over-optimism (Baron, 1998; Hmieleski and Baron, 2009; Kambourova and Stam, 2017) have been subsequently examined within the entrepreneurship literature as researchers found that personality worked better as a predictor of behaviour when coupled with other factors related to motivations and cognitions (Code & Langan-Foz, 2001; Naffziger, 1995). In this context, motivation and cognition have been explored in extant literature as mediating factors in the personality performance relationship (Baum & Locke, 2004; Baum, Locke, & Smith, 2001; Dewal and Kumar, 2017) that may explain intra-individual variation in personality across situations (Judge, Simon, Hurst and Kelley, 2014).

However, other scholars (e.g., Rauch & Frese, 2007; Shane, Locke, & Collins, 2003) argued that the mixed findings in the earlier literature on personality and entrepreneurship due to poor reliability and validity might be corrected through the use of meta-analytical methods. The development of the five-factor model of personality, which aggregates personality variables into five main categories, became recognised as a robust indicator of an individual's personality (Ciavarella et al., 2004; Leutner et al., 2014; Seibert and DeGeest, 2017).

### *The Five Factor Model (FFM)*

Commonly referred to as the Big Five, the FFM groups an individual's personality into five categories: extraversion, emotional stability, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience (Costa and McCrae, 1992; Digman, 1990). It adopts a genotypic view of personality traits as endogenous and inherited basic tendencies that are largely independent from culture (McCrae & Costa, 1996). In this approach, Costa and McCrae (1992) distinguish between biologically-based traits captured by their Five Factor Model and characteristic adaptations –habits, values, beliefs, goals, and identities, which develop from the interaction of basic tendencies and experience. While the characteristic adaptations can be culturally shaped, the FFM traits are culture-free thus, assumed to be universal. Any cultural difference on FFM levels was thought to represent genetic differences between the cultural groups the model was used to investigate. However, whether there are cultural differences in personality traits such as, extraversion or emotional stability is still unanswered when thinking about the issue of cultural influences on personality. Table 1 lists the five factors with their respective descriptive components and/or traits as delineated in Barrick and Mount (1991).

'Insert Table 1 here'

### *Extraversion*

Extraversion is primarily manifested in traits such as, sociability and assertiveness (John, Naumann and Soto, 2008). Extant research (e.g. Barrick and Mount, 1991; Judge and Zapata, 2015; Judge et al., 1999; Vinchur et al, 1998) has indicated that extraverted managers are more likely to adopt leadership roles and perform better at their jobs. Research on extraversion between managers and entrepreneur groups have established significant correlations between the trait and intentions to start a business as well as business performance (Zhao et al., 2010). More recent research by Hussein and Aziz (2017) comparing entrepreneurs with non-

entrepreneur managers in Egypt found that extraversion was highly correlated with entrepreneurship. Furthermore, being extraverted should also facilitate the development of social networks, ultimately resulting in stronger partnerships with suppliers and customers (Baker, 1994; Barringer and Greening, 1998).

### *Emotional stability*

This trait contrasts Neuroticism and feelings such as anxiety, nervousness and depression (John et al., 2008). Previous research has reported high scores on emotional stability for entrepreneurs in comparison to managers (Zhao and Siebert, 2006) and positive effects of emotional stability on both the intention to start a private business and on performance (Zhao, Siebert and Lumpkin, 2010). High emotional stability may also aid the ability of individuals to maintain relationships (Hurtz and Donovan, 2000).

### *Agreeableness*

Individuals high on agreeableness tend to be courteous, trusting and cooperative (John et al., 2008), focusing on the quality of the relationships with others (DeNeve and Cooper, 1998; Judge et al., 1999). While some researchers have proposed that being cooperative is a key factor in an entrepreneur's ability to secure venture capital (Cable and Shane, 1997), entrepreneurs have been rated lower than managers on agreeableness (Zhao and Siebert, 2006) and Zhao et al (2010) found no significant correlation between agreeableness and intentions of setting up a business or business performance. It has however, been suggested that this trait may have more of an impact on interpersonal relationships rather than on task performance (Hurtz and Donovan, 2000; Van Scotter and Motowidlo, 1996). In addition to this,

contemporary research in a developing country context found that agreeableness was highly correlated to entrepreneurship (Hussein and Aziz, 2017). Thus, the role of agreeableness in entrepreneurship needs to be further examined to explain this inconsistency.

### *Conscientiousness*

Responsible, dependable, hardworking and achievement-oriented are some of the hallmarks of this personality trait (John et al., 2008). Conscientiousness has also been closely linked with 'goal-directed behaviours such as self-efficacy and control-related traits such as, internal locus of control' (Ciavarella et al., 2004:472). Entrepreneurs have been shown to score highly on the achievement-oriented dimension of conscientiousness, more so than managers (Brandstätter, 2011). Furthermore, Zhao et al (2010) reported positive correlations between conscientiousness and intentions to become an entrepreneur and entrepreneurial performance.

### *Openness to experience*

The attributes of this trait describe 'the breadth, depth, originality, and complexity of an individual's mental and experiential life' (Brandstätter, 2011:227; John et al., 2008:138). Individuals high in openness to experience are imaginative, broad-minded, creative and artistically sensitive. These characteristics are thought to be salient for starting a new venture (Ciavarella et al. 2004) such that entrepreneurial ideas for new products or services begin with creativity and innovative thinking (Bird, 1989) Studies on openness and entrepreneurial intentions, business creation, success and entrepreneurial status have confirmed these positive effects (Hussein and Aziz, 2017; Zhao et al., 2010; Zhao and Siebert, 2006).

These studies in entrepreneurship that have examined the relationship between the five fundamental dimensions of personality and venture survival (Ciavarella et al., 2004); entrepreneurial status (Hussein and Aziz, 2017; Zhao and Siebert, 2006) and entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial performance (Zhao et al., 2010) have either compared entrepreneurs with managers or conducted a meta-analysis of previous studies in which entrepreneurs were compared with non-entrepreneur groups. Thus, findings that the Big Five personality dimensions are related to entrepreneurial behaviour cannot be generalized.

The paper is the first to propose a relationship between the Big Five personality dimensions and the likelihood of starting and/or running a business among an entrepreneur group rather than explain personality differences among entrepreneur and non-entrepreneur groups. In this paper, artisan entrepreneurs are specifically examined both in answer to the call for papers (Ratten and Ferreira, 2017) and to contribute to the growing interest about artisan entrepreneurship and the role of entrepreneurial personality and link to artisan businesses. As argued above, an individual's personality traits shape their behaviour. The personality traits of artisan entrepreneurs may therefore, provide insight into their entrepreneurial behaviour. Artisan entrepreneurship is heavily influenced by cultural heritage and a sense of community. In addition to this, the craft-like nature of the business suggests a propensity for creativity and innovation. Therefore, individuals with personalities that enhance their ability to cooperate with others as well as develop their creative assets are likely to start and/or run an artisan business. In this paper, the characteristics of artisan entrepreneurs have been streamlined into four dimensions, namely, cultural heritage, community entrepreneurship, craftsmanship and innovation, which are based on concepts from extant literature (Figure 1).

'Insert Figure 1 here'

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### *Cultural Heritage*

Many artisan entrepreneurs start their businesses because they have a hobby or interest, which is usually linked to the culture and tourism of a region (Ratten and Ferreira, 2017). Culture encompasses macro-level processes and deals specifically with the values, norms and beliefs that govern and organise a group of people, defining characteristics and behaviours that are deemed appropriate or inappropriate (Hofstede, 1994; Spencer-Oatey, 2008; Triandis & Suh, 2002). Culture also specifies the context and environment, (that is, a specific place, time, and stimuli), in which social origins, shared culture and traditions are maintained between generations. This is generally manifested through language, cultural practices and institutions, values and artefacts, and through the modelling of behaviour (Markus & Kitayama, 1994) and results in a sense of identity and group membership (Senior & Bhopal, 1994).

The cultural factor emphasises the fact that entrepreneurial activity requires a responsive environment that is conducive to the qualities and virtues of entrepreneurs (Klamer, 2011). Lavoie and Chamlee-Wright (2000) insist, the cultural factor affects the context of entrepreneurship in that, it is easier to break a routine when the community appreciates initiative and novelty. Artisan entrepreneurs often engage in entrepreneurial activity that preserves ancient cultural traditions that may be in danger of being lost. They maintain long-standing traditions through re-imagining and re-inventing ways to pass them on. Stories and story-telling play a critical role in the processes that enable these types of businesses to emerge (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001). In examining the person in entrepreneurship, cultural heritage therefore has paramount influence on what it means to be an entrepreneur. Artisan entrepreneurial activity is proposed to be artistically sensitive, requiring openness to experience.

**Proposition 1: Artisan entrepreneurs start cultural forms of business ventures to pass on ancient cultural traditions through handmade goods and services as well as through cultural stories because of their high openness to experience.**

### *Community entrepreneurship*

Community entrepreneurship exists in the interface between culture, entrepreneurship and economic development (Spilling, 1991). The role of this concept is to focus on the fact that economic development not only depends on individual entrepreneurs starting private enterprises but also about developing adequate infrastructure, networks for collaboration and community organisations (Johannisson & Nilsson, 1989), which together develop a local milieu that is favourable to entrepreneurship and economic development.

The community itself is a complex web of relationships between a set of individuals who share values, norms, meanings, history, and identity (Etzioni, 1996). What makes communities distinctive (and therefore contribute to identity) is their culture, groups, and places (Shepherd & Patzelt, 2011). By being able to maintain a culture within the larger society, individuals can secure their personal identity, which is the basis for a well-developed community (Miller, 2001).

Artisan entrepreneurship is often fostered within a community as individuals share a rich cultural heritage and artisan entrepreneurs develop their personal identity from their craft or trade. Many artisan businesses also adopt traditional business models e.g. cooperatives, in keeping with the traditions of family, quality and sustainability (Grimes & Milgram, 2000). Contemporary research (e.g. Autio et al. 2014; Fritsch and Storey 2014; Stenholm et al. 2013) suggests that



entrepreneurial activity may be embedded in an underlying social, cultural, and institutional context. Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) suggest that such a social and cultural context reflects a deep imprinting. We propose that artisan entrepreneurship is embedded in an underlying regional social and cultural identity (Audretsch, Obschonka, Gosling and Potter, 2017), which is imprinted on the artisan entrepreneur and informs their personal identity and the identity of the business venture.

**Proposition 2: An artisan entrepreneur is a community entrepreneur who starts cultural forms of business ventures, which require high levels of sociability and assertiveness so as to secure their personal identity.**

**Proposition 2a: An artisan entrepreneur must be emotionally stable and have high levels of agreeableness in order to maintain relationships within the regional community and thereby secure their personal identity.**

### *Craftsmanship*

When something is described as a craft, it refers to a skill, often a tradition passed on through a sacred relationship between master and apprentice (Kennedy, 2010). The craftsman is engaged in designing and producing an authentic product, which forms part of his tangible cultural heritage (Nascimento, 2009). This tangible heritage is mirrored in its richness by the intangible craft knowledge and skill passed down through generations (Cominelli & Greffe, 2012). Craftsmanship therefore, represents a legacy of artistic and craft traditions within a region as well as the associated individual and community systems that support and nurture these traditions (Kennedy, 2010). An artisan entrepreneur is a skilled craftsperson who takes pride in one's work as it is a symbol of one's cultural heritage. Artisan entrepreneurship is the result of continuous practice on a craft, passed down from past generations, to produce authentic, hand-

made products including organic locally grown food, craft beers and handmade clothes (Tregear, 2005). Artisanry is therefore, more than just a technical skill but also implies a mind-set and social consciousness (Nagyszalanczy, 2000).

**Proposition 3: An artisan entrepreneur is a skilled craft worker with high levels of conscientiousness which enables him/her to not only learn a craft but continually practice and pass down that craft through generations to foster social consciousness and a shared social identity.**

### *Innovation*

Schumpeter (1934) and many researchers after him, have linked entrepreneurship with innovation (Zhao, 2005). This strong link between innovation and entrepreneurial activity portrays entrepreneurs as 'innovators' (Schumpeter, 1965, p. 55), that is, as change makers who challenge existing assumptions and disrupt the status quo (Schwartz and Malach-Pines, 2007). Entrepreneurs search purposefully for the sources of innovation, the changes and their symptoms as these are indicative of the potential opportunities for successful innovation (Drucker, 2014). However, the fundamentals of the innovation concept date back to Marshall (1890), who highlighted the spatial concentration of small firms specialising in one (or a few) elements of the production process of the main economic activity in the area concerned. This concentration was thought to be representative of not just the market-driven economy and technological proficiency, but is also 'anchored in the region's cultural, institutional and socio-economic value systems such as, trust, cooperation, social support systems' (Fisher & Nijkamp, 2009:4).

Small firms such as, artisan type businesses generally benefit from lower production costs, reduced transaction costs, rise in efficiency of production factors deployed and enhancement of dynamic efficiency (Lever, 2002; Porter, 2000). According to Rabelotti (1997), such innovation clusters form the foundation of modern entrepreneurship. As with most other forms of entrepreneurship, artisan entrepreneurs face uncertainty (Knight, 1921) and are endowed with limited resources (Baker & Nelson, 2005). While some artisan businesses are following the trend away from technology to handmade businesses, others are finding ways to incorporate technology into their processes to deliver on product innovation (Lockyer, 2016).

The innovativeness of small and medium-sized entrepreneurs can stem from general innovativeness, which is the degree of openness to newness as well as specific innovativeness that relates to being an early adopter of innovations within a specific domain (Marcati, Guido & Peluso, 2008). Innovation is a key aspect of artisanship, both the engagement with and adoption of new approaches. In terms of the innovativeness of the artisan entrepreneur, they draw on their passion and creativity to make and sell hand-made products, often in the clothing and food industries, which are linked to their cultural heritage (Tregear, 2005). Artisan entrepreneurs therefore, display general innovativeness in terms of creativity in the development of their craft as well as openness to specific innovations that may provide them with a competitive edge.

**Proposition 4: Artisan entrepreneurs utilize their passion and creativity to make and sell hand-made products linked to their cultural heritage because of their openness to newness and openness to innovation.**

## DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this paper, the relationship between an entrepreneur's personality and the likelihood of starting and/or running an artisan business venture has been explored. The arguments proposed therein are that certain personality traits such as, agreeableness, emotional stability, openness; conscientiousness and extraversion are related to four dimensions of artisan entrepreneurship: cultural heritage, community entrepreneurship, craftsmanship and innovation. The following sections discuss the implications of this relationship.

### *The role of Agreeableness on entrepreneurial intentions*

In this paper, the artisan entrepreneur is illustrated as culturally sensitive as well as a community entrepreneur. These roles require personality traits of openness to experience, extraversion, emotional stability and agreeableness. While the first three traits are well documented in extant literature as having a positive impact on the likelihood of individuals to start a business as well as on business performance, agreeableness is the only personality trait that has not been shown to exert any influence on entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial performance (Zhao et al., 2010; Zhao and Siebert, 2006).

However, the central proposition is that for artisan entrepreneurs specifically, the trait of agreeableness is important in the decision to start a cultural-based business. Artisan entrepreneurs draw their personal and shared social and cultural identity from the community as the community is the microcosm of the larger society, and the link to their cultural heritage. In one strand of extant literature, the goals of individual artisans have been inferred to be towards co-operation and community involvement, with individual gain sacrificed for collective good (Marshall 1961). It is proposed in this paper that these goals of individual artisan entrepreneurs

stem from an innate personal characteristic to cooperate and build lasting relationships with others who share the same cultural norms and values and wish to preserve long-standing traditions that may be in danger of dying out.

This has implications for research on entrepreneurial personality regarding the importance of context and underlying regional, social and cultural identity (Audretsch et al., 2017). A few contemporary studies (e.g. Hussein and Aziz, 2017) have already empirically proposed a correlation between agreeableness and entrepreneurship among entrepreneurs in a developing country context. Much more research is however needed to substantiate these findings. Furthermore, future research analysing how different contexts shape different conceptualisations of entrepreneurship can draw on these insights to explain entrepreneurship as a social phenomenon not just at the macro-country level but importantly, at the meso-community level.

#### *Openness to newness and Openness to innovation*

The artisan or craftsperson has continued to be perceived as problematic to regional development ever since research (e.g. Cooper et al., 1997; Smith, 1967) found that artisans lack growth ambitions and commercial skills. The notion that artisans possess the wrong mix of personal characteristics and ambitions that is conducive to economic growth has been examined by researchers (e.g. Hornaday, 1990; Tregear, 2005). However these studies compared whether artisan producers pursued goals of lifestyle, community involvement or commercial growth, offering empirical insights into entrepreneurial behaviour and not entrepreneurial personality. Another central proposition within the paper is that artisan entrepreneurs possess traits of openness to newness and openness to innovation that are

integral to regional development. However, it has not been presumed that artisan entrepreneurs are a homogenous group, and therefore, varying degrees of innovativeness and engagement are to be expected within the artisan entrepreneur population. This has implications for how entrepreneurs are perceived as a group. The artisan entrepreneur has not been given the same recognition as mainstream entrepreneurs. However, researchers have still managed to group mainstream entrepreneurs as a homogenous group with women, ethnic minorities and artisans as outsiders. The proposition that even within the artisan entrepreneur population there might be variations in openness to innovations and openness to newness suggests that future research on entrepreneur groups should not automatically assume homogeneity but embrace the potential diversity of the person in entrepreneurship.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Artisan entrepreneurship is emerging as a form of cultural-based business that is linked to tourism, culture and regional development. In this paper, culture has been examined from a micro level of analysis by conceptualizing the concept from the perspective of the individual entrepreneur's personality. The central premise is that personality is shaped by cultural influences as culture consists of shared meaning systems that provide the blueprint for behaviour through the creation of values and norms that define what is appropriate or inappropriate.

In examining culture within a specific context – artisan entrepreneurs – and the shared culture and traditions that are maintained between generations, and which result in a sense of personal identity and social consciousness among artisans, the arguments put forward within the paper have illustrated how artisanship is manifested through the hand-made products and services

artisan entrepreneurs create and sell (Tregear, 2005) as well as through the cultural stories (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001) they might weave to preserve long-standing traditions that may be in danger of dying out. A main point has been that these cultural influences have substantial psychological effects on an individual's behaviour especially, entrepreneurial behaviour as culture, devolved as one's personality, is a key determinant of what it means to be an entrepreneur. The main research question explored within this paper therefore was whether artisan entrepreneurs share common personality traits with other entrepreneurs using the five factor personality model (FFM) as the basis of our conceptual model.

This paper suggests that artisan entrepreneurs share personality traits such as, openness to experience, extraversion, emotional stability and conscientiousness with other entrepreneur groups that have been researched using this personality taxonomy. However, it has also been suggested within this paper that personality traits such as, agreeableness, which have been classified as unimportant for other entrepreneur groups, may have generally a positive influence on the likelihood of individuals starting an artisan business. However, empirical research should be conducted on artisan entrepreneurs as well as on other forms of cultural entrepreneurship as well as on the emerging field of community entrepreneurship to further examine the role of agreeableness on entrepreneurial intentions.

In addition to the role of agreeableness on entrepreneurial intentions, personality traits such as openness to newness and openness to innovation are proposed as integral to regional development. In this paper, it has also been proposed that artisan entrepreneurs may possess a proclivity to innovation, either in general innovativeness with regards to creativity in the development of their craft or trade or in the specific adoption of new technologies that may

enhance their craft or trade. Studies should also therefore, explore the varying degrees of innovativeness and engagement that may exist among the artisan entrepreneur group.

In doing this research, the focus has only been on examining the artisan entrepreneur group. This paper is the first to propose a relationship between the Big Five personality dimensions and the likelihood of starting and/or running a business among an entrepreneur group rather than explain personality differences among entrepreneur and non-entrepreneur groups. Future empirical research should therefore discontinue comparison studies of entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneur groups. In order to advance the field of entrepreneurship and sub-fields of tourism entrepreneurship, researchers need to recognise that entrepreneurs are not a homogenous group and that exploring differences within an entrepreneur group is a fruitful research avenue. It is recommended that researchers begin with the artisan entrepreneur group as throughout this paper, arguments have been proposed for personality differences for artisan entrepreneurs based on the fact that their artisanship is highly influenced by their cultural heritage and this may distinguish them from other groups of entrepreneurs.

Finally, other potential avenues for future research may involve the role of social networks, or the social capital of artisan entrepreneurs given their proclivity for cooperation and community involvement. In addition to this, researchers can consider researching a more diverse group of artisan entrepreneurs. The artisan or craftsperson is often referred to as a 'craftsman' in extant literature. However, as artisan entrepreneurship continues to grow and artisan entrepreneurs start more hobby-based businesses and/or inherit businesses, the diversity of artisan entrepreneurs is also changing to include women. Thus, future research should be cognizant of this and recognise the growing contribution of women in this field.



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