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## Article

# The attributes of successful tourism-related entrepreneurs : a case from South Africa

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## **The Attributes of Successful Tourism-related Entrepreneurs: a Case from South Africa**

**Sibusiso D. Ntshangase<sup>1</sup>, Ikechukwu O. Ezeuduji<sup>2</sup>**

**Abstract:** Previous studies have recognized entrepreneurs as a significant part of the global pursuit for sustaining economic development and social progress in the world. This study therefore explores the entrepreneurial attributes that have significant impact in differentiating between successful and struggling tourism entrepreneurs in South Africa, using Mtubatuba Local Municipality as a case. A structured questionnaire survey was used to collect data. Convenience sampling was employed in selecting 124 tourism-related entrepreneurs in different regions of Mtubatuba Local Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal Province of South Africa. The results indicate that the entrepreneurial attributes that *somewhat* differentiate successful entrepreneurs from struggling entrepreneurs are: business drive and enthusiasm, being efficient and effective, and being visionary and having achievement motivation. This study also validates that socio-demographic variables in this study area, tend to be more useful in explaining the reasons for success or struggle among entrepreneurs than behavioural variables. This study recommends that Mtubatuba Local Municipality needs to organize targeted Tourism Development and Tourism Business Management education for the willing population of Mtubatuba Local Municipality, in collaboration with Tourism KwaZulu-Natal. By so doing, equal opportunity can be granted to anyone who wants to start-up and manage a new tourism business.

**Keywords:** entrepreneurship; tourism entrepreneurship; tourism entrepreneur; entrepreneurial attributes; sub-Saharan Africa

**JEL Classification:** J16; L26; O55; R11; Z32

### **1. Introduction**

In this changing world of commerce, entrepreneurs are a significant part of the global pursuit for sustained economic development and social progress in the world (Santhi, 2017). In South Africa, entrepreneurs have played a key role in changing the economic standard of living in the society. Researchers suggest that an entrepreneur is someone who exercises initiative by organizing a venture to take benefit of an opportunity (Goliath et al., 2014; Rusu et al., 2015; Iwu et al., 2016; Khanna, 2016). Entrepreneurship is a driving force behind the socio-economic success of any nation (Ezeuduji & Ntshangase, 2017a). Previous research (Olomi & Sinyamule, 2009; Chenuba et al. 2011; Singh & Singh, 2016) provided valuable information regarding entrepreneurship. The aforementioned authors posit that entrepreneurship is used as an instrument to create more jobs and to eradicate poverty in the country. This means that, entrepreneurship has been considered as a key element in the process of growth, as it

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helps entrepreneurs create economic independence and improve their social status (Premand et al., 2016; Villasana et al., 2016). Earlier studies and researchers in the field of entrepreneurship focused on personal characteristics that differentiate entrepreneurs from non-entrepreneurs (Pirnar, 2015; De Souza et al., 2016; Santhi, 2017). The entrepreneur is the person usually seen as a designer or an innovator of new business ideas. The entrepreneur is someone engaged or active in entrepreneurial activity with a purpose of becoming self-employed (Rusu et al., 2015). In as much as tourism entrepreneurs have a significant part to play in the South African economy and social progress (Pirnar, 2015), there are those who are regarded as successful entrepreneurs and those who are regarded as struggling entrepreneurs. From the national and international literature reviewed, it becomes clear that in entrepreneurship studies that relate to distinguishing between successful and struggling entrepreneurs, there is still a dearth of literature from the sub-Saharan Africa. This study is significant for the global community, especially the sub-Saharan Africa, as it does not only add to the entrepreneurship literature, but also explores national or regional differences. Thus, the focus of this study is assessing the attributes of successful tourism-related entrepreneurs in Mtubatuba Local Municipality of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. This study area was chosen due to researchers' personal interest and knowledge that the local economy of Mtubatuba Local Municipality relies much on tourism. The next section explores the relevant literature related to this study.

## **2. Related Works and Research Problem Statement**

Tourism is one of the most rapidly growing industries and an important economic activity in most countries worldwide (Solvoll et al., 2015; World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017; Kallmuenzer & Peters, 2018). Also Solvoll et al. (2015) posit that tourism as an industry is highly affected by change; therefore, effective entrepreneurs are needed to sustain and secure this industry. The notion of a successful entrepreneur in this study relates to the perception that an entrepreneur has achieved the success he/she wants in his/her business (De Raffe, 2011), and interacts continuously with a diverse array of people such as actual customers (for example, tourists), potential customers, competitors and suppliers (Urban, 2014). A struggling entrepreneur in this study relates to an entrepreneur who has not achieved expected and desired results as an entrepreneur (Atsan, 2016). In relation to tourism entrepreneurship (which is the focus of this study), a struggling entrepreneur underperforms in terms of critical processes or desired targets in the tourism businesses (Cope, 2011; Atsan, 2016). These statements notwithstanding, the researchers sought to evaluate what makes one entrepreneur successful and another not successful or struggling in the South African tourism industry. The underperformance of the struggling entrepreneur represents one of the most difficult, complex and yet valuable learning experience that the entrepreneur needs to be engaged in, to understand entrepreneurship in terms of its causes and consequences for the individual entrepreneur, organizations and society at large (Atsan, 2016).

Based on the review and synthesis of relevant literature, it is discovered that different attributes are associated with tourism entrepreneurs some of which the researchers found very germane to the present study (Table 1). Even though the attributes of entrepreneurs are seen as a crucial issue in the tourism businesses especially in small and medium enterprises, research in this field is still needed (Jonker et al., 2009). Through this observation, this research explores the entrepreneurial attributes that have

significant impact in differentiating between successful and struggling entrepreneurs in South Africa. There are studies indicating that entrepreneurs face various obstacles such as a lack of information on various aspects of business, excessive taxation, high rates of inflation, and a lack of financial assistance (Ezeuduji, 2015; Ismail et al., 2016; Santhi, 2017). The study, based on the literature review, adopted attribute clusters, namely: innovation and networking; learning and resource acquisition; drive and enthusiasm; the use of technology; visionary and achievement motivation; level of preparedness for risk taking; and efficiency and effectiveness as the main attributes that may differentiate a successful tourism entrepreneur from a struggling entrepreneur in the South African tourism industry. Ahmad (2015) suggests that entrepreneurial ability is perceived as possession of abilities necessary for the starting and nurturing to growth of a new enterprise, especially in a competitive environment. The aforementioned attributes are assumed to be the key success factors, which are related to entrepreneurs.

The aim of this study is to explore the entrepreneurial attributes that have significant impact in differentiating between successful and struggling entrepreneurs, using Mtubatuba Local Municipality as a case. The seven entrepreneurial attributes mentioned earlier, were tested for significant results. The next section outlines how the study was designed, and how the data were collected and analyzed to reach study conclusions.

**Table 1. Attributes of Entrepreneurs**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Attributes of an entrepreneur</b>
Singh and Rahman (2011); Pirnar (2015); Omerzel (2016)	resourcefulness, creativity, visionary, hard worker, optimistic, risk taker, leadership/leader, innovator, need for achievement, commitment and determination, motivation to excel, tolerance of risk, self-confidence
Machín-Martínez and de-Pablos-Heredero (2017); Santhi (2017)	high motivation for achievement of goal, insatiable drive and persistent enthusiasm, ready to take risk and face challenge and learn, technical expertise, commitment and self-confidence, learn from the failure and use of feedback, effective management of time, efficiency and effectiveness
De Raffele (2011)	creativity, self-reliance and the ability to adapt, education
Villasana, Alcaraz-Rodríguez and Alvarez (2016)	social intelligence: ability to recognize up-and-coming trends in society at a very early stage, establish a social network with the right people around the innovation
Omerzel, (2016)	achievement, self-edification, explorative
Bohn (2013); Premand et al. (2016)	creating value: transforming a business, creating a new business, growing a business and creating wealth, networking, uniqueness, owner-manager

*Source: Literature Review*

### 3. Research Design and Methods

In this research, the independent (success level of the entrepreneur) and dependent variables (seven entrepreneurial attributes mentioned earlier) were used to define the scope of the study, and both of these variables were not explicitly controlled by the researchers (Huff, 2009; Neneh, 2011; Neneh, 2015; Leggett, 2017). Survey research is a frequently used mode of observation in the social sciences (Babbie, 2017); hence, this study was designed as a survey, especially due to the fact that the constructs to be

tested in this study are better presented in quantifiable ways. Survey entails researchers selecting a sample of respondents and administering a standardized questionnaire to each person in the sample. In most cases, tourism research needs quantitative data for researchers to get the required information (Nkwanyana et al., 2016; Ezeuduji & Mbane, 2017). This research involves a large number of respondents (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012), and a structured questionnaire was used in the sample survey. Questions in the questionnaire were set on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 - strongly agree, 2 – agree, 3 – neutral, 4 – disagree and 5 - strongly disagree. The quantitative approach allows us to generate statistical data and present it in frequencies, percentages and tables. The type of sampling used in this study was non-probability sampling as the research population is unknown (Veal, 2011). The researchers employed convenience sampling in selecting tourism-related entrepreneurs doing business in different regions of Mtubatuba Local Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal Province of South Africa.

In some of the places where the study was conducted, the researchers along with the tourism-related entrepreneurs had an agreement that the questionnaires were to be dropped and later collected (weekly and at times after two weeks). A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed between July 2018 and February 2019, however the researchers used 124 questionnaires that were fully completed, for analyses in March 2019. This sample size of 124 entrepreneurs was considered large enough to reach conclusions on the research purpose, especially as the number of tourism entrepreneurs in this locality is unknown and not relatively large compared to the number of those in bigger cities or towns in KwaZulu-Natal, such as Durban, Pietermaritzburg, or Richards Bay. The respondents were chosen based on convenience and availability, when the researchers visited the business areas. The participants were fully informed of the purpose of the study before they participated in the study. Furthermore, participants were given assurance of privacy, confidentiality and anonymity with regard to the information provided. The questionnaire variables consisted of close-ended questions in a form of matrix questions, to save time for respondents, and to increase the comparability of responses (Chawla & Sondh, 2011).

Data analyses were done using IBM's SPSS version 25 software for statistical purposes. Descriptive statistics were used to generate frequency of respondent's profile (in percentages), mean scores, and standard deviation. Bivariate analyses (comparing two variables) employed Spearman's Correlation (two-tailed) and Mann-Whitney U tests to check for relationships between variables (Bolboacă et al., 2011). For the purpose of data analysis using Mann-Whitney U test, variables such as respondents' ethnic group and age group were re-recoded into two categories. The ethnic group variable was recoded from "Black Africans, White, Indian and Coloured" to "Black" (consisting of Black Africans, Indians, and Coloured) and "White", while the age group was recoded from "18 - 29, 30 - 39, 40 - 49, 50 – 59, 60 and above" to "Below 40 years", and "40 years and above", to allow the calculation of the Mann-Whitney U test. The reliability test (using Cronbach's Alpha) was conducted to check for the level of internal consistencies of variables used to explain seven dimensional entrepreneurs' attributes (drive and enthusiasm, efficiency and effectiveness, innovation and networking, learning and resource acquisition, level of preparedness for risk taking, use of technology, and visionary and achievement motivation). The reliability tests conducted show internal consistency among variables used to explain all the entrepreneur success attributes. Bivariate tests (Spearman's Correlation and Mann-Whitney U) were conducted at 95% confidence interval.

**4. Results and Discussion**

The respondents that participated in the study were tourism-related entrepreneurs from different tourism-related businesses, mostly from the Saint Lucia town and around Mtubatuba town (in the same Municipality: Mtubatuba Local Municipality). The results in Table 2 show that majority of the respondents were South Africans (75%); and female respondents were somewhat in the majority (about 58%). The sample consists more of the White racial group (about 53%), suggesting that they dominate the tourism industry in this region.

**Table 2. Profile of the Respondents (N = 124)**

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Origin	South African	75
	Non South African	25
Gender	Female	58.1
	Male	41.9
Ethnic group	Black (Black Africans, Indians, and Coloured)	46.8
	White	53.2
Age group	Below 40 years	42.7
	40 years or above	57.3
Number of years in business	6 years or below	70.2
	Above 6 years	29.8
Highest level of education	No western education	10.5
	Primary education	16.1
	Secondary education (Matric)	35.5
	Tertiary education (University, College / TVET)	37.9
Type of business	Accommodation	45.2
	Food and Beverage	14.5
	Events Management	12.9
	Tour Operation	7.3
	Travel Agency	4.0
	Tour Guide	6.5
	Car rentals	6.5
	Resorts	2.4
	Consultancy	0.7
Perceived classification regarding level of success as tourism entrepreneur	Very successful entrepreneur/ business owner	9.7
	Successful entrepreneur/ business owner	27.4
	Surviving entrepreneur/ business owner (neither successful nor unsuccessful, but just surviving)	38.7
	Struggling entrepreneur/ business owner (struggling to survive in the business world)	18.5
	Unsuccessful entrepreneur/ business owner	5.7

About 43% of the respondents were below 40 years old, and about 57% of the respondents were above 40 years old, reflecting that the sample is relatively matured or older. Age is an important factor in exploring the entrepreneurial attributes that have significant impact in differentiating between successful and struggling entrepreneurs (Bruwer & Smith, 2018). It has been argued that the younger people are more involved in participating in the entrepreneurial activities, however, most of them failed to demonstrate the level of maturity along the way, and that results in a high rate of failure in tourism businesses (Ramasobana & Fatoki, 2017). In this study, most of the respondents are fairly new in the

tourism businesses (about 70% of the population are 6 years or below in the business, while about 30% are above 6 years in the business).

About 36% of the respondents have secondary education (matriculated), and about 38% have tertiary education (University, College / TVET), revealing that the general educational level is not a significant barrier for South African tourism entrepreneurs to enter the industry. The results reveal that the majority of respondents are owners of accommodation businesses. About 10% of the respondents classified themselves as “very successful entrepreneur/business owner,” and about 27% of the entrepreneurs see themselves as “successful entrepreneur/business owner”. About 39% of the respondents perceived themselves as surviving entrepreneurs/business owners (neither successful nor unsuccessful), and about 19% as struggling entrepreneurs/business owner (struggling to survive in the business world). Only about 6% classified themselves as unsuccessful entrepreneurs or business owners in the study area.

Results in Table 3 through Table 9 show that respondents tend to agree mostly to the entrepreneur attributes statements in the questionnaire.

Testing the relationship between entrepreneur’s statements on “learning and acquiring resources” on the one hand; and “level of education”, “entrepreneur success level”, and “entrepreneur’s profile” on the other hand, yield interesting results for this study (see Table 3).

**Table 3. Relationship Between Entrepreneurs’ Perceptions of “Learning And Acquiring Resources”; And Level of Education, Entrepreneur Success Level, and Entrepreneurs’ Profile**

Learning and acquiring resources - Statements	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Correlation with level of education <sup>b</sup>	Correlation with entrepreneur success level <sup>b</sup>	Compared with entrepreneurs’ profile <sup>c</sup>
South African entrepreneurs or business owners lack the expertise to develop tourism in South Africa	2.00	** , negative	N.S	**age group – 40 years and above agree more
Attending business courses before starting tourism business is important	1.84	** , negative	N.S	** age group – 40 years and above agree more
Attending any business courses after starting tourism business is important	1.87	** , negative	N.S	* age group – 40 years and above agree more
I have the ability to learn from failure	1.83	N.S	N.S	N.S
I was able to acquire resources on my own to start a tourism business	1.87	* , negative	N.S	N.S
I have a strong skill of acquiring financial resources to run my business	2.04	* , negative	N.S	N.S

I have the ability to learn new ways of doing things	1.81	N.S	N.S	N.S
Reliability Statistics (learning and acquiring resources), Cronbach's Alpha =.754, N of Items = 7, Valid cases = 124 (100%), Excluded cases = 0 (0%), Total = 124				

Notes: a Questionnaire were itemised along a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1, Strongly agree; 2, Agree; 3, Neutral; 4, Disagree; 5, Strongly disagree.

b Spearman's Rank correlation (2-tailed) test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ .

c Mann-Whitney U test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ .

The results, as shown in Table 3, indicate there is no significant correlation between entrepreneurs' statements on "learning and acquiring resources" and entrepreneur success level. The more educated the entrepreneurs are, the more they agree to most of the entrepreneurial attributes statements depicting "learning and acquiring resources". Also entrepreneurs who are 40 years old and above agree more to the 3 statements shown above, compared with those who are younger in age. Interestingly, this evidence posits that entrepreneurial success has some relationships with 'the level of maturity' and 'the level of education' of the responding entrepreneurs. These results support research findings by Urban (2014), Ahmad (2015), and Premand et al. (2016) regarding positive relationships between entrepreneurial abilities and the level of maturity. Hsiung (2018) also argues that the entrepreneur's managerial ability can be acquired through learning.

In Table 4, relationship tests were conducted between entrepreneurs' statements on "innovative thinking and networking" on the one hand; and "level of education", "entrepreneur success level", and "entrepreneur's profile" on the other hand.

**Table 4. Relationship between Entrepreneurs' Perceptions of "Innovative Thinking and Networking"; and Level of Education, Entrepreneur Success Level, and Entrepreneurs' Profile**

Innovative thinking and networking - Statements	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Correlation with level of education <sup>b</sup>	Correlation with entrepreneur success level <sup>b</sup>	Compared with entrepreneurs' profile <sup>c</sup>
Innovation and networking are important aspects for the entrepreneur in daily business operations	1.46	**, negative	N.S	** age group – 40 years and above agree more
As an entrepreneur, I depend on my own creativity to develop my business and to make a mark in the industry	1.80	N.S	N.S	N.S
I believe that networking is often connected with the notion of friendship to overcome competition	1.63	N.S	N.S	N.S



I know how to create better products and services in my business	1.91	N.S	N.S	*White ethnic group agree more than Black ethnic group
Sometimes I depend on other business owners to be successful	2.21	** , negative	N.S	N.S
Networking is one of the ways for entrepreneurs to know each other's product offerings	1.88	N.S	N.S	N.S
I believe my business will grow quicker if I form connections with or become a member of professional bodies	1.88	** , negative	N.S	N.S
Reliability Statistics (innovative thinking and networking), Cronbach's Alpha =.779, N of Items = 7, Valid cases = 124 (100%), Excluded cases = 0 (0%), Total = 124				

Notes: a Questionnaire were itemised along a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1, Strongly agree; 2, Agree; 3, Neutral; 4, Disagree; 5, Strongly disagree.

b Spearman's Rank correlation (2-tailed) test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ .

c Mann-Whitney U test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ .

The results in Table 4 show that there are no significant correlations between the respondents' agreements to the entrepreneurial attribute – “innovative thinking and networking” and their perceived “entrepreneur success level”. The results also show that the respondents who are 40 years and above agree more than those who are below 40 years of age with this statement: ‘innovation and networking are important aspects for the entrepreneur in daily business operations’. Results also show that the White ethnic group agrees more than the Black ethnic group with this statement: ‘I know how to create better products and services in my business’. This provides possible explanations as to why many tourism businesses owned by youths and the Black ethnic group have less survival rates in South Africa. This gives room for further research. Regarding those who are below 40 years of age, the results in this study confirm the conclusion reached by Ezeuduji and Ntshangase (2017b) in that the tourism entrepreneurs, especially youths, are facing a number of difficulties: lack of expertise to carry out an economic activity, lack of training, and lack of skills in the field of management and marketing. The results in Table 4 however show that respondents with higher level of education agree more with the three statements shown in this table. These results partially contradict the findings of Lopes et al. (2014) and De Souza et al. (2016) who posit that the success of an entrepreneur does not depend on the level of education.

**Table 5. Relationship between Entrepreneurs' Perceptions of “Business Drive and Enthusiasm”; and Level of Education, Entrepreneur Success Level, and Entrepreneurs' Profile**

Business drive and enthusiasm - Statements	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Correlation with level of education <sup>b</sup>	Correlation with entrepreneur success level <sup>b</sup>	Compared with entrepreneurs' profile <sup>c</sup>
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I feel motivated and energetic to make a difference in the South African tourism industry	1.60	N.S	N.S	* age group – 40 years and above agree more *Entrepreneurs who are more than 6 years in business agree more
How to run my business successfully is always in my mind	1.60	N.S	N.S	N.S
I think I am one of the best entrepreneurs in South Africa	2.03	*, negative	N.S	*Females agree more than males
I feel very attached to my business	1.82	N.S	N.S	N.S
It would be difficult for me to get rid of my business	1.73	N.S	*	N.S
It would be easy for me to start another tourism business because of experience and energy that I have	2.06	N.S	N.S	* age group – 40 years and above agree more
I always want to achieve greater things	1.81	N.S	**	* Females agree more than males
Reliability Statistics (business drive and enthusiasm), Cronbach's Alpha = .710, N of Items = 7, Valid cases = 124 (100%), Excluded cases = 0 (0%), Total = 124				

Notes: a Questionnaire were itemised along a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1, Strongly agree; 2, Agree; 3, Neutral; 4, Disagree; 5, Strongly disagree.

b Spearman’s Rank correlation (2-tailed) test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ .

c Mann-Whitney U test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ .

The results in Table 5 suggest that the higher the level of Western education of the entrepreneurs, the more they believe in being some of the best in the nation. The results also show that those who are more than 6 years in business agree more than those who are less than 6 years in business that: ‘they feel motivated and energetic to make a difference in the South African tourism industry’. Neneh (2011) states that those who had no prior business experience probably inherited the business from their family members without any prior experience in managing the business. They have a bigger chance of not doing well in their businesses. Hence, this study agrees that training programs are very important and should be provided to low-skilled tourism entrepreneurs for the long-term survival of their businesses (Ezeuduji & Ntshangase, 2017b; Boermans & Willebrands, 2017; Santhi, 2017; Kallmuenzer & Peters, 2018). Such a lack of business skills is one of the crucial barriers to a firm’s success (Pirnar, 2015; Omerzel, 2016). Interestingly, the results obtained from this study also suggest that females are more energetic and confident than males. Females agree more than males to these statements: ‘I think I am one of the best entrepreneurs in South Africa’, and ‘I always want to achieve greater things’. This is enough evidence to state that females in this study agreed more to a strong business drive and enthusiasm than their male counterparts. Rasul et al. (2016) opine that these are common characteristics that describe successful entrepreneurs. Again, respondents who are 40 years and above agree more than their younger counterparts regarding business motivation. Results also show that there are significant correlations

between the respondents' agreements to the entrepreneurial attribute – 'business drive and enthusiasm' regarding the statements: 'It would be difficult for me to get rid of my business', 'I always want to achieve greater things'; and their perceived 'entrepreneur success level'. This means that entrepreneurs who perceive themselves as being successful are more likely to retain their business and they do want to achieve greater things.

**Table 6. Relationship between Entrepreneurs' Perceptions of "Use of Technology in the Business"; and Level of Education, Entrepreneur Success Level, and Entrepreneurs' Profile**

Use of technology in the business - Statements	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Correlation with level of education <sup>b</sup>	Correlation with entrepreneur success level <sup>b</sup>	Compared with entrepreneurs' profile <sup>c</sup>
The most important resource for tourism business is the Internet	1.67	*, negative	N.S	** age group – 40 years and above agree more
Technology has a significant role in the success of the tourism entrepreneur	1.73	*, negative	N.S	*South Africans agree more than non-South Africans
It helps to get additional technology education and training on an ongoing basis as an entrepreneur	1.66	** , negative	N.S	N.S
The entrepreneur will struggle if she/he lacks modern technology	1.84	N.S	N.S	** Females agree more than males * South Africans agree more than non-South Africans
The entrepreneur's competitiveness increases by introducing and using modern technologies	1.77	N.S	N.S	** Females agree more than males * Entrepreneurs who are 6 years or below in business agree more
An entrepreneur cannot communicate effectively with his/her customers if he/she cannot use technology	1.87	N.S	N.S	** Females agree more than males
Modern technology is a very important source of information for an entrepreneur	1.75	N.S	N.S	** Females agree more than males
Reliability Statistics (use of technology in the business), Cronbach's Alpha =.830, N of Items = 7, Valid cases = 124 (100%), Excluded cases = 0 (0%), Total = 124				

Notes: a Questionnaire were itemised along a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1, Strongly agree; 2, Agree; 3, Neutral; 4, Disagree; 5, Strongly disagree.

b Spearman's Rank correlation (2-tailed) test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ .

c Mann-Whitney U test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ .

Table 6 indicates that the respondents with a higher level of education agree more strongly to the entrepreneurial attributes statements that show significant results. However, there are no significant results between the level of education and entrepreneurial attributes statements that are labelled N.S. In Table 6, the respondents who are 40 years and above agree more than those who are below 40 years of age, with this statement: ‘the most important resource for tourism business is the Internet’. This is in line with the findings of Mamabolo et al. (2017) and Tichaawa (2017) who argued that the success of an entrepreneur greatly depends on the attributes of the entrepreneur including the use of technology. Moreover, South Africans agree more than non-South Africans to these statements: ‘technology has a significant role in the success of the tourism entrepreneur’; ‘the entrepreneur will struggle if she/he lacks modern technology’. This concurs with previous studies that recognize technology as a key role player in determining the success of the tourism entrepreneur and the tourism business (Alsos et al., 2014; Africa Tourism Monitor, 2016). Female entrepreneurs tend to support the necessity of the use of technology in the business, more than their male counterparts.

**Table 7. Relationship between Entrepreneurs’ Perceptions of “Being Visionary and Having Achievement Motivation”; and Level of Education, Entrepreneur Success Level, and Entrepreneurs’ Profile**

<b>Being visionary and having achievement motivation - Statements</b>	<b>Mean<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Correlation with level of education<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Correlation with entrepreneur success level<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Compared with entrepreneurs’ profile<sup>c</sup></b>
I know where I will be or what I will achieve as a business owner in 5 years’ time	1.65	N.S	N.S	* Females agree more than males
Lack of acceptance of personal responsibility for outcomes can hinder the entrepreneur’s success	1.82	*, negative	N.S	N.S
I enjoy facing and overcoming obstacles to my ideas	1.86	N.S	N.S	N.S
Entrepreneurial achievement motivation is one of the key components for entrepreneurial success	1.68	N.S	N.S	* Females agree more than males
I know how to set goals and reaching these goals through my own effort	1.87	N.S	N.S	N.S

I have love and passion for work in the tourism industry	1.78	N.S	N.S	** White ethnic group agree more than Black ethnic group
Hard work is very important for entrepreneurial success	1.71	N.S	*	N.S
Reliability Statistics (being visionary and having achievement motivation), Cronbach's Alpha =.780, N of Items = 7, Valid cases = 124 (100%), Excluded cases = 0 (0%), Total = 124				

Notes: a Questionnaire were itemised along a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1, Strongly agree; 2, Agree; 3, Neutral; 4, Disagree; 5, Strongly disagree.

b Spearman's Rank correlation (2-tailed) test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ .

c Mann-Whitney U test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ .

In Table 7, results indicate that the respondents with a higher level of education agree more strongly to the entrepreneurial attributes statement that shows significant result (lack of acceptance of personal responsibility for outcomes can hinder the entrepreneur's success). The results also show that females agree more than males with these statements: 'I know where I will be or what I will achieve as a business owner in 5 years' time', and 'entrepreneurial achievement motivation is one of the key components for entrepreneurial success'. Some scholars submit that the psychological characteristics associated with entrepreneurship are needed for achievement. Previous studies such as Neneh (2011) and Chen et al. (2012) posit that the individuals who had a great need for achievement possessed five important qualities, namely, the individual responsibility; moderate risk taker; knowledge of results of decisions; novel instrumental activities and the anticipation of the future possibilities. Entrepreneurs from the White ethnic group agree more than those from the Black ethnic group with this statement: 'I have love and passion for work in the tourism industry'. One can argue that the majority of the entrepreneurs from the Black ethnic group do not have enough strong achievement motivation to excel in their businesses. Entrepreneurs who have high achievement motivation also have attitude and behaviour which support their aims (Sutanto & Eliyana, 2014). Results also show that there is a significant correlation between the respondents' agreements with the entrepreneurial attribute – "being visionary and having achievement motivation" regarding the statement: 'hard work is very important for entrepreneurial success'; and their perceived 'entrepreneur success level'. This means that entrepreneurs who perceive themselves as being successful are more likely to believe in hard work to achieve success. Being visionary and having achievement motivation can translate into action in order to have a significant impact on the business performance (Neneh, 2015).

**Table 8. Relationship between Entrepreneurs' Perceptions of "Preparedness for Risk Taking"; and Level of Education, Entrepreneur Success Level, and Entrepreneurs' Profile**

Preparedness for risk taking - Statements	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Correlation with level of education <sup>b</sup>	Correlation with entrepreneur success level <sup>b</sup>	Compared with entrepreneurs' profile <sup>c</sup>
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No matter what the odds, if I believe in something, I make it happen	1.88	N.S	N.S	N.S
I always fix things that I do not like immediately	1.64	*, negative	N.S	* age group – 40 years and above agree more
It is good to take some level of risks to succeed as a business owner	1.75	*, negative	N.S	N.S
I test my abilities by engaging myself in complex tasks	1.81	N.S	N.S	* Females agree more than males * Entrepreneurs who are 6 years or below in business agree more
I am always looking for better ways to do things	1.87	N.S	N.S	N.S
Wherever I have been, I have been a powerful force for creating change	2.08	N.S	N.S	N.S
Taking calculated risks comes with being an entrepreneur	1.89	N.S	N.S	* South Africans agree more than non-South Africans
Reliability Statistics (preparedness for risk taking), Cronbach's Alpha =.700, N of Items = 7, Valid cases = 124(100%), Excluded cases = 0 (0%), Total = 124				

Notes: a Questionnaire were itemised along a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1, Strongly agree; 2, Agree; 3, Neutral; 4, Disagree; 5, Strongly disagree.

b Spearman’s Rank correlation (2-tailed) test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ .

c Mann-Whitney U test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ .

The results in Table 8 show that the higher the level of Western education of the entrepreneurs, the more they believe in the entrepreneurial attributes of “preparedness for risk taking” which has to do with ‘fixing things that I do not like immediately’, and ‘it is good to take some level of risks to succeed as a business owner’. The results reveal that the respondents who are 40 years and above agree more, compared with those who are below 40 years old with this statement: ‘I always fix things that I do not like immediately’. Females and entrepreneurs who have been in business for 6 years or less agree more with this statement: ‘I test my abilities by engaging myself in complex tasks’. South Africans agree more than non-South Africans with this statement: ‘taking calculated risks comes with being an entrepreneur’. Two of the most important attributes for any business to grow are risk-taking and how one organizes him or herself (Omerzel, 2016). A real entrepreneur cannot put aside whatever problems she/he is facing; the entrepreneur must solve that problem (Bruwer & Smith, 2018). These findings strongly support those of Mohamed and Baqutayan (2016), and Boermans and Willebrands (2017). They posit that the risk attitude dimension is the most important entrepreneur’s attribute for success, as the risks-taking behaviour is an example of courage that must be possessed by the entrepreneurs. However, for this study there is no correlation between entrepreneur success level and attributes describing the preparedness for risk taking dimension.

**Table 9. Relationship between Entrepreneurs’ Perceptions of “Being Efficient and Effective”; and Level of Education, Entrepreneur Success Level, and Entrepreneurs’ Profile**

Being efficient and effective - Statements	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Correlation with level of education <sup>b</sup>	Correlation with entrepreneur success level <sup>b</sup>	Compared with entrepreneurs' profile <sup>c</sup>
I am good at turning resources into profitable outcomes	1.74	**, negative	N.S	** age group – 40 years and above agree more
I am very concerned if I or my employees make mistakes	1.63	N.S	N.S	* age group – 40 years and above agree more * White ethnic group agree more than Black ethnic group * Entrepreneurs who are 6 years or below in business agree more
I know how to anticipate problems in advance and deal with them before they occur	1.90	**, negative	N.S	** age group – 40 years and above agree more * Females agree more than males
I am always working hard towards delivering products or services to the customers on time	1.75	**, negative	N.S	** Females agree more than males
I am constantly seeking to improve my business operations	2.17	**, negative	N.S	** age group – 40 years and above agree more
I get myself or my employees regularly trained to do things better	1.90	N.S	N.S	** Females agree more than males
I am always making profit in my business	1.91	N.S	**	** White ethnic group agree more than Black ethnic group
Reliability Statistics (being efficient and effective), Cronbach's Alpha =.803, N of Items = 7, Valid cases = 124 (100%), Excluded cases = 0 (0%), Total = 124				

Notes: <sup>a</sup> Questionnaire were itemised along a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1, Strongly agree; 2, Agree; 3, Neutral; 4, Disagree; 5, Strongly disagree.

<sup>b</sup> Spearman's Rank correlation (2-tailed) test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*, p < 0.05; \*\*, p < 0.01.

<sup>c</sup> Mann-Whitney U test significance: N.S, no significant results; \*, p < 0.05; \*\*, p < 0.01.

In Table 9, the results show no significant differences between the level of education and other entrepreneurial attributes statements that are labelled N.S. In summary, the higher the level of Western education the entrepreneurs possess, the more they believe in being profitable, proactive, effective, and optimizing business operations. Similarly, entrepreneurs with much of the socio-demographic characteristics described before tend to be consistent with their support of the previous entrepreneurial attributes discussed, and the entrepreneurial attribute of being efficient and effective. Being efficient

and effective are valued in entrepreneurial activities, for the entrepreneurs to become successful. Actually, Antonites et al. (2007) strongly argue that efficiency and effectiveness are the factors that represent an individual's actual control over the psychological behaviour. Results also show that there is a significant correlation between the respondents' agreement to the entrepreneurial attribute – “being efficient and effective” regarding the statement: ‘I am always making profit in my business’ and ‘entrepreneur success level’. This means that entrepreneurs who perceive themselves as being successful believe that they are always making profit in their businesses and could therefore be the reason why they are successful. Based on the body of research on personality and entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs have to be efficient and effective as part of their personality traits to control their behaviour and navigate business opportunities (Singh & Rahman, 2011).

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on these findings, this study therefore concludes that the entrepreneurial attributes that *somewhat* differentiate successful entrepreneurs from struggling entrepreneurs are: business drive and enthusiasm, being efficient and effective, and being visionary and having achievement motivation. The results of this study, therefore, indicate that the socio-demographic variables such as ‘level of Western education’, ‘age’, ‘cultural group’, ‘business experience’, ‘gender’, and ‘nationality’ have significant influences on how entrepreneurs respond to acquiring entrepreneurial attributes than ‘entrepreneurs’ success level perceptions’. This is quite interesting to note as socio-demographic variables tend to explain the reasons for success or struggle among entrepreneurs (based on entrepreneurial attributes as mediating factors). These study results are particular to the study area (Mtubatuba Local Municipality) at the time the study was conducted, and cannot be generalized across regions and nations. This study has limitation as it made use of convenience sampling (a non-probability sampling method). It therefore implies that one has to be careful in interpreting or implementing the results, as the results can be statistically argued to not be representative of the study population (Mtubatuba Local Municipality). This study however is significant as it contributes to the body of knowledge regarding the explanation of the reasons for success or struggle among entrepreneurs.

Based on the findings of this research, few recommendations are offered to Mtubatuba Local Municipality decision-makers (business support offices), as well as Tourism KwaZulu-Natal (the provincial Destination Management Organization). Tourism KwaZulu-Natal and Mtubatuba Local Municipality business support officers should support tourism entrepreneurs by organizing workshops and seminars related to tourism entrepreneurship at different towns and villages of the local municipality, targeting prospective and current entrepreneurs. Equal opportunity can be granted to anyone who wants to start-up and manage a new tourism business. Workshops should be developed to meet the conditions for effective learning and developing other entrepreneurial attributes identified by this study. This will help in creating professional networks and establishing a shared understanding among prospective and existing tourism entrepreneurs. By so doing, prospective and inexperienced entrepreneurs can learn from the experienced ones.

Further research on this topic or related topics is needed in other regions of South Africa and sub-Saharan Africa to identify regional differences or similarities.



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