

Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) in Family Firms: The Case of Tourism

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Abstract

The tourism industry is dominated by small and medium-sized family businesses. Until today, tourism research hardly has investigated entrepreneurial behavior of this particular form of business. Learning from family business and entrepreneurship research, this explorative study attempts to analyze entrepreneurial behavior and performance as perceived by owner-managers of family businesses in tourism. The authors conducted narrative interviews to understand the managers' meaning of entrepreneurship and discuss the results in the light of existing entrepreneurship literature. For that purpose the concept of Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) is initialized when analyzing the data. Results indicate that family firms in tourism are peculiar and the embeddedness in the tourism destinations outlines their entrepreneurial behavior against Schumpeter's definition of growth-oriented entrepreneurship.

Keywords: family business, small tourism business, Entrepreneurial Orientation, entrepreneurial behavior, qualitative, Austria (Tyrol).