Tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship, social setting and research methodology: moving ‘into the beyond’

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Abstract
This paper provides an insight into the research issues and challenges that confronted PhD research into small hotels in Croatia, drawing on theories and literature associated with entrepreneurship, and tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship. In particular, it analyses the tensions and contradictions inherent in a literature that is largely derived from developed economies, dominated by an economics-centric bias, and positivistic methodologies. Relevance within the social, cultural and political setting is questioned and research approaches developed that have the potential to increase relevance for both advancement of respective academic fields, and practitioner and policy maker effectiveness – moving into the ‘beyond’. It is concluded that knowledge creation and production pertaining to both fields can be enhanced through multi-disciplinary perspectives that are critical of ideological stance, politics of power, social and cultural contexts. This has consequences for research methodological design which places the researcher as a central insider participant in the process alongside the social actors, drawing on personal reflexivity and interpretative powers, in a socio-economic setting.

Key Words: tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship, social setting, research methodologies
1. Introduction
This paper explores the research development journey travelled during the process of PhD research into small hotels in Croatia. The objective is to communicate progress in research approaches achieved that have the potential to contribute to the development of the academic fields of entrepreneurship and hospitality and tourism. Furthermore, outcomes which aim to have potential relevance towards influencing both practitioner and policy maker effectiveness are communicated. One finding of particular significance was that of the impact of the social and cultural setting of the key actors, that is to say, the hotel owner/managers, and the resultant implications for research methodological design. In addition, was the realisation of the researcher that she required to transform from a ‘dispassionate scientist’ to an ‘insider participant’. Both these dimensions are particularly significant within the context of the research which is Croatia; a former socialist country that has faced severe political, economic and social turmoil and transitions, including war. To be more specific, the research was undertaken within the Dalmatia region of Croatia which contains a significant number of small hotels. Furthermore, this region has explicitly included tourism in its development plan. All three of these dimensions are investigated in relation to entrepreneurial behaviour.

The point of departure for the literature review was entrepreneurship, moving into tourism and then applied to the hospitality industry. Both entrepreneurship and tourism literature has largely been informed by economic and business research and analysis. However, it has been proposed by Morrison (2006) that tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship is dominated by entrepreneurs who wish to derive a certain social lifestyle, and economic motives play a secondary role. Hence, it is proposed that researching this phenomenon through economic theory alone may be inadequate. For example, it would fail to reveal understanding and knowledge pertaining to the primary motivations and values of such entrepreneurs. Moreover, entrepreneurial activity is conditioned by a vast number of factors, including the structure and ideology of the society within which an entrepreneur acts, specific characteristics of an industry sector, and the personal characteristics of each individual operating a business. Therefore, account also needs to be taken of the social context in which the entrepreneurs are embedded, and interact. Thus, the four aims of this paper are to:

- expose the uni-dimensional understanding achieved through dependence on ideological, disciplinary and methodological bias/power;
- critically analyse the impact of social setting and cultural context on entrepreneurial behaviour and attitude;
- take account of the implications of points 1 and 2 for research methodology and design; and
- reflect how the adopted philosophical and methodological approach contribute to the knowledge

It can be summarised that the methodological aim is to create emancipatory knowledge (Habermas, 1978). In order to achieve this goal, conventional Western wisdom is challenged and the voices of those who are marginalised in previous studies are introduced, along with the context of former socialist economies, the voice of the researcher through reflexive practice and by giving an agency to those being researched (small hotel proprietors). The outlined research aims require entrepreneurship and tourism not to be seen as central to, but as a part of a wider geopolitical and socio-cultural context (Franklin, 2007). Such a perception gives an emancipatory
voice (Tribe, 2004) to entrepreneurship and tourism research and represents a significant shift from more traditional, economic and positivistic approaches.

2. Entrepreneurship
Since Cantillon (1755) used the term entrepreneur a vast number of scholars through the history of economic thought endeavoured to define entrepreneurs. For example, they were seen variously as economic agents, decision makers, risk-takers, coordinators of scarce resources, innovators, and agents of economic change (Cantillon, 1755; Say, 1855; Schumpeter 1934). However, they failed to arrive at one universally accepted definition. Undeterred by such academic activity, entrepreneurship succeeded to adapt to a multitude of social settings, historical epochs, and different game rules present at a certain point of time (Hébert and Link, 1988). Over years, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs became a subject of interest for other social sciences, such as, anthropology, geography, psychology, sociology, law. Each observes the phenomenon through their particular disciplinary lens. This research practice created multiple theories and ways of understanding and knowing. Nevertheless, there continues to be a lack of a unifying framework (Sougata and Ramachandran, 1995).

However, while the developed Western economies recognised the role of entrepreneurial activity in stimulating innovation and change, employment and new venture creation, growth in economic activity and technical progress (Baumol, 1986; Kirby, 2002; Schumpeter, 1934) this was not the case throughout the world. For example, former socialist economies had very different development paths. In their ideology, supported by the dictatorship of the ruling communist party, socialist societies aimed to eliminate all major institutions and conditions for entrepreneurial development. These included private ownership, market competition, and freedom of individuals to establish private enterprises (Kovac, 1990). Furthermore, while similarities can be identified, each of the former socialist countries, depending on its own particular historical, political and economic attributes, developed its own version of a socialist economy. However, a common feature of all was the position of the entrepreneur, seen as a deviant individual, infused with Western ideology, and a threat to a communist society (Bateman, 1997; Franicevic, 1990).

Although little research has been undertaken regarding specific types and definition of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs in transition economies, Dallago and Scase have made a significant theoretical contribution. Within a Soviet type of economic system, Dallago (1997) identified two types of entrepreneurs: economic entrepreneurs; and systemic entrepreneurs. The former ‘transforms the structure and working of the system in a novel, non-routine way so as to render it better able to solve certain problems’ (ibid., p.104). The latter, works within the existing system to further specific interests. Within the economic entrepreneur type Dallago identifies four sub-types: elite member (former socialist elite); domestic; returning migrants; and foreign entrepreneurs. Research carried out by Scase (2000) within post-socialist countries of Central Europe and Russia revealed the existence of two distinct processes, which correspond to Dallago’s findings: entrepreneurship and proprietorship, identifying legitimate and illegitimate entrepreneurs often connected with ‘mafia’ members. Thus, in comparing and contrasting Western conceptions of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs with examples from former socialist economies acceptance of homogenised world views require to be challenged. Again, this emphasises the importance of taking into account social setting and cultural contexts. Indeed, it is pointed out that even within socialist economies there are variations in attitudes and behaviours
dependent of the historical, political and social setting (Bateman, 1997).

As understanding of what constitutes entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship extended to into a wider range of the social sciences this contributed to more multi-disciplinary perspectives and methodologies. According to Tribe (2006) this is beneficial as a dominance of one discipline can not only determine what will be excluded or included in research but it can literally discipline both perception and knowledge creation. Foucault (1974) adds the close relationship and interconnection between knowledge and power; if knowledge of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs is left in the hands of the economists then it is logical to suggest that research will serve an economic interest to the exclusion of other areas. Ogbor (2000) contributes an additional viewpoint suggesting that ideology underpinning entrepreneurship research is dominated by assumptions derived from male oriented cultural ideologies, highly discriminatory and gender biased, justified in terms of its appeal to a free market system. The research challenge, therefore, is to be cognisant of the danger of partial and uncritical knowledge creation through disciplinary and/or methodological, ideological bias or power. Furthermore, the fact that the subject areas continue to evade unifying definitions and/or conceptual frameworks is perhaps testimony to the complex and irreverent nature of the phenomena. Therein lies a further research challenge that explicitly requires the incorporation of the dynamics of social setting, and geographic and cultural context.

3. Tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship

The dominance of small, owner-managed tourism and hospitality businesses in many countries (Morrison et al., 1999; Tinsley and Lynch, 2007; Thomas, 2000, 2004; Shaw, 2004; Shaw and Williams, 2002) has ‘led to recognition of the significance of entrepreneurship’ (Shaw and Williams, 2004, p.99). Despite this, it is argued that the field has not received the level of attention it deserves (Ateljevic and Page, 2009; Ioannides and Petersen, 2003; Li, 2008). Furthermore, it has been dominated by that derived from developed economies, with a paucity of studies focusing on lesser developed or transition economies (Morrison et al., 2008). Some points of similarity across economies have been identified, for example, relative ease of entry into the sector, and financial and human resource poverty (Morrison and Teixeira 2004; Shaw and Williams, 1998), but the majority of conventional wisdom remains indoctrinated by Western developed economies ideology (Skokic, 2010).

Exploring tourism entrepreneurship in Cornwall, Williams et al., (1989) observed the concept of lifestyle entrepreneur which was to become a permanent figure in further studies conducted within the tourism and hospitality industry (for example, Ateljevic and Doorne, 2000; Di Domenico, 2003; Getz and Petersen, 2005; Hall and Rusher, 2004; Ioannides and Petersen, 2003; Lashley and Rowson, 2010; Morrison et al., 2001; Mottiar, 2007; Shaw and Williams, 2004). These studies identified a number of factors associated with the phenomenon including:

- entry is often related to a desire to retain some control over working lives, or having a clearer line between work and private leisure time (Di Domenico, 2003);
- desire to ‘be my own boss’ (Lashley and Rowson, 2010);
- move to an agreeable natural environment (Shaw and Williams, 1998);
- exit a stressful urban corporate employment (Morrison et al., 2001); and
- keep the family together (Hall and Rusher, 2004).

Thus, from the foregoing it is insinuated that certain lifestyle motivations may be prioritised over...
a focus on those of an orthodox business growth and profit maximisation nature. This is emphasised by Morrison et al., (2001, p.17) summarising that lifestyle motivated tourism and hospitality entrepreneurs are those who are likely to be concerned with:

‘survival and securing sufficient income to ensure that the business provides them and their family with a satisfactory level of funds to sustain enjoyment in their chosen lifestyle…[The] lifestyle proprietor defines an individual who has a multiple set of goals associated with their businesses. Profitability in their business operations will be only one of these goals.’

In addition, Shaw and Williams (1998) draw attention to two different models of entrepreneurship among small tourism and hospitality businesses, which are closely connected with the lifestyle entrepreneurship. The first comprises those owners who have moved into a tourism destination for non-economic reasons, usually combined with a lack of business experience. This group they categorise as ‘non-entrepreneurs’. The second consists of ‘constrained entrepreneurs’. These are mostly young people with a greater level of economic motives drawn from more professional but mainly non-business background. They are constrained by a lack of business skills and capital. Getz and Carlsen (2000) add two motivational types of entrepreneurs, ‘family first’, being predominant and ‘business first’. Furthermore, they noted that half of the entrepreneurs within their study did not have formal business goals.

In contrast, Buick et al., (2000), who examined small hotel proprietors in Scotland, revealed that 52% saw their business as being at a growth stage, and 59% had plans for expansion. Glancey and Pettigrew (1997, p.23) studied the small hotel sector in a Scottish town and found that they ‘generally displayed characteristics and motivations associated with ‘opportunistic entrepreneurs’, and the majority had some other business interests which could be termed as ‘portfolio entrepreneurs’. They assert that they ‘display tendencies associated with business oriented entrepreneurs in other sectors of the economy’ (ibid., p.24). Although these two studies were small in size, and the research methods employed (a mail and a postal survey) did not allow a further elaboration of the responses, they were in stark contrast to similar studies which linked the lifestyle-oriented small business proprietors to a lack of growth orientation (Burns and Dewhurst, 1996; Reid et al., 1999).

However, a number of these studies conducted in the context of developed economies found it difficult to explain the motivations of small businesses (Dewhurst and Horobin, 1998). Morrison (2006) proposes one model that may assist. It is that of a continuum moving from strong profit and growth orientation at one end through to a tenacious focus on the social orientation of ‘business’. This has some utility as it recognises that there exist under the umbrella of the tourism and hospitality industries multiple manifestations of ‘entrepreneur’ and their individualised motivations. While it is tempting to accept Morrison’s proposition, it does not address or explain the source of different world views within literature, and limited understanding within the context of transition economies.

One explanation returns to the subject of what disciplinary lens and methodological approaches are employed. For example, Tribe (1997; 2004) emphasises that tourism studies crystallise around the field of tourism business studies, dominated by positivist approaches. Understandably, they fail to observe tourism in its wider social and cultural settings, focusing on the economics of business, and ‘only offering a partial reading of the world’ (Tribe, 2007, p.280). This narrow and
constraining view is reflected by Franklin and Crang (2001, p.6) who state that as a consequence understanding ‘has become fetishized as a thing, a product, a behaviour – but in particular an economic thing’. Furthermore, Coles et al. (2005, p.31) argue that if studies of tourism are to reflect contemporary conditions, ‘they should move away from traditional inner- and multi-disciplinary approaches to more flexible forms of knowledge production’. However, Lashley et al., (2007, p.186) considered that hospitality research has advanced ‘from being a topic simply for thematic investigation directly or indirectly for the study to management to one that also locates the study of hospitality as a significant means of exploring and understanding society.’

Within Central and Eastern Europe there exists a respectable number of case studies of tourism development (Bacharov, 1997; Balaz, 1995; Hall, 1995; Johnson, 1997) but the role of tourism in former Yugoslavian countries remains relatively unexplored. The situation within Croatia is slightly better, with most of the studies focused on recovery from the war or the influence of tourism on the national economy (such as Cavlek, 1988; Petric, 1998; Vukonic, 1997). While tourism represents a key pillar of the national economy, and a significant focus is given to entrepreneurial activity, to date, tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship has not been explored within the Croatian context. An exception is the work of Ateljevic and Doorne (2003) who investigated it within the Village of Murter, in the context of socio-cultural issues in the post-Communist period. A contribution from Hitrec (2000) only offered a summary of quantitative data illustrating the importance of small tourism and hospitality enterprises for the European Union.

A reason for this dearth of research into tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship, and why what does exist is highly quantitative in perspective, can be found within the Croatian academic community. Traditionally, it explores the phenomenon through purely economic lenses, strictly relying on economic perspectives. A quote from Vukovic (1999, p.151) provides an insightful illustration. He defines entrepreneurial activity within the hospitality industry as: ‘creative and innovative business activity where entrepreneurs, in the free market conditions, combine resources, especially financial capital and its investment into numerous entrepreneurial ventures with the aim to obtain the biggest as possible profit.’ Within Croatian literature, other motives apart from profit achievement for starting a business are rarely considered. Furthermore, it can be proposed that the tourism academic community in Croatia reflects its’ broader society, culture, traditions, economic and political systems. Four points may explain this:

• coming through a period of communism, war and economic transition, tourism emerged as a central contributor to the national economy, generating significant foreign currency, and results in revenues that cover approximately 55% of the trade balance deficit (HGK, 2009);
• tourism and hospitality studies as academic fields are physically and organisationally located in Business and Management faculties, with curricula informed through economic methodologies, theories and concepts;
• academic communities tend to operate in a closed culture, influenced by authorities from the past who rejected any kind of changes in tourism and hospitality research, resulting in the shaping and conditioning of the next generations of researchers’ academic practice; and
• funding bodies strongly influence the nature of research practice placing pressure to produce technically useful and policy oriented research.
Therefore, the existence of different world views can, in part, be explained by: variety of disciplinary lenses and research methodologies employed; domination of literature and thought derived from Western developed economies and cultures; different academic communities’ embeddedness in a particular discipline and tradition; and influences of the host society, culture, economic and political systems. Thus, relative to knowledge and understanding of tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship, care should be taken to scrutinise the origins, factors that influence and shape, and role of the politics of power. This may serve to explain and provide insight into why world views are various, and sometimes only partial in nature. This has been clearly illustrated within the context of the Croatian academic community which tends to be closed to the economic ‘unorthodoxy’ of the likes of lifestyle motivated tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship.

4. Croatian Context
It has been argued that social setting presents an important factor in shaping and making entrepreneurs and also determines the extent to which a society accepts entrepreneurial behaviour to be desirable (Morrison, 1998). Furthermore, the cultural context may facilitate or hinder entrepreneurial activity, as was the case with former socialist countries in general. The context of Croatia is now presented to illustrate this point. Its historical framework can be divided into three stages (Fig. 1).

From Figure 1, it can be seen that entrepreneurial activity was significantly constrained by a socialist regime and transition period. During the period of socialism, entrepreneurs were portrayed as individuals incapable of securing a public sector job. The transition period was marked by an inappropriate privatisation policy which enabled fraudulent practices by privileged individuals termed as ‘entrepreneurs’, consequently resulting in corrupt criminal image associations. This was especially reflected in the hospitality sector and manufacturing industry where government enabled such entrepreneurs, to buy enterprises far below market price, subject to an obligation to invest money and increase employment. In practice, the opposite occurred. Once in their ownership entrepreneurs would strip out equipment, sack employees, and abandoned the premises. However, currently entrepreneurship is becoming adopted as a philosophy of progress, and the entrepreneurs who create new values and jobs are seen as capable individuals who contribute to building a welfare state and economy (GEM, 2002). Thus, the entrepreneurial culture in Croatia is changing, becoming more of a stimulant for entrepreneurial activity. That said, there are still difficulties, and the number that become entrepreneurs due to business opportunity is much lower than those who become entrepreneurs out of necessity (GEM, 2006). In terms of global comparison, rates of necessity entrepreneurship in developing countries can be five times higher than observed in developed ones (Reynolds et al., 2003). Baker et al. (2005, p.497) stressed that these differences ‘point to the importance of national context in shaping the opportunity set and consequently the opportunity cost evaluations of potential entrepreneurs’. With respect to Croatia, the national economic-political system generated many economic, social, psychological and general barriers to entrepreneurial venture, identified by Bartlett and Bateman (1997) and Glas (1998) as follows:
- collective decision-making process which hindered individual initiatives;
- lack of private savings and limited accessibility to credit finance at commercial banks to invest in start-up businesses;
• dominant ideology of social egalitarianism;
• mistrust towards people not members of the ruling party;
• romantic nationalist feeling resulted in many barriers to foreign investments;
• corruption and profiteering as substitutes for entrepreneurship; and
• educational system which did not promote competencies generally associated with entrepreneurship, such as, creativity and critical observation.

This provides a vivid example of social and cultural setting’s influence in shaping and making entrepreneurs. Previously constrained entrepreneurship, during times of the socialist regime and economic transition, emerges to manifest itself as corrupt and unethical, in part, supported by the misconstrued privatisation policies of the day. Hence, it attracts a negative image within the host society. Encumbered by a legacy of cultural conditioning associated with the previous regime, entrepreneurship is evolving to be associated with more positive language, such as, ‘progress’ and contributing ‘new values’. This indicates a gradual change in the culture that is more stimulating for entrepreneurship. However, there still remain many challenges in fostering this movement and for individuals not to be deterred by actual and perceived opportunity costs associated with starting and developing enterprises.

5. Research Design

Drawing on critical analysis of the foregoing, focus turns to how key issues arising therein impacted on the research design adopted in the PhD study of small hotels in Croatia. Specifically, the focus is on the research methodology which has to encompass the aforementioned challenges and incorporate context specific variables.

5.1 Research Methodology

Articulation of paradigmatic position, which is generally avoided in entrepreneurship and hospitality research (Blackburn and Kovalainen, 2009; Jones, 1989) is crucial, as it shaped the overall research project. Therefore, it is important to label the philosophical and methodological position and make clear the researchers’ assumption about the world which determined the adopted methodologies and methods. Firstly, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs are seen as subjectively and inter-subjectively understood by human beings and they exist through the interpretations made by individuals and/or groups in different cultures and societies (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). Thus, ontology is relativist meaning that reality is only knowable through socially constructed meanings. There is no single shared social reality, only various representations of the world (Snape and Spencer, 2003). The epistemological stance taken by this research can be defined as being interpretive. As entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship are considered to be socially constructed (ontology) it is meaningful to create knowledge of the interaction process in which concepts are produced and reproduced. Thus, knowledge is seen as an inter-subjective construct rather then objective and true. In order to create emancipatory knowledge (Habermas, 1978), critical theory reasoning is adopted when analysing data.

Therefore, it was essential to incorporate more flexible forms of inquiry, in order to encompass a wide range of context specific variables, and explicitly positioning the researcher therein. Therefore, it is argued that entrepreneurship represents a dynamic and socially constructed phenomenon which can not be reduced to its simplest elements, and causal relationships, with fundamental laws applicable to different settings. Commencement of this form of research
orientation was to adopt a research methodology which aimed to achieve:

- disclosure of complex relationships which exist between small hotel owners and their external and internal environment;
- enable explicit incorporation of the analysed social setting and the nature of the investigated phenomenon into the research design; and
- contribute to the knowledge base that gives a deeper insight into the observable phenomena, and not simply recycle existing and saturated business and management theories.

Furthermore, tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship in Croatia was largely un-researched. This meant that there were few culturally-specific theoretical grounds on which to base this research. This situation requires a flexible design which is capable of adopting new and unexpected findings (Bryman, 2004), emerging from the real setting of the actors, to reveal understanding of complexities therein. Qualitative methodology, embedding a process of communication between researcher and the researched, was considered to be most appropriate (Flick, 1998). It involves researching people in their natural settings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and seeks to understand tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship in a holistic setting. This represents a significant shift from the more traditional, economic and positivistic approaches, discussed earlier in the paper.

The method employed was in the form of semi-structured interviews which is flexible, and has the potential to provide rich, detailed answers. Furthermore, ‘rambling’ is encouraged that gives insight into what an interviewee sees as important, process is influenced by an interviewee and it is possible that the interviewee may be interviewed on more than one and several occasions (Bryman, 2004). The Splitsko-dalmatinska county was selected as a geographical setting for the following reasons: it has a long established tourist tradition; and in recent years entrepreneurial activity within the tourism and hospitality industry has growing rapidly enabling the researcher to find ‘the best representative’ population. Furthermore, the researcher originates from the area giving possibility for an ‘insider’ perspective through access to the research population, incorporating local knowledge and values to reveal underlying sociological, cultural and political complexities. This orientation is supported by the nature of qualitative research which seeks the intensive study of a small group or setting (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). As qualitative researchers are not obsessed with generalizability, but with ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) of the observable setting, this provides a further justification for employed methodology.

The adopted interpretive stance rejects the paradigm of value free research and researchers, and those being researched can be viewed as partners in knowledge production. Allowing the researched to have an agency in the process can challenge our assumptions, academic mindsets and all other biases brought as researchers (Harris et al., 2007; Phillimore and Goodson, 2004). The researcher is not only an analytical tool and ‘dispassionate scientist’, but the value of insiderness is recognised as crucial. However, this position can be criticised as too subjective and may even mask researchers’ ability to judge when analysing data (Bryman, 2004; Patton, 2002). To overcome this problem, qualitative researchers propose ‘empathic neutrality’ (Patton, 2002; Snape and Spencer, 2003). This position takes a middle position between objectivity and subjectivity, recognising that ‘research can not be value free but…researchers should make their assumptions transparent’ (Snape and Spencer, 2003, p.13). During the interview process empathy developed naturally, and enabled the researcher to understand respondents’ positions, feelings, and experiences. For instance, the researched had their own perception of the researcher that
crystallised around two groups of respondents. The first, which was in the majority, were willing to talk and help immediately and it seemed to the researcher that they were happy having this opportunity. When talking on the phone with the second group of the respondents and trying to arrange an interview, the researcher sensed in their voices some resistance and suspicion although they were willing to interact. This was even more emphasized when arriving at the interviews where respondents were surprised and even shocked with the researcher’s age, perceiving her as ‘too young’. Starting an interview they were firstly very brief with answers probably wanting to finish the interview as soon as possible. But after a couple of minutes they become more relaxed and started to open up and also provided the researcher with the possible explanation of their initial attitude. Namely, respondents felt marginalised from the environment and authorities and thought that the researcher was going to waste their time by asking questions which are not relevant to them. This is illustrated by the following dialogue between the interviewer (I) and the respondent (R):

R: Can I ask you, if you do not mind, how old are you?
I: 27
R: You see, you are 27 and you are asking questions that NO ONE asks us! And we are, as they say, the most important sector in the economy! This is the problem, the policy does not ask us, no one asks us! (H 9[1], 342-346)

Even more importantly, an insider perspective also helped the researcher to gain deeper trust, because respondents perceived the researcher as someone who comes from the area and is familiar with the local nature of tourism development, political games and the mentality which very slowly accepts change, often seen as a barrier to further development. For example:

R: I was engaged in the development of the PURA (The Plan of Total Development) in which your Faculty works. Without that document our municipality can not do anything, can not apply for any funds...and when we had a meeting a couple of months ago, Professor PF from your Faculty was presenting the document and said, in front of the people from our island that our municipality is making a developmental shift, from industrial to the service sector. That is the same as you would dare to say in Rome that the Pope won’t be a pope, that would be, that would be a disaster. But you know what I am talking about, you are originating from Dalmatia, you know our people. (H 11, 428-435)

However, the main question which arises in this approach is by what criteria should the emerging data and the data generating process be judged? Being cognizant of various influences in knowledge creation and taking critical and emancipatory stance, the researchers ‘do not necessarily trust the accounts of the researched to give a true reading of the world’ (Tribe, 2008, p.248), what also makes crucial distinction between interpretivism and critical theory. The researchers firstly used key informants technique through the study (2007-2009). The key informants included two university professors from Croatia and policy representatives involving: the President of the Association of Small Hotels; the President and the Vice-president of Croatian Bank for Reconstruction and Development; Vice-President for the Ministry of Tourism; and the officials from the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship. This technique helped the researchers to contrast the proprietors’ accounts but also to direct the research, give it context and provide rich background knowledge. Secondly, through the journey the researcher acknowledges the importance of reflexivity in the process and exposed her position under four dominant themes: the content of entrepreneurship and tourism and hospitality studies; the researcher’s host academic community; the notion of the self in the research; and the researcher’s intersectionality with the researched (Skokic, 2010). The role of the reflexivity is twofold. Firstly, it brings the researcher’s voice into the process of theory building. The researcher’s active participation shapes the progress of the research and the knowledge produced through the analysis (King, 2004) where interpretive
research by its orientation places both the researcher and the respondent at the centre of the process. On the other hand, explicit examination of the researcher’s embodied characteristics enabled her to understand how her social background might influence and shape her beliefs, the way how she attributes meanings and, at the end, how she interprets interactions with the research informants (Myerhoff and Ruby, 1982). It can be argued that personal reflection also increases trustworthiness of the research (Causevic and Lynch, forthcoming). The major trustworthiness criteria, that of credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability (Guba and Lincoln, 1994) were applied in the study to evaluate the overall data generating process.

To conclude, by this approach the knowledge was co-created between all key participants in the process: the small hotel proprietors, key informants and the researcher. Furthermore, the role of social and cultural setting has been shown as integral to research into tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship. Thus, it follows that it requires to be incorporated into research design to reflect, for example, history, ideologies, dynamics, and politics that influence and condition the social actors. The aim is to go beyond purely economic premises and incorporate social structure and cultural context (Ateljevic and Doorne, 2003). This moves away from tourism theories’ centrism which has tourism as its centre, irrespective of social, cultural, political and geopolitical setting (Franklin, 2007). The aim is to uncover the particular of the dynamic context and not to generalise commonality. Thus, in exploring small hotel owners in a former socialist country, this paper strongly argues that understanding of entrepreneurship can be enhanced through contextualisation of theories within a specific social, cultural and industry sector (Aldrich 2000; Ateljevic and Doorne, 2003; Cole, 2007; Morrison, 1998, 2006; Welter and Lasch, 2008). It also challenges the dominant research practice in entrepreneurship studies, where the changes are of much slower intensity than in tourism and hospitality. For example, Ogbor (2000, p.624) described research practice in entrepreneurship as: ‘researches do not engage in a conscious attempt to go beyond taken for granted assumptions, ideas and norms of the society…[and] have a tendency for subscribing to what appears as the evident truth through the concepts and the language used in entrepreneurial research.’ This research methodology outlined in this section clearly illustrates an attempt to move into the ‘beyond’.

6. Conclusions

Table 1 summarises the research methodology issues and challenges explored and explained in this paper. It has been argued that knowledge creation and production pertaining to both entrepreneurship and tourism and hospitality can be enhanced through multi-disciplinary perspectives that are critical of ideological bias, politics of power, social and cultural contexts. This represents a critical shift in focus which is important in that it can explain and capture different world views and ‘truths’, and challenge embedded conventional wisdom focused on the same phenomena. This has consequences for research methodological design which places the researcher as a central insider participant in the process alongside the social actors, drawing on observation, personal reflexivity and interpretative powers, in a socio-economic setting. Furthermore, it is proposed that researchers should consider questioning more deeply:

- how knowledge is constructed in the particular discipline;
- who has a power in knowledge creation;
- what research orientation and methodologies predominate and to seek for possible explanations;
- be aware of different world views on the same phenomena and resist in adopting homogenised
similarities;
• how characteristics of the observable setting, that of social, political and economical interplay and impact on entrepreneurial behaviours; and
• which different research approaches, flexible designs and the recognition of the self in the research could be usefully incorporated.

In this way, research development has the potential to progress, moving into the ‘beyond’, in a manner that can advance tourism and hospitality management theory and knowledge. Furthermore, through an enhanced critical stance worthwhile knowledge that reveals the differences, rather than the similarities, can be transferred to improve practitioner and policy-maker understanding and effectiveness. For example, by delineating literature associated with developed economies from those in transition a dichotomy provides valuable insight in terms of discourses. Within the former, associated language is infused with associations of choice, opportunity, and positive connotations of entrepreneurship. With respect to the latter, connotations are much more negative and pejorative including the likes of necessity, illegitimate, corruption, criminal moving slowly into current parlance that associates entrepreneurship with a philosophy of progress, creation of new values, jobs and employment. Thus, it is concluded that entrepreneurship represents primarily a human process that is shaped within the host social setting and cultural milieu of the social actors. Only by penetrating the worlds of the entrepreneurs – moving ‘into the beyond’ - can they be given voice and more accurate and illuminating knowledge be created.

(Insert Table 1 here)
References


GEM (2006) Sto cini Hrvatsku poduzetnickom zemljom? Zagreb: CEPOR.


Table 1: Research Methodology Issues and Challenges

| Literature: recognise the danger of partial and uncritical knowledge creation that is informed through uni-disciplinarity and/or ideological bias. |
| Knowledge production: understand the politics of power that influence groups in society in terms of what knowledge is produced and what is not. |
| World views: scrutinise literature to understand the origins in terms of social setting to allow for taking account of various world views regarding the same phenomenon. |
| Conventional wisdom: be critical and questioning of, for example, acceptance of the dominance of lifestyle entrepreneurship in tourism. |
| Research design: explore other than traditional approaches, seeking more flexible and open forms, for example, insider’s perspective and the explicit positioning of the researcher within the research process. |
| Social setting: explicitly incorporate social setting into research design to reflect history, ideologies, dynamics etc. that influence and condition social actors. |
[1] Interviews in the main study are referred by the labels H 1 through H 33, where H stands for a hotel.