In search of Creative Entrepreneurship: a bibliometric analysis of the period 1998-2016

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Abstract:

1. Introduction

In the very recent debate with regard to new emerging trajectories within the Creative Economy Research, the term entrepreneurship has been introduced by a growing number of scholars as a new possible sub-field of analysis. During the last years the (re)-emergence of an entrepreneurial focus has arisen both in academic researches and political agendas, together with the great attention devoted to Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs), has spread globally, stimulating the interest for these two dimensions characterized by fuzzy and highly porous borders. Recently, some scholars have started to debate a new theme, called “Creative Entrepreneurship”, a very intriguing topic that seems posing new perspectives both in the field of creative economy and entrepreneurship research.

A seminal contribution towards the definition of Creative Entrepreneurship is given by Swedberg (2006) that, with his paper “The cultural entrepreneur and the creative industries: beginning in Vienna”, evidences the role played by some classical thinkers (such as Schumpeter, Weber, Durkheim) and provides a first definition of “cultural entrepreneurship” as “the carrying out of a novel combination that results in something new and appreciated in the cultural sphere” (Swedberg, 2006: 260). Even if the idea of cultural entrepreneurship has already been used in relation to “cultural capitalists” in the 80s (Di Maggio, 1982), it is from the 2000s that the argument has developed. Klamer (2011) underlines the necessity to distinguish the cultural entrepreneur from the cultural manager and seller and Scott (2012) depicts the traits of this “special” kind of
entrepreneur, as a tastemaker and herald of symbolic capital forms. Another declination of Creative Entrepreneurship has been found in “art entrepreneur” (White, 2017), where the profile of art entrepreneur has been defined as a figure that mediates two forces: the business necessity and the artistic goals (Aggestam, 2007). Creative Entrepreneurship has been defined also as a social process (Scott, 2006), able to catalyse resources (Markusen, 2013) and representing the human capital externalities (Florida, 2003) within an urban context. There is room also for theory of geography of innovation, which, even if not considered by many studies on the field, seems to have promising opportunity of development. Within this framework, a possible application seems to be the theory of knowledge spillover (Acs and Audretsch, 2005) and the introduction of high-tech entrepreneurship (Van Roy and Nepelski, 2017).

The present work develops in the direction of showing if the Creative Entrepreneurship topic presents the features to be analysed as an autonomous stream of research and if its burden in the Creative Economy Research is relevant. To carry out the investigation, firstly it is carried out a qualitative analysis of the contributions that explicitly considers and try to define what is Creative Entrepreneurship. Then, searching for empirical evidence of the trends in the literature, a bibliometric analysis is executed. Finally, the results obtained are critically discussed in order to evidence the limitations of the study and the main results of the research.

2. Research design: Methodology and data collection

The methodology used in this research is a bibliometric analysis, a tool that recently is gaining more and more popularity among researchers. The reason for employing it in this work seeds in the explorative attempt to provide some insights on the new theme of Creative Entrepreneurship, in terms of number of publications and citations over time, most publishing journals and finally most cited authors. Some researchers have already performed bibliometric analyses, matching the two concept of creativity and entrepreneurship, as Hausmann and Heinze (2016) with Entrepreneurship in Cultural and Creative Industries and Chang and Wyszomirski (2015) with Arts Entrepreneurship. The present work aims not only to include the restricted set of papers that mention specifically the idea of Creative Entrepreneurship, but also to consider the possible origins of the concept and how it is rooted in various streams of research.

To try to answer this point, a query on ISI Web of Science (WoS)\(^1\) has been built using some keywords (e.g. creative entrepreneur) and combination of keywords (e.g. creative industries and entrepreneurship) in order to define a sort of map containing the articles relative to the theme of Creative Entrepreneurship in the period 1998-2016.

The choice of the ISI Web of Science database is due to the extensive presence of most important scientific journals with impact factor (Lazzeretti et al., 2014) and the period time selection (1998-2016) is due to the official introduction in the academic debate of the concept of Cultural and Creative Industries (DCMS, 1998). The formation of a research field in Entrepreneurship comes back to 1981 where the first conference on

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\(^1\) ISI WoS is a database, which allows for searching specialised papers within academic or scientific discipline.
entrepreneurship research was held by Babson college (BCERC) (Sternberg and Krauss, 2014), therefore 1998 has been assumed as the first year where both concepts are on the scene simultaneously.

The selection of the keywords and combinations of keywords was based on the previous insights coming from the creative economy literature review conducted by Lazzeretti et al. (2017) and took the cue from the analyses previously mentioned (Chang and Wyszomirski, 2015; Hausmann and Heinze, 2016). The samples so constructed was generated, keeping separated each keywords and combination of keywords, to consider eventually the importance of each of them. Subsequently they were matched in a single database to assess the general trend. After the downloading procedure, a detailed review of each title and abstract was executed to assess the eventual relationship of each contribution with the Creative Entrepreneurship topic (unrelated contributions and proceedings papers have been excluded).

3. Preliminary results

Considering the evolution of Creative Entrepreneurship in the period 1998-2016, it seems evident how the interest around the topic has increased noteworthy in terms of publications and citations. Creative Entrepreneurship has grown as an “hot topic” especially in the last 5 years within the academic debate, but the development trajectories are nevertheless not so delineated.

Looking at the publishing side, the percentage of contributions on the total is spread very equally among journals, underlining how Creative Entrepreneurship theme is faced by diverse point of views. The presence of journals that deal with different matters such as “CITIES”, “JOURNAL OF ARTS MANAGEMENT”, “INTERNATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS JOURNAL”, “SMALL BUSINESS ECONOMICS”, “URBAN STUDIES, “EUROPEAN PLANNING STUDIES”, “JOURNAL OF BUSINESS RESEARCH” “MANAGEMENT DECISION”, “CITIES” confirms the multidisciplinary feature of the topic. However, beyond the muddle around Creative entrepreneurship, the fragmentation of the theme among different disciplines could also stimulate interesting pattern of development.

Shifting the analysis to a “keywords level”, a gathering process has occurred according to their inclination, in order to show how the interest on Creative Entrepreneurship have evolved over time considering different sub-themes. An initial prevalence of the “cultural side” have been found until the first decade of 2000s, while the “creative side” sees a marked taking-off starting from the second decade of 2000s.

We identify the academic scholars most cited that propagate through their publications a topic within the scientific community. Gill and Pratt (2008) and Lee, Florida and Acs (2004) investigate respectively the theme of precariousness of cultural work and the regional determinants of new firm formation within the creative sector. Other important works among the most cited analyse the relationship between entrepreneurship, creative sector and geography (Scott, 2006), the importance of creative class in regional development (Boschma and Fritsch, 2009), entrepreneurship and tourism, (Russell and Faulkner, 2004) and entrepreneurship in the network system (Nijkamp, 2003).
However, it is important to consider two indications that stemmed from the analysis. The papers ranked here in top-quoted authors were mostly published before 2010. In addition, only few articles use the term “entrepreneurship” in the title, stating that Creative Entrepreneurship is an underdeveloped academic trend that currently seems to become popular. Lastly, the analysis of the database also revealed the presence of interesting sub-themes of the Creative Entrepreneurship topic. The concept of “entrepreneurial city” (Zimmerman, 2008), the role of education in Creative Entrepreneurship (Beckman, 2007), ethnic entrepreneurship (Smallbone et al., 2010) and “women entrepreneurship” (McRobbie, 2013) have been associated with the Creative Entrepreneurship theme.

4. Limitations and discussion

Starting from the technical problems, we have faced some issues directly linked to the nature itself of bibliometric analysis. Some articles on Creative Entrepreneurship even if published in journal with impact factors, recorded in the ISI database, are not included in our sample, a very important point given the newness and fuzziness of the topic. The latter features make harder to find empirical evidences within the most cited literature, where the unique use of ISI Web of Science could neglect the influence of some papers (a matching with the SCOPUS database could indeed have a certain pertinence).

Beyond technical issues, preliminary results show that some authors that define Creative Entrepreneurship (considered in the literature review) are not present in the database used for the bibliometric analysis. This can be due to the newness of the theme and to the lack of some keywords and combination of keywords, useful to integrate the database.

The necessity of integrating a qualitative part with a quantitative one is even more valid in this case, where an emergent field of analysis as Creative Entrepreneurship is taking its shape. Neglecting the first qualitative part could overshadow the signals of this nascent theme, but at the same time its partial presence on the main literature channels points out that the theme is still in a developmental phase.

However, given the fragmentation of the discipline some uncertainties emerge concerning the definition of Creative Entrepreneurship. If the creativity is a natural characteristic of entrepreneurial activities, limited to the approach that we followed, we challenged the appropriateness of Creative Entrepreneurship. Results in terms of publications subjects and top cited authors suggest to describe the theme of Creative Entrepreneurship in a local development and creative economy perspective. Thus, after the first results, the propose is to define the theme as “Entrepreneurship in CCIs”. This definition seems to explain more properly the phenomenon encountered, but given the novelty of the theme, the debate remains still opens.
5. References


