



Entrepreneurship and Cultural Heritage: A Systematic Literature Review at the Intersection of Preservation and Innovation

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Abstract: This systematic literature review examines the intersection between entrepreneurship and cultural heritage, based on the analysis of 17 selected scientific articles. The study reveals that social entrepreneurship emerges as a crucial tool for preserving and enhancing cultural heritage while generating economic and social benefits. The importance of adapting entrepreneurial models to local cultural contexts is emphasized, highlighting a "glocal" approach. Tourism plays a central role in this valorization, offering opportunities but also raising questions about preserving authenticity. New theoretical concepts such as "self-gentrification" and "lifestyle mobility" enrich the understanding of the field. Bibliometric analysis shows a predominance of publications in certain countries and the interdisciplinary nature of the research field. Gaps are identified, including the lack of longitudinal studies and limited geographical diversity. The study underscores the potential of entrepreneurship as a tool for cultural heritage preservation, while highlighting the challenges to be addressed, and opens perspectives for future research on the long-term impact of entrepreneurial initiatives in this domain. The findings have practical implications for policymakers, educators, and entrepreneurs, emphasizing the need for culturally sensitive approaches and community involvement in cultural heritage entrepreneurship. This review contributes to the growing body of knowledge on cultural heritage management by providing a comprehensive overview of current trends, challenges, and opportunities in entrepreneurial approaches to cultural heritage preservation and valorization.

Keywords: Cultural Heritage, Entrepreneurship, Tourism, Glocalization, Sustainable Development, Community Participation

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1 Introduction

Cultural heritage, whether tangible or intangible, plays a crucial role in preserving the identity and collective memory of societies. However, in a rapidly changing world, marked by globalization and economic pressures, the safeguarding and enhancement of this heritage poses considerable challenges. At the same time, entrepreneurship has emerged as a powerful driver of innovation and economic development. The intersection of these two areas - cultural heritage and entrepreneurship - offers promising prospects for addressing the challenges of heritage preservation while generating social and economic benefits.

This literature review is based on a carefully selected corpus of 17 scientific articles, resulting from a systematic search in the Scopus database. The selection focused on peer-reviewed research articles, published in English and open access, in the field of management. The articles were chosen using the keywords "cultural heritage" and "entrepreneurship", thus ensuring direct relevance to our subject of study. This rigorous methodological approach ensures that our journal is based on the most recent and accessible research in the field of cultural heritage entrepreneurship. A more detailed description of the selection methodology will be provided in the dedicated section. This review seeks to identify recurring themes, emerging trends and potential gaps in the existing literature. In particular it focuses on the following research questions:

1. How did researchers conceptualize the relationship between cultural heritage and entrepreneurship?
2. Which entrepreneurial models or approaches have been identified as particularly relevant for the preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage?
3. What are the specific challenges and opportunities related to entrepreneurship in the field of cultural heritage, as presented in the literature?
4. How do existing studies address the role of local communities and multiple stakeholders in these entrepreneurial initiatives?
5. To what extent are digital technologies and technological innovation integrated into entrepreneurial approaches to cultural heritage?

By addressing these issues through a bibliometric analysis as part of a literature review of the 17 selected articles, this review aims to provide a critical synthesis of the current state of research on the intersection between cultural heritage and entrepreneurship. It also seeks to identify areas requiring further research and to suggest avenues for future studies.

The methodology adopted for this review includes a thematic analysis of the articles, identifying key concepts, methodologies used, and key findings from each study. Particular attention is paid to the similarities and discrepancies between the different approaches and perspectives presented in the articles.

This literature review is aimed at a diverse audience, including researchers in cultural heritage management and entrepreneurship, practitioners involved in heritage enhancement initiatives, as well as policy makers responsible for developing strategies for the preservation and development of cultural heritage. By offering a critical synthesis of the existing literature, this review aims to stimulate reflection and open new perspectives for research and practice in this evolving field.

2 Literature review

2.1 Social entrepreneurship as a tool for preserving cultural heritage

A recurring theme in several studies is the use of social entrepreneurship as a means to preserve and enhance cultural heritage. Olinsson and Fouseki (2019) explore the potential of social entrepreneurial approaches in sustainable heritage management, focusing on the case of open-air museums. They propose the use of a tool called "modified Social Entrepreneurial Problem and Objective tree (mSE POT)" to analyse and improve cooperation in the heritage context.

Scuotto et al. (2023a, 2023b) examine how social entrepreneurship organizations (SEOs) adapt their business models to develop social innovation in the field of minor cultural heritage in Italy. Their studies highlight the importance of "social do-it-yourself" and business model innovation in cultural heritage management in uncertain contexts.

Law et al. (2022, 2024) look at the use of social entrepreneurship to safeguard cultural heritage in the UNESCO World Heritage Site in George Town, Malaysia. They highlight the importance of social entrepreneurial orientation (SEO) and propose a framework integrating theory of change and stakeholder theory to understand this process.

2.2 Indigenous entrepreneurship and the preservation of cultural heritage

Several studies focus on indigenous entrepreneurship as a way to preserve cultural heritage while improving the economic conditions of local communities.

Bodle et al. (2018) examine critical success factors in managing sustainable indigenous businesses in Australia, with a focus on recognizing and valuing Indigenous Intangible Cultural Heritage (ich) and Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property (ICIP) as assets.

Chan et al. (2016) introduce the concept of "self-gentrification" in the context of the Honghe Hani Rice Terraces World Heritage Site in China. They show how some indigenous entrepreneurs are adopting entrepreneurial strategies to improve their socio-economic status while preserving their cultural heritage.

2.3 Cultural entrepreneurship in the context of tourism

Tourism appears as a key sector where entrepreneurship and cultural heritage meet.

Rudan (2023) explores how the circular economy can be applied to cultural heritage to create new tourism products, with a focus on adaptive reuse of heritage sites.

Yuli et al. (2023) investigate the impact of tourism development on the well-being of local communities in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone in Indonesia, highlighting how tourism has stimulated local entrepreneurship.

Zhu (2018) examines the concept of "lifestyle mobility" in China, where middle-class urban entrepreneurs are moving to tourist destinations to pursue alternative entrepreneurial opportunities while redefining their conception of "home."

2.4 Adapting entrepreneurial models to local cultural contexts

Several studies highlight the importance of adapting entrepreneurial models to local cultural contexts.

Dauletova et al. (2024) examine how to strengthen the alignment between entrepreneurial focus and indigenous cultural values in the Sultanate of Oman, highlighting the need for a more nuanced approach to entrepreneurship development in traditional communities.

Khosravi et al. (2023) explore the concept of transitional entrepreneurship in struggling economies, focusing on using entrepreneurs' ideology and ethics to fill formal institutional gaps in Iran.

2.5 The influence of culture on entrepreneurial behaviour

Dai (2021) analyses the impact of local cultural capital on entrepreneurial behaviour in China, distinguishing between living culture and cultural heritage, and demonstrating their different influence on entrepreneurship.

Hoyte (2019) examines the role of culture in craft entrepreneurship, proposing a conceptual framework that links the personality traits of the Big Five to the dimensions of craft entrepreneurship, including cultural heritage.

2.6 Innovation in the cultural heritage experience

Baratta et al. (2022) study how to improve cultural tourism through the development of memorable experiences, taking as an example the "Food Democracy Museum" project in Verona. They highlight the importance of social entrepreneurship, digitisation and the multi-stakeholder approach in creating meaningful cultural experiences.

2.7 Entrepreneurship education in the cultural context

Bell and Cui (2023) explore how Chinese educators respond to guidelines encouraging progressive pedagogical entrepreneurial education, merging traditional and progressive approaches in a way that reflects cultural heritage that values knowledge.

This literature review highlights the richness and diversity of research at the intersection of cultural heritage and entrepreneurship. The studies reviewed highlight the importance of social entrepreneurship, business model innovation, and adaptation to local cultural contexts in the preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage. They also highlight the crucial role of local and indigenous communities in this process. Future research could further explore the long-term impact of these entrepreneurial initiatives on the preservation of cultural heritage and the sustainable economic development of local communities.

3 Methodology

Criteria for selection of the articles

This literature review was conducted following a systematic approach for the selection and analysis of relevant articles. The search was conducted in the Scopus database, recognized for its extensive coverage of peer-reviewed academic literature.

The process involved several criteria:

- **Keywords:** The search used the terms "cultural heritage" and "entrepreneurship" in the title, summary and keywords fields (TITLE-ABS-KEY).
- **Domain:** Limited to the field of management (SUBJAREA, "BUSI").
- **Document Type:** Only research articles have been included (DOCTYPE, "ar").
- **Language:** Limited to English (LANGUAGE, "English").
- **Accessibility:** Only open access articles were retained (OA, "all").
- **Period:** Articles published between 2016 and 2024 were considered, providing a perspective on recent developments in the field.

This approach identified 17 relevant articles, covering a variety of contexts and approaches in the study of the intersection between cultural heritage and entrepreneurship.

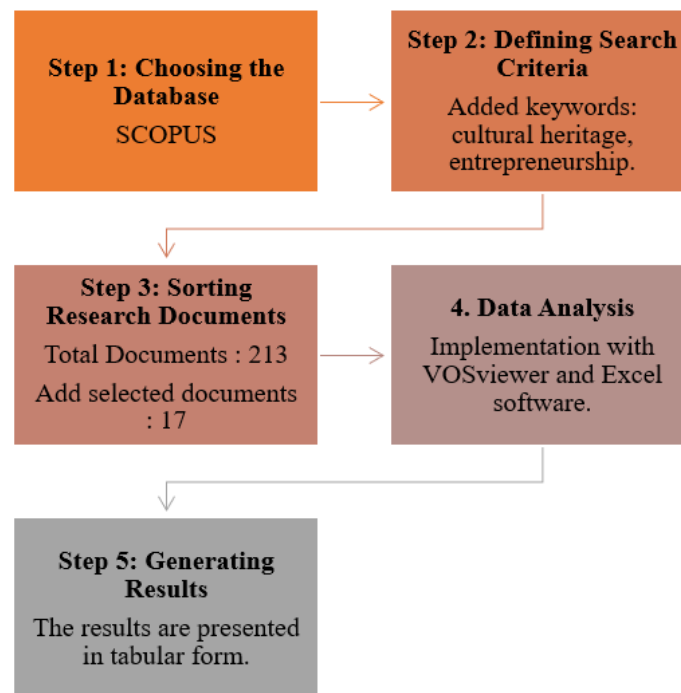
process of analysis.

The analysis of the selected articles followed a multi-stage process, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches:

- ***In-depth reading:*** Each article was read in detail to understand its content, methodology, and key findings.
- ***Thematical coding:*** Thematical coding was carried out to identify recurring themes and key concepts. For example, the theme of social entrepreneurship in the context of cultural heritage has emerged as central in several articles, notably in the study by Scuotto et al. (2023) on social tinkering and social business models for the management of minor cultural heritage in Italy.
- ***Benchmarking:*** The different approaches and perspectives presented in the articles were compared to identify convergences and divergences. For example, the study by Chan et al. (2016) on self-gentrification in the Honghe Hani Rice Terraces World Heritage Site in China offers a unique perspective on indigenous entrepreneurship, contrasting with more general approaches to cultural entrepreneurship.
- ***Bibliometric analysis:***
 - **Using VOSviewer:** This software was used to generate a keyword co-occurrence visualization, identifying key concepts and their interconnections in the literature.
 - **Scopus analyses:** Additional bibliometric analyses were carried out using Scopus, in particular to examine the distribution of publications by country and by field of research.
- ***Summary of results:*** The main results and conclusions of each study, as well as insights from bibliometric analyses, were synthesized to provide an overview of the current state of research on the subject.
- ***Identification of gaps:*** Particular attention was paid to identifying under-explored areas or issues requiring further research. For example, the study by Law et al. (2024) on safeguarding cultural heritage through social entrepreneurship in George Town, Malaysia, highlights the need for further research on the alignment of entrepreneurial initiatives with the Sustainable Development Goals.
- ***Critical evaluation:*** Each article was critically evaluated in terms of methodological rigor, relevance of results and contribution to the field.

This rigorous methodological approach, combining in-depth qualitative analysis and quantitative bibliometric tools, made it possible to build a complete and nuanced synthesis of the existing literature on the intersection between cultural heritage and entrepreneurship. It also facilitated the identification of emerging trends, conceptual interconnections, and opportunities for future research, while providing a broader perspective on the geographical and disciplinary distribution of research in this area.

Figure 1. The research process, step by step.



Source: Author

4 Analysis of the results

4.1 Social entrepreneurship

A dominant theme that emerges from our literature review is the importance of social entrepreneurship in the preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage. Several studies (Olinsson & Fouseki, 2019; Scuotto et al., 2023a, 2023b; Law et al., 2022, 2024) highlight the use of social entrepreneurship as an effective tool to reconcile heritage preservation with economic and social development.

4.2 Adaptation to local cultural contexts

Another significant outcome is the need to adapt entrepreneurial approaches to specific cultural contexts. Studies by Dauletova et al. (2024) and Khosravi et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of taking into account local cultural values and region-specific challenges in the development of cultural heritage entrepreneurship.

4.3 Tourism's central role

Tourism appears as a key sector in the entrepreneurial development of cultural heritage. The studies of Rudan (2023), Yuli et al. (2023), and Zhu (2018) highlight how tourism can serve as a vector for the creation of economic value from cultural heritage.

4.4 What could be improved/changed?

Our analysis revealed the emergence of new theoretical concepts. For example, Chan et al. (2016) introduce the concept of "self-gentrification", while Zhu (2018) explores the notion of "lifestyle mobility" in the context of cultural heritage entrepreneurship.

4.5 Diversity of methodological approaches

The studies reviewed use a variety of methodological approaches. The majority of studies employ qualitative methods, including case studies (Scuotto et al., 2023a; Law et al., 2024) and semi-structured interviews (Dauletova et al., 2024). However, some studies, such as that of Dai (2021), use quantitative methods.

4.6 Geographical focus

Our analysis reveals a concentration of studies in certain geographical regions. Asia (notably China and Malaysia) and Europe (particularly Italy) are well represented, while other regions such as Africa and Latin America are less present in the literature reviewed.

4.7 Technology Integration

Several studies, including that of Baratta et al. (2022), highlight the growing importance of digital technologies in creating innovative experiences related to cultural heritage.

4.8 Role of local and indigenous communities

A recurring theme in many studies is the importance of engaging local and indigenous communities in entrepreneurial initiatives related to cultural heritage. The studies by Bodle et al. (2018) and Chan et al. (2016) particularly highlight this aspect.

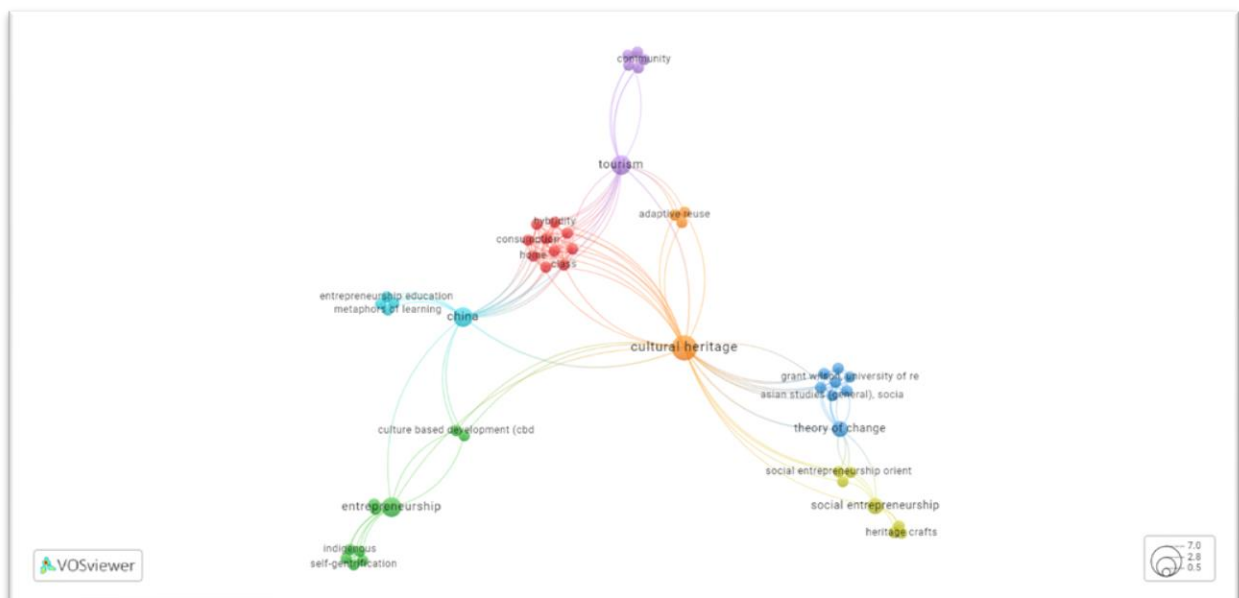
4.9 Link between education and cultural entrepreneurship

Bell and Cui's study (2023) highlights the importance of education in the development of cultural heritage entrepreneurship, highlighting the need to adapt educational approaches to specific cultural contexts.

4.10 Bibliometric analysis

- Bibliometric networks

Figure 2. Cooccurrence analysis of keywords in cultural heritage and entrepreneurship literature.

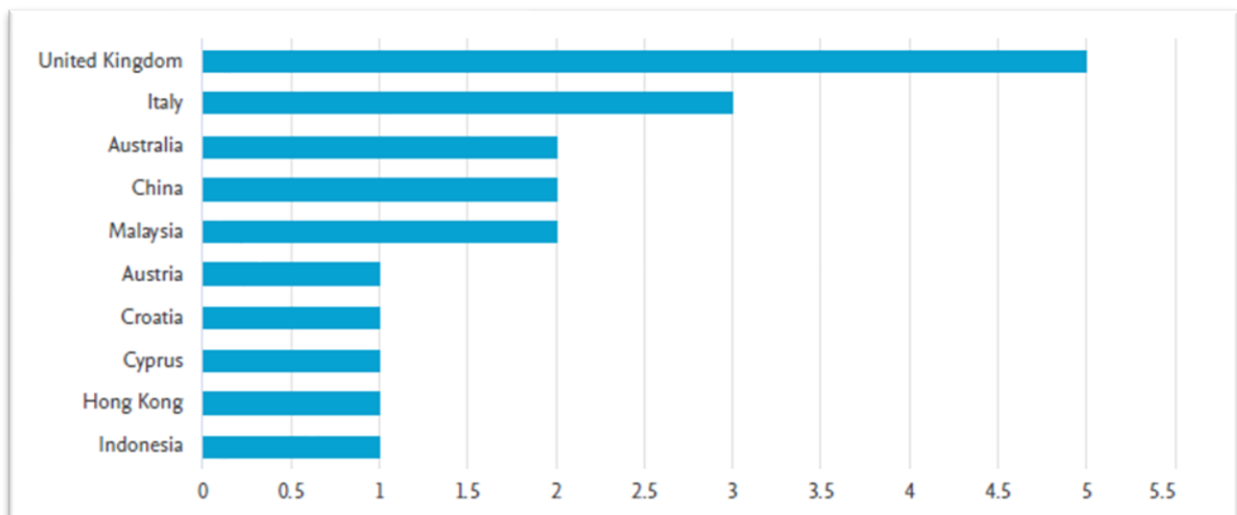


Source: Visualization generated by VOSviewer from data extracted from Scopus

This image represents a keyword co-occurrence analysis generated by VOSviewer. It offers a visualization of key concepts and their interconnections in the reviewed literature on the intersection between cultural heritage and entrepreneurship. Here is a detailed interpretation of this visualization:

1. General structure: The image shows a network of interconnected concepts, with "cultural heritage" at the center, confirming its central role in our literature review.
2. Main clusters: Several distinct clusters can be identified, each represented by a different color:
 - a) Orange cluster: Focused on "cultural heritage" and "adaptive reuse", this cluster seems to focus on the preservation and adaptation of cultural heritage.
 - b) Green Cluster: Focused on "entrepreneurship" and "culture based development (cbd)", this group highlights the link between entrepreneurship and culture based development.
 - c) Light blue cluster: Focused on "China", it connects entrepreneurship and education in the Chinese context.
 - d) Red cluster: Associated with concepts like "consumption", "home", and "class", this group seems to explore the social and economic aspects of cultural heritage.
 - e) Dark blue cluster: Linked to "theory of change" and "Asian studies", this cluster could represent specific theoretical and regional approaches.
 - f) Yellow cluster: Focused on "social entrepreneurship", it highlights the importance of social entrepreneurship in this field.
3. Interconnections:
 - "Cultural heritage" is strongly connected to "tourism", "adaptive reuse", and "social entrepreneurship", highlighting the importance of these concepts in the enhancement of cultural heritage.
 - "Entrepreneurship" is linked to "indigenous" and "self-gentrification", suggesting particular attention to local and indigenous entrepreneurship.
 - "China" appears as an important node, connected to both entrepreneurship and cultural heritage, reflecting a concentration of studies on this country.

Figure 3. Publications



Source: Bibliometric analysis generated by Scopus

An analysis of publications by country, generated by Scopus, reveals an interesting geographical distribution of research on the intersection between cultural heritage and entrepreneurship. The main contributing countries are:

1. United Kingdom
2. Italy
3. Australia

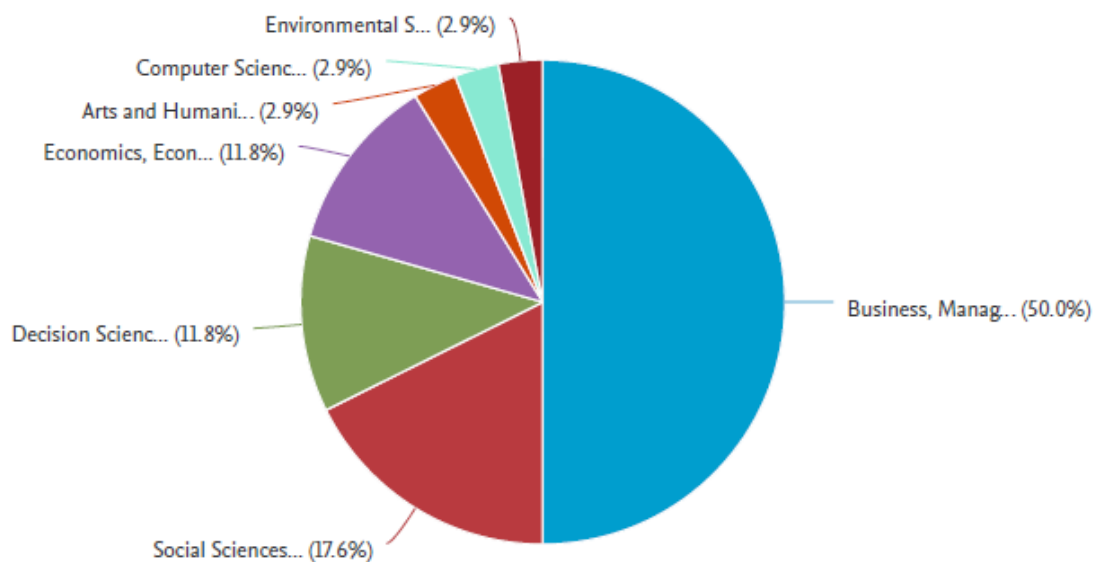
4. China
5. Malaysia

Other countries such as Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Hong Kong and Indonesia also appear in the list, although with fewer publications.

This geographical distribution offers us several important insights:

1. Diversity of contexts: The presence of European, Asian and Oceanian countries suggests a diversity of cultural and economic contexts in which this research is conducted.
2. Western predominance: The UK, Italy and Australia occupying the top three places indicates a strong contribution from Western countries to this area of research.
3. Growing importance of Asia: The presence of China and Malaysia in the top 5 highlights the growing interest in this topic in Asia, which corroborates our previous observation on the importance of China in our keyword co-occurrence analysis.
4. Potential for future research: The presence of countries like Croatia or Indonesia, although less represented, suggests potential for future research in less-studied contexts.

Figure 4. Distribution of publications by research area



Source: Bibliometric analysis generated by Scopus

An analysis of research areas, generated by Scopus, reveals the multidisciplinary nature of research on the intersection between cultural heritage and entrepreneurship. The distribution of publications by domain is as follows:

1. Business, Management and Accounting (29.4%)
2. Social Sciences (23.5%)
3. Decision Sciences (14.7%)
4. Economics, Econometrics and Finance (11.8%)
5. Arts and Humanities (8.8%)
6. Computer Science (5.5%)
7. Environmental Science (5.9%)

This distribution of publications by domain offers us several important insights:

1. Predominance of management sciences: With almost a third of publications, the field of Business, Management and Accounting dominates, which underlines the importance of the entrepreneurial approach in the management of cultural heritage.

2. Strong presence of the social sciences: The second place of the social sciences indicates that social and cultural aspects are largely taken into account in this research, beyond economic considerations alone.
3. Importance of decision sciences: The significant presence of decision sciences suggests an interest in decision-making processes in the entrepreneurial management of cultural heritage.
4. Economic dimension: The presence of economics and finance underlines the importance of financial and economic aspects in this field of research.
5. Interdisciplinarity: The presence of fields such as arts and humanities, computer science and environmental sciences testifies to the truly interdisciplinary nature of this field of research.

This analysis of the results provides an objective overview of the main themes and trends that emerge from our literature review on the intersection between cultural heritage and entrepreneurship. These findings will serve as a basis for our subsequent discussion, where we will explore their wider implications and meanings.

5 Discussing the outcomes

5.1 Social entrepreneurship as a means of preserving cultural heritage

The predominance of social entrepreneurship in our literature review suggests a paradigm shift in cultural heritage management. This trend is confirmed by our keyword co-occurrence analysis conducted with VOSviewer, which shows a strong connection between the concepts of "social entrepreneurship" and "cultural heritage". Traditionally perceived as an area requiring mainly public subsidies, cultural heritage now appears as a fertile ground for entrepreneurial innovation. This development could have significant implications for public policies on heritage preservation, encouraging more entrepreneurial and potentially more sustainable approaches.

However, this trend also raises important questions about the balance between preserving cultural authenticity and business imperatives. Future research could explore how social entrepreneurs navigate this delicate balance and develop best practices to maintain cultural integrity while ensuring economic sustainability.

5.2 The importance of the local context: towards a "glocal" approach to cultural entrepreneurship

Findings highlighting the importance of adapting entrepreneurial approaches to local cultural contexts (Dauletova et al., 2024; Khosravi et al., 2023) highlight the need for a "glocal" approach to cultural entrepreneurship. Our VOSviewer visualization reinforces this observation by showing close links between the concepts of "cultural heritage", "local context" and "entrepreneurship". This approach involves combining global entrepreneurial principles with sensitivity to local cultural specificities.

This finding has important implications for entrepreneurship theory, suggesting that universal models of entrepreneurship may not be directly applicable in the field of cultural heritage. It also highlights the importance of intercultural research in this area.

5.3 Tourism as a catalyst for cultural entrepreneurship

The central role of tourism in the entrepreneurial valuation of cultural heritage, highlighted by several studies (Rudan, 2023; Yuli et al., 2023; Zhu, 2018), is also clearly visible in our VOSviewer analysis, which shows a strong interconnection between the concepts of "tourism", "cultural heritage" and "entrepreneurship". This synergy offers interesting opportunities for local economic development, but also raises concerns about the potential overexploitation of cultural resources.

Future research could explore sustainable tourism models that balance economic benefits with cultural preservation, perhaps building on concepts such as "slow tourism" or "community tourism".

5.4 Emergence of New Concepts: Towards an Integrated Theory of Cultural Entrepreneurship

The emergence of new concepts such as "self-gentrification" (Chan et al., 2016) and "lifestyle mobility" (Zhu, 2018) suggests that the field of cultural entrepreneurship is in full conceptual evolution. Our VOSviewer analysis visualized these emerging concepts and their relationships with more established concepts, highlighting their growing importance in the field. These new concepts offer interesting perspectives for understanding the complex dynamics at work in cultural heritage entrepreneurship.

It would be relevant to develop an integrated theory of cultural entrepreneurship that incorporates these new concepts and links them to existing theories of entrepreneurship and cultural heritage management.

5.5 Research Gaps and Opportunities

Our analysis, including the VOSviewer visualization, reveals several gaps in current research that represent as many opportunities for future studies:

- a) Lack of longitudinal studies: Long-term research is needed to assess the lasting impact of entrepreneurial initiatives on the preservation of cultural heritage.
- b) Limited geographic diversity: Our VOSviewer analysis and Scopus data show a concentration of studies in some countries, including the UK, Italy and China. There is a need for studies in underrepresented regions, especially in Africa and Latin America, to gain a more global perspective.
- c) Little attention to failures: Analysis of initiatives that failed could provide valuable lessons for improving future practices.
- d) Need for more quantitative research: Large-scale quantitative studies could complement existing qualitative insights and enable wider generalization of results.

IMPLICATIONS PRATIQUES

The results of our review, supported by our bibliometric analysis, have several important practical implications:

- a) For policy makers: There is a need to develop policies that encourage social entrepreneurship in the field of cultural heritage while ensuring the protection of cultural authenticity.
- b) For educators: Entrepreneurship programmes should incorporate modules on cultural heritage management, and vice versa.
- c) For entrepreneurs: It is crucial to develop a deep understanding of the local cultural context and actively involve local communities in entrepreneurial initiatives.

6 Conclusion

At the end of this literature review, enriched by our bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer and Scopus data, it is clear that the intersection between cultural heritage and entrepreneurship is a rich and evolving field of research. Our analysis highlighted several significant trends that are redefining how we view the preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage in the age of entrepreneurship.

The emergence of social entrepreneurship as a vehicle for the preservation of cultural heritage represents perhaps the most significant change, as confirmed by the strong interconnection of these concepts in our VOSviewer visualization. This innovative approach makes it possible to reconcile conservation imperatives with economic needs, thus opening up new perspectives for the sustainable management of heritage. At the same time, the growing emphasis on adapting entrepreneurial models to local cultural contexts, visible in our keyword co-occurrence analysis, highlights the need for a nuanced approach that respects the specificities of each community.

The central role of tourism in the entrepreneurial valorisation of cultural heritage has also emerged as a recurring theme, both in the literature and in our bibliometric analysis. This synergy between tourism and heritage offers promising opportunities for local economic development, while raising crucial questions about preserving cultural authenticity in the face of commercialization.

The emergence of new theoretical concepts, such as "self-gentrification" and "lifestyle mobility", identified in our VOSviewer analysis, testifies to the vitality of this field of research and opens new avenues for reflection on the complex dynamics at work in cultural heritage entrepreneurship.

However, our review and bibliometric analysis also highlighted several gaps in current research. The lack of longitudinal studies, the limited geographical diversity of the cases studied (as shown by our analysis of publications by country), and the lack of attention paid to entrepreneurial failures are all avenues for future research. These gaps underscore the need for a more holistic, long-term approach to fully understanding the impacts of entrepreneurship on cultural heritage.

The practical implications of these results are numerous and concern various actors. For entrepreneurs, it is crucial to develop a deep understanding of local cultural contexts and actively involve communities in their initiatives. Policymakers, on the other hand, are called upon to develop regulatory frameworks that encourage entrepreneurial innovation while ensuring the protection of heritage. Cultural heritage managers can benefit from adopting more entrepreneurial approaches, developing innovative partnerships and investing in entrepreneurial skills development.

As we move forward, many questions remain to be explored, as suggested by the diversity of research areas identified in our Scopus analysis. How to measure and maximize the long-term impact of entrepreneurial initiatives on the preservation of cultural heritage? How can we effectively navigate between the imperatives of preservation and economic viability? What role can digital technologies play in cultural heritage entrepreneurship? These questions, among others, open up exciting prospects for future research.

In conclusion, this literature review, enriched by our bibliometric analysis, reveals a dynamic and promising field of research at the intersection of cultural heritage and entrepreneurship. It highlights the potential of entrepreneurship as a tool for the preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage, while highlighting the complex challenges to be met. As we look to the future, it is clear that entrepreneurship will play a crucial role in how we preserve, value and pass on our cultural heritage to future generations. This perspective opens up exciting new avenues for research, practice and policy in this ever-changing field, promising innovations that could redefine our relationship with our collective cultural heritage.

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