

# WHEN CREATIVE MINDSET HELPS ENTREPRENEURIAL INNOVATION IN TOURISM: AN EXAMINATION ON DEMOGRAPHICS

Natthawut Yodchai<sup>1,\*</sup>, Pham Thi Minh Ly<sup>2</sup>, and Lobel Trong Thuy Tran<sup>3</sup>

## Abstract

Given the growing importance of creativity and innovation, this study explores the role of entrepreneurial demographics in determining creativity and innovation capabilities in Thailand's tourism industry. The results from the analysis of data from 179 Thai entrepreneurs confirmed robust relationships between the dependent variables and the characteristics of growth mindset, gender, age, and educational group. Additionally, growth mindset demonstrates a significant relationship with innovation capability (both technical and non-technical). Regarding gender, female entrepreneurs demonstrated a higher prevalence of growth mindset, resulting in female gender having a significant positive influence on innovation capability regarding both technical and non-technical forms of innovation capability, while for male entrepreneurs, the presence of growth mindset had a significant positive influence only on technical innovation capability. Regarding age, entrepreneurs with an age of 51 years and above had a higher growth mindset, while younger entrepreneurs had significantly higher technical and non-technical innovation capability. Regarding the education segments, entrepreneurs who hold a master's degree or higher have a higher growth mindset, while entrepreneurs with an education level of below a bachelor's degree have a higher association with innovation capability. The relevant implications of these findings for academicians and practitioners are discussed.

---

<sup>1</sup>\*Natthawut Yodchai is a Ph.D. candidate in the Faculty of Business Administration, Ton Duc Thang University, No. 19 Nguyen Huu Tho Street, Tan Phong Ward, District 7, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam. Email: natthawutyodchai.st@tdtu.edu.vn

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor Pham Thi Minh Ly obtains her PhD in World Economy & International Economic Relations from Saint Petersburg State University, Russia. Currently, she is working as a Dean in the Faculty of Business Administration, Ton Duc Thang University, No. 19 Nguyen Huu Tho Street, Tan Phong Ward, District 7, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam.

<sup>3</sup>Dr. Lobel Trong Thuy Tran obtains his PhD in Business Economic and Strategy from Asia University, Taiwan. Currently, he is working as a lecturer in the Faculty of Business Administration, Ton Duc Thang University, No. 19 Nguyen Huu Tho Street, Tan Phong Ward, District 7, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneur, Creative Mindset, Demographics, Innovation Capability, Thai Tourism

## **INTRODUCTION**

In recent years, creativity has been acknowledged for its growing importance in organizational development, providing creative and strategic solutions (Richards, 2014). In such cases, creativity enables managers to generate novel and useful tactics for developing culture (Tang et al., 2016), designs, and innovation of new products, helping to achieve a superior competitive advantage (Jaiswal & Dhar, 2015). For entrepreneurs, a creative mindset is at the heart of their business achievements (Tang et al., 2016), as it relates to the production of an individual's talents and abilities (Dweck, 2009). The creativity factor is also a driving force for entrepreneurial processes and the development of new business opportunities, as successful entrepreneurs are not only intrinsically linked to creativity, but also associated with innovation (Gurel et al., 2010).

Innovation is also important in business practices involving the action of entrepreneurs (Alam, 2011), as innovative entrepreneurs or innovative managers are defined through their fostering of innovation activities, resulting in an increase in the firm's ability to stay competitive (Wang & Dass, 2017). Many researchers have found that innovation capability can be

developed in various ways. However, few studies have explored the role of top management (Wang & Dass, 2017), especially in emerging economies where a lack of knowledge and stimuli for innovation exists (Chen, 2018; Geldes et al., 2017). Of particular interest and complexity is the creativity factor, which has a key strength in building a competitive advantage through innovation, nevertheless, the relationship between creativity and innovation still remains unclear (Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Stojcic et al., 2018). Specifically, little research has provided empirical evidence to examine the work of innovation in hospitality and tourism firms (Sipe, 2016). Tourism entrepreneurs are able to create value and offer products or services in the tourism business (Alam, 2011). Yet, to date, little attention has been given to the analysis of creative mindset or assessing its influence on innovation capability and entrepreneurial demographics, especially in the context of an emerging economy (Thailand) as shown in Table 1.

In this study, creative mindset is conceptualized with fixed mindset and growth mindset as a two-dimensional function, examining their relation to different groups in terms of age, gender, and education. Specifically, this study describes the relationship between entrepreneurs' demographic characteristics, and their creative mindset and innovation capability, offering new insights into the tourism industry. Creativity and innovation factors contribute to and create new processes and business

**Table 1.** A Review of Relevant Studies on Creative Mindset.

Author (s)	Examined	Creative Mindset	Innovative Variables	Sample / field	Country
Hass et al. (2016)	Creative mindsets, creative self-efficacy, and creative identity	Yes	No	Student Education	USA
Karwowski (2014)	Creative mindset, creative self-efficacy, creative personal identity, and insight problem	Yes	No	Student Education	Poland
Puente-Díaz and Cavazos-Arroyo (2017)	Creative mindset, task approach, avoidance achievement goals, creative, self-efficacy, enjoyment, and perceived performance	Yes	No	Student Education	Mexico
Royston and Reiter-Palmon (2019)	Creative self-efficacy, creative mindsets, and creative problem solving	Yes	No	Student Education	USA
Tang et al. (2016)	Creative mindset, individualism, collectivism, and cross-culturalism.	Yes	No	Student Education	Poland and Germany
<b>The authors of the current study</b>	<b>Creative mindset and entrepreneurial innovation</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Innovation capability</b>	<b>Entrepreneur / Tourism</b>	<b>Thailand</b>

opportunities for entrepreneurs, benefiting by providing a competitive advantage in a global environment. The tourism industry is expanding and growing rapidly as it contributes substantially to the economic growth of ASEAN’s GDP with an increasing number of tourists, expected to reach 397 million people by 2020 (Wong et al., 2011). Meanwhile, revenue is expected to increase over 12% by 2025, creating a large number of jobs in the tourism industry and becoming a key contributor in ASEAN’s economy (Haseeb et al., 2019). In

Thailand, the total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP was USD 95.0 billion, accounting for 21.2% of the country’s GDP in 2017, and forecast to rise by 28.2% in 2028 (WTTC, 2018). Concurrently, with strong support from the government and successive campaigns by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), Thailand is in the Top 4 ranking with Travel & Tourism GDP growth at 6.0%, higher than the global Travel & Tourism GDP growth of 3.9% (WTTC, 2019). Additionally, Thailand’s tourism entrepreneurs

have been continuously improving their business models, focusing on creativity and technological innovations due to the digital economic transition. Therefore, there is a strong need for Thai entrepreneurs to search for and adopt new ideas in their businesses, where creative mindset plays a key role in achieving business goals and objectives.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature suggests that tourism is among the industries that can benefit most from creativity (Horng et al., 2015), with creativity appearing in a wide range of operations (Richards, 2014). Creativity plays an important role in tourism businesses as it enables the creation of new products and processes, shaping special characteristics of the region for visitors (Sleuwaegen & Boiardi, 2014). Creativity relates to the ability to deal with novelty (Fasko, 2001), and has been recognized as a key strength in building a competitive advantage through innovation (Bouty & Gomez, 2013).

### **Creative Mindset**

Creative mindset refers to a set of beliefs associated with the nature of creativity (Karwowski, 2014), and can be influenced by fixed mindset and growth mindset. These two mindsets are products of nature and nurture related to peoples' talents and abilities (Dweck, 2009), and capable of influencing their achievements. Fixed

mindset is characterized by a belief that one's level of creativity is stable (or invariant) and unchangeable (Burnette et al., 2013; Tang et al., 2016), where it is not possible to do much to improve one's creativity and creative skills (Puente-Díaz & Cavazos-Arroyo, 2017). Fixed mindset carries the belief that individual qualities, such as intelligence, personality, and moral character, are simply fixed and have a certain amount which cannot be changed (Dweck, 2009). Fixed mindset leads to negative forecasts of creative behavior such as creative self-efficacy and creative personal identity (Tang et al., 2016). Consistent with Karwowski (2014), fixed mindset is negatively associated with efficiency in solving insight problems. In terms of business, managers with a fixed mindset orient people towards performance goals focusing on personal and professional reputation, and seeking positive praise or feedback from their performance (Murphy & Dweck, 2016). In contrast, growth mindset is underlined by the belief that creativity and creative skills can grow with time and practice (Puente-Díaz & Cavazos-Arroyo, 2017). An individual with a growth mindset believes that talents and abilities can develop through effort and practice (Dweck, 2008), fostered by learning and experience (Murphy & Dweck, 2016). Holding a growth mindset is related not only to initial talents and aptitudes but also interests and temperaments. For example, growth mindset supports the idea of learning approach goals (Burnette et

al., 2013) and is accepting of mistakes as a means to improve weaknesses (Dweck, 2009). In an organization, managers with a growth mindset seek learning goals, focusing on competence and mastery, tending to see failures and critical feedback as opportunities for greater success (Murphy & Dweck, 2016).

### **Innovation Capability**

Innovation capability (IC) is an ability to continuously develop new innovations, transforming knowledge and ideas into new products, processes, and systems, in order to generate added value for the firm or its stakeholders (Lawson & Samson, 2001). Many firms strive to develop or improve their innovation capabilities as IC is one of the major resources helping companies to achieve a competitive advantage and success in the marketplace (Wang & Dass, 2017). Therefore, the capability to innovate is a key driver to gaining a competitive advantage in a turbulent market environment (Rajapathirana & Hui, 2018). Nevertheless, IC is hard to specify directly and requires defining through empirical investigation (Saunila & Ukko, 2014). Similarly, Divisekera and Nguyen (2018) emphasized the essential need for more empirical research and quantitative evidence in tourism innovation.

Additionally, within the literature on innovation, researchers have frequently cited technical innovation as a key perspective (Ngo & O'cass, 2013). Technology is a

transformational driver, able to reshape the tourism industry's structure and operations through the formation of new roles, capabilities, and changes; existing studies have partially attempted to explain innovation (e.g., technical innovation) in a company (Geldes et al., 2017). Therefore, this study extends IC into two dimensions: technical innovation capability (TIC) and non-technical innovation capability (NTIC). TIC is related to the development of new services, service operations, and application of new technologies (Ngo & O'cass, 2013), also relating to the development and application of new technologies including product and process innovations (Geldes et al., 2017). NTIC is an important element in enhancing the quality of firms, allowing firms to achieve higher levels of performance (e.g., market share, sales, and profitability) (Ngo & O'cass, 2013). This is consistent with Camisón and Villar-López (2011) who posited that non-technical innovation promotes the achievement of sustained competitive advantages.

### **Demographics**

Demographics are an important force with implications in terms of marketing activities and strategy (Tran et al., 2019). Demographic variables affect tourism behavior and decision-making while demographic changes can create new challenges for tourism development (Bernini & Cracolici, 2015). Thus, having better knowledge of demographic segments can provide helpful information for

tourism business activities. In this study, the three characteristics of gender, age, and education, form the key demographics for examining entrepreneurs. First, gender serves as a fundamental demographic factor influencing individual behavior (Tran et al., 2019) and daily practice (Trupp & Sunanta, 2017) receiving greater interest in the tourism sector (Costa et al., 2017; Pritchard, 2014). Consequently, gender is now seen as a new perspective of knowledge production in tourism studies (Bakas, 2017), with different genders serving different perspectives such as through attitudes (Khare, 2011) and decision-making (Tran et al., 2019). People perceive their individual characteristics differently, either through a fixed or growth mindset (Karwowski, 2014), with the mindsets of both male and female individuals presumed to be fostered by the praise type of parents and teachers in childhood (Dweck, 2008). Additionally, biological and environmental factors are able to produce gender differences in their achievements (Baer & Kaufman, 2008). Particularly, gender is of broader interest and can be found as a key factor in investigating tourism work (Bakas, 2017; Tajeddini et al., 2017).

Second, the workforce has aged rapidly, while age is becoming the topic to understand an organization's outcomes such as creativity or competency (Binnewies et al., 2008). Despite the fact that having a fixed or growth mindset is determined in childhood (Karwowski, 2014), an

individual with growth mindset can improve their creativity and creative skills with time and practice (Dweck, 2008; Karwowski, 2014). Furthermore, there is some evidence supporting the idea that age serves an important role in determining one's attitude (Khare, 2011) and decision-making processes (Tran et al., 2019). Particularly in an organization, age is positively relevant to the idea of creativity in a high job control situation (Binnewies et al., 2008).

Third, education is one of the important factors, having an ability to inhibit or stimulate creativity (Castillo-Vergara et al., 2018). Previous studies (Dweck, 2009; Puente-Díaz & Cavazos-Arroyo, 2017) have argued that creative mindset influences individual achievements that can translate into functioning effectiveness such as learning goals and school satisfaction (Karwowski, 2014). An individual with a growth mindset believes that talents and abilities can be developed through effort, practice and instruction (Dweck, 2009), benefitting their academic achievements, while a fixed mindset is detrimental (Dweck, 2008). This is in line with the findings of Zander et al. (2018) who stated that the relationship among academic self-efficacy, growth mindset, and academic support networks is critical.

## **METHODS**

### **Sample**

The purpose of this study was to understand the impacts of various

entrepreneurial demographic characteristics on creative mindset and innovation capability in the context of Thai tourism, due to the rapid growth of the industry in ASEAN while there is little empirical evidence (Sipe, 2016). The sample of 179 tourism entrepreneurs are entrepreneurs listed in the Tour Company and Travel Agency of a Thai-based market, having received a travel agency business license from the Department of Tourism, Thailand. Tourism entrepreneurs play a vital role as drivers of structural change and job creation by creating value and offering products or services in the tourism business (Alam, 2011). Thus, tourism entrepreneurs can demonstrate and provide various aspects such as strategy and management implementation with a solid and compelling understanding.

### Data Collection, Instrument and Measurement

Data collection was executed through a structured questionnaire with a total of 184 entrepreneur respondents. Initial analysis of the questionnaires reported 179 valid responses, with five incomplete responses, which were subsequently excluded. Analysis of the characteristics of the respondents is shown in Table 2.

A questionnaire protocol was used as the primary means of data collection as existing scales could be used to measure the important constructs. To ensure consistency of the construct, recommendations were sought from a psychologist and a firm manager. The Cronbach's alpha values for creative mindset and innovation capability ranged from 0.814 to 0.906, showing that the scale was reliable (see Table 3).

**Table 2.** Demographic Characteristics ( $n = 179$ ).

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	62	34.6
	Female	117	65.4
Age	Under 30 years	62	34.6
	31-40 years	63	35.2
	41-50 years	31	17.3
	51 years and above	23	12.8
Education	Below bachelor's degree	41	22.9
	Bachelor's degree	115	64.2
	Master's degree and higher	23	12.8

The creative mindset scale was adapted from Karwowski (2014), offering potential interesting insights about fixed and growth mindset which were verified with other published literature such as Tang et al. (2016) and Puente-Díaz and Cavazos-Arroyo (2017). Additionally, innovation capability was measured using items from Ngo and O'cass (2013), generated from the literature, including knowledge and skills engagement in two forms (TIC and NTIC).

### **Common Method Bias (CMB)**

The possibility of a common method bias (CMB) was tested, to assess the effectiveness of the

research findings, using Harman's one-factor test, one of the most widely used techniques (Fuller et al., 2016). The findings showed that the first (largest) factor accounts for 37.80% of the variance. As such, no single factor accounted for more than 50% of the variance, suggesting that CMB is unlikely to be a substantive concern in this study.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Measurement Model**

The factor loadings were assessed, along with average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability (CR) to measure the model. As shown in Table 3, the values of

**Table 3.** Construct Measurement

Constructs	Indicator	Cronbach alpha	Loadings	AVE	CR
Growth mindset	GM1	.906	.849	.728	.930
	GM2		.823		
	GM3		.897		
	GM4		.900		
	GM5		.792		
Fixed mindset	FM1	.814	.700	.554	.861
	FM2		.716		
	FM3		.721		
	FM4		.705		
	FM5		.867		
Technical innovation capability	TIC1	.904	.881	.778	.933
	TIC2		.890		
	TIC3		.890		
	TIC4		.868		
Non-technical innovation capability	NTIC1	.865	.720	.657	.905
	NTIC2		.741		
	NTIC3		.876		
	NTIC4		.846		
	NTIC5		.856		



**Table 4.** Discriminant Validity

	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Growth mindset	5.487	1.135	.853			
2. Fixed mindset	4.179	1.238	.005	.744		
3. TIC	5.095	1.073	.550	.277	.882	
4. NTIC	4.783	1.052	.454	.228	.640	.810

Notes: Diagonals represent the square root of AVE, while the other matrix entries represent the correlations, TIC = Technical innovation capability, NTIC = Non-technical innovation capability.

AVE and CR were greater than the thresholds of .50 and .70 suggested by Hair et al. (2011). Accordingly, the research model was shown to have a good reliability and convergent validity. The variance inflation factor (VIF) for each construct was lower than the threshold of 5 as suggested by Hair et al., (2011). Given these findings, multicollinearity was not a concern in this study. Finally, the square root of the AVE for each construct was higher than those of the other correlations, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity (see Table 4).

**Key Findings**

As shown in Table 5, the results suggested that the entrepreneurs’ gender ( $F= 6.840, p < .01$ ), age ( $F= 2.780, p < .05$ ), and education ( $F=3.501, p < .05$ ), all have significant positive relationships with growth mindset. While entrepreneurs’ gender, age, and education, had a non-significant effect on fixed mindset, naturally, creativity is relevant to genetic endowment (Dweck, 2008),

rooted in biological and environmental factors (Baer & Kaufman, 2008). People perceive the nature of creativity and individual characteristics differently (Karwowski, 2014). Consequently, differences between individuals can easily be identified.

Age had a positive effect on growth mindset. This finding differed with those of previous studies (Binnewies et al., 2008; Eder & Sawyer, 2007). However, under high job control conditions Binnewies et al. (2008) found that age and idea creativity were positively related. Besides this, an individual’s growth mindset can be developed with time and practice (Dweck, 2008; Karwowski, 2014).

Focusing on education groups demonstrated a significant direct positive effect on growth mindset. In the prior creative mindset literature (Puente-Díaz & Cavazos-Arroyo, 2017; Tang et al., 2016), growth mindset indicates a belief that creativity and creative processes can be developed through effort and practice, benefiting academic

**Table 5.** Relationship between Demographics and Creative Mindset.

Demographics	Fixed Mindset		Growth Mindset	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
Gender	.294	.588	6.840	.010
Age	1.382	.250	2.780	.043
Education	.269	.764	3.501	.032

achievement (Dweck, 2008).

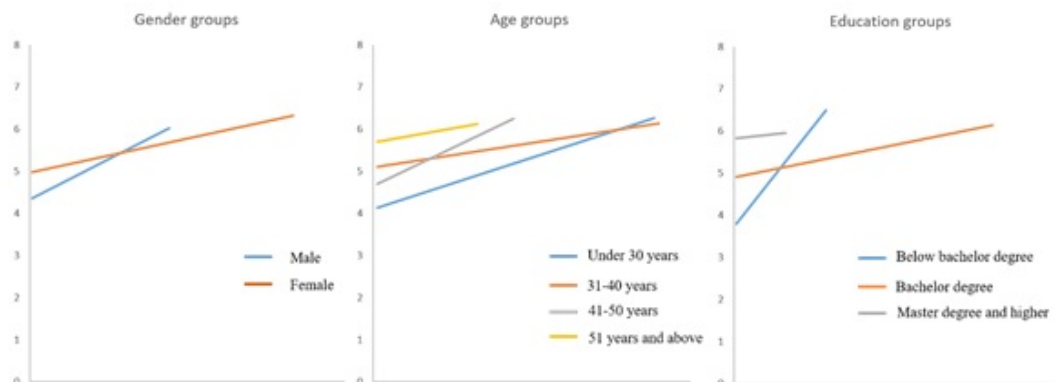
As shown in Figure 1, female entrepreneurs tend to have a greater growth mindset than male entrepreneurs. These results are consistent with Baer and Kaufman (2008), who found that females tend to score higher than males in terms of creativity, while Castillo-Vergara et al. (2018), also found that females demonstrated better performance in regard to creativity.

Regarding the different age groups, entrepreneurs with an age of 51 years and above had the highest growth mindset. As previously mentioned, an individual's growth mindset can be developed with time

and practice. Therefore, entrepreneurs of 51 years of age and above seemed to have more exposure to conditions for practice, enhancing their growth mindset, and leading to higher scores than seen in younger entrepreneurs.

Regarding education, entrepreneurs with a master's degree or higher had higher growth mindsets than those from other education segments. That is to say, the more education obtained by the entrepreneur, the higher the growth mindset of the entrepreneur.

For further understanding of growth mindset and innovation capability, a separate ANOVA test was run. The 2 items (NTIC1 and



**Figure 1** Growth Mindset and Demographics

**Table 6.** Relationship between Growth Mindset and Innovation Capability

Factors	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>Technical Innovation Capability (TIC)</b>					
Between Groups	79.570	20	3.979	5.011	.000
Within Groups	125.440	158	.794		
Total	205.010	178			
<b>Non-Technical Innovation Capability (NTIC)</b>					
Between Groups	65.604	20	3.280	3.008	.000
Within Groups	172.311	158	1.091		
Total	237.914	178			

NTIC2) received weak dedications and were thus eliminated. The ANOVA test was then run again, with the results showing significant differences between growth mindset and TIC ( $F=5.011$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The findings for NTIC indicated a significant effect ( $F=3.008$ ,  $p < .01$ ) of growth mindset (see Table 6). Growth mindset leads to the development of creative processes which in turn influences individuals' performance (Cutumisu, 2019), where TIC is required to integrate technology in products and processes, while NTIC is also required to implement new organizational methods (Camisón & Villar-López, 2011), ultimately achieving higher performance (Ngo & O'cass, 2013).

As Table 7 shows, the innovation capability varies across the entrepreneurial demographics of growth mindset. In female entrepreneurs, growth mindset significantly influenced TIC ( $F=2.993$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and NTIC ( $F=1.910$ ,  $p < .05$ ), while in male entrepreneurs, growth mindset only significantly influenced

TIC ( $F=2.496$ ,  $p < .01$ ). NTIC is a key element in enhancing the quality of a firm, allowing it to achieve superior performance, including advancing knowledge and skills such as managerial, market, and marketing. This is consistent with Costa et al. (2017), who posited that managerial characteristics are associated with females (women and femininity).

TIC was significantly influenced by age, with entrepreneurs under 30 years old having higher correlations ( $F=2.492$ ,  $p < .01$ ), than age 31-40 years ( $F=1.880$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and age 41-50 years ( $F=4.157$ ,  $p < .01$ ). However, NTIC was also found to be a significant influence in entrepreneurs with an age under 30 years ( $F=2.926$ ,  $p < .01$ ), or 31-40 years ( $F=1.943$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Contrastingly, for entrepreneurs with an age of 51 years or above, there was no significance to TIC or NTIC. This is in line with Wang and Dass (2017) who found a relationship between young managers and the promotion of innovative activities.

**Table 7.** Demographics of Entrepreneur with Growth Mindset and Innovation Capability.

Demographics	Technical Innovation Capability (TIC)		Non-Technical Innovation Capability (NTIC)	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
	Male	2.496	.007	1.082
Female	2.993	.000	1.910	.020
Under 30 years	2.492	.007	2.926	.002
31-40 years	1.880	.047	1.943	.039
41-50 years	4.157	.004	.799	.654
51 years and above	1.988	.135	.985	.510
Below bachelor's degree	3.866	.002	2.413	.025
Bachelor's degree	4.254	.000	2.739	.001
Master's degree and higher	1.253	.351	.436	.901

Education below bachelor's degree ( $F=3.866$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and of bachelor's degree level ( $F=4.254$ ,  $p < .01$ ) had positive effects on TIC. Accordingly, NTIC was also positive and significant for an education level below bachelor's degree ( $F=2.413$ ,  $p < .05$ ) or of bachelor's degree level ( $F=2.739$ ,  $p < .01$ ). For entrepreneurs with an education level of master's degree or higher, there was no significance to TIC and NTIC. Most of the young entrepreneurs in this study had an educational background of bachelor's degree or below. Therefore, this finding might be intrinsically linked with technological characteristics (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2013; Wang & Dass, 2017).

### Implications

In regard to gender, age, and education group, female

entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs with an age of 51 years or above, and entrepreneurs who hold a master's degree or higher, were found to have a higher growth mindset. Given the finding of entrepreneurs with growth mindset, being female had a positive significance to innovation capability; this was significant for both technical and non-technical innovation capability. Concerning age group, entrepreneurs with an age under 30 years old or those in the age category of 31-40 years demonstrated a significant difference in comparison to other age groups in terms of technical and non-technical innovation capability. According to education, entrepreneurs with an education below a bachelor's degree had a greater association with innovation capability.

It is necessary to highlight the importance of growth mindset. Entrepreneurs ought to pay attention

to building the belief of growth mindset and the potential for creativity. More subtly, entrepreneurs should be aware of how to encourage themselves by reading, learning, or participating, in training that emphasizes the development of abilities in order to generate creativity and innovation, as well as the importance of sharing both successes and failures, generating a beneficial effect for both the individual and organizational functionality. The tourism industry has slowly been adopting new technologies, in turn contributing to greater effectiveness of the firm's performance. Therefore, it is necessary to encourage innovation capability in entrepreneurs by committing knowledge and using skills. Entrepreneurs should create better awareness of the benefits of innovation, in order to encourage their firm to compete globally. It is suggested that key characteristics in technical innovation capability, should include new services, service operations and technology, as well as services innovation. As suggested by Divisekera and Nguyen (2018), the capacity of tourism firms to invest in innovation activities are limited, and therefore, there is a need for external funding (e.g., government) which can also encourage and help to stimulate innovation within the tourism industry.

Tourism is a highly gendered industry, providing significant opportunities for both females and males. Gender equality is very important in the development of tourism as gender shapes tourism processes and practices, especially

regarding women's empowerment. Regarding the tourism sector, female entrepreneurial characteristics point towards entrepreneurial success, but due to the differentiated and unequal social values, a gender hierarchy has formed between men and women. Although female staff hold a higher proportion of the jobs and generally perform better, they are inadequately represented at professional levels. As an important facet, women's work is regarded as meagre compared to men, and thus they do not receive equal benefits from the tourism business or in the job market. Notwithstanding, previous studies point in the same or opposite directions or even show that gender is non-significant in terms of differences and creativity e.g., Baer and Kaufman (2008). However, the interesting finding of this study, is that female entrepreneurs showed an outstanding significance regarding their growth mindset and innovation capability. Therefore, this study provides some opportunities for females working in tourism. Meanwhile little research has been done on female entrepreneurs, particularly in developing countries. Consequently, this research can help by empowering, inspiring, and encouraging, females to participate and present potential in the tourism sector. Particularly, this result deepens understanding of gender differences, extending to gender equality in enterprise, especially in Thailand's tourism industry. It is recommended that the tourism business sector put greater consideration on gender equality,

especially in developing countries where cultural stereotypes or gender hierarchy determination occurs.

As shown in the results, older entrepreneurs own the highest growth mindset, where they can develop new ideas and products for their firms. The results support the notion that younger entrepreneurs will benefit from innovation capability. It is suggested that older entrepreneurs establish innovation activities at work which value their innovation capabilities, fostering support for innovation activities (both technical and non-technical) by networking openly, and sharing information, especially with young entrepreneurs. However, the real contribution of these findings is the demonstrated equality in age, which may lead to development of a more equal attitude regarding seniority systems or age hierarchy, which is seen obviously in Thailand. Education is necessary for creating, with regard to having a creative mindset (growth mindset). It should be especially noted that education increases business acumen and leads to economic improvement. The authors recommend that young entrepreneurs should consider pursuing higher education or at least participate in creativity training programs. Entrepreneurs should educate themselves and invest more educational resources in improving the development of their growth mindset.

### **Contributions and Conclusions**

This study offers several useful

contributions. First, the findings help to clarify the potential role of a creative mindset in entrepreneurs, as few studies have explored this aspect (Wang & Dass, 2017). Second, for successful entrepreneurship, there is an association between creativity and innovation (Gurel et al., 2010), while its role has previously been unclear (Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Stojcic et al., 2018). The present results show empirical evidence for the link between a creative mindset and innovation capability. Third, as noted earlier, the differences between individuals can easily be identified. This result adds to further understanding of the differences between gender, age, and education factors, and their influences on firms' innovation capabilities, especially in an emerging country (Thailand) where there is a lack of existing innovation knowledge (Chen, 2018; Geldes et al., 2017).

### **LIMITATIONS**

The study is subject to several limitations that should be carefully addressed in future research. Firstly, this study examined entrepreneurs in a single tourism sector (tour company and travel agency) in Thailand. Future studies may obtain data from other related businesses (hotels, airlines) or be applied in other countries, making comparisons for more insightful findings. Different firm character types such as firm size, firm tenure, and firm capital, which would be valuable for explaining tour businesses are also recommended for

future research. Secondly, this study discovered interplays between gender, age, and education, with the relationship of creative mindset and innovation capability. However, there are many demographic factors (e.g., social, culture or environment) which have not yet been included and require further synthesis for obtaining the most useful results. These variables may shape creative mindset and innovation capability differently and may help future research through the analysis of individuals. Thirdly, the responses to this study were collected via self-administration of the questionnaires, which may lead to self-selection variance. Although, the findings of Harman's single-factor test confirmed that common method bias is unlikely to be a substantive concern in this study, the small sample size (179 entrepreneurs) might influence the results of the current study. Future research should obtain a larger and more representative sample to enhance accuracy and offer more favorable empirical findings.

## REFERENCES

- Alam, S. S. (2011). Entrepreneur's traits and firm innovation capability: an empirical study in Malaysia. *Asian Journal of Technology Innovation, 19*(1), 53-66.
- Baer, J., & Kaufman, J. C. (2008). Gender differences in creativity. *The Journal of Creative Behavior, 42*(2), 75-105.
- Bakas, F. E. (2017). 'A beautiful mess': Reciprocity and positionality in gender and tourism research. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, 33*, 126-133.
- Bernini, C., & Cracolici, M. F. (2015). Demographic change, tourism expenditure and life cycle behaviour. *Tourism Management, 47*, 191-205.
- Binnewies, C., Ohly, S., & Niessen, C. (2008). Age and creativity at work: The interplay between job resources, age and idea creativity. *Journal of managerial psychology, 23*(4), 438-457.
- Bouty, I., & Gomez, M.-L. (2013). Creativity in haute cuisine: Strategic knowledge and practice in gourmet kitchens. *Journal of culinary science & technology, 11*(1), 80-95.
- Burnette, J. L., O'boyle, E. H., VanEpps, E. M., Pollack, J. M., & Finkel, E. J. (2013). Mind-sets matter: A meta-analytic review of implicit theories and self-regulation. *Psychological bulletin, 139*(3), 655.
- Camisón, C., & Villar-López, A. (2011). Non-technical innovation: organizational memory and learning capabilities as antecedent factors with effects on sustained competitive advantage. *Industrial Marketing Management, 40*(8), 1294-1304.
- Castillo-Vergara, M., Galleguillos, N. B., Cuello, L. J., Alvarez-Marin, A., & Acuña-Opazo, C. (2018). Does socioeconomic status influence student creativity? *Thinking Skills and Creativity, 29*, 142-152.

- Chen, L.-C. (2018). Developing technologies or learning institutions? Exploring the role of hackathons for developing innovation capability in emerging economies: the case of Taiwan. *Asian Journal of Technology Innovation, 26*(2), 202-221.
- Costa, C., Bakas, F. E., Breda, Z., & Durão, M. (2017). 'Emotional' female managers: How gendered roles influence tourism management discourse. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, 33*, 149-156.
- Cutumisu, M. (2019). The association between feedback-seeking and performance is moderated by growth mindset in a digital assessment game. *Computers in Human Behavior, 93*, 267-278.
- Divisekera, S., & Nguyen, V. K. (2018). Determinants of innovation in tourism evidence from Australia. *Tourism Management, 67*, 157-167.
- Dweck, C. S. (2008). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*: Random House Digital, Inc.
- Dweck, C. S. (2009). Mindsets: Developing talent through a growth mindset. *Olympic Coach, 21*(1), 4-7.
- Eder, P., & Sawyer, J. E. (2007). *A meta-analytic examination of employee creativity*. Paper presented at the 22nd annual conference, society of industrial and organizational psychology (SIOP), New York, NY, April.
- Fasko, D. (2001). Education and creativity. *Creativity Research Journal, 13*(3-4), 317-327.
- Fuller, C. M., Simmering, M. J., Atinc, G., Atinc, Y., & Babin, B. J. (2016). Common methods variance detection in business research. *Journal of Business research, 69*(8), 3192-3198.
- Geldes, C., Felzensztein, C., & Palacios-Fenech, J. (2017). Technological and non-technological innovations, performance and propensity to innovate across industries: The case of an emerging economy. *Industrial Marketing Management, 61*, 55-66.
- Gurel, E., Altinay, L., & Daniele, R. (2010). Tourism students' entrepreneurial intentions. *Annals of tourism research, 37*(3), 646-669.
- Hair, J. F., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2011). PLS-SEM: Indeed a silver bullet. *Journal of Marketing theory and Practice, 19*(2), 139-152.
- Haseeb, M., Zandi, G., Andrianto, N. M., & Chankoson, T. (2019). Impact of macroeconomic indicators on development patterns: Case of tourism industry in ASEAN region. *Journal of Security & Sustainability Issues, 9*(1), 257-268.
- Hass, R. W., Katz-Buonincontro, J., & Reiter-Palmon, R. (2016). Disentangling creative mindsets from creative self-efficacy and creative identity: Do people hold fixed and growth theories of



- creativity? *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 10(4), 436-446.
- Hong, J.-S., Tsai, C.-Y., Liu, C.-H., & Chung, D. Y.-C. (2015). Measuring Employee's Creativity: A new theoretical model and empirical study for tourism industry. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 20(12), 1353-1373.
- Jaiswal, N. K., & Dhar, R. L. (2015). Transformational leadership, innovation climate, creative self-efficacy and employee creativity: A multilevel study. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 51, 30-41.
- Karwowski, M. (2014). Creative mindsets: Measurement, correlates, consequences. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 8(1), 62-70.
- Khare, A. (2011). Mall shopping behaviour of Indian small town consumers. *Journal of retailing and consumer services*, 18(1), 110-118.
- Lawson, B., & Samson, D. (2001). Developing innovation capability in organisations: a dynamic capabilities approach. *International Journal of Innovation Management*, 5(03), 377-400.
- Murphy, M. C., & Dweck, C. S. (2016). Mindsets shape consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 26(1), 127-136.
- Ngo, L. V., & O'cass, A. (2013). Innovation and business success: The mediating role of customer participation. *Journal of Business research*, 66(8), 1134-1142.
- Pritchard, A. (2014). Gender and feminist perspectives in tourism research. *The Wiley Blackwell companion to tourism*, 314-324.
- Puente-Díaz, R., & Cavazos-Arroyo, J. (2017). The influence of creative mindsets on achievement goals, enjoyment, creative self-efficacy and performance among business students. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 24, 1-11.
- Rajapathirana, R. J., & Hui, Y. (2018). Relationship between innovation capability, innovation type, and firm performance. *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, 3(1), 44-55.
- Richards, G. (2014). Creativity and tourism in the city. *Current issues in Tourism*, 17(2), 119-144.
- Roongrengsuke, S., & Liefoghe, A. (2013). Attracting gold-collar workers: Comparing organizational attractiveness and work-related values across generations in China, India and Thailand. *Asia Pacific Business Review*, 19(3), 337-355.
- Royston, R., & Reiter-Palmon, R. (2019). Creative self-efficacy as mediator between creative mindsets and creative problem-solving. *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, 53(4), 472-481.
- Saunila, M., & Ukko, J. (2014). Intangible aspects of innovation capability in SMEs: Impacts of size and industry. *Journal of*

- Engineering and Technology Management*, 33, 32-46.
- Sipe, L. J. (2016). How do senior managers influence experience innovation? Insights from a hospitality marketplace. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 54, 75-83.
- Sleuwaegen, L., & Boiardi, P. (2014). Creativity and regional innovation: Evidence from EU regions. *Research Policy*, 43(9), 1508-1522.
- Stojcic, N., Hashi, I., & Orlic, E. (2018). Creativity, innovation effectiveness and productive efficiency in the UK. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 21(4), 564-580.
- Tajeddini, K., Ratten, V., & Denisa, M. (2017). Female tourism entrepreneurs in Bali, Indonesia. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 31, 52-58.
- Tang, M., Werner, C., & Karwowski, M. (2016). Differences in creative mindset between Germany and Poland: The mediating effect of individualism and collectivism. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 21, 31-40.
- Tran, L. T. T., Ly, P. T. M., & Le, L. T. (2019). Hotel choice: A closer look at demographics and online ratings. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 82, 13-21.
- Trupp, A., & Sunanta, S. (2017). Gendered practices in urban ethnic tourism in Thailand. *Annals of tourism research*, 64, 76-86.
- Wang, X., & Dass, M. (2017). Building innovation capability: The role of top management innovativeness and relative-exploration orientation. *Journal of Business research*, 76, 127-135.
- Wong, E. P., Mistilis, N., & Dwyer, L. (2011). A model of Asean collaboration in tourism. *Annals of tourism research*, 38(3), 882-899.
- WTTC. (2018). *Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2018*. Retrieved from <https://www.wttc.org/economic-impact/country-analysis/country-reports/>
- WTTC. (2019). *Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2019*. Retrieved from <https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/regions-2019/world2019.pdf>
- Zander, L., Brouwer, J., Jansen, E., Crayen, C., & Hannover, B. (2018). Academic self-efficacy, growth mindsets, and university students' integration in academic and social support networks. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 62, 98-107.