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| Perceptions of the Students Related to Entrepreneurship as an Option of the Career | |  | Economy |
| | | | Keywords: entrepreneurship, students perception, SMEs, Kosovo, entrepreneurship career, start ups. |
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| Abstract | | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">What is the importance of entrepreneurship for the economic development of a country? How the entrepreneurs are seen in the society? Are the entrepreneurship and the entrepreneur considered as a positive, negative or intermediate occupation and how important it is for a society? In order to answer these questions, an appropriate questionnaire has been drafted, meanwhile the sample has included 285 interlocutors.</p> <p>This study evaluates the importance the entrepreneurship has in an economy of a country, based on the evaluation of young people/students of Kosovo. The study aims to review and evaluate the possible causes which foster the students to consider the entrepreneurship as their future career, and will research the students perceptions toward the entrepreneurship as an option of the career and also to evaluate the beliefs and stands the students have for establishing new enterprises.</p> | | | |

1. Introduction

The Economy of Kosovo is a less developed economy, with a high unemployment rate, while as a consequence, it should be concentrated in Small Enterprises, which employ employees/students and which can be adjusted, depending on market demands. According to Kjeldsen and Niesen (2000 page 6), the establishment of new enterprises is the basis for "economic development, employment, standard of living as well as maintain the international competition strength of the country". So, the support of the Kosovo institutions toward the entrepreneurship of the country should be increased, despite that such an increase has been noted recently. Furthermore, "despite the unfavourable and extreme business environment, entrepreneurial activities play a part in improving the welfare of the Kosovar people." (Hoxha, 2009)

The development of small and medium enterprises (SME) is considered as key for an economic growth of a country, innovation and competition in the market of the western advanced economies (Acs and Audretsch, 1990). It is also considered that SME are an obvious source for creating new jobs and wealth (Birch, 1979; Storey, 2000). It is to be mentioned that in the countries of transition, the SME have a significant role.

This "urgent" need for small enterprises in our country is also as a consequence, because employment can be increased faster through small enterprises. Krueger and other authors have had a lot of discussions on enterprises in order to show that people will not decide and will not be satisfied to establish new enterprises as a consequence of a reflection (an ad-hoc opinion), but in the contrary, people consider the option for an entrepreneurship career with a high consideration and analyze it very carefully (Krueger et al 2000, Scutjens & Stam 2006).

Consequently, it is important to evaluate the student perceptions related to entrepreneurship as an option for the career. An element of the feasibility is the fact that young people in our country are in a great need for employment. Students who have just complete their studies are facing significant difficulties in finding a new job. It is therefore obvious that establishment of the enterprises, creating new jobs and other issues should be a permanent concern while all stakeholders in the society should do the best efforts to solve these problems. Recently, a lot of efforts are being done to provide university level education for young people in order to prepare them, not as job seekers in the labor market, but also to contribute in creating new jobs, including self-employment (Gelderen et al 2008)

This study evaluates the importance the entrepreneurship has in an economy of a country, based on the evaluation of young people/students of Kosovo. The study aims to review and evaluate the possible causes which foster the students to consider the entrepreneurship as their future career.

What is the importance of entrepreneurship for the economic development of a country? How the entrepreneurs are seen in the society? Is the entrepreneurship and the entrepreneur considered as a positive, negative or intermediate occupation and how important it is for a society? In order to answer these questions, an appropriate questionnaire has been drafted, where a certain number of students at the universities in Kosovo at the bachelor level of studies have been interviewed such as the public University of Prishtina and “Haxhi Zeka in Peja as well as the private universities, FAMA and AAB in Prishtina while the outcome, recommendations and conclusions of such an interview will be presented later on.

The sample has included 285 interlocutors.

1.1. The aims and objectives of the research

This study will research the students perceptions toward the entrepreneurship as an option of the career and also to evaluate the beliefs and stands the students have for establishing new enterprises. This group of population is considered to be part of the population with the highest entrepreneurship potential, based on their education level as well as their age. This is the reason why such students contain a specific group and have been selected as “target group” for this study. In particular, the students of last year studies at bachelor level will be interviewed since they are the most attractive for this purpose for the following reasons. First, such students are ready to face with the issue of selecting of a professional career. Second, within this group of students there is a possibility to find people of different opinions in regard to different preferences and objectives. Third, a significant number of such students did not develop the entrepreneurship skills therefore it is appropriate to study their perceptions and objectives before these issues are met by them.

The study aims to research the following objectives:

- The analysis of the students willingness to select the entrepreneurship as their future career;
- Evaluation of students perceptions related to entrepreneurship as a selection of their future career as well as comparison between the students of economy and other faculties towards an entrepreneurship career including the perceptions of the students at public universities towards private universities;
- Perception of entrepreneurship as professional career comparing with other professions and what influences in such perceptions;
- The analysis of the student’s evaluations in regard to establishing new enterprises, which will create new jobs and a sustainable economic development.
- The analysis and comparison of social and institutional factors which influence in the students decision for an entrepreneurship career.

1.2. The importance of the study

The study will provide a specific importance related to both practical and scientific side of the study. The scientific contribution provides results which are as an outcome of sophisticated scientific methods from a significant database, making appropriate conclusions related to the subject of study. Furthermore, there was no such a research undertaken so far, which will test the students capability to start with entrepreneurship activities.

At international level, this study will provide interesting data from a country which faced the war and a country which is facing as lot of difficulties in ending the period of transition. However, in the practical aspect, this study will provide concrete results which will show what is the level of education for the students today, who consider the entrepreneurship as an option of their future career. The study can also be a signal for the policy makers, making

them to thing in changing the current education system and to design a system which will provide a significant number of entrepreneurs.

1.3 The methodology

The study has been completed based on the questionnaire. The collection of data has been performed through direct contacts or interviews with students based on the drafted questionnaire.

The questionnaire has been drafted in a manner that can evaluate the students stands toward the entrepreneurship in order to decide for a future entrepreneurship career as well as in aiming to establishing of new enterprises from the students themselves.

The basic information of the interlocutors

Table 1

| Sample | Age | | Gender | | Place of birth | |
|-----------------|------------------------|----------|--------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | Min. | Max. | Male | Female | Town | Village |
| 285 Students | 19 years | 42 years | 148 | 137 | 183 | 102 |
| | Average 23.66 years | | Percentage % 51.9 48.1 | | Percentage % 64.2 35.8 | |

The nature of studying this research is quantitative. The interviewed students are students of the following faculties: The Faculty of Economics; The Faculty of Philology; The Faculty of Law; The Faculty of Architecture; The Faculty of Medicine and The Faculty of Computer Science; The sample includes 285 students.

2. The definition of entrepreneurship and the entrepreneur

The entrepreneurship is recently being evaluated in such a level, considered not as a career option but also as an employment opportunity for the majority of people today. Consequently, the number of newly established enterprises is increasing as well as the number of people specialized in developing of such enterprises.

There are many various definitions in regard to explaining the entrepreneurship. Some of them are mentioned in here in order for clarifying and defining in an accurate and appropriate way of the entrepreneurship.

The entrepreneurship today is considered as a philosophy and important energy for development as well as one of very important sources of economic growth. In many cases this is compared and even takes a more important role than other sources such as natural resources or technical equipment. The entrepreneurship creates a creative, innovative and pro active stand toward the development. This means that it foster the self-activation of the human resources, human capital for the development and places the development at the first place within a society (M. Mustafa et all, 2006).

P. Drucker the entrepreneurship defines “the most hopeful event” since it fosters frequent changes, uses the chances which are not seen by others, creates something different and makes the need for innovations to be permanent. So, entrepreneurship is a new style of management.

In the case of this study, we will refer to the definition of Kihlstrom and Laffont (1979), based on the selection of individuals for a career in order to undertake a risk to start a self business and creating new jobs. This definition is selected since it is linked with the stand of the students for a entrepreneurship career who are willing to take the risk to start their personal business. In this way, students become self employed because they wish to have a personal freedom and hope for an economic independence.

In regard to the definition of entrepreneurship, there are many authors and various approach who made a lot of efforts to give their contribution in defining the entrepreneur. The main problem is related to the fact which elements should be taken into consideration in order to give a clear definition and also which are the features which make a difference between an entrepreneur and the actions undertaken by an entrepreneur and a manager and its day today business activities. In this regard, one of the most appropriate approaches to give an acceptable definition is to determine the attributes of an entrepreneur (M. Mustafa et al, 2006). For example, Wickham (2003) mentioned three attributes such as the risk, effectiveness and innovation.

The entrepreneur, as a subject of entrepreneurship is an initiator, leader, a person who approves strategic definitions, business innovator, curios for new developments who directs his abilities, knowledge and capabilities in a new combination of disposable assets with a dynamic and harmonic system, with the aim of a successful implementation of the new efforts, through using the new processes and technologies, tracking and accepting the changes as sources of the possibilities for innovations, which take with them a certain risk and uncertainty (E. Solymossy and S. Merovci, 2006).

3. Discussions and conclusions

This research aims to creating an entrepreneur vision among the students of the universities in Kosovo. The results of the above analysis have help to answer the researching question which aims the involvement of entrepreneurship as an option of the career among the students.

3.1. Gender

In many studies about the entrepreneurship, women are considered to be less entrepreneurs than man and are less important. Based on a research made by all reviewed students, the great majority of interviewed students 82.5% are of the opinion that they are an appropriate person to become entrepreneurs. About 30% of women comparing with 53.5 of man think seriously to establish their own business.

The results collected are in a full accordance with the other studies related to the entrepreneurship such as for example Martinez et al (2007) which show that the entrepreneurship features are more attributed to man. Still, it is to mentioned that the difference between gender, according to the study performed by Ede at all (1898) show that there are no significant differences between man and women.

Nevertheless, if the conditions for support of entrepreneurship for women will be improved, this would have an impact in increasing the gender diversity in doing business, further economic growth of the country which would strengthen the decision making role of women in the decision making structures of the society of a country.

Consequently, this shows the need for strengthening of the role of women in the private sector, i.e. the need for a financial support of the women entrepreneurship in Kosovo by the government institutions of the country. It is to be mentioned that recently, there was a significant support marked toward women and women entrepreneurs in general.

3.2 The family background

The family has a significant impact in creating the trust for the potential and the possibilities which has a young man in creating the idea of self employment.

The wish of each individual in determining the career can be strengthened within the family which plays a significant role in initiating the characteristics which are in general linked with an enterprise. The relationship between close family members (parents, sisters and brothers) is one of the most important aspects of the family environment during the childhood and plays a crucial role in determining of the wish of a child/children in making the future career. The majority of children “imitate” what their parents have selected as their future career.

Around 51.9 % of student interlocutors have entrepreneurs in their families. According to a research, the main impact in the students' opinion related to entrepreneurship has their parents with 32.1% and other relatives with 17.9%. The outcome reached supports the idea that the ability to select the entrepreneurship as an option of the future career is affected by the family environment (Gurol and Atsan, 2006)

The outcome reached also is related to the theory of behavior which explains that the entrepreneurship behavior can be affected by a certain number of various factors such as parents, family members as well as close friends (Fridoline, 2009)

As a result, the students of the entrepreneur families have more abilities to establish new enterprises in order to get self employment, comparing with the students who have no family entrepreneur members.

3.3. The impact of the university curricula for an entrepreneurship career

According to Robinson et al (1991), students who enroll the entrepreneurship during their studies have an ability for an entrepreneurship career.

An approximate outcome has been produced by a conducted research where 61.1% of students' interlocutors, i.e 174 students consider that the university curricula has an average outcome, i.e 63 students (22.10%) think that the university curricula has a strong outcome in determining an entrepreneurship career.

3.4 The Economic curricula versus the non-Economic curricula

There is a difference between the Economic and non-Economic program, while as a result, 54 students of economy (27%) evaluate much better the impact of the university curricula for an entrepreneurship career, comparing with the students of non-Economic curricula, 9 students (10.60%) As an outcome, the students of economy have a higher entrepreneurship capability comparing with the students of non-Economic field. This result is compatible with the research conducted by Levenburg and Schwarz (2006), while according to them, the students who study the entrepreneurship subjects or other business subjects in their university curricula have more entrepreneurship abilities and feel as more entrepreneurs.

However, it is to be mentioned that there is enough space for other contrary studies where the establishment of an enterprise by students themselves sometimes can be “compulsory” in a situation when to find a job is very difficult.

Table 2. The Economic curricula versus non-Economic curricula. Evaluate yourselves the impact on you of the university curricula for an entrepreneurship career.

| | A lot | Average | A little | Non | Total |
|---------------------------|--------|---------|----------|-------|---------|
| Economic Number | 54 | 125 | 20 | 1 | 200 |
| Curricula % | 27.00% | 62.50% | 10.00% | 0.50% | 100.00% |
| Number | 9 | 49 | 21 | 6 | 85 |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Non-Economic | | | | | |
| Curricula | % | 10.60% | 57.60% | 24.70% | 7.10% |
| | Number | 63 | 174 | 41 | 7 |
| <i>Total</i> | % | 22.10% | 61.10% | 14.40% | 2.50% |
| | | | | | 100.00% |

3.5 The Public Universities versus Private Universities/Faculties

It is obvious that there is a difference between the students of public and private universities in terms of the evaluation of their curricula. The students of public universities have evaluated that the university curricula has a significant impact in determining the future entrepreneurship career, comparing with the students of private universities (more details are shown in Table 3)

Table 3. The Public University versus Private Universities: Evaluate, according to your opinion the impact of university curricula on you for your future entrepreneurship career.

| | | A lot | Average | A little | Non | <i>Total</i> |
|---------------------|--------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|------------|--------------|
| Public | Number | 40 | 127 | 30 | 7 | 204 |
| Universities | % | 19.60% | 62.30% | 14.70% | 3.40% | 100.00% |
| Private | Number | 23 | 47 | 11 | 0 | 81 |
| Universities | % | 28.40% | 58.00% | 13.60% | 0.00% | 100.00% |
| <i>Total</i> | Number | 63 | 174 | 41 | 7 | 285 |
| | % | 22.10% | 61.10% | 14.40% | 2.50% | 100.00% |

It is therefore recommended to persuade the management of both Public and Private Universities in Kosovo to include the subject entrepreneurship in the curricula of all Faculties and not in the Faculty of Economics only. The entrepreneurship is not important for establishing and development of the enterprises only, but it is important also for other fields of life, through which a lot of possibilities for the prosperity of our country would be created.

3.6 The support of the Government institutions in establishing new enterprises

The small economy, since 1999 has been mainly fostered by international aid, public sector and remittances. The role of private sector, and in particular of small enterprises has been weak. Despite this, Kosovo is still at the period of transition, while it is to be expected that the entrepreneurship and the establishment of small businesses will play a significant role toward a modern free market economy, and as a consequence toward the development and economic growth. Kosovo is suffering because of the de balance of payments where the imports are dominated by exports. This is mainly due to the fact that small and medium enterprises in Kosovo are not competitive at international level. In Kosovo, there is a lack of innovative companies with a rapid growth, which are the most significant contributors in creating new jobs in advanced western economies.

Over 50% of all small and medium enterprises operate in the trading sector which is characterized with small and non productive investment. This model, which has an approach of copying each other in a way “I will do the same” in small businesses limits the capacity of small and medium enterprises (SME) in generating new jobs. In sense of developing the policies, the Report “The Index of the Policies for SME in 2009” shows that Kosovo for many different reasons is still at the phase of completing of elementary institutional, legal and regulative requirements, which are related to the policies of SME (The Ministry of Trade and Industry of the Republic of Kosovo ((MTI), 2011).

The strategy of developing the SME in Kosovo during the year 2012-2016 with a vision until the year 2020). It is obvious that the institutions of the Republic of Kosovo, recently are paying a special attention to the entrepreneurship, having in mind the importance it has for the economic development of Kosovo. More than 99% of the enterprises in Kosovo are small or medium enterprises, therefore there are training programs being drafted for the employees, the categories of potential entrepreneurs, both for beginners and existing ones, as a compulsory measure in order for increasing the entrepreneurship performance, i.e of the small and medium enterprises in Kosovo, with an impact in increasing of productivity.

It is considered in this study that the establishment of an enterprise is currently more easy than it was 2-3 years ago, where 62.5 % of interlocutor students have this opinion, toward 34.4% of the interlocutor students who think that it became more difficult. Also in the research conducted, the external primary institutional factors which foster the establishment of new enterprises are as following:

- The improvement of the position of young people, women entrepreneurs as well as the minorities, according to 135 (47.00%) of the interlocutor students;
- The promotion and development of the entrepreneurship culture, with 121 (42.50%) of interlocutor students, and the third encouraging factor is
- The improvement of the approach of small and medium enterprises in finance, 116 (40.70%) of interlocutor students.

Consequently, the increased support by the government institutions has influence in the students perceptions in Kosovo to think or to take a decision for an entrepreneurship future career.

On the other hand, it is to be mentioned that beside the encouraging factors mentioned above, there are mainly three external institutional factors, considered to be as an obstacle in establishing new enterprises, which based on the research would be as following:

- A weak supporting mechanism in starting a new business, 156 interlocutor students, (54.70%);
- Legislation-laws and the application of law, 140 interlocutor students, (49.10%) and
- A limited number of financial products offered to small and medium enterprises, 104 interlocutor students, (36.50%).

Having in mind what was stated above, the Government of Kosovo has to consider the above mentioned factors and try to improve them as soon as possible.

3.7. The entrepreneurship features

According to Fridoline (2009), the individuals with entrepreneurship personal features such as the need for success, the ability to take a risk as well as the strong will to become independent, show a strong ability to get involved in entrepreneurship activities, comparing with the individuals who do not poses such features.

Conclusions

This study has been conducted in order to have an opinion on the perceptions of the students in Kosovo related to entrepreneurship as an option of the future career. The study has also conducted interviews with 285 student interlocutors, enrolled at the last year of studies at bachelor level at two public and two private universities as following: The University of Prishtina and The University "Haxhi Zeka" as public universities and The University AAB and the college FAMA as private universities in the municipalities of Prishtina, Peja Prizren and Gjilani.

The majority of student interlocutors were single in regard to their marital status, the average age was 23.6 years old while 51.9% were male and 48.1% female.

A number of 83.1% of student interlocutors have thought seriously to establish their own business in order to get self employed. This can be explained by the fact that the graduates in Kosovo are not quite certain in finding an employment, or sometimes even the salaries offered are not sufficient to meet their day to day needs while no way to meet any need such as holidays or buy luxury things.

The impact of training related to entrepreneurship is shown as successful and as an outcome, many students prefer to get involved in the entrepreneur activities, i.e. self-employment. It seems therefore to be a challenge in persuading the political decision making actors in the field of education to include the subject of entrepreneurship to be lectured not in the Faculty of Economics only, but also in all other faculties of the universities in Kosovo.

This study has also give a significant contribution in regard to students perceptions related to entrepreneurship, while a similar job can be conducted with other focus groups of the society.

The study has its limitations, because it is limited in a few universities of the country and has target the students of bachelor level, therefore the results may not be the same if this study would be conducted with other focus groups of the society in Kosovo. These would be the challenges of limits this study is faced with.

It is to be mentioned that the completion of this study will provide new opportunities for further research and studies. It is recommended that all decision making structures at both public and private universities in Kosovo as well as political actors of the education sector to include the subject of entrepreneurship to be lectured in all faculties, without any exception, because despite the reasons mentioned in the study, also because the entrepreneurship spirit is needed in all fields of life and not in establishing a new business only, but also to manage better the challenges and un expected issues life may bring. Having in mind the fact that Kosovo has a significant number of young people (the age is 15-24 years) in the society, 60.25 (The Agency of the Statistics of Kosovo, the census of population of the year 2011), students who are well informed are considered to be a valuable asset which will contribute in the economic development and the prosperity of the country.

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