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Demographic determinant of the entrepreneurship intentions. The case of Romania

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Abstract

The purpose of the paper is to analyze the gender-related differences and family background influences in the context of the choice of starting a business. The results of our study confirm that men have higher entrepreneurial intentions and consider that monetary rewards are very important. From the women point of view, more important is the sense of their lives. Our study shows also that family background influence entrepreneurial intentions. The article concludes with implications for entrepreneurship development. Limitations and directions for future research are also discussed.

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1. Introduction

The influence of starting new businesses on economic growth has led to an increasing number of studies approaching the factors that influence the development of entrepreneurial phenomenon, the study of entrepreneurial personality and the identification of the right motivations for starting a business. This article deals with the problem of entrepreneurial intentions and motivations, as well as the way people see the entrepreneurial success. These

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aspects have been assessed depending on the respondent gender and family background (if family members own or have previously owned a business).

2. Entrepreneurial process

Krueger et al. [10] and Shaver et al. [18] argued that entrepreneurship is a planned process, with a specific goal. In this respect, Fishbein and Ajzen [7] in their theory of planned behavior stated that the behavior of a person is influenced by the intention of that person to be involved in that behavior, and that the intentions of that person are also influenced by the attitude regarding that behavior. Similarly, the theory of Bandura [2] on self-efficacy states that the behavior relies on the perception of a person that really can do the intended activity.

If we start from the assumption that entrepreneurial process is an intentional action, as Ajzen [1] stated, and that self-efficacy influences the attitudes, then we can put the question concerning the factors that can influence these three variables. According to Scherer et al. [17], these influences can be divided in two types: specific to a person, therefore - internal attributes (personality, characteristics, etc.) or specific to a group, therefore external attributes (competition, consumers, investors, etc.).

In our paper we will only deal with individual influences.

3. Individual factors

The decision of a person to be involved in entrepreneurship is influenced by many individual variables. These can be classified as generally variables and psychological variables.

Among the demographic variables, two of them essentially influence the entrepreneurial activities: genre and family background. Crant [6], Matthews and Moser [12], and Verheul et al. [19] found that men manifest stronger than females their intentions and preferences to become entrepreneurs. However, leaving aside the intentions, there is an increased number of businesses owned by women, with women founded companies three times more than males, women holding more than 70% of all new start-up businesses", as stated Brenner and Tomkiewicz [5], and Hisrich and Peters [9].

Family background significantly influences people's intentions to start their own business, as Crant [6], and Matthews and Moser [12] noted. Matthews and Moser [12] states that is especially true for men. In the desire to become entrepreneur an important place takes the model from our lives, as found Birley and Westhead [4] and parents who own a business tend to be mentors for children who start their own business as reported Matthews and Moser [12], and Scheinberg et al. [16].

Entrepreneur's attitudes and values also influence the reasons to have your own business. Gatewood et al. [8], Naffziger et al. [13], Sasu [15], and Wilson et al. [20] show that amongst entrepreneurial motivations are contributing to community welfare, caring for family prosperity and money.

In spite of the fact that money can be motivational, several studies carried by Lowe and Schllenberg [11] and O'Connell [14], and Bird [3] showed that it is more important for entrepreneurs to control their own lives, and to do an interesting work than gaining more money.

Both personal values and behavioral motivators can be considered either intrinsic factors or extrinsic ones to a person. Among the extrinsic motivators for a potential entrepreneur we can find the financial gains, reflected in wages and benefits. The most important intrinsic rewards are the satisfaction of being your own boss, control of your own life and the whole responsibility for managing the business, as found Naffziger et al. [13]. Gatewood et al. [8] show that potential women entrepreneur tend to put a much greater emphasis on intrinsic factors than men, giving a higher importance of getting a higher salary.

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