

7th International Economics & Business Management Conference, 5th & 6th October 2015

## Influence of Outlook towards Work on Entrepreneurial Potential of Professional Sport Coaches in South Africa

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### Abstract

One of the ways to effectively address unemployment and revitalise the economy is through the rediscovery of the entrepreneur who takes risks, breaks new ground and innovates. Entrepreneurship therefore needs to be embedded into the basic fabric of society. Sport in South Africa has moved from being amateur-focused to being professional-focused, resulting in an increase in the number of professional sport coaches in the sport industry. Furthermore, heightened competition for coaching positions has intensified the volatility of coaches' jobs as well as their job security. The purpose of this study was, therefore, to explore the influence of outlook towards work on the entrepreneurial potential of professional sport coaches in South Africa. A quantitative research approach was adopted for the study. This involved the administration of questionnaires to 200 professional sport coaches. Frequencies and percentages were used to report on the data. In addition, a one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to investigate the impact of level of outlook towards work on entrepreneurial potential. The results indicated that sport coaches with high levels of motivation, aptitude and attitudes towards work have higher levels of entrepreneurial potential. Sport coaches who possess a positive attitude towards work, are knowledgeable about entrepreneurship and are motivated to excel may be more likely to achieve long term success than those who do not possess these qualities. Therefore, sport coaches who have these qualities should take advantage of this and embark on entrepreneurial ventures to escape the uncertainty associated with sport coaching.

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Peer-reviewed under responsibility of Universiti Tenaga Nasional

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship; unemployment; sport coach; motivation; entrepreneurial potential

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## 1. Introduction

Crime, corruption, mismanagement and unemployment experienced by the people of South Africa are a huge cause for concern. This, coupled by the global recession, has resulted in a staggering 200 000 to 300 000 jobs being lost rather than being created each year (Bruggermans, 2009). Shane, Locke and Collins (2003) are of the view that the afore-mentioned factors, which have contributed to the renewed interest in entrepreneurship as a possible solution to unemployment, may influence the entrepreneurial process.

It is not surprising, therefore, that it is now widely held that the only way for South Africa to effectively address unemployment and revitalise the economy is through the rediscovery of the entrepreneur who takes risks, breaks new ground and innovates (Co & Mitchell, 2006). Puffer and McCarthy (2001) posit that, despite the serious constraints, entrepreneurship is still identified as the business activity most likely to lead to the successful economic change in transitional economies. Entrepreneurship which is increasingly becoming an indispensable prerequisite for success in an increasingly globalised and competitive economy therefore needs to be embedded into the basic fabric of society. Interest in entrepreneurship has thus grown exponentially (Brennan, Wall & McGowan, 2005).

Entrepreneurship has attracted much attention both nationally and internationally recently. In South Africa there have been a number of initiatives which have been addressed regarding entrepreneurship. These include small business units being attached to universities, various research projects being conducted at macro-and micro levels, programmes and curricula instituted at training and educational institutions, the promulgation of the Small Business Bill, and the formation of organisations focusing on entrepreneurship such as the Umsobomvu Youth Fund, the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) and small business financing units at banks (Anon, 2008). The increased interest in entrepreneurship is as a result of the belief that it is a recipe for economic prosperity and reduced unemployment (Ball, 2005). Henry, Hill and Leich (2003) posit that entrepreneurship is critical for sustaining prosperity and creating new jobs.

The definition of entrepreneurship has been hotly debated in the literature. The lack of consensus on its definition may be attributed to the fact that the concept is multidisciplinary (Hebert & Link, 2009; Peneder, 2009) as it is linked to the fields of sociology, psychology, business management and economics. Henry et al. (2003) view entrepreneurship as the process of identifying opportunities in the marketplace, marshalling the resources to pursue these opportunities and committing the actions and necessary resources to exploit the opportunities for long-term personal gain. Echols and Neck (1998), on the other hand, expound entrepreneurship as a process, indicating that it takes place in different environments and settings which causes changes in the economic system through innovations brought about by individuals who generate or respond to economic opportunities that create value for both those individuals and society. Kao (1993) defines entrepreneurship as the process of doing something new and different for the purpose of creating wealth for oneself and adding value to society. In similar vein Ma and Tan (2006) are of the view that entrepreneurship is determined by the desire to achieve and the need to be creative and constantly aiming at being innovative. From the different definitions of entrepreneurship, it can be concluded that entrepreneurship is a result of actions of entrepreneurs. This implies that as an outcome of actions of entrepreneurs, there are driving forces for entrepreneurship apart from the characteristics of entrepreneurs. For the purpose of this study, the definition of Shane and Venkataraman (2000) is adopted. The authors define entrepreneurship as a process through which opportunities to create future goods and service are discovered, evaluated and exploited. They argue that the field of entrepreneurship involves the study of sources of opportunities; the process of discovery, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities. In this context, the entrepreneur is defined as the individual who discovers, evaluates, and exploits opportunities.

Kroon (1998) identified a few fundamental driving forces of entrepreneurship, which are influenced separately and collectively by the environment. These include the *entrepreneur* which relates to the fact that an entrepreneur is more important than technology, because s/he can change the product and utilise the opportunity creatively; the *opportunity* which relates to the fact that entrepreneurs constantly examine new ideas in search of opportunities which are attractive, sustainable, timely, anchored in products or service that adds value to the customer; and the *resources*, which relate to identifying, obtaining and managing the resources necessary to utilise the opportunity creatively and innovatively. There are several constraints that impede the development of entrepreneurship. These include the lack of relevant entrepreneurial knowledge and technical knowledge (Urban, Van Vuuren & Barreira, 2008), lack of preparedness and knowledge of costs (Lau & Busenitz, 2001), lack of resources (Aldrich & Martinez, 2001) and inexperience. Despite these constraints the importance of entrepreneurship has pervaded all sectors of the

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