

FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING PERCEPTION

Iulia C. MUREȘAN¹, Felix H. ARION¹, Camelia I. ALEXA¹, Marioara ILEA¹

e-mail: iulia.muresan@usamvcluj.ro

Abstract

This paper presents the results of a research conducted in four counties of Romania regarding the real situation of the entrepreneurship. The population investigated is represented by the participants to training programs organized by FAER. The random sample method was used to establish the size of the sample. The data were analyzed by using the Chi-Square test. The results revealed the fact that the gender of the respondents and the monthly income influence their perception regarding the quality, content, utility of the curricula on these courses on one hand, and the perception of the professionalism of the lectures on the other hand. Having all these information future efforts need to be done in order to adapt the content and the teaching methods to the target group in order to improve the quality of the delivered service

Key words: quality, courses, participants

When a person decides to become an entrepreneur, the decision depends on the capacity of fulfillment of four specific variables (Saphero, 1982): the situation, psychological, sociological and economic variables. In order to validate the variable of the situation it is necessary to exist a break in the dynamic forces (whether internal or external) (Merce et al., 2010) that keep a person in so-called "comfort zone". If people, in general, by their nature, will act to limit the possible risks and do not want leave the "comfort zone", there are, too, those people who believe that the achievement of their potential it can be reached only by overcoming the limitations imposed by fear of failure and by materializing the desire of success (Adams, 2001). The items that can cause an equilibrium disrupts for a person and, thus, drive towards finding a new form of stability - including entrepreneurship are either negative (transfer to another job, another city, unemployment etc.) or positive (encouragement from customers, friends, etc.). In this view, entrepreneurship can be considered (Toboșaru *et al.*, 2010; Maurer, 2001) as the discovery of new opportunities and ideas outside of the area a person usually control.

The second variable that determines the transformation of a person into an entrepreneur, the psychological variables, assumes the person's human nature, temperament and personality that manifests itself, ultimately, though the desire to action.

Even the very simply overcome of comfort zone often induce the feel of success, even if economic outcomes of the business are not as good as they were planned to be (Hardy, 1994).

According to a study of the European Union (13, 2010), men and the young people are more prone to entrepreneurial attitudes than women and the elderly.

Sociological variable takes into consideration, primarily but not exclusively, the direct social environment of the person, evidenced by the response and considerations that the involvement into entrepreneurship can generate from friends, family, neighbors and society, motivated, generally, by the social culture. The key cultural elements that influences the potential entrepreneurs include language (verbal and nonverbal), values and attitudes, habits and traditions, material culture, aesthetics and education level (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996). The European Commission studies (13, 2010) indicates that persons which grown up on an entrepreneurial environment within the family and which lives in urban areas are more interested in becoming entrepreneurs.

Finally, the economic variable is a variable that should be considered not only as a possibility to obtain the required inputs - the resources for investment, regardless of their nature: financial, material, information, legislative, and especially human, as experts currently consider that on the current business environment the strategic resource

¹ USAMV, Cluj-Napoca

is the human capital, replacing the financial capital (Porumb, 2001) - but also in terms of their opportunity cost (Key, Edwards and Duffy, 2004). European Commission Eurobarometer (36, 2010) shows that for 24% of Europeans, the main reasons they are not involved into entrepreneurship is the lack of financial funds.

The determination of the factors which influence the willingness to participate to training courses (Van Vianen *et. al.*, 2011) can help providers to improve the quality of their services by adapting the curricula to the realities of the economic, social and political environment and improving the effectiveness of the work productivity at the end (Garavan *et. al.*, 2008). Also they can find out which are the main strengths and weaknesses of the lectures on the other hand, from the participants points of view.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

In order to achieve the research objectives, it was established that the studied target group to be formed by the participants to training courses in in field of entrepreneurship in four Romanian's counties: Mures, Suceava, Arges and Nasaud. The sample of the target group was created using the random sample with continuous variable for an error limit of 2% and a probability of guarantee the results of 95%, based on information provided by the Fundația pentru Promovarea Agriculturii și Economiei Regionale, Reghin.

The limit error in absolute value was computed based on the formula (Merce și Merce, 2010):

$$\Delta_{\bar{x}} = \frac{R_{\bar{x}} \cdot X_{\max}}{100} = \frac{2 \cdot 79}{100} = 1.58 \quad (1)$$

Where $\Delta_{\bar{x}}$ is the error limit in absolute value, $R_{\bar{x}}$ is the error limit in relative value, while X_{\max} is the maximum value of characteristic age.

Volume of the sample (n) was computed based on the average age of the target group, determined on a previous research as being 35.74 years old:

$$\sigma_x^2 = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^k (x_j - \bar{x})^2 N_j}{\sum_{j=1}^k N_j} = 130.39 \quad (2)$$

where σ_x^2 is dispersion, and X is the average age of the target group.

To determine how respondents perceive the impact and the utility of entrepreneurship training courses they attended, there were used to behavior factual questions that allowed achieving information on specific training programs, information related to the involvement in entrepreneurship activities etc. There were used,

as well, questions about opinion and attitudes, which allowed the measurement of the direction and the intensity of attitudes to courses attended, their utility, their running conditions, their organizational conditions, the quality and usefulness of the didactic and materials provided .

As analytical method of research it was chosen Hi-square criterion

The volume of the sample it was computed based on the following formula (Merce, Merce and Dumitraș, 2010):

$$n = \frac{k^2 \cdot \sigma_x^2}{\Delta_{\bar{x}}^2 + \frac{k^2 \cdot \sigma_x^2}{N}} = \frac{(1.96)^2 \cdot 130.39}{(1.58)^2 + \frac{(1.96)^2 \cdot 130.39}{1608}} = 178.39 \text{ persons} \cong 178 \text{ persons} \quad (3)$$

where n is the volume of the sample and k is the probability of guarantee.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The estimation of the utility of entrepreneurship courses, whose impact is analyzed, reveals that participants do not consider all the courses as having the same utility.

Thus, the most useful course (considered to be "very useful" for almost 3 of 4 respondents) is considered the one about of the project on a small investment, but also one that provides information on how to analyze financial performance of SMEs (80% of respondents expected it to be useful and very helpful). The reasons are diverse, including the fact that the ones that previously participated in other entrepreneurship courses considered to be most useful to attend complementary courses.

To complete the overall image on perception on quality of the professional training courses, it was used the Hi-square test. There have been issued hypothesis that between the gender of the respondents and the appropriate quality elements there is no relation. Null hypothesis was accepted for the allegations: "The quality of information provided" and "Availability of training courses".

Testing the relation between gender of the respondents and "The clarity of the process of transmission of information" it was noted that calculated Hi-square (14.58) is higher than the theoretical Hi-square (13.27) for a probability guarantee of 99% and 4 degrees of freedom. Null hypothesis is rejected, between the two variables there is a strong relation. It can be appreciated the fact that, based on Pearson's coefficient, between the two variables there is a low intensity relation, the women appreciating more favorably the clarity and transmission of information (tab. 1).

Another hypothesis was issued: "Gender does not influence the perception of utility of provided information". After testing the hypothesis with Hi-square test, the null hypothesis was rejected. Calculated Hi-square value (14.12) is

higher than the theoretical value (13.27) for a probability guarantee of 99% and 4 degrees of freedom. Between the two variables there is a distinct significant relation of reduced intensity. As

described above, women perceive the information provided as being more useful than the men does.

Table 1

Coefficients for testing the relation between the gender of respondents and “The clarity of the process of transmission of information”

Significance level		0.05	0.01	0.001
CHITEST (Sig value)	0.0056		**	
Degree of freedom	4.0000			
CHIINV (Chi theoretical)		9.48	13.27	18.46
CHIINV (Chi compute)	14.58			
Pearson Chi-Square	0.264			

Regarding the relation between gender of respondents and the schedule of courses, it was found that between the two variables there is a very intense relation, Hi-square calculated value (19.87) is higher than the theoretical Hi-square for probability of error of 0.01% and 4 degrees of freedom. Pearson's coefficient of 0.305 indicates a relation of average intensity between the two variables. This can be explained by the fact that the share of men who are entrepreneurs or managers is 36.20% inside of the sample, while the share of women is just 19.20%. Thus for men, the time represent a more limited resource, being involved in various activities during a working day.

There was issued the null hypothesized that gender of the respondents does not influence the perception of quality and preparation activities of the courses. The calculations proved that calculated Hi-squared value (18.52) is higher than the theoretical Hi-square (18.46) for a probability of error of 0.01% and 4 degrees of freedom, so the null hypothesis is rejected, between the two there is a very significant relation. Pearson's coefficient of 0.295 suggests the existence of a relation of low intensity between the two variables. As in previous cases, women evaluated more positively the training courses. This may be explained by the fact that, of the total women from the sample, only 59.20% have university degree, while in case of the men the share is of 72.50%. The share of women who have previously participated in training courses is 36.80%, while that share of men who participated in training courses is 39.10%.

The null hypothesis: "Gender does not influence the level of appreciation of quantity / of provided information" is rejected. Theoretical Hi-value (9.49) for a probability guarantee of 99% and 4 degrees of freedom is lower than the calculated Hi-square (11.42), so between the two variables exist a significant relation of low intensity, the Pearson's coefficient value being 0.238. This phenomenon can be explained by the profile of respondents by gender related to the education

level and the previous participation in training courses.

Analyzing the relation between the income and the perception of courses quality, it has been found that income levels influence the respondents' perception of "quality of information provided." Calculated Hi-square value (27.51) for a probability of error of 5% and 16 degrees of freedom is higher than the theoretical Hi-square (26.29), so the null hypothesis is rejected, between the two variables there is a significant relation. As the income of respondents increases, the perception of quality of provided information decreases. This phenomenon can be explained by the fact that additional financial resources offers to the respondents the opportunity to participate and to access the different categories of information to ensure a higher degree of training.

The null hypothesis was rejected, too, for the following cases: "The income does not affect the quality and preparation of activities" and "Income does not affect the accessibility of training courses". In the second case it was found that lower income people appreciate more favorably the accessibility, this can be attributed to the large number of human resource development training programs carried out in recent years, which is mainly addressed to vulnerable groups. As income increases, the appreciation of quality and preparation activities is more favorable. In fact, the organization of the courses was one of the most positive aspects mentioned by the participants of the training courses.

Regarding the influence of profession of respondents on perceptions of quality of training courses though with eight statements, the null hypothesis was rejected for three statements.

For the first statement, there was issued the hypothesis: "The profession of respondents does not influence the perception of quality of provided information", and theoretical Hi-squared value (21.02) for a probability guarantee of 95% and 12 degrees of freedom is lower than the calculated

value (24.95), so the null hypothesis is rejected, between the two variables there is a significant relation. Pearson's coefficient (0.338) shows a moderate relation between the two variables. So, the higher are the financial resources involved in the business and the deeper are involved as the respondents in organization management, the lower is the level of perception of quality of provided information is lower. This is a result of the fact that the courses are adapted to a medium level, for being widely accessible.

Null hypothesis "The profession of respondents does not influence the perceptions of schedule of courses" was not accepted. Calculated Hi-square value (21.80) is lower than the theoretical Hi-square value (21.02) for a probability guarantee of 95% and 12 degrees of freedom. Between the two variables there is a significant relationship of moderate intensity, the Pearson's coefficient value being (0.318).

Between the profession and the quantity / content of provided information there is a distinctly significant relation. Calculated Hi-square value (32.16) is higher than the theoretical Hi-square value (26.21) for a probability guarantee of 99% and 12 degrees of freedom. In this case, too, those who appreciated the amount and the content at a lower quality level are the managers, followed by entrepreneurs. Regarding the influence of educational level on estimating the quality level in terms of the eight statements, it was found that there is no relation between them.

CONCLUSIONS

As results of the research, it was found that it is necessary to adapt the tools for education and training of people in entrepreneurship, because the perception on this field raised area is very different, both in terms of willingness to engage, as well as the considerations on their utility.

Socio-educational profile of the studied areas require the creation of various professional training courses, designed, on one hand of potential high school graduated beneficiaries, and on the other hand, those who have already completed university education, since the easiest access to higher education has generated in recent years a large number of university graduates who validated themselves only partially on the labor market. Duration, level and teaching supports for the two types of courses should be adapted to the understanding and knowledge level of target group to maximize their impact.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was supported by Fundația pentru Promovarea Agriculturii și Economiei Regionale, Reghin FEAR, contract no. 135/04.04.2012 „Impact of the impact of implementation of the Project POSDRU/92/3.1/S/61872 „Entrepreneurship, from Idea to Success”.

REFERENCES

- Adams, B., 2001** - *The Everything Time Management Book. How to get it all done and still have time for you!*, Adams Media Corporation, Avon, Massachusetts, USA
- Garavan, T. N., Walton, J., Cross, C., and Carbery, R. 2008** - *Mapping the Context and Practice of Training, Development and HRD in European Call Centres*, *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 32, 612-728
- Hardy, Cynthia, 1994** - *Managing Strategic Action. Mobilizing Change. Concepts, Reading and Cases*, Sage Publication, London, UK
- Key, R. D., W. M. Edwards, Patricia A. Duffy, 2004** - *Farm Management 5th Edition*, The McGraw-Hill, New York, USA
- Maurer, T.J., 2001** - *Career-relevant Learning and Development, Worker Age, and Beliefs about Self-efficacy for Development*, *Journal of Management*, 27, 123-140
- Merce, E., Ileana Andreica, F. H. Arion, Cristina Pocol, Dumitraș Diana, 2010** - *Managementul și gestiunea unităților economice cu profil agricol*, Editura Digital Data Cluj, Cluj-Napoca, România
- Merce, E., C. C. Merce, Diana Dumitraș, 2010** - *Prelucrarea statistică a datelor*, Editura AcademicPres, Cluj-Napoca, România
- Porumb, Elena, 2001** - *Managementul Resurselor Umane*, Ed. Fundației pentru Studii Europene, Cluj-Napoca, România
- Shapero A., 1982** - *Social Dimensions of Entrepreneurship*, in *The Encyclopedia of Entrepreneurship*, eds. Calvin A. Kent, Donald L. Sexton, and Karl H. Vesper, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, pag. 72-90
- Toboșaru, Irina, Ileana Modreanu, M. Piti, 2010** - *Incubatoarele de afaceri -oportunitate de dezvoltare a start-up-urilor din România*, Fundația Post-Privatizare, http://www.postprivatizare.ro/romana/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Studiu-incubato_arena_final1.pdf, accesat 04/12/2010
- Van Vianen, A.E.M., Dalhoeven, B.A.G.W., and De Pater, I.E. 2011** - *Aging and Training and Development Willingness: Employee and Supervisor Mindset*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 32, 226-247
- Zeithaml A. Valerie, Mary Jo. Bitner, 1996** - *Services Marketing*, The McGraw-Hill, Inc., Singapore, UK
- *** - 2008**, Newsletter 4/09, Banca Comercială Română, http://www.bcr.ro/sPortal/download?documentPath=bcr_ro_0785_ACTIVE%2FDownloads%2FEUOFFICE%2FEU_Office_BCR_Newsletter_4_2009__romana.pdf, accesat 04/12/2010