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Aspirations towards Entrepreneurship and Self-awareness among Young Female Population in the North Kosovo & Metohija



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ABSTRACT

Encouraging entrepreneurial culture and developing entrepreneurial education are key factors for the development of modern economies and society as a whole. Although the number of female entrepreneurs is growing, it is still relatively low, and one of the ways to achieve the gender balance in the field of entrepreneurship is the entrepreneurial education that will introduce women with the ability of the business venture through the phenomena of education.

The aim of this research is to examine the aspirations and intentions towards entrepreneurship in female undergraduate students and to understand which factors influence students' entrepreneurial intention and behavior. The survey was conducted among the female students' population of the final years of the University of Pristina temporary seated in Kosovska Mitrovica as well as female students of

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the fourth year of secondary schools in the North Kosovo and Metohija (the North K&M).

We find that the half of respondents never engaged in entrepreneurial activities and that one-third of them were involved in such activities by helping parents, friends or acquaintances. Female students in North Kosovo & Metohija generally recognize and highly rank qualities such as a desire for success, confidence, creativity, and initiative as very important for engaging in entrepreneurial activities. Their previous experience and positive attitude towards entrepreneurship are promising factors for the future growth of the number of female entrepreneurs in North K&M.

KEY WORDS: *entrepreneurship, female entrepreneurship, economic growth, employment, development, Kosovo & Metohija*

Introduction

The recent global trend is increasing attention towards supporting different initiatives in promoting entrepreneurship, creating new entrepreneurial ventures and new jobs. This trend is a direct consequence of the evidence that has shown that entrepreneurial endeavors contribute to economic growth, increased productivity, and increase of employment. Different studies, including GEM (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor) report, demonstrate the ability of entrepreneurship to solve different problems related to unemployment (Storey, 1994; White & Reynolds, 1996) economic and regional growth (Neck et al., 2003). This positive impact has led many countries worldwide, to paid serious attention to entrepreneurship, as a potentially fundamental solution to various problems, including a lack of economic growth, increasing employment rates, as well as possibility of providing work for graduating students.

While entrepreneurship has been viewed as crucial to economic growth and development in developing countries, surprisingly little research has been conducted on the factors that influence individuals' intentions to start new businesses (Karimi et al., 2010; 2013), in particular intentions of those who are still in the educational system. Therefore, it is crucial to understand what factors influence college students' entrepreneurial intention and behavior within sound theoretical frameworks in order to develop and implement effective educational strategies. In other words, understanding determinants of entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors can help entrepreneurial educa-

tors, consultants, advisors and policy makers to find the right way to foster entrepreneurship at universities and consequently in society.

Despite the increasing the number and share of women entrepreneurs (De Bruin et al., 2006; Brush, 2006), entrepreneurship is still a male-stereotyped domain and associated with masculine traits (Ahl, 2006; Lewis, 2006) while number of female entrepreneurs is still significantly lower than male (Blanchflower, 2004; Langowitz & Minniti, 2007; Marlow, 2002). According to the World Bank, globally only 25% to 33% of all private businesses are owned or operated by women. There are global trends that show the insufficient number and share of women entrepreneurs (Kelley et al., 2013). One of the ways to achieve the gender balance in the field of entrepreneurship is the entrepreneurial education that will introduce women with the ability of the business venture through the phenomena of education (Jones, 2014). Policy-makers and entrepreneurship educators believe that entrepreneurial education (EE) can promote the accumulation of entrepreneurial skills and knowledge in students of both sexes (European Commission, 2008; Jones, 2014; Kuratko, 2005). It is very important to find out if University students have any intention to start up their own business, and the way the Universities can influence on students' attitudes and their knowledge about entrepreneurship with the aim to facilitate a tendency to create their own business in the future (Wang & Wong, 2004).

In the last few years, the number of female entrepreneurs is growing, therefore, many researchers and the academic community pay more attention to this phenomenon. Female entrepreneurship is of particular importance from various reasons (Welter, 2004). First, female entrepreneurs create jobs for themselves, thus offering an alternative to unemployment that will give women the opportunity to balance work and family responsibilities, while improving family welfare and social cohesion. Also, the establishment of small enterprises owned by women can help in increasing women's autonomy and provide them the opportunity to have a more active and representative role in the country's economic and political life. The development of female entrepreneurship could result in a more successful and faster transition process by the improvement of innovative capacities and private sector development.

The northern part of Kosovo and Metohija (K&M), as well as its whole territory, has become UN protectorate after the 1999 NATO bombing. From then on, the formal power is in the hands of UNMIK administration and temporary Kosovo institutions. Then, on February 17, 2008, Kosovo pro-

claimed independence which most of the Western countries have soon recognized. In the meantime, till the moment of signing the Brussels Agreement made between governments of Serbia and Kosovo, most of the institutions of the Republic of Serbia has existed at this area, especially at the north of the province. After making the Brussels Agreement, a significant number of these institutions has been integrated into the system of Kosovo. At the north of K&M, only Health and Education system are still integrated within the system of the Republic of Serbia. In the middle of economic and social devastation and constant political crisis, the lack of economic activities in this region surely could be noticed. The constant crisis and weak Rule of Law bring to the fact that there are almost any interested investors and investments for this area. Thus, the most of young people who graduated, try to employ themselves in the public institutions. As it is not possible that all those young people get employ in the public institutions, the idea of researchers was to examine the aspirations of the female student population as its most sensitive category.

The aim of this research is to examine the aspirations and intentions towards entrepreneurship in female undergraduate students at the University of Pristina and high schools' students. For this purpose, we applied the survey method, in order to get information from the female student at the final year of studies, which will help us clarify the analyzed phenomenon. The article has the following structure. After the introduction, the literature review is presented. The second part gives the literature and hypothetical frameworks. Based on literature review, defined hypotheses and identified constrains, we structured questionnaires, and the third part of the paper relates to data analysis and research results. The conclusion unambiguously shows that female students in North K&M generally recognize and highly rank those qualities that are necessary for starting a job or engaging in entrepreneurial activities. This gives a promising light to entrepreneurial culture and environment in North K&M.

Literature Review and Methodological Framework

Besides more evident importance that female entrepreneurship achieves during the past decade, there are still no clearly defined factors which could help females to engage in entrepreneurship. One of the ways that will encourage female's participation in business activities is to examine intentions and aspirations in women while still being at the faculties. It is necessary to

explore which determinants have a key influence on female students' intention for entrepreneurship. Various studies show mixed results about the factors that influence entrepreneurial intention.

Adnan et al. (2012) showed that attitude and perceived behavioral control are major determinants of entrepreneurial intention with significant positive effect. In a related study, Tong et al. (2011) using multiple regression analysis, showed that entrepreneurial intention is predicted by the need for achievement, family business background, and subjective norm. The result suggests that students will choose to become entrepreneurs if there is a need for achievement when they come from a family that engages in business and if there is support from close individuals such as family members and friends. Peng et al. (2012) provide findings for entrepreneurial intention among university students in China with the use of the chi-square tests. They showed that subjective norm, entrepreneurial attitude, and entrepreneurial self-efficacy had a positive influence on entrepreneurial intention while entrepreneurial resistance caused by lack of funds, time, family support, business skills and entrepreneurship education negatively affect students' entrepreneurial intention.

Using descriptive statistics, Kume et al. (2013) provided evidence of the positive effects of subjective norm on entrepreneurial interest among undergraduate students in Albania. Students whose parents had entrepreneurial experience were the majority of respondents who indicated interest in starting their own business after graduation. A study by Khuong and An (2016) showed that prior entrepreneurial experience, external environments such as availability of loans and access to target markets as well as perceived feasibility, positively influenced students desire to engage in entrepreneurship in Vietnam. On the other hand, personal traits, the need for autonomy and achievement surprisingly deter interest in entrepreneurial engagement. In the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Obembe et al. (2014) tried to identify the factors that influence on career choices in students and how university entrepreneurship education may affect on the conscience of students to start-up business. Also, they determine that gender differences do not substantially affect the perception of entrepreneurship. Ekpe and Mat (2012) examine the influence of entrepreneurial orientation (self-efficacy and education) on intentions in students at three universities in Nigeria. Results show that entrepreneurial orientation have a significant positive impact on entrepreneurial intentions among the students. They also

determined that social environment moderates the relation between the entrepreneurial orientation and intentions among the students.

Rakićević et al. (2015) examined the entrepreneurial readiness in students in Serbia. They were exploring the relation between particular students' characteristics and their readiness on entrepreneurship that is measured through 5 dimensions: entrepreneurial intentions, readiness on entrepreneurship, the attractiveness of this profession, study orientation, and passion at work. Results show that students of management have more entrepreneurial readiness and they have expressed higher intentions in regard to students of engineering. Ninković and Knežević Florić (2016) examine the presence of entrepreneurial intentions in students of social and humanistic science at the University of Novi Sad, as well as having the insight in expressing the entrepreneurial preferences in regard to sex and academic achievement in students. Results show that students mostly express the focus on achievement, then acceptance of risks and at least the confidence in their own abilities. It is not defined whether there are statistically important sex differences in the level of entrepreneurial aspiration presence. Also, the measures of manifesting the entrepreneurial inclinations in regard to academic achievement of students were not determined.

Based on our previous experience and literature review, we have formulated our hypotheses:

- H1: Female student do not have entrepreneurial experience and rarely engage in entrepreneurial activities
- H2: Previous entrepreneurial experience is important in developing personal characteristic for entrepreneurship
- H3: Students have qualities that are necessary for starting a job or engaging in entrepreneurial activities.

Based on literature review, defined hypotheses and identified constraints, we structured questionnaire. For the purpose of data collection, structured questionnaires were distributed to female students of all faculties in the northern part of K&M. Questions included in the questionnaire were stipulated in a way that allows further processing and statistical analysis.

The questionnaire consisted of three parts. In the first part, respondents gave answers that reflect their socio-demographic characteristics: age, urban or rural surrounding, attending high school or university, type of institution, and average grade. The second part of the questionnaire contained questions that were used to test respondents attitudes towards entrepreneurial experience. The last part contained questions about the self-perception of capabili-

ties for entrepreneurship. Each question in the questionnaire is given with a concise explanation, in order to eliminate possible errors and ambiguities of the respondents.

The survey was conducted at the University of Pristina and high schools in the northern part of K&M. The study included 110 respondents, 48 from high schools and 62 from the University. The response rate was rather high, at the level of 56%. The collection of primary statistical material was carried out from November 2018 to February 2019. The table 1 shows the distribution of basic characteristics of the sample.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristic of the sample

Age	Frequency	Percent
18	42	38,2
19	6	5,5
21	16	14,5
22	26	23,6
23	20	18,2
Living in		
Urban area	60	54,5
Rural area	50	45,5
Go to		
	Frequency	Percent
High school (HS)	48	43,6
Faculty (F)	62	56,4

Type of institution

High school			Faculty		
F=48			F=62		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Economic HS	15	31.3	Faculty of Economics	18	29
Gymnasium	19	39.6	Faculty of Technical Sciences	18	29
Technical HS	14	29.1	Faculty of Arts	4	6.5
			Faculty of Philosophy	8	12.9
			Faculty of Natural Sciences	14	22.6

Average grade			Average grade		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
excellent	32	66.7	6-7	10	16.13
very good	10	20.8	7-8	24	38.71
good	6	12.5	8-9	18	29.03
			9-10	10	16.13

Source: Author(s) based on research results

The vast majority of respondents from high schools were at the age of 18, while from university the age ranged from 21 to 23. Over 50% of respondents are living in a urban area. Students from three high schools participated in the research Economic, Gymnasium, and Technical School. Regarding university students, five institutions were included: Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Technical Sciences, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Philosophy, Faculty of Natural Sciences.

Data Analysis and Results

Data analysis was performed by using MS Office Excel and SPSS.

The primary purpose of this research was to examine the aspirations and intentions towards entrepreneurship in female undergraduate students. First, two questions were created so we can directly approach them and determine did they have any entrepreneurial experience. The respondents could choose multiple answers when asked about initiatives towards entrepreneurship. Since it was a multiple-choice question, we here have 114 initiatives in total. To our surprise, almost 50% of respondents have never engaged in any kind of entrepreneurial activities. Those who have, most often help their parent in running their private business (32.73%). Twenty percent of respondents have worked at other entrepreneurs or found additional ways to earn money. Out of 62 entrepreneurial initiatives, most of the respondents have proven themselves that they have the ability to earn (34.48%). This characteristic is building on their entrepreneurial character and is increasing the probability that they will engage in entrepreneurial activity in the future. About 24% of them increased their motivation, learned to appreciate money, or earned money.

Table 1: Results of the attitudes of entrepreneurial experience (part I)

Question	Number	Percentage	
Have you demonstrated incentives towards entrepreneurship in your life-time? (multiply answers)	Yes, I have helped my parents (relatives, friends, acquaintances) in running their private businesses	36	32.73%
	Occasionally, I have worked at other entrepreneurs to earn money	12	10.91%
	I found additional ways to make money	10	9.09%
	I have other entrepreneurial initiatives	4	3.64%
	No, I did not have entrepreneurial experiences/I did not earn money myself	52	47.27%
TOTAL		114*	
Are you satisfied with the effects of your entrepreneurial incentives? (only those who had entrepreneurial experience N=62)	Yes, I have earned some money	14	24.14%
	Yes, I have proven the ability to earn	20	34.48%
	Yes, my motivation for achievement has increased	14	24.14%
	Yes, I learned to appreciate money	14	24.14%
TOTAL		62**	

Source: Author(s) based on research results

In examining the entrepreneurial tendencies of students one of the tasks was to examine the perception of students about the necessary qualities that should be held by an entrepreneur. The respondents were asked to evaluate offered psychological characteristics of entrepreneurs on Likert's five-step scale. Students first assessed how previous entrepreneurial experience has influenced the development of the personal characteristic. The results show that they rated the highest desire for achievement (4.72), self-esteem (4.31), creativity and initiative (4.23), ability to control (4.04). Other characteristics

were rated lower than 4. It is interesting that student rated, rather high all characteristics, indicating that they consider previous entrepreneurial experience important in developing personal characteristic for entrepreneurship.

Next, we examined the psychological characteristics, necessary for the founders of own business. Results show that students consider self-esteem (4.75), desire for achievement (4.63) and persistence (4.62) as three most important. All other characteristic, except tendency towards risk are rated with scores higher that 4. However, standard deviation on the characteristic tendency towards risk is the highest and at the level of 1.15, indicating that student have different opinions on this characteristic.

Finally, we tried to determine do the students have defined characteristics need for entrepreneurial activities. Results show, that the respondents identify needed characteristics for entrepreneurial activities in themselves. They claim their three major characteristics are desire for achievement (4.61), persistence (4.58) and commitment (4.56). However, in this case scores are much lower. They rated following personal characteristics below three: ability to concretize ideas, tendency towards risk, independency and autonomy, and financial motivation (table 3).

Table 2: Results of the self-perception of capabilities for entrepreneurship

	Total sample N=110				High School Respondents N=48				Respondents from University N=62			
	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
self-esteem	1	5	4.309	0.896	3	5	4,542	0,713	1,00	5,00	4,129	0,983
desire for achievement	3	5	4.718	0.577	4	5	4,792	0,410	3,00	5,00	4,661	0,676
ability to concretize ideas	2	5	3.991	0.963	3	5	4,146	0,875	2,00	5,00	3,871	1,016
tendency towards risk	1	5	3.527	1.115	2	5	3,750	1,101	1,00	5,00	3,355	1,103
ability to control	1	5	4.036	1.057	1	5	4,208	1,030	1,00	5,00	3,903	1,067
creativity and initiative	2	5	4.227	0.895	2	5	4,208	0,922	2,00	5,00	4,242	0,881

Please rate how much the previous entrepreneurial experience has influenced the development of the following personal characteristic (from 1 – the least to 5 – the most)

	Total sample N=110				High School Respondents N=48				Respondents from University N=62			
	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
independence and autonomy	1	5	3.909	1.138	2	5	3,708	0,922	2,00	5,00	3,871	1,000

Please rate which of the following psychological characteristics, in your opinion, are necessary for the founders of your own business (from 1 – the least to 5 – the most)

self-esteem	3	5	4.746	0.549	3	5	4,792	,582	3	5	4,710	,524
desire for achievement	2	5	4.627	0.788	3	5	4,750	,601	2	5	4,532	,900
ability to concretize ideas	2	5	4.336	0.881	2	5	4,292	,944	3	5	4,371	,834
tendency towards risk	1	5	3.864	1.145	1	5	4,000	1,238	2	5	3,758	1,066
ability to control	1	5	4.100	0.986	1	5	4,417	,964	2	5	3,855	,938
creativity and initiative	2	5	4.227	1.037	2	5	4,313	,949	2	5	4,161	1,104
independence and autonomy	2	5	4.236	0.845	2	5	4,438	,897	3	5	4,081	,775
financial motivation	2	5	4.364	0.885	2	5	4,458	,874	2	5	4,290	,894
energy	1	5	4.382	0.898	3	5	4,625	,703	1	5	4,194	,989
optimism	2	5	4.446	0.841	2	5	4,500	,967	3	5	4,403	,735
persistence	2	5	4.618	0.717	2	5	4,708	,743	3	5	4,548	,694
commitment	1	5	4.527	0.854	1	5	4,667	,907	3	5	4,419	,801

Which of these characteristics do you see in yourself?

self-esteem	2	5	4.273	0.877	3	5	4,500	,799	2	5	4,097	,900
desire for achievement	1	5	4.609	0.779	3	5	4,687	,552	1	5	4,548	,918
ability to concretize ideas	2	5	3.936	0.921	2	5	4,083	1,108	2	5	3,823	,736
tendency towards risk	1	5	3.509	1.147	1	5	3,500	1,368	2	5	3,516	,953
ability to control	2	5	4.155	0.848	3	5	4,417	,800	2	5	3,952	,895

	Total sample N=110				High School Respondents N=48				Respondents from University N=62			
	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
creativity and initiative	2	5	4.091	0.973	2,00	5	4,042	1,166	3	5	4,129	,799
independence and autonomy	2	5	3.882	0.875	2	5	3,875	,981	2	5	3,887	,791
financial motivation	2	5	3.991	0.883	2	5	4,125	,866	2	5	3,887	,889
energy	2	5	4.264	0.842	2	5	4,375	,890	2	5	4,177	,800
optimism	1	5	4.282	0.997	1	5	4,396	1,0466	2	5	4,193	,955
persistence	2	5	4.582	0.871	2	5	4,625	,799	2	5	4,548	,935
commitment	1	5	4.564	0.894	2	5	4,604	,764	1	5	4,532	,987

Source: Author(s) based on research results

Ranks for high school respondents and respondents from university are almost the same, with the note that high school respondents on average rated higher all characteristics (table 4).

Table 3: Ranks for results of the self-perception of capabilities for entrepreneurship

	How much the previous entrepreneurial experience has influenced the development of the following personal characteristic	Which of the following psychological characteristics, in your opinion, are necessary for the founders of your own	Which of these characteristics do you see in yourself?
self-esteem	2	1	5
desire for achievement	1	2	1
ability to concretize ideas	5	8	10
tendency towards risk	7	12	12
ability to control	4	11	7
creativity and initiative	3	10	8
independence and autonomy	6	9	11
financial motivation	/	7	9

energy	/	6	6
optimism	/	5	4
persistence	/	3	2
commitment	/	4	3

Source: Author(s) based on research results

Conclusion

The culture that supports entrepreneurship and economic development sets up education on entrepreneurs as the central theme of the value system and is the foundation of the socio-economic progress. Only dynamic education and knowledge can foster and develop creativity and innovation in modern society. Encouraging entrepreneurial culture, developing entrepreneurial education, a constant search for innovative solutions are a key precondition for the development of modern economies, and society as a whole. The practice has shown that societies that are capable and willing to invest into the entrepreneurial education, stimulate the development of innovations, and are capable to commercializing these innovations or valorizing them on the market through entrepreneurial activity, have a chance for growth and development. In this context, it is crucial to understand the determinants that stimulate young people to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Institutional factors play a key role that influences affirmative and incentive measures on entrepreneurial intentions and aspirations, above all, among young people.

The paper analyzes factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions and aspirations among students of the female population of the final years of the University of Pristina temporary seated in Kosovska Mitrovica as well as female students of the fourth year of secondary schools in the North of K&M. The specificity and diversity of research is the field of research, bearing in mind the social and political context of this environment. Due to the turmoil over the legal status of this region, there are problems of insufficient or almost no investment. Under such conditions, the researcher's idea is to determine whether there are intentions or aspirations for young females for self-employment by engaging in entrepreneurial activities. Emphasis is placed on female students at the final years of schooling at universities of high schools as a socially endangered population. Modern research shows that by engaging in entrepreneurial activities, the autonomy of women is increased and provides them with a more representative role in society.

In this paper, we used the survey method to analyze research phenomena. The results of the survey show that half of the respondents never engaged in entrepreneurial activities and that one-third of them were involved in entrepreneurial activities by helping their parents, friends, or acquaintances. When asked how the previous entrepreneurial experience influenced the development of personal qualities related to entrepreneurial activities, most of them rated as the most important characteristic, desires for achievement (4.72), self-esteem (4.31), creativity and initiative (4.23). Also, other stated characteristics were also rated high. When asked which psychological characteristics an entrepreneur should have, the highest rated are self-esteem (4.75), desire for achievement (4.63) and perseverance (4.62). Finally, when they were asked which of these characteristics, they can recognize in themselves, the most common answers were the desire for achievement (4.61), perseverance (4.58) and dedication (4.56). A comparative analysis for students and secondary school students shows that values are similar, with slightly more grades given by secondary school students.

It is interesting that female students recognize that participation in entrepreneurial activities has developed their desire for success, confidence, creativity, and initiative to the fullest extent. Also, the female students assessed that self-confidence is very important for the start-up of entrepreneurial activities. However, they did not recognize this characteristic among themselves and ranked it only in the fifth place. They have a desire for achievement and consider it important. Persistence and commitment are recognized as important characteristics which they have and rank it in second and third place respectively. In essence, students generally recognize and highly rank those qualities that are necessary for starting a job or engaging in entrepreneurial activities. This gives a promising light to entrepreneurial culture and environment in North K&M.

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