

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE EDUCATION OF FUTURE TEACHERS

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Abstract/Izvleček Modern education needs include teachers who possess entrepreneurial competences. The subject of our study is entrepreneurship education in the field of teaching. We conducted semi-structured interviews with senior students of the Faculty of Education in Užice ($N=70$). Entrepreneurship education can be realised using formal, non-formal and informal methods in higher education. The fundamentals of entrepreneurship are already represented in the existing curriculum, which cannot be deemed sufficient for systematised knowledge of entrepreneurship. Therefore, faculties of teacher education must be open to new models of activity and content organisation aimed at the development and encouragement of entrepreneurial competences among future teachers.

Podjetništvo in izobraževanje bodočih učiteljev

Sodobna vzgoja in izobraževanje morata vključevati učitelje, ki imajo podjetniške kompetence. Predmet naše raziskave se nanaša na vzgojo in izobraževanje za podjetništvo na področju poučevanja. S študenti zadnjih letnikov Pedagoške fakultete v Užicu smo izpeljali polstrukturirane intervjuje ($N = 70$). Podjetniško vzgojo in izobraževanje je v visokem izobraževanju mogoče izvajati z uporabo formalnih, neformalnih in aformalnih metod. Osnove podjetništva so že zastopane v obstoječem kurikulu, česar pa ni mogoče ocenjevati kot zadostno za sistematizirano znanje podjetništva. Fakultete, ki izobražujejo učitelje, morajo torej biti odprte za nove modele organizacije aktivnosti in vsebin, katerih cilj sta razvoj in spodbujanje podjetniških kompetenc bodočih učiteljev.

Keywords:
entrepreneurship,
entrepreneurial
competences,
entrepreneurship
education, faculties of
teacher education.

Ključne besede:
podjetništvo, podjetniške
kompetence, vzgoja in
izobraževanje za
podjetništvo, fakultete za
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Introduction

The development of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education is a priority in many EU member countries and forms part of numerous documents issued by the European Union: the Lisbon Strategy from 2000 (Kronja, Avljaš, Matejić, Todić, Kovačević, & Branković, 2011), the European Charter for Small Enterprises from 2000, the Green Paper Entrepreneurship in Europe from 2000 (European Commission, 2003), the Agenda for Entrepreneurship Education adopted in 2006 (Eurydice, 2016), as well as the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan, passed in 2013 as part of a comprehensive EU sustainable development strategy and aimed at unlocking entrepreneurial potential and removing existing barriers to the development and strengthening of entrepreneurial culture in Europe (Kronja et al., 2015).

Entrepreneurship education

There are many definitions of the term entrepreneurship that attempt to bring together all its major characteristics to the greatest extent possible. Some broad-based approach definitions define entrepreneurship as a process in which an individual pursues a business opportunity without reflecting on the resources at their disposal, and as the art of translating one's ideas into a new business venture (Bringer & Ireland, 2010). Entrepreneurship is also viewed as an individual's ability to translate their idea into action and application of entrepreneurial skills in everyday life. Omerbegović-Bijelović (2010) define entrepreneurship as the social function of creating new value through a creative combination of business resources related to the creation of new value, stating that it has a significant impact on economic development and employment. If we accept the assumptions that entrepreneurship is a process through which knowledge is transformed into practical results (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000), that entrepreneurship represents the basis of intellectual capital development (Zahra & Dess, 2001), and that entrepreneurs are not born, but made (Drucker, 2014), we will see the need for entrepreneurship education emerge. Entrepreneurship education seeks to develop entrepreneurial competences aimed at the individual's abilities to transform their ideas into concrete activities. Observing them with regard to the defined European Competence Framework, they can be specified within several areas (Bacigalupo, Kampylis, Punie & Van den Brande, 2016).

More specifically, competences are focused on the ability to identify opportunities for advancement, creativity, ability to predict and clearly define one's vision, as well as the ability to recognize the context in which an individual acts and proactively responds to the opportunities provided. In addition, entrepreneurial competences also imply initiative, development of self-awareness and self-efficacy, as well as motivation and determination to achieve success. Innovativeness is the central point of entrepreneurship and a major entrepreneurial characteristic, and some research shows that entrepreneurs are more innovative than others, as a rule (Lumpkin & Erdogan, 1999). Other research speaks of personality traits that may impact entrepreneurial behavior, such as achievement motivation, tolerance of ambiguity, self-confidence and innovativeness, among which the need for achievement has had the longest history (Rauch & Frese, 2007; Zhao, Seibert & Lumpkin, 2010).

Financial and economic literacy are also counted among the entrepreneurial competences. Entrepreneurial activity implies the ability to be cooperative and flexible in teamwork, the ability to identify one's personal strengths and weaknesses, the ability to act proactively and react positively to change, as well as the ability to assess and take risks when justified. Tolerance of ambiguity can be observed as a tendency to perceive ambiguous situations in a neutral way. A person with a high tolerance of ambiguity sees vague (ambiguous) situations as a challenge and strives to overcome unpredictable and uncertain situations so as to perform a task well (Koh, 1996). Individuals with an inclination towards entrepreneurial activity are expected to show higher tolerance of ambiguity than others. Kourilsky (Kourilsky, 1980) argues that self-confidence and self-respect are important variables in predicting one's success as an entrepreneur.

Moreover, planning and management skills are thought to form the basis of entrepreneurial competences. These competences are recognized as part of the competence framework and classified in three areas: "Ideas and opportunities", "Resources", and "Into action," defined within the Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (Bacigalupo, Kampylis, Punie & Van den Brande, 2016). This competence framework is the foundation of entrepreneurship education at all levels, from primary education to university education. Based on all that, it is clear that those tasked with developing these competences in students must themselves possess such competences. Therefore, entrepreneurship education of teachers is crucially important.

The introduction and design of entrepreneurship education in Serbia is regulated by several documents adopted in recent years. The Law on the Foundations of the Education System in the Republic of Serbia (2019) regulates matters associated with the realization of entrepreneurship education. The Strategy for the Development of Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Serbia (2006) opens new directions for the development of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial competences in students of secondary vocational schools. The National Youth Strategy (2015) supports and promotes entrepreneurship as an area necessary for the development and employment of young people. The Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020 (2012) emphasizes the role of education in inciting economic growth and social progress, developing comprehension skills and critical thinking, as well as encouraging initiative, creativity and entrepreneurial spirit, together with teamwork and positive social values, which sufficiently illustrates the importance of entrepreneurship education; on the other hand, the Memorandum of Understanding (2009) focuses on the process of and steps in the development and implementation of lifelong entrepreneurial learning policies. General Competence Standards after Primary Education (2010), and the Interdisciplinary Competence Standards after Secondary Education (2013) are defined in accordance with the European Reference Framework of Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, which recognizes competences for entrepreneurship education.

Entrepreneurship in teacher education

Entrepreneurship education is integrated within higher education in the form of individual courses at some faculties. However, entrepreneurship education is not sufficiently represented at faculties of teacher education in Serbia. Some faculties of teacher education tentatively offer different forms of entrepreneurship education as the content of individual courses, or as elective courses, whereas most faculties do not offer entrepreneurship education in any form (Rakićević, Omerbegović-Bjelović, Ljamić-Ivanović, 2015; Zlatić & Stamatović, 2018). Formally speaking, some faculties of teacher education provide Master's degree programs where entrepreneurial content is incorporated within individual courses (master's programs: Leadership in Education, Educational Policy, etc.).

Based on the report Mapping of Teachers' Preparation for Entrepreneurship Education (2011), we can see that some European countries (Finland, United Kingdom, Sweden, Austria and Scotland) do implement various methods of teacher education for entrepreneurship at faculties of teacher education. The report also states that the curricula of these faculties clearly define the basic values of entrepreneurship learning in the mission of the institution, which aim at developing the knowledge and skills of teachers and their attitudes towards entrepreneurship learning, encouraging them to participate in non-formal models of entrepreneurship education, and developing a culture of lifelong entrepreneurship learning.

Bearing in mind the directions of primary and secondary entrepreneurship education development in Serbia, and the binding implementation that rests on several normative and other documents mentioned in previous paragraphs, the need for teachers with well-developed entrepreneurial competences is clear. Such competences should primarily be developed through teacher training and professional development programs.

Some research shows that it is crucial to establish and develop conditions and assumptions for entrepreneurial characteristics of universities and faculties. The connection between innovativeness and the entrepreneurial spirit of the institution is particularly emphasized, as well as the need for support both within and outside of the institution to help researchers in obtaining, financing and managing projects, as well as support for entrepreneurial education within the institution and the entire ethos surrounding education (Gjerding, Wilderom, Cameron, Taylor & Klaus-Joachim, 2006). These characteristics can become a framework for the development and vision of teacher education faculties. The implementation of content aimed at developing entrepreneurial competences can be realized through models that encourage the development of entrepreneurial competences. In addition, extracurricular activities that can be organized by other institutions, organizations or establishments may also contribute to the entrepreneurship education of future teachers (Zlatić & Stamatović, 2018).

Method

The object of our study is to establish how students, future teachers, understand and experience entrepreneurship education as part of their initial education, and how they perceive entrepreneurship in the teaching profession.

The relevance of this perspective lies in the socioeconomic circumstances in Serbia, i.e. the high youth unemployment rate (Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2014) and the fact that the teaching profession is generally in a very unfavourable position, which reflects negatively on the choice of this profession (Kovač-Cerović, 2006). Given the importance of and need for entrepreneurship education of future teachers, the aim of our research was to examine the viewpoint of students on the current state of and need for entrepreneurship education, more specifically, their overview of entrepreneurship education, how they perceive the relation between their future profession and entrepreneurial competences, as well as opportunities for employment and self-employment. We organized a survey among senior students of the Faculty of Education in Uzice who were close to graduation and thus to potential inclusion in the workforce.

We opted for a qualitative research methodology because we believe it to be adequate for obtaining a large amount of information, i.e. descriptive data, representing the product of the student perspective and their personal experiences (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Another reason for choosing this approach is that the very sparse existing research on entrepreneurship from the perspective of students has mostly used quantitative approaches. We expected interview techniques, specifically the semi-structured interview to provide more comprehensive data, insights and experiences of the respondents. The main research instrument was the semi-structured interview, which encourages flexibility and reflexivity of the respondents regarding themselves and the social context. The interviews encouraged students to discuss the following topics: their view of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education, how they perceive the relation between their future profession and entrepreneurial competences, as well as the opportunities for employment and self-employment.

The sample comprised final-year students at the Faculty of Education in Uzice from the undergraduate studies programmes Teacher and Preschool Teacher. The survey was carried out in four focus groups with a total of 70 respondents (45 students in the Teacher study programme and 25 students in the Preschool Teacher study programme).

When it comes to the gender structure of the sample, women were the dominant population in the Teacher study programme, where 41 students were female (91.11%) and 4 were male (8.89%), whereas in the Preschool Teacher study programme, 24 students were female (96.00%) and only one was male (4.00%).

Survey data processing. The data obtained in the survey were processed and analysed using a qualitative approach. We started with raw data. Our interviews with the students were recorded, the interviews were transcribed, and then we performed thematic analysis of the raw data, identifying recurring topics and subtopics with a higher frequency of occurrence, starting with the concrete and moving toward higher levels of abstraction, which resulted in more comprehensive topics. The unit of analysis was the interview, whereas the units of coding were the sentences or groups of sentences students used to describe or explain particular segments of entrepreneurship education within the teaching profession. The next step was to further analyse the identified thematic sentences of students and connect defined categories with subcategories that explain these phenomena in more detail. Finally, we linked those findings with existing research on similar phenomena and with the theoretical framework.

Research Results and Discussion

View of entrepreneurship. In defining the term entrepreneurship, students' views gravitate toward entrepreneurship as the organisation of work, personal characteristics of the entrepreneur, and starting a business. Students associate organisation of work with planning and management aimed at a particular goal. They state that successful organisation of work requires teamwork and human resource management. Some of the responses include the following:

In my opinion, entrepreneurship implies individual organisation of a business, where the entrepreneur possesses certain knowledge and skills, investing them in his business venture.

Entrepreneurship is when a person has ideas and manages to realise those ideas with the help of others.

Joint effort of people who possess different knowledge and competences necessary for a business is the essence of entrepreneurship.

Findings from certain studies show that students whose major belongs to the field of the social sciences and humanities, mathematics and medicine are not particularly interested in any information about entrepreneurship, unlike students of natural and technical sciences (Somer et al., 2008).

In our survey, the group of students who presented their views on entrepreneurship understand entrepreneurship in a wider context, i.e. they not only associate entrepreneurship with starting a business but also observe it in a context involving integration of knowledge, skills and attitudes to achieve realisation of the necessary activities within a particular business. They also associate the concept of entrepreneurship with the personal characteristics of the entrepreneur, which may be classified among entrepreneurial competences, and which refer to one's need for achievement (or achievement motivation) recognised as dedication to one's job, persistence, patience, work motivation, personal initiative, risk-taking and creativity.

We list several examples of such responses below:

An entrepreneur is persistent and determined, and he/she also must be patient and responsible.

An entrepreneur must "have the nerve" to take risks for certain jobs and be able to bear the pressure and uncertainty.

Entrepreneurship requires people with ideas, creative people able to share their ideas with other employees.

An entrepreneur is a person with initiative who will either start a business of their own by themselves, or perhaps in partnership with others.

Initiative and creativity are very valuable traits in entrepreneurs, which is further confirmed by some studies (Gorman, Hanlou & King, 1997; Ševkušić, Stojaković & Simijonović, 2018; Viduka, 2017; Wang & Wong, 2004).

Entrepreneurship education and development of entrepreneurial skills. In the answers above, we can see that students recognise the link between entrepreneurship and the necessary entrepreneurial skills and knowledge.

Based on the student responses, we can identify two aspects of entrepreneurship education: acquisition of theoretical and practical knowledge, and development of the skills relevant for entrepreneurship. The important question is how to acquire theoretical and practical knowledge related to entrepreneurship. Students based their responses on their personal experiences in the context of formal education, as well as activities outside of it, i.e. informal and non-formal types of education and training.

Students recognise entrepreneurship education at the university level as part of certain curricular content, in teachers' initiatives, as well as in their personal efforts. In the context of their own education, students perceive the curriculum as an essential source of content for entrepreneurship education. They highlight certain courses with content they believe to provide knowledge relevant for entrepreneurship education, and they also emphasise professional traineeship as a crucial segment through which one can develop their entrepreneurial initiative and learn. Here are some examples of their responses:

In my opinion, some of our courses do provide knowledge required for entrepreneurship, Pedagogical Research Methods, for example, where we learn to create research projects, as well as Language Development, where we acquire communication skills which are valuable for entrepreneurs.

I think traineeship is very important for the development of entrepreneurial spirit because we directly participate in everything the job entails, we are in a position to design activities with children on our own and organise work.

If I were to open a private kindergarten, I would first have to conduct research on the needs of the community, using certain techniques and instruments we learned in Teaching Methods and Statistics, whereas Rhetoric would be useful for conducting interviews with interested parties.

Results of a study by Somer et al. (2008) show that most respondents from Belgrade University believe that knowledge acquired at university is insufficient for entrepreneurial initiative.

The authors cite student dissatisfaction with the teaching materials and lack of market-orientation of the material, whereas the other reason is student awareness that, in addition to university education, one needs self-initiative in the form of non-formal education. Markov and Izgorjan (2010) obtained similar results from students at the University of Novi Sad, who reported not receiving sufficient knowledge during their studies, and did not fully develop competences that could help them start their own business. Students who participated in our study cited similar reasons, claiming there were no courses dedicated to entrepreneurship, and that only certain segments of this area would sporadically appear as part of individual courses, which is not sufficient to acquire any systematised knowledge of entrepreneurship.

Given their competences and approaches to working with students, university teachers are an important resource in the process of entrepreneurship learning. Students stated that teachers and their approach to teaching, students and the learning culture could be among the initiators and sources of entrepreneurial knowledge and forms of behavior. Here are several examples of their responses:

Some professors present the material in correlation with practical examples and situations closely related to working with children.

Some professors talk about entrepreneurial initiative and different people who started a business in the field of education or another field, but they are few.

Kourilsky's theory (Kourilsky, 1990) relies on the fact that besides theoretical knowledge, students need to gain practical experience in entrepreneurial thinking and engagement, which can be achieved by means of non-formal education.

When it comes to students' perspective, they were more convinced that theoretical knowledge of entrepreneurship could be acquired on their own, from books, the Internet, and available magazines, whereas practical knowledge could be acquired by participating in certain activities, learning through work, through professional practice at university, various seminars, workshops, panels, and other types of non-formal education. Here are several examples:

I am involved in the family business, helping my parents and thus expanding my knowledge of this area.

I would like to attend some seminars and workshops to learn how to open a private kindergarten.

I'd like if we had an opportunity to learn more about it in workshops or lectures at university.

Entrepreneurship education can be organised through non-formal education, where attendants get an opportunity to expand their knowledge of this area. In their study, Somer et al. state that a large percentage of respondents believe that non-formal education plays a significant part in entrepreneurship education (Somer et al., 2017). However, results also show that the supply of systems of non-formal education is poor. The study by Rakićević et al. (2015) shows that students who expressed a genuine interest in entrepreneurship by attending seminars and other types of non-formal education are better prepared for entrepreneurship. One conclusion of this study is that non-formal education about entrepreneurship can increase one's propensity toward entrepreneurship (Rakićević, Omerbegović-Bjelović and Ljamić-Ivanović, 2015).

Entrepreneurship education and future profession. Entrepreneurship education for the teaching profession is a necessity imposed by the needs of elementary education practice. Introducing entrepreneurship to elementary schools in Serbia would require teachers who possess entrepreneurial competences. This is a view shared by students, who believe that the teaching profession demands the development of certain entrepreneurial competences. Their comments range from the necessity of entrepreneurial competences in the organisation of work within an institution, to the necessity of possessing competences to help them find a job in their chosen field. Students have a realistic perception of the necessity of entrepreneurial initiative in the organisation of work because it improves employee participation and contributes to institutional development. Here are several examples of their responses:

It is crucial we should develop our entrepreneurial knowledge and skills because they will help us design more creative activities with children.

Since schools and kindergartens often have limited budgets, teachers and preschool teachers should learn how to provide additional resources (through projects, donations, etc.).

It is important to actively seek work immediately upon graduation, even in rural areas, and that requires certain skills and abilities.

Farashah (Farashah, 2013) and Solesvik et al. (Solesvik, Westhead, Matlay & Parsyak, 2013) argue for a positive correlation between entrepreneurship education and the entrepreneurial intentions underlying entrepreneurial competences. These competences also imply active job seeking by students, but it should be noted there are factors that influence this as well.

Possibility of self-employment. Based on these results, we can say students underlined the importance of personal initiative for finding employment.

Students cited areas belonging to their profession and other professions with regard to self-employment. Although self-employment has been reported in the previous topics and in association with the thematic content mentioned above, here we will distinguish it as a separate topic in terms of the importance of self-employment initiative within both one's chosen profession or another profession. The student perspective on this topic is focused on their personal openness to various possibilities for finding employment in their chosen field, outside of it, or the opportunity to start their own business. We will cite several examples:

There usually are no kindergartens in rural areas, so this is both a good opportunity to help parents in such communities, and a good opportunity for us to start a private business.

If I fail to land a job in an educational institution, my plan B is a private playroom. If I am unable to get employment in my chosen field, I would analyse the market in my hometown, its needs, if anything is missing, etc, and then start thinking about starting a business in that area.

Here we have a kind of openness to different possibilities regarding jobs and employment that requires certain knowledge and skills.

Entrepreneurship education in higher education and through lifelong learning. Sudarić (2012) emphasises that organisations today cannot provide permanent employment, which is why they must provide continuing education for their employees, while also expanding and enhancing their knowledge and skills through a lifelong learning system. Students' thoughts about the direction in which entrepreneurship education should develop at university gravitate toward the curriculum and the organisation of work at university level, as well as institutional openness toward entrepreneurs, education professionals and unemployed teachers: It would be good to organise various training programmes about entrepreneurship, not only for students, but for other interested parties as well (teachers, citizens, etc.) where they could exchange knowledge and experience.

Faculties should provide professional development for their employees and students seeking employment.

I think we should get new elective courses in the field of entrepreneurship, such as marketing, accounting, etc.

Faculties should organise meetings between students and successful professionals, both in the field of education and in other areas, or screen documentaries about the origins and development of successful companies.

One conclusion of the study by Ševkušić et al. (Ševkušić, Stojanović & Simijanović, 2018) indicates the potential to hire successful local professionals as associates or mentors in entrepreneurship education in order to help students develop psychological strategies for maintaining motivation related to their career choice.

Models of university-level entrepreneurship education in various European countries (Finland, United Kingdom, Sweden, Austria and Scotland) focus on different activities. The report *Mapping of Teachers' Preparation for Entrepreneurship Education* (2011) cites models of entrepreneurship education at the university level designed for future teachers. Entrepreneurship education is commonly organised and realised through educational modules within existing study programmes (Entrepreneurship Training, Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial Thinking), or as the possibility given to future teachers of enrolling in elective entrepreneurship modules at other institutions of higher education.

Many teacher training faculties in the relevant countries participate in non-institutional programmes and projects referring to entrepreneurship education both during studies and as part of professional development for teachers in the context of lifelong learning. Any education system should ensure that children develop their creativity and curiosity as early as possible, because these traits are the basis of entrepreneurial competence and intention, whereas university students should learn both the practical and theoretical elements necessary for entrepreneurship (Dinis, Paço, Ferreira, Raposo & Rodrigues, 2013).

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship learning is aimed at encouraging and developing entrepreneurial competences. A systematic approach to entrepreneurship education must be the main direction and strategy of education development at all levels, from primary to university education. Therefore, it is crucial to prepare future teachers for the realization of entrepreneurship education in a planned and purposeful way, developing their entrepreneurial competences. Different European countries have different models for the realization of entrepreneurship education of future teachers. Serbia does not yet have a clearly defined model of entrepreneurship education for future teachers. One of the main conclusions of this research is the need to introduce entrepreneurship learning into the system of higher education, including faculties of teacher education.

We have determined that future teachers and primary teachers have a need for knowledge in the field of entrepreneurship, and consider entrepreneurial experience important as a basis for the development of entrepreneurial competences, and associate these not only with the formal aspect of education, but with other informal and non-formal learning situations, as well. They also believe that the supply of such informal models of entrepreneurship learning is scarce. Therefore, it is necessary to systematically approach the enrichment and expansion of the curriculum at institutions of higher education, adding entrepreneurial content both as part of individual courses, and through an integrated interdisciplinary approach, which is a model already used in several European countries.

It would also be important to provide the opportunity for informal models of professional development in the field of entrepreneurship by organizing various activities at faculties of teacher education. Modern society implies that continuous learning is a requirement for finding employment at any moment, and that one needs to continuously develop one's entrepreneurial competences even when one already has a job. Openness to professional development in the field of entrepreneurship should be one of the outcomes of higher education and required by the institutions where teachers are employed. The quality of entrepreneurship learning in the workforce and the ability to take responsibility for one's own success are the keys to success of every institution. The authors of this paper must point out the potential methodological limitations of this research.

During the survey, the respondents (students) were open and ready to cooperate, but we cannot claim with absolute certainty that they avoided giving any socially desirable answers. However, we tried to reach deeper personal views and attitudes and encourage them to self-reflection by asking follow-up questions.

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