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ANTOANETA ROXANA SURCEL (GEORGESCU)

Valahia University of Târgoviște, Romania

KEY COMPETENCES FOR AN ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES' INITIAL TRAINING IN AN ORGANISATION

Abstract:

Entrepreneurship manifests itself in economy in a variety of ways. The development of the entrepreneurial space among future employees is fundamental towards a healthy economic growth, as well as a compulsory condition for a durable local and regional development. Transversal competences such as creativity, initiative and entrepreneurial spirit help the future employee develop its critical and creative thinking, innovate in its own field of activity. They also lead to an increase in his productivity, flexibility, in his autonomy at the workplace. Moreover, these also aid the individual in managing a project in terms of personal competences and obtain the expected results. In broad terms, any future employee has to have access to entrepreneurial education through all types of education and training, disregarding their level. The current research represents the most important findings regarding identifying the key competences that support an entrepreneurial culture in the initial training period. The data obtained is the result of applying a survey on a representative sample of teachers in pre-university educational system in Dâmbovița county, teachers who carry out their activity in theoretical and vocational high schools. This has served to outline an overview on the role and the importance of entrepreneurial education in the initial training of future employees.

Keywords:

Key skills, Entrepreneurship education, Initial training, Organization, Human resources

JEL Classification: M53, J24

1. Introduction

The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union recommend entrepreneurial skills among key skills for lifelong learning¹. Encouraging the development of skills is one of the objectives relating to the vision of achieving a European Space which should exploit the entire potential of education and culture toward creating new jobs, social equity and active citizenship². At present, the requirements in terms of skills have changed. More and more jobs are subjected to automation while technologies play an important role in all fields of activity³. In this context, entrepreneurial, social and civic skills become increasingly relevant for the development of the capacity of human resource to adapt to new changes. Within the framework of professional formation, entrepreneurship education facilitates a bond between future employees and the labour market. It increases the chances of the people involved in the learning process to set up their own business, it changes the mentality of the young in the sense of going from the position of employee to the position of employer. The entrepreneurs are the ones who produce prosperity and economic growth and support the changes.⁴

We can strongly affirm that entrepreneurship contributes to the economic growth of a country.⁵ Stimulating entrepreneurship among the young is extremely beneficial, both in economic and social terms: decrease in unemployment, promotion of social inclusion, reduction of juvenile delinquency, stimulation of innovation and creativity, increase of self-esteem etc. According to the specialists, the entrepreneurs may fall under any professional group. It would be incorrect to state that there are jobs which offer the skills needed to become an entrepreneur. The genuine entrepreneur may have all and any job; however, they need entrepreneurial skills.

2. Relevance and importance of study

The investments in the education represent a common interest of Europe and all member states. They represent the driving force toward creating jobs, economic growth and enhanced welfare. They support the increase of the level of economic and social convergence among member states and within them. The investments in initial education and lifelong training, the upgrade of the lifelong-acquired skills bear dividends to the benefit of both personal and public budget. We are all aware that education makes its contribution to achieving economic and social objectives. Moreover, education is a right which enables each person to have access to professional education and lifelong training⁶.

There are changes worldwide in relation to the content of the skills, i.e. “soft” skills become as important as “hard” skills. In this context, employers want their employees to possess ICT skills, “green” skills for all occupations: communication, being a team player, collaboration,

¹ Recommendation of the European Parliament and European Council on key skills [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0604\(01\)&from=ES](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0604(01)&from=ES)

² Communication of the Commission to the European Parliament, European Council, European Economic and Social Council and the Committee of the Regions Council, Strasbourg, 2017 (COM(2017) 673 final) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52017DC0673&from=EN>

³ AMOROS, J.E. ; BOSMA, N (2014) Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2013 Global Report, from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11187-011-9349-0>

⁴ BORZA, A.; MITRA, C.; BORDEAN, O.; MUREȘAN, A.; SUPURAN, R (2009) Entrepreneurship. Management of Small and Medium Enterprises, Cluj Napoca: Risoprint Publishing House

⁵ WONG, P. K.; HO, Y. P.; AUTIO, E (2005) Entrepreneurship, innovation and economic growth: Evidence from GEM data. Small Business Economics

⁶ <https://fra.europa.eu/ro/eu-charter/article/14-dreptul-la-educatie>

decision-making power, entrepreneurship; creativity, innovative thinking, ability to solve problems, flexibility, ability to learn how to get involved in a lifelong learning process⁷.

2.1 Materials and methods

The investigative endeavour in relation to the key skills developed toward an entrepreneurial approach of the human resources' initial formation used a complex research strategy, which combines both quantitative and qualitative research methods. We will present below the set of methods and techniques used with a view to collecting information as well as the objective considered when using them.

2.2 The objectives of the study were:

O1 – Integration of entrepreneurial skills in the teaching-learning-assessment process, irrespective of the subject taught in class

O2 – Development of entrepreneurial skills within the framework of initial formation and lifelong learning

Hypotheses

H1 – Teaching staff develop entrepreneurial skills among future employees, irrespective of the subject taught

H2 – Teaching staff possess the expertise in the field of entrepreneurship and may form abilities among future employees, irrespective of the subject taught

2.3 Documentary Analysis

The investigative endeavour on the **entrepreneurial approach of initial formation of human resources within an organization** combines both quantitative and qualitative research methods. In terms of methods and techniques used to collect information, documentary analysis was used to study regulations in force with regard to initial formation of teaching staff in pre-university education, statistical analyses of the National Institute of Statistics, methodologies on lifelong training of teaching staff in pre-university education, priorities of the Ministry of Education and sectoral action plans for 2019, statistical data of School Inspectorate of Dâmbovița County, HR department.

2.4 Selecting the Sample

The status of the human resources carrying out their activity in high schools in Dâmbovița County (full-time, retired, hourly rate, associates) is presented below in the tables below:

Table 1: Status of the teaching staff teaching in high schools in Dâmbovița County

Number of teachers	Gender		Residence	
	M	F	U	R
1403	424	979	991	412

Source: database of School Inspectorate of Dâmbovița County, HR department

As one may see, there are twice as many women employed in pre-university education, high school, in the county, as there are men. These data support what occurs at European level as well; the percentage of women teaching in high schools is approximate 70%, the rest are men. Additionally, in terms of residence of teachers, most of them teach in urban areas. When analysing, one has to consider the fact that the number of high schools in rural areas represent a little over 23% compared to the number of high schools located in urban areas.

The sample of teaching staff teaching in pre-university education, high school, on which the quantitative research was conducted, is made of a number of 303 teachers of 1403 in total.

⁷ ROBERTS, K.; HUNT, D (1991) *Organizational Behavior*. Boston: PWS-Kent Publishing Company, 1991, p 145

In order to determine the sample, the following formula was applied:

$$n1=384.16/ (1+ (384, 16 -1)/n$$

$$n1=384.16/ (1+ (384, 16 -1)/1403=303 \text{ questionnaires}$$

The questionnaires applied on teachers carrying out their activity in high schools of Dâmbovița County were distributed as follows:

Table 2: Distribution of questionnaires by high schools

Total	Number of questionnaires	Academic high schools	Technology high schools	National high schools	Vocational high schools
1403	303	62	131	87	23

Source: made by author

The questionnaires according to types of high schools were distributed by keeping the proportions of the teachers who teach in these organisations.

The analysis of the research sample shows a majority of **female** teachers (75.91%), compared to **male** teachers (24.09%).

The distribution of the sample in line with the **age** criterion, seniority in education and years served within the organisation for the teachers interviewed is presented below:

Table 3. Sample distribution by age

	Age	Percent
1	below 30	7.92%
2	31-40	40.92%
3	41-50	33.33%
4	51-60	14.85%
5	over 60	2.97%

Source: authors contribution

The analysis of the socio-demographic characteristics of the teachers interviewed indicates respondents between 31 and 40 (40.92% of total); by contrast, the teachers below 30 (2.97%) are represented to the lowest extent; this tendency is the same for all types of high schools under analysis.

Table 4: Sample distribution by seniority in education

	Years	Percent
1	below 5	8.58%
2	6-10	13.53%
3	11-20	46.20%
4	over 20	31.68%

Source: authors contribution

In terms of seniority in education, the analysis of the sample researched indicates teaching staff with a seniority ranging from 11 to 20 years, to the detriment of the teaching staff with seniority below 5 years (8.58%).

Table 5: Sample distribution by seniority within the teachers' school organisation

	Years	Percent
1	below 5	30.36%
2	6-10	28.38%

3	11-20	27.39%
4	over 20	13.86%

Source: authors contribution

With regard to the seniority within the organisation where teachers conduct their main activities, one may see that the seniority of most respondents (30.36%) is below 5, compared to the teachers whose seniority within the organisation exceeds 20 years. We may identify the fluctuation of the teaching staff towards organisations which should ensure their personal and professional growth.

A higher weight is represented by the teachers in the urban areas (75.25%), who carry out their activity as shown in the Table below:

Table 6: Sample distribution by area of residence

Areas	Urban	Rural
	75.25%	24.75%

Source: authors contribution

Most teachers interviewed have reached a high degree of didactic maturity (first level of qualification – 53.14%, second level of qualification – 21.45%, PhD – 2.97%).

In addition, the selection of the teaching staff took account of the teachers' curricular area, as indicated in the Table below:

Table 7: Distribution of teachers by curricular area

	Curricular area	Percent
1	Language and Communication	25.74%
2	Mathematics and Sciences	25.74%
3	Human an society	19.80%
4	Arts and sports	8.91%
5	Technologies	19.80%

Source: authors contribution

The respondents' analysis in terms of their curricular area proves that the Mathematics and Sciences teachers (25.74%) as well as the Language and Communication teachers (25.74%) are best represented, to the detriment of the arts and sports teachers (8.91%). This is easy to understand if one takes into consideration the high school curriculum, the number of hours allocated by types of high schools, lines of study, qualifications, year of studies.

In relation to the status of the teachers interviewed, tenure teachers have the precedence (83.50%) over the unskilled substitute teachers (0.66%).

3. Discussion

One has to highlight the fact that the employer is less interested in knowledge specific to the field of activity and more concerned with development of non-cognitive and socio-emotional skills. All these mean that the employer may develop speciality skills through trainings at workplace and strict specialisations in the field targeted. In terms of work performances, people are similar⁸. Fulfilment of tasks by an employee at work requires a mix of skills or aptitudes (depending on the complexity of their work). Among such skills, specific to the

⁸ DEMING, W. EDUARD (2000) Out of the Crisis , Mit Press Publishing House, page 88

position held, there are the basic, professional or essential skills, while the others represent auxiliary, secondary, soft, transversal skills.

As a key skill, the entrepreneurship is most popular in high schools, under the form of various approaches. It is often either a standalone subject or integrated in other subjects such as: social sciences, economic and business studies. Nevertheless, at this level, entrepreneurship is frequently taught as an optional subject. This is in line with the fact that there is, in general, a greater freedom of choice for pupils in high school education than for the ones at lower levels of education⁹.

Following analysis of how teachers develop entrepreneurial skills within the framework of initial formation, we have identified differences which vary from one country to another, in the context of the autonomy of the training institutions. There are two main ways by which they may be exposed to the realities of the business environment. Firstly, by inviting the factors interested in the field of entrepreneurship to face-to-face discussions with future teachers, and secondly, by organising visits to enterprises, social enterprises and NGOs in order for such factors to get acquainted with entrepreneurial challenges, methods and skills. The interaction with the external world is a key aspect of the entrepreneurship education¹⁰.

The thematic working groups of the European Commission have identified five main skills which a teacher who teaches entrepreneurship education needs to possess, regardless of the main subject they teach in class. They are: capacity to use a project-based learning approach; capacity to conduct project-based activities, in addition of use of textbooks; capacity to use an interdisciplinary approach; capacity to manage group processes and interaction within groups and capacity to act as a guide (not only as a lecturer).

The respondents' opinion on the skills needed to develop entrepreneurship among pupils, irrespective of the subject taught, is presented below:

Table 8: Integration of entrepreneurial skills into the teaching process

Skills	Very important	Important	Not so important	Not important	Total
Conducting project-based activities	69	57	4	1	131
	52.7%	43.5%	3.1%	0.8%	100.0%
Interdisciplinary approach of content	32	28	2	0	62
	51.6%	45.2%	3.2%	0.0%	100.0%
Managing group processes and interaction within groups	12	11	0	0	23
	52.2%	47.8%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Capacity to act as a guide as well	38	40	8	1	87
	43.7%	46.0%	9.2%	1.1%	100.0%
Total	151	136	14	2	303
	49.8%	44.9%	4.6%	0.7%	100.0%

Source: made by author, based on interpretation of quantitative data

In addition to the high percentage of respondents who consider that integration of entrepreneurial skills into the teaching process is important, irrespective of the subject taught,

⁹ European Commission /EACEA/Eurydice, 2016. Entrepreneurial Education in European Schools Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office for the European Union accessed on the website <file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/EC0216104RON.ro.pdf>

¹⁰ LACKEUS, M (2013) Developing Entrepreneurial Competencies - An Action-Based Approach and Classification in Education. Licentiate Thesis, Chalmers University of Technology

the responses of the interviewed also indicate a low number of teachers who consider this to be unimportant (4.6% of low importance; 0.7% not important). Their justification starts from the fact that during the initial formation and throughout the lifelong training, they did not benefit from training in their field, which means that what they would do in class would be done empirically, with no scientific support.

In order to develop entrepreneurial skills among teachers it is important to provide future teaching staff with initial formation and to offer such opportunities to those who already teach and have not yet benefited from training programmes which would help them develop such skills as part of their lifelong training. The attendance of teaching staff in Dâmbovița County to lifelong learning programmes focused on the field of entrepreneurship is presented below:

Table 9: Participation to training programmes

	1	2	Several programmes	I attended no programme	Total
Technology high school	25	5	0	101	131
	19%	4%	0	77%	100.0%
Academic high school	22	3	0	37	62
	35%	5%	0	60%	100.0%
Vocational high school	4	1	0	18	23
	17%	4%	0	79%	100.0%
National high school	19	2	0	66	87
	22%	2%	0	76%	100.0%
Total	70	11	0	222	303
	23%	4%	0	73%	100.0%

Source: made by author, based on interpretation of quantitative data

Based on the responses of the interviewed, we may see a high percentage of teachers who did not attend lifelong training programmes on entrepreneurship, i.e. 73% and 27% (23% participated to one training course only and 4% to two such courses). This explains the reluctance of the teaching staff in relation to development of entrepreneurial skills among future graduates, irrespective of the subject which they teach. They do not possess the expertise in the sector of entrepreneurship and may not develop skills in a sector that they do not know. This fact invalidates both hypotheses, H1 and H2, teaching staff, irrespective of the subject taught, may not develop entrepreneurial skills among future employees, due to lack of expertise in the field, although they asserted that such skills are important. They benefited from no support with regard to development of entrepreneurial skills in relation to initial formation either, and their lifelong training did not target integration of entrepreneurship education into the teaching-learning-assessment process.

4. Conclusions

The research in entrepreneurship, research carried out to identify the personality traits of entrepreneurs¹¹. Through entrepreneurial initiatives, new companies and workplaces are

¹¹ McCLELLAND, D., C.; ATKINSON, J. W.; RUSSEL, A.; LOWELL, E.L (2004) Motivation and personality. Handbook of Thematic Content Analysis Edited by Charles Smith, City University of New York, Cambridge University Press

created, new markets emerge, new knowledge is generated, and new competences are formed. Entrepreneurship makes economies more competitive and more innovative¹².

The professional growth of an employee is a lengthy process which is carried out throughout their entire career. This implies acquisition of new knowledge and skills in connection with both the qualification of a person and the development of new skills or upgrades in order to cope with new technologies. The empirical research conducted pursued to highlight the importance of the key skills developed within the framework of initial formation of human resources toward shaping the entrepreneurial spirit among future employees. The capacity of the European countries to compete on the international trade markets and to face up to new technologies depend on how the educational systems form abilities and encourage lifelong learning, in particular in the field of entrepreneurship. The empirical research carried out among the teaching staff interviewed shows the extent to which one may speak of development of entrepreneurial skills within the framework of initial formation and lifelong learning. The entrepreneurs form and develop their skills as early as school time, in a context in which the teacher favours this state of things due to accumulations in the entrepreneurial field throughout Initial formation – Lifelong. Therefore, in order to develop entrepreneurial skills among the young, the teacher has to possess such entrepreneurial skills, starting with Initial Formation, irrespective of the subject taught, and later on to upgrade their basic entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through experiential learning.

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