

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION PROGRAMS: THE CONTRIBUTION OF COURSES, SEMINARS AND COMPETITIONS TO ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY DECISION AND TO ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT AND MINDSET OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN GREECE

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ABSTRACT

Unemployment, as well as the significant increase of its rates, particularly amongst young people, constitutes one of the greatest problems. As it concerns Greece, the recent financial crisis and the problems of its economy along with the way of coping them-austerity measures-contributed to the extremely significant increase of unemployment rates. On the other hand, the new financial and working environment in process, demands from young people new skills and competences. According to the European frame of basic skills, Entrepreneurship is recognized as one of them. Besides, emphasis is given to the significance of education in the development of this skill without omitting mentality involvement.

The current financial situation in Greece constitutes a significant factor in the necessity of researching the role of entrepreneurship education. Specifically, the research of its role in facing unemployment and in the development of a healthy and viable entrepreneurship. The purpose of this article is to study entrepreneurship education programs. Likewise, is an attempt of listing issues concerning the entrepreneurial field and entrepreneurship education. Participants in research, the answers of which are reflected in the questionnaire, are students and graduates who have attended an educational program for entrepreneurship and in particular a lesson, seminar or competition entrepreneurship. Through this research is examined the contribution of courses, seminars and competitions to the entrepreneurial activity decision and to entrepreneurial spirit and mindset of young people in Greece. Thus, the opinions of young people who have attended equivalent programs about entrepreneurship are recorded. Moreover, an effort is made to examine the relation in between the above programs and factors connected to the decision of entrepreneurial activity, as well as their contribution to the estimated feasibility, desirability and possibility of young people in acting in entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Education Programs, Entrepreneurship Courses, Entrepreneurship Seminars, Business Idea competitions, Entrepreneurial Activity, Entrepreneurial Spirit, Entrepreneurial Mindset.

INTRODUCTION

It is a common ground the fact that unemployment constitutes a major problem of the contemporary social and financial state structure, with a significant increase of its rate especially among people of young age. Nowadays, international financial crisis constitutes one of the most serious problems. The entry of Greek economy in recession in the context of international financial crisis didn't take long to come with the first signs occurring in early 2008 when

unemployment started to show increasing trends. More specifically, the economic crisis, the problems of Greek economy and simultaneously the way of dealing with all these, contributed to the extremely significant increase of unemployment rates, reaching a very high percentage of 27.8% (ELSTAT, 2014). Although unemployment rates present gradual decrease, 21.1% nowadays (ELSTAT, 2017), previous unprecedented decrease of employment has resulted in consequences, still emerging in many dimensions of the country's economic and social life.

On the other hand, the new economic and working environment in process requires young people who are now looking for a job and those who are already working to acquire new skills and competences. The entry of new conditions in the transition field from education to work-linked to general changes in the workplace, coupled with lifelong learning and the rising of unemployment levels; has led to the emphasis on the need of updating and acquisition of new skills by young people. Entrepreneurship was recognized as a basic skill (European Commission, 2005) and an emphasis is given to the role of education in the development of this ability and to the cultural aspect involved.

Nevertheless, although the important role of education as well as that of entrepreneurship at work and in economy is recognized by most of the literature, however, the factor of entrepreneurship education as a variable of the growth of the entrepreneurial activity of a country was recognized just a few years ago (Verheul & Van der Kuip, 2002). The development of business education, initially in the U.S and then in Europe and other countries, is largely due to the recognition of its contribution to tackling unemployment. Policymakers in the EU, increasingly recognizing the role of entrepreneurship in reducing unemployment and at achieving higher levels of innovation, stress the importance of education to boost entrepreneurship.

Thus, although the factor of general education plays a crucial role in increasing level of societies in general but even in the development of a healthy and sustainable entrepreneurship, business education which is a lesser educational term, is the most important variable for entrepreneurship flourishing. The development of entrepreneurial spirit has often been reflected in various EU educational programs, while entrepreneurship courses have been introduced in many countries, within curricula (Kuratko, 2005). In addition, there is a significant increase in the supply of courses, seminars and competitions aimed at i) promoting and cultivating entrepreneurial mindset ii) familiarizing young people with entrepreneurship and self-employment, iii) providing knowledge, iv) developing entrepreneurial initiatives and skills and v) feasibility of innovation.

Regarding Greece, the current economic situation constitutes a significant factor in the necessity of exploring the importance of education's role in entrepreneurship, its development and the creation of new jobs. There is therefore a need to raise new questions regarding entrepreneurship, which in Greece has not developed into a healthy framework and based on those criteria that would support its further evolution. Serious weaknesses that have emerged particularly since financial crisis are due to factors not mentioned in this article. However, it is important to mention that the intrinsic malaise of the Greek business environment in conjunction with the political choices, that have been taken in the past and weaknesses of European economic policy, to the extent of the creation of a single economic policy, resulted in the development of entrepreneurship without a healthy collaborative spirit and sustainable investment with financial and social benefit. For the exact representation of the business climate in Greece in the past, may be sought the research results of the Eurobarometer survey on the country (European Commission, 2012), where there is a limited entrepreneurial "depth" of business sovereignty of

“by necessity” entrepreneurs and negative attitude of entrepreneurs and the aforementioned environment, which is extremely unfavorable for the promotion of entrepreneurship. In conjunction with the above mentioned characteristics, the structure of the domestic economy, the hallmarks of and what negative entrepreneurship demonstrated recently and the effects of the recent economic crisis further hamper the development of the entrepreneurship plan as reflected in the sizes of entrepreneurship during the period in question by challenging and demonstrating the need for drafting new guidelines and strategies in the field of business education in Greece.

With this article responses are being researched to these challenges with the registration issues in the field of entrepreneurship and business education and more specifically of the importance and role of educational programs, especially of courses, seminars and competitions in the proper cultivation of entrepreneurial spirit among young people of our country. Thus, the view of those young people who have attended respective programs is being examined. Also, we study the correlation of entrepreneurship education programs with factors related to the decision in business as well as their contribution to the estimated desirability, feasibility and capacity of young people to entrepreneurship.

More specifically, this survey, whose results are presented below, is intended to study the contribution of educational programs entrepreneurship in the decision of youth’s business activity while at the same time it briefly presents the field of education in entrepreneurship in the Greek curriculum. So the questionnaire, which is the basic research tool, completed by 786 students and graduates of Greek universities who have attended a training program entrepreneurship aiming to the exploitation of attitudes, views and intentions concerning the possibility of business activity on their behalf. As such programs were chosen the main programs offered by the Greek universities and these are: entrepreneurship courses, seminars and entrepreneurship competitions.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurship Education

Although the concept of entrepreneurship has not been given by a single definition, commonly accepted, we can say that it is all of those business activities relating to the creation of new enterprises, the renewal of existing and the introduction of new products and technologies. Furthermore, the meaning of entrepreneurship is framed by a set of abilities referred to as business skills which are identified in many literature references (Kourilsky, 1980; Rushing, 1990; Born & Altink, 1996; Cotton & Gibb, 1992; Binks, 1994). It is also specified, as the search of business opportunities (Kirzner, 1973; Weaver & Henderson, 1995) and as the attempt to convert the initiative to result and the idea in practice, with the aim of creating a profit. But recently, in the term has been included the entrepreneurship culture. The preference for self-employment as a vocational choice, willingness to take responsibility, the perception of opportunities and their interpretation, on the basis of creativity and unleash, are some of the characteristics of the enterprise culture (European Commission, 2013).

It is worth making clear that, during the effort of defining the meaning of entrepreneurship, a plethora of opinions has been developed about its main characteristics, with principal dimensions those of entrepreneurial attitude and the features defining entrepreneurial activity, as, in the first dimension entrepreneurship is faced as a set of personal characteristics, while in the second, as a particular and delimited behavior distinguishing an entrepreneur of all the other people. According to the approach of character trends, these are playing the most

important role in the entrepreneurial evolution of a person, since under the same circumstances not everyone is equally able to act in entrepreneurship, whereas the most significant of those characteristics of personality are persistence, creativity, initiative, self-confidence, the tendency of risking and the internal locus of control, which, as mentioned (Rotter, 1975), is connected to the possibility of controlling actions and to the concrete perception of the interconnection between actions, responsibilities and results.

Nevertheless, entrepreneurship cannot be considered only as the result of specific features of the personality, as well as these do not coincide between individuals who undertake entrepreneurial activities nor do they necessarily pre-exist (Amit et al., 1993). This whole discussion has led to the controversy as to whether the operator is born or made in the course of his life, as, in the first case began with an intuitive capacity which leads him to entrepreneurship (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991) while in the second case this capacity is studied (Kourilsky & Carlson, 1996). According to the literature, the truth lies somewhere in the middle of those viewpoints as well as the personal characteristics of a person interact with the external environment. A frequent phenomenon which is the justification for this particular approach is the fact that many people undertake business activity after a long period of work experience as salaried employees (Peters et al., 1999). Furthermore, personality is not solely a question of heredity, but it varies constantly in accordance with various environmental factors such as culture, family norms, relatives and friendly background. On this base is defined entrepreneurship education which, according to some, is more effective in early ages, so personality of each person is at the stage of evolution. On the basis of this approach many researchers say that entrepreneurship education is, with regard to the inflation of certain behaviors, more effective during the first years of education, whereas higher academics education focuses mainly on the development of practical skills (Rushing, 1990). But, about the age that entrepreneurship must be taught, it should be highly kept in mind mentality included in the meaning of entrepreneurship and which is connected to the usefulness of enterprises to the society.

Moreover, it is ascertained that high levels of general education as well as entrepreneurship education lead to intensification of entrepreneurship (European Commission, 2006a), a fact that reflects on the majority of policies applied in Europe and in the U.S. Thus, anaphorically to the entrepreneurship education, it is noted that this last is important and constitutes a defining factor in the offer of entrepreneurship due to the formulation of (potential) entrepreneurs and contributes to the culture of entrepreneurial spirit. In this context, entrepreneurship education must not focus exclusively on limited tools (starting a business, financial management and human resources) but also on wider behaviors, especially in primary and secondary education (OECD, 2008). Also, the development of entrepreneurial activity, which interacts with the environmental frame in social, financial and cultural level, is directly influenced by any kind of educational intervention, which provides a bundle of supports for the culture of entrepreneurial spirit and for the improvement of personal professional skills (Van Stel et al., 2005), whereas the educational procedure influences the entrepreneurial choice.

In general the aims and objectives of entrepreneurship education, according to which are defined the evaluation and quantification of its results, are classified in a) acquisition of basic skills concerning the level of general knowledge, communication, science, technology and problem solving for the effective function in a working environment and the design of a professional career, b) development of personal and social skills including team work, taking risks, self-esteem, self-knowledge, problem-solving, creativity and desire for innovation and c)

breathing skills concerning the creation of enterprises or the financial management, like composing business plans, marketing, sales, human resources management and designing plus drawing personal and business budgets (OECD, 2009).

Entrepreneurship education includes a bundle of educational interventions in the purpose of a wider skills and abilities development that promote and reinforce entrepreneurial spirit. As skills and abilities of this kind, considering that nowadays entrepreneurship is manifested as the expression of creativity and independence (Hisrich et al., 2005), are recognized the decision-making ability, the insightfulness, initiative, risk management, flexibility and adaptation, perception and utilization of opportunities, team work, responsibility and many other skills connected to success on the level of self-employment. Entrepreneurship education does not exclusively reflect the information or the professional guidance but it constitutes a constant developmental procedure of the personality features of an individual, in order to acquire abilities of creative motivation, management of uncertainty, scientific instruction and perception of effectiveness.

According to the European Commission, entrepreneurship education is a lifelong procedure, because if mentality change is necessary and almost inevitable, then automatically it is transformed into an extended procedure rather than into a direct transformation, since entrepreneurship is a social and dynamic procedure where people, as units or in cooperation, identify opportunities for innovation and acting in them through the conversion of ideas into practices and targeted activities, in a socio-cultural or economic context (European Commission, 2006b).

In literature, there are models which indicate the training in entrepreneurship as part of strengthening entrepreneurship and economic development. One of these is the conceptual model of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, in which are described the factors influencing entrepreneurship. In this model, the importance of the size of the entrepreneurial framework differs depending on the developmental level of each country. Constitutions, infrastructures, macroeconomic stability, health and education influence the financial activity of all economies. Especially about economies depending on innovation, the significance of dimensions like the ease of business financing, the existence of entrepreneurship reinforcement state programs, entrepreneurship education, technology transfer, open local market and commercial and legal infrastructure about entrepreneurship is higher since they have an impact on entrepreneurial attitudes and perceptions, the entrepreneurial activity and entrepreneurship ambitions (GEM, 2014).

Entrepreneurship Education Programs

Entrepreneurial Event Behavior and Entrepreneurship Education Programs as Factors of Business Action

Before referring to the relation of educational programs and entrepreneurial activation, a brief reference to the literature concerning the manifestation of entrepreneurial behavior would be useful and, thus, the possibility of beginning an enterprise. To the manifestation of entrepreneurial behavior refer various theoretical models of entrepreneurship intentions framing entrepreneurship education. Among these models is included that of Entrepreneurial Event Model (EEM) (Shapero & Sokol, 1982), purpose of which is the provision of a causal basis about the procedures leading to the expression of entrepreneurial behavior and eventually to an

entrepreneurship event, meaning the moment of a new enterprise opening (Kollmann & Kuckertz, 2006).

This model assumes that inertia leads human behavior, such time as a fact excludes the inertia and ceases previous undesirable behaviors. Thus, there are events that could alter the perception of an individual causing the desire to be self-employed. But ultimately, what behavior will be followed by the individual depends on the reliability of the alternatives and the perception of action. In this context, the credibility exists in cases where the person is aware of feasibility and desire for a specific behavior.

The perceived desire refers to personal values and how these affect the person regarding what is attractive or desirable for him/her. In this context, culture, family, peers or mates, colleagues, mentors and previous professional experience are identified as factors having an impact on the shaping of personal values and the intelligibility of the desire (Shapero & Sokol, 1982), which is closely linked to the “social norms” of the Theory of Planned Behavior (Krueger et al., 2000). In addition, the perceived feasibility determines the extent to which a person feels ready to start a new business, reaching the entrepreneurial event.

A second model is that of Planned Behavior, which was based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). This theory refers to the behavioral intention depending directly on subjective standards and attitudes. The more positive is the attitudes towards a behavior, the stronger is the behavioral intention and the stronger is the subjective standards towards behavior, the stronger is the behavioral intention. If the intention is high then the individual is very likely to perform a defined behavior. The addition of the factor referred to the perceived behavioral control constitutes the evolution of the above model which is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), (Ajzen, 1991). The perceived scope of conduct referred to the concept of self-efficacy and constitutes a measure of perceived capacity of the individual to perform a defined behavior.

Lastly, it would be useful and on the basis of what has been mentioned in this unit, if should be noted that the Theory of Planned Behavior is used for the creation of evaluation models for entrepreneurship education programs. Such model (Fayolle et al., 2006) connects the Entrepreneurship Education Programs (EEP) with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), in accordance with which, these educational programs, planned according to the academic framework and the corresponding learning audience affect the designed behavior of people, strengthening their entrepreneurial intentions.

Therefore, various forms of educational intervention, as courses and activities workshop, have been implemented in many schools and university programs from several European and U.S. countries. The main assumption underlying the educational programs aiming to promote entrepreneurship development is how entrepreneurial skills can be taught, since they don't refer to fixed and predetermined characteristics of each individual, whereas they constitute an essential ingredient to success in people having assumed entrepreneurial activity (Karlan & Valdivia, 2006). Thus, the educational programs and courses are of major importance for boosting entrepreneurship, while it has been also noted that the provision of specific entrepreneurship information, through special seminars and the organization of competitions of business ideas, is extremely important, both for the expansion of learning horizon of business education and to identify future training needs (Kuratko, 2005). Still, especially business plans competitions provide a wide range of benefits to participants, as is the development of business skills, to enhance the accessibility to entrepreneurial entities, enhanced possibility of developing

business networks, encouragement of self-confidence and of desire future risk-taking for entrepreneurship (Russell et al., 2008).

Nevertheless, in the European Union and in particular in Greece, there is a deficiency in studies on entrepreneurship, since this is not a fully integrated dimension in courses. The majority of entrepreneurship courses are mainly operational and financial studies in higher education and in very minimum degree in secondary education such as in middle and high school (European Commission, 2008).

From the above models of entrepreneurial intention (Shapero & Sokol, 1982; Ajzen, 1991) the concepts which are more specifically on this research is: the perceived feasibility and desire, referred to in the degree of preparedness and desire a person respectively to start a new company and on the other hand by the self-efficiency as a measure of the estimated capacity of the individual to perform a behavior. Thus, these concepts in conjunction with newer researches where the influence of educational programs to the designed behavior of individuals and to strengthen their business intent is referred (Fayolle et al., 2006), form the basis of this research. Thus, in the research undertaken, together with a record of opinions and factors that motivate young's on entrepreneurship, the examination of the relationship between the specific educational programs, that are training courses, seminars and competitions with the estimated desire, feasibility, ability and willingness of people who attended the respective programs in Greek universities and within a specified time period.

Entrepreneurship Education Programs in the Greek Education System. Summary of the Current Status

With regard to Greece and in particular in primary degree and secondary education, perhaps the instruction of other courses includes the reference to certain general concepts for the economy and its role in society but such knowledge does not form part of a separate course. Primary school children have the opportunity to attend additional optional cognitive subjects, but these activities optionally chosen, will be implemented only on the initiative of tutors. These programs are intended, on one hand, the acquisition of knowledge, skills development and change attitudes and values in relation to the consumption while, on the other hand, the understanding of basic economic concepts which is necessary in everyday life.

In secondary education, we meet the sense of entrepreneurship in those non-compulsory activities and in high school; within the context of economy courses (Papagiannis, 2013). The implementation of various programs, optionally chosen by students and outcome of teachers' initiative enables students to be taught the notions relating to entrepreneurship.

In higher education, entrepreneurship is usually taught as an optional subject whereas it is compulsory course in a few departments of economic studies. In departments of economic studies, students can be taught the concept of entrepreneurship in various courses and acquire the necessary knowledge for establishing an enterprise, to promote its products, accounting and managing of it. On the other hand, in non-economic studies departments, entrepreneurship is taught within the context of selected courses. Also, besides entrepreneurship and other financial courses, in the direction of developing skills relating to entrepreneurship include services provided by the liaison University bureaus and offices of practical training as well as the organization of seminars, events and competitions on entrepreneurship.

It must also be noted the contribution of European Programs related to entrepreneurship education and lifelong learning in the above mentioned sector. In particular under such schemes, the Units of Innovation and Entrepreneurship of Universities, with the aim of developing those

actions cultivate entrepreneurial spirit of students and contribute to their business prospects. The aim of these Units as well as the structures for enhancing employment and career development is the connection of the education system and the labor market, through the cultivation of entrepreneurial spirit among students and encouraging them to entrepreneurship. So, for this purpose, supported educational of sections with courses of entrepreneurship and other activities such as seminars, events and competitions, where an opportunity is given to students and graduates to reach quotes of basic notions of entrepreneurship and innovation, learn how to prepare a business plan and undertake business activities.

By way of a conclusion, actions that contribute to students' cognitive background, the development of business initiative but also in connection with their knowledge of the meaning of entrepreneurship, is the introduction of entrepreneurship courses in the curriculum of various sections or even support corresponding courses, business labs for the development of business plans, visits to enterprises and productive entities, entrepreneurs invitations in conferences and lectures, the creation of educational material plus the organization of business seminars and business ideas competitions. We could also add supporting students' innovative ideas, holding open seminars as well as intensive entrepreneurship and innovation seminars concerning a special topic and entrepreneurship summer schools.

METHODOLOGY

To carry out the statistical study, on the basis of what has been outlined in the presentation of the theoretical components surrounding the training in entrepreneurship, put in advance a series of research questions through which were designed these research tools and the survey has been directed. Consequently, the following statistical study aims (a) to investigate the views of students and graduates attending an educational program entrepreneurship among the lesson, seminar or entrepreneurship competition and, more specifically, (b) to examine the role of specific training programs for entrepreneurship (courses, seminars, competitions) in shaping perceptions and attitudes toward entrepreneurship and their entrepreneurial activity, (c) presenting the incentives which encourage students of Greek Universities in doing business, (d) to highlight the reasons of young people's hesitation to get involved with business and (e) to capture the extent of the estimated capacity, desire and potentiality of business activities by the students. Additionally, a reference is made for the effects of the economic crisis regarding the selection of a program for entrepreneurship and for the future of entrepreneurship without being considered in greater detail in this particular research field.

Initially, is carried out a first empirical approach of the object of study which running as a pilot research, in order to examine the responses to a questionnaire relating to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education. Following this pilot research, carried out the main survey in which the questionnaire has been the main research tool. It should be noted that the responses received from the questionnaire, shared a high degree of consistency and internal coherence with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient=0.812. At this point and before mentioning the individual sections of the questionnaire, it would be important to note that, in view of the fact that training in entrepreneurship education is a fairly new field of research and that their respective training actions in Greece systematically implemented by the latter in particular time, constraints as in any research, referred to inter alia to methodology issues which could be improved. Among these limitations, is the lack of precise research data and already calibrated research tools referred to in Greece, the fact that there is no official structure and logging database about aggregated data

relating to the participation of students' and professors' in entrepreneurship programs and the current economy recession environment in which this research has been conducted.

The questionnaire contained three individual separate subunits. The first was based on the demographic features of the respondents. The second one on their point of view on entrepreneurship and more specifically focused on the reasoning of their entrepreneurial activity, on the deterring factors motivation but also on their potential entrepreneurial activation. At the same time, questions were raised in order to increase the capacity, the ability and the desire of participants for entrepreneurial activity in future. Finally, the third subsection addressed the views on entrepreneurship education, focusing in the range to acquire entrepreneurial knowledge in middle, high school and higher education, participation in relevant programs and on the significance of entrepreneurial action in the future.

For the purpose of the research, the sampling group consisted of students and graduates of higher educational institutes in Greece, who participated in entrepreneurship programs supported by the Employment Structures and Career Development and Innovation and Entrepreneurship Units of Universities. The educational programs mentioned in this survey are courses, seminars and entrepreneurship competitions. The sample of the survey constitutes of 786 students and graduates who attended corresponding educational programs during a time period between 2009 and 2014, which constituted a specific phase of entrepreneurship action reinforcement through a specific European support program. For the selection of the sample the procedure which have been followed was either the distribution of questionnaires directly to students during monitoring a specific course and/or seminar on entrepreneurship or via questionnaires, through the competent offices of universities maintained students data, referring to those students who had attended and participated in the respective programs during this particular time period.

The statistical tools that are used, with the aid of the statistical program SPSS, are tools of the descriptive and inferential statistics. In particular, the internal rate reliability Cronbach's Alpha was used for the grouping of variables and the exportation of factors plus the One Way ANOVA method and Independent Samples t-Test, to examine the existence or not statistically significant differences in between the averages of variables, which are identified by a numerical scale. It should also be noted that the level of significance to carry out audits of affairs in advance is $\alpha=0.05$. For presenting the research results listed below, frequency allocation tables and tables with the results of the above mentioned Statistical Methods have been used.

Finally, even though, the results mentioned in this article mostly concern young students and graduates, having participated in this survey, it must be noted that for the best exploration of this issue, tutors teaching optional entrepreneurship courses and entrepreneurs were questioned in order to record their point of view and their propositions for entrepreneurship and business education.

RESULTS

Demographics of the Research, the Incentives to Entrepreneurship, Views on Entrepreneurship and Greek Financial Crisis Factor

Starting with the demographics of the participants in research (Table 1), it is ascertained that women are more than men. Also, it is observed that women of the sample attend to a greater degree entrepreneurship courses and seminars, whereas men participate mostly in business competitions. It is also ascertained that the subject of study of students who attended relevant

training programs (Entrepreneurship Education Programs-thereinafter as EEP abbreviation) is, starting with the largest percentage, 1) economy and administration, 2) polytechnics and 3) humanitarian studies. In addition, most of them come from urban areas while it is observed that their parents' educational level is relatively high, since most of them are carry degree. Also, it should be noted that the majority of their parents are public servants and self-employed.

Regarding the main reasons of taking entrepreneurial action, these are for most of the participants a) to have control of their work, b) to apply ideas and innovations, c) to enjoy what they do, d) to utilize their qualities and e) to work for them. A large amount of respondents dealing with their entrepreneurial occupation as an alternative due to limited employment opportunities in the public or private sector because of the economic crisis, whilst the acquisition of high income, as incentive of entrepreneurial action, is only mentioned by a small percentage of respondents.

On the contrary, among the main reasons functioning in an inhibitory way to draw entrepreneurial activities, are the unstable environment of Greek economy and the difficulty in finding the necessary financial resources required, since these factors seem to have negative impact on the largest percentage of participants in the research. The next reason to suspend business motivation of young people is bureaucracy while relatively high is the percentage attributed to fear of failure and money loss. Other reasons however from a smaller part of participants, is lacking of a network of contacts, taking risks and coping with competition. It is also important to mention that the long working hours, the level of required knowledge and skills and social stigmatization in the event of failure seems to negatively affect students' decision for business activity. Nevertheless, there are a great percentage of participants, 69.30%, who consider that creating and running a business in Greece is not easy.

Aiming to examine the perceived capacity, the responses to the self-assessment of student's characteristics related to entrepreneurial activity, showed that most of them believe that they can detect entrepreneurial opportunities or ideas. Furthermore, the majority of participants consider that are creative, with effective ideas, innovative and able to solve problems. High remains the percentage of those considering that they are motivated by success and the achievement of the objectives. But caution appears as regards the ability of developing a business plan and managing risks which may arise in the business.

Thereinafter, anaphorically to the perceived desirability and feasibility of entrepreneurial action, it occurs that a large percentage presents a high degree of desire to establish an enterprise whereas in this case they act with self-confidence, excitement, hard work but also anxiety. On the other hand, for most of them it would be hard to start their own business, with the majority of them declaring it would be very difficult. At the same time, the most are those expressing a moderate degree of confidence that such an entrepreneurial attempt would be successful, while several fewer consider that it would be definitely successful.

Table 1 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA			
		%	
Gender	Male	45.6%	
	Female	54.4%	
Participation in EEP based on gender	EEP		
	Male	Lessons	41.9%
		Seminars	44.9%
		Competitions	63.3%
	Female	Lessons	58.1%
		Seminars	55.1%
Competitions		36.7%	
Field of study	Economy and B.A.	27.4%	
	Polytechnics	20.7%	
	Human Sciences	19.5%	
Parents residence	Urban area	72.6%	
	Semi-urban area	15.4%	
	Rural area	12%	
Parent's educational level	Higher education graduates	44.4%	
Parent's profession	Civil servant	29.9%	
	Private employee	18.9%	
	Entrepreneur	7.5%	
	Self-employed-Professionals	25.3%	
	Farmer	4.6%	
	Unemployed	3.6%	

Still, the percentages of those who consider that they have the required level of knowledge for establishing a company is relatively low, with most of them not responding clearly or feel that they do not have the required knowledge for the creation of their own business. With regard to the possibility of establishing an enterprise during the next time over the next three years, most declare negative in such a case and many are those not taking a clear position while several others are convinced that they could start their own business, although they do not feel this will happen in the near future. In addition, the majority of questioned would choose to do business in tertiary sector of production and a smaller percentage in primary and secondary field whereas a significant percentage indicates that they would do business, in case of such decision, in any sector of production (Table 2).

Also, calling for all of the participants on this research to describe the characteristics composing the notion of an entrepreneur, they mentioned as more important perspicacity, insight, persistence and patience, business skills, team spirit, leading features and entrepreneurial spirit. Simultaneously, the answers given for the definition of innovation focused on notions such as original and radical ideas, doing business in new products and services and the improvement of already existing and exploitation of new techniques. The main areas where innovative entrepreneurship ideas can find a fertile ground are mainly those related to new technologies and information technology, telecommunications but also traditional domains of primary, secondary and tertiary sector.

Over all, given the financial status of Greece during the period of conducting the present research, it was judged as necessary to examine the factor of economic crisis and its possible relationship in may have with participation in EEP, to young people's attitude towards the

possibility of creating an enterprise and to the future of entrepreneurship. At this point, it's more than important to note that examination of the factor of economic crisis is limited to the recording of the participant's point of view for its role in the two questions that have been raised above. Thus, a detailed search of the factor is not the object and purpose of this analysis since other parameters such as, the cultural context should be taken into consideration. Thus, from the received responses, most of the participants (59.7%) answer that economic crisis did not have an immediate impact on their decision to attend a course or seminar or to participate in entrepreneurship competitions, while fewer are those (31.9%) who respond positively to the same question. In addition, a part of the participants (42%) replied that economic crisis has positively influenced their attitude towards the possibility of creating a business in the future, whereas similar is the percentage of participants who consider that economic crisis will affect the future of entrepreneurship favorably (39.8%) to those who believe the opposite (38.4%), (Table 2).

The Relationship between Entrepreneurship Education Programs and Entrepreneurial Activity Factors

In this unit is presented the relation between EEP and factors of entrepreneurial activity of the participants in this research. Specifically, we examine the relationship with factors concerning the incentives, their hesitation to undertake entrepreneurial action but also to the estimated capacity, ability and willingness of young people to become active in entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurial Activity Factors

From the analysis of factors referring to the incentives, disincentives or hesitations and suspensions and personal assessments of the participants to undertake entrepreneurial action revealed a total of six factors emerged presented, through reliability control, a satisfying rate of consistency by Cronbach's Alpha. Therefore, factors presenting a rate of Cronbach's Alpha more than 0.70 or approached this rate is as follows:

With regard to the incentives for doing business, are the use of personal skills and the economic and social motives while the factor of personal and financial insufficiency is mentioned in the hesitations about assuming entrepreneurial activity. Yet, personal assessment about assuming entrepreneurial activity is defined by factors of personal entrepreneurial skills, the estimated feasibility and estimated desirability for an enterprise creation.

Table 2 RESULTS OF DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ABOUT UNDERTAKING ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTION AND THE FACTOR OF FINANCIAL CRISIS		
Motives about undertaking entrepreneurial action		%*
Application of my ideas		88.50%
Possibility of controlling my work		87.60%
Opportunity of applying innovations		84.80%
Doing something I enjoy		80.60%
Exploitation of my qualities		78.20%
Be my own boss		69.00%
Lack of employment opportunities in the public sector		53.70%
Lack of employment opportunities in the private sector		48.30%

Hesitation concerning undertaking entrepreneurial action			
Need for big financial capitals/difficulty finding			71.70%
Unstable environment of Greek economy			71.40%
Bureaucracy			62.10%
Fear of failure-money loss			44.10%
Taking risks			35.50%
Estimated ability of taking entrepreneurship action			
Motivated by success and goal achievement			82.90%
Characterized by creativity/effective ideas			78.20%
Working with others helps to achieve goals			77.10%
Having skills of new technologies exploitation			68.00%
Being innovative and problem-solver			67.60%
Being good in negotiating and managing conflicts			61.70%
Distinguishing entrepreneurship opportunities and ideas			51.20%
Know-how to develop a business plan			33.10%
Estimated feasibility & desirability of taking entrepreneurship action			% much/too much
I could become "workaholic"			91.60%
I would be enthusiastic			85.60%
I would be stressed			75.30%
I would be self-confident			69.70%
I would really like to start a business			58.60%
It would be difficult for me			55.80%
I would be sure of its success			27.10%
Preferred sector of entrepreneurial activity			
Primary sector	10.10%		
Secondary sector	7.30%		
Tertiary sector	59.70%		
Any sector	22.90%		
About the possibility of creating an enterprise			
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Big chance of creating an enterprise within the next 3 years	23.80%	40.10%	36.10%
I could start my own business	48.20%	18.50%	33.40%
I have the required knowledge of creating my business	27.50%	38.70%	33.80%
Financial crisis factor Financial crisis:			
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Affected my desire to attend an EEP	31.90%	59.70%	8.40%
Positively affected my attitude about creating an enterprise in future	42.00%	35.00%	23.00%
	Positive	Negative	Don't Know
Affects and will affect the future of entrepreneurship	39.80%	38.40%	21.70%

*Agreement/strong agreement.

Examining the average prices of the above factors, using the Likert's five-degree scale, starting from the total disagreement and ending up in absolute agreement with the posed question, it should be noted that the extent to which participants have desire to activate in entrepreneurship in order to exploit their personal abilities, is high whereas as incentives of lower importance proves to be financial and vocational recovery and social recognition. On the other hand, it seems that general, reluctance to withdraw of business activities, out of personal or financial inefficiency is not high enough. Moreover, the respondents consider that they possess sufficient skills for entrepreneurial activation. Finally, the average scores for the two specified factors of the estimated feasibility and desirability for the creation of an enterprise show that the participants present a low feasibility of creating an enterprise, but in the other hand, the degree of desirability is high enough (Table 3).

Table 3 MEANS OF FACTORS RELATING TO INCENTIVES, MISGIVINGS AND ESTIMATIONS OF RESPONDENTS ABOUT UNDERTAKING ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTION		
Incentives of undertaking entrepreneurial action	Mean*	SD*
Use of personal skills	4.13	0.66
Economic and social motives	3.49	0.77
Misgivings about undertaking entrepreneurial action		
Personal and financial insufficiency	3.07	0.80
Personal estimations about undertaking entrepreneurial action		
Personal entrepreneurial skills	3.58	0.64
Estimated feasibility	2.79	0.58
Estimated desirability	4.14	0.67

* Mean: Average values; SD: Standard Deviation

Moving on to the examination of the relation between these factors with EEP and more specific forms of EEP a number of results occurred which are shown below.

The Contribution of Entrepreneurship Education Programs to Entrepreneurial Activity and the Importance of Courses, Seminars and Entrepreneurial Ideas Competitions

By verifying the existence or not of the statistically significant differentiations in averages values of the above factor ratings to undertake business activity in relation to the nature of entrepreneurship program attended by the participants via the ANOVA control, the conclusions being recorded on Table 4. Specifically, it should be noted that the average ratings of the incentive to use of personal skills do not differ statistically significant in relation to the training program which was attended, whereas those who attended entrepreneurship courses or took part in entrepreneurship competitions present statistically significant higher ratings in economic and social motives than those who attended relevant seminars.

Table 4 ONE WAY ANOVA OF FACTORS REFERRING TO INCENTIVES, MISGIVINGS AND PERSONAL ESTIMATIONS ABOUT UNDERTAKING ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTION WITH THE TYPE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION PROGRAMS							
	Courses		Seminars		Competitions		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	p-value*
Incentives of entrepreneurial activation							
Use of personal skills	4.11	0.67	4.12	0.67	4.14	0.60	0.260
Economic and social motives	3.53	0.73	3.37	0.87	3.54	0.74	0.025
Misgivings about entrepreneurial activation							
Personal and financial insufficiency	3.06	0.78	3.23	0.80	3.00	0.74	0.043
Personal estimations of entrepreneurial activation							
Personal entrepreneurial skills	3.48	0.63	3.63	0.58	3.95	0.46	0.000
Estimated feasibility	2.75	0.57	2.75	0.55	2.98	0.44	0.000
Estimated desirability	4.06	0.69	4.21	0.54	4.38	0.48	0.000

*P-value: Probability value.

Also, all the respondents who participated in a competition show, to a lesser extent, personal and financial insufficiencies, which function as constraints on enterprise creation, with average ratings, in particular to be equal to 3.00 and the differences with their respective averages in courses and seminars to be statistically significant. Statistically important appears to be the differentiations in the average values of personal entrepreneurial skills, of the estimated feasibility and desirability in relation to EEP was attended by the participants, with those who participate in competitions to have a higher average rating ($p\text{-value} < 0.001$).

DISCUSSION

Highlighting the key points of the results, a differentiation has been recorded between men and women in the sample, as women prefer more entrepreneurship courses and seminars whereas men prefer competitions. In addition, the majority of the sample studies either in the economy and business administration field or in polytechnics find that consistent with the literature, where it is concluded that the graduates of economic and commercial schools have a higher entrepreneurial intention (Luiz & Mariotti, 2008). An examination of the incentives to entrepreneurship, as more significant highlights the desire control of their work, the applicability of ideas, to make it really enjoy and implement innovations. The significance of the above incentives has been proven in the existing research literature, which highlights as of crucial importance motives about undertaking entrepreneurship action, the need for independence and autonomy, the dissatisfaction from the dependent job form, the need to be boss himself and the need for an innovative idea (Douglas & Shepher, 2002; Hughes, 2003; Nooderhaven et al., 2004; Smeaton, 2003; Austin et al., 2006; Autio et al., 1997). It is worth pointing out that the acquisition of income, as a reason of undertaking entrepreneurial action, is indicated by students in a relatively low rate, while the percentage of students who have not taking stand, for the specific reason, reaches 31.8% reflecting a skepticism concerning the income results of enterprises, especially small mid-sized enterprise, given the financial circumstance in Greece.

Concerning the perceived barriers of undertaking entrepreneurial action as such mainly focuses on the unstable and uncertain economic environment, the difficulty on raising funds and bureaucracy, obstacles which together with the lack of appropriate advisory infrastructures already recorded in the relevant literature (European Commission, 2002; Owusu-Ansah & Poku, 2012; Hannon, 2009). It is worth noting that tackling barriers to funding and bureaucracy, as well as the acquisition of specialized knowledge are matters for which young people are looking for ways of information, usually through special seminars (Sipitanou & Papagiannis, 2013). Although the findings of Eurobarometer survey in the past (2002) indicates that EU citizens prefer employee status to that of self-employed, mainly because of the risk of failure and social stigmatization this entails, a high percentage of the sample is not aware of the risk of failure as a deterrent to his entrepreneurial activity. However, 69.3% of the respondents highlight the difficulty of setting up and running a business in Greece.

A significant proportion of young people who took part in this particular research considers that they are able to distinguish entrepreneurial opportunities with commercial value, whereas high are the percentage of those who believe they are characterized by creativity and positive view of the importance of cooperation with others. Confidence in personal skills has proven how it relates positively with the estimated capacity of making business (GEM, 2002; Hay et al., 2002).

On the estimated desirability and feasibility of undertaking entrepreneurial activity, there is a high percentage of those who declare excited at the prospect of creating an enterprise and

ready for work hard in such case. In general, students are favorably disposed towards the option of undertaking entrepreneurial action, a very important finding, since the foresaid point is positively related to the participation of some kind of entrepreneurship education program (Krueger, 1993; Peterman & Kennedy, 2003; Gorman et al., 1997; Rajecki, 1990). This positive attitude of students is also reflected on their entrepreneurial intention, as well as 23.8% of them wishes to establishing a company within the next three years, while 48.2% is convinced that it is in a position of engage in his/her own business in the future. Although entrepreneurial intention and personal provision, such as those listed above, differentiated (Armitag & Conner, 2001), in any case it is proven that students with entrepreneurship expertise have significantly greater intention of becoming entrepreneurs and increased possibility to start a business (Baron, 2004; Delmar & Davidsson, 2000; Kickul & Zaper, 2000; Kolvereid & Moen, 1997; Noel, 2001).

The young people involved in the research expressed, in their majority, the opinion that in the chance of undertaking business action they would prefer the tertiary sector of production whereas there are few who wish to become involved in the primary sector. But, significant percentage indicates how it could do business in any sector, expressing likely a trend business need of necessity, taking in account the existing recession economic environment. In fact, extraneous variables, such as the current economic and business environment trends have proven to be significant variables of entrepreneurial orientation (Krueger et al., 2000; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Lent et al., 2000; Kreiser et al., 2002).

As the most important features composing the notion of entrepreneur, in accordance with students' opinions, recorded the insight, foresight, perseverance, business skills, spirit of cooperation, leading features and entrepreneurial spirit, findings that agree with the majority of existing theoretical and research literature (Connie et al., 2005; Rauch & Frese, 2000; Korunka et al., 2003). Also, most students' opinion, anaphorically to the conceptual and practical range of innovation, is that it refers to product/service innovation as well as process and operational innovation. But, it is worth mentioning that there were no specifications about the notion of entrepreneur as collectivity and offer to the society, features that characterize people undertaking initiatives in converting their ideas into practical applications that would benefit society as a whole and chosen as a field of social entrepreneurship in the field of entrepreneurial action. Therefore, to summarize, it is important to put emphasis on the context of entrepreneurship education in the connection between entrepreneurship, innovation and social entrepreneurship.

Likewise, it appears that while economic crisis has not definitely affected students' decision to attend a course or seminar or to participate in entrepreneurship competitions, nevertheless it constitutes a defining factor of formation of a positive attitude towards the potentiality of setting up an enterprise. These findings may mark a trend of latent entrepreneurship, with a significant part of students facing the possibility of setting up an enterprise as a way out of financial crisis, without losing sight of the fact of positive inherent attitude towards entrepreneurship. Furthermore, it must be mentioned that the economic crisis factor is not considered further on this study and, other factors that might be responsible for the responses of the participants about economic crisis are not be taken into account.

Finally, from examining the relation between EEP factors and entrepreneurial action factors, it occurs that students who have attended entrepreneurship courses or participated in their respective competitions indicate higher economic and social motives comparison to those who have attended entrepreneurship seminars. Yet, students and graduates having participated in business ideas competitions perceive as less important than the constraining facts the personal inadequacy in funding an enterprise and the financial risk involved in this movement. Moreover,

statistically important seems to be the relation of EEP with personal entrepreneurial skills and the estimated feasibility and desirability. In this case, the participants in competitions present a higher average rating in above factors. There is therefore, the importance of practical application of knowledge in this field and its contribution to limiting the estimated risks on the part of trainees as well as to the perceived skills, ability and feasibility in order to move forward in the process of undertaking entrepreneurial initiatives.

To conclude this section, it might be useful to note that the above analysis is based only on the results of the research. The above mentioned restrictions must be seriously considered from the respected readers. That analysis has been based on the responses of students who attended these programs and thus the generalization of its results for the majority of people who attend the respective programs is likely to be incorrect.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE SUGGESTIONS

This discussion has shown, usefulness and effectiveness of Entrepreneurship Education Programs in higher education is indisputable. But it would also be important, prior to all, to note that the limitations of the present research constitute a reason why the findings and conclusions should be examined with due attention. Among these limitations lies the lack of clear research data and already weighted research tools referred to in Greece which would make it possible to compare these findings. The training in entrepreneurship is fairly a new field of research whereas the corresponding training in country implemented systematically in the last mainly period. So there is not a structured institutional and academic framework for the evaluation of effectiveness on the respective programs while limitation is the fact that there is not official structure or logging database, aggregate features relating to participation of students and tutors in entrepreneurship programs, with all that it implies. Moreover, as a restriction on the research can be considered the fact that this was relied within the present recessed environment and for this reason it is likely that the findings and conclusions have been affected by the impact of financial crisis.

According to the research findings, Entrepreneurship Education Programs implemented in University have an impact on the configuration of factors related to up taking business activities. On the other hand, nominees and findings which could be associated with a tendency of latent entrepreneurship, as a part of the participants in Entrepreneurship Education Programs face the possibility of establishing and operating a business more as an outlet and less as a challenge and opportunity. Of course, such a finding was expected, taking in consideration the current financial environment in Greece, the rapid increase in unemployment rates, especially among younger ages and the problems emerging in the labor market in general.

In recent years, the provision of courses, seminars and entrepreneurship ideas competitions as well as events referring to entrepreneurship matters has increased and substantially the number of students attending equivalent programs also. The content of programs adapted to the needs of students, but can by significantly improved. Considering as necessary the designation of culture as a dimension of the concept of entrepreneurship, it would be important, according to columnist's viewpoint, the penetration of the content of entrepreneurship studies courses on issues related to innovation and the social dimension of entrepreneurship in order to spot the importance of their entry in study programs other than those of higher education as well as the reinforcement of business opportunity as opposed to needed entrepreneurship. Specifically, these issues concern the compliance with the fiscal rules in matters of fiscal justice, the importance of business viability with the implementation of labor

legislation, social entrepreneurship and social and solidarity economy and genuine relationship of all the above with the configuration of responsible citizens which will create the conditions of stable business environments.

It is therefore, as necessary to further examination of the usefulness for various types of entrepreneurship education programs and evaluation methods in order to extract information which will assist of their respective policies in this scientific field. Moreover, is particularly important to the rapid changes that are observed nowadays in global economy and the constant changing nature of labor market, the role of education in shaping those perceptions and attitudes of young people, who will contribute to the development of healthy and sustainable business projects with social benefits. We should make it clear that entrepreneurship education is not addressed exclusively to students of Economy and Business schools but, on the contrary, its effective appliance can have a wide range of benefits for the entire student community, which will serve a driving force of a fair development beneficial for the societies and their members.

The promotion of entrepreneurship education requires concerted efforts of the institutions and educational policies structures. Considering that entrepreneurship education must take into account the views and policies on entrepreneurship education it may be helpful to set up a working team with the involvement of Ministries of Education and Labor, bodies of Lifelong Learning and also Universities with the view of planning and coordinate entrepreneurship education. Venturing further proposals about entrepreneurship education, these could include the configuration of a handbook of best practices for the effective promotion of Entrepreneurship Education Programs in a purpose of providing common guidelines for the implementation of credibility of relevant programs and tryout of a national frame of educational tools and indicators concerning the evaluation of Entrepreneurship Education Programs fostering. In addition, educational institutions would be important to further diffusion of Entrepreneurship Education Programs with regard to all scientific fields apart from economics and on the development of explicit academic roles among the education teaching staff or personnel of entrepreneurship education.

In terms of future research in the field of entrepreneurship education, taking in consideration the limitations of this study and the constant development of educational programs, *inter alia* it could focus on investigating of the effectiveness of their equivalent programs such as the degree of achievement of cognitive and behavioral objectives and the effectiveness of teaching practices plus the evaluation of the impact of entrepreneurship education, focusing on growth, sustainability and social contribution of enterprises. Moreover, it would be important to search the relationship of entrepreneurship education with the regional and sustainable development, the promotion and development of innovation and the social entrepreneurship, taking into account the phenomena of financial and social inequity, as well as the consequences of the recent financial and social crisis.

In short, it is important to mention that some disagreements and skepticism are registered concerning concepts like employability, flexibility and adaptability particularly in an era where the problems in labor market are flourishing and the conditions are constantly altering. Thus, it has a particular importance to apply policies aiming to ensure the right working conditions for all employees. As for entrepreneurship, when it is linked only with obtaining profit and not with the achievement of a social benefit, there is a self-evident criticism towards the notion of entrepreneurship as well as a suspiciousness about the significance of entrepreneurial education. Hence, it is essential to redefine the relationship of entrepreneurship and culture.

Entrepreneurship may, on one hand, be a skill, but prior to that is mentality and culture and as such, entrepreneurship education ought to be revealed.

Bearing in mind, what needs to be done for each individually is not focusing on disagreements about which policies favor entrepreneurship but a common approach of the frame defining the necessity of entrepreneurship. Following this approach, it may be agreed on the necessity of entrepreneurship education that stems from its contribution to the shaping of people who are capable of coping confidently with challenges on employment sector and relying on their own strengths seeking contributions to society through improvement of which they can reassure the viability of the business operations.

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