

PROMOTION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE LJUBLJANA URBAN REGION THROUGH PONI LUR

MAJA DJURICA,¹ NINA DJURICA,¹ DEJAN MARINČIČ,²
MIHA MARIČ³

¹ Belgrade Business and Arts Academy of Applied Studies, Belgrade, Serbia
maja.djurica@bpa.edu.rs, nina.djurica@bpa.edu.rs

² Regional development agency of Ljubljana urban region, Ljubljana, Slovenia
dejan.marincic@rralur.si

³ University of Maribor, Faculty of Organizational Sciences, Kranj, Slovenia
miha.maric@um.si

Abstract When discussing entrepreneurship, we have a sub-research area in this field, which deals with establishing and conducting own business operations in specific ways, sometimes also based on gender differences. We discuss incentives and obstacles to the development of entrepreneurship, as an economic and social growth factor. Entrepreneurship is promoted via state incentives. We will present one of such incentives, which involves a majority of women entrepreneurs named PONI LUR: An entrepreneurial approach to challenges in the Ljubljana Urban Region. With this paper we give our contribution to increase the visibility of entrepreneurial achievements and encourage individuals to put their own entrepreneurial ideas into actions.

Keywords:
entrepreneurship,
promotion,
business,
HRM

1 Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a significant factor in the economic and social development in every developed and developing country (GEM, 2022). Entrepreneurs identify opportunities, create a new business environment for themselves, but also for other stakeholders (Alhnaity, 2021). An entrepreneur is able to create and implement their idea, skill, motivation and innovative ability through establishing and running their own business. The main motive of every entrepreneur is to make a profit through recognizing opportunities, creating, communicating and delivering useful values.

Entrepreneurship is essential to fuel economic growth, and therefore it is essential to promote the creation of businesses by entrepreneurs to highlight the value that entrepreneurs bring to global society and to enhance further growth (Schröder, et al., 2021; Rai and Kiran, 2020; Mazonde and Carmichael, 2016). Entrepreneurs provide income for their families, employment in their communities, and products and services that bring new value to their environment (Gochhait, et al., 2020). Therefore, providing the basis for the development of entrepreneurship is of vital importance and this fact requires systematic research in order to identify and eliminate the limitations of the development of entrepreneurship through the appropriate creation of policy and strategy (Jayawardane, 2019).

This requires enthusiasm and faith in one's own idea; persistence and commitment to work; creativity and innovation; flexibility; marketing orientation; ability to take risks for invested money, time, energy and image. Their businesses should be given flexible, long-term financing that allows for small, short-term business failures in line with an "okay to fail" policy (Ng-Lun, et al., 2013).

2 Developing entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurial skills depend on personality traits, as well as acquired knowledge and skills, the diversity and structure of which affects the success of implementing ideas and thoughts, that is, the success of entrepreneurship (Hossain, et al., 2018).

According to empirical research, there is a positive correlation between the level of education and starting one's own business, with evident differences in the possibilities of self-employment depending on the type of occupation. In the

literature, it is assumed that becoming an entrepreneur and starting a business is more likely when people are in an entrepreneurial environment, so if a company employs many young people, entrepreneurial intentions in that company will increase (Schröder, et al., 2021).

Also, according to the literature, professional experience and education are essential success factors for entrepreneurship and have a huge impact on entrepreneurial skills and self-employment (Schröder, et al., 2021). Role models play an essential role when it comes to the perception of entrepreneurial skills (Schröder, et al., 2021; Aldana and Thiagarajan, 2016).

Challenges faced by entrepreneurs around the world in starting and maintaining their companies include difficulties with business registration, sufficient access to human capital, lack of government support, lack of capacity to access financing, development of innovation and access to markets (Alhnaity, 2021). Strengthening entrepreneurship requires state support through subsidies, incentives, education and promotion thereby reducing unemployment, diversifying livelihoods, and empowering individuals. Microfinance is characterized by short-term loans, small loan amounts, strict supervision and control of the credibility of entrepreneurs in order to minimize risks in case of default (Wijewardana and Dedunu, 2017).

Education and additional education programs are extremely important for the effective improvement of entrepreneurial abilities, and consequently for self-employment, as well as economic growth. Entrepreneurial education has always been focused on the development and improvement of entrepreneurial inspiration, perceptions, skills and knowledge that are necessary for successfully starting and running a business venture (Alhnaity, 2021).

Entrepreneurial success is a complex phenomenon and there is no single definition of what is meant by this term. Different authors in the research of this phenomenon start from different criteria that lead to correlation, and accordingly entrepreneurial success is viewed from different perspectives. It is unique for all authors to emphasize the role and importance of entrepreneurship for economic and social development.

3 PONI LUR

PONI LUR: An entrepreneurial approach to challenges in the Ljubljana Urban Region is entrepreneurial training for people who want to realize an entrepreneurial idea. The project includes the provision of substantive support activities, thus providing a group of up to 11 participants with a supportive entrepreneurial environment in which they can successfully develop and realize their own business ideas over a period of 4 months. The content of the program is structured in such a way that during the 4 months of inclusion, the participants, with the professional help of mentors and additional training from external contractors, receive key knowledge in the field of entrepreneurship, which they need when entering an independent entrepreneurial path. At the same time, they develop their business idea, create a business model and business plan, and prepare everything necessary to realize the idea on the market.

The main goal of the project is the establishment of one of the legally valid forms for performing activities that will be realized by persons with an entrepreneurial idea through entrepreneurial training. The target group is potential entrepreneurs (people with entrepreneurial ideas) with permanent or temporary residence in the region. The condition is that, upon application, they have at least an outline of their business idea, which they can develop by themselves and with the help of mentors and training into successful companies with products or services of market interest.

67 people in the 6th groups were included in the program from 1 October 2020 to 31 December 2022. Of these, as many as 51 women and only 16 men. During the training, 14 participants were between 18 and 29 years old; 19 female participants between 30 and 39 years old, 9 female participants were between 40 and 49 years old; and one participant was older than 50 years. 24 participants developed their own products and 27 participants developed services. The ideas of the participants were very different, from jewelry making; fashion accessories; production of unique handbags; manufacture and sale of candles; development and sale of board games; interior design; recycling and reuse of lights; cosmetic products; organization of active weekends for children; nature therapy; dog grooming salon; massage and exercise studio; a flower shop; etc. Of the 51 women included in the program, after completing the training, as many as 26 of them opened some legal formal form of organization.

Table 1: PONI LUR participants by groups and gender

| Group | Gender | 18-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | >50 | No. Of participants |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|---------------------|
| PONI I. | Male | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 5 |
| PONI I. | Female | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| PONI II. | Male | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| PONI II. | Female | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 9 |
| PONI III. | Male | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| PONI III. | Female | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| PONI IV. | Male | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| PONI IV. | Female | 4 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 11 |
| PONI V. | Male | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| PONI V. | Female | 2 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 10 |
| PONI VI. | Male | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| PONI VI. | Female | 1 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 8 |
| Combined | Male | 4 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 16 |
| | Female | 14 | 19 | 9 | 1 | 51 |

4 Discussion

The main role of promoting entrepreneurship consists in communication, the goal of which is to increase the visibility of entrepreneurs and their achievements, as well as to create opportunities for increasing the business potential by eliminating stereotypes and encouraging individuals to start their own businesses (Djurica, Djurica and Marič, 2022). For this purpose, both social media and traditional mass media, public relations, direct marketing, fairs and other specialized events and manifestations are used.

From a business point of view, social media enables the promotion of the achievements of female entrepreneurs, the identification of business opportunities, but also the connection and effective networking of entrepreneurs.

The construction of a virtual platform facilitates networking between different entrepreneurial organizations and/or entrepreneurs, which contributes to the development of entrepreneurial skills, the acquisition of new knowledge, the exchange of entrepreneurial ideas, information and opportunities, the transfer of business experiences, increasing motivation and self-confidence, participation in various events, seminars and conferences. This networking is of crucial importance for the improvement of their business and communication network, but also for the acquisition of partnerships at the national and international level.

The role of advertising in the promotion of entrepreneurship consists in conveying a propaganda message through traditional mass media (newspapers, magazines, radio, television, billboards, etc.) with the aim of creating awareness among the target audience about products/services or brands, i.e. the achievements, encouraging interest, strengthening the desire in the minds of consumers to buy a product/service/brand. In this way, general awareness of the product/service/entrepreneurial enterprise is created, but also the ambient conditions for the promotion and development of entrepreneurship are created.

Compared to other forms of promotion, public relations are primarily informative in nature, as they are based on journalistic news, events or news with the intention of increasing recognition, credibility, acceptance and reputation of women in their own business. The purpose of public relations is to create good communication between entrepreneurs and other participants in the business environment in order to best influence knowledge, ideas, attitudes and behaviour in terms of products, services or brands.

Direct marketing enables "one-to-one" communication with the target audience through one or more media, with every transaction information entered into a database. Based on this information, consumers are identified, contacted by creating personalized messages, predicting future sales, but also predicting new trends in consumer behaviour, which will contribute to the development and increased placement of products.

In addition to relevant ministries and state bodies, non-governmental organizations also play a significant role in promoting entrepreneurship and the positioning of entrepreneurs in society (Djurica, Djurica and Marič, 2022). The activities of these

organizations are reflected both in the mutual connection of entrepreneurs, as well as in the connection with other stakeholders, as well as in the organization of various events, seminars, counselling, conferences.

Conclusion

Development of entrepreneurship is a complex, long-term and comprehensive process, the purpose of which is to encourage ambitions, intentions and actions to carry out entrepreneurial activities. Through integrated communication activities, interest in the development of an entrepreneurial way of thinking and the acquisition of entrepreneurial competencies are encouraged, thereby reducing the barriers to starting one's own business.

A significant role in the affirmation (promotion) of entrepreneurship is played by educational institutions, which through teaching and extracurricular programs can spread the awareness of students/pupils about the possibilities and opportunities for self-employment.

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