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Entrepreneurial Orientation of the Female Students of Educational Professions²

Extended summary

Traditional education emphasized innovation, creativity, inventions, and entrepreneurship as important results of education and the pre-requisites of education quality. Current educational policies use a little different terminology for the same phenomenon and consider entrepreneurial competence as one of the key competences for lifelong learning in modern social environment and culture (Kakouris et al., 2016). The concept of entrepreneurial competence is investigated and considered in both meanings: as a competence of professional activity of an entrepreneur (career choice) and as a general transferable competence needed for every person (competence components of every profession). It distinguishes two approaches to entrepreneurial education: training for entrepreneurial activity (education of entrepreneurs) and the development of entrepreneurial competencies as widely applicable competencies in different domains (Bjekić & Zlatić, 2021a). Both approaches are the teacher tasks.

Complex professional requirements for teachers include requirements to formatively impact and encourage students' entrepreneurial competence development, and especially the

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development of entrepreneurial orientation – a dynamic dimension of entrepreneurial competence and a formative component of entrepreneurial behaviour. A developed active and prospective teachers' entrepreneurial orientation, visible in their activities, is an important model for students.

The reviews of the structure of employees in educational institutions around Europe, the world, and Serbia, suggested that most of the employees are women (EuroStat, 2016; Katsarova, 2020; OECD; Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2020, 2022; World Bank, September 2021). The entrepreneurial orientation of the female pre-service teachers (preschool, primary, and subject teachers) was investigated in accordance with gender structures in educational institutions.

The concept "entrepreneurial competence" refers to the set of the knowledge, skills, abilities, capacities, attitudes, and other motivational dispositions needed for efficiency and entrepreneurial dealing. Entrepreneurial orientation is the basic component of the entrepreneurship competence construct (Bjekić & Zlatić, 2021). The basic components of the entrepreneurial orientation are (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Schillo, 2011; Vogelsang, 2015; Wu, 2009): taking risks or readiness for risk, proactivity, innovativeness, competitiveness, autonomy, entrepreneurial intention.

The main topic of the research is the level and structure of the entrepreneurial orientation of the female pre-service teachers in preschool, primary, and secondary education. The sample consists of 237 female students from three Serbian faculties/university departments.

The investigated variables are the following: entrepreneurial orientation as a five-component variable (innovativeness, proactivity, risk readiness, competitiveness, and entrepreneurial intention); internal locus of control; field of pre-service teacher education (student-teachers for preschool education, pre-service primary teachers, and pre-service teachers for subject education); study years; type of secondary education (general or vocational); and attendance of entrepreneurship courses during education.

POPOM Self-Assessment Scale (developed for prior research, Bjekić et al., 2019) was used. It consists of five subscales (readiness to take risks, innovation, entrepreneurial intentions,

competitiveness, and proactivity) and locus control represented by one item.

The results showed that female prospective teachers assessed their entrepreneurial orientation at a moderate level, but their awareness and declarative entrepreneurial orientation were relatively high. Proactivity is more expressed than the other components, and competitiveness is less than the others.

Based on the theoretical conception of the entrepreneurial orientation scale's development, there is the strong/high correlation between the fundamental categories of entrepreneurial orientation. The internal locus of control correlates positively with readiness to take the risk and proactivity, but not with the other components of entrepreneurial orientation.

The structure and level of entrepreneurial orientation of the female students of different educational professions and different study years are similar. Hence, the general research hypothesis of the high female pre-service teachers' entrepreneurial orientation was not con-

firmed. These results indicate the homogeneity of the population of the female students in educational professions in terms of their entrepreneurial orientation.

These results show that, in terms of their entrepreneurial orientation, the female students in educational professions are a homogeneous group.

At the end of the text, some reasons for the absence of educational impact on the development of the female pre-service teachers' entrepreneurial orientation are considered, and, based on the research results, the need to enrich university entrepreneurship education as a part of empowering the pre-service teachers' orientation to entrepreneurial behaviour is emphasized.

Keywords: female students of educational professions, entrepreneurial orientation, entrepreneurial behavior of women, entrepreneurial behavior model

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