

ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROGRAM SUPPORT OF YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract: This article discusses the study of youth entrepreneurship development conducted. The relevance of the study is determined by a major gap between the need for large-scale involvement of young people in entrepreneurial activity in order to ensure development of the country's economy and quite passive attitude of young people in Russia towards setting up their own businesses despite various enabling programs and mechanisms for youth entrepreneurship offered at different levels of power in Russia. In order to identify the reasons behind these discrepancies, the article writers review the programs and organizational forms to support youth entrepreneurship development at different levels that are currently available in Russia: from federal to local and intra-university. The analysis of youth entrepreneurship support provided is based on a study of the international practice addressing these issues. This article discusses the key issues that hamper youth entrepreneurship development. The article has a special focus on a social study of the effectiveness of various supportive measures as viewed by young people – university students. It also gives a detailed account of individual aspects of youth entrepreneurship organization in the context of a regional university – Minin University. The authors have examined some of the measures to be taken by universities to empower and involve students as country's most active youth representatives in entrepreneurial activity. Conclusions have been drawn as to certain aspects of the effectiveness of youth entrepreneurship organizational and program supportive measures in this country.

Keywords: youth entrepreneurship, supportive measures, organizational support, entrepreneurship development programs.

1. INTRODUCTION

Small and medium business development remains a burning issue in the context of the modern Russian economy. This economy sector plays the key role in the middle-class expansion, increase in standards of well-being, quality improvement of products and services provided as a result of competitive expansion [2]. According to the research

conducted by the Global Bank, if small and middle businesses account for less than 40% of a country's GDP, investment in its economy will not yield the required and planned economic effect. All this is yet another proof of the importance of small and medium business support [22]. Currently, one of Russia's top-priority tasks is the implementation of the state policy of transition to innovation-based development and establishment of a national innovative system. As the experience of virtually all developed countries shows, youth entrepreneurial initiative may become one of the main drivers of innovative Russian economy [15].

Today, young people have good outlooks for entrepreneurial activity [3]. This is due to success orientation typical of young people and conformity of their properties to social and psychological market requirements (creativity, mobility, courage, risk appetite, ability to learn and retrain, openness to innovations, etc.). At the same time, for a number of objective reasons, they lack such knowledge and experience and, as a result, young people are unable to fully implement their personal potential, implement their ideas. This is why for successful work, young entrepreneurs need modern business education that will make up for the lack of knowledge and experience [4,8,9].

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Youth entrepreneurship as a social and economic form of human potential implementation needs the substantial targeted support of the State [6]. First of all, this brings about the need to improve the regulatory framework for youth entrepreneurship development at various levels of power [11,12]. This is also confirmed by the data of APS Russia statistics agency; the age structure of Russian entrepreneurs is not homogenous. The mean age of an early Russian entrepreneur is 36 years. Age distribution of early and established entrepreneurs is shown in fig. 19. Prevalence of the "25-34" age group is typical of most entrepreneur groups [16]. As far as early entrepreneurs are concerned, this is true both for men and women. Exceptions are the respondents intending to set up a business and established entrepreneur. The activity of those intending to become entrepreneurs decreases with age. The highest activity is observed in young people aged from 18 to 24. 11% of men and 7.5% of women from this age group intend to set up a business. In older age groups, the decreased activity trend is observed. Prevalence of the "35-44" and "45-54" age groups is typical of established entrepreneurs [16]. Among owners of newly set businesses and established entrepreneurs, men are more active than women in all age groups. There are virtually no differences among emerging entrepreneurs.

Data of the conducted study of optimism of individuals' assessment of the business environment in the country as a share of the population has been used to analyze countries distribution by the degree of optimism of population's assessment of the business environment in a relevant region. Analysis results have shown that a country aggregate is characterized by moderately expressed heterogeneity of this indicator (coefficient of variation is 44.6%) [17,19]. The study has resulted in a 6-cluster structure of homogenous country groups with two prominent observations: an abnormally small share of optimists has been recorded in Japan (6%) and abnormally big - in Nigeria (85%). Prevailing are the countries, the share of optimists in the population of which has been recorded at the average or below average levels (37 out of 55 countries) with almost half of the countries (47%) having an average share of

optimists. It should be noted that in half of the countries, the share of population optimistic about starting a business does not exceed 38.8%.

A low level of population's optimism with regard to this indicator is observed in Japan, Korea and Greece that has been affected by deep implications of the financial crisis. The highest level of optimism is observed in African and Latin-American countries that feature a low level of entrepreneurial activity and in North-European countries (Finland, Sweden, Norway) with a relatively low level of early entrepreneurial activity [11,12]. Available youth entrepreneurship state support programs offer quite wide opportunities and ensure the competitive power of youth projects that often lose the competitive battle to large companies [1]. At the federal level, the youth entrepreneurship support and development system is developed by the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs.

Presently, youth entrepreneurship plays an important role in economic development of most countries of the world [7]. Entrepreneurship is an economic activity targeted at regular profit earning [14]. As to youth entrepreneurship, it is a special sphere of public relations that comprises both economic and youth policy of the state [5]. Youth entrepreneurship holds a prominent place in country's economy also because it provides a tool to settle a global issue – youth unemployment, which has been very relevant recently. In Russia, for example, young people aged under 25 account for 23% of the unemployed, including 3.3% aged 15–19, 19.7% aged 20–24. The high unemployment rate is observed in the age group of 15–19 (28.2%) and 20–24 years (14.0%). [10] Youth entrepreneurship development is intended to decrease these indicators. Entrepreneurship is targeted at the creation of new jobs. Besides, development of both medium and small business results in an increase in tax proceeds to budgets of all levels.

This means that the state is particularly interested in youth entrepreneurship development. Young people (aged under 30) feature innovative thinking, mobility, adaptability to new conditions of economic environment, availability of present knowledge and ability to quickly acquire new knowledge. At the same time, young people face the following challenges when setting up their own businesses:

1. lack of experience, i.e. they don't know how and where to start a business;
2. lack of financial base; even if they have a project of their own, they have no chance to put it into practice;
3. lack of education, i.e. even if young men have the basic economic knowledge, they lack knowledge in entrepreneurship.

These days, youth entrepreneurship development faces a number of typical problems:

1. lack of full-fledged regulatory framework;
2. poor development of the business project financing system;
3. high tax and loan rates;
4. lack of an information resource where young people could find the required information about available entrepreneurship support programs;
5. corruption barriers and “shadow” economy, etc. [23]

To overcome these issues, organizations are set up in this country to assist in youth entrepreneurship development. They include Russian Center for Youth Entrepreneurship Assistance, Business Youth, Association of Young Entrepreneurs of Russia, Opora Rossii LLC, Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. These organizations develop various programs to support small and middle businesses. A special role in youth entrepreneurship development in this country belong to “You Are an Entrepreneur” program that has been unrolled in pursuance of the resolution of the Russian Government dated 30 December 2014 [25]

In 2009, joint efforts of Rosmolodezh and Russian Ministry of Economic Development resulted in a decision to implement the “You Are an Entrepreneur” federal program in Russia. Currently, this program covers 52 regions of the country. In this region, the project is implemented by the order of the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Entrepreneurship of Nizhny Novgorod Region. In Nizhny Novgorod region, the program is implemented by youth business movement “KOLESO”. The mission that determined the focus area as early as 2010 is upbringing the generation of business leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators.

The aim of the program is to establish progressive working environment for the growth and development of youth entrepreneurship in the region and country. In fact, “You Are an Entrepreneur” creates a unique platform for the development of human business skills from school to the support and improvement of operating businesses! “You Are an Entrepreneur” has been implemented in Nizhny Novgorod region for six years now: over this period, 24,293 people have been involved in program projects, 6,555 people have been trained and 73 small and medium businesses have been set up. The target audience of the youth entrepreneurship development program in Russia has very broad coverage: from high-school children, university and technical school students to young people willing to set up their own business or already running it at the initial stage. “You Are an Entrepreneur” participants are people aged 14–30 (inclusive) willing to start their own business, emerging and acting young entrepreneurs.

2016 saw the following main events for school children and students: “Koleso” Training Business Quests”. Quests are very popular among guys aged from 14 to 20. Participants acquire initial entrepreneurship knowledge, new starting points to choose their future career and consider whether to work as hired employees or set up their own business while playing. The final part of the game includes the elaboration of a training business process, its defence before acting entrepreneurs, experts, representatives of government agencies engaged in entrepreneurship support in the region. – “Young Entrepreneur School”. This activity is intended to improve the image of entrepreneurial activity to attract young people in business and foster a positive image of an entrepreneur. The program is targeted at high-school children and it introduces participants to the basic concepts of entrepreneurial activity in the form of interactive sessions, problem discussions and individual work in an entrepreneurship guidebook.

In April 2016, a pilot project titled “Business Mandarins” was launched for students of training colleges and technical schools. This is a multilevel interactive business education program intended to identify young people who are skilled and interested in the entrepreneurial activity. Training is based on modern techniques and it promotes entrepreneurship skills, comprehensive knowledge about the market economy and business projects. At the level of the Russian Federation: large-scaled event – “Povolzhye” Business Forum” has been held for six years in a row. This is an

annual summer training camp for young businessmen and young people interested in entrepreneurship. Forum of real-life communication, alliances, search for the areas of common interest of various businesses. In 2016, the forum changed its traditional format and content and was justly give the name of “Povolzhye. Forum of Young Millionaires”.

The final event of “You Are an Entrepreneur” program is the contest titled “Young Entrepreneur of Russia” – a federal project intended to identify and encourage young talents engaged in entrepreneurial activity, foster a positive image of youth entrepreneurship as an important factor of country’s economic and social development. Contest jurors include well-known Russian business representatives and entrepreneurship experts. There is another program to be mentioned that helps young entrepreneurs – “Youth Business of Russia” intended to foster youth entrepreneurship development. This program promotes conditions for young people to get available financial assets as credits (loans) to set up their own business. Apart from financial support, young people get help from individual mentors, advice when making up business plans and training in various business dealing matters [12]. Other programs also exist, but they all pursue the same aim – to activate young people, involve them in entrepreneurial activity and promote the conditions required to unlock their potential.

Since 2016, activities to foster youth entrepreneurship development have been performed by Rosmolodezh as part of the “Small and Medium Business Development” subprogram of the state program of the Russian Federation titled “Economic Development and Innovative Economy”. To settle youth entrepreneurship issues, “youth” and “youth entrepreneurship” concepts must be formalized in legislation as presently, they are not formalized anywhere although many people speak in these terms. The “youth entrepreneurship” concept was for the first time mentioned in the Resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation dated 3 June 1993 “On main directions of the state youth policy in the Russian Federation”. However, it is only in Moscow that an individual resolution “On youth entrepreneurship” has been passed, there is an ad hoc commission and financial assistance is provided.

According to Moscow regulations, a young entrepreneur is an individual entrepreneur aged under 27 and in case of activities falling within top-priority lines of support and development of micro-entrepreneurship – under 30. At the time of economic stagnation and crisis, these are mainly young people that often give way to socially vulnerable sentiments [20,21,24]. According to statistics, young people aged under 30 are the first to become unemployed and radicalize [13]. This is why young entrepreneurs are in need of constant support to make sure that their business makes good headway at the very early stage. Besides, this support has to be of long-standing rather than isolated nature. It is essential to support a young entrepreneur since the onset of the desire to become one until the project advances to the operating business stage.

A university may support youth entrepreneurship at the initial stage. For example, student association “New Style Entrepreneur” has been set up and has successfully operated at Minin University. A student consulting agency and student coworking center operate as part of the association. These units of the student association provide business planning consulting support; they prepare projects for the participation in business contests of various levels, including to attract investors. Consultations at student association “New Style Entrepreneur” are provided by students with the assistance of supervising teachers. Student business initiatives that have been

successfully implemented and operate include student recruitment agency and Wood-style NN LLC (wooden accessories) [18].

3. RESULTS

Students' interest in involvement in entrepreneurial activity and a major role of the university in the process are confirmed by the poll of students of Minin NGPU conducted by the innovative management technology chair. Results of this poll have yielded constructive proposals as to university support of student entrepreneurship. The poll was conducted in April 2017 using Google forms among full-time students. The sample group comprised 300 people (81.3% women and 18.7% men). 1st year students – 24%, 2nd year students – 26.7%, 3rd year students – 25.3%, 4th year students – 16% and 5th year students – 8%. Age of respondents: 54.7% – under 20, 45.3% – over 21. 90.7% – single and 9.3% – married students, 93.7% have no kids yet. According to poll results, 24% of young people combine work with full-time attendance, 6.7% have their own business, 12% work for a company or firm and 5.3% work for a public institution. Most students (60%) are positive about entrepreneurship, 37.3% are neutral and only 2.7% are negative, which proves the importance of this poll. It should be noted that 40.6% out of 76% full-time students try to find a regular job; most see themselves as entrepreneurs and 35% consider a side job (hourly, temporary, part-time, flexible working hours to be able to combine it with studies).

The following factors that hamper student entrepreneurial initiative have been identified (and ranged): overload with studies (they can only think of passing their exams) – mentioned by 198 people (66.0%), lack of hands-on experience to start own business – 142 people (47.3%), lack of entrepreneurial skills – 122 people (40.7%), laziness – 96 people (32.0%), obligation to attend lectures (lack of time) – 92 people (30.3%), ability to generate ideas, but lack of skills to implement them – 73 people (24.3%), lack of basic practical entrepreneurship courses – 58 people (19.4%), education as the first priority followed by work – 58 people (19.4%), parental overprotection – 30 people (10.0%), lack of “health” to handle everything – 30 people (10.0%), rejection of innovations, stability in work and studies preferred – 22 people (7.3%), other – 3 people (1.0%).

The study has ascertained that student entrepreneurship development depends more on the university – mentioned by 150 people (50.0%), lack of mechanisms of financial and credit support of innovations and entrepreneurship – 135 people (45.0%), lack of special state support measures – 108 people (36.0%), administrative barriers – 50 people (27.7%), poor taxation system – 55 people (18.3%), other – 12 people (4.0%). The university can coordinate student business development and lobby the most curious ideas on the regional level. When asked about areas to start a business and reasons for their interest, students gave the following answers. 45% are interested in such services as tourism, public catering, beauty salons and cosmetology, car service, clothed tailoring, IT, etc., some 10% are interested in extended education for children, sport sections, 8% are interested in trade, 7% – in production, some 12% have not yet chosen their business area and cannot answer this question. The choice of various business lines is most often explained by earning power, high profitability (rate of return, especially in services and trade that enjoy steady consumer demand), it has to be interesting, bring joy, has to be related to studies, or it can be a childhood hobby or dream.

Students are most interested in the following forms of starting own business: making a dream come true – own business from scratch (82.7%), considering to buy a ready-made business (20%), continue an individual line of family business (8%), franchising (6.7%). This data only confirms open question results. When setting up businesses, students prefer to be: individual entrepreneurs – mentioned by 62.7% and some 37.3% are willing to set up a legal entity (firm, company, enterprise). Disciplines and education modules need a focus on small businesses. Respondents prefer the following financial conditions to start a business: investment of own funds into an enterprise being set up (58.7%), search for like-minded fellows for joint capital formation (49.3%); less attractive options are the search for investors (32%), family budget (25.3%), bank lending (10.7%) and lease (4%), which is why financial literacy has to come to the fore. About half of the students (46.7%) are aware of bank lending programs for small and medium businesses; 26.7% are not aware and the same share don't know the answer. The university may hold round-table discussions, demo lessons with bank representatives for advice and development of lending competences. Only 24% of the students are aware of concessional/simplified taxation, subsidies in certain areas such as state support to entrepreneurs. The poll has shown that young people trust the following non-governmental organizations engaged in entrepreneurs' support, advice and lobbying:

- 1) Funds (46.7%)
- 2) CCI – Chamber of Commerce and Industry (41.3%)
- 3) Associations (32%)
- 4) Guilds (8%)

Most students know and have participated in regional and university contests such as ROST, Business Provocation, i-volga, Koleso, Start Business for Nizhny, Start-up, Business Incubator, Kanva, break point forum, Russian Startup Tour, Skolkovo technopark, but they are not yet aware of federal programs. Information about contests and programs of various levels, timelines and terms of participation is needed. Most students (77.3%) think that the university has to support their business initiatives, 17.3% don't know the answer than 5.3% said no. Students need this support from the university in the *following matters*:

- 1) mastering fundamentals of entrepreneurial activity, training, extended education courses (62.7%);
- 2) advice on sectoral market research and verification of business project economic feasibility (52%);
- 3) advice on taxation and accounting (49.3%);
- 4) supervisors' assistance in preparing contest applications (44%);
- 5) setting up a portal on ongoing business contests (links to up-to-date information for young entrepreneurs on various business matters) (38.7%);
- 6) setting up a student business incubator (32%);
- 7) consulting (business starting support) – (30.7%);
- 8) preparation of a set of investment/credit documents (21.3%);

9) setting up young entrepreneur's personal account at the university's website or social media (18.7%).

According to the poll results, students need to master entrepreneurship essentials (lack of knowledge is due to the fact that Minin NGPU students follow various lines of training for bachelors – educational, technical, service, economic and others), which is why they need the following competences to start their own business:

- 1) entrepreneurship essentials – 73.3%;
- 2) marketing (market research) – 61.3%;
- 3) accounting and audit (mastering software to issue documents for tax authorities) – 61.3%;
- 4) finances, credits, insurance – 52%;
- 5) management (administration) – 46.7%;
- 6) human resource management – 45.3%;
- 7) logistics – 34.7%;
- 8) social studies (polls of target consumers) – 29.3%

Some 64% of the students are willing to take part in youth business forums with the support of the university that could also offer training. The university may arrange various conferences and forums, meetings with entrepreneurs using its infrastructure and as webinars. More than half of the students (54.7%) are registered at GOSUSLUGI website. More than half of the respondents (52%) have come across business starting communities in social media. However, 75% of the respondents are not aware of mobile apps for (instructions and advice on setting up and running one's business). The students rate willingness to start a business now and in 5 years (by a 5-grade scale, where 1 is willing and 5 – not willing) at 2.6 on the average vs. 3.8 in the future with an increase by 46%, which is a significant potential.

4. DISCUSSION

Matters of youth entrepreneurship support have been studied by many foreign authors. Essentials of general entrepreneurialism have been laid out in works by such renowned economists as S. Brue, R.C. McConnel, F. Night, J.-B. Say, A. Smith, A. Thunen, F. Walker, F. Hayek, J. Schumpeter, A. Hosking, etc. [1]. The following home scientists have contributed to entrepreneurialism and state support of entrepreneurial activity: L.I. Abalkin, T.A. Alimov, A.V. Bachurin, A.V. Vilensky, B.K. Zlobin, V.V. Maslennikov, A.A. Sukhanov, S.A. Smirnov, V.E. Khrutsky, G.P. Chernikov, N.P. Shmelev, V.M. Yakovlev and many others [1,4,7]. Studies of state regulation and support of entrepreneurial activity dedicated to the conceptualization of the experience accumulated and identification of new trends and directions in the establishment of the micro-entrepreneurship regulation and support system have been conducted by the following authors: S.V. Vladimirov, E.I. Levin, O.V. Sukhomlinov. Some authors, for example, I.A. Shatkevich address youth entrepreneurship in terms of legal regulation [3]. These studies are mostly applied and are based on particular empirical evidence. However, all the specified authors study either methodical or strictly applied aspects of youth entrepreneurship development. Besides, applied research, for example, gets out of date

quite fast due to high social mobility and changes in young people's preferences when choosing their trades. This is why it quickly becomes outdated and may not adequately give the picture of the current implementation of youth entrepreneurship ideas. In this respect, the aspects considered in this article have been ignored in previous research. And the research conducted is fully authorial and authentic.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The research has shown the following:

1. Students find it important to add the basic course of entrepreneurial activity to the curriculum for various training areas where students could perform practical tasks intended to elaborate options to open their business, examine entrepreneurs' taxation matters and possible support from the state and banks. This will develop young people's entrepreneurial competences.

2. Starting a business from scratch is the most costly and labor-intensive process; it needs competences in various registration and operation matters. The university may accumulate the experience of various enterprises and give advice.

3. The university may set up a youth entrepreneurship association that would work with funds, CCI and other associations, lobby their interests, offer training and market research.

4. It is feasible for the university to train students as part of extended education courses subject to young people's demand for required entrepreneurial competences.

5. Communications are an important tool for information acquisition and business promotion. The university needs to enhance its activities as part of Internet communications (website, social media) by posting useful links to entrepreneurial resources that are of interest to students.

Thus, the research conducted has revealed students' high interest in youth entrepreneurship development and implementation of a "soft" start-up while yet studying at university. As far as the business start is concerned, the university has to play a key role since it is the educational platform that affords opportunities to try one's hands, find like-minded fellows, acquire teamwork skills and, last, but not least, acquire all the competencies that a modern businessman needs. Article materials are of practical value to the university units that supervise youth entrepreneurship and managers of student associations.

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