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Lars Kolvereid
Bodo Graduate School of Business, Lars.Kolvereid@hibo.no

Tatiana Iakovleva
Bodo Graduate School of Business

Jill Kickul
Simmons School of Management

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SUMMARY

AN INTEGRATED MODEL OF ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS

Lars Kolvereid, Bodø Graduate School of Business
Tatiana Iakovleva, Bodø Graduate School of Business
Jill Kickul, Simmons School of Management

Principal Topic

The present research investigates whether the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) and the model of the entrepreneurial event (SEE) (Shapero & Sokol, 1982) can be integrated into one model of entrepreneurial intentions. Furthermore, it is investigated whether different definitions of entrepreneurial intent, i.e. the intention to become self-employed and the intention to start a business make a difference in the model. Specifically, our research focuses on two research questions:

1. Are employment status choice intentions different from or similar to intentions to start a business?
2. How are the independent variables from the two intention models in question, related to each other and to entrepreneurial intentions?

Method

A questionnaire was administered to university students taking business courses in three countries: Russia (n=317), Norway (n=111) and Finland (n=100). Entrepreneurial intentions were measured by items adopted from Kolvereid (1996) and Krueger et al. (2000). Measured related to TPB were taken from Gundry and Welch (2001), Kolvereid (1996), Tkachev and Kolvereid (1999). Measures related to SEE were taken from Kickul and Krueger (2004). Structural equation modelling applied in the analysis. Aggregation conducted for each common construct in order to have unidimensional composite scales for the structural model.

Results and Implications

The findings indicate that the intention to become self-employed is a function of desirability and feasibility of self-employment. Moreover, the desirability of self-employment is a function of attitude and subjective norm, and feasibility is a function of subjective norm and perceived behavioural control. As far as intention to become self-employed is concerned, the TPB and SEE models can be successfully integrated into one model. This findings was robust not only when participants from the 3 countries were analysed together, but also when separate analyses were carried out on respondents from each of the three countries.

The findings also illustrate that entrepreneurial intentions among students is best assessed using intentions to become self-employed as the measure of entrepreneurial intent rather than the intention to start a business. While starting up a new business in most cases is relatively easy, making a living out of it is far more difficult.

Future research should investigate whether some of the concepts included in the model presented here have direct effects on behaviour.

CONTACT: Lars Kolvereid; lars.kolvereid@hibo.no