MEASURING THE CHANGE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTITUDES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS (INTERACTIVE PAPER)

Asun Ibáñez
*University of Deusto, asun.ibanez@deusto.es*

Oier Marigil
*Deusto Foundation*

Anaïs Iglesias
*Deusto Foundation*

Isabel Fernández
*Deusto Foundation*

Paul San Sebastián
*Deusto Foundation*

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INTERACTIVE PAPER

MEASURING THE CHANGE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTITUDES
OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Asun Ibáñez, University of Deusto, Spain
Oier Marigil, Deusto Foundation, Spain
Anaïs Iglesias, Deusto Foundation, Spain
Isabel Fernández, Deusto Foundation, Spain
Paul San Sebastián, Deusto Foundation, Spain

Principal Topic
Formal education in general does not encourage entrepreneurship (Peterman and Kennedy, 2003). Research on measuring the impact and performance of an entrepreneurship education programme is sparse and recent, and there is no consensus (Garavan and O’Cinneide, 1994). The influence of entrepreneurship education on attitudes, perceptions or entrepreneurial behaviour needs to be tested (Kantor, 1988; Donckles, 1991; Garavan and O’Cinneide, 1994; Krueger and Brazeal, 1994; McMullan et al., 2002; Gorman et al, 1997; Peterman and Kennedy, 2003)

We would like to address three issues. First, we seek to determine if, as literature states, formal education does not encourage entrepreneurship. To do so, we will develop a reliable and valid measurement tool and we will measure the change of entrepreneurial attitudes of students of Business Administration after their two last academic years at our university. Second, we would like to determine if their entrepreneurial intention increases or not. Third, and finally, we seek to develop a programme which, taking these results into consideration, could develop their entrepreneurial attitudes. We will also measure the results of the programme working with a control group. In answering these questions, we build on previous work which proved that entrepreneurial attitudes can change (Ibáñez, 2002 and Krauss, 2008).

Method
We will work on samples of students from two different generations who took the same survey twice: the first time when they were in their fourth academic year and the second time after finishing their career. Our data collection was carried out on the basis of surveys which, in order to ensure reliability and validity, were extracted from the literature as far as possible. The original questionnaire was a Likert-type scale with 6 positions (1 being “completely disagree” and 6 “completely agree”) and was based on Ibáñez (2006) and Krauss (2008). We will use analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Crosstabs to determine if significant differences exist between the two different periods when the survey was done.

Results and Implications
Our study draws attention to the importance of measuring attitudinal changes and to take them into account to develop entrepreneurship programmes. This study will also enrich the results of other researches which have measured the performance of entrepreneurship programmes not only by the number of new ventures started up after the programme was completed but also with attitude scales which measure both entrepreneurial profile and the intention of starting up a new venture.

CONTACT: Asun Ibáñez; asun.ibanez@deusto.es; (T): 34.943.297274; (F):34.943.273932; Camino Mundaíz, 50 – 20012 San Sebastián, Spain.