PATH DEPENDENCY IN ENTREPRENEURIAL CAREER CHOICE (SUMMARY)

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SUMMARY

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Principal Topic

The study sheds light on transference from salaried employment towards entrepreneurship, the different dimensions and actualisation of the phenomenon. The purpose of the study is to recognise and describe university graduates’ paths that have led to entrepreneurship. The paper will also explore, whether there are significant factors in individual’s work experience that predict entrepreneurship. As a result, we aim at identifying individual features that may distinguish entrepreneurs from wageworkers. The theoretical background of the study is based on an assumption that becoming an entrepreneur is intentional behaviour (see Shapero and Sokol 1982; Ajzen 1991). It suggests that intentions are based on perceived desirability and feasibility of entrepreneurship. These individual perceptions, in turn, are affected by several exogenous or objective factors, which can be further divided into personal and situational factors. (see Krueger 2000) According to yet another model (Dyer 1994) entrepreneurship as a career choice is a result of individual, social and economic antecedents, career socialization and career orientation. Of particular interest here is the career socialization, according to which there may be certain features in one’s early childhood, education and work experience that would encourage entrepreneurial behaviour. In this study, we focus on work experience.

Method

The research population was defined as employees and entrepreneurs with a university degree in either business economics or engineering. The data was gathered through an Internet survey and altogether approximately 1,500 responses were received. Analyses included descriptive statistics, logistic regression analysis and cluster analysis.

Results and Implications

The study suggests that based on work experience it is possible to identify a taxonomy of different paths towards entrepreneurship. Moreover, certain factors seem to distinguish between entrepreneurs and wageworkers: variety of work, amount of experience, type of employment, quality and amount of work tasks, career advancement and experience in small firms.

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