



SHAPING ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCIES IN EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

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Abstract. The subject of the considerations in the article is the practice of forming entrepreneurial competencies in the educational system in Poland. The research focused on innovative forms of shaping key competencies, with particular emphasis on entrepreneurial competencies, was carried out using the diagnostic survey method and the method of existing data analysis. The obtained research results indicate that in the process of education in the field of entrepreneurship, good practices concerning activating teaching-learning methods recommended by EU agendas are little used. Against the background of a very low assessment of the level of education in the field of entrepreneurship, the respondents formulate remedial postulates regarding the practical orientation of entrepreneurship classes, increasing the number of lesson hours devoted to this issue and ensuring competent teaching staff. The obtained research results may serve as an inspiration for undertaking more extensive research enabling the formulation of general conclusions.

KSZTAŁTOWANIE KOMPETENCJI W ZAKRESIE PRZEDSIĘBIORCZOŚCI W PRAKTYCE EDUKACYJNEJ

Słowa kluczowe: kompetencje kluczowe, kompetencje przedsiębiorcze, edukacja, metody aktywizujące

Streszczenie. Przedmiotem rozważań podjętych w artykule jest praktyka formowania kompetencji przedsiębiorczych w systemie edukacyjnym w Polsce. Badania empiryczne skoncentrowane na innowacyjnych formach kształtowania kompetencji kluczowych ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem kompetencji przedsiębiorczych zostały przeprowadzone przy użyciu metody sondażu

diagnostycznego z wykorzystaniem techniki ankiety oraz metody analizy danych zastanych. W celowo dobranej próbie badawczej uczestniczyło 100 respondentów. Cechą charakterystyczną badanych osób jest ukończenie cyklu kształcenia co najmniej na poziomie średnim i aktualna aktywność zawodowa. Badania zostały przeprowadzone wiosną 2022 roku w trybie ankiety internetowej - z uwagi na sytuację wynikającą z pandemii Covid-19. Uzyskane wyniki badań wskazują, że w procesie kształcenia w dziedzinie przedsiębiorczości w nikłym stopniu wykorzystywane są zalecane przez agendy unijne dobre praktyki dotyczące aktywizujących metod nauczania-uczenia się. Na tle bardzo niskiej oceny poziomu kształcenia w dziedzinie przedsiębiorczości respondenci formułują postulaty naprawcze dotyczące: praktycznego ukierunkowania zajęć z przedsiębiorczości, zwiększenia liczby godzin lekcyjnych poświęconych tej problematyce oraz zapewnienia kompetentnej kadry prowadzącej zajęcia. Zaprezentowane wyniki mogą stanowić inspirację do podjęcia szerszej zakrojonych badań umożliwiających sformułowanie wniosków o charakterze generalnym.

Introduction

Commonly shared ideas about the proper way of being/functioning for a person in the conditions characteristic of the contemporary capitalist economy lie at the basis of the principles of the organization of social life adopted in the European Union. They are focused on activities allowing people to maintain high living standards in the conditions of social cohesion, taking into account the developing society integrated by the social division of labour. Meeting these expectations requires equipping people with an appropriate set of competencies, which highlight the key competencies that everyone needs to enable development, employment, social inclusion, a fulfilling life and active citizenship. These competencies are a dynamic combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes that the learner must develop throughout their life (Council Recommendation, 2018).

The conviction of the relevance of key competencies for the modern citizen of the European Union Member States makes their formation an important element of the education system, where the development of these competencies can be implemented in all contexts of education, training and lifelong learning (Council Recommendation, 2018).

The catalogue of key competencies also includes competencies in the field of entrepreneurship. In the *Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competencies for lifelong learning*, these competencies are treated as the ability to use opportunities and ideas and transform them into value for others. They are expressed in problem-solving and collaborative skills in planning and managing

projects with cultural, social and financial value. An important premise for taking action to shape them in the education process is the conviction about the importance of these competencies for maintaining social cohesion in developing Member States of the European Union.

Formation of entrepreneurial competence in the educational system in Poland

Against this background, the subject of the considerations in the article is the practice of forming entrepreneurial competencies in the education system in Poland in the context of the recommendations formulated in EU documents, including, in particular, the above-mentioned Council Recommendation. The main problem is to determine whether the educational practice concerning the development of entrepreneurial competencies allows for the achievement of the expected results concerning the shaping of active participants in the market economy. The problem posed in this way corresponds to one of the main didactic goals of the subject of entrepreneurship, which is to prepare students for planning their future and for professional activity as employees or self-employed persons. Hence, the purpose of the considerations in this article is to formulate a preliminary diagnosis of the practice of shaping competencies in the field of entrepreneurship in the education process in Poland, based on the opinions of people participating in the study.

Among the many theoretical concepts concerning the foundations of educational activity, particular attention should be paid to the assumption that a human being is an independent and creative subject, whose knowledge is a structure created as a result of one's own, multi-faceted activity implemented in a specific situational context. In the case of educational activity, the effects are achieved in the education process, the key element of which is the purposefully selected and arranged educational content. This process is currently implemented in the lifelong learning formula, which includes various forms of formal, non-formal and informal learning.

With regard to the development of key competencies, it has been proposed to introduce new and innovative forms of teaching and learning, aimed at acquiring knowledge and skills necessary to promote sustainable development and the implementation of the social cohesion policy (Council Recommendation, 2018).

In particular, entrepreneurial competencies are defined in the above-mentioned *Council Recommendation* as the ability to seize opportunities and ideas and transform them into value. It is assumed that this competency includes the ability to recognize and describe one's own interests as well as strengths and weaknesses. This allows one to gain self-confidence that allows one to take actions aimed at achieving the set goals according to the circumstances. The competencies in question are exemplified in specific resources of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate for enterprising people. The necessary knowledge and skills needed to create entrepreneurial attitudes relate to recognizing and understanding the ways of functioning of the economy and profiling career paths and running a business. It involves organizing the necessary resources needed to achieve goals, risk management and teamwork. Developing these competencies requires the use of effective teaching methods, among which the following methods can be distinguished: educational projects, WebQuest or problem methods. The use of these methods should be conducive to the independent pursuit of the necessary knowledge, acquiring teamwork skills and adequate self-assessment.

In the exploratory studies concerning the implementation of the set research goal, the method of a diagnostic survey with the use of the survey technique and the method of existing data analysis were used. 100 respondents participated in a deliberately selected research sample. Such a sample selection, often used in social research, according to E. Babbie, is arbitrary and does not authorize the formulation of generalizations concerning the entire population. A characteristic feature of the respondents is the completion of the education cycle at least at the secondary level and current professional activity. The research was conducted in the spring of 2022 as an online survey – due to the situation resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The diagnostic survey method and the method of existing data analysis were used in the exploratory research concerning the achievement of the set research goal. 100 respondents participated in the deliberately selected research sample. The respondents represent various age groups, levels of education and place of residence. The structure of the studied sample according to the above-mentioned criteria is presented in Chart 1.

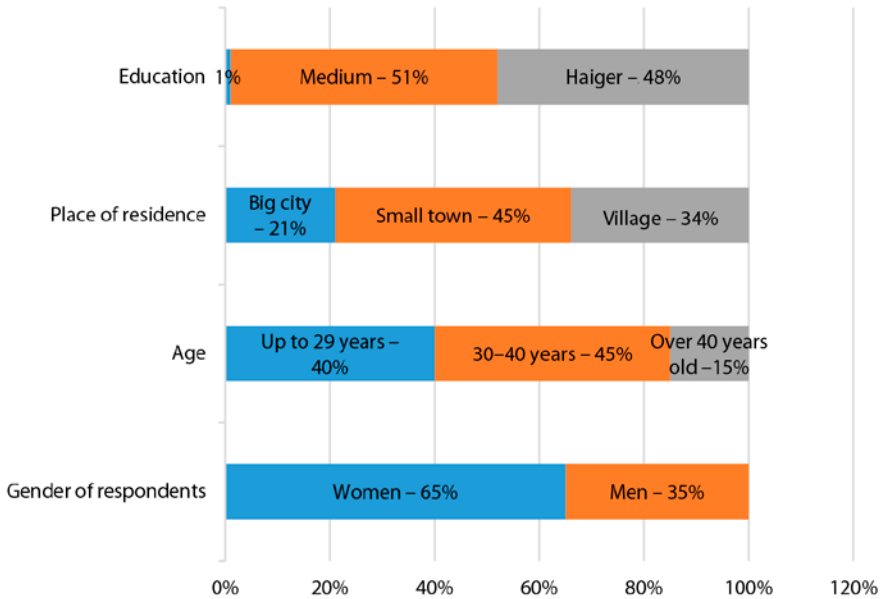


Figure 1. The structure of the research sample by sex, age, education and place of residence of the respondents.

Source: own study

The structure of the research sample presented in Fig. 1 shows that the respondents have secondary and higher education, while in the group of people with secondary education, a significant part of them continue higher education. The respondents represent different environments in terms of their place of residence and age groups entering the labour market and developing their professional careers. Such a selection of the sample makes it possible to obtain the opinion of professionally active people about the methods and effectiveness of this process used in the process of education in the field of entrepreneurship.

The conducted research focused on activities appropriate for innovative educational methods that stimulate the development of entrepreneurial competencies. Such methods, in accordance with the recommendations set out in the Council Recommendation, should take into account good practices in the field of:

- generating ideas and activities to obtain their final product,
- educational business ventures,
- project planning and management,

- organization of teamwork.

An important element of competencies in the field of entrepreneurship is understanding the mechanisms of the economy and profiling career paths. In this area, respondents were asked to comment on the message of the Monetary Policy Council addressed to the general public and to be active in the preparation of an individual career development plan. At the conclusion of the survey, the respondents were asked to assess the quality of school education in the field of entrepreneurship and to articulate postulates regarding expectations regarding the manner of education in this field.

The obtained research results allow for the formulation of a preliminary diagnosis regarding the involvement of respondents in educational projects consisting in the generation of ideas and their implementation, business simulations as well as project planning and management. The results of the research are presented in Fig. 2.

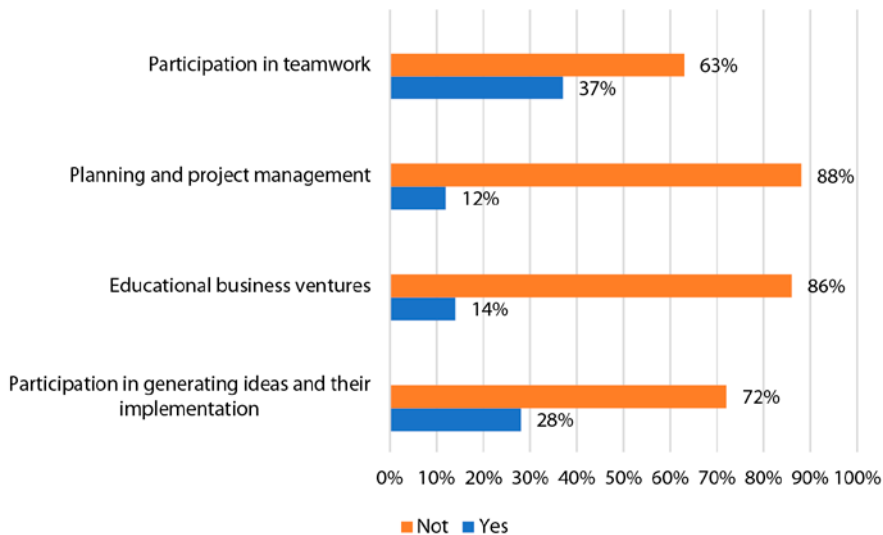


Figure 2. Involvement in activating educational projects

Source: own study

The data presented in Fig. 2 indicate a low share of respondents in educational projects characterized by active participation in their implementation. The respondents declare a particularly low level of commitment to projects and

business projects. This means a limited range of using the activating methods of education postulated in the Council Recommendation.

An example of the application of knowledge in the field of financial aspects of the functioning of the economy is the ability to interpret the messages of the Monetary Policy Council addressed to a wide group of recipients – participants of economic life. Almost 80% of respondents indicate a lack of competencies in this area. Also, about 70% of the respondents did not prepare an individual career development plan. This state of affairs indicates that there is a clear gap in the education system between the expectations articulated in EU documents and the educational practice in the field of entrepreneurship in the Polish education system. As a result, respondents rate the quality of entrepreneurship education in Poland very low. The results of this assessment on a five-point scale are presented in Fig. 3.

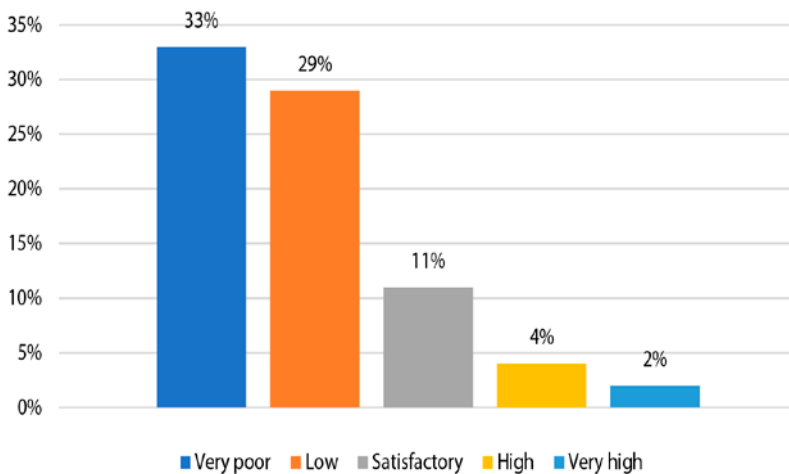


Figure 3. Assessment of the quality of entrepreneurship education in Poland

Source: own study

The data in Fig. 3 indicate a very low assessment of the level of education in the field of entrepreneurship in Poland. Almost 80% of respondents underline the low and very low levels of education in this field. Only 11% give a satisfactory assessment and in incidental cases, we meet with a positive assessment.

Against this background, an interesting circumstance is the attempts to rationalize activities in this area, exemplified in the statements of the respondents. The respondents pointed to the limited possibilities of implementing the core

curriculum on the subject of entrepreneurship in the realities of a modern school. They state that: „it is unlikely that an average secondary school student will acquire skills in 64, sometimes very difficult and complex subjects, which are adopted by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education on the basis of the general education curriculum for general secondary school, technical secondary school and branch school of the second degree from January 30, 2018”. An example of such an issue is the above-mentioned statement of the Monetary Policy Council with the following content:

„The Council decided to raise the NBP interest rates by 1 percentage point. To the level:

- 4.50 per cent reference rate, on an annual basis;
- lombard rate 5.00 percent, on an annual basis;
- 4.00% deposit rate, on an annual basis;
- rediscount rate 4.55%, on an annual basis;
- discount rate of bills of exchange 4.60%, on an annual basis”.

Moreover, the analysis of the respondents’ statements shows that approximately 50% of the respondents did not formulate any postulates regarding the preferred methods of education in the field of entrepreneurship. In relation to the remaining respondents, there are postulates regarding:

- practical orientation of entrepreneurship classes,
- increasing the number of teaching hours devoted to entrepreneurship issues,
- providing competent staff conducting classes.

The obtained research results indicate that in the process of education in the field of entrepreneurship, little use is made of good practices, recommended by EU agendas, concerning the application of activating teaching-learning methods. In this situation, activities leading to improvement and increasing the efficiency of the process of shaping entrepreneurial competencies should, at the stage of school education, focus on improving the teaching methodology, improving teachers’ qualifications and developing the material base for the implementation of didactic tasks. At the same time, the specificity of entrepreneurial competencies as a dynamic combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes makes them relate to a complex area of human behaviour taking the form of variable relations between entities, which are derived from the socio-economic context in which people function. This is of particular importance in circumstances when entrepreneurial competencies constitute an important factor contributing to value creation and implementation of the social cohesion policy

in the territory of the European Union Member States. Nowadays, when we are dealing with a qualitative change in the ways of creating value, in which cognitive and non-material processes as well as systems of social cooperation play a key role, the formation of entrepreneurial competencies takes the form of a life-long process. This means the need to constantly develop these competencies in line with the changing socio-economic context in which the goals are achieved.

The presented research results, due to the importance attributed to competencies in the field of entrepreneurship, for the achievement of individual and social goals, may constitute an inspiration for undertaking more extensive research as the basis for formulating general conclusions and postulates regarding the entrepreneurship education system.

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