The Relationship between Teachers Entrepreneurial Competence, Level of Job Satisfaction and Work Readiness

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCE, LEVEL OF JOB SATISFACTION AND WORK READINESS

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Abstract: The relationship of classroom teachers’ self-evaluation of entrepreneurial competence, level of job satisfaction and work readiness was investigated in this study. Results are situated in the context of current literature on lifelong learning educational policy, entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial competence development, job satisfaction and work readiness. The 450 questionnaires have been administered to classroom teachers from the two of Croatia’s most southern counties. In general, the data collected from the representative sample indicated correlation between the self-evaluation of the classroom teacher entrepreneurial competence, their job satisfaction and work readiness. The paper’s discussion and the conclusion contain the implications of the results on the educational policies and teachers’ professional development.

Key words: entrepreneurial competence, job satisfaction, work readiness, teachers’ professional development

1. Introduction

According to the Council of European Union (2006), the entrepreneurial competence is one of the key competencies of lifelong learning. The development of entrepreneurial competence is not only a question of acquiring knowledge but also a question of the development of abilities, attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, as emphasized in the Oslo Agenda (European Commission, 2006), development of entrepreneurial competence should be in focus of the primary school curriculum and adopted in all study fields. Entrepreneurial competence is acquired at its best in the social environment where the teacher uses active student-centred approaches and creates opportunities for learning. In order to develop entrepreneurial competence among students, it is important to develop the teacher-entrepreneurial competence which includes the acceptance of reflexive practice culture, autonomous learning, research and cooperation (European Commission, 2011).

2. Objectives of This Paper

The primary objective of this research was to investigate the relationship between teachers’ self-evaluation of the entrepreneurial competence related to the teaching profession, job satisfaction and work readiness. Within the research agenda in mind, the following questions were explored:

1. What is the level of self-evaluated teachers’ entrepreneurial competence?
2. What is the level of teachers’ job satisfaction?
3. What is the teachers’ perceived work readiness?
4. Is there a relationship between the level of self-evaluated teachers’ entrepreneurial competence, perceived job satisfaction and work readiness?

3. Review of Related Literature

In order to respond to the requirements of knowledge society and global market, Council of European Union (2006) determined eight key competences for a lifelong learning, one of which is entrepreneurial competence which should be developed on different levels of education. Entrepreneurial competence development does not rely solely of the knowledge acquisition, but is defined as combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities to create and recognize opportunities in the environment, making changes and taking steps towards the successful resolution of a task (Sedan König, 2012). Entrepreneurial competence is based on the individual’s ability to turn ideas into action and is the basis for acquisition of specific skills and knowledge needed by those establishing or contributing to social or commercial activity (European Parliament, 2006), while education is needed in order to carry out entrepreneurial aspirations (Raposo & Do Paço, 2011).

Therefore, it is crucial to develop entrepreneurial competence on different levels of education, since it includes basis for leaders and development of everyday professional and social life. Entrepreneurial competence is acquired at its best in the social environment where the teacher uses active student-centred approaches and creates opportunities for learning (Heder, Ljubić & Nola, 2011). It is important that teachers stimulate initiative and motivation for problem solving among students, while putting emphasis on cooperation and collaborative practices. Ernest, Matthew and Samuel (2015) elaborate that entrepreneurial learning should focus on learners’ awareness of self-employment, promoting the development of entrepreneurship related qualities, such as creativity, risk-taking and responsibility; and development of skills that are needed in order to start and run a new business.

The educational policy demands for inclusion of entrepreneurial education in contemporary schools requires innovative ways of thinking and new pedagogical models in order to fully enhance and develop entrepreneurial approaches in education (Higgins, Smith & Mirza, 2013). There are a number of research studies centred on entrepreneurship education (Hjorth & Johannisson, 2007; Johansen, 2014; Raposo & Do Paço, 2011), indicating that entrepreneurship education is not only about learning what to do, but also learning how to create new things (Hjorth & Johannisson, 2007), and promoting general and specific entrepreneurial abilities while improving academic performance (Johansen, 2014). The idea behind entrepreneurship education is not that all students will become entrepreneurs, but to receive solid education with entrepreneurial knowledge and skills to use over their lifetime (Raposo & Do Paço, 2011).

When considering the educational process development, as well as the professional development of teachers, it is crucial for teachers to accept the critical reflective practice, in order to raise awareness about areas of work in which they need improvement. In addition to the fact that social interaction and collegial support positively influence teachers’ self-confidence and helps them in understanding of the work role and its meaning in society, the collaborative learning has positive impact on teachers’ likelihood to adopt entrepreneurial teaching approach (Peltonen, 2015). The review of relevant literature indicates different of concepts that are used in order to explain and understand the teacher characteristics and job related behaviour. One of the concepts commonly used in organizational sciences is job satisfaction, suggesting that the attitude towards a job can be indicative of the job-related behaviour. While the most commonly used instrument for determining job satisfaction is Job Descriptive Index (Stanton et al., 2002). Furthermore, research studies focusing on teachers job satisfaction, commonly explain the concept of jobs satisfaction by its psychological determinants such as teacher autonomy and self-efficacy (Canrinus, Helms-Lorenz, Beijaard, Buultink, & Hofman, 2012; Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni & Steca, 2003; Skåalvik & Skaalvik, 2014).

Another relevant concept that can be indicative of teacher job related behaviour is work readiness, which is focusing on of possession of the characteristics which are indicators of the work success. This concept and instruments determining level of work readiness are commonly used in studies focusing on students and recent graduates (Daniels & Brooker, 2014). The concept includes large number of different aspects, such as personal characteristics, organizational acumen, work competence and social intelligence (Cabaliero, Walker & Fuller-Tyszkielwicz, 2011).
4. Overview of Methodology

4.1 Participants

The teachers’ self-evaluation of entrepreneurial competence, job satisfaction and work readiness were in the focus of this study. The survey included 450 classroom teachers from the two of Croatia’s most southern counties. As seen in Table 1, the sample included teachers working at schools that differ by size, and that have different levels of education and work experience. The survey sample accurately represents the population of classroom teachers in accordance to their educational level and work experience. Also, the sample is representative in relation to the school sizes in two Croatia’s most southern counties (Croatian Bureau of Statistics, 2015). In regards to the level of education of currently employed teachers, it is important that in academic year 1991/1992, teacher colleges preparing classroom teachers were incorporated within the system of higher education which resulted with the extension of studies from 2 to 4 years (Pavin, Vizek Vidović & Miljević-Rdički, 2006). Another major change in classroom teacher education occurred in the academic year 2005/2006, with the implementation of Bologna process and establishment of a 5-year integrated classroom teacher education programs (Mrnjauš, 2012).

Table 1. Study participants’ demographics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Experience</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>up to 10 years</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from 10 to 30 years</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>55.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 30 years</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>two-year degree</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>45.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four-year degree, M.Ed.;</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>54.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School size</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>more than 800 pupils</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from 250 to 800 pupils</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than 250 pupils</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Instruments

The questionnaires designed for the purpose of this study included general demographic questions (age, work experience, employment status, level of education, county, school size, the frequency of participation in professional improvement, professional promotion, the place of studying) and three separate scales: the key entrepreneurial competences scale - KECS (Ernest, Matthew & Samuel, 2015), the scale of job satisfaction - SJS (Blazer & Smith, 1990) and work readiness scale – WRS (Caballeo, Walker & Fuller – Tyszkiewicz, 2011).

KECS scale. The self-evaluation of the key entrepreneurial competences related to the teaching profession was developed by Ernest, Matthew and Samuel (2015). The scale consists 14 items/3 factors (defining the entrepreneurial attitudes, entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurial knowledge). In this study, the KECS scale was translated in Croatian and the scale was later translated back to English by an independent translator who has no knowledge of the questionnaire. In the Croatian version of the KECS scale the respondents were asked to indicate, ‘How important is particular competence for the teaching profession’, on a 5-point scale with 1 = not important and 5 = very important. For the purpose of this study, we performed the both exploratory and confirmatory factorial analysis

SJS scale. The scale of job satisfaction developed by Blazer and Smith (1990); it consists of 15 items exploring five facets of job satisfaction (work satisfaction, pay satisfaction, co-workers satisfaction, promotions satisfaction and supervision satisfaction). The original version of the scale was first translated from English into Croatian and then back-translated into English in order to make sure that the translation had a same meaning as original scale. The translated job satisfaction scale was then revised through both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. In this study, the respondents were asked to indicate, ‘How satisfied are you with the particular job facet, on a 5-point scale with 1 = very dissatisfied and 5 = very satisfied. The principal component factor analysis supported a 2-factor structure explaining 39.4 percent of the variance, with Cronbach’s Alpha of .850 for the entire scale. The first subsection dealing with work satisfaction and supervision satisfaction has 10 items and Cronbach’s Alpha .837, the second subsection dealing with pay satisfaction and promotions satisfaction has 5 items and Cronbach’s Alpha .733.

WRS scale. The work readiness scale was developed by Caballeo, Walker and Fuller – Tyszkiewicz (2011) with 54 items. The original scale consists of the four factor structure: personal characteristics, organizational acumen, work competence and social intelligence. In this study, the scale was translated into Croatian based on the back translation method and revised using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. The respondents were asked to indicate the level of agreement with the particular statement, on a 5-point scale with 1 = strongly disagree, and 5 = strongly agree. The principal component factor analysis supported three-factor structure with 51 item which explains 31.46 percent of variance and has Cronbach’s Alpha of .842 for the entire scale. The first factor with 18 items has focus on the personal characteristics and Cronbach alpha .906, the second factor with 23 items has focus on social intelligence and organizational acumen and Cronbach alpha .891, while the third factor with 10 items has focus on work competence and Cronbach alpha .751.

4.3 Data Analysis

On a descriptive level, the data was analysed using measures such as frequency, mean per-item score and standard deviation. To determine the correlation between respondents results on key entrepreneurial competences scale, scores on the scale of job satisfaction, and scores on the work readiness scale and their subsections, Pearson coefficient of correlation was used on the p<.001 level and p<.05 level.

5. Findings and Discussion

The key entrepreneurial competences related to the teaching profession were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. As visible in table 2, the analysis of the mean per-item of each subscale score indicated a high self-evaluation of the entrepreneurial attitude (M=3.98, SD=1.45), entrepreneurial skills (M=4.47, SD=1.81), and somewhat lower self-evaluation scores on the entrepreneurial knowledge subscale (M=3.79, SD=2.72).

Scale of job satisfaction was measured on a 5-point Likert scale. On this scale the study participants had an above average level of work satisfaction and supervision satisfaction (M=3.92, SD=4.82) and somewhat lower satisfaction was related to pay and promotions (M=3.05, SD=3.06).

The results for the work readiness scale indicated that teachers believed that they do possess work competence (M=4.42, SD=4.19), social intelligence and organizational acumen (M=4.19, SD=9.10), while results indicate that study participants do not recognize high level of possession of personal characteristics that are related to work readiness (M=2.56, SD=13.10).
The inter-correlations between key entrepreneurial competences scale, scale of job satisfaction, and work readiness scale and their subsections are presented in Table 3. Pearson correlation coefficient indicated correlation between the entrepreneurial attitude subsection of the KECS and pay satisfaction and promotions satisfaction of the SJS, r(445)=.107, p<.05; and high correlation between attitude subsection of the KECS and social intelligence and organizational acumen of WRS r(450)=.145, p<.001.

Entrepreneurial skills subsection of the KECS scale has high level of correlation with social intelligence and organizational acumen of WRS r(450)=.165, p<.001. Furthermore it is correlated with pay satisfaction and promotions satisfaction of the SJS, r(445)=.112, p<.05; and with personal characteristics of WRS r(449)=.106, p<.05.

Entrepreneurial knowledge subsection of the KECS scale has high level of correlation with personal characteristics of WRS r(445)=.188, p<.001; social intelligence and organizational acumen of WRS r(446)=.307, p<.001; and work competence of WRS r(446)=.146, p<.001. It is also correlated with work satisfaction and supervision satisfaction of the SJS, r(446)=.114, p<.05.

In addition, the majority of the subsections of SJS scale and WRS scale are highly correlated. Pearson correlation coefficient indicated correlation between the work satisfaction and supervision satisfaction section of the SJS and personal characteristics subsection of WRS, r(449)=.123, p<.001; work satisfaction and supervision satisfaction section of SJS and social intelligence and organizational acumen subsection of WRS, r(450)=.279, p<.001; work satisfaction and supervision satisfaction subsection of SJS and work competence subsection of WRS, r(450)=.307, p<.001; pay satisfaction and promotions satisfaction subsection of SJS and personal characteristics subsection of WRS, r(444)=.305, p<.001; and pay satisfaction and promotions satisfaction subsection of SJS and work competence subsection of WRS, r(445)=.240, p<.001.

In relation to the posed research questions, the statistical results indicated that classroom teachers had an above average scores on each of the three subsections of the entrepreneurial competence scale. Also, the level of perceived job satisfaction of teachers was above average for both subscales, with the higher results for the work satisfaction and supervision satisfaction subscale. The teachers’ perceived work readiness was above average in regards to work competence and also for social intelligence and organizational acumen. The scores on the personal characteristics trait of the scale were somewhat lower. The study results indicate that there is a relationship between the level of self-evaluated teachers’ entrepreneurial competence, and certain traits of the perceived job satisfaction and work readiness. In particular, high correlation exists between entrepreneurial knowledge and each of the three facets of the work readiness scale.

6. Recommendations and Conclusions

While acknowledging the recommendations from relevant European educational policy documents according to which entrepreneurship education should be implemented on all educational levels, in this paper we tried to determine the level of classroom teachers’ preparedness for this endeavour. Although the study results indicate that classroom teachers believe that they do hold different traits of entrepreneurial competence, the particular research interest was to determine the relation between self-evaluated entrepreneurial competence attributes and their actual job satisfaction and work readiness. This query is linked to speculation that job satisfaction and work readiness may be indicators of actual teacher readiness to implement entrepreneurship education in their classes and could serve as guideline for future professional development.

The correlation analysis indicated that self-perceived social intelligence and organizational acumen is highly correlated with all three aspects of self-evaluated entrepreneurial competence. In the same time, entrepreneurial knowledge has high correlation with each of the three aspect of work readiness. Another interesting finding is an existing negative correlation between the entrepreneurial skills and pay satisfaction and promotions satisfaction, and personal characteristics of teacher. These findings may be indicative of type of teacher characteristics that have positive impact on their entrepreneurial competence development.

Conclusively, this study results may serve as a guide in planning of the teacher education and teacher professional development programs which focus on the different traits of job satisfaction and work readiness, in order to assure the development of the teacher entrepreneurial competence.
References

Ivana Batarelo Kokić i Ines Blažević

Sažetak: Ovaj rad donosi rezultate istraživanja odnosa samoprocjene poduzetničke kompetencije razrednih nastavnika, razine zadovoljstva poslom i spremnosti na rad. Rezultati su smješteni u kontekst aktualne literature o politikama cjeloživotnog učenja, poduzetničkog obrazovanja i razvoja poduzetničke kompetencije, zadovoljstva poslom i spremnosti na rad. U dvije najjužnije hrvatske županije, nastavnicima je podijeljeno 450 upitnika. Općenito, prikupljeni podaci iz reprezentativnog uzorka ukazuju na povezanost između samoprocjene poduzetničke kompetencije razrednog nastavnika, njegovog zadovoljstva poslom i spremnosti na rad. Diskusija i zaključak rada sadrže implikacije rezultata o obrazovnim politikama i profesionalnom razvoju nastavnika.

Ključne riječi: poduzetnička kompetencija, zadovoljstvo poslom, spremnost na rad, profesionalni razvoj nastavnika