

## **Personal Characteristics as Determinants of Students' Entrepreneurial Intention**

**Tina Bratkovič Kregar**

University of Primorska, Faculty of Management, Slovenia  
*tina.bratkovic.kregar@fm-kp.si*

**Jana Hojnik**

University of Primorska, Faculty of Management, Slovenia  
*jana.hojnik@fm-kp.si*

**Doris Gomezelj Omerzel**

University of Primorska, Faculty of Management, Slovenia  
*doris.gomezelj@fm-kp.si*

This paper investigates the relationship between personal characteristics and entrepreneurial intention. Previous studies have confirmed that intentions play an important role in the decision to start a business. In order to better understand how intentions influence the later decision of an individual to become an entrepreneur, it is first necessary to identify what determines and shapes individual's entrepreneurial intention.

Entrepreneurial intention is acknowledged as one of the major contributing factors to the development of entrepreneurship and can be determined based on the degree of willingness and ability of an individual to start a new business. Person may have higher or lower predisposition to entrepreneurial activities due to different factors, such as personality traits, perceived motivation, political and economic factors, education, obstacles, etc. The present study aims to analyse how personal characteristics influence intentions to become entrepreneurs. In particular, we are curious in analysing students' intentions to start a new business, since past research has found that psychological characteristics of students influence their inclination towards entrepreneurship. Based on a literature review, we identified four personal characteristics that could be related to entrepreneurial intention. These are following self-efficacy, innovativeness and creativity, diligence and self-confidence.

In this study, a model was proposed and empirically tested on a sample of 193 students at University of Primorska in Slovenia. In order to test the developed hypotheses about the relationships among students' personal characteristics and their entrepreneurial intention, a structural equation modelling (SEM) is used. The research results show that innovativeness and creativity represent the most influencing personal characteristic that determines students' intentions to become entrepreneurs. On the other hand, we found that diligence is negatively related to students' entrepreneurial intentions. Although the influence is weak, it is statistically significant.

Based on the results we may be able to advice educators which personal characteristics positively contribute to students' intentions to become entrepreneurs and should thus be especially reinforced during the education process in order to facilitate entrepreneurship among youth. In fact, most personal characteristics can be developed during the study process. The current study is focused only on students belonging to one university in one country. The limitations of the study could be overcome with further studies that would include comparisons between undergraduate and postgraduate students from various fields of study or by conducting cross-cultural research.

Since today's students are the potential entrepreneurs of the future, we believe the present study represents an important contribution to a better understanding of students' orientations toward entrepreneurial activities.

*Keywords:* entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial intention, personal characteristics, students