

CENTER FOR CONVENTIONAL AND DIGITAL MANAGEMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP ESTABLISHMENT

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Abstract: *This research paper is dedicated to the need for establishment of Center for Conventional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship by University of Telecommunications and Post – Sofia. A theoretical framework about the necessity for educational institutions to have more digital and entrepreneur skills courses has been drawn. In order to determine if the students also consider them important a survey has been done. On that basis, some key conclusions and recommendations about the establishment of the educational center and the possible courses to be conducted there have been outlined.*

Keywords: *entrepreneurship, digital skills, management, education.*

Introduction

Small organizations are the bearers of technical progress and innovative entrepreneurship. It has been considered, entrepreneurship, to be the fourth main resource in the economy with land, labour and capital being the other three. Nowadays, it has become more and more difficult and it has moved to pivot role for economic growth with its essence of discovering new products and services or exploiting resources. Moreover, entrepreneurship is strongly connected with new technologies and very often entrepreneurs are considered to be good innovative leaders. Having this into consideration it is obvious for educational institutions and centers to have entrepreneur courses which involve digital skills, leadership skills and entrepreneurship trainings or practices.

On the other hand, in Bulgaria and other Eastern European countries, there is rapid interest in business startups and entrepreneurship indicated by the

willingness of not only the managers of the old enterprises but also the thousands of other people to achieve the material basis of their independence (small business ownership) and take advantage of the opportunities offered by economic freedom.

Therefore, the main purpose of this research paper is to analyze the need of Center for Conventional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship established by the University of Telecommunications and Post - Sofia.

The goals are:

To make a theoretical and methodological framework;

To analyze the need of Center for Conventional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship by survey among students of University of Telecommunications and Post - Sofia;

To underline some key conclusions and recommendations.

I. Theoretical and methodological framework

According to some researchers [Mariotti, Towle, 2010], Entrepreneurship is the ability to search and exploit the changes, create, innovate and be willing to take the risk, which can make old industries obsolete. Some of the key personal attributes for it are:

- Creativity as the spark that drives the development of new products or services, or ways to do business;
- Dedication as what motivates the entrepreneur to work hard, more than 12 hours a day;
- Determination as the extremely strong desire to achieve success;
- Flexibility as the ability to move quickly in response to changing market needs;
- Leadership as the ability to create rules and to set goals. It is the capacity to follow through to see that rules are followed and goals are accomplished [Druker, 2002], [USINFO.STATE.GOV, 2016].

These attributes required for entrepreneurship very often come from personal background, but it is not enough just to have them, you need to develop and deploy them. To do it you need to start from early age development. This is possible with the right education which is correlated with the idea of establishing Centre for Convectional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship by the University of Telecommunications and Post - Sofia.

Moreover, in the near future 65% of the existing jobs will be very different as a result of technological developments, and individuals should develop their skills and competences in order to remain competitive in the digital economy [Temelkova, 2018]. Furthermore, in the European Union the need for IT professionals with competences to sustain innovation and competitiveness in the world market is growing rapidly. They will have to face the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution and the high-tech economy, which can be described as: the combination of interrelated digital technological decisions assisting the development of the automation, the integration and the exchange of data in real time in the production processes, delivering several times higher norm of added value compared to the traditional economic system [Temelkova, 2018].

According a report [European Commission, 2017] from 2017, around 48% of the experts agree that private sector should initiate effort to improve high-tech skills in their employees and managers and 44% are willing to fund such kind of training courses.

This requires to change the focus of **Business and Management** curriculums not only in their field but also involving more **IT based classes**. Thus, leading to the higher demand of educational institutions to open more computer labs in which IT business classes could take place, which is the main aim of the Center for Conventional and Digital management and Entrepreneurship.

In addition, entrepreneurs are considered to be modern age leaders and to do that they need to be able to: set goals, create rules and follow through or in other words to plan, organize and control assets and management of business processes. Moreover, in the fourth industrial revolution the leaders or managers must have digital knowledge to comprehend with the resource planning and management, this includes: information technology tools, complex business

systems, artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Cloud technologies, virtualization and so on [Temelkova, 2018].

According to the European Union agenda [European Commission, 2017] for digital leadership there is a need for:

- **Integration of high-tech savviness in formal education** (nearly 60% of experts participating in the survey agree);
- **Promotion of training course for high-tech skills for managers** (about 53% of respondents agree).

The aforementioned information confirms the need for Entrepreneurship and Digital skills training courses for educational institutions and gives a solid basis for the methodology of the following research. The main observation and key indicators analysis is done by **empirical data survey research**.

The **questions** in the current research are divided into several groups by their purpose. In the **first** group, are the questions that make it possible to divide the respondents. They are placed at the beginning or end of the questionnaire, but they can also be in the main part of it as long as the logic is not broken. Basic dichotomous questions and interval scales are used [Banchev, P., 2012]. In this case, the selected questions are about gender, age and education.

The **second** group of questions is the most important one. It is about key factor for establishing and running the Center for Conventional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship, such as:

- To state if the respondent considers the establishment of the center useful;
- To select some additional courses which are interesting to him/her – which would be useful for the organization and the training courses selective options are correlated with the aforementioned information – so they are **IT based, Digital management and Entrepreneurship**;
- To refer how many hours per week respondent could participate in such course organized by the center;
- To state which is the most important characteristic of the additional courses – this question aims to further quantify and determine key factors for maintaining training courses.

The **third** group is one Likert scale question to evaluate students' current experience with the educational institution, as follows (see Table 1):

Table 1. Students' evaluation scale

Value	Evaluation
1	Very Bad
2	Bad
3	Sufficient
4	Average
5	Good
6	Very Good
7	Excellent

The selection of respondents is limited process due to the purpose of the research, which is to evaluate the need for establishment of Center for Conventional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship by the University of Telecommunications and Post – Sofia, which means that they are students from this educational institution.

II. Results and discussion

The research has been conducted among more than a hundred students from University of Telecommunications and Post – Sofia to verify the need for Center for Conventional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship. The survey has been designed in Google forms and distributed via a social network – Facebook. The age of the respondents is as follows: 54.62% between 19 and 30, between 31 and 40 – 32.77%, from 41 to 50 – 7.56% and above 51 years old – 5.04%, of which 64% males and 36% females. This distribution is satisfactory for the research.

Almost all respondents from both genders agree that the Center for Conventional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship would be useful for the University of Telecommunications and Post – Sofia (See Fig. 1).

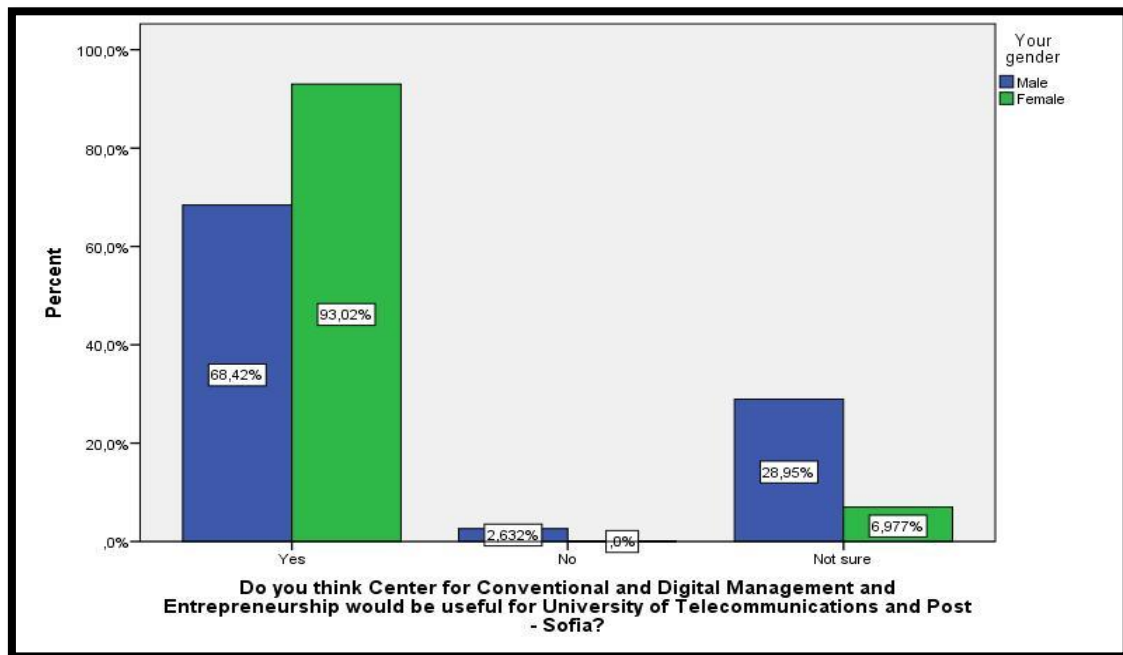


Figure 1. Usefulness of Center for Center for Conventional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship

Only men have some doubt with about 29% of them being not sure about the benefit of the Center and about 2% think it won't be useful. Contradictory to them 93% of the females consider the establishment of such institution beneficial and only 7% are not sure. These results confirm the need and the desire of students of this institution to receive better education in the field of management and digital skills.

In terms of what possible courses could be organized by the center as selective options for the respondents the basic idea is for digital skills, management, entrepreneurship and online security. This is correlated with the aforementioned European labor market needs and their fulfillment and the forth industrial revolution demands. As evident from the figure (Fig. 2) below the respondents have a very diverse desire in terms of additional courses. Most of the students require Entrepreneurship (20.34%) and Computer systems and networks (21.19%) as an additional course. Next are the Internet security, Digital management and Private data security with 16.95%, 15,25% and 15.25%

respectively. It seems like there is a good distribution among the possible courses which means that the Center for Conventional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship would have high interest in the respected courses if organized.

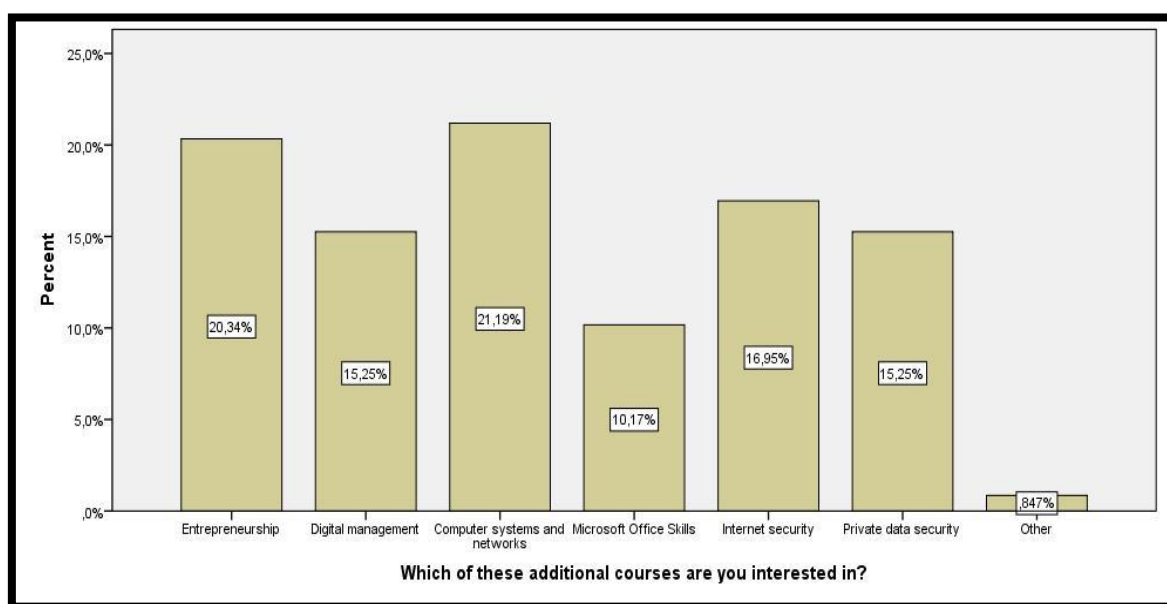


Figure 2. Additional courses interest

On the other hand, if the management of University of Telecommunications and Post – Sofia wants the Center to be successful they have to consider two more important factors –what are the features required by students to visit such a course and how many hours do they wish to spend on a weekly basis for additional education. Firstly, some key features of the additional courses are presented in the survey so the respondents could outline their preferences, which would be guidelines for the institution to organize and manage the courses.

As evident from the figure (Fig. 3) the students consider trainer competences with 31.36% responses to be the most important factor for them to visit additional courses. The second feature is the adjustable timetable of the course with around 20%, which might be due to the fact that a lot of the students work so they need to have free time to visit the classes. The distribution of the other

possible features of the courses is almost even (16%) between three – price of the course, certification and the course content.

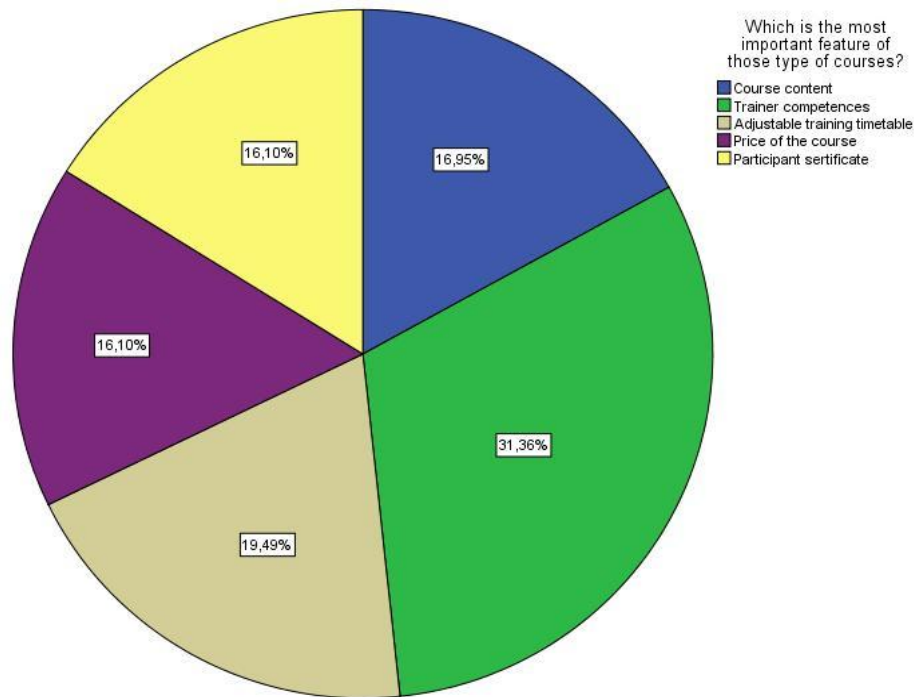


Figure 3. Additional courses interest

Although, certification and course content could be considered similar due to their relatedness to the course outcome for the respondents, it seems a bit odd to put the price of the course on the same level. Maybe, because Bulgaria is relatively poor country for the European Union and people here tend to value their money. Moreover, for some job opportunities it is a requirement to have certain knowledge and certificates.

It is valuable for the educational institution to have this on their mind when they decide to organize a course – to hire well known trainers, to adapt the timetable according the need of the majority of the students enrolled in the course and to make a balance between price and outcomes for the students.

As aforementioned, the hours spend for additional courses is an important factor for the students and it has been considered in the survey. They have been asked to state how many hours on a weekly basis they could spend on an

additional course (see Fig. 4). Most of the respondents could spend between 1 and 3 hours per week for such a course and only 26% are able to have additional classes for more than 4 hours. On one hand, males are almost equally spread among 1 hour per week – about 43% and 2 to 3 hours – 40%, with only 16% stating they could spend more than 4 hours per week on a course. On the other hand, the females tend to be more willing to spend 2 to 3 hours per week – 51% and 39% having only 1 hour for additional course. This result clearly shows that if the University of Telecommunications and Post – Sofia establishes a Center for Conventional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship to conduct such courses they have to be on a short timetable for week approximately 2 hours per week.

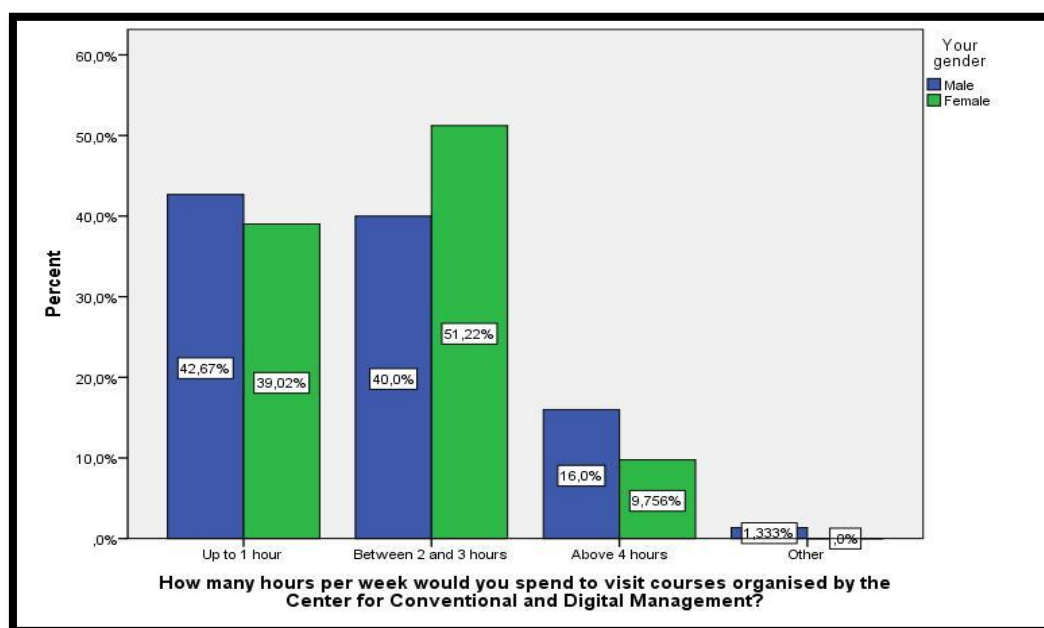


Figure 4. Hours per week to spend on additional course

To conclude, this research has confirmed the need for establishment of Center for Conventional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship by the University of Telecommunications and Post – Sofia. There is a diverse requirement by the students for additional courses which complies with the

general labor market needs. It would be beneficial for the institution to organize such courses and they have to consider the trainers' competences and the timetable.

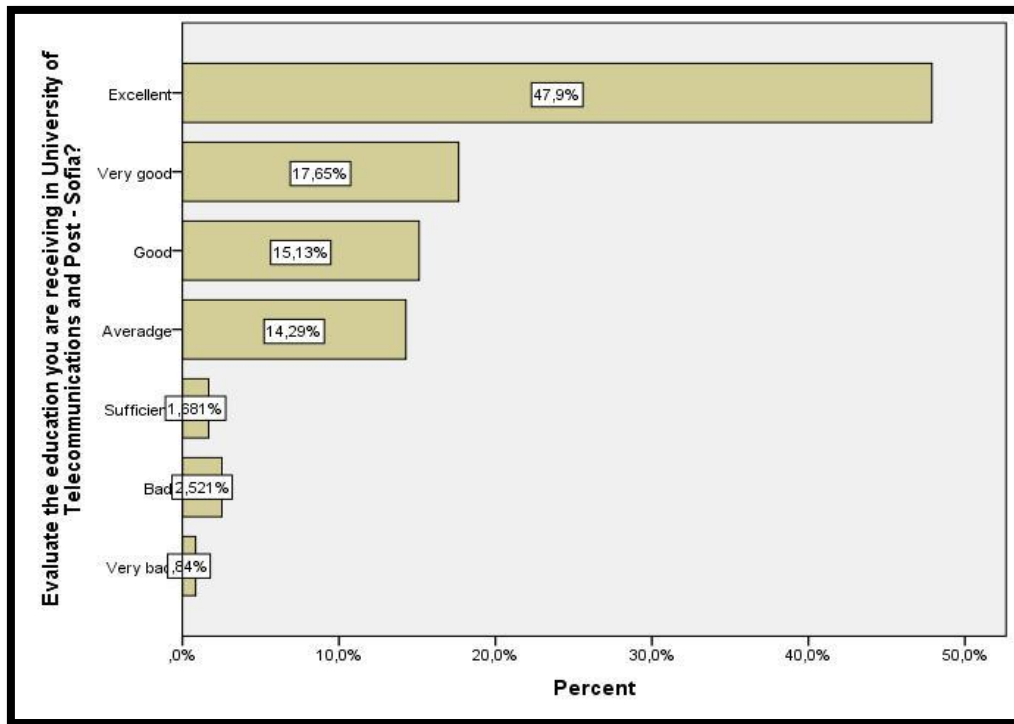


Figure 5. Evaluation of University of Telecommunications and Post – Sofia

Finally, to confirm if the institution is on the right track a Likert scale evaluation has been done (Fig. 5). It clearly shows the satisfaction of the students – about 48% of them consider the education given by the University of Telecommunications and Post – Sofia as excellent and around 18% think it is very good. Only 2% responded that the education given by the university is bad. These results confirm that this institution is on the right way of providing quality educational service and they will continue to grow by establishing Center for Digital Management and Entrepreneurship.

Conclusion

In the context of the fourth industrial revolution, starting small business or entrepreneurship is very difficult especially in Eastern European countries, which are considered to be relatively small markets. This requires additional set of skills like IT knowledge, digital management and entrepreneurship.

Establishing a Center for Conventional and Digital Management and Entrepreneurship would be good addition to the education provided by University of Telecommunications and Post – Sofia. As it stands from the research, there is a diverse requirement by the students for additional courses which complies with the general labor market needs. It would be beneficial for the institution to organize such courses and they have to consider the trainers' competences and the timetable.

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