

THE PREFERENCES OF STUDENTS AND THEIR VIEW ON THE EDUCATION OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SUBJECTS AT A TECHNICALLY ORIENTED UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The contribution is a partial output of KEGA research task no. 011STU-4/2022 "Creating a model of education supporting the increase of competencies of students of a non-economically oriented university in the field of innovative, entrepreneurial thinking and business support" conducted at the Institute of Management of the STU in Bratislava. The research presented in this article was conducted on a sample of 45 students of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava, Faculty of Chemical and Food Technology, who successfully completed the master level of education in 2022. The students were presented with a questionnaire consisting of 6 questions. The questionnaire contained both open and closed questions and its objective was to find out the preferences of students and their view on the education of economic and management subjects at a technically oriented university. Data collection took place online, through the Academic Information System - AIS, and in person on the basis of printed questionnaires that students received at their final exams. The results of the survey were compared with a similar survey conducted in 2017 and we found that up to 20% more students than in 2017 think they do not have sufficient knowledge of economic and managerial subjects for their future career. Even fewer students think (77%) that they do not have enough knowledge to start a business, despite the fact that almost 49% of them consider that they would like to start a business in the future.

Keywords: *Business education, survey, entrepreneurship, research.*

1. Introduction

The results published in this article are a partial output of a larger research carried out at the Slovak Technical University at the Faculty of Chemical and Food Technologies. The aim of this research is to analyze the current situation among students and, based on the requirements of practice, to innovate the teaching of economics and management subjects at a technically oriented university.

In general, we can observe the lack of interest of students of technologically oriented universities in studying management and economic subjects (Zatrochova & Fabova, 2018). On the other hand, the demands of the labor market are gradually changing and more and more emphasis is being placed on soft skills and education in the economic and managerial fields of graduates of technical universities. (Chodasova et al., 2015; Zavadsky & Olexova, 2022)

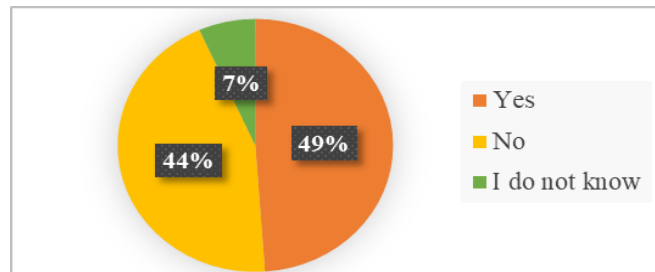
2. Methodology

The paper presents the results of primary research that was performed at the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (STU) at the Faculty of Chemical and Food Technologies (FCHPT). The research aimed at finding out the opinions of graduating students in the field of economic and management education. The students were asked a questionnaire with four open questions and one closed question. Some of the respondents were asked the questionnaire online through the Academic Information System and some were given the questionnaire in printed form. The students completed the questionnaire after the end of the year. A total of 45 students participated in the questionnaire. All materials and data found during the research have been progressively analyzed and evaluated. General methods of scientific work such as abstraction, induction, deduction, analysis, synthesis, and standard statistical methods were used in the processing. Some of the results were compared with similar research that was conducted in 2017 at the same university in a sample of 120 students.

3. Results

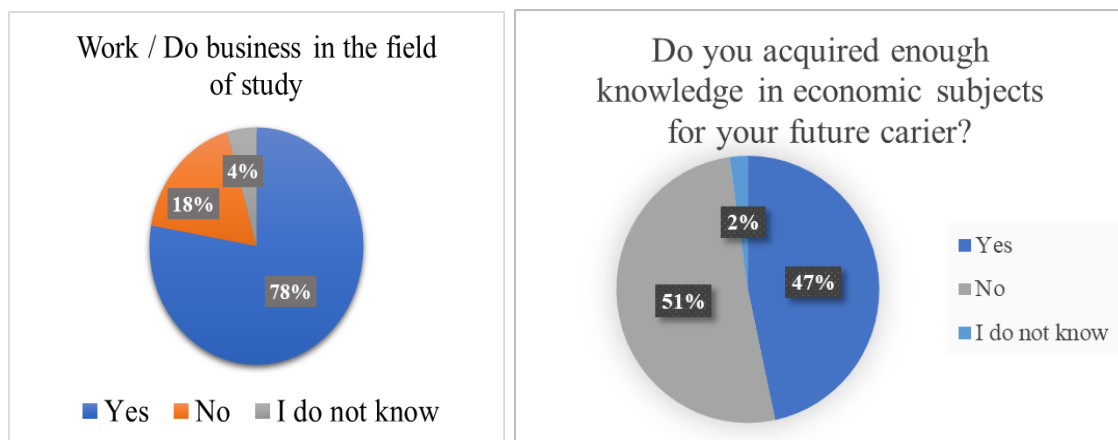
The first question of the questionnaire concerns the respondents' interest in doing business in the future. Almost 49% of them state that they are interested in starting a business in the future. 7% said that they do not know if they want to start a business, and 44% do not think they would like to start a business in the future.

Figure 1. Would you like to start a business in the future?



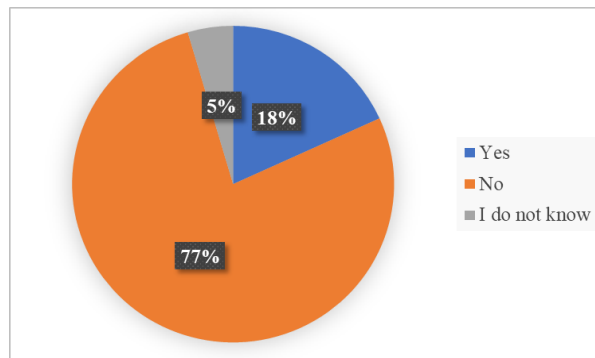
We found out whether the graduating students plan to stay working or start a business in the field. Most of them (78%) confirmed that they want to work or start a business in the field they graduated from. Only less than a fifth think that they will work/do business in another field. When asked whether they think they have acquired enough knowledge and skills for their future career while studying economic subjects, the majority (51%) answered that they did not think they have enough knowledge. 20% fewer students answered negatively on a similar question in 2017. (Plchova & Zatrochova, 2017). Detailed results of these questions are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. The interest of the respondents to stay work / do business in the field of study and their opinion on acquired knowledge in economic subjects for their future carrier.



Another part of the research was devoted to finding out whether, in their opinion, students have sufficient knowledge to start a business. The results show that the overwhelming majority (77%) think that they do not have enough knowledge to start a business. Only 8 respondents consider their knowledge sufficient to start a business. Although the students first said that they acquired sufficient knowledge of economic subjects during their studies for their future career, 38% of them answered that they did not have sufficient knowledge for entrepreneurship. Of the students who said they would like to start a business in the future, only a third said they had sufficient knowledge to start a business. Only one student responded that he did not want to start a business and that he had sufficient knowledge to start a business.

Figure 3. Do you think you have enough knowledge to start a business?



Almost two-thirds of the students answered that during their studies they did not have sufficient information about the possibility of choosing and the content of subjects with an economic focus. We find similar results with students who are still studying.

The last question of the questionnaire was open and in it we asked what recommendations the respondents would suggest to be introduced in teaching in the field of economic focus and entrepreneurship. The most frequent answers consisted of including more teaching in the field of financial literacy, investing, and entrepreneurship and focusing on the application of economic subjects in the chemical and food industries.

4. Conclusions

The research results point to the fact that students of a technically oriented university are interested in entrepreneurship. More students responded that they would like to start a business but do not have enough knowledge to start a business. The reasons can be identified as the reluctance of students at a technically oriented university to study subjects in the economic and managerial fields. We also see a problem in students' lack of information about study options and the content of the subjects offered.

We are increasingly identifying a trend in teaching that tends to use modern tools that are interactive and interesting for the student. Reducing the time of lectures and actively involving the student in the lesson appears to be a suitable way of obtaining positive references with an emphasis on increasing the competence of students in the taught material.

Most of the students want to stay working or start a business in the field they studied, and yet almost half of them answered that they did not acquire sufficient knowledge in the field of economics and management. Thus, it can be observed that students consider education in the economic and managerial fields to be necessary even in technically oriented directions. This is also evidenced by the trend in the labor market, which places more and more emphasis on soft skills.

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