

The role of institutional, educational and family context for engagement in entrepreneurship: evidence from Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia

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Doctoral Thesis Summary



Tomas Bata University in Zlín
Faculty of Management and Economics

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**The role of institutional, educational and family
context for engagement in entrepreneurship:
evidence from Albania, Kosovo and North
Macedonia**

**Úloha institucionálního, vzdělávací a rodinného kontextu pro
zapojení do podnikání: důkazy z Albánie, Kosova a Severní
Makedonie**

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ABSTRACT

Although scholars have studied the effects of individual attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavior control on entrepreneurial intention, there is a need to shed light on the role of contextual factors on entrepreneurial engagement. To fill this gap and address this need, this thesis aims to investigate the role of institutional, educational, and family context on the relationships between the antecedents of an individual's behavior and engagement in entrepreneurship.

The role of contextual factors will be incorporated in the research as potential moderators of the relationship between attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavior control and the individual's involvement in starting a business. Hence, institutional environment is expected to moderate the influence of attitude on engagement in entrepreneurship; educational context is supposed to govern the relationship between attitude and perceived behavior control and one's motivation to start a business; family background is assumed to influence the linkages between antecedents of one's motivation to start a business. The research is administered on an individual-level face-to-face data collection approach through a survey in three Western Balkan countries: Albania, Kosovo, and North Macedonia. The relationships are examined by using Partial Least Square within a Structural Equation Modelling per each country separately.

In the case of Albania, study results confirm the direct effect of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control on entrepreneurial intention. Regarding the moderating effect, it is supported that institutional context and educational background moderate the linkage of attitudes and entrepreneurial intention; previous family business experience affects the relationship of both personal attitudes and subjective norms toward entrepreneurial intention. The research findings for Kosovo confirm the direct effect of perceived behavior control on entrepreneurial intention, while the educational context plays a moderating role on the relationship of attitude and entrepreneurial intention. Furthermore, family context affects the linkage between individual attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control with one's motivation to start a business. In North Macedonia, the results confirm that there is a direct effect of personal attitude on entrepreneurial intention and that institutional framework moderates the relationship between personal attitudes and entrepreneurial intention.

This thesis contributes to the literature, first, by adding value to the existing models used to explain the determinants of entrepreneurial engagement, second, by pointing out that institutional environment, educational and family context moderate the linkages between one's antecedents of an individual's behavior and starting a business. From the perspective of policymakers, it is important to understand the influential factors on entrepreneurial intention so they can design policies that combat youth unemployment and boost entrepreneurship.

ABSTRAKT

Přestože vědci studovali vliv individuálního postoje, subjektivních norem a vědomě řízeného chování na podnikatelský záměr, je třeba objasnit, jakou roli mají další související faktory pro zapojení do podnikatelských aktivit. Pro zaplnění této mezery a zaměření se na tento nedostatek, tato práce si klade za cíl prozkoumat roli institucionální, vzdělávací a rodinné souvislosti ve vztahu mezi činiteli ovlivňujícími chování jednotlivce a jeho zapojení do podnikání.

Související faktory budou mít ve výzkumu roli potenciálních moderátorů vztahu mezi postojem, subjektivními normami, vědomě řízeným chováním a zapojením jednotlivce do zahájení podnikání. Předpokládá se, že institucionální prostředí ovlivňuje postoje směrem k zahájení podnikání. Dále se předpokládá, že vzdělání určuje vztah mezi postojem, vědomě řízeným chováním a motivací člověka k zahájení podnikání, rovněž rodinné zázemí ovlivňuje vazby mezi původci motivace jednotlivce k zahájení podnikání. Výzkum je prováděn prostřednictvím individuálního sběru dat za pomoci dotazníkového šetření ve třech zemích na Západním Balkáně: Albánii, Kosovu a Severní Makedonii. Vztahy budou prozkoumány pomocí částečné regrese Partial Least Square v rámci modelování strukturálními rovnicemi, individuálně pro každou zemi.

V případě Albánie výsledky studie potvrzují přímý vliv postoje, subjektivních norem a vědomě řízeného chování na podnikatelský záměr. Co se týče vlivu moderátorů, byl podpořen předpoklad, že institucionální kontext a vzdělání moderují spojení mezi postoji a podnikatelským záměrem. Zkušenosti z předchozího rodinného podnikání ovlivňují vztah mezi osobními postoji a subjektivními normami směrem k podnikatelskému záměru. Výsledky výzkumu v Kosovu potvrzují přímý vliv vědomě řízeného chování na podnikatelský záměr, zatímco kontext vzdělávání hraje roli moderátora u vztahu postojů a podnikatelského záměru. Navíc rodinný kontext má vliv na spojení mezi individuálním postojem, subjektivními normami a vědomě řízeným chováním, spolu s motivací jednotlivce zahájit podnikání. V Severní Makedonii výsledky potvrzují, že existuje přímý vliv osobního postoje na podnikatelský záměr a že institucionální rámec moderuje vztah mezi osobními postoji a podnikatelským záměrem.

Tato práce přispívá k teoretickému poznání především tím, že přidává hodnotu existujícím modelům používaným k vysvětlení determinantů podnikatelské angažovanosti. Rovněž poukazuje na to, že institucionální prostředí, kontext vzdělávání a rodiny moderují vazby mezi původci chování jednotlivce a zahájením podnikání. Z pohledu představitelů, kteří mohou činit strategická rozhodnutí, je důležité pochopit vlivné faktory na podnikatelský záměr, aby mohli navrhnout vhodné strategie, které budou bojovat proti nezaměstnanosti mladých lidí a budou podporovat podnikání.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem statement

Academics recognize that entrepreneurship is important for economic development (Bosma et al., 2018; Rajnoha & Lorincova, 2015). Self-employment is seen as a good opportunity because you can use your skills and abilities to run your company the way you want (Barba-Sánchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo, 2018; van Gelderen et al., 2008), demonstrate willingness to take risks (Brachert et al., 2017). In fact, according to the International Report on Entrepreneurship, seven out of 10 adults in efficiency-oriented countries view entrepreneurship as a good career path. Additionally, about a quarter of adults in efficiency-oriented economies expressed interest in starting a business within the next three years (Herrington & Penny, 2017). Additionally, the majority of Europeans (58%) see entrepreneurship as a good career. According to Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2022, p. 70) there are four main motivators to get engaged in business activities such as to make a difference in the world; to build wealth or very high income; to continue a family tradition and/or to earn a living because jobs are scarce.

The role of entrepreneurship as a key driver of economic growth is widely recognized. Promoting entrepreneurship is therefore a strategic goal for many European countries, and policymakers are developing a range of measures to support it (Johansen, 2013).

The abovementioned records are of precise hobby for public-coverage advocates while thinking about the layout of regulations specializing in boosting entrepreneurship. Assuming that among entrepreneurial goal and related to in start-up interest it's far a robust superb relationship, withinside the factor views of university and the government, it's far vital to apprehend the elements which cause the encouragement of people to interact in start-up interest. Such elements is probably education, training, attitudes, subjective norms, macroeconomic environment, business support etc. (Dvouletý, 2017; Feola et al., 2017; Trivedi, 2016). Consequently, investigating and addressing these factors influencing the business start-up and becoming an entrepreneur is regarded as high significance.

Scholars have analyzed the influence of regional environment on business start-ups (Liñán et al., 2011; Stam, 2009; Weiss et al., 2019). Hence, it is necessary to consider the relationship between entrepreneurial intentions and the local conditions in which these individuals live (Kibler, 2013). Educational and macroeconomic environments and business support can influence individuals' future entrepreneurial intentions (Cuervo, 2005; Nabi et al., 2006; Tolentino et al., 2014; Trivedi, 2016). Accordingly, it is necessary to clarify these relationships. This study aims to examine the relationship and impact of these factors on entrepreneurial intentions in Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia.

To our knowledge, this is one of the first studies to address the above issues, especially in the context of these three countries.

This study offers at least three theoretical and practical contributions are made in the field of entrepreneurial behavior. First, it enriches the literature by providing insights to understand the factors that influence entrepreneurship conundrums in the context of Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia. Second, this study provides evidence for how the educational environment and family experiences influence entrepreneurial motivation. Third, from a policy maker's perspective, it is important to understand the factors that influence entrepreneurial motivation so that they can design or redesign strategies to promote entrepreneurship (de Jorge-Moreno et al., 2012).

1.2 Research background

According to OECD (2021) the unemployment rate in Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia is considerably higher than in EU, especially in the case of Kosovo and North Macedonia. Furthermore, the share of youth not in employment, education or training is almost at the same level for Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia reaching about 27%, while this indicator is about 11% for EU area. These data point not only to the fact that this is a similar symptom for the three countries but also it underlines the urgent need to address the unemployment, especially among those young people who are not in employment, education or training. Policymakers of these countries should design policies to address such issue and to do so they need to better understand also the factors which foster the decision to get involved in start-up activities.

The context is relevant for understanding entrepreneurship (Dana & Dana, 2005; Fiti et al., 2017), it is also important in terms of external validity – generalising the research findings in other similar contexts. Since the transition into the 1990s, many important changes have taken place in Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia. Anticipating a rapid shift from a controlled economy to a market-oriented economy, the Balkans chose to privatize state-owned enterprises and liberalize prices, hoping that corporations would engage in capitalist thinking (Ramadani & Dana, 2013). The early stages of this were characterized by entrepreneurs who did not have clear answers on how to behave in the prevailing chaos (Dana, 1996). The Western model so adopted and applied did not yield the expected results. Not just individuals, but whole institutional systems were in turmoil. A lack of knowledge about how to behave in a market economy was a result of the practice of the command economy (Dana, 2011; Ramadani & Dana, 2013). The corporate culture in the Balkans is therefore still young and fragile.

Comparable with Baltic countries, Balkan ones like Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia, which have transitional economies, encounter new challenges to prepare individuals with appropriate set of skills, abilities, behavior and knowledge (Aaltio, 2008) to succeed in a competitive environment and in times of rapid changes. The public sector strategies used to affect entrepreneurial

activity are entirely different today than they were during prior periods of controlled economy (Dana, 2011). However, the educational system still adheres to the outdated method of imparting knowledge to society (Aaltio, 2008; Fiti et al., 2017; Polenakovikj & Polenakovikj, 2017) and adopting an entrepreneurial attitude is challenging given the need for new educational strategies. The education system should equip students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and talents to find employment and succeed in their future careers even when job insecurity is on the rise. Skills and aptitudes that are not deemed important in industrialized nations, such as those in the Balkans, may be valuable in transitioning economies (Polenakovikj & Polenakovikj, 2017; Ramadani & Schneider, 2013).

Fighting the unemployment rate, in particular among young individuals, is another urgent issue for these economies. Furthermore, governments of the three countries are struggling with high rate of young individuals, especially graduated students, who migrate to make a living abroad and this is a pressing issue which need to be addressed. Despite the fact that there are many factors involved in the topic, this research is focused on the entrepreneur element.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical background

The following four viewpoints are frequently used by academics as theoretical bases for research into the elements that influence entrepreneurial intention: the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), human capital theory (Becker, 1994), entrepreneurial self-efficacy perspective (Chen et al., 1998) and triple helix model (Kim et al., 2012).

According to the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), behavior intention along with perceived behavior control predict individuals' action, which in turn is determined by attitude towards behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control. The conceptual framework of this approach is presented in the following picture, which depicts the factors which determine the entrepreneurial intention on an individual. According to this theory, each factor imposes a positive direct effect on the individual intention to get involved in business activities. In other words, when personal attitudes are high, the intention to start a business are higher. Same is concluded for subjective norms and perceived behavior control.

The human capital theory (Becker, 1994) underlines the importance of education in providing people with general knowledge and skills they can use in daily life, which might have an impact on the factors that determine someone's intention to start their own business.

The entrepreneurial self-efficacy perspective (Chen et al., 1998) emphasizes the idea that study programs in entrepreneurship can influence people's attitudes

and intentions, particularly their desire to work for themselves. Chen et al. (1998) argue the fact that human behavior can be explained in terms of three main factors, which in turn are affected in a reciprocal way among each other. These factors are personal behavior, cognitive and other personal aspects, and environment events. The reciprocal causation notion between these factors is essential for the self-efficacy theory: each of them can cause and be influenced by the other two. According to this theory, people with high self-efficacy are more intrinsically interested in the tasks, more eager to put up effort, and more persistent in the face of setbacks. Consequently, they are more productive. Performance and achievement are not only the results of self-efficacy, but they are also the determinants of self-efficacy. The most influential factor in shaping and measuring one's self-efficacy is one's performance achievements.

The triple helix model (Etzkowitz, 2003; Kim et al., 2012), the most recent viewpoint stated above, contends that the alignment of university, industry, and government policies and tactics can either encourage or dissuade students from participating in start-up activity. The goal of the university is to attract more students to its study programs. One way to do this is to show that getting a job is simple for its students. (Lüthje & Franke, 2003; Navratilova, 2013). On the other hand, from the business' point of view, it is important to attract the best potential employees (Babikova & Bucek, 2019). According to the government, students who successfully graduate and find employment pose no problem in terms of youth unemployment (Dvouletý, 2017; Herrington & Penny, 2017). Etzkowitz (2003) describes the four stages of the triple helix model: The first stage is when each helix undergoes an internal metamorphosis. Universities and other knowledge-producing organizations take on a new role in society, not only in terms of student education and research, but also in terms of attempting to put knowledge to good use. The entrepreneurial university blurs the conventional barriers between academics and business, as evidenced by technology transfer offices and the requirements of government grant programs for research assistance. Strategic research and development agreements between companies and governments acting as venture capitalists. The second stage: The effect of one helix on another. Through programs or broad agreements, the US federal government built a robust environment for academic technology transfer. The change to the Patent and Trademark Law, for example, established an indirect industrial strategy by encouraging colleges to support industrial innovation. Furthermore, clear rules of the game for disposing of intellectual property emerging from government-funded research aided the growth of technology transfer to a wider variety of universities and enlarged the academic technology-transfer profession. Because universities and their representatives were active in pushing for the bill, there was a two-way flow of influence. Third stage: the interaction between the three helices results in the formation of a new overlay of trilateral networks and structures. By "brain storming" new ideas, such groups often form to address all gaps in an innovation system. Final stage: triple helix

networks have a recursive influence on the spirals from which they formed as well as on society as a whole. One of the effects is on science. The commercialization of knowledge has superseded disinterestedness, the idea that scientific information would be distributed and that researchers would be compensated exclusively for their peers' acknowledgment.

Education-based human capital is regarded as a crucial element that might encourage entrepreneurship (Martin et al., 2013; Unger et al., 2011; Van Der Sluis et al., 2008). In this context, researchers have discovered a favorable relationship between schooling years and graduate student start-up activity (Lafuente & Vaillant, 2013; Millán et al., 2014). Additionally, having a dual degree or vocational diploma increases the likelihood that someone will take steps to start their own business (Joensuu-Salo et al., 2015) or if one has been graduated (Johansen, 2013; Millán et al., 2014). Education and training are therefore crucial if we want to encourage young people to establish businesses. Therefore, institutions of higher education offer educational support for entrepreneurship (Kraaijenbrink et al., 2010; Máté & Darabos, 2017).

For a better understanding of the cognitive process of entrepreneurship, psychological aspects must be integrated in addition to the examined environmental factors (Sieger et al., 2014). For this, the most used theoretical foundation is Ajzen's (1991) TPB. The combined influence of personal and social elements on the entrepreneurial process has solidified TPB as the most widely used perspective in recent study (Entrialgo & Iglesias, 2016; Lima et al., 2015; Lingappa et al., 2020; Sait & Semira, 2016; Shirokova et al., 2016; Turra & Melinda, 2021; Vamvaka et al., 2020). Personal attitude, perceived behavior control, and subjective norms are three distinct elements that affect entrepreneurial inclination, according to TPB (Ajzen, 1991). A person's level of positive or negative self-evaluation is referred to as their "personal attitude." The term "perceived behavior control" refers to how easily or difficultly that behavior is thought to be under control. Both the capacity for self-perception and the degree of perceived control are included in this term. The sense of the level of agreement – or lack thereof – between relatives, friends, and other persons of reference over the choice to adopt a particular conduct is captured by the term "subjective norms." Following Ajzen (1991), the three antecedents listed, are adequate to explain the intentions, however their relative relevance varies from context to context. This viewpoint contends that the perception of these three antecedent elements of entrepreneurial involvement will determine whether or not one decides to being involved in entrepreneurial activities.

Hence, the research aims to shed light and provide answer to the following **research question** (RQ1): *To what extent do an individual's (a) attitude, (b) subjective norms, and (c) perceived behavior control affect engagement in entrepreneurship?*

Accordingly, the **research objective** (RO1) for this case is as follows. *To identify how (a) attitude, (b) subjective norms, and (c) perceived behavior control influence an individual's engagement in entrepreneurship.*

Based on the research needs and the literature, the following **research hypotheses** are proposed:

Hypothesis 1 (H1). *An individual's personal attitude toward entrepreneurship positively influences his/her engagement to create a business as a professional career.*

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *The subjective norms perceived by the individual influence positively in engagement to create a business as a professional opportunity.*

Hypothesis 3 (H3). *The perceived control of the individual's behavior positively influences the engagement to create a business.*

1.1 Institutional, educational, and family context

The environment factors or, differently known as contextual factors, play a key role in learning and furthering cognitive processes, according to the social learning theory (Bandura, 1997). Consequently, the behavior of individuals can be the result of stimulus from environmental conditions. According to North (1990), these factors can be grouped into formal and informal institutions. The relationship between institutions and intention to start a business has been studied by many researchers (Engle et al., 2011; Jackson & Deeg, 2008; Liñán et al., 2011). It is widely accepted that contextual conditions affect the intentions of individuals by influencing perceptions and beliefs (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005).

The **institutional factor** or dimension is closely related to North's (1990) concept of the "rule of the game," and reflects such factors as the legal system and the tax system. By utilizing various policy measures the institution dimension can influence the entrepreneurial process (Bruton et al., 2010). According to Pryor (2008) the regulations and which help entrepreneurship as well as incentives can effectively lower barriers to entrepreneurial activities. Nonetheless, it is observed that entrepreneurship in emerging economies is impeded by the overload of bureaucracy, ineffective tax system and problems related to legislation (Krasniqi & Kume, 2013). Although the favorable regulations can be used in fighting poverty in emerging economies (McMullen, 2011); their failures can be big issue for entrepreneurs. These regulatory challenges include overload bureaucracy, high tax burdens, an inefficient tax administration, bribe anomaly, and failure to deliver on existing legal commitments. Based on the fact that such institutional impediments can close the possible pathways by which individuals can generate optimistic outcomes from business undertakings, it is likely that these obstacles make it more difficult for individuals to engage their personal resources toward entrepreneurship. On the other hand, in economies with favorable institutional conditions, personal resources may be applied more effectively to engagement in entrepreneurial opportunities.

There are scholars who have examined the aforementioned linkages and they report that these linkages could be different among countries. The context and environment where the behaviors take place influences an key role in the start-up and entrepreneurial activities (Stam, 2009). Scholars have confirmed this result by considering the country as a separate factor which plays the role moderator of the effect of individual behavior toward engagement in entrepreneurship (Lim et al., 2015).

Indeed, research demonstrates that national differences in entrepreneurial intention exist. (Bae et al., 2014; Engle et al., 2010, 2011; Shinnar et al., 2012) even in the Central Europe context (Belas et al., 2019). Moreover, in an effort to identify variations in entrepreneurial potentials, Mueller and Thomas (2001) came to the conclusion that there are differences among nine nations, including the Czech Republic. A previous study found that Slovak students shown a greater interest in business than Czech students (Çera et al., 2018). Even the impact of the macroeconomic environment on entrepreneurial intention varied between nations (Dvorský et al., 2019).

An enormous amount of study has concentrated only on the economic environment as elements that would influence entrepreneurial intention. (Cuervo, 2005; Engle et al., 2011). Economic growth affects the structure of opportunities, resources, competencies, and interests, which in turn determine behaviors (Wennekers et al., 2002). In a broader context, Straus (2007) and Kibler (2013) contend that institutions and economic considerations, as well as environmental conditions, have an impact on people's cognition, preferences, and intentions. Contrary to what was anticipated, Griffiths et al. (2009) discovered that GDP per capita has a negative impact on entrepreneurial intention. However, a favorable macroeconomic climate can encourage people to become entrepreneurs (Engle et al., 2011). Thus, it is hypothesized:

Hypothesis 4 (H4): *Institutional context moderates the relationship between individual's attitude and engagement in entrepreneurship, such that the relationship is stronger in case of favorable institutional context.*

The corresponding **research question** (RQ2) for this dimension is: *Is there any moderating effect of institutional environment towards the influences of the attitude on engagement in entrepreneurship?* While the **research objective** (RO2) is: *To investigate the moderating effect of institutional environment on the relationship between one's attitude and engagement in entrepreneurship.*

To investigate the moderating effect of institutional environment on the relationship between one's attitude and engagement in entrepreneurship. When it comes to entrepreneurship, **the educational environment** can either support students or put obstacles in their way (Lüthje & Franke, 2003). It is reported that there is a clear linkage between the level of education and the level of entrepreneurial activities (GEM, 2022), meaning that those with higher level of education have higher level of entrepreneurial intentions or actions due to the possession of additional skills to manage a business.

According to Franke and Lüthje (2004), educational environment is among external factors that affect both the mindset toward self-employment and entrepreneurial intention. The educational environment can give students access to a variety of tools, affect their entrepreneurial behavior, and aid in the creation of successful new businesses. The resources provided by their universities can be utilized by student entrepreneurs. The availability of entrepreneurial courses, which advance students' knowledge and abilities and give them access to business contacts, networks, and financial resources, is essential for their capacity to effectively identify possibilities (Robinson & Sexton, 1994). Education supports the growth of perceived behavioral control, enhancing students' competences and equipping them with the skills necessary to start a successful business. On the other hand, enhancing entrepreneurship education in schools could be viewed as a low-cost, high-impact strategy for enhancing the entrepreneurial atmosphere (GEM, 2022). Additionally, there is evidence to support the idea that offering programs for business aid sponsored by education enhances the likelihood of students actually acting (Parker & Belghitar, 2006).

Trivedi (2016) reported statistical variations among nations in his study on the association between educational environment and inclination to establish a business. Additionally, a study conducted by Franke and Lüthje (2004) in three different countries (Germany, Austria, and the United States of America) revealed evidence of differences in entrepreneurial intention, environmental factors, including market factors, government policies promoting entrepreneurship, and educational environments.

Furthermore, the aim of students to launch a business can be influenced by a higher education institution through training, networking, motivation, etc. Universities foster motivation by implementing rules and tools that encourage students to start their own businesses (Feola et al., 2017). In conclusion, in order to encourage students to pursue an entrepreneurial career, higher education institutions play a crucial role (Trivedi, 2016; Turker & Sonmez Selcuk, 2009). Therefore, there is need to explore the following **research question** (RQ3) *Does educational context moderate the effects of one's (a) attitude and (b) perceived behavior control on engagement in entrepreneurship?* while aiming the following **research objective** (RO3): *To investigate the moderating effect of educational context on the impact of one's (a) attitude and (b) perceived behavior control on engagement in entrepreneurship.*

Based on the above discussion and the need to address the respective research question and objective the **hypothesis** can be formulated:

Hypothesis 5 (H5): *Educational context positively moderates the influence of individual's (H5a) attitude and (H5b) perceived behavior control on engagement in entrepreneurship, such that the relationships are stronger in case of having high levels in educational context.*

Entrepreneurial family background is the third dimension of the environment which imposes influence toward the individual to undertake

business activities. It refers to those people whose parents or family members are involved in business activity or self-employment (Bae et al., 2014). The family background and engagement in business activities are two factors that are also seen as drivers of intention in the literature on entrepreneurship. Numerous research actually indicate that students with a history of entrepreneurial ancestors may affect their career intention (Dimitrova et al., 2014; Shirokova et al., 2016). Family members' prior business experience may have an impact on someone's decision to pursue an entrepreneurial profession through the development of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Kolvereid, 1996).

Based on the evidence from literature about student entrepreneurship attitude, studies suggest that graduated students with family business context may affect their future intentions towards undertaking business activities (Laspita et al., 2012; Sieger et al., 2014) and strengthen their proclivity to transform these intentions into actual behaviors (Shirokova et al., 2016). The importance of parental business experience is confirmed by a several empirical studies, suggesting a significant influence on children's intentions and behavior to start a business (Carr & Sequeira, 2007).

According to Dunn & Holtz-Eakin (2000) findings, prior entrepreneurial experience is considered to be a key element to determine the self-employment intentions of the individuals. Such individuals may benefit from parents' network and experience when trying to start up a business as a new entrepreneur (Laspita et al., 2012), which provides them a jump start in terms of moving from intentions to engagement when compared to other individuals who also manifest the desire to start a business but do not benefit from a variety of resources that are stem from having parents involved in entrepreneurship activities.

The chance to learn from self-employed parents who act as role models is provided by being a part of an entrepreneurial environment (Chlosta et al., 2012) creating the necessary conditions and the supportive beliefs that a similar career is a choice worth taking and also creates a favorable attitude towards engaging into entrepreneurial activities. Furthermore, the business background of the family provides insights into entrepreneurial activity and decision-making process (P. Mueller, 2006), which helps in shifting from entrepreneurial intentions to engagement as individuals having such knowledge will be less afraid of a possible failure. In the majority of cases, parents assist their children by providing financial capital (Dunn & Holtz-Eakin, 2000) and creating the conditions to acquire human capital (Lentz & Laband, 1990). Consequently, being part of a family with entrepreneurship background, is equal to having additional resources and being more confident regarding their perceived behavioral control as the available resources and opportunities outline the chances of a successful behavioral achievement as well as individual's perception of his or her probabilities to succeed (Shirokova et al., 2016). This conclusion is consistent with the planned behavior theory put forth by Ajzen (1991), which predicates on the idea that behavioral achievement may be directly influenced by

perceived behavioral control, behavioral intention, and behavioral conduct. A student's perception of behavioral control – which is likely greater in the case of students coming from families with entrepreneurial experience – increases the chance of effective action initiation and engagement when intention is held constant. Apart from assisting with resources, families that have an entrepreneurial context are likely to emotionally support their family members towards entrepreneurial actions creating this way an in favor-business subjective norm (Shirokova et al., 2016).

Families with businesses are more likely to emotionally support their children's entrepreneurial endeavors, providing a favorable subjective norm, i.e., endorsing their career choice, in addition to providing help with various resources. There are studies which confirm this linkage by suggesting that individuals who perceive support from their family and social contacts are more likely to shift from entrepreneurial intentions to engagement in business activities (Carr & Sequeira, 2007; Zanakis et al., 2012). Therefore, the following **hypothesis** is derived:

Hypothesis 6 (H6): The family experience positively moderates the effects of (H6a) personal attitude, (H6b) subjective norms and (H6c) the perceived behavior control on engagement in entrepreneurship, such that these linkages are stronger in case of having previous business family experiences.

This hypothesis will address the following **research question** and **objective**: (RQ4) *Does family context moderate the effects of one's (a) attitude, (b) subjective norms, and (c) perceived behavior control on engagement in entrepreneurship?*; (RO4) *To investigate the moderating effect of family context on the impact of one's (a) attitude, (b) subjective norms, and (c) perceived behavior control on engagement in entrepreneurship.*

1.2 Conceptual framework

Based on the literature review, this study develops a research model as shown in figure below. Personal attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavior control are part of theory proposed by Ajzen (1991), and they are hypothesized to have a direct impact on engagement in entrepreneurship.

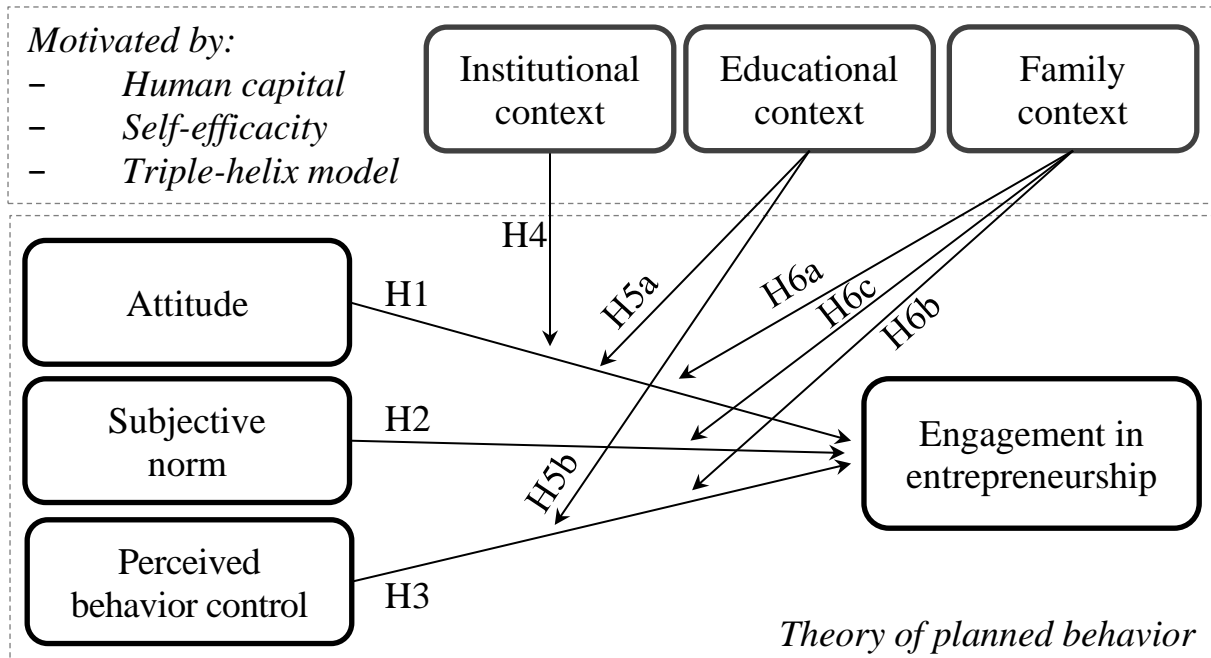


Figure 1. The Conceptual Model. Source: Own Research

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research instrument

Based on a combination of different theories within the realm of entrepreneurship, this **study aims** to shed light on the relationships and influences both personal and environment factors toward entrepreneurship intention.

This research is based on the **survey approach** by collecting representative face-to-face interviews in Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia. When studying entrepreneurship, a survey-based methodology is most commonly utilized since the samples of data obtained allow for the validation of theories and correlations between the variables or questions collected (Hlady-Rispal & Jouison-Laffitte, 2014). The target audience of the survey is anyone between 18 and 35 years of age and the selection of respondent is random. Since the approach is to collect primary data, the research the development of a questionnaire is addressed. Therefore, certain definitions need to be defined and constructed for data collection purpose. The literature review helped define, develop, and constructing the constructs of this research.

The dependent variable in this case is the entrepreneurial intention and is defined by a set of statements representing certain characteristics of entrepreneurial intention measured through Likert-scale questions. The Liñán and Chen (2006) definition is adopted for this research.

The notion of North (1990) notion concerning the institutional framework of the society is used to measure the institutional context of the current study. It stands for the underlying political, social, and legal principles that provide the

framework for business activities. The educational environment is measured through the definition of Lüthje and Franke (2003), which can either encourage students towards the involvement in business activities or not. The literature review helped to design the family factor and for this case, the definition of Shirokova et al. (2016) was adopted for the current study. The family context is regarded as the accumulated social capital as having at least one parent or close relative currently or previously engaged in business management.

3.2 Variable measurement

Here is presented the variable measurement based on the respective source. The construct of the dependent variable is based on the formulation introduced and used by Liñán and Chen (2006). According to this source, the **engagement in entrepreneurship** is represented by a set of statements measured through likert-scale questions. The set of statements explore different aspects of the intention to be an entrepreneur, such as *“I’m ready to make anything to be an entrepreneur”* or *“My professional goal is becoming an entrepreneur”*. The main question here is formulated: *“indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements”* and the responses are recorded using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is *“strongly disagree”* and 5 denotes *“strongly agree”*.

The following three constructs represent the environmental factors that play the moderation role in our model. The **institutional context** is adopted by Lim et al. (2015), who measure it by collecting responses concerning the extent of agreement with several statements that describe certain aspects of the formal governmental policies and regulations which affect business activity. Overall, there are five statements like *“In my country, government policies (e.g., public procurement) consistently favor new firms”*. The next moderator is **educational context** and the definition provided by Franke and Lüthje (2004) is used for it. For this construct, statements such as *“I consider school and university education of my country to be of good quality”* support the measurement of educational context. **The family context** is the third moderator factor for this thesis model and is based on the instructions provided by Shirokova et al. (2016). The measurement of this factor is done through a dummy variable asking if there are any of the parents or close relatives who are currently or previously engaged in running or managing a business. The question here is asked in the following format *“Is at least one of your parents an entrepreneur?”* and the same is asked for siblings and other relatives.

The remaining constructs are three individual level factors which are based on the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and in the current study are adopted by García-Rodríguez and his collaborators (2017). **Personal attitude**, which is measured through several questions which explore certain views of personal attitude toward entrepreneurship. There are a set of sentences which are evaluated through a 1-5 Likert scale. *“Being an entrepreneur implies more advantages than disadvantages to me”* is one of the questions of this set. **Perceived behavior**

control is measured by statements like “*I am usually able to protect my personal interests*” or “*When I make plans, I am almost certain to make them work*”. The answers are recorded in a Likert-scale format. **Subjective norm** is the third factor of the theory of planned behavior, and it is measured by asking how people who are close to the respondent react when pursuing a career as an entrepreneur.

3.3 Data collection

Once the measurement of the constructs was designed for the proposed research model, all survey items, originally elaborated in English language, were translated into the local language. When the translation was completed, a focus group and the pilot test were conducted to ensure the understanding of all questions by subjects and no ambiguous question was included in the research instrument.

All data both pilot and main survey were conducted via face-to-face interviewing. The answers were stored in Google Drive platform and then exported into Microsoft Excel, which was imported into a SPSS file and SmartPLS software for data analysis.

The sample ensured the appropriate proportion of interviews corresponding to the regional distribution of population in Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia. For the sample distribution of the interviews the official data regarding the geographical or regional coverage was considered. The interviews were carried out by survey local agencies in each country and the data collection phase started in September 2021 and was completed in October 2021.

3.4 Data Analysis

The focus of this study is to investigate the relationships of both individual and environmental level factors toward the entrepreneurial intention, and this is done for three different countries: Albania, Kosovo, and North Macedonia. Once the data were gathered through face-to-face interviews, SPSS 25.0 and SmartPLS 3.0 were used to analyze the data in order to accomplish the objective of this study and test hypotheses (Ringle et al., 2015). The model in SmartPLS 3.0 was then executed reflecting the hypotheses and conceptual framework of the study and it looks like the following illustration. Prior to the data processing validation and consistency tests were executed. After this process the following sample was qualified for the analysis: 412 successful interviews in Albania, 206 in Kosovo and 203 in North Macedonia. The table below represents the profile of the sample for each country.

Table 1. Profile of respondent by country

Demographic aspect (question format)	Answer choice	Albania (n=412)	Kosovo (n=206)	North Macedonia (n=203)
How old are you?	<i>18-24 years old</i>	58.3%	42.5%	48.3%
	<i>25-35 years old</i>	41.7%	57.5%	51.7%

Demographic aspect (question format)	Answer choice	Albania (n=412)	Kosovo (n=206)	North Macedonia (n=203)
What is your highest completed level of education?	<i>High school or lower</i>	37.0%	38.6%	44.8%
	<i>University or higher</i>	63.0%	61.4%	55.2%
What is the field of your completed studies?	<i>General (high school)</i>	14.6%	18.4%	36.1%
	<i>Economic related</i>	49.8%	51.9%	33.2%
	<i>No economic related</i>	35.6%	29.6%	30.7%
Based on the level of my household income, it is:	<i>1 (very hard to manage)</i>	1.7%	3.4%	2.5%
	<i>2</i>	3.9%	4.8%	4.9%
	<i>3</i>	42.2%	17.4%	31.5%
	<i>4</i>	32.3%	30.9%	38.4%
	<i>5 (comfortably to live)</i>	19.9%	43.5%	22.7%
Engagement in entrepreneurship ¹	<i>Yes</i>	50.7%	59.9%	50.2%
	<i>No</i>	49.3%	40.1%	49.8%

Source: own research

The **common method variance** was tested as recommended by Chang et al. (2010) and it was reported that this is not a problem for the current study. A preliminary examination of the model measurement was performed before the hypotheses were tested. Therefore, the PLS-SEM assumptions of **collinearity** and item loading, **scale reliability**, and **discriminant validity** between constructs were met properly. All item loadings ought to be more than the 0.70 conservative threshold (Hair et al., 2019). Moreover, no multicollinearity problem was reported. The variance inflation factor coefficients were examined to check this test.

The **measurement model** is analyzed through the partial least squares (PLS) approach via SmartPLS 3.0 software. The PLS approach is a variance-based SEM method. Additionally, the PLS method enables the parallel testing of the measurement and structural models. According to Urbano, Aparicio and Audretsch (2019), SEM is among the most statistical technique used by scholars concerning the measurement of the effect of institutions on entrepreneurship. In order to assess the variance of the internal causes of the constructs based on the suggested theoretical model and each of their associated manifest variables, PLS-SEM is utilized (Hair et al., 2017). In the current study, every construct is modeled as a reflecting indicator. In order to demonstrate the links between the constructs, the reliability, validity, and discriminant validity of the construct

¹ This is an output of three levels construct: (i) discovering entrepreneurial opportunities; (ii) engagement in evaluating entrepreneurial opportunities and (iii) engagement in exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities. This is a construct used by Lim et al. (2015).

measurement model are first determined (Hair et al., 2017). The standardized pathways are checked in order to determine the relevance of these associations. The bootstrap method is used to calculate these pathways, using 5000 iterations of resampling.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Direct effects

The hypotheses are tested in PLS-SEM. Its results are summarized in table below. Here are reported the results of research model for the three countries and are organized according to the nature of the path: direct or interactive. In the following paragraphs are interpreted the direct paths only for the three countries. Then, the moderating effects are interpreted in the following heading.

There are three direct paths that are of interest for the research and are indicated by three hypotheses: H1, H2, and H3. In the case of Albania, those paths are statistically significant. Therefore, the attitude is found to positively influence engagement in entrepreneurship ($\beta=0.329, t=5.665, p<0.001$). Evidence shows that social norms positively impact engagement in entrepreneurship ($\beta=0.174, t=3.039, p<0.01$). Regarding the linkage between perceived behavior control and engagement in entrepreneurship, the data support a positive influence ($\beta=0.120, t=2.083, p<0.05$). Altogether, evidence fails to reject H1, H2, and H3.

In case of Kosovo, the following results are found. Different from the Albanian case, only perceived behavior control is found to be a significant factor in predicting engagement in entrepreneurship ($\beta=0.582, t=5.454, p<0.001$). On the other hand, engagement in entrepreneurship is not affected neither by attitude ($\beta=0.071, t=0.868, p>0.10$), nor by social norms ($\beta=0.082, t=0.964, p>0.01$). Given these results, one can conclude that in the case of Kosovo, only H3 is supported.

In the case of North Macedonia, different results from those of Albania and Kosovo are found. Hence, the data show that out of three direct paths, only one of them is statistically significant. Attitude positively influences individual's engagement in entrepreneurship ($\beta=0.501, t=6.790, p<0.001$), while social norms ($\beta=0.044, t=0.564, p>0.10$) and perceived behavior control ($\beta=0.072, t=0.879, p>0.10$) do not influence it. Considering these results, it can be said that in the case of North Macedonia, H1 is supported, whereas H2 and H3 are not.

Table 2. Hypotheses testing

Effect	Hypothesis	Path	Albania			Kosovo			North Macedonia		
			<i>beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Direct	-	AGE → EIE	-0.113	2.584	0.010	-0.286	5.605	0.000	-0.068	1.106	0.269
	-	SEX → EIE	-0.160	3.906	0.000	-0.071	1.248	0.212	0.053	1.055	0.291
	-	INC → EIE	-0.050	1.014	0.311	-0.302	4.743	0.000	0.085	1.406	0.160
	H1	ATT → EIE	0.329	5.665	0.000	0.071	0.868	0.386	0.501	6.790	0.000
	H2	SN → EIE	0.174	3.039	0.002	0.081	0.964	0.335	0.044	0.564	0.573
	H3	PBC → EIE	0.120	2.083	0.037	0.582	5.454	0.000	0.072	0.879	0.379
	-	EDU → EIE	0.029	0.576	0.565	0.000	0.002	0.998	0.269	3.183	0.001
	-	FAM → EIE	-0.188	4.643	0.000	-0.478	7.505	0.000	-0.120	1.698	0.090
	-	INS → EIE	0.021	0.441	0.659	0.010	0.157	0.875	-0.168	1.823	0.068
Inter-active	H4	ATT × INS → EIE	0.039	2.015	0.044	-0.010	0.147	0.883	0.047	1.857	0.063
	H5a	ATT × EDU → EIE	0.074	1.707	0.088	0.050	1.775	0.076	-0.008	0.092	0.927
	H6a	ATT × FAM → EIE	0.039	1.779	0.075	0.317	4.002	0.000	-0.117	1.190	0.234
	H5b	PBC × EDU → EIE	-0.021	0.446	0.655	0.002	0.022	0.983	-0.049	0.688	0.491
	H6c	PBC × FAM → EIE	-0.006	0.120	0.905	0.279	2.530	0.011	0.001	0.011	0.991
	H6b	SN × FAM → EIE	0.039	1.723	0.085	0.110	1.802	0.072	0.010	0.106	0.915

Source: own research

4.2 Interactive effects

In addition to the examination of the direct paths, the interactive effects are tested, and the results are shown in the second part of tables presenting the hypotheses testing for each country. In case of Albania, the results inform that institutional, educational and family contexts manifest moderating roles in governing the relationships of attitude and social norms with individual's engagement in entrepreneurship. Thus, it was found that institutional context statistically moderates the attitude–engagement in entrepreneurship relationship ($\beta=0.039$, $t=2.015$, $p<0.05$), confirming H4. Educational context has mixed findings: it moderates the influence of attitude on engagement in entrepreneurship ($\beta=0.074$, $t=1.707$, $p<0.10$), but not the effect of perceived behavior control on engagement in entrepreneurship ($\beta=0.044$, $t=0.564$, $p>0.10$), which leads to the confirmation of H5a and rejection of H5b. It is hypothesized that family context moderates the effects of attitude (H6a), perceived behavior control (H6c), and social norms (H6b) on engagement in entrepreneurship. However, the data in the case of Albania only H6a ($\beta=0.039$, $t=1.779$, $p<0.10$) and H6b ($\beta=0.039$, $t=1.723$, $p<0.10$) are supported. The evidence failed to support H6c ($\beta=-0.006$, $t=0.120$, $p>0.01$).

The same examination of the interactive effects is done for the case of Kosovo. Results show that the influence of attitude on engagement in entrepreneurship is moderated by educational ($\beta=0.050$, $t=1.775$, $p<0.10$) and family contexts ($\beta=0.317$, $t=4.002$, $p<0.10$), leading to the confirmation of H5a and H6a. Moreover, family context is found to be a statistically significant moderator of two other linkages as well: perceived behavior control ($\beta=0.279$, $t=2.530$, $p<0.05$) and social norms ($\beta=0.11$, $t=1.802$, $p<0.10$) with engagement in entrepreneurship. Given these findings, one can conclude that the data from Kosovo supports H6b and H6c. However, the analysis fails to support H4 and H5b.

Regarding the moderating effects in case of North Macedonia, the analysis does not show similar findings to the cases of Albania and Kosovo. Hence, the data in the North Macedonia case excluding H4, fails to support any moderating effect. Further, it was found evidence of the moderating effect of institutional context in the relationship between attitude and engagement in entrepreneurship ($\beta=0.047$, $t=1.857$, $p<0.10$), which leads to the confirmation of H4. The other hypotheses dealing with moderating role of educational and family contexts are rejected (H5a, H5b, H6a-c). The interactive effects and their statistical significance are analysed by plotting the data in line charts for each case.

5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The following paragraphs discuss the research findings for the first research objective of this thesis, which is to **identify how attitude, subjective norms, and**

perceived behavior control influence an individual's engagement in entrepreneurship. The current research reported that *personal attitude* has a positive influence on the entrepreneurial intention in the case of Albania and North Macedonia. This finding means that the personal attitude is an important direct individual-level factor when considering engagement in start-up activities by imposing a positive influence on this linkage. The personal attitude is considered among the most important drivers to get involved in business activities. It is worth underlining that this finding is in line with previous research that highlights the direct effect of personal attitude towards participation in business activities (Ajzen, 1991; García-Rodríguez et al., 2017; Lingappa et al., 2020; Sait & Semira, 2016; Turra & Melinda, 2021; Vamvaka et al., 2020).

Through this study, it is confirmed that there is a positive effect of *subjective norms* toward the initiative of a person to start a business as a professional opportunity in the case of Albania. Taking into account the construction of this concept, which encompasses the reaction of family members, relatives, and close friends or colleagues, or in other words social pressure, it can be stated that in this case, social circles influence one's decision to pursue a career as an entrepreneur. This finding corresponds to previous studies (Ajzen, 1991; García-Rodríguez et al., 2017). While in the case of Kosovo and North Macedonia, this result is not supported, which goes in line with other studies, such as Duong et al. (2022); Moriano et al. (2012), Sait and Semira (2016), Liñán et al. (2011), Thomas and Mueller (2000). These findings could also be explained by the country background. Because these small countries are still transitioning from socialism to an open market economy, the residents lack an entrepreneurial culture. Entrepreneurship is also discouraged by government rules, procedures, and the financial costs of starting a business. Potential entrepreneurs in these countries are discouraged from engaging in entrepreneurial activities for these reasons, and their judgments of their own capacities and skills in the development and operation of businesses are often unfavorable. This is argued also by Sait and Semira (2016) when analyzing the entrepreneurial intention of individuals in another Western Balkan country, Bosnia and Hercegovina. In addition, subjective norms as a construct seem to yield conflicting results among different studies. Gomes and her collaborators (2021) found that subjective norms have a negative impact on entrepreneurial intention while studying the motivation to become a business owner under the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Furthermore, Moriano et al. (2012) reason that subjective norms have a poor or non-significant influence in this area because younger individuals base their entrepreneurial career decisions more on personal attitudes.

The positive impact of *perceived behavior control* on intention to create a business is confirmed in the case of Albania and Kosovo. Perceived behavior control can be considered as another type of self-efficacy. This element describes the behavior's previous experiences. It also embraces all the information available to the individual prior to taking action and often is known as one's

control beliefs. These findings show that having stronger self-esteem and confidence in own ability to control the process of starting and maintaining a business will boost the individual entrepreneurial proclivities. This is in line with findings of other researchers (Ajzen, 1991; Duong et al., 2022; García-Rodríguez et al., 2017; Gomes et al., 2021; Sait & Semira, 2016; Turra & Melinda, 2021; Vamvaka et al., 2020). Nonetheless, this is not supported in the case of North Macedonia.

Having non-converging results between three countries when studying the entrepreneurship intention goes in line with the findings from other researchers such as Agolli et al. (2015), Edo et al. (2018), Gomes and her collaborators (2021), Jovanov Apasieva et al. (2020), Karamanos & Vasileiou (2015), Moriano et al. (2012), Sait and Semira (2016). Most of these studies have been carried out in Balkan countries and they underline the fact that the standard linkages proposed by the theory of plan behavior are not reflected in all countries. All the above-mentioned authors have a consensus over the reasons that fact that TPB is not supported. They argue that it is due to many factors such as social, cultural, historical and the development level of the respective country. Social, cultural, and historical factors play a promotor or detractor role when considering the individual intention to start a business. On the other hand, institutions that are not well-functioning, affected by election periods, and dependent/controlled education system together with the unfavorable business climate form obstacles for individuals to start a business. Even the moderation effect of the contextual factors, which is discussed below, needs to be interpreted in the light of this argument: there are also other factors that affect the individual intention to get involved in entrepreneurship activities.

The second objective of this thesis is to **investigate the moderating effect of institutional environment on the relationship between one's attitude and engagement in entrepreneurship**. According to the survey findings in the case of Albania and North Macedonia, it is confirmed that the institutional context plays a moderating role on the linkage between individual attitudes and entrepreneurial intention. The macroeconomic environment is foreseen to have a positive impact on entrepreneurial intention (Cuervo, 2005; Kibler, 2013). The moderating role of institution toward the entrepreneurship intention is confirmed by studies, such as Lim et al. (2015). In addition, scholars have revealed that the effect of the macroeconomic environment on entrepreneurial intent differs between countries (Dvorský et al., 2019). Overall, there's a consensus in the literature that a favorable institutional environment can stimulate individuals toward business opportunities. According to the current study, organizations must adhere to this institutional framework in order to be supported and recognized as legitimate. This framework is made up of the fundamental political, social, and legal guidelines that provide the foundation for production and distribution. Its construct does not include specific regulations rather than generalized statements of different aspects that identify and form the environment of starting and

managing a business. Such a role is important in moderating attitudes toward the motivation to start a business venture. This finding indicates that friendly intuitional environment can strengthen the attitude-entrepreneurial intention linkage, which can be translated into insights for policymakers. Therefore, designing instruments and policies that feed individual attitudes toward start-up activities would address contribute to the overall objective of increasing entrepreneurship rate. However, the survey data fails to support the moderating effect in the case of Kosovo.

The third research objective is to **investigate the moderating effect of educational context on the impact of one's attitude and perceived behavior control on engagement in entrepreneurship**. According to the research findings, the moderating effect of educational context on the relationship between one's attitude and engagement in entrepreneurship is confirmed in case of Albania and Kosovo. According to Turker and Sonmez Selcuk (2009), a better university environment based on the quality of entrepreneurship education increases the likelihood of students engaging in the process of starting a business. Our findings support Audretsch's (2017) claim that "the university's role in generating both knowledge spillover entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship capital may ultimately prove to be the most significant and compelling." Scholars have discovered empirical data indicating that participation in an entrepreneurial education program increases a person's desire to engage in start-up activities, especially if they study engineering or science (Åstebro et al., 2012; Barba-Sánchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo, 2018; Maresch et al., 2016; Souitaris et al., 2007; Vij & Ball, 2010; Westhead & Solesvik, 2016) and even of those in lower levels of education (Johansen et al., 2012; Johansen & Clausen, 2011; Rodrigues et al., 2012). Also, entrepreneurship trainings, programs and courses at universities can help people develop a more positive attitude toward starting a business (Abebe et al., 2020; Anwar et al., 2021; Dionco-Adetayo, 2006; Entrialgo & Iglesias, 2016). According to the current study, entrepreneurship educational context provides the information and necessary business-related knowledge to trigger and support the personal attitude of one's motivation to get involved in self-employment actions. This finding is supported by studies such as Wach and Wojciechowski (2016), Shirokova et al. (2016). In other words, as stated by Shah and his collaborators (2020), entrepreneurship education positively contributes to strengthening and channeling the attitude toward business actions. The entrepreneurship education is seen with considerable interest from European Commission and have designed a plan how to put in action several aspects of entrepreneurship education aiming the increase of self-employment rate (European Commission, 2020).

The fourth and final objective of the thesis is to **investigate the moderating effect of family context on the impact of one's attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control on engagement in entrepreneurship**. Considering the results of this thesis, the moderation effect of family background on the relationship of attitudes with entrepreneurial intention is confirmed in case of

Albania. Therefore, having a family member involved in business activity, be it like ownership or management, can foster other family members to manifest attitudes toward starting their own business. The influence of previous experience with business activity of family members has a favorable effect on attitudes toward entrepreneurship. This is in line with other studies (Abebe et al., 2020; Shirokova et al., 2016).

The current research findings confirm that family background plays the moderating role between subjective norms and motivation to start a business in case of Albania and Kosovo. This means that having previous experience with business activity, family members tend to manifest higher regards and consideration when one is thinking to start a business by their own. Subjective norms and previous business experience of the family members are closely tied. Parents help their children in the majority of cases by providing financial resources (Dunn & Holtz-Eakin, 2000). As stated before, being part of an entrepreneurial environment allows children to learn from self-employed parents who act as role models, providing the necessary conditions and positive beliefs that pursuing a similar career is a worthwhile endeavor, as well as a positive attitude toward engaging in entrepreneurial activities.

Furthermore, the results reported that the family background influences the linkage between perceived behavior control and engagement in entrepreneurship in case of Kosovo. Individuals belonging to collectivist cultures value their viewpoint highly, hence family presence in entrepreneurship has always been a significant aspect. Due to earlier exposure, the family's involvement in entrepreneurship provides an advantage of knowledge, which may increase self-efficacy perceptions (Lingappa et al., 2020).

6. CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

Driven by the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and institutional perspective (North, 1990), this study provides a unique and improved framework, which offers the possibility of identifying how the level of institutional, educational, and family contexts influence the relationships between antecedents of an individual's behavior and engagement in entrepreneurship. Besides the fact that this study is among the first to investigate the theory of planned behavior and the moderating effect of environmental factors for three Western Balkan countries, it provides both theoretical contribution to the existing literature and practical implications.

This thesis contributes to the literature in at least two ways. First, this research contributes to the entrepreneurship and institution literature by adding value to the existing models (Engle et al., 2011; Jackson & Deeg, 2008; Liñán et al., 2011). This offers the possibility to investigate the relationships between institutional, educational, and family contexts and the actual involvement of the individuals in start-up activity. The literature review revealed that the theory of planned

behavior has been analyzed in many aspects and perspectives, also including here those studies which inspected the moderating effect from environmental factors. However, the set of constructs which represent the moderators in the current research are unique. The combination of these factors and inspecting their influence on the relationships between individual level factors (attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavior control) and the entrepreneurial intention is not found in other studies.

Second, the research contributes to enrich the existing literature by investigating whether the environment factors moderate the relationships of classic individual factors and motivation to start a business. In this line, it examines whether (1) institutional environment governs the linkage between one's attitude and engagement in entrepreneurship; (2) educational context moderates the effects of an individual's attitude and perceived behavior control on engagement in entrepreneurship; (3) family context moderates the linkages of the antecedents of one's behavior with engagement in entrepreneurship.

It is important to highlight the fact that this research provides contribution to the literature by offering insights from three different Western Balkan countries, which all three have a common communist past and aspire to be part of EU.

In order to make adjustments to current policies and strategies or design and develop new ones that foster the process of new venture creation while taking into account the social and economic benefits of business activity among individuals, academics, university management, government, and policymakers are particularly interested in understanding the effect of various factors on the intention to start a business. As a result, it's critical to look at the psychological, situational, and contextual actors that influence people's decision to start a business (Schlaegel & Koenig, 2014; Tolentino et al., 2014; Trivedi, 2016).

In a broader sense, policymakers should work on developing a well-functioning education system and a welcoming business environment (Brixiova and Égert, 2017) in order to enhance the supply of educated entrepreneurs (La Porta and Shleifer, 2014). As a result, governmental authorities and institutions should consider adopting policies and constructing curricula that boost students' capacity and skills toward entrepreneurial activity. Employers may also try 'nurturing entrepreneurship' by participating in internship programs in collaboration with educational institutions and government to create a more open and welcoming environment for students. This means that, in addition to knowledge, the educational system should provide students with practical experiences that will help them develop their abilities and skills for a successful start-up.

There are several inputs from the government and academic point of view that can be considered for this perspective (European Commission, 2020), such as draft strategies or plans defining specific entrepreneurship education goals and objectives; educational institutions prioritizing entrepreneurship education content and methods in teaching and learning; schools and universities

introducing entrepreneurship education in the form of individual courses and classes.

Government programs should be given attention through changing policies aimed at enhancing entrepreneurial activity, since business assistance from the government may impact entrepreneurial intention and actual engagement in start-up activity. The following are among the policy-tools at hand when designing and implementing friendlier business policies from public administration: shortening the timing and paperwork for registration procedures; tax supporting the new businesses and initiatives; reducing tax burden and procedures for tax reporting; promoting e-solution for entrepreneurs; encouraging collaboration between researchers and university institutions, from one side, the private sector, from the other; assisting entrepreneurs in gaining access to networks; expanding the financial support and providing grants for new business ideas; etc. Scoring higher result in terms of business climate yield benefits.

It is also important to understand the full potential of contextual factors which might strengthen the relationship of individual level factors with the motivation to start a business, so the policymakers acknowledge all tools at their disposal that they might use when thinking about increasing the self-employed rate. According to this study, in addition to the institutional and educational context, family background plays an important role in this regard. If a policy framework is designed and implemented to promote family members' business understanding and engagement, there is a good chance that entrepreneurial attitudes of other family members and/or close relatives will improve (Abebe et al., 2020). These lead to the application of the triple-helix model (academia, government, business) (Feola et al., 2017). By aligning their objectives, the three organizations may benefit through promoting a more welcoming business climate and encourage people to establish businesses.

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**The role of institutional, educational and family context for
engagement in entrepreneurship: evidence from Albania, Kosovo
and North Macedonia**

Úloha institucionálního, vzdělávací a rodinného kontextu pro zapojení do
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