

Entrepreneurial Intentions Among Youth: Opportunities, Resources and Challenges in Launching Businesses

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Abstract: This paper seeks to investigate the entrepreneurial intentions of Romanian youth, focusing on the opportunities, resources, and challenges they face in launching their own businesses. The central research question explores why a relatively small percentage of young people in Romania engage in entrepreneurial activities, despite demonstrating interest. To address this, the study was guided by four key objectives: identifying motivating factors, understanding barriers, assessing awareness and interest, and evaluating the effectiveness of existing support programs.

A descriptive, cross-sectional survey was conducted among individuals aged 15 to 35 in Sibiu County, Romania. The quantitative research design involved a structured questionnaire distributed via social media, capturing both measurable data (through multiple-choice and Likert scale questions) and qualitative insights (via open-ended responses). The data was analysed using descriptive statistics and comparative analysis to uncover patterns and trends.

The findings indicate a high level of interest in entrepreneurship, with 83 out of 110 respondents expressing a desire to start a business. However, only 38 had taken concrete steps to do so. Economic independence emerged as the primary motivator, while the main barriers included fear of failure, financial constraints, and lack of knowledge. Although 60% of participants had attended entrepreneurship programs, many remained unaware of available support resources and felt hindered by bureaucratic procedures.

The study concludes that while interest in entrepreneurship is strong among Romanian youth, actual engagement is limited due to systemic and educational shortcomings. These results highlight the need for better access to funding, practical training, and supportive infrastructure to bridge the gap between intention and action, contributing valuable insights to the field of entrepreneurial studies.

Key words: Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Intentions, Barriers, Business, Youth

JEL classification: L26, M13

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship nowadays describes the process of creating, developing and managing a new business or project with the aim of turning innovative ideas into reality. (Munich Business School, 2024). Starting and running a business requires more than just talent and ambition—it demands hard work, discipline, risk-taking, and perseverance. Entrepreneurs often work long hours, including evenings, weekends, and holidays, and must possess unique, sometimes unconventional traits such as a strong aversion to failure and obsessive drive. Success comes from knowing how to use one's strengths and weaknesses effectively, and having the courage to pursue bold, untested ideas. Ultimately, business success is less about luck and more about preparation and seizing opportunities. (Scott, J., 2017)

Different steps need to be taken into consideration for this to happen, from identifying the need of the society that you want to accomplish, up to taking the risks and making use of the resources that make the dream come true. In this sense, entrepreneurship can improve existing products on the market, or innovate new products and services, generating employment and economic growth. Successful entrepreneurship requires creativity, resilience, and strategic decision-making to overcome challenges and achieve sustainability. However, despite all the progress that has been made through the years, young people are affected the most by the economic imbalance and they are not aware of the opportunities waiting for them on the actual market.

In Romania, the number of young people with their age up to 29 years who are registered at the Trade Register in December 2024 is very low (ONRC, 2025). Only 10% of the total people registered is showcasing the people aged 29 and lower, and 22.71% represents the percent of people aged between 30 and 39 years registered. One objective is to identify how many people want to become entrepreneurs, despite the fact that they did not start businesses in order to be reflected in actual data. This discrepancy raises important questions regarding the barriers preventing young people from translating their business ideas into reality.

So, the next questions arise. Why only such a low proportion of young people actually reach the point to start a business? Are they presenting an interest towards the field of entrepreneurship? Are they having difficulties accessing this field?

This paper showcases the factors that are linked to young entrepreneurship, among the challenges faced in the process. This study will aim to provide a deeper understanding of the factors underlying young entrepreneurship by analysing the perspectives of young people regarding their needs, challenges, and incentives for starting a business. To achieve this, a survey will be conducted among young individuals, particularly those in secondary and higher education, as well as recent graduates, to gather insights on their entrepreneurial intentions, perceived obstacles, and support mechanisms they consider essential for business success. Ultimately, the findings of this research will provide valuable insights for policymakers, educational institutions, and business organizations.

2. Literature review

2.1. Entrepreneurial Intentions

Economy ↕	Year ↕	Entrepreneurial Intentions ↕
Romania	2024	5.99
Romania	2023	5.79

Figure 1. Entrepreneurial Intentions score of Romania
Source: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor

According to GEM (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor), Romania's entrepreneurial intentions score increased slightly from 5.79% in 2023 to 5.99% in 2024. This metric reflects the percentage of adults aged 18 to 64 who expect to start a business within the next three years. While the increase is modest, it suggests a slight upward trend in entrepreneurial interest. However, the overall level remains low compared to global averages, indicating that entrepreneurship is still not a widely pursued path in Romania. This may be due to persistent barriers such as fear of failure, limited access to funding, and a lack of supportive infrastructure. Despite a relatively high perception of opportunities and self-assessed capabilities among Romanians, these structural and cultural challenges continue to suppress the translation of potential into action.

2.2. Entrepreneurial Fundamentals

Numerous studies have been conducted regarding the topic of entrepreneurial intentions all over the world. Kurowska-Pysz (2014, p 52-65), for instance, investigated with a group of young people in secondary education and higher education the efficacy of Academic Incubators of Entrepreneurship (AIE) in Poland. The aim was to promote managerial competencies in students, and formulate recommendations in terms of the development of managerial skills or future entrepreneurs. Kurowska-Pysz saw that students who participated, perceived the development of desirable traits and the strengthening of specific entrepreneurial and management competencies, which increased their motivation to start a business after leaving the incubator. Promoting managerial competencies in students and formulating suggestions for the growth of managerial abilities of aspiring entrepreneurs were the objectives. According to Kurowska-Pysz, students who took part felt that certain managerial and entrepreneurial skills were strengthened and that desirable attributes were developing, which made them more inclined to launch a business when the incubator ended.

Likewise, Johansen conducted a quantitative analysis in 2007 of former Junior Achievement-Young Enterprise (JA-YE) Europe participants and discovered that entrepreneurship education program participants typically have a higher likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs. General education clearly has an impact on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial activities, according to a study by Finisterra do Paco et al. (2010). Researchers are now more interested in entrepreneurship education programs as a result of this. Additionally, some studies propose that early formal entrepreneurship education can affect students' mindsets, guiding their future professional paths and enhancing their likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs later in life.

Gulzar and Fayaz conducted a study in 2023 to discover the entrepreneurial intentions, using an integrated model of individual and contextual factors. They discovered that antecedents have a great impact on the intentions of young entrepreneurs. For instance, personal competencies, contextual factors and entrepreneurial exposure.

In 2019, an article was published by Spanish university professors that analysed a bunch of factors that influence the entrepreneurial intentions of Spanish youth between 15-18 years (Figure 1) using PCA (Principal Component Analysis) analysis. After a thorough analysis, they came to the result that the percentage of the surveyed that present a strong entrepreneurial interest is pretty small, primarily, men that have a family business background that aspire to be autonomous and financially independent. The analysis revealed that

“Key motivations include professional development, idea implementation, and economic self-sufficiency, while barriers involve financial constraints, risk-taking, and fear of failure. The study highlights the need for early identification and reinforcement of entrepreneurial interests through education, requiring collaboration between policymakers, universities, and professional networks. Health-related aspects also play a role, an area often overlooked in research.” (M Camino, E. et al., 2019, pg. 11)

Overall, these studies highlight the importance of education, exposure, and support systems in fostering entrepreneurial mindsets, while also addressing the common obstacles young entrepreneurs face. These findings suggest that education plays a key role in teaching students the skills necessary to become a successful entrepreneur, such as managerial skills, business knowledge and confidence. This was demonstrated by entrepreneurial training programs and academic incubators. Moreover, contextual factors are as important as education and bring a significant contribution to the development of future entrepreneurs. Access to mentors or inspiring personalities, access to financial resources and networks that support and encourage young people to start a business are some of the parts of the exposure that shapes the youth.

Despite the strong desire to become entrepreneurs that appears among a part of the youth, others are getting discouraged by difficulties and barriers such as fear of failure or the lack of independent financial support. As the Spanish study shows, people that come from a business-related background in their families are more inclined to take a risk.

Encouraging young people to start their own businesses involves more than just personal aspirations; it also entails creating an environment that values creativity, encourages measured risk-taking, and offers the tools needed to turn concepts into viable enterprises. In order to boost the number of young entrepreneurs and promote long-term economic growth, it will be essential to address the issues that have been highlighted and fortify mechanisms that assist entrepreneurs.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Development of the thesis objectives

This paper is aimed to identify and bring forward the entrepreneurial intentions of the Romanian youth, their opportunities, resources and challenges in launching businesses. In this regard, a survey will be conducted with the scope to gather information to touch 5 main objectives. In the first place, the study will be used to identify the key factors that determine the youth to participate in entrepreneurship activities in Romania. Then, the challenges faced by people that want to step into the business world, but do not know how will be identified and analysed. The study will investigate the main barriers, such as financial constraints or lack of sufficient education in this field. A third objective would be to assess the level of interest and awareness regarding the entrepreneurship field. Another objective is determined by the evaluation of the effectiveness of the existing support programs in Romania and if they are well recognized among Romanian youth.

3.2. Research method and the justification of the method

The research design for this study is conclusive descriptive cross-sectional simple, focusing on capturing data at a specific point in time to understand the opportunities, challenges and resources regarding launching a business. The research type is simple, aiming to describe patterns and trends. Data collection is conducted through a survey which gathers insights from young people about the purpose of the study. This approach allows for the identification of challenges faced, the level of interest and awareness, the effectiveness of existing support programs, to propose solutions for solving the existing problems.

3.3. Description of the research design

This study has a quantitative research approach, which allows the collection and analysis of numerical data to identify patterns and trends among young people regarding entrepreneurship. The use of a structured survey ensures that responses are measurable, comparable and statistically analysable, providing reliable insights into entrepreneurial intentions, perceived challenges and required support mechanisms.

The study targets young individuals, particularly those between ages 15 and 35, as they are categorised in this way for statistical purposes by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) 2017, coming from the Sibiu region of Romania. The main objective of this approach is to analyse the entrepreneurial intentions of young people in this age segment, respectively their desire to start a business. At the same time, if entrepreneurial intentions are absent or limited, the study aims to identify the needs and barriers perceived by these young people, in order to highlight the reasons that discourage their involvement in entrepreneurial activities. This research also aims to suggest effective ways in which young people can be encouraged and supported to approach the entrepreneurial field.

3.4. Explanation of the data collection and analysis procedure

The collection of data is free of charge, through a questionnaire sent to all the participants in the survey via social media. The questionnaire will be structured and will contain different types of questions, including factors mentioned in literature papers such as The Entrepreneur's Guide to Building a Successful Business. Firstly, demographic questions will be addressed to correlate the answers with the age, region, level of education and experience in the entrepreneurial field. Secondly, open-ended questions will be used to understand better why respondents feel a certain way about entrepreneurship and reveal unexpected challenges, which help a qualitative data analysis to be carried out. This type of questions also enhances the quantitative data, as they help to contextualize the findings. Measurable data will be obtained by multiple-choice questions and Likert scale questions to measure the interest and evaluate the perception about challenges. A qualitative data analysis will also be conducted, through the open-ended questions.

After collecting the answers, the data will be processed and analysed statistically using Excel. The analysis will contain descriptive statistics (percentage distributions) to analyse trends, comparative analysis between different groups such as young people with or without entrepreneurial experience and correlations between resources and barriers and the intention to start a business.

4. Results and discussions

The study was conducted through a survey, from 23rd of April to 2nd of May 2025. The questionnaire was sent using social media to people from Romania of different ages, backgrounds and demographics. Although the study was concentrated on young people aged 15-35, there are several answers from older people that can help the study by making a comparison between different categories of age. The questionnaire was answered by 172 people, 110 from Sibiu county, 8 from Bucharest, 5 from Bihor county, from Dolj, Olt and Vâlcea counties (4 each), from Brasov and Constanta (3 each), from Arges, Bistrița-Năsăud, Botoșani, Cluj, Prahova and Timiș (2 each), and Alba, Arad, Bacau, Călărași, Covasna, Hunedoara, Iasi, Maramureș, Mehedinți, Mureș, Suceava, Teleorman and Vaslui counties registered only 1 answer.

Besides the fact that people from different regions of Romania answered this survey, they come from different environments. For instance, 141 come from urban areas of Romania and 31 from rural areas. Regarding the age, 82 respondents lay between 18-24 years, 32 between 25-34 years old, 32 between 15-17 years, 16 between 45-64 years, 9 between 35-44 years and one over 65 years. Also, 108 of them are females, 62 are males and 2 preferred not to say.

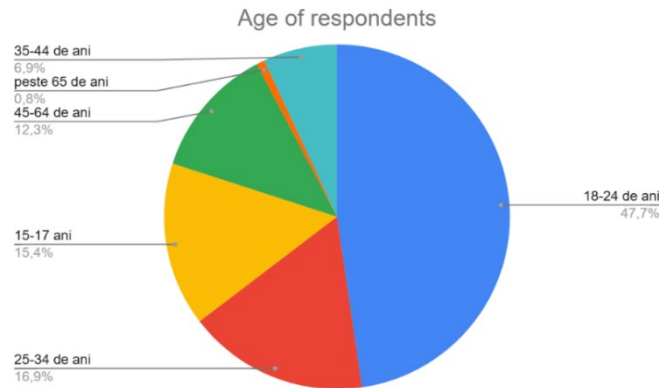


Figure 2. Age of initial respondents
Source: Own Figure

For research purposes, from the study were kept only the answers of the youth aged between 15 and 35, living in Sibiu. From now on, all the results and interpretations are made exclusively on this part of the respondents. The remaining answers were a total of 110, with Sibiu county residents only, aged between 15 and 35, coming from both rural and urban areas. Regarding their occupation, most of the respondents were students (65) or employees (36).

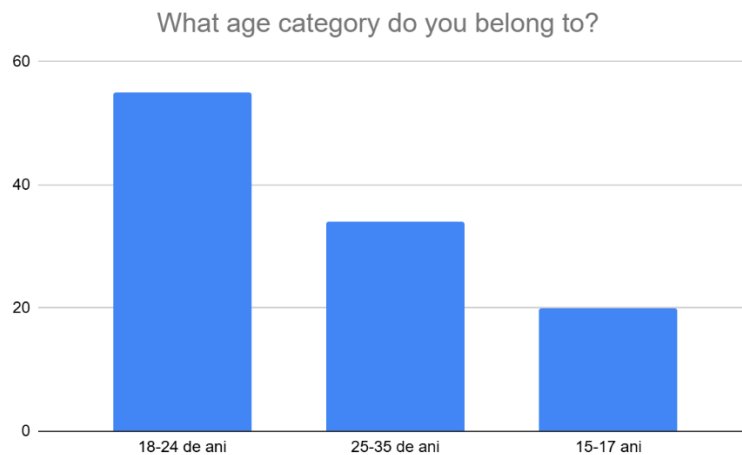


Figure 3. Age of respondents after filtering the data
Source: Own Figure

Access to technology is an important factor regarding how informed a person is, so a question in this regard was asked. On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means very limited access and 5 means very good access, 87 answered 5, 15 answered 4 and 5 answered 3, but only 2 answered that they have limited access to technology.

83 answered they were at least once interested in starting a business. Although a number answered that, the others that were not interested at all said that this is because of the financial risks implied, lack of know-how or fear of failure. Besides the answers provided, they were free to write their own, so other answers were that is not a point of interest or they do not need to have a business. Out of the 84 answers of “yes, I was interested”, 38 started a business.

The next 3 questions were asked on a scale from 1 to 5. The first one “How well do you consider that you understand what entrepreneurship implies?” 43 responded 3 (moderately), 27 responded 2 (a little), 23 responded 4 (well), 13 responded 5 which means very well, and only one responded not at all. At the second question, 37 answered that they perceive the entrepreneurship field as an attractive one, 22 said it is very attractive for them, 19 said not so attractive, and 24 were neutral. There was a small number of people that perceived entrepreneurship as unattractive at all. The third one, “How often do you discuss entrepreneurship and business initiatives with your circle of people?” had different answers. 20 said very rarely, 17 said rarely, 41 said occasionally (which is the middle answer), 15 said they discussed it often and only 16 discussed it very often. On the contrary, 85 people responded that they have a friend or a family member that is an entrepreneur, which in a moderate way, changed their perception of entrepreneurship in a good one.

Taking into account that most of them are employed or students, the study had a question that would show how much of the respondents prefer an entrepreneurial occupation rather than a traditional career. In this regard, 55,54% of the respondents think that it is indeed more attractive for them. This high percentage is highlighted in the answer provided

to the next question, which refers to the way that entrepreneurs are perceived in Romania. Most answered that entrepreneurs are respected quite a lot in Romania.

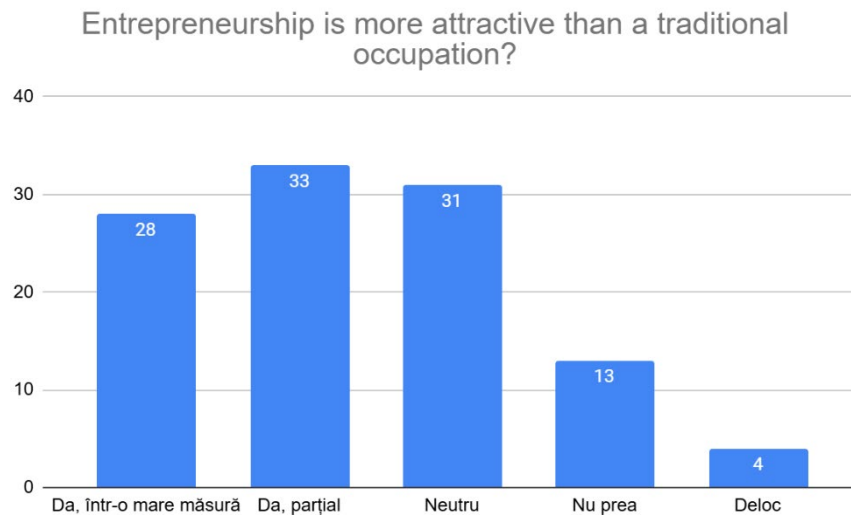


Figure 4. How attracted the youth is to an entrepreneurial occupation
Source: Own Figure

The existence of courses and workshops is well known by the people, because 60 % of the respondents said that they participated in workshops, courses of educational programs linked to entrepreneurship. 28 see them as useful and 15 see them as very useful, so a percentage of 55,84% are satisfied with what the courses had to give.

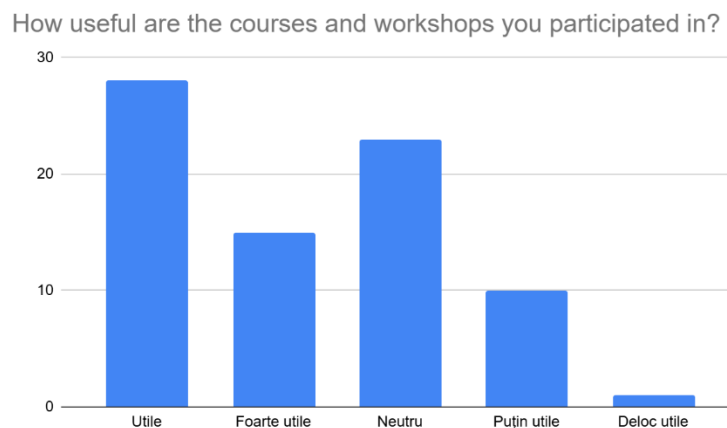


Figure 5. Usefulness of entrepreneurship-related courses and workshops among respondents
Source: Own Figure

A set of open-ended questions was also addressed. From this questions the next things were reflected:

- The educational institutions, among the government and the non-governmental organisations should offer financial support, free courses, introducing practical courses in the curricula related to management, marketing and financial education and to promote more funds that are accessible to everyone, in order to encourage the young population and not only to have a start-up.
- The ideas of the young people should be listened to more to help them familiarize themselves with the tendencies and expectations of the generation.
- The introduction of free workshops and meeting successful entrepreneurs and easier legislation and less bureaucracy also can be helpful with promoting entrepreneurship.
- The ones that already know about the financing programs suggested that the state has drastic actions over businesses that have state financing, which is leading to closing the business very early, not encouraging them to rise.
- The most met answers to “how to make financial programs better” were: more support and transparency, less bureaucracy.

As other resources, among the entrepreneurial programs, the respondents suggested the most a “step-by-step” guide for an entrepreneurial career.

For every occupation, there is a set of abilities that need to exist in order to excel in that specific field. For entrepreneurship, the most important ability or knowledge is how you manage the business, an answer preferred by more than 50% of the respondents, among marketing and financial education. This question also had new answers from the respondents, including project management, sales, legislation knowledge, economic education (micro/macroeconomics, consumer's behaviour etc.).

In the end, the best motivation to start a business for the young respondents of the survey is economic self-sufficiency. Also, access to financing is the most useful support system for 42,72% of the respondents.

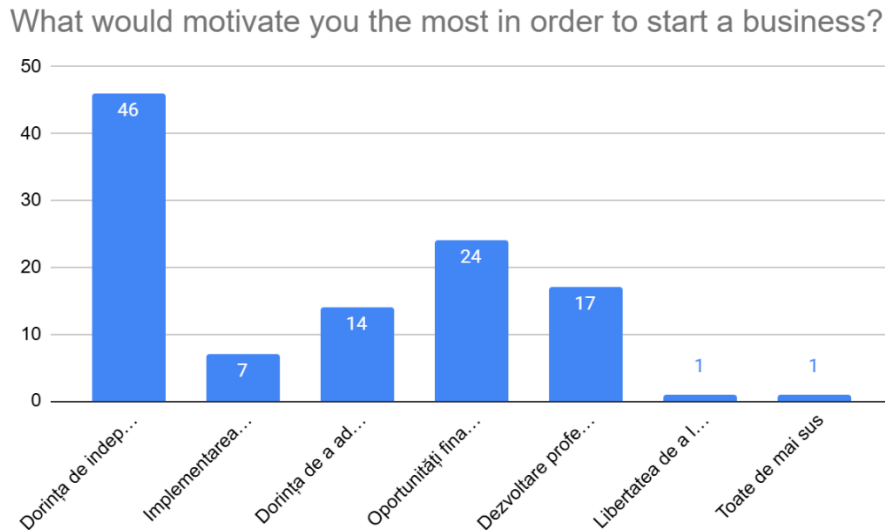


Figure 6. Key motivation factors in starting a business among respondents
Source: Own Figure

4.1. Objective 1: Identify the Key Factors that determine the Youth to Participate in Entrepreneurship Activities in Romania

The study set out to determine the key motivational factors that drive Romanian youth, particularly those between the ages of 15 and 35 living in Sibiu, to engage in entrepreneurship. A significant portion of the respondents—83 out of 110—indicated that they had at least once considered starting a business. This statistic demonstrates a widespread curiosity or inclination toward entrepreneurial ventures within the youth population surveyed.

When exploring motivations, the data highlighted that the primary reason young people are interested in entrepreneurship is economic self-sufficiency. This validates the hypothesis that economic independence is a major driver. The youth view entrepreneurship as a pathway to financial autonomy, allowing them to break free from traditional employment and possibly earn better incomes. Many also expressed an interest in creating something of their own, thus aligning entrepreneurship with personal fulfilment and ambition.

In open-ended responses, participants mentioned that entrepreneurship enables control over one's future and career path. Others valued the flexibility it provides, a sentiment commonly shared among younger generations globally. Furthermore, the perception that entrepreneurs are well-respected in Romanian society strengthens their appeal to follow this career route. Over 55% of respondents found entrepreneurial occupations more attractive than traditional jobs. These findings confirm that intrinsic motivations like independence, ambition, and social recognition are powerful incentives for youth to consider entrepreneurial careers.

Educational background and social environments also play crucial roles. For example, 85 respondents had a friend or family member who is an entrepreneur. This social exposure appears to positively influence their perceptions and aspirations. It offers real-life role models and encourages them to envision entrepreneurship as attainable. Consequently, this objective shows that economic independence, social influence, and personal values are significant determinants of entrepreneurial interest among Romanian youth.

4.2. Objective 2: Identify Challenges Faced by young People that Want to Start a Business

The study aimed to explore the barriers young people face when trying to start a business. The hypothesis proposed that most individuals refrain from initiating entrepreneurial activities due to lack of money and knowledge. This was strongly supported by the data collected.

Respondents who were not interested in starting a business cited financial risks, lack of know-how, and fear of failure as the top reasons. This underscores the reality that while interest exists, actionable steps toward entrepreneurship are hindered by concrete and often overwhelming obstacles. Participants highlighted the difficulty in accessing startup capital. Without initial funding or adequate financial support, many good ideas remain unpursued.

Knowledge gaps were also prominently discussed. Many respondents felt ill-prepared to manage a business due to limited understanding of key areas like management, marketing, and financial education. This points to a critical shortfall in the current educational and support systems. The open-ended responses elaborated further, emphasizing a

need for practical education and hands-on experience. Suggestions included the introduction of real-world business simulations, mentorship programs, and more accessible informational resources.

Moreover, bureaucracy and stringent regulations were frequently mentioned as deterrents. Some young entrepreneurs who had tried accessing state support or funding felt discouraged by complex procedures and excessive red tape. A few even noted that aggressive oversight of state-funded startups led to premature business closures. This signals that systemic inefficiencies play a substantial role in deterring entrepreneurship.

These findings validate the hypothesis that financial constraints and lack of entrepreneurial knowledge are the primary barriers. Additionally, they highlight the importance of regulatory reform and the need for structured educational interventions. Tackling these challenges is essential if Romania aims to empower its youth to confidently pursue entrepreneurial ventures.

4.3. Objective 3: Assess the Level of Interest and Awareness Regarding the Entrepreneurship Field

This objective explored the extent to which young people in Sibiu are informed about and interested in the field of entrepreneurship. The hypothesis anticipated a high level of interest and awareness among the respondents. The data largely confirmed this, showing that a significant majority had at least considered becoming entrepreneurs.

Out of 110 respondents, 83 reported being interested at some point in starting a business, and 38 had already taken steps to start one. These figures reflect a strong level of interest. When asked to evaluate their understanding of entrepreneurship on a scale from 1 to 5, most responses clustered around the midpoint: 43 selected 3 (moderate understanding), 23 chose 4 (good), and 13 rated themselves at 5 (very good). This indicates that while enthusiasm exists, many still feel they lack deep knowledge of the field.

The perception of entrepreneurship as an attractive field was similarly positive. More than half of the participants viewed it as attractive or very attractive. Additionally, 41 respondents mentioned that they occasionally discuss business and entrepreneurship in their social circles, showing that the topic is relevant in their daily conversations. Only a small minority claimed to rarely or never talk about it.

A noteworthy finding is the influence of personal networks. Eighty-five respondents reported having friends or family members who are entrepreneurs, and most stated that this exposure positively shaped their perception of entrepreneurship. This informal transmission of knowledge and inspiration is a key factor in raising awareness and fostering interest.

Although the overall picture is optimistic, there are still informational gaps. While many participants had a general interest and some exposure, not all had taken steps to deeply educate themselves about entrepreneurship. Thus, while the hypothesis was correct in identifying a high level of interest and awareness, the study also reveals that this awareness could be significantly deepened through targeted educational initiatives.

4.4. Objective 4: Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Existing Support Programs in Romania

This objective assessed how well the current support systems—such as courses, workshops, and funding programs—help young people pursue entrepreneurial careers. Contrary to the hypothesis, which predicted that most people would not be aware of these resources, the survey revealed a relatively high level of engagement.

According to the results, 60% of respondents had already participated in entrepreneurship-related programs. Moreover, 55.84% of them rated these initiatives as either useful or very useful. These numbers indicate that a majority are not only aware of but also benefiting from the existing support infrastructure. Therefore, the initial hypothesis does not hold.

However, the qualitative responses offer critical nuances. While participation rates are encouraging, many respondents emphasized the need for more practical, transparent, and accessible resources. They expressed a desire for workshops that are free and better adapted to real-world business challenges. A recurring suggestion was to offer step-by-step guides to entrepreneurship, helping novices transition from idea to execution.

Some dissatisfaction was also noted regarding government-backed financial programs. Participants cited bureaucracy and strict oversight as discouraging factors. Several respondents who had accessed these funds mentioned that regulatory demands sometimes led to early closure of their startups. Thus, while awareness and use of programs are higher than expected, their perceived effectiveness is mixed.

Overall, this objective reveals that while support programs are reaching a large portion of the youth, their quality and accessibility can still be improved. More user-friendly formats, clearer communication, and reduced bureaucratic hurdles would enhance their impact. As such, the findings provide a roadmap for how existing structures can evolve to better serve Romania's next generation of entrepreneurs.

4.5. Comparative Analysis of Research Results and Literature

The results of this study align well with the literature findings regarding entrepreneurial intentions and the challenges young people face in starting a business. Both the survey and the literature acknowledge that economic self-sufficiency is a leading motivation behind youth entrepreneurship. In the Romanian context, over half the respondents saw entrepreneurial occupations as more attractive than traditional careers, echoing Camino et al. (2019) who found similar motivations, particularly among youth from entrepreneurial family backgrounds.

However, despite this interest, both sources underline a low actual engagement in business creation. The GEM report supports this, showing only 5.99% of Romanians aged 18–64 expected to start a business in the next three years—

reflecting low entrepreneurial intention on a national scale. The study confirms this gap, with only 38 out of 83 interested youths actually having started a business.

Barriers such as fear of failure, lack of know-how, and financial insecurity are consistent across both the survey results and the literature (e.g., Gulzar & Fayaz, 2023). Respondents in the current research explicitly pointed to these issues as reasons for not pursuing entrepreneurship.

When it comes to entrepreneurship education and support, this paper reflects the findings of Kurowska-Pysz (2014) and Johansen, showing that exposure to training and workshops positively influences young people's perception and readiness. With 60% of Romanian youth surveyed having attended such programs—and over half finding them useful—the value of targeted educational initiatives is strongly reinforced. The demand for practical content such as “step-by-step” guides further supports the need for structured, action-oriented training, as promoted in academic incubator models.

Finally, the research reinforces the literature's emphasis on contextual support systems—such as funding access, mentoring, and policy reform—to reduce bureaucratic obstacles and encourage entrepreneurship. Both sources agree that fostering an entrepreneurial culture requires collaboration between education providers, government institutions, and professional networks.

5. Conclusions

5.1. Summary of the most important findings of the study answering the research question/scope

This study sought to investigate why only a small proportion of Romanian youth start businesses despite showing interest in entrepreneurship, whether they are genuinely interested in the field, and what difficulties they face in accessing it. The key findings indicate that while entrepreneurial interest is relatively high among youth aged 15–35 in Sibiu County (with 83 of 110 expressing interest), only 38 have taken concrete steps toward launching a business. The most frequently cited motivation was economic self-sufficiency, confirming the initial hypothesis.

Barriers identified include limited financial resources, fear of failure, and insufficient knowledge or practical experience. Access to entrepreneurship education and support systems such as workshops and courses appears relatively strong, with 60% participation, and more than half found them useful. However, bureaucratic challenges and a lack of transparent funding programs remain major obstacles.

5.2. Presentation of the significance of the results for the research field

These findings contribute to the growing body of research on entrepreneurial intentions (EI) by reinforcing the idea that a gap persists between interest and action in the Romanian context. The study validates insights from global literature, including those by Kurowska-Pysz, Camino et al., and Gulzar & Fayaz, confirming that both individual competencies and external contextual factors play key roles in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes.

5.3. Perspectives for further research or practical applications

This study opens several avenues for further research and practical intervention. Future research could focus on assessing the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education through longitudinal studies that follow students over time to observe how their entrepreneurial activities evolve after completing training programs. On the practical side, policy makers and educational institutions can utilize these findings to improve the structure and delivery of entrepreneurship programs, ensuring they are more hands-on, accessible, and less hindered by bureaucratic processes. Furthermore, NGOs and business incubators could play a key role by creating mentorship initiatives or structured “step-by-step” guidance models, as suggested by the respondents, to help bridge the gap between entrepreneurial interest and actual business creation among young people.

5.4. Presentation of the significance of the results and their implications

Theoretical Implications

The results confirm existing theoretical models such as integrated models of entrepreneurial intention, emphasizing the influence of self-efficacy, perceived behavioural control, and enabling conditions. This study adds specificity by confirming that even with strong perceived entrepreneurial capability, intention may not always translate into action without external enablers.

Practical Implications

For educators, the findings suggest the need for more applied, experiential learning in business curricula. For policy makers, the demand for financial transparency and bureaucratic simplification calls for immediate reforms. Entrepreneurship support programs should be youth-centred, inclusive, and built around real-world challenges and networks.

5.5. Suggestions of the limitations of the thesis and proposals for future studies

This study presents several limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the research focused exclusively on Sibiu County, which limits the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of Romanian youth. Secondly, the sample was collected through a non-random, convenience-based approach via social media, which may have introduced selection bias by primarily reaching more digitally connected and potentially more interested individuals. Thirdly, the study's cross-sectional design only provides a snapshot of respondents' attitudes and intentions at a single

point in time, making it difficult to assess how these may evolve. For future research, it is recommended to expand the geographic scope to include multiple regions of Romania to allow for comparative analysis across different local contexts. Additionally, longitudinal studies should be conducted to evaluate the long-term impact of entrepreneurship education and support programs. Further exploration is also needed into the gender and socioeconomic disparities that influence entrepreneurial engagement, as well as the role that emerging technologies and digital tools might play in reducing access barriers and enabling more equitable participation in entrepreneurial activities.

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