The Image of an Entrepreneur in Institutional Perception of Modern Students

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Abstract: The formation of entrepreneurship in Russia in its function as a social group is determined by those institutional processes, which appeared in the course of formational changes of the society. Analysis of the theory of entrepreneurship within the framework of sociological concept and empirical studies made it possible to identify the problem of inconsistence of the economic status of entrepreneurship declared by the political institution and the role of entrepreneurs in their function as a social group. The study of the image of entrepreneurs according to the conception of students allowed to identify the types of contemporary images of entrepreneurs: ideal, conventional, rationally practical and mixed. The results of the study indicated that, in the Russian society, there is institutional contradiction between the conception of entrepreneurship from the perspective of an economic person (the official model) and a social person (which is formed in the social consciousness).

Key words: Entrepreneurs • Entrepreneurial activity • Institutionalization • Image • Social portrait • Social type • Students

INTRODUCTION

The process of institutionalization of entrepreneurship is directly related with the how the entrepreneurship concept is understood and what is understood under this definition. It is the conceptual position of the political institution that sets the social vector of choosing this type of activity through the mechanism of law, which leads the society to a specific social and economic result. It is the political institution that acts as the driver according to the opinion of institutional economists [1; 2].

Entrepreneurial activity is determined in the Civil Code as "independent activity, which is conducted at the risk of the entrepreneur and which targets systematic gain of profit from using property, selling goods, fulfilling works, or rendering services by the persons registered as entrepreneurs according to the order prescribed by the law" [3]. Starting from this point, we are now seeing the absurdist theater with the main social roles played by: entrepreneurship in its function as a social process (socio-economic activity), entrepreneurship in its function as a social phenomenon, entrepreneurship in its function as a social group". What is it related to and determined by?

This legal representation of entrepreneurial activity is at variance with the classical definition of entrepreneurship describing it as a social phenomenon, a social process and a social group. The main contradiction lies in the fact that the official Russian concept of entrepreneurial activity is oriented to its functional and economic essence, in which the focus is made to "systematic gain of profit". At that, the classical definition of entrepreneurship suggested in 18th century by the French economist R. Cantillon emphasizes generation of new ideas, development of new products oriented for the good of society, unveiling and application of personal potential of entrepreneurs, i.e. in this case, the socio-functional understanding of the essence of entrepreneurship is the most important [4]. Further development of the theory did not change the basic value-related attributes of entrepreneurship [5, 6, 7, 8]. Entrepreneurship in its function as a social phenomenon leans on such five pillars as: the new (idea, quality, thing, etc.), the risk (social, economic, politic), the profit (the socio-economic effect), the self-fulfillment of a personality (satisfaction with one's place and role in the life) and the social good (usefulness for people).

Therefore, the contradiction between the official politic concept and the social essence of entrepreneurship
generates such a problem as antagonistic opposition of the social and the personal. Therefore, the study of the image of an entrepreneur's personality in the conception of the modern young people in its function as the reflection of this contradiction becomes a question of present interest.

Young people being the most active group of the society are potentially the main reserve for expansion of the entrepreneurial class. The intention of young people to start their own business in the future and conduct it in accordance with certain principles directly depends on what conception of entrepreneurs and their activities have been formed in the young people's minds. The study of the social image of entrepreneurs, which is formed in the minds of young people, will allow to examine comprehensively their conception of entrepreneurs, social dependence and the dependence of the conception on their attitude to entrepreneurial activity.

Is it possible to identify the contradiction using the empirical method? Sociological research dedicated to entrepreneurship is mostly based on the study of the social portrait of entrepreneurs or the attitude of consumers to entrepreneurs as a social group. Socio-marketing research is based on determination of the relationships of "consumers – buyers" and "entrepreneurs – sellers" in the "demand-offer" system. This allows to understand why scientific literature indicates skeptical attitude to empirical studies and defines them as a tool that is not able to identify the social contradiction stated by us.

In this view, it is necessary to distinguish the social image from the social portrait. Social portrait is a kind of an integral image, the source of which the social reality is. However, social portrait is built based in the collected empirical facts on the social object. It directly describes the object, which is the study object. Social image is the conceptions on a social object, which have been diffracted by the subject's consciousness and which fuse into something integral that can be determined as the image. However, social image is also a visual (graphic, integral) reflection of the reality, as particular conceptions do not appear on their own, but they depend on the real nature of the object.

Sociology builds the image concept based on two points:

Image in its function as the reflection of the social reality.

According to the theory of E. Durkheim, image is a reflection of a social fact. The category of social facts, according to Durkheim, is distinguished for very specific properties; "it consists of ways of thinking, activity and feelings, which are outside of an individual and which possess the force of conviction, due to which they are forced on the individual". According to him, these social facts consist of conceptions and actions and exist in collective consciousness [9].

In other words, a person and his knowledge, convictions, conceptions are influenced by social facts, which exist in the society. Following this line of reasoning, the image of a certain social phenomenon is forced on its subject by the society.

The Social Construction of the Reality by T.Lukman and P. Berger determines "reality as a quality typical of phenomena to exist independent from our will and desire (we cannot get rid of them) and knowledge can be determined as assurance in the fact that phenomena are real and have certain specific characteristics" [10]. Therefore, an image can be formed based on the knowledge of the day-to-day life in terms of relevance.

Consequently, we can assume that image is the reflection of that knowledge of the reality, which surrounds a person in his day-to-day life. At the same time, the person is not isolated from the society; he is captured by institutional processes. "Institutionalization takes place wherever various doers perform mutual typification of habitual actions. In other words, any such typification is an institution" [10, pp.93].

Social institutions "control human behavior by setting its predetermined patterns, which direct the behavior in one of theoretically possible directions" [10]. Following this line of reasoning, we can state that social reality is a variety of images. At that, "on the one hand, we can state that certain relevances (i.e. interests and preferences) will be common for all members of the given community. On the other hand, many spheres of behavior are relevant only for some of the types. This means that at least differentiation of methods takes place, by means of which relatively stable values are assigned to these types" [10, p. 107].

Image as a kind of an ideal model, an ideal type.

According to the concept of M. Weber, an ideal type is the display of the particular interest of the epoch, construction of thought, particular theoretical scheme, which, strictly speaking, cannot be extracted from the empirical reality. "This construction in its essence is of Utopian nature as it is built by mental amplification of certain elements of the reality" [11]. This means that an image can be formed under the influence of ideal characteristics assigned to the object.
Therefore, an image is a kind of a subjective model of the reality, of a certain social object, which model is formed based on the objective reality, receiving into itself both existing and attributed ideal characteristics of the object, as well as subjective factors related to the subject of the reflection – the personality. At that, image is set of object, as well as subjective factors related to the subject scientific literature, first of all, allowed to identify a certain both existing and attributed ideal characteristics of the social group and their typical attributes represented in formed based on the objective reality, receiving into itself The analysis of entrepreneurs in their function as a social object, which model is principle of types' classification.

Therefore, the study of conceptions (the image) of an object along with the object itself can also characterize the society itself and reveal typical features of various social groups with respect to the object.

Typification of the Image of an Entrepreneur: The social consciousness has a certain stereotypical image of an entrepreneur, rather stable and formed under the influence of social institutions: family, traditions and customs, religion, profession, production and policy. Parents, mass media, school and friends act in this case as social guides and make the experience of many people identical to each other, because they form the stereotypical image of the entrepreneur's personality, his way of life and his behavior model. At the same time, young people reconsider the social image of an entrepreneur during the process of socialization, as if they are trying this image on. This allows to form their subjective attitude to the role and position of entrepreneurs, in their function as a social group, in the social relations. Therefore, it may be said that there are various types of social images of entrepreneurs in the conception of the modern young people.

The image of an entrepreneur, which is formed in the minds of young people, is determined also by the objectively existing characteristics of the social group of entrepreneurs and its particular representatives. The classification of types of entrepreneurs is represented in scientific works by such authors as J. Schumpeter, I. Kirzner, T.I. Zaslavskaya, G.V. Razinsky and V.V. Radaev. Existence of a certain type of entrepreneurs contributes to formation of certain image type in the conception of young people,

The following principles were used as the basis of the given classifications: 1) the entrepreneurship in its function as a social phenomenon; 2) the entrepreneurs in their function as a social group; 3) the entrepreneurial activity in its function as a social process.

For the purpose of our study, we selected the social image of the entrepreneur's personality in the conception of the modern young people to be the principle of types' classification.

The analysis of entrepreneurs in their function as a social group and their typical attributes represented in scientific literature, first of all, allowed to identify a certain set of ideal social characteristics, which can be formed in the conceptions of young people: the ability to foresee changes and assume the risk in the circumstances of social, economic and political uncertainty; the strive for innovations, development and implementation of innovative projects and creative work; the desire to be useful for the society; the strive for success in the competition; the ability to take efficient managerial decisions, the ability to convince and efficiently manage other people using the example of oneself; the strive for success and high income, which is the criterion of success of the conducted activity; the strive for satisfaction of consumer demand; the entrepreneurial spirit and intelligence, the strive for gaining new knowledge; the personal energy and the will to act; the strive for spiritual freedom; the persistence and the stability; the strive for doing one's favorite job according to one's interests and attitude; and such qualities as diligence, mercy, responsibility, self-discipline and self-control.

Secondly, the image of an entrepreneur can be formed through the conventional attitude to entrepreneurs in the society [12]. A negative image, according to T.A. Melekhina, A.S. Belokonova and O.Y. Ozherelyeva, is fluctuated less by the image itself and more by the imaginary simulative attitude to this social group. Therefore, the research of the real image of an entrepreneur in the eyes of young people becomes important, as it allows to identify the nature of the influence of traditional culture on the professional choice of young people.

Thirdly, practical interest prevails in the reality, as evidenced by the studies of S.V. Konovalov and G.V. Razinsky [13]. This aspect, in particular, is promoted by the Russian legislation, which does not contain such an important element of entrepreneurship as the necessity to combine personal benefits and social usefulness. This type of entrepreneurs conduct their business with the purpose of implementing their personalized interests and satisfy their personalized demand, which results in treating the work as a form of employment.

Thus, the empirical studies show that the social portrait of entrepreneurs in real life is of contradictory and questionable nature, which affects the formation of an appropriate image of entrepreneurs. The ideal constructions of social, cultural and economic behavior,
associated with entrepreneurship, on the one hand dissolve in the cultural, ethnic and moral diversity of personality types and on the other hand are determined by the life conditions and the business environment conditions (socio-economic, socio-political, territory-related, ecological, etc.).

**Institutional Perception of the Image of an Entrepreneur by Students:** The completeness of the image of an entrepreneur reveals itself through those social characteristics of a personality, which mirror the nature of the entrepreneurial culture, the entrepreneurial ethics, the entrepreneurial qualities, the entrepreneurial spirit and the entrepreneurial behavior. Reflection of these characteristics in the image of an entrepreneur is diffracted by the culture of the entrepreneur, his morality and social qualities, which he demonstrates in his entrepreneurial activity and this contributes to formation of the young people's vision of the entrepreneurial spirit. This all directly influences the behavior of the entrepreneur. As a result, young people create a certain image of the personality of a modern entrepreneur.

Therefore, an important point of the research is the young people's conception of the entrepreneur's personality, including:

- Value priorities, labor values and motives of the particular activity selection by the entrepreneurs;
- Socio-psychological traits of the entrepreneur's personality, traits of the entrepreneurial spirit;
- Attitude of the entrepreneurs to profit in its function as a social value and purpose of entrepreneurial activity;
- Attitude of entrepreneurs to consumers.

The study of the entrepreneur's personality image, which has formed in the minds of young people, allows, firstly, to represent the social types of entrepreneurs, which are the most common in the Russian society; and secondly, to understand how a particular type influences the formation of the attitude with respect to entrepreneurial activity.

The extent of readiness of young people to assume the role of an entrepreneur with all associated obligations and responsibility can be broken up in three elements: emotional, cognitive and pragmatic: 1) the emotional attitude to this type of activities will influence the readiness of a young person to assume the entrepreneur's role; 2) the understanding and realization of the social role of an entrepreneur to a certain extent will also influence the choice and readiness to play this role in the society; 3) the proper attitude and the readiness to real social behavior determines the orientedness to entrepreneurial activity and readiness of young people to assume the role of an entrepreneur.

The performed analysis of the problem allowed us to develop the following types of the image of an entrepreneur (the classification principle is based on students' particular conception of entrepreneurs and their activity): conventional, ideal and rationally pragmatic. We also separated the mixed type, which included students whose vision of entrepreneurship is undetermined, i.e. they cannot be associated with any of the developed types.

The *ideal type* was developed based on the concept of entrepreneurs who, according to Weber, are of the Utopian type. At the same time, our effort to separate this type empirically showed that this image exists with students, though it is not typical of them. At that, representatives of this type are more prone to mark the socially ideal orientedness of the entrepreneurial activity ("the benefit provided to people", "an opportunity to participate in the life of the society more extensively", etc.). It also needs to be noted that this type is more typical for the circumstances of a large city of regional importance. This indicates the fact that city subculture influences the formation of new progressive types of personalities to a higher degree.

The *conventional type* developed based on the historically negative perception of entrepreneurs in the Russian culture and, consequently, negative attitude to them. In the circumstances of transformation of the Russian society, such attitude still exists even among such a mobile and dynamic group as young students. However, we can state that there is a tendency for its change, as students of this type have positive characteristics with respect to the entrepreneur's personality and show positive attitude to entrepreneurial activity. This, first of all, refers to their intelligence. Also the importance of universal human values in the structure of life goals of entrepreneurs is noted, a focus on respecting the people around is made, as it is one of the incentives for choosing entrepreneurial activity. However, financial prosperity maintains its valuable status. Among representatives of this type, there are many students who plan to conduct entrepreneurial activity in the future. This indicates the fact that in the current context, certain cultural changes occur in the consciousness of young people, which changes mostly concern conventional attitude.
The rationally pragmatic type was developed in the circumstances of the reality of the Russian society; and it is an image, which reflects all socio-cultural and socio-economic changes. This type shows no traditionalism with respect to entrepreneurs, but, at the same time, it has certain ideal characteristics, which are combined with the realia of the current stage of socio-economic development. This manifested itself in the attitude to creative work, which is understood as an essential quality in the life of entrepreneurs along with material values and career.

The mixed type is similar to the conventional type for its nature; still it shows more neutrality with respect to the problem under study. At that, such persons, if compared to others, show more negative attitude to entrepreneurs.

**Summary:** In general, students show positive attitude to entrepreneurship. The majority of them, despite their type, find it a prestige type of activity. Half of the students intend to conduct entrepreneurial activity in the future and this equally refers to representatives of all types.

This problem has not been sufficiently studied yet; it requires further research. At that, this concerns not only the study of the image existing with the students and young people as a whole, but also with other social groups in our society, as it will allow to draw a more complete picture of the entrepreneur's image existing in the collective consciousness, to compare groups and reveal the problems at the level of the society, in general.

The concept of entrepreneurial activity formulated by the Civil Code differs from the young people's vision of the role and the position of entrepreneurship in the modern society. Young people do not only review entrepreneurial activity from the perspective of rationally pragmatic attitude to life, they are prone to certain canonization of this type of activities. Consequently, the law on entrepreneurial activity is oriented to people of economic nature in the entrepreneurial activity and students are oriented to people of social nature.

**REFERENCES**