E-ISSN: 2360 – 6754; ISSN-L: 2360 – 6754

**European Journal of Law and Public
Administration**

2017, Volume 4, Issue 1, pp.78-84

<https://doi.org/10.18662/eljpa/08>

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WITHIN THE SMES SECTOR IN ROMANIA**

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Covered in:

**CEEOL, Ideas RePeC, EconPapers, Socionet,
HeinOnline**

Published by:

Lumen Publishing House

On behalf of:

**Stefan cel Mare University from Suceava, Faculty of Law and
Administrative Sciences, Department of Law and Administrative
Sciences**

How to cite: Morariu, A. (2017). Dimensions Regarding the Aspect “Women as Entrepreneurs / Managers” within the SMES Sector in Romania. *European Journal of Law and Public Administration*, 4(1), 78-84.

DIMENSIONS REGARDING THE ASPECT “WOMEN AS ENTREPRENEURS / MANAGERS” WITHIN THE SMES SECTOR IN ROMANIA

Alunica MORARIU¹

Abstract:

We focus in this paper on certain aspects of interest regarding the “female - entrepreneur / manager” hypostasis in the Romanian social and economic environment. For this purpose, we resort to the literature in the field, as well as to various reports issued by prestigious specialised institutions referring to indicators or other types of data, to which we also point. Through our findings and remarks, we wish to bring through the present approach a useful contribution to the thematic research in this specific field, meeting the attention of those interested in this issue.

Keywords:

business environment, entrepreneurial / managerial typology, female entrepreneurs, SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises).

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1. A SENSITIVE THEME: WHO HAS BIGGER TRUMPS, THE MAN-ENTREPRENEUR OR THE FEMALE-ENTREPRENEUR?

Definitely, in the current era we are living in, the gender of the individual becomes less and less considered as an impediment to the pursuit of socio-professional activities, whatever they may be. Today, we see women in professional situations, which were unimaginable in other times of history: astronauts, generals in terrestrial forces, admirals on warships, hunting pilots in the civil aviation, entrepreneurs / managers of top companies etc.

However, for certain reasons, when it comes to the female entrepreneurs, they find themselves in a clear minority as compared to the number of male entrepreneurs who act in the domestic business environment.

Although at present it is no longer firmly argued that through the masculin qualities men are more suitable for entrepreneurship / leadership / management [3], [8], still, it is appreciated that the minority is due to the tendency that women have to assume roles in home care, raising and educating children, caring for parents, etc.

Regarding the influence of the culture over the entrepreneurs, from this perspective - masculinity / femininity, "Romania has been and remains a country whose culture is oriented towards masculinity. In the Romanian culture, men make the important decisions and hold jobs with power and authority to a greater extent than women do. Romania is the country of a patriarchal society in which women, viewed first and foremost as mothers and wives receive less important positions outside their homes. Men usually have the authority in the family and feel stronger the responsibility to support their family" [4].

Moreover, the placement of the family before the business career, beyond the cultural [9] or financial [2] obstacles, is explained by the fact that the offer for certain services - child care and education, catering, cleaning, etc. - is still deficient.

In our opinion, with regard to any of the psychological characteristics and knowledge required by the quality of entrepreneur - whatever the type may be (Quadrant 1), one person belonging to one gender or the other cannot be considered to have a higher degree of trumps.

Quadrant 1. Entrepreneurial typology

<p>► The entrepreneur – manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ has appreciable qualities and managerial preparation;▪ likes to lead his employees, aiming toward the development of the enterprise;▪ assigns time and resources to convince potential clients to buy the products of his company;▪ encourages the staff to build and develop a carrier within the company;▪ insists on eliminating the cultural differences among the individuals.
<p>► The entrepreneur – of personal success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ assigns large amounts of time to the business;▪ strongly believes in himself and in what he does;▪ searches to learn as much as possible about his own business;▪ uses planning techniques;▪ rapidly reacts to the changes of the environment;▪ possesses a great capacity to solve problems;▪ reacts well under crises.
<p>► The entrepreneur – as “super seller”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ is permanently preoccupied to sell;▪ is concentrated on what and how he sells;▪ never quits selling;▪ appeals to others to run the current affairs of the company;▪ finds important the human relations and team work.
<p>► The entrepreneur – as expert, ideas generator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ has enough knowledge in a certain field to be considered an “expert”;▪ has the “liberty” to innovate and implement his own ideas;▪ gives attention to attracting individuals with complementary qualities to his own, in order to complete a new idea;▪ dedicates his energy to obtain the necessary support to implement a new idea.

Adaptation after: [5: pp. 54-67]

On the other hand, it must be acknowledged that men are more inclined to take on the difficult affairs/business, to confront each other more harshly, because “conducting a personal business involves daily struggle not only at the risk of financial failure but also with the fatigue and the stress associated with the efforts to make the business into a profitable one” [4].

However, with the implementation in the production and services of the elements of technical progress found in the Western world also in

Romania there have been changes and in the future, the business opportunities for women will be expanded. Especially if we think that the sphere of services, in which women frequently affirm themselves, has a relatively high pace of development.

2. THE PLACE HELD BY THE FEMALE ENTREPRENEUR / MANAGER IN ROMANIAN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

In Romania, only 40% of small and medium-sized enterprises have women as a managers or majority shareholders (although the female population is predominant, with a male ratio of about 95.5 males per 100 females) and the firms act in the field of consulting and commerce [7].

According to the same source, the portrait of the native business woman (exclusively employed) shows that “she is aged 35 - 50; university educated, lives in the city, and is focused on commerce”.

Data from BCR and Erste Asset Management [1] reveal other important aspects: (i) - women (who own one third of SMEs in Romania) are more conservative than men in selecting the type of investment, focusing on low-risk funds (64 000 women have invested in bond funds and the financial market, 4% more than the men); (ii) - women often choose to open a business in the area of trade (pharmacies, grocery stores and clothing) and services (business consultancy, beauty salons); (iii) - women choose to place money in investment funds in a significantly higher proportion than men (50.5% women, 49.5% men).

By going over the data in the most well-known paper in the field of SMEs (The White Charter of Romanian SMEs in 2016), issued annually by the National Council of Small and Medium-sized Private Enterprises in Romania, “which highlights the quantitative and qualitative situation, trends, business perception and is a basis for policy proposals on future directions of support and development of the Romanian business environment.” [6], we also find out some interesting facts about the female - entrepreneur.

The scientific character resides on the fact that all conclusions are based on an investigated sample representative for Romania - 1096 entrepreneurs from all categories of SMEs located in the eight development regions.

Here are, for example, some characteristics of the Romanian entrepreneurs: “according to the groups of age, the highest percentages are held by entrepreneurs between 45 to 60 years (37.49%) and those between

35 to 45 years (33.79%) and at the opposite end there are the people under 25 years (1.04%). Also, the average age of entrepreneurs is: 44.43 years at the sample level, 45.10 years for male entrepreneurs and 42.93 years for female entrepreneurs”(Nicolescu, 2016).

At the level of year 2016, the classification of the entrepreneurs according to the sex shows the predominance of male entrepreneurs (69.71%), (Figure 1).

Figure 1. The structure based on sex of entrepreneurs

Source: http://www.aippimm.ro/files/articles_files/57/6521/carta-alba-a-imm-urilor-din-romania-2016.pdf

Then, since only a quarter of all European entrepreneurs are women, the gender structure in Romania appears to be more balanced.

The authors of the paper we have referred to predict a higher degree of capitalizing on the potential of women in the future, by reference to what takes place in the EU or the US, taking into consideration the current prevailing share of women in Romania – of about 51% of the population.

From an analysis of SMEs according to the gender of entrepreneurs (Table 1) it results that firms whose entrepreneurs are women have a slightly higher share among those with much better performances (2.11%) and respectively with results similarities (65.96%).

Table 1. Evolution of performance in 2016 compared to 2015 by the gender of the entrepreneur

<i>No</i>	<i>SMEs performances in 2016 as compared to 2015</i>	<i>Gender of entrepreneur</i>	
		<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
1	Much better	2,11 %	1,31 %
2	Better	21,69 %	22,64 %
3	Identical	65,96 %	64,27 %
4	Slightly poorer	5,42 %	6,28 %
5	Much poorer	4,82 %	5,50 %

Source: http://www.aippimm.ro/files/articles_files/57/6521/carta-alba-a-imm-urilor-din-romania-2016.pdf

Finally, after recalling some favourable aspects clearly outlined in relation to the entrepreneur, we recall that the aforementioned study also puts together a sketch of the Romanian entrepreneur.

But it does not refer to a feminine figure. More specifically, the description recalls that it is “mature person, with economic and tehnical training, male, married, with children, university graduate, with an average seniority of 10.28 years as entrepreneur, with high level studies, unic shareholder, who allocates, daily, more than 8 hours to the business and who does not involve family members in the company’s activity” [6].

3. CONCLUSIONS

Representing the real engine for any competitive economy, the entrepreneur and all of his problematic range deserve further investigation.

This is all the more so as, from one stage to the next, things evolve with a special dynamics in this aspect. Only from the perspective of our interest, the profile of the national entrepreneur - the real promoter of change and the true creator of economic substance - undergoes visible changes over time, increasing, among other things, the percentage of women as well as that of young people and above all, of those with academic background, etc.

Even though currently in Romania small and medium-sized enterprises created by women have a relatively small share (about 30%), there is potential for expansion on this sector, as women represent over 51% of the population.

That is why we estimate that future research will reveal much higher indicators in all chapters regarding the role and importance of the woman entrepreneur / manager in Romanian small and medium-sized enterprises.

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