land

Article

Exploring the Link Between Openness and Entrepreneurial Capacity in Young People: Building Resilient and Sustainable Rural Territories

Aleksandra S. Dragin [1,2], Tamara Surla [1], Maja Mijatov Ladičorbić [1,*], Tamara Jovanović [1], Zrinka Zadel [3], Milena Nedeljković-Knežević [1], Aleksandra Tešin [1], Juan Manuel Amezcua-Ogáyar [2], Alberto Calahorro-López [2], Kristina Košić [1], Vladimir Stojanović [1], Anđelija Ivkov-Džigurski [1], Danijel Pavlović [4] and Živorad Vasić [4]

[1] Faculty of Sciences, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, University of Novi Sad, 21000 Novi Sad, Serbia; aleksandra.dragin@dgt.uns.ac.rs or sadragin@gmail.com (A.S.D.); tamara.bozovic@dgt.uns.ac.rs (T.S.); tamara.jovanovic@dgt.uns.ac.rs (T.J.); milena.nedeljkovic@dgt.uns.ac.rs (M.N.-K.); aleksandra.tesin@dgt.uns.ac.rs (A.T.); kristina.kosic@dgt.uns.ac.rs (K.K.); vladimir.stojanovic@dgt.uns.ac.rs (V.S.); andjelija.ivkov@dgt.uns.ac.rs (A.I.-D.)
[2] Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Department of Business Organization, Marketing and Sociology, University of Jaén, Campus Las Lagunillas, 23071 Jaén, Spain; jamezcua@ujaen.es (J.M.A.-O.); acalahor@ujaen.es (A.C.-L.)
[3] Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, University of Rijeka, 51410 Opatija, Croatia; zrinka.zadel@fthm.hr
[4] Academy of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness, 11070 Belgrade, Serbia; dpavlovic@akademijahtw.rs (D.P.); zivorad.vasic@kadena.rs (Ž.V.)
* Correspondence: majam@dgt.uns.ac.rs; Tel.: +381-64-2036990

Abstract: Youth migration has significant consequences that lead to depopulation and less sustainability of local business, which is particularly pronounced in rural areas. All of this contributes to the potential devastation of rural communities, an impact that could be highly significant and far-reaching. Entrepreneurship and the innovation it brings with it can be important markers for effective rural development if changes are needed. Therefore, the primary objectives of our research were to determine how socio-demographic factors determine the attitudes of young rural people regarding openness to entrepreneurship, whether young rural people believe they have the ability to engage in entrepreneurship and take actionable steps, and what is the relationship between openness and entrepreneurial capacity. The research was conducted from December 2023 to May 2024 among 299 participants in rural areas of two neighboring countries, Serbia and Croatia. The results indicate various factors that influence rural youth's openness to entrepreneurship, such as unemployment, age and country of origin. Also, the results show a positive correlation between openness to entrepreneurship and the perception of personal capacities for entrepreneurial activities. In addition, the study found significant differences between respondents from Serbia and Croatia in the assessment of personal capacities for entrepreneurial activities. The results of this research contribute to a deeper understanding of how young people perceive and experience life in rural areas, and highlight potential challenges related to their specific needs. This insight enables key stakeholders to design programs that support youth in starting businesses and sustaining entrepreneurial ventures. Furthermore, the study offers both a theoretical and practical basis for future research, serving as a valuable guide for the improvement of rural communities, that is, guidelines for strategies that focus on inclusive development based on the revitalization of social frameworks.

Keywords: rural development; local community involvement; sustainable economics; entrepreneurship; young rural people; rural management

check for updates

Citation: Dragin, A.S.; Surla, T.; Ladičorbić, M.M.; Jovanović, T.; Zadel, Z.; Nedeljković-Knežević, M.; Tešin, A.; Amezcua-Ogáyar, J.M.; Calahorro-López, A.; Košić, K.; et al. Exploring the Link Between Openness and Entrepreneurial Capacity in Young People: Building Resilient and Sustainable Rural Territories. *Land* **2024**, *13*, 1827. https://doi.org/10.3390/land13111827

Academic Editors: André Samora-Arvela and Hossein Azadi

Received: 26 September 2024
Revised: 31 October 2024
Accepted: 2 November 2024
Published: 3 November 2024

1. Introduction

Growing youth migration and rural poverty are two of the most important issues facing developing economies [1]. The consequences of the migration of young people due to the need for higher education or a better standard of living lead to the disintegration of rural communities, less sustainability of local businesses and lower quality of life, which later results in the devastation of the countryside, which can be epoch-making [2].

The policy emphasis on regional economic growth and infrastructure development, while important, is seen as insufficient to address the deeper, underlying causes of socio-economic disparities [3]. These causes often include complex, systemic issues such as inequality in education, healthcare and employment opportunities, which cannot be fully addressed by infrastructure alone. As a result, the policy is far from responding to the deep-rooted economic and social challenges faced by many "backward" areas, leading to continued struggles and unmet needs.

Economic considerations, such as employment possibilities and income level, have historically determined the direction of population migration, particularly among young people [4]. Young people's emigration is a major problem that requires attention, and encouraging them to search for economic prospects in their rural areas of residence is especially crucial to the sustainability of those communities [2].

Rural depopulation has become a global problem. Therefore, research on this topic must be carried out continuously. According to Gao and Wu [5]: "Rural areas and the rural way of life have gone through a global crisis in recent years especially in developing countries; traditional agriculture and rural culture have been disappearing or undergoing assimilation through urbanization". Furthermore, rural areas are confronting several demographic challenges, including depopulation. These trends, along with an aging population, are expected to have significant social and economic consequences on both national and regional levels in Europe and around the globe. This will likely affect the ability of governments to generate tax revenue, maintain balanced finances and provide sufficient pensions and healthcare services in rural areas [6]. "The exodus of young and highly qualified workers further hinders the economic performances of rural regions. Indeed, the rise of unemployment in Southern European countries drives away skilled labor usually to the most competitive areas in the new knowledge economy, which are concentrated in cities and in North-West Europe. Again, this trend sustains a downward spiral which decreases the overall appeal of rural regions in the south. . ." [7]. Bearing this in mind, the authors of this paper conducted research in two neighboring European countries, in the southeast of that continent.

According to the most recent data on the EU population from 2021, 29.6% of the population resides in rural areas, a decrease from 30.3% in 2011, representing a decline of 2.6 million people. Between 2019 and 2022, the population aged 65 and older in rural regions grew by 1.1% (approximately 840,000 individuals), while the younger and working-age populations declined. Although the average age of the EU population is rising, rural areas are experiencing a faster rate of aging due to lower natural growth and net migration [8].

The highest rates of depopulation were observed in rural areas of Croatia [9]. This study specifically examines the attitudes of young people toward their position in rural areas of Croatia and the neighboring country of Serbia (Figure 1), where dramatic demographic changes are currently under way, as highlighted by the latest census [10–12].

The Republic of Serbia is located in the center of the Balkan Peninsula, with a population of 6.7 million, according to the most recent census (2022). In terms of age structure, Serbia has reached the bottom level of the demographic age stage, as evidenced by the following data: average age 43.9 years, 19.4% of people under 20 years old, 43% of people under 40 years old and 29.2% of people older than 60 years, and the aging index (60+/0–19) is 150.1 [9]. The Republic of Croatia is situated at the crossroads of Central and Southeastern Europe, with access to the Adriatic Sea. According to the latest census (2021), the population of Croatia is 3.9 million inhabitants. Similarly to Serbia, in 2021, Croatia was experiencing a continuous aging of the population. The average age in 2021 was 44.3 years

and the structure by age groups was as follows: 24.54% of people under 24 years old, 11.40% of people under 34 years old, 41.61% of people under 64 years old and 22.45% of people older than 64 years [13].

Figure 1. Location of the two case study countries (Serbia and Croatia).

Among the key problems of both countries is uneven regional development caused by uneven economic development and poor infrastructure, which results in depopulation. Depopulation occurs primarily in rural areas, where young people migrate to urban centers or other countries. The contingent of the young population is the basis of sustainable demographic development and the backbone of the biological, economic and social development of a society (state). As they point out in republic institutes of statistics in Serbia and Croatia, in addition to the further decrease in the number of inhabitants, the low and negative rate of natural increase and emigration of the young population will primarily affect the "quality" of certain functional contingents of the population. In Serbia and Croatia, there is a constant decrease in the young population, especially in rural areas, where, on the other hand, there are numerous comparative advantages [10–12].

Therefore, the valorization of various resources is needed in order to propose solutions for improving the position of young people and keeping them in the countryside, for attracting young families who have or do not have a connection with the area they inhabit and finally for preventing the extinction of the village, which is the main purpose of the research of this paper.

1.1. Study Background

Due to the growing younger population migration that coincides with demographic changes, rural economies are typically constrained by a lack of investments and a labor shortage [14]. Corresponding to the above, numerous rural economies depend on the growth of agriculture as a traditional way to provide existence in the village, and when they choose to change, they are prepared to depart from the conventional approach to rural development [15]. Entrepreneurship and the innovations it brings with it might be important markers for effective rural development if changes are needed [16]. New business models and values that are important to the community's economy can be developed through entrepreneurship, which will improve rural communities' quality of life in a number of aspects [17].

The academic literature has given much attention to the topic of entrepreneurship, which has been shown to have a positive effect on local economies [18,19]. As such, it may be a good option for young people seeking to optimize their potential when choosing a career. Human capital and the features of the rural area where it is based are the main factors influencing the growth of entrepreneurship in rural areas [20]. According to Brixiová et al. [21], young people who take part in entrepreneurial activities have a substantially stronger impact on entrepreneurship and rural development.

Nowadays, it is assumed that entrepreneurship can be a significant way to revitalize small rural communities, especially when those areas are struggling more economically and undergoing a decline in population [2,22]. According to Gómez-Araujo et al. [23], there can be a wide range of significant benefits to entrepreneurship in rural areas. For instance, through launching innovations, creating new jobs [4,24] and ensuring the appropriate use of rural resources [25], entrepreneurship can considerably reduce issues like rural poverty [26].

Traditionally, agriculture has been the main generator of rural economic development. The growth of entrepreneurship provides these areas with an alternative that promises to boost local knowledge, create jobs and draw in new residents. This encourages the rural economy to continue growing but in a different direction [27,28]. Prior studies validate the favorable effects of entrepreneurship in several domains. In their study, Berglund et al. [29] demonstrate how entrepreneurship affects the development and evolution of a destitute rural community undergoing change.

Rural areas can have numerous advantages that can contribute to attracting and retaining the working age population, especially young people who have the potential to become entrepreneurs. Many benefits that come with living in a rural region might help draw and keep people throughout their working years, particularly young people with the ability to start their own businesses. These villages enjoy abundant natural and cultural resources from outside sources, as well as the ability to start new businesses with less capital, more readily access potential clients and less rivalry because of their tiny market [2].

Rural areas are mostly left by young people, which, as Mitrović [30] points out, is the face of the world's demographic and sociological veranda. Therefore, it is necessary to plan rural development on the basis of interdisciplinary research, which can be influenced to some extent by complex population policies and supported by appropriate policy measures. This paper will study the cause-and-effect relationships of representatives of young local communities regarding their openness and entrepreneurial capacity, formulating the development possibilities of rural areas. The situation requires an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach, which will be achieved in this work.

Young Entrepreneurs

According to Gaidhani et al. [31], members of Generation Z comprise more than 30% of the employed population [32], and by 2050, youth (those between the ages of 15 and 24) are expected to account for 1.3 billion of the projected 9 billion people on the planet [33,34]. This indicates that we ought to learn more about how to fully understand youth [35–37]. As a result, the primary focus of this study is on the target group of young people, who are citizens of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Croatia.

Young people's innovative thoughts and expertise provide a major role in rural development, particularly in small rural areas [4]. As a result, youth entrepreneurship is recognized as an essential component in the growth and renewal of local communities [38]. Because there are so many options open to them currently, young people have been increasingly motivated to launch small enterprises in recent years. Some of the primary factors that encourage young people to choose entrepreneurship are the desire for success as a social motivator, professional career growth, entrepreneurial ambitions and the desire to make a profit [39,40]. Even though they are frequently just starting out in their current positions, young people who choose to pursue entrepreneurship have the benefit of assuming

less personal risk [41]. Additionally, it has been observed that young individuals in rural areas who pursue entrepreneurship are more likely than their non-participating peers to be risk-takers [25]. According to Minola et al. [42], youth have a significant advantage over the elderly due to their greater education, extensive understanding of modern technological advances and abundance of information. Furthermore, it is predicted that the younger generation is more likely than the older one to aspire to start their own business [43].

A future successful entrepreneur must be adaptive to new information in addition to the previously listed benefits, according to the literature [44]. Openness and an enthusiasm for entrepreneurship in young people make it easier for them to adjust to market changes, competition and the comprehension and application of innovations [45]. This is an excellent foundation for becoming a successful entrepreneur. Youth who are open to novel experiences tend to be more creative, curious and engaged in exploring new avenues for learning and growth [46]. Being open to new experiences has been shown to have a major impact on entrepreneurial ambitions [47]. As such, it is crucial for young people to have this quality.

Due to the types of socio-cultural characteristics of the people who live in rural communities, it frequently happens that entrepreneurial activity is lower in rural areas [48]. Previous research indicates that certain social and demographic characteristics affect entrepreneurial intentions [49–51] and that there is a relationship between personality traits and future entrepreneurial intentions [52,53]. The probability that young people will be open to starting their own business in the future may be strongly correlated with their intentions. For instance, it is claimed that men are more likely than women to possess entrepreneurial traits [54]. Other research [55,56] that shows men are more inclined than women to pursue entrepreneurship support these findings. However, other research has revealed that, for instance, perceptions of entrepreneurship are the same for men and women [57]. Similarly, a young person's prior employment experience may also have an impact on their desire for and openness to entrepreneurship [58–60]. According to Ahmed et al. [61], having prior work experience or having experienced entrepreneurship in the past positively influences the propensity to pursue entrepreneurship. Successful entrepreneurship requires certain traits, like self-assurance, being accomplishment oriented, having a need to show oneself, independence, risk-taking or dominance [62]. The environment in which an individual lives, the business climate in their community and the general status of the economy—which can particularly impact younger generations—can all have an impact on an individual's decision to pursue entrepreneurship and their ability to succeed at it [19].

Prior studies have concentrated primarily on the potential for entrepreneurship in rural communities [63], rural entrepreneurship [27,64,65] and the role of human capital in rural development [4]. Research on the points of view of young people who have taken part in entrepreneurship [2,15,25,66] as well as those who return to rural areas in order to pursue tourism entrepreneurship [67] occupy an important part of the literature. There are still a lot of crucial scientific gaps in the literature, despite the fact that studies [19,23,35] have been conducted on the subject of what influences young people's decisions to pursue entrepreneurship. A previous study on potential entrepreneurs and their connections with entrepreneurial capacity and openness toward innovation was conducted in a former Yugoslav republic, Slovenia [68]. The results revealed that an individual's decision to become an entrepreneur in Slovenia is positively correlated with entrepreneurial awareness and willingness to try new products/services, while the correlation is negative in the case of risk aversion. In addition, significant guidelines and platforms have been made available toward enhancing the potential of youth entrepreneurship, particularly in developing countries [69].

Nevertheless, there is a gap in the literature on how young people from rural areas of Serbia and Croatia perceive their openness and entrepreneurial potential.

Thus, the primary objectives of this research were to determine (1) how young rural people's attitudes regarding openness to entrepreneurship are determined by socio-

demographic factors, (2) whether or not young rural people believe they have the capacity to engage in entrepreneurship and take actionable steps and (3) what the relationship is between openness and entrepreneurial capacity. Finding out whether a young rural individual's openness or capacity for entrepreneurship is influenced by their country of origin was another objective. Young people who reside in rural areas of the neighboring countries (Republic of Serbia and Republic of Croatia) participated in the survey. Research on this subject and in this field has not yet been carried out. Thus, the research's outcomes contribute to understanding youth perceptions and highlight possible problems related to youth needs in rural areas. Based on this information, key stakeholders may then create programs that assist young people in launching businesses and continuing their entrepreneurial endeavors. In addition, this study provides a theoretical and practical foundation for future research and can act as a guide for the advancement of rural communities in these two countries.

This study was focused on the unique context of young representatives of the local communities in rural areas and their openness and entrepreneurial capacity. In having this focus, this study seeks to shed light on the complexities of community perspectives, offering insights that can inform policymakers, planners and community leaders in their pursuit of sustainable and local rural community-centric practices. Accordingly, the following research questions were posed in the paper based on the goals of the research (Figure 2):

- **RQ1:** What is the impact of demographic characteristics and the country of origin on the openness to entrepreneurship of young rural people?
- **RQ2:** To what degree do young rural people in Serbia and Croatia differ in their perspectives about their capacity for entrepreneurship?
- **RQ3:** How do young rural people's capacity for entrepreneurial activities and their openness to entrepreneurship relate to one another?

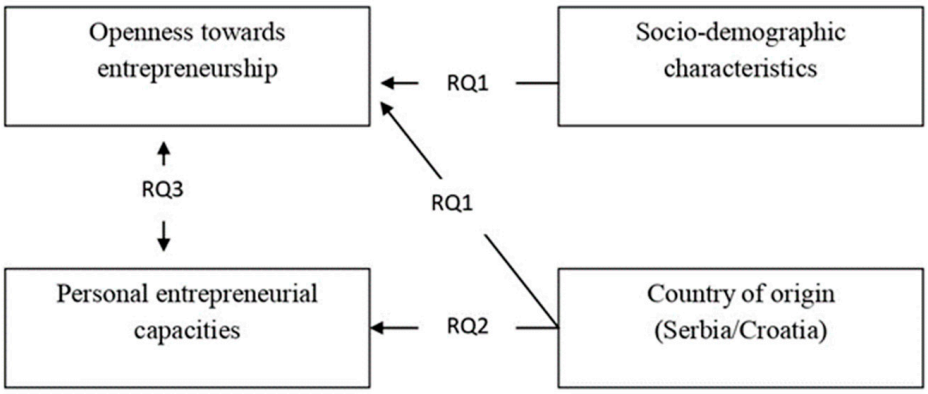

Figure 2. Research framework.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Instrument and Procedure

The research was conducted through a questionnaire consisting of two parts. The first part was about the respondent's socio-demographic characteristics, including gender, age, education, income, employment and marital status. The second segment of the questionnaire measured respondents' openness towards entrepreneurship through 5 items and their capacity for entrepreneurial activities through 13 items using the Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EIQ). The research instrument was a survey, taken from the authors Liñán and Chen [70], which was then adapted to the needs of the research. The detailed process of creating and validating the used EIQ questionnaire is explained in the paper of Liñán and Chen [68] and validated in the research of Kolvereid [71], Krueger et al. [72], Venciana et al. [73] and Dragin et al. [35]. A 5-point Likert scale was used to rate the level of agreement with each statement (1—strongly disagree; 5—strongly agree).

At the very end of the questionnaire, the authors added a question related to the research of respondents' attitudes towards the possible unsuccessful implementation of their ideas in the business environment.

Principal component analysis (SPSS 23.0) was used.

2.2. Data Collection

A quantitative research approach was used in order to collect the necessary data. The research was conducted from December 2023 to May 2024 in two neighboring countries, Serbia and Croatia. The research involved young people (older than 18) and residents of rural, underdeveloped areas of both countries. The questionnaires were distributed through specialized marketing research agencies. The authors provided the agencies with the desired sample characteristics, and they contacted respondents who fulfilled the requirements. Respondents filled out questionnaires using the classic paper–pen method, and a total of 299 valid surveys was collected. All the participants were informed about the purpose of the study and that being part of it was completely voluntary and anonymous.

2.3. Sample

The European Commission identifies rural regions on the basis of urban–rural typology. The classification of regions is determined by identifying the population in rural grid cells (all cells outside of urban clusters) and their proportion. Therefore, predominantly rural regions are defined as those in which more than half of the population lives in rural grid cells [74]. As already mentioned, the researchers obtained a sample of 299 rural people between 18 and 30 years of age (M = 20.161) from Serbia (N = 150).

Female respondents represented 72.9% of the total sample. This was beneficial for our study because without young women in the countryside there is no sustainable development of those settlements. The majority of them (77.3%) completed their high school education. The number of respondents who had obtained a bachelor's degree (19.4%), master's degree (1.3%), or a primary school degree (1.7%) was noticeably lower. A total of 11.7% of them had jobs. In addition, 60.9% of the respondents said that they were single (60.9%) or in a relationship (36.5%), while 2.3% of the sample's respondents were married, which is a minority. A slightly lower proportion of the respondents (51.1%) said that their monthly income was average, while 27.1% and 21.1%, respectively, said that their financial status was above or below average.

3. Results and Discussion

To explore what shapes openness towards entrepreneurship, general linear modeling (regression analysis) was employed. Ten separate variables were included in the model: gender, monthly income, education, marital status, employment status, age, country and three items that describe respondents' attitudes towards the possibility of implementing their entrepreneurial ideas in a business environment. According to the research results, shown in Table 1, it could be noticed that openness towards entrepreneurship is shaped by the respondents' employment status and their age, as well as by the country of their origin. Besides that, openness towards entrepreneurship is also shaped by the respondents' attitude towards possible unsuccessful implementation of their ideas in a business environment.

A possible explanation of the obtained result is that the increased openness towards entrepreneurship among the unemployed respondents is found in the basic motives of potential entrepreneurs to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Most often, people engage in entrepreneurial activities to make their own profit and work autonomously, but also they engage in entrepreneurship when no other options are available [75]. Mota et al. [76] distinguished the motivation of potential entrepreneurs into two types: those who are willing to be and those who need to be entrepreneurs. Hence, entrepreneurs do not necessarily strive for innovative work, as fighting unemployment gives a strong incentive for the development of entrepreneurship.

Table 1. GLM results for aspects that shape the respondents' openness towards entrepreneurship.

Source	F	Sig.	Observed Power
Employment status	3.077	0.048	0.591
Age	5.176	0.024	0.621
Country	5.254	0.023	0.627
I have entrepreneurial ideas, however I do not think that they will achieve success in a business world	4.793	0.029	0.588
R2 = 0.110			

The obtained result indicates that younger respondents are more open to entrepreneurship. One possible explanation is that younger people have more enthusiasm for entrepreneurship. So, while the elderly may have more opportunities to become entrepreneurs, the young have a greater desire to do so. Young people are often thought to have a creative advantage in generating transformative ideas because they are less distracted by family and other commitments. This is consistent with Planck's principle [77,78], as younger people are less bound to existing paradigms and practices [79]. In addition, younger people have less experience and therefore may be less aware of the potential obstacles and risks involved in entrepreneurship. Furthermore, prior research [80] reveals that openness to experience decreases with age, which contributes to the negative correlation between entrepreneurial propensity and age [81], showing that older people exhibit increased aversion to risk and decision making, especially regarding new investments. With age, the desire for long-term investments declines as older people sees their time as limited.

Finally, as already mentioned, openness towards entrepreneurship is also shaped by the respondents' country of origin. The research results in Table 2 indicate that openness towards entrepreneurship is slightly higher among the respondents from Serbia (M = 4.055).

Table 2. Mean values of openness towards entrepreneurship and respondents' country of origin.

Country	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Serbia	4.055	0.177	3.708	4.403
Croatia	3.784	0.198	3.394	4.174

Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Age = 20.166.

When considering the differences in the obtained results between Croatia and Serbia, the most notable factor is that Croatia is an EU member state, with EU-modeled governmental policies, while Serbia is still in transition to become an EU member state. Hence, one of the possible explanations for the obtained result is that Serbia, as a country in transition, is also involved in the restructuring processes of large organizations, which often leads organizations to reduce the number of employees. People who lose their jobs decide to enter the world of entrepreneurship, that is, they see an opportunity for new employment in entrepreneurship. In Serbia, entrepreneurship is more often manifested as a consequence of pressure—the need to work and survive [82]. In the paper [83], it is stated that entrepreneurship itself opens up the necessary dynamics of economic life, stops economic immigration and enables the improvement of the quality of life. Entrepreneurship enables a long-term reduction in the unemployment rate and social problems arising from unemployment. Significant research has been published on the relationship between entrepreneurship and unemployment. It is known that during the global recession, one of the strategies for overcoming the burden of unemployment was aimed at subsidizing the labor force for undertaking entrepreneurial activities [84].

In addition, the high level of stress present during organizational restructuring can be a "trigger" for many employees who think they have creative ideas to try being entrepreneurs. The period of sanctions that hit Serbia in the 90s forced many people to "make ends meet" by doing some additional work with the presence of a high degree of risk, which consequently could contribute to the entrepreneurial spirit of the Serbian population.

Furthermore, based on the research results represented in Table 3, respondents who stated that they have entrepreneurial ideas, but do not think that they will achieve success in the business environment, expressed a lower level of openness towards entrepreneurship compared to those respondents who did not select this option.

Table 3. Mean values of openness towards entrepreneurship and respondents' attitudes about the possibility of gaining business success on the market based on their business ideas.

I Have Entrepreneurial Ideas, However, I Do Not Think That They Will Achieve Success in the Business World	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
No	4.062	0.168	3.731	4.394
Yes	3.777	0.209	3.366	4.188

Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Age = 20.166.

The obtained result is expected. It is known that the path from a business idea to its realization is long and uncertain. If the respondents believe that they have entrepreneurial ideas, but, on the other hand, they do not believe that they will be realized and that they will achieve business success, then they are less open to entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship is an innovative process towards the creation of new products or services. The transformation of a potential opportunity into a concrete product or service requires innovation. On the other hand, innovation is an uncertain journey and entrepreneurs can fail many times on the way to realizing their business ideas. In addition to predictable problems, entrepreneurs are often in a situation to solve unpredictable problems, which requires willingness to take risks [85]. The entrepreneurial process begins when a business opportunity is created or discovered by potential entrepreneurs, but that is only the beginning of the entrepreneurial process. In the later stages of the process, there are numerous obstacles that an entrepreneur may encounter, including dealing with uncertainty [85]. Therefore, in our study, respondents who are less open to entrepreneurship are aware of these hurdles and hence they believe that entrepreneurial ideas cannot lead them to business success.

Furthermore, the research focused on identifying the correlation between respondents' openness towards entrepreneurship and 13 items that represent attitudes on having satisfactory personal capacities for entrepreneurial activities. As can be seen in Table 4, there is a significant positive correlation of medium intensity between these two researched aspects. The highest correlation is identified between openness towards entrepreneurship and respondents' need to make something new. This is in agreement with Schumpeter's innovation theory, which argues that anyone seeking profits must innovate. According to Schumpeter, the "entrepreneur" is the central innovator and their innovations are essential to explaining economic growth [86].

Only one item (I have professional knowledge) had no correlation with openness towards entrepreneurship.

The obtained correlation can be explained by considering one of the items of the openness to entrepreneurship construct: "If I became an entrepreneur, I would feel satisfied." On the other hand, studies have confirmed that one of the greatest pleasures offered by entrepreneurship is innovation—that is, the opportunity to realize a creative idea and make something new [87]. It has been shown that innovation contributes to work–family balance, job satisfaction and life satisfaction [87].

Table 4. Correlation matrix of openness towards entrepreneurship and respondents' evaluation of personal capacities for entrepreneurial activities.

I have skills in leadership and good communication.	Pearson Correlation	0.167 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.004
I can develop new products and services.	Pearson Correlation	0.145 *
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.012
I can connect with people and establish good business relations.	Pearson Correlation	0.185 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
I am ready to face risk.	Pearson Correlation	0.169 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.003
I can control the entire business process.	Pearson Correlation	0.248 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
I'm good with money and I want to make a lot of earnings.	Pearson Correlation	0.223 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
I have a great need to show myself in front of the others and to achieve success.	Pearson Correlation	0.115 *
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.047
I have a great need to make something new.	Pearson Correlation	0.258 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
I can recognize good business chances.	Pearson Correlation	0.136 *
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.018
I am a creative person.	Pearson Correlation	0.198 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
I can resolve problems.	Pearson Correlation	0.176 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002
I have professional knowledge.	Pearson Correlation	0.090
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.119
I am responsible and accurate in fulfilling obligations.	Pearson Correlation	0.236 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Considering the respondents' evaluation of personal capacities for entrepreneurial activities across two researched countries, based on the results represented in Table 5, it can be seen that there are significant differences in several aspects of this evaluation. More precisely, there are significant differences in evaluation of respondents' creativity (t = 2.198, $p < 0.005$), capability to resolve problems (t = 4.675, $p < 0.001$), making connection with people and establishment of good business relations (t = 2.311, $p < 0.005$), responsibility (t = 2.199, $p < 0.005$), money management (t = 2.219, $p < 0.005$) and a need to make something new (t = 4.787, $p < 0.001$). It is also interesting to notice that there is a significant difference in evaluating the respondents' possession of professional knowledge across two researched countries (t = −3.886, $p < 0.001$).

According to the research results represented in Table 6, it is interesting to notice that all the aforementioned aspects of evaluation are higher in Serbia compared to Croatia. However, respondents from Serbia are less inclined to agree to the statement that they have enough professional knowledge in the field of entrepreneurship than respondents from Croatia. It seems that respondents from Croatia are more confident in themselves when it comes to knowledge.

Table 5. T-test results on respondents' evaluation of personal entrepreneurial capacities across Serbia and Croatia.

	T	df	Sig. (2-Tailed)
I can recognize good business chances.	1.152	297	0.250
I am creative person.	2.198	297	0.029
I can resolve problems.	4.675	297	0.000
I got skills of leadership and good communication.	1.121	297	0.263
I can develop new products and services.	−0.685	297	0.494
I can connect with people and establish good business relations.	2.311	297	0.022
I am ready to face with risk.	1.593	297	0.112
I can control the entire business process.	1.272	297	0.204
I have professional knowledge.	−3.886	297	0.000
I am responsible and accurate in fulfilling obligations.	3.956	297	0.000
I'm good with money and I want to make a lot of earnings.	2.219	297	0.027
I have a great need to show myself in front of the others and to achieve success.	0.761	297	0.447
I have a great need to make something new.	4.787	297	0.000

Table 6. Mean values of respondents' evaluation of personal entrepreneurial capacities across Serbia and Croatia.

Item	Country	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I can recognize good business chances.	Serbia	150	3.853	0.9151
	Croatia	149	3.705	1.2866
I am creative person.	Serbia	150	4.093	0.9922
	Croatia	149	3.812	1.2101
I can resolve problems.	Serbia	150	4.260	0.8932
	Croatia	149	3.651	1.3199
I got skills of leadership and good communication.	Serbia	150	3.933	1.1213
	Croatia	149	3.779	1.2619
I can develop new products and services.	Serbia	150	3.680	1.0575
	Croatia	149	3.772	1.2527
I can connect with people and establish good business relations.	Serbia	150	4.073	1.0625
	Croatia	149	3.752	1.3300
I am ready to face with risk.	Serbia	150	3.940	1.0247
	Croatia	149	3.718	1.3610
I can control the entire business process.	Serbia	150	3.760	0.9809
	Croatia	149	3.584	1.3809
I have professional knowledge.	Serbia	150	3.333	1.0723
	Croatia	149	3.852	1.2323
I am responsible and accurate in fulfilling obligations.	Serbia	150	4.393	0.8891
	Croatia	149	3.913	1.1908
I'm good with money and I want to make a lot of earnings.	Serbia	150	4.167	0.9583
	Croatia	149	3.899	1.1195

Table 6. *Cont.*

Item	Country	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have a great need to show myself in front of the others and to achieve success.	Serbia	150	3.727	1.2090
	Croatia	149	3.617	1.2713
I have a great need to make something new.	Serbia	150	4.220	1.0158
	Croatia	149	3.597	1.2243

The obtained results are in accordance with the research study [88], which reveals that entrepreneurs in Serbia, compared to countries in the EU region (including Croatia), show increased entrepreneurship. Therefore, even with pronounced lower professional knowledge, Serbian entrepreneurs show confidence in spotting business opportunities, as well as in their entrepreneurial skills. On the other hand, Serbian respondents' doubts about professional knowledge in the field of business can be explained by different circumstances for the development of entrepreneurship in EU countries and Serbia, which is not a member of the EU. Namely, in contrast to the clear insight into numerous regulations related to starting entrepreneurial activities, as well as knowledge of the necessary steps for the development of an entrepreneurial venture that is available to citizens of European Union countries, to which Croatia also belongs, the majority of the Serbian population has no knowledge of the necessary steps for starting an entrepreneurial venture. Furthermore, the institutional support of the Serbian state for the development of entrepreneurship is vague and the steps to be taken in order to realize an entrepreneurial idea are not sufficiently transparent. In addition, various types of training in which the knowledge needed to engage in entrepreneurial activities is often absent or insufficient, so that potential entrepreneurs in Serbia feel insufficiently confident in their possession of professional knowledge regarding entrepreneurship.

4. Conclusions

This study examined the connection between openness and entrepreneurial capacity among young people in rural areas of Serbia and Croatia. The results indicate the various factors influencing openness towards entrepreneurship among young people in rural areas, with several key findings emerging from the analysis.

Firstly, the increased openness to entrepreneurship observed among unemployed respondents is likely driven by their intrinsic motivation to create employment opportunities through entrepreneurial activities. This suggests that entrepreneurship can be a crucial pathway for those facing unemployment.

Secondly, the results indicate that younger respondents exhibit a greater openness to entrepreneurship, reflecting a generational shift in attitudes towards entrepreneurial endeavors.

Additionally, the study highlights the impact of respondents' country of origin on their openness towards entrepreneurship, underscoring the importance of cultural and national contexts in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes. This is in line with sociological theory, which argues that one's sociological background is one of the decisive "push" factors to become an entrepreneur. In addition, Hofstede's cultural model is a widely known theory regarding the influence of national cultures on entrepreneurial behavior [89,90].

Furthermore, respondents who believe they have entrepreneurial ideas but lack confidence in their success in the business environment expressed lower levels of openness towards entrepreneurship. This points to the critical role of self-confidence and perceived feasibility in entrepreneurial intentions.

The research also reveals a significant positive correlation between openness towards entrepreneurship and the perception of having personal capacities for entrepreneurial activities. Notably, the strongest correlation is observed between openness to entrepreneurship and the respondents' desire to innovate. However, the perceived possession of professional

knowledge did not correlate with openness to entrepreneurship, suggesting that other factors play a more influential role.

Finally, the study found significant differences between respondents from Serbia and Croatia in their evaluations of personal capacities for entrepreneurial activities. Serbian respondents rated themselves higher in several entrepreneurial capacities, such as creativity, problem-solving and money management, but were less confident about their professional knowledge compared to their Croatian counterparts.

Overall, these findings highlight the complex interplay of personal, demographic and cultural factors in shaping young people's openness to entrepreneurship. The results suggest the need for tailored support programs that address these diverse influences to foster entrepreneurial engagement among rural youth.

The findings emphasize the need for customized policy measures that not only cultivate entrepreneurial skills but also establish supportive environments tailored to the unique needs of young entrepreneurs in rural settings. Such measures might include the development of local business incubators, access to mentorship programs and the provision of financial incentives to reduce the risks associated with starting a business in these areas. Furthermore, fostering collaboration between local governments, educational institutions and private sectors could enhance the support network available to aspiring entrepreneurs. By addressing these issues, rural areas can better leverage the innovative potential of their youth, contributing to sustainable rural development. This approach could also play a significant role in reducing youth migration by providing viable economic opportunities within their home regions, thereby reversing the trend of rural depopulation.

Further research is needed to assess the long-term effects of such interventions and to explore similar patterns in other rural areas. This future research could also consider the role of cultural factors, digital literacy and global market access in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how to unlock the entrepreneurial capacity of rural youth.

The findings of this study have significant implications for policymakers, educators and community leaders, especially in rural areas. Instead of leaving these areas with limited access to resources and inadequate support systems, policymakers can create an environment that nurtures entrepreneurial talent and encourages sustainable economic growth in rural areas. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of including integrating entrepreneurship into rural school curricula, offering workshops and training sessions and facilitating access to mentorship and networking opportunities. Additionally, improving infrastructure and access to technology in these regions could further empower young entrepreneurs, enabling them to compete in broader markets and drive rural development.

These challenges include limited access to financial and material resources, inadequate support systems and a lack of specialized educational opportunities that are crucial for nurturing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge.

This study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on the entrepreneurial capacity and openness among rural youth in Serbia and Croatia, a topic that has been underexplored in the context of rural areas worldwide. It sheds light on the unique challenges and opportunities faced by young entrepreneurs in these rural settings, offering insights that are crucial for designing effective policies and interventions.

The research also adds value by emphasizing the role of cultural and regional factors in shaping entrepreneurial behavior, which can inform comparative studies in other rural regions. Furthermore, by identifying specific barriers to entrepreneurship, the study provides a foundation for future research that could explore strategies for overcoming these obstacles and enhancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem in rural areas.

Ultimately, the study's findings underscore the potential of youth as drivers of economic transformation, offering a roadmap for leveraging this potential to achieve broader socio-economic development goals in rural areas.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, A.S.D., T.S. and A.T.; data curation, M.M.L. and T.J.; formal analysis, M.M.L., T.J. and A.S.D.; funding acquisition, A.S.D., J.M.A.-O., A.C.-L. and Z.Z.; investigation, M.M.L., Z.Z., M.N.-K., K.K., V.S. and A.T.; methodology, M.M.L., T.J. and A.S.D.; resources, A.S.D. and Z.Z.; supervision, A.S.D. and Z.Z.; validation, M.M.L., T.J. and T.S.; visualization, M.M.L., A.S.D., T.S. and A.C.-L.; writing—original draft, A.S.D., T.S., M.M.L., T.J., M.N.-K. and Z.Z.; writing—review and editing, A.S.D., T.S., J.M.A.-O., A.C.-L., V.S., A.I.-D., D.P. and Ž.V.; project administration, A.T. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research is a part of a project approved by the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, Provincial Secretariat for Higher Education and Scientific-Research Activity, Program 0201, with the project title "Research of the entrepreneurial potentials among the local population for using the thermo-mineral water resources of Vojvodina", registration number: 142-451-3467/2023-02 (2021–2024). The authors also gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation of the Republic of Serbia (Grants No. 451-03-66/2024-03/200125 and 451-03-65/2024-03/200125).

Data Availability Statement: The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors on request.

Acknowledgments: We acknowledge the financial support of the University of Jaen (SEJ-289 research group: Information and Management Systems in Andalusian Enterprises).

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of the data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results.

References

1. Galvao, A.R.; Carla, M.; Carla, S.M.; Vitor, B.; Marisa, F. Mentoring entrepreneurship in a rural territory—A qualitative exploration of an entrepreneurship program for rural areas. *J. Rural. Stud.* **2020**, *78*, 314–324. [CrossRef]
2. De Guzman, M.R.T.; Surin, K.; Sarah, T.; Irene, P. Rural communities as a context for entrepreneurship: Exploring perceptions of youth and business owners. *J. Rural Stud.* **2020**, *80*, 45–52. [CrossRef]
3. Agarwal, S.; Rahman, S.; Page, S.J.; Jakes, S. Economic performance amongst English seaside towns. *Curr. Issues Tour.* **2023**, *27*, 2631–2648. [CrossRef]
4. Josipović, S.; Molnar, D. Human capital, entrepreneurship and rural growth of the Serbian economy. *Acta Econ.* **2018**, *16*, 39–62. [CrossRef]
5. Gao, J.; Wu, B. Revitalizing traditional villages through rural tourism: A case study of Yuanjia Village, Shaanxi Province, China. *Tour. Manag.* **2017**, *63*, 223–233. [CrossRef]
6. European Parliament. Demography on the European Agenda. Strategies for Tackling Demographic Decline. 2020. Available online: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2020/651939/EPRS_BRI(2020)651939_EN.pdf (accessed on 1 March 2024).
7. ESPON. *Transnational Observation: Fighting Rural Depopulation in Southern Europe*; ESPON: Luxembourg, 2020.
8. European Commission. *Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Region: The Long-Term Vision for the EUs Rural Areas: Key Achievements and Ways Forward*; European Commission: Brussels, Belgium, 2024.
9. Eurostat. Available online: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/w/ddn-20230117-2 (accessed on 14 July 2024).
10. RZA. *Population Census in Serbia*; RZS: Beograd, Serbia, 2022.
11. Stojilković Gnjatović, J.N. Age structure of the population of Serbia–what changes were recorded in the censuses in 2002, 2011 and 2022? *Sociološki Pregl.* **2023**, *57*, 792–822. [CrossRef]
12. Tešin, A.; Dragin, A.S.; Mijatov, M.B.; Jovanović, T.; Zadel, Z.; Surla, T.; Košić, K.; Amezcua-Ogáyar, J.M.; Calahorro-López, A.; Kuzman, B.; et al. Quality of Life and Attachment to Rural Settlements: The Basis for Regeneration and Socio-Economic Sustainability. *Land* **2024**, *13*, 1364. [CrossRef]
13. Croatian Bureau of Statistics. Available online: https://dzs.gov.hr/vijesti/objavljeni-konacni-rezultati-popisa-2021/1270 (accessed on 5 August 2024).
14. Deller, S.; Matt, K.; Tessa, C. Rural entrepreneurship and migration. *J. Rural Stud.* **2019**, *66*, 30–42. [CrossRef]
15. Mularska-Kucharek, M.; Justyna, W. Entrepreneurship of rural residents in Poland. *Acta Sci. Polonorum. Oeconomia* **2015**, *14*, 83–93.
16. Naldi, L.; Pia, N.; Hans, W.; Sofia, W. What is smart rural development? *J. Rural Stud.* **2015**, *40*, 90–101. [CrossRef]
17. Đerčan, B.; Bubalo Živković, M.; Gatarić, D.; Lukić, T.; Dragin, A.; Kalenjuk Pivarski, B.; Lutovac, M.; Kuzman, B.; Puškarić, A.; Banjac, M.; et al. Experienced Well-Being in the Rural Areas of the Srem Region (Serbia): Perceptions of the Local Community. *Sustainability* **2021**, *14*, 248. [CrossRef]

18. Neumann, T. The impact of entrepreneurship on economic, social and environmental welfare and its determinants: A systematic review. *Manag. Rev. Q.* **2021**, *71*, 553–584. [CrossRef]
19. Sahrah, A.; Guritno, P.; Rengganis, R.; Dewi, R.; Saufi, R.; Yukthamarani, P. Personality traits, individual resilience, openness to experience and young digital entrepreneurship intention. *Int. J. Data Netw. Sci.* **2023**, *7*, 1193–1204. [CrossRef]
20. Radosavljević, D.; Sonja, J.; Gordana, K.; Snežana, U. A new model of rural development based on human capital and entrepreneurship. *Econ. Agric.* **2022**, *69*, 595–611. [CrossRef]
21. Brixiová, Z.; Mthuli, N.; Zorobabel, B. Skills and youth entrepreneurship in Africa: Analysis with evidence from Swaziland. *World Dev.* **2015**, *67*, 11–26. [CrossRef]
22. Bosma, N.; Hessels, J.; Schutjens, V.; Van Praag, M.; Verheul, I. Entrepreneurship and role models. *J. Econ. Psychol.* **2012**, *33*, 410–424. [CrossRef]
23. Gómez-Araujo, E.; Bayon, M.C. Socio-cultural factors and youth entrepreneurship in rural regions. *Rev. Bras. Gestão Negócios* **2017**, *19*, 200–218. [CrossRef]
24. Carree, M.A.; Thurik, A.R. *The Impact of Entrepreneurship on Economic Growth*; Springer: New York, NY, USA, 2010; pp. 557–594. [CrossRef]
25. Dadvar-Khani, F.; Rezvani, M.R.; Imeni Gheshlagh, S.; Bozarjemehry, K. Analyze the role of tourism in the development of rural youth entrepreneurship (The case study: Knadovan Village, Osku Province). *Hum. Geogr. Res.* **2011**, *43*, 169–196.
26. Müller, S.; Korsgaard, S. Resources and bridging: The role of spatial context in rural entrepreneurship. *Entrep. Reg. Dev.* **2018**, *30*, 224–255. [CrossRef]
27. Fortunato, M.W.P. Supporting rural entrepreneurship: A review of conceptual developments from research to practice. *Community Dev.* **2014**, *45*, 387–408. [CrossRef]
28. Von Reichert, C.; Cromartie, J.B.; Arthun, R.O. Impacts of Return Migration on R ural US Communities. *Rural Sociol.* **2014**, *79*, 200–226. [CrossRef]
29. Berglund, K.; Gaddefors, J.; Lindgren, M. Provoking identities: Entrepreneurship and emerging identity positions in rural development. *Entrep. Reg. Dev.* **2016**, *28*, 76–96. [CrossRef]
30. Mitrović, M.M. Sela u Srbiji—Promene strukture i problemi održivog razvoj, Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava i stanova 2011. In *Popis Poljoprivrede*; RZS: Beograd, Serbia, 2012.
31. Gaidhani, S.; Arora, L.; Sharma, B.K. Understanding the attitude of generation Z towards workplace. *Int. J. Manag. Technol. Eng.* **2019**, *9*, 2804–2812.
32. Mijatov, M.B.; Dragin, A.S.; Majstorović, N.; Janičić, B.; Zadel, Z. The impacts of the COVID-19 on youth tourism and hospitality managers in-training. In *COVID-19 and a World of Ad Hoc Geographies*; Brunn, S.D., Gilbreath, D., Eds.; A Chapter No. 102; Springer: Cham, Switzerland; New York, NY, USA, 2022; Volume 3, pp. 1879–1895, ISBN 978-3-030-94350-9. [CrossRef]
33. Bloom, D.E. Youth in the balance. *Financ. Dev.* **2012**, *49*, 6–11.
34. Uduji, J.I.; Okolo-Obasi, E.N. Empowerment of rural young people in informal farm entrepreneurship: The role of corporate social responsibility in Nigeria's oil producing communities. *J. Enterprising Communities People Places Glob. Econ.* **2022**, *16*, 924–947. [CrossRef]
35. Dragin, A.S.; Mijatov, M.B.; Munitlak Ivanović, O.; Jovičić Vuković, A.; Ivkov Džigurski, A.; Košić, K.; Knežević, M.N.; Tomić, S.; Stankov, U.; Vujičić, M.D.; et al. Entrepreneurial intention of students (managers in training): Personal and family characteristics. *Sustainability* **2022**, *14*, 7345. [CrossRef]
36. Dragin, A.S.; Majstorović, N.; Mijatov, M.; Janičić, B.; Stojanović, V. Clusters of Generation Z and Travel Risks Perception: Constraining vs. Push-Pull Factors. In *The Emerald Handbook of Destination Recovery in Tourism and Hospitality*; Mohanty, P., Sharma, A., Kennel, J., Hassan, A., Eds.; Emerald: Bingley, UK, 2022; pp. 375–395, ISBN 978-1-80262-073-3. [CrossRef]
37. Dragin, A.S.; Mijatov, M.B.; Majstorović, N.; Janičić, B.; Korovljev, D. COVID-19 Pandemic and Young Tourists' Travel Risk Perceptions. In *COVID-19 and a World of Ad Hoc Geographies*; Brunn, S.D., Gilbreath, D., Eds.; a Chapter No. 95; Springer: Cham, Switzerland; New York, NY, USA, 2022; Volume 3, pp. 1755–1775, ISBN 978-3-030-94350-9. [CrossRef]
38. Kourilsky, M.L.; Walstad, W.B.; Thomas, A. *The Entrepreneur in Youth: An Untapped Resource for Economic Growth, Social Entrepreneurship, and Education*; Edward Elgar Publishing: Cheltenham, UK, 2007.
39. Al-Jubari, I. College students' entrepreneurial intention: Testing an integrated model of SDT and TPB. *Sage Open* **2019**, *9*, 2158244019853467. [CrossRef]
40. Papulová, Z.; Papula, J. Entrepreneurship in the Eyes of the Young Generation. *Procedia Econ. Financ.* **2015**, *34*, 514–520. [CrossRef]
41. Kautonen, T.; Down, S.; Minniti, M. Ageing and entrepreneurial preferences. *Small Bus. Econ.* **2014**, *42*, 579–594. [CrossRef]
42. Minola, T.; Criaco, G.; Cassia, L. Are youth really different? New beliefs for old practices in entrepreneurship. *Int. J. Entrep. Innov. Manag.* **2014**, *18*, 233–259. [CrossRef]
43. Minola, T.; Criaco, G.; Obschonka, M. Age, culture, and self-employment motivation. *Small Bus. Econ.* **2016**, *46*, 187–213. [CrossRef]
44. Slavec, A.; Drnovšek, M.; Hisrich, R.D. Entrepreneurial openness: Concept development and measure validation. *Eur. Manag. J.* **2017**, *35*, 211–223. [CrossRef]
45. Antoncic, B. The entrepreneur's general personality traits and technological developments. *World Acad. Sci. Eng. Technol.* **2009**, *53*, 236–241.
46. Robbins, S.P.; Judge, T.A. *Organizational Behavior*, 15th ed.; Prentice Hall: Hoboken, NJ, USA, 2012.

47. Awwad, M.S.; Al-Aseer, R.M.N. Big five personality traits impact on entrepreneurial intention: The mediating role of entrepreneurial alertness. *Asia Pac. J. Innov. Entrep.* **2021**, *15*, 87–100. [CrossRef]
48. Lafuente, E.; Vaillant, Y. *Generationally Driven Influence of Role-Models on Entrepreneurship: "Institutional Memory" in a Transition Economy*; Working Paper Series, 03-2008; Centre for Entrepreneurship and Business Research (CEBR): London, UK, 2013. [CrossRef]
49. Fragoso, R.; Rocha-Junior, W.; Xavier, A. Determinant factors of entrepreneurial intention among university students in Brazil and Portugal. *J. Small Bus. Entrep.* **2020**, *32*, 33–57. [CrossRef]
50. Jovičić-Vuković, A.; Jošanov-Vrgović, I.; Jovin, S.; Papić-Blagojević, N. Socio-demographic characteristics and students' entrepreneurial intentions. *Stanovnistvo* **2020**, *58*, 57–75. [CrossRef]
51. Wahidmurni, W.; Indah, A.Z.; Alfiana, Y.E.; Abdussakir, A. Entrepreneurial intention of university students and the affecting factors. *Libr. Philos. Pract.* **2020**, 1–14.
52. Murugesan, R.; Jayavelu, R.O.E.N.T.G.E.N. The influence of big five personality traits and self-efficacy on entrepreneurial intention: The role of gender. *J. Entrep. Innov. Emerg. Econ.* **2017**, *3*, 41–61. [CrossRef]
53. Zhao, H.; Seibert, S.E.; Lumpkin, G.T. The relationship of personality to entrepreneurial intentions and performance: A meta-analytic review. *J. Manag.* **2010**, *36*, 381–404. [CrossRef]
54. Haus, I.; Steinmetz, H.; Isidor, R.; Kabst, R. Gender effects on entrepreneurial intention: A meta-analytical structural equation model. *Int. J. Gend. Entrep.* **2013**, *5*, 130–156. [CrossRef]
55. Moa-Liberty, A.W.; Tunde, A.O.; Tinuola, O.L. The influence of self-efficacy and socio-demographic factors on the entrepreneurial intentions of selected Youth Corp members in Lagos, Nigeria. Bulletin of Geography. *Socio-Econ. Ser.* **2016**, *34*, 63–71. [CrossRef]
56. Wilson, F.; Kickul, J.; Marlino, D. Gender, entrepreneurial self–efficacy, and entrepreneurial career intentions: Implications for entrepreneurship education. *Entrep. Theory Pract.* **2007**, *31*, 387–406. [CrossRef]
57. Chaudhary, R. Demographic factors, personality and entrepreneurial inclination: A study among Indian university students. *Educ. Train.* **2017**, *59*, 171–187. [CrossRef]
58. Fatoki, O. The entrepreneurial intention of undergraduate students in South Africa: The influences of entrepreneurship education and previous work experience. *Mediterr. J. Soc. Sci.* **2014**, *5*, 294. [CrossRef]
59. Vuković, A.Đ.J.; Papić-Blagojević, N. Preduzetnički potencijali studenata turizma i ugostiteljstva. *Int. J. Econ. Pract. Policy* **2018**, 54–72. [CrossRef]
60. Nguyen, C. Demographic factors, family background and prior self-employment on entrepreneurial intention-Vietnamese business students are different: Why? *J. Glob. Entrep. Res.* **2018**, *8*, 1–17. [CrossRef]
61. Ahmed, I.; Nawaz, M.M.; Ahmad, Z.; Shaukat, M.Z.; Usman, A.; Rehman, W.U.; Ahmed, N. Determinants of students' entrepreneurial career intentions: Evidence from business graduates. *Eur. J. Soc. Sci.* **2010**, *15*, 14–22.
62. Dinis, A.; do Paco, A.; Ferreira, J.; Raposo, M.; Gouveia Rodrigues, R. Psychological characteristics and entrepreneurial intentions among secondary students. *Educ. Train.* **2013**, *55*, 763–780. [CrossRef]
63. Dana, L.P.; Calin, G.; Frank, L. Entrepreneurship, tourism and regional development: A tale of two villages. *Entrep. Reg. Dev.* **2014**, *26*, 357–374. [CrossRef]
64. Korsgaard, S.; Müller, S.; Tanvig, H.W. Rural entrepreneurship or entrepreneurship in the rural–between place and space. *Int. J. Entrep. Behav. Res.* **2015**, *21*, 5–26. [CrossRef]
65. Patel, B.; Chavda, K. Rural entrepreneurship in India: Challenge and problems. *Int. J. Adv. Res. Comput. Sci. Manag. Stud.* **2013**, *1*, 28–37.
66. Keiko Yamaguchi, C.; Stefenon, S.F.; Ramos, N.K.; Silva dos Santos, V.; Forbici, F.; Rodrigues Klaar, A.C.; de Borba, M.L. Young people's perceptions about the difficulties of entrepreneurship and developing rural properties in family agriculture. *Sustainability* **2020**, *12*, 8783. [CrossRef]
67. Wang, Y.; Yangyang, J.; Baojiang, G.; Bin, W.; Lu, L. Determinants of returnees' entrepreneurship in rural marginal China. *J. Rural Stud.* **2022**, *94*, 429–438. [CrossRef]
68. Tomnic, P.; Rebernik, M. Connections of entrepreneurial capacity and openness towards innovations with the individual's decision to become an entrepreneur: A case from Slovenia. *Soc. Econ.* **2010**, *32*, 297–313. [CrossRef]
69. OECD. *Unlocking the Potential of Youth Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries: From Subsistence to Performance, Development Centre Studies*; OECD Publishing: Paris, France, 2017. Available online: https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/groups/youth-rural-areas-empowering-next-generation_en (accessed on 1 March 2024). [CrossRef]
70. Liñán, F.; Chen, Y.W. Development and cross–cultural application of a specific instrument to measure entrepreneurial intentions. *Entrep. Theory Pract.* **2009**, *33*, 593–617. [CrossRef]
71. Kolvereid, L. Prediction of employment status choice intentions. *Entrep. Theory Pract.* **1996**, *21*, 47–58. [CrossRef]
72. Krueger, N.F., Jr.; Reilly, M.D.; Carsrud, A.L. Competing models of entrepreneurial intentions. *J. Bus. Ventur.* **2000**, *15*, 411–432. [CrossRef]
73. Veciana, J.M.; Aponte, M.; Urbano, D. University students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship: A two countries comparison. *Int. Entrep. Manag. J.* **2005**, *1*, 165–182. [CrossRef]
74. Eurostat. Available online: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/rural-development/methodology (accessed on 3 August 2024).
75. Shane, S.; Locke, E.A.; Collins, C.J. Entrepreneurial motivation. *Hum. Resour. Manag. Rev.* **2003**, *13*, 257–279. [CrossRef]

76. Mota, A.; Braga, V.; Ratten, V. Entrepreneurship motivation: Opportunity and necessity. In *Sustainable Entrepreneurship: The Role of Collaboration in the Global Economy*; Springer: Cham, Switzerland, 2019; pp. 139–165. [CrossRef]
77. Planck, M. The meaning and limits of exact science. *Science* **1949**, *110*, 319–327. [CrossRef]
78. Dietrich, A.; Srinivasan, N. The optimal age to start a revolution. *J. Creat. Behav.* **2007**, *41*, 54–74. [CrossRef]
79. Azoulay, P.; Jones, B.F.; Kim, J.D.; Miranda, J. Age and high-growth entrepreneurship. *Am. Econ. Rev. Insights* **2020**, *2*, 65–82. [CrossRef]
80. Zelekha, Y.; Kavé, G. Entrepreneurial tendency across the adult lifespan. *PLoS ONE* **2022**, *17*, e0262856. [CrossRef]
81. Albert, S.M.; Duffy, J. Differences in risk aversion between young and older adults. *Neurosci. Neuroeconomics* **2012**, *1*, 3–9. [CrossRef]
82. Zakić, N.; Vukotić, S.; Aničić, J.; Laketa, M. Self-employment and enterpreneurship as a choice: An example of Serbia. *J. Geogr. Inst. Jovan Cvijić SASA* **2012**, *62*, 49–66. [CrossRef]
83. Anicic, J.; Laketa, M.; Laketa, L.; Anicic, D.; Lukic, S. Entrepreneurship development in Serbia: The chance for a way out of economic crisis. *UTMS J. Econ.* **2014**, *5*, 189–198.
84. Marič, M.; Jeraj, M.; Žnidaršič, J. Entrepreneurship as a solution to the unemployment problem. *Škola Biznisa* **2010**, *2*, 89–97.
85. Cha, M.S.; Bae, Z.T. The entrepreneurial journey: From entrepreneurial intent to opportunity realization. *J. High Technol. Manag. Res.* **2010**, *21*, 31–42. [CrossRef]
86. Śledzik, K. Schumpeter's view on innovation and entrepreneurship. In *Management Trends in Theory and Practice*; Hittmar, S., Ed.; Faculty of Management Science and Informatics, University of Zilina & Institute of Management by University of Zilina: Zilina, Slovakia, 2013.
87. Jensen, K.W.; Liu, Y.; Schøtt, T. Entrepreneurs innovation bringing job satisfaction, work-family balance, and life satisfaction: In China and around the world. *Int. J. Innov. Stud.* **2017**, *1*, 193–206. [CrossRef]
88. Ljajić, S.; Kostić, V.; Nikolić, M. The level of development and significance of entrepreneurship and SMEs in Serbia and selected EU countries from the region. *Ekon. Preduzeća* **2019**, *67*, 435–452. [CrossRef]
89. Simpeh, K.N. Entrepreneurship theories and Empirical research: A Summary Review of the Literature. *Eur. J. Bus. Manag.* **2011**, *3*, 1–8.
90. Dubina, I.N.; Ramos, S.J. Entrepreneurship and national culture (according to Hofstede's model). In *Encyclopedia of Creativity, Invention, Innovation and Entrepreneurship*; Springer International Publishing: Cham, Switzerland, 2013; pp. 634–638.