How culture and education influence students’ entrepreneurial intentions

-A qualitative study between students from Babes-Bolyai University, Romania and Umeå University, Sweden, enrolled in Business programs-

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Entrepreneurship has become a much discussed subject in the past years when the business world together with universities discovered that one of the factors that will help the national economy, level of innovation are the entrepreneurs. And even though there are different attitudes towards whether entrepreneurs are born or made, everyone agreed that the role of academic education is important in the creation of new entrepreneurs and developing them. Now the question is whether the universities in the way that they are conducting studies are able to offer the appropriate environment for an entrepreneur to develop or national culture has a more powerful impact on the young graduates’ entrepreneurial initiatives.

The study attempts to understand how culture and education influence students to go towards an entrepreneurial career rather than preferring the security of a job. A qualitative research was conducted with groups of students from two different countries in order to better see the effects culture has, as it is an abstract concept.

First, a literature review was conducted in order to clarify different concepts and to create the basis for the analysis and interpretation. Next, gathering the data- focus groups and interviews conducted with students- was an important step in being able to understand how culture and entrepreneurial education interact to each other. Afterwards, the analysis was made and the data gathered was examined through the theory previously chosen. The results lead to a framework, developed by the author, which explains the relationships between entrepreneurial education, culture and new venture creation- entrepreneurial intentions. Further research and recommendations were added at the end of the study to guide the future studies.

Key words: role of culture and education, new venture creation, young graduates, entrepreneurial intentions.
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Entrepreneurship is an important part of society and the economy as entrepreneurs constitute driving forces behind economic growth. As a field, entrepreneurship has gained much attention from politicians and researchers because of its ability to create personal and societal growth (Baron, 1998). Shane (2000) suggests that entrepreneurship research involves the study of why, when and how only some people can discover and exploit business opportunities, as well as the consequences of their decisions during the entrepreneurial process, which is formed by three main activities: discovery, evaluation and exploitation of business opportunities. This study will focus mainly on the discovery phase, related to the students’ intentions towards entrepreneurial activities, and how those intentions are influenced by culture and education.

The importance and the role of education in innovativeness and in the creation of a knowledge based society is even emphasized in the EU statements (EC, 2002), as it can be seen a positive influence on the attitudes towards entrepreneurial activities, but also towards managerial skills, employment and self-employment. The EU goal is to overcome the challenges of globalization and to create the environment for new opportunities, among which would also be the creation of new ventures. There are several factors that might influence the level of innovativeness, creativity and thus the number of new ventures. Such factors might be the political, economical or environmental ones in that certain region/country, or even education or culture where the potential entrepreneur develops.

Clark (1998) underlines the fact that successful universities have to be able to combine traditional values with the new culture. In their efforts to unite the business world with the academic one, universities have tried to create flexible, practical programs that would attract students who wish to become maybe later on entrepreneurs. In the last decade the number of programs that were focused on entrepreneurship rise, probably also because entrepreneurship as a concept was more often used and researched upon (Bygrave, 1994, Klofsten, 1996), but also because entrepreneurship as a discipline has been gaining more acceptance as an educational field than before (Klofsten, 2000).

However, despite this increase very few universities succeed in encouraging students to actually become self-employed, rather they in practice influence them to find a job in the state sector or the private sector (Peterman and Kennedy, 2003). This is happening both because it is risky to encourage students to start a venture by themselves without any previous experience but also because most of the literature that they recommend advises them that way. Thus, the students become very ambiguous about what they should be doing (Kuratko, 2005, Collins, 2004).

But even so, entrepreneurship education plays an important role in the creation of the future entrepreneurs, as it offers them a base of theoretical support. Furthermore, in order to be able to create, innovate- start up-new ventures potential entrepreneurs have to consider
themselves capable and motivated to do so (Mueller, 2000). As stated by Fayolle (2008a:325) entrepreneurship education is “very young, emergent, and in its adolescence (or infancy) phase” thus, there are few studies in the area of entrepreneurship as a program in universities, studying how it is being taught and what goal it has. Fleming (2004) is one of the authors that tried to research how entrepreneurship education shapes the future entrepreneurs, whereas Garavan and O’Cinneide (1994) had a more practical view in analyzing educational and training programs that enhance the development of entrepreneurs. Those studies showed that practical courses and the training programs have a strong impact on the skills of the entrepreneur to be.

Culture, “as the underlying system of values peculiar to a specific group or society, shapes the development of certain personality traits and motivates individuals in a society to engage in behaviors that may not be evident in other societies” (Mueller, 2000), is an essential factor shaping emergent entrepreneurs. With a culture that supports and encourages entrepreneurial intentions, sustained by the state, social environment and the business people, an increase in new ventures can be seen (Mueller, 2000:51). Culture as a factor influencing entrepreneurship has been deeper researched on (Hayton, 2002). But there is a gap in researching overall-studies including a high quantity of countries- what is the impact of culture and whether there are similar factors influencing any taken nation.

Culture and entrepreneurship education are interesting to study as very often culture blends into the educational system and it might be difficult to separate it, affecting each individual differently. Culture is at the base of almost all the decisions taken in a specific country, it influences the perspectives over the environment and also it can persuade in a way or another people's attitudes (Hofstede, 1980). People are born in a certain culture and they bring it with them everywhere. Nevertheless, education is as important, as it represents the other pole of the equation together with culture, which motivates or not people to follow a certain career, and it broadens ones views.

For this study is important to consider both culture and education in entrepreneurship in the same sentence as it is important to create a connection, to better understand the existing relationship between them and how they influence each other. Nevertheless, as mentioned before, entrepreneurship education is still a young field, and there is no common framework of how it should be taught or organized, thus there are very few pure entrepreneurship courses. Although there are business programs that include entrepreneurship courses they are not called entrepreneurship. Furthermore there has not been yet established a clear connection between culture and entrepreneurship and to which degree culture influences entrepreneurship and thus the way the courses are designed. For this reason, the study will be conducted through the eyes of students enrolled in business programs (for example Business Administration or Service Management).

The effects that the entrepreneurship education and culture have on young entrepreneurs are critical and trying to understand how they work it should be essential in order to know how to motivate more students to follow this road. Previous literature on culture (Davidsson, 1995, Hayton, 2002, Hofstede, 1980, Mueller, 2000) and entrepreneurship education (Clark, 1998, Collins, 2004, Kuratko, 2005, Roudaki, 2009) was focused on environmental factors and less on the actual student and how they decide to start a new venture. The new ventures are a well researched area, but there is not much said about the students that want
to become entrepreneurs, nor whether there is any connection in between the country where they open it and its culture, or related to their level of education. So, there is a need of research of the relationship that exists between culture, entrepreneurship courses and entrepreneurial intentions; how do they influence each other. It was observed that there is an empirical gap in the literature related to the relationship mentioned before. Thus, this study’s purpose is at giving more understanding of the influence that culture and entrepreneurship education has on the students’ entrepreneurial intentions. The student’s perspective was mostly used in quantitative studies which were researching relationships between education-in general and student’s views. There is hence a need for qualitative studies that use the student’s views to get deeper information and to better understand their reasoning. In this way this study brings a new perspective to the research field, trying to fill the existing gap.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTION

This discussion leads to the following research question for the present study:

What is the role of national culture and education on entrepreneurial intentions of business students?

1.3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to explore the influences of culture and education in students’ intentions towards entrepreneurial intentions, new venture creation in Sweden and Romania. The aim is to understand how the national culture influences the young graduates in two countries so different- economically, culturally, overall level of innovation and creation of businesses. National culture and education were selected for this study as are among others essential factors influencing the intentions towards new venture creation by students in two universities, one in Sweden and one in Romania. The Universities chosen have programs in business and entrepreneurship and thus students with similar factors influencing them.

The study is conducted from the students’ perspective and its main beneficiary will be the universities, as information related to how students perceive the entrepreneurship education is provided and thus they can design better entrepreneurship programs, considering the culture and the future needs of the students.

1.4 LIMITATIONS RELATED TO THE PURPOSE

These limitations are mostly concerning the purpose of the study and how it is intended to be studied.

The study is only focused on culture and education as in literature most studies focus on either one or the other or even on more economic issues, and thus a study focused on the
role of those factors would be interesting. Moreover, the research will be done only in Sweden and Romania, as the contact with actual students would be facilitates.

Another limitation of the study is the way culture will be analyzed. It will be studied from the student’s perspective, considering their opinions related to education and entrepreneurship, trying to find the cultural aspects in their answers. As it is an abstract concept- hard to be expressed and further analyzed- it is the author’s interpretation and understanding of the culture based on the students’ answers that will be used in the analysis.
1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER

Chapter 1
Introduction
- This chapter introduces the topic and discusses the importance and the previous research done

Chapter 2
Research strategy
- The choice of theories and the preconceptions are introduced in this chapter as well as the epistemology and ontology approach

Chapter 3
Literature review
- The theories and concepts that will be used further in the thesis are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 4
Methodology of research
- Chapter 4 includes the description of the method chosen for analysis, as well as the phases of the research.

Chapter 5
Research and Analysis
Romania
- The findings of the conducted research are presented here, the focus group and the interviews conducted with the students from the Romanian University, as well as the analysis of the findings.

Chapter 6
Research and analysis
Sweden
- Chapter 7 presents the findings of the interviews and the focus group in Sweden and the analysis done on those findings.

Chapter 7
Comparative analysis
- Comparing and understanding the empirical findings from both groups of students in relation to the theory presented in Chapter 3.

Chapter 8
Conclusions
- The Conclusions based on the analysis are presented in this chapter, but also the limitations of the results and the suggestions for future research

Chapter 9
Quality criteria
- This chapter underlines the quality of the results of the study and their trustworthiness
2. RESEARCH STRATEGY

2.1 CHOICE OF SUBJECT AND PRECONCEPTIONS

As I have seen universities will have to adjust in between the traditional way of teaching and more practical, market orientated ways so that to succeed in attracting but also forming students for the business world.

I noticed that nowadays, students are more aware of the need of self-employment and this is due also to the development of technology and the “entrepreneurial culture”. As it is mentioned by Jack (1999) in his article, up until now there is no certainty that entrepreneurship is the “engine that drives the economy of most nations” (Jack, 1999:110), but the attitudes towards it are increasingly becoming more positive. Programs in universities that are trying to teach entrepreneurship were seen as factors that would influence “perceived desirability” (Peterman, 2003: 132) of being self-employed. The notion of one-size-fits all in the education of entrepreneurs cannot be applied, as skills, attitudes cannot necessary be taught to everyone in the same way. Different students have different needs and thus the programs have to be flexible enough to offer everyone a chance in developing himself and maybe a business of its own.

With a background in business administration, and further more within a master program in Strategic entrepreneurship it grew in myself the idea of having a business of my own someday soon. Nevertheless, I realized that there are not representative numbers of new ventures created by students and it was then when I started asking myself why. During the courses in the university we were also told that through education, studies the “entrepreneurial spirit” can be diminished and thus the most important quality of an entrepreneur- taking risks- to disappear. Once you acknowledge all the risks and you start seeing the business world with different eyes, you might stop seeing all the opportunities because at every moment there will be the tendency to count first the risks and not to be open in taking them as easily. In addition, there was also the question whether the “entrepreneurial spirit” is or not influenced by the culture in the country where the new venture is to be open. The attitude of the country towards the failure/success of entrepreneurs might be an important factor when opening a business. Furthermore, students, as I wanted to see how they are influenced by certain factors when opening a business, might be very easily influenced by peoples’ attitudes. Culture, with tradition, preconceptions, attitudes form a mix that might enhance or not the development of a business and even more of a new, young one.

Sweden and Romania were chose as study countries, as Romania is my home-country and I have been studying for the last two years in Sweden. Nevertheless, those two countries have a totally different background, social structure, and business environment, thus the results should be able to give a certain perspective, if not general at least for those two countries. Trying to find almost the same type of students, to create similar groups, the intention is to get to results that in certain aspects to be generalized, but also the findings might help improving the studying programs in universities in order for the universities to better understand and customized the entrepreneurial programs.
2.2 THEORETICAL METHODOLOGY

2.2.1 EPISTEMOLOGY AND ONTOLOGY

As mentioned before, the study’s purpose is to find what role the education and culture have when students have the intention of creating a new venture, and thus the study is being done through the eyes of a student that wants at some point to create his own venture. As a finished study, it might offer an interesting angle for both students and universities – as it presents the impact those two factors have for someone creating a new venture, but nevertheless, more useful for the universities as they could use the information in developing more suitable education programs.

As the purpose is to increase the understanding of certain aspects within the entrepreneurship research, it implies exploring perceptions and opinions of students. Interpretivism, the most used epistemological position in social science research, has this characteristic of exploring, and it focuses according to Andersson (1979:31) “not on explanations, but on understanding”. Furthermore, interpretivism focuses on understanding human behavior and implies that behaviors can only be understood in a certain context and thus there is no universal truth (Bryman, 2003).

In addition, Bryman (2007) suggests that interpretivistic research can only be understood “through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants” (Bryman, 2007:42). In other words, the meaning or the role of a certain phenomena can be understood through the eyes of the participants in that particular context. For this study, the role of education and culture will be seen and examined through the eyes of the students interviewed.

The interpretive focus on phenomena that takes place in a certain context is closely related with the ontological position of constructionism which also views the social phenomena as social constructions that change with the actors (Bryman, 2007). As stated in the purpose, culture and education are shaping students’ views and perceptions. This is in the same line with constructionism which argues that people are having an active role in creating phenomena (Bryman, 2007).
2.2.2 SCIENTIFIC APPROACH

Most empirical research previously conducted on entrepreneurship is focusing on defining it and clarifying its characteristics using a qualitative way, as in literature reviews and comparisons in between previous research (Aldrich, 2001, Gartner, 1988), whereas the previous research on culture and education was mostly done with quantitative methods such as surveys and questionnaires (Mueller, 2000, Collins, 2004, Kolvereid, 1997). But, as the purpose of this study is to understand how culture and education influences student’s attitudes towards entrepreneurial activities, a more qualitative research design would be appropriate as it allows the respondents to express their thoughts and perceptions.

As mentioned in the introduction, some gaps exist within entrepreneurship research regarding culture and education and their role. This implies, therefore, that a more explorative approach will be used, rather than conclusive. As the name suggests, it aims at exploring and understanding of a certain phenomena, providing insight (Malhotra, 2007). Its main usage is to identify relevant behaviour patterns, beliefs, attitudes and to develop an understanding of those, which is precisely what this study aims at. The explorative research which is flexible and it evolves (Malhotra, 2007), in relation with the existing gaps in research implies that there is no clear what information is needed to fill these gaps.

The research will follow a deductive approach where the chosen topic is developed in the context of a “well-developed theory” (Malhotra, 2007:160). The deductive approach is the most common view of the relationship between theory and research (Bryman, 2003). Considering this approach, the researcher based on the previous research done and his knowledge createa a hypothesis that will be tested through the empirical research. The data collected is based on the theories used and what information the researcher wants to find. After the research is done, the hypotheses is verified in order to see if it can be confirmed or rejected (Bryman, 2003). For this study assumptions are done regarding the relationship between culture, education and new venture creation based on the previous research, but no hypothesis will be developed nor tested. Rather, based on the literature review the research method is established- focus groups and interviews- and the sample is chosen- students. After gathering it, the data will be analysed and in the end it is investigated whether it is consistent with the research question.

A deductive approach will help at better understanding the relationships between culture, entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions in the context of existing theory.

2.3 LITERATURE SEARCH

In order to ensure the trustworthiness and quality of the results, it is important to be critical about all sources and information used in the study. The theoretical framework of this study covers three main areas of theory: education in entrepreneurship, culture and entrepreneurship initiative, and will be mainly based on scientific articles. This type of sources is considered by most researchers the most trustworthy as it relates to Bryman’s (2003) criteria called authenticity, which refers to the accuracy of the information. As
scientific articles are published more often than the books the information provided are more updated and it reveals the last developments within a certain field.

The secondary sources have been collected through the database provided by Umeå University library, Business Source Premier. The search for articles included key words such as: entrepreneurship education, culture and education, new venture creation. Once some articles were found, the rest were indirectly suggested (in the articles or books). During my master courses some of the articles were used as literature for the classes thus ensuring that are trustworthy and reliable sources. Those articles were a significant part of the literature used in this paper.

It is important to be critical when searching for articles as well as when you analyze the results. Therefore, a number of criteria were set before starting the research in order to ensure the reliability and trustworthiness of the sources. The first criterion was that the articles should only be published in peer-reviewed journals as this ensures their quality. Also if looking on how many times that articles has been cited by others, it can be found how well recognized the article is within the field. For example Shane (1992) was cited in 63 documents (result found by using Scopus Preview, offered by Umeå University Library online), whereas Clark (1984) was cited only 3 times in the Business Source Premier database. In other words, articles that established a theory and they were innovative in a way, continued to be taken as a base for future reference, others were considered less. Thus, even if some of the articles in this study are old as date of publishing, their content is still used in research done more recently.

2.4 CRITICISM OF SECONDARY SOURCES

As mentioned before, in order for a study to be reliable and to offer a quality results the research and the analysis has to be critical. For this study, original sources were used where possible in order to ensure the trustworthiness of the information. Most of the sources are articles from journals and they were downloaded from the Umeå University Library in their original format. Using secondary sources when there is a limit of time for the research it can be very helpful, but nevertheless the primary one will improve the quality and reliability of the study. Additionally, secondary sources can help in finding the right method for the study and can later on be a comparison tool with previous studies, this, when interpreting the primary information (Ghauri, 1995).

Course literature is often considered less reliable as it contains summaries of other authors’ work and thus there might had been information left out. However, this type of reference was not always used, and when it was it represents well established theory in the field, which implies that it is well known and recognized.

Furthermore, some sources might be regarded as very old, as for example Schumpeter (1934) or Hofstede (1980). Nevertheless, a source does not become automatically updated just because was published a long time ago, as long as the information is still current. Also, as long as other authors are citing it, it still represents a reliable source.
3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 DEFINING ENTREPRENEURS AND NEW VENTURE CREATION

3.1.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF ENTREPRENEURS

Over the years there have been different characterizations of the entrepreneurs but there doesn’t seem to be a generic definition agreed by all the scholars (Klofsten, 2000, Gartner, 1988). Despite the valid criticism of the traits approach regarding entrepreneurship research (Gartner, 1988) more recently the findings suggest that entrepreneurs can be differentiated from the general population based on the personality characteristics (Mueller, 2002).

In the early 1776, Frederick Webster was categorizing the entrepreneurs in five types: the Cantillon entrepreneur, the industry-maker, the administrative entrepreneurs, the small business owner and the independent entrepreneur. The first category has as a base an even previous definition of the entrepreneur made by Cantillon in the early 18th century, emphasizing the role of the entrepreneur as someone who assumes risks and management responsibility of a business. The industry-maker category was based on the management literature, considering the entrepreneur as “a nation builder, a hard working pioneer spirit who takes large risks, invests a total personal fortune, establishes an organization and than manages it into the industry leader.” (Webster, 1977:54). The third category includes the entrepreneur as an administrator, a person who creates an organization or reorganizes an existing one, and then remains to manage and control the managerial function (Webster, 1977). The small business owner entrepreneur relates to retail and wholesales merchants whose operations are limited geographically, regarding sales and profit potential. The last category includes the independent entrepreneur who works by himself in creating an organization but not being connected in long-term management to the organization. Overall, the characteristics that Webster found in 1776, could also be found in newer articles and research papers (Henderson, 2000, Mueller, 2002).

Continuing Webster’s (1977) work in trying to categorize and clarify the characteristics of entrepreneurs, Sven (1998) considers the entrepreneur an uncertainty-bearer, an innovator, an alert discoverer but also a coordinator. In his research, Sven (1998) puts together different previous researches and definitions of entrepreneurs in order to create a more global description of what an entrepreneur represents. He considers Knight’s (1921) differentiation in between risk and uncertainty where the first one is calculable but the later one no, thus underlying that the main function of the entrepreneur is to decide what and how to do it without being certain of future states. In addition, he also considered Schumpeter’s (1954) view where the entrepreneur is the one carrying out new combinations and thus risk is not necessary associated with it. Furthermore, Sven (1998) considers the entrepreneur seen as an alert discoverer characterized by Kirzner (1992) as “the entrepreneur alertly to discover failure in existing patterns of co-ordination among market decisions, permits us to..."
see how systemic market tendencies can be traced back to creative, originative, entrepreneurial alertness” (Kirzner, 1992:7).

Over time a more traditional view of the entrepreneur was taken into account- as a person that takes risks bringing different factors of production together (Henderson, 2000). The Austrian school’s perspective is more dynamic considering the entrepreneur crucial for the economic development and as a “catalyst for technological progress” (Mueller, 2000:52). On the other hand, Schumpeter (1934:93) presented a heroic vision of the entrepreneur as someone motivated by the "dream and the will to found a private kingdom"; the "will to conquer: the impulse to fight, to prove oneself superior to others"; and the "joy of creating.” In Schumpeter’s (1934) view the entrepreneur leads the way in creating new industries, which, in turn, precipitate major structural changes in the economy. He also defines the entrepreneurs people who “reform or revolutionize the pattern of production by exploiting an invention…or untried technical possibility for producing a new commodity or producing an old one in a new way…this requires aptitudes that are present in only a small fraction of the population…. “(Schumpeter 1934:132). Old industries are rendered obsolete by a process of "creative destruction"- Schumpeter’s (1934) concept where one creates an enterprise which in turn creates innovation thus forcing the other businesses to either adapt or they will disappear. As the new industries compete with established ones for labour, materials, and investment goods, they drive up the price of these resources. The old industries cannot pass on their higher costs because demand is switching to new products. As the old industries decline, the new ones based on the innovator’s ideas arise. New companies, innovative ones bring the change needed in the economic environment so that the economy keeps on going.

Cantillon (1775) and Aldrich (2001) have two different categorisations for the entrepreneurs: as the first one distinguished between entrepreneurs, landowners, workers within the system, the latter considered the nascent entrepreneurs, the innovators and the reproducers. In both cases there is a clear difference between people that create something new considered by both authors entrepreneurs and those people considered non-entrepreneurs, that just work for a new venture or within it.

Very frequently the notion of entrepreneur is being associated with characteristics as imagination, creativity, self-determination (Henderson, 2000). However, Deakins (1996) suggests that a lot of attention was focused on the personality of the future entrepreneurs and very little on the actual learning process, the individual gaining skills, both from entrepreneurship education but also from innate abilities. “New combinations” by such things as introducing new products or processes, identifying new export markets or sources of supply, or creating new types of organization” is a more clear view upon the tools an entrepreneur might use (Deakins, 1996).

Overall, all the different categorizations bring into discussion the skills and the actual jobs that an entrepreneur has to do. Over time there was not one better than the other and for this paper Schumpeter’s (1934) definition will be considered in regards with the general definition of an entrepreneur and its role. But, when discussing related to entrepreneurs and their motivation and education Deakins (1996) definition will be considered, as it
incorporates characteristics as creativity and self-determination which could be related to culture and education, which are the focus of this paper.

3.1.2 BORN OR MADE?

The discussion on whether the entrepreneurs are “born or made” is an importing point in numerous papers (Henderson, 2000, Shefsky, 1996, Naffziger, 1994, Cunningham, 1991). It derives from the “populist belief” (Gibb, 1987:6) that entrepreneurship as a characteristic is a basic one and that other characteristics such as risk taking or need for achievement are somehow innate to the individual (Gibb, 1987). Shefsky (1996) used stories of entrepreneurs in order to indicate that entrepreneurs in the day by day life have to overcome barriers to achieve their dreams and also failure as an antecedent to success, and that they become entrepreneurs with every experience that they have. Alike, Naffziger (1994) in his research argues that the debate “born or made” has not been clarified and thus there is no characterization yet of the types of genes that those born entrepreneurs have in order to differentiate them from those that will later on become entrepreneurs through education and experience.

On the other hand some people argue that entrepreneurship cannot be though as it is a matter of personality and psychological characteristics (Fayolle, 2008a). An argument used is that talent and temperament cannot be taught (Thomson, 2004). The discussion is still open and researchers on both sides have their own strong arguments.

Despite of this debate, most theories are in the same line with McClelland’s (1961) “big five personality dimensions” regarding the entrepreneur: achievement level, the need for autonomy to create their own future, the locus of control, risk taking attitude and self efficacy. According to McClelland (1961) five personality dimensions a “person with high achievement motivation has ample optimism, wants individual responsibility, enjoys future challenges and novel activities, and is a moderate risk taker” (Gibb, 1987:6).

As further researched, individuals are considered to have entrepreneurial inclinations from very early age, but there are also several factors that influence their motivations and attitudes along their life (Gibb, 1987). Gibb (1982) suggests a stage of life model for the development of entrepreneurs. Passing from an early age and until adulthood and beyond, according to Gibb (1982) an individual is influenced by the community, family, the interactions with the environment, education, etc. His path to entrepreneurship is being built all the time. This argument also comes in favor of the debate related to the entrepreneurs that are born or made, emphasizing that all the things gathered along life are creating an entrepreneur that will later succeed.
As Gibb (1982) suggests- and it can be seen from the Figure. 1 - during their life future entrepreneurs are gathering information, are becoming more and more aware of their future career. Both culture and education are important from early ages in order to form the future entrepreneurs. Whether is the family or the school or the environment, the factors that influence the future entrepreneur in their early ages- adolescence and until early adulthood- are essential elements in their future attitudes and views. Culture becomes a strong stimulant in the adolescence when the community becomes important for the young adult but he also has the choice of the future education. It is the moment when he decides to take a certain road.

The main definitions and perspective that will be further used in the study are summarized in the table below:

**Table 1: Entrepreneur, main definitions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entrepreneur</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schumpeter (1934)</td>
<td>The entrepreneur is someone motivated by the dream and will to found a private kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantillon (1775)</td>
<td>Entrepreneur is someone who assumes risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webster (1776)</td>
<td>5 types of entrepreneurs: Cantillon entrepreneur, administrator entrepreneur, small business owner, independent entrepreneur, industry maker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henderson (2000)</td>
<td>Someone with imagination, creativity and self determination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gibb (1982) | An entrepreneur is being formed during life with the influence of the community, family, friends, and education.

The definition of an entrepreneur that will be used in this paper is on a general level, Schumpeter’s (1934), emphasizing the entrepreneur as someone looking for something new. On a more specific level, when discussing about the education and motivation, Deakins (1996) has a more in-depth and hence more appropriate definition for this paper. He incorporates characteristics as creativity and personality in describing the entrepreneur, which further connect to the purpose of the paper, which is centered on education and culture and their influence on the entrepreneur.

### 3.1.2 THE CREATION OF A NEW VENTURE

Along with trying to define what an entrepreneur is, researchers tried to define a framework for new venture creation, as it is a multidimensional phenomenon and it is one of the elements that differentiates the entrepreneurs from the non-entrepreneurs. The creation process of a new firm varies widely as entrepreneurs vary too. How entrepreneurs find the opportunities, what actions they take, how do they respond to the environmental factors, makes their way to the creation of a new venture unique. Besides an entrepreneurial climate, the creation of a new venture and existence of entrepreneurial activities depends on the availability of prospective entrepreneurs, “individuals possessing personality traits combined with personal circumstances which are likely to lead them to forming a new venture” (Mueller, 2000:54).

The correlation between entrepreneurs and new venture creation has been well established for many years, during the research done in the entrepreneurship field. In Gartner’s (1985) view the creation of a new venture is the result of the interaction of four dimensions: the individual characteristics of the entrepreneur, the competitive entry strategies, the environment’s push and pull factors, and the process in itself shaped by the entrepreneur to create the venture. Another perspective is offered by Shapero and Sokol (1982) who present the process of creating a venture as a “life path change in which situational factors such as negative displacement, along with a positive pull from a partner, mentor, or customer, combined with a perception that the entrepreneurship is both desirable and feasible, leads to the initiation of a new venture” (in Mueller, 2000: 54). Overall, research in this area underlines that the new venture formation does not only depend on economical, social and political factors but also on the existence of individuals predisposed to create new ventures.

Gartner (1985) underlines that the key element in the creation of a new venture are the individuals with expertise, and that a new venture it is not necessary instantaneously produced but it evolves over time. Furthermore, the environment in which the new venture has to look for resources and where its competition will be is an important factor to keep in mind when creating a new venture. Gartner (1985:698) suggests a framework which describes the types of interactions and the entities that are involved in the creation of a new venture.
The figure presented below represents a framework for describing the new venture creation considering four dimensions: the individual (the entrepreneur involved), the organization (the type of firm that will be created), the environment (the factors influencing the new organization), and the new venture process (the actions taken by the entrepreneur to start the venture) (Gartner, 1985:698).

![Diagram of framework for describing new venture creation](source: Gartner, 1985:698)

**Figure 2: A framework for describing new venture creation (Source: Gartner, 1985:698)**

The framework is useful to discover the interactions that exist between the four variables. This way of seeing the venture creation is mostly useful as it takes into account different aspects of creating a venture. The entrepreneur as the individual that performs the action has been seen as a unique person different from other entrepreneurs with his background, and personality. The needs for achievement, the risk taking ability are characteristics that have been used to differentiate entrepreneurs (Gartner, 1985). Nevertheless, Gartner (1985) emphasizes what different researchers found along time as attributes used when describing entrepreneurs based on their background: job satisfaction, previous work experience, entrepreneurial parents, the age, and the education.

Compared to Gartner (1985:698), two years later Gibb (1987) creates his own model of new venture creation, or how he calls it “entrepreneurial response” (Gibb, 1987:9). This model includes attributes of both the environment and the entrepreneur. It suggests some of the factors that might be determining the size and the type of entrepreneurial attributes that will lead to success.
The difference in between the two models presented above is very subtle as basically they are suggesting the same things. Gartner’s (1985:698) is a more simplified model but it has as a center the environment, the entrepreneur and the process in itself, whereas Gibb’s (1987:9) focuses more on the environment but includes also the attributes that entrepreneurs should possess in order to succeed in those environments. On the other hand, there is a better representation of the interaction of different factors in Gartner’s (1985:698)
model than in Gibb’s (1987), where we cannot see how the different aspects interact with each other.

When referring to the process of creating a new venture, Gartner (1985) puts together a list of common behaviors that occur during the process of creating a new venture. Finding the business opportunities, accumulating resources to start the venture, marketing the product or the service, producing it, actually starting the venture and responding to the government and to the society are the most important steps followed by almost all entrepreneurs.

The environment in which the new venture will be created is an important influential factor, because as Gartner (1985:700) underlines “entrepreneurs do not operate in vacuums-they respond to their environments”. In the literature two views over the environment are considered: the environmental determinism which considered the environment an outside set of condition to which the venture has to adapt, and the strategic view which considers the environment is being created along with the venture according to their perspectives (Gartner, 1985). The environment overall can stimulate entrepreneurship through a set of conditions that enhance the creation of new ventures like the availability of capital, the skills of the labor force, accessibility of suppliers/customers, the attitudes of the population and the governmental influences.

The future new organization in itself has not been very often considered in the literature as a factor affecting the entrepreneur in its decision when creating the venture. The strategic decisions taken, but also the future structure- partners, juridical form- influence the entrepreneur’s perspective, sometimes having to adapt and sometimes changing the concept.

Overall, the variables that affect the entrepreneur in his way of creating a new venture were summarized by Gartner (1985:702) in the following figure (Figure 4).

The model presents the interaction between the four factors involved in the process of creating a new venture. Gartner (1985:702) suggests a list of factors that should be taken into consideration when starting a business, as they interact with each other and thus the outcome can change all the time. Out of those factors in this paper will be considered only the ones relevant based on the chosen purpose. The focus will rather be on the individuals and environmental categories which relate with both culture and education, which in turn are the main research points in this paper. Among those there might be factors that wont necessary be touched upon but in a way or another will be involved- like for example the attitude of the population which will not be the main concern but when talking about culture it might arise. Even though it might seem that the organization in itself that will be created is left aside, the goal here is to find out more about the education and culture and their influence and to mainly think of the incipient stage of the new venture.
Figure 2, 3 and 4, presented above, represent models that were developed years ago, and that were created taking into account the situation and the research done at that point. Nevertheless, they are still accurate as studies nowadays are still basing on them and referencing them (Mueller, 2002).

In a more recent study, Townsend (2010) argues that the belief in one’s abilities triggers the success of the new ventures. According to their findings, even though entrepreneurs enter the business environment with a high level of uncertainty, over time these entrepreneurs gain feedback and trust in their own entrepreneurial skills and thus succeed in their new venture. Townsend (2010) compared with Gibb (1987:9) and Gartner (1985:702) underlines the importance of the entrepreneurial abilities rather than the influence of the environment on the new venture. For him the main actor is the entrepreneur in itself.

The creation of a new venture has been described in different ways according to the point of view taken. I will be considering Gibb (1987:9) model as it has its focus on the environmental factors that would make a business to work. As this paper considers
education and culture as factors influencing the new venture creation process, Gibb’s (1987) model is the most appropriate.

As a summary of this section, the table below presents the concepts and definitions that will most be consider for this study:

**Table 2: New venture creation, main definitions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New venture creation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gartner (1985)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gibb (1987)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Townsend (2000)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those definitions were used in order to better understand the process of a new venture creation, to understand the factors that would influence it. The literature in this section is useful in relating also the culture and education to the process of creation of a new venture. As it can be seen, for example, from Gartner’s (1985) model the environment interacts constantly with the entrepreneur and thus it constitutes an important aspect for the new venture.
3.2 CULTURE AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATIONS

3.2.1 DEFINING CULTURE

Cultural values are deeply rooted in a society and therefore are less influenced by one’s experiences or economic development or even political changes (Mueller, 2002). As a general knowledge, culture has a strong influence on different human behaviors which would also include the entrepreneurial one.

The most used theory regarding the different dimensions culture has is the one Hofstede first proposed in 1980. Hofstede (1980) defines culture as being “a set of shared values, beliefs, and expected behaviors” (in Hayton, 2002:33). He refers to the cultural values that refer to the society’s attitudes to entrepreneurial behavior as risk taking and initiative, in other words how the society does perceives the entrepreneurs. Those shared values shape the institutions and the social systems in a country and thus influence on the entrepreneurship activity (Hofstede, 1980, Hayton, 2002).

The five dimensions of culture that Hofstede (1993) uses to define characterize culture are:

- **Power distance index** measures the perception of individuals regarding the unequal distribution of power.

- **Individualism** describes the extent to which people are acting individually, the opposite of it is collectivism and relates to the level of bonds that exist in the society.

- **Masculinity** refers to the role the women and man are holding in a society, as when the man is considered to hold high positions and the women is expected to just take care of the children the masculinity is rather high in that society.

- **Uncertainty avoidance index** represents the extent to which individuals are striving to have order.

- **Long term orientation** explains the level to which individuals think of their future rather than on present actions.

These dimensions have been used by other researchers as well in their papers underlining the fact that until now they represent a solid base when considering culture. Hofstede (1993) in his research considers different countries and examines its cultural characteristics. Sweden is among those but Romania is not included. The five dimensions will still be used to some extent in trying to understand the importance and influence of culture on the intentions of creating a new venture.

Rodrigues (1998) examines culture in a similar way to Hofstede (1993) but adding other characteristics too, as shared decision- making/few in charge, high-context opposed to low-context, but also decision based on data opposed to emotions. Opposed to this type of view is Hall’s (1995) view of culture. He characterizes culture through an ABC, for its components seeing culture as the layers of an onion, as it can be seen from the figure below.
Artifacts and etiquette are the visible and concrete things that everyone can easily see when interacting with a new culture (Hall, 1995).

Behaviors and actions relate to things that are more subtle, the way people do things, how they communicate to each other (Hall, 1995).

The third factor are the core morals, beliefs and values which are considered to be the deepest level (Hall, 1995), it refers to what people consider to be right or wrong, their perceptions on things.

This way of seeing the culture is in line with Bakic-Miric (2008) research but also with Merriam Webster Dictionary (2010) which defines culture as “the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group”.

For this study culture will be seen as an onion with different layers, as Hall’s (1995) model. This way of viewing the culture will help understand better what part of culture is influencing the students to create new venture or not. Being depicted into layers makes it easier to interpret and understand when studying it after the focus group and interviews. Having it being depicted into three different categories it is easier to understand, for example, what represents the artifacts of what the students are saying- which are the most obvious cultural aspects, and then to go deeper in seeing the core values and beliefs that can be interpreted from the messages there are sending, their answers.

Table 3 below presents a summary of the main concepts and definitions that will be used in the study.

Table 3: Culture, main aspects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hofstede (1980)</td>
<td>“culture is a set of shared values, beliefs, expected behaviors”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall (1995)</td>
<td>The ABC model (Artifacts, Behaviors, Core morals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shane (1995)</td>
<td>Based on Hofstede (1980) dimensions, tried to relate the dimensions to the level of innovation in a country. Some cultures are motivating more entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayton (2002)</td>
<td>“culture is captured in different forms in behaviors” (association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the cultural aspects will be analyzed through the eyes of the students, Hall’s (1995) model is the most clear for this study. His model of three layers onion, ABC, shows that there are layers of culture that can be grasped at different level of observation and analysis. The outer layer, artifacts would be the easiest one to see and analyze as it represents the obvious things that one can see when interacting with a new culture. Second will be the behaviors and actions which take longer time to observe and the last are the core morals and beliefs which can only be identified when discussing and understanding one’s views and perspectives.

3.2.2 ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND CULTURE

During time research was done in order to try to relate the levels of entrepreneurial activity with national culture (Schumpeter, 1934, Hofstede 1980). Among the research done three main streams could be seen: the first one is related to the impact that culture has on the entrepreneurial outcomes; the second one focuses on the association between the national culture and the entrepreneur’s individual characteristics; and the third one studies the correlation between national culture and corporate entrepreneurship (Hayton, 2002). Mainly the research was focused on the relationship between culture and entrepreneurial behaviors.

Hofstede’s (1980) work was representative in the field and many researchers based their studies on his cultural dimensions. Among others some of the dimensions considered when studying culture related to entrepreneurship are the individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power-distance and masculinity-femininity (Hofstede, 1980). Authors like Hofstede(1980) and Shane (1992) were, among others, offering definitions of those dimensions in relation with entrepreneurship, and the general hypothesis was that entrepreneurial activities are facilitated by a culture that is “high in individualism, low in uncertainty avoidance, low in power-distance, and high in masculinity” (Hayton, 2002). In other words, a culture where individual opinions are more appreciated that group ones, where people are less hesitant to change their employment status, and more willing to take risks, but also putting high values on independence, considering that everyone has the same rights, and nevertheless in which the need of recognition is high are attributes for a perfect environment for entrepreneurial activities.

In Table 1 are presented some of the studies that tried to answer to the question whether culture is related to the entrepreneurial level in a country. They all based their research on Hofstede’s (1980) model using its dimensions in order to research either the association between culture and national rates of innovation, or the interaction among culture, beliefs concerning entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intentions, or even if culture is directly connected to the rates of new firm formation. Shane (1992) for example, took as a base Hofstede's (1980) dimensions of individualism and power-distance and tried to related them to the level of innovation, arguing that individualism is positively correlated but
power-distance is negatively associated, thus meaning that a country has a culture that motivates individualism and independence but not necessary equality. Davidsson (1995) examined six regions from Sweden and discovered that there was a correlation between entrepreneurial values, new firm formation and the beliefs related to entrepreneurship (Hayton, 2002).

Table 4: Studies of national culture and entrepreneurship at the country level (Source: Hayton, 2002:36)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Research question</th>
<th>Measure of national culture</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Data sources</th>
<th>Major findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shane (1992)</td>
<td>What is the association between national culture and national rate of innovation?</td>
<td>Individualism, power distance (Hofstede, 1980)</td>
<td>33 countries</td>
<td>Cultural values based on Hofstede’s (1980) results and compared with per capita rates of innovation</td>
<td>National rates of innovation are positively correlated with individualism and power distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shane (1993)</td>
<td>What effect does national culture have on national rates of innovation?</td>
<td>Individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity (Hofstede, 1980)</td>
<td>33 countries</td>
<td>Cultural values based upon Hofstede’s (1980) results and compared with per capita rates of innovation in 1975 and 1980</td>
<td>National rates of innovation are positively correlated with individualism and negatively correlated with uncertainty avoidance and power distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davidsson (1995)</td>
<td>What is the interaction among structural characteristics, culture and beliefs concerning entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intentions?</td>
<td>- an entrepreneurial values index that includes dimensions such as achievement motivation, locus of control, need of autonomy and change orientation. - entrepreneurial beliefs: societal contribution, financial payoffs, perceived risk.</td>
<td>2200 individuals: 6 regions in Sweden</td>
<td>Survey (cultural values measured by survey)</td>
<td>Scores on the entrepreneurial values index are correlated with regional rates of new firm formation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davidsson &amp; Wiklund (1995)</td>
<td>Controlling for economic/structural factors, is culture associated with differences in rates of new firm formation?</td>
<td>- Values: Change orientation, need for achievement, need for autonomy - Beliefs: Societal contribution, financial payoffs, perceived risk, social status, know-how</td>
<td>1313 individuals: 6 regions in Sweden</td>
<td>Survey (cultural values measured by survey)</td>
<td>Cultural values and beliefs have a small but statistically significant association with regional rates of new firm formation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the majority of studies, the authors found that industrial countries would positively influence values that support entrepreneurial activities (Hayton, 2002), in most of the cases the national culture would influence the “supportiveness of the environment so as to make it more legitimate to form a business” (Hayton, 2002: 37). Culture was seen also to influence the beliefs and values of individuals so that to create potential entrepreneurs.
Hayton (2002) developed a model that relates the national culture to entrepreneurship, which is based on the argument that the national culture is “captured in different forms in behavioral research” (Hayton, 2002: 45). Furthermore, culture is defined as being a moderator in the relationship between contextual factors and entrepreneurial outcomes (Hayton, 2002). In other words meaning that culture helps and develops entrepreneurial behaviors rather than being a cause of them. The model presented below emphasis the idea that cultural characteristics can influence and transform the economical and institutional environment in order to influence the entrepreneurship outcomes (Hayton, 2002). The social institutions are considered to reflect the cultural values, and as can be seen from Figure 3, cultural values further more shape the institutions and create the environment for entrepreneurial activities. These types of values are important when looking closely to the education and culture, as in this paper. This figure shows the importance of culture and how it can be found in different other aspects that lead to entrepreneurship. Even though at first sight there might not be that many connections between culture and entrepreneurial activities, after breaking it down into smaller categories it can be seen at every level the existence of something from the culture. In this paper, the main focus will be on the cultural values and the beliefs that exist related to young entrepreneurs.

![Diagram of cultural values and entrepreneurship](image)

Figure 6: A model of culture’s association with entrepreneurship (Source: Hayton, 2002: 46)

Even though entrepreneurs or future entrepreneurs might share common characteristics, universal traits, cultural specific attributes, and motivational differences will almost all the time make them different. As Thomas (2000) points out, compared to American
entrepreneurs which are “characterized by rugged individualism” (Thomas, 2000:290), Asian entrepreneurs will rely more on their families when creating a business.

Nevertheless, as McGrath, MacMillan, Yang and Tsai (1992) underline in their paper “people who are from live to work cultures respond to the excitement and self-fulfilling aspects of entrepreneurship, and people from work to live cultures respond better to arguments that stress upward mobility” (McGrath, 1992:454). As mentioned above, culture has its branches in all aspects of one’s life, and thus an entrepreneur born in a certain culture will most probably be conducted by certain unwritten principles that he always knew.

Overall, the authors (Hayton, 2002, Hall, 1995, Mueller, 2002) are emphasizing that the individual characteristics of the entrepreneurs make them unique. Culture can be found in their views and actions when conducting a business. One is born in a certain culture and thus it might be hard to separate what is from culture and what are one’s characteristics related to its personality. In order to study culture, in this paper, questions were prepared to understand how culture influences their decisions, and to try to differentiate what represents the cultural aspects from their innate characteristics.

### 3.3 ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EDUCATION

Entrepreneurship education has come very far since the first program proposed by Myles Mace in 1947 at the Harvard University (Katz, 2003). Bechard (2005) underlines that in many cases the education in entrepreneurship remains closer to craft than science, based more on experiences than on academic approaches. Entrepreneurship education is “lacking academic credibility and there is no clear return on investment to society from the point of view of politicians and decision makers who have invested a lot of resources in entrepreneurship teaching programs” (Fayolle, 2008a:325). As stated by researchers in entrepreneurship education (Low, 2001, Katz, 2008), this field is still “very young, emergent, and in its adolescence (or infancy) phase” (Fayolle, 2008a: 325). Nevertheless, nowadays “entrepreneurship education is the fastest-growing course of study on campuses” (Gray, 2006:36) emphasizing even more its importance.

In the entrepreneurship education field there is no common framework yet regarding how to teach it or educate it (Fayolle, 2008b). Fayolle (2008b) argues that the word “entrepreneurship” is polysemous: it can relate to attitudes as autonomy, creativity and risk taking but also can be related to the creation of new ventures. On the other hand Hindle (2007) articulates the need to define entrepreneurship education around its research object - the field of entrepreneurship which could be defined as “the examination of how, by whom, and with what effects, opportunities to create future goods and services are discovered, evaluated and exploited” (Shane, 2000:218). Furthermore, then entrepreneurship education might as well be defined as “knowledge transfer regarding how, by whom, and with what effects, opportunities to create future goods and services are discovered, evaluated and exploited” (Hindle, 2007 in Fayolle, 2008b:573). Those definitions echo the words of previous researchers in their attempt to define entrepreneurship: Schumpeter (1934),
Kirzner (1992) and Gibb (1987), underlining that those “old” concepts and definitions about entrepreneurship are still the base of the nowadays research and that it constitutes a valuable resource.

Different goals in entrepreneurship education have been found by researchers. Kirby (2007) sees education in entrepreneurship as it is “concerned with raising awareness of entrepreneurship- with teaching students about entrepreneurship and, in particular, their roles and functions in the economy and society […] For others it is more than this. For them it is about developing the attributes of the successful entrepreneur in their students. […] In contrast others (perhaps a small minority) are more concerned with education through enterprise- with using the new venture creation process to help students acquire a range of both business understanding and transferable skills and competences” (in Fayolle, 2008b:575). In contrast to this definition, Fayolle (2008b:575) suggests that “entrepreneurship education should aim at developing a taste for entrepreneurship” and to stimulate the enterprise spirit towards new venture creation, making the students to see in entrepreneurship education a career option.

In summary, there are various different definitions that were proposed by different researchers, as mentioned before, considering different aspects of the contexts in which the entrepreneurs act. Kirby’s (2007) definition captures the complexity of the phenomenon, covering the different aspects that might be related also to culture.

University education is an important factor in forming the intent to start a career or a business after graduation (Roudaki, 2009). Various researchers had as center of interest studying the effects of education on entrepreneurial activities (Henderson and Robertson, 2000, Kirby, 2005) and their findings suggest that university programs should not be neglecting this type of economical activities. In their papers, the authors argue that education and advisors are an important element in the formation of future entrepreneurs. Peterman and Kennedy (2003) show that even though it might seem that in the past studies have shown that entrepreneurs are “less well educated” more recent studies underline the fact that actually they have a solid background.

“Entrepreneurial educators must be more than cheerleaders. We can no longer simply say ‘entrepreneurship is different.’ Entrepreneurship is now a part of the mainstream. Perhaps the greatest danger of all is that the hardy band of entrepreneurial scholars will become like many successful businesses. Business and scholars fail by not valuing change. Guarding the past, espousing orthodoxy, and refusing to see the wisdom inherent in the challenges of the young and inexperienced will lead to the same problems in education as in business (Stevenson, 2000:7, in Kuratko (2005:586)).” Thus, Kuratko (2005) in his article presents some of the challenges that might occur for the entrepreneurship education. Among others, there is the lack of professors to create programs in entrepreneurship, which have to expand their way of teaching, in order to include new and innovative approaches. “Entrepreneurship educators must have the same innovative drive that is expected from entrepreneurship students” (Kuratko, 2005:591), meaning that there has to be the same passion to teach others to become entrepreneurs as the students have in order to become that. And as entrepreneurship is characterized by innovativeness and creativity there has to be a continuous process of acquiring new information, techniques, and ways of teaching in order to keep up with the development of the real business world. Henderson and
Robertson (2000) suggest that the unavailability of a model, the discouragement form teachers and the unsupportive media are barriers that young entrepreneurs have to overcome. Mgaya and Magembe (2007) underline that factors as productivity, support, income, stability are essential in stimulating students to become entrepreneurs. Further, Kirby (2004) suggests that the educational system should respond to the needs of the future entrepreneurs that it should adapt, have more practical aspects. In this regard, Hannon, Collins and Smith (2005) in their study recommend that higher education should promote motivation and the capacity of students to develop entrepreneurial activities.

Rinne (2005:112) suggests that universities should anyway “function in an entrepreneurial fashion, but in an academic sense, not in an economic sense” (Rinne, 2005:112). Kuratko (2005) argues whether the gap between the business world and the universities has been “bridged” or the process was just slowed, as students in order to get a deeper understanding of entrepreneurial practices need “the exposure to those entrepreneurs who have paid the price, faced the challenges, and endured the failures” (Kuratko, 2005:589), which are important aspects in order to know how the real world works. Both authors agree in their research that there is a piece of the puzzle that misses and that universities would be the ones that will have to find a way to incorporate what is lacking: the interaction between the real world and the academic one.

Gibb (1987) underlines the differences that exist between the focus of the academic world compared to the entrepreneurial one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational focus on:</th>
<th>Entrepreneurial focus on:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The past</td>
<td>The future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical analysis</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Insight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive understanding</td>
<td>Active understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute detachment</td>
<td>Emotional involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation of analysis</td>
<td>Manipulation of events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written communication and</td>
<td>Personal communication and influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutrality</td>
<td>Problem or opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 7: The focus of learning (Gibb, 1987: 17)*

While the educational field focuses mostly on the past (journals, books, theory) the entrepreneurs need to think of the future, see the opportunities, innovate. Furthermore, as can be seen from Figure 7, their personal communication skills are rather more important that the written ones, as networking is one of their most important activities, as well as actively understanding and acting quickly rather than taking the time to analyze (Gibb, 1987:17). The effects of such an educational system could probably be seen in the success or failure of the new entrepreneurs, or in the number of new venture creations. Some of the effects were gathered by Gibb (1987:18) in the figure below.
The entrepreneur having limited resources will mostly act with “gut feeling” (Gibb, 1987:18), recognizing the hidden agendas of their competitors, and making decisions based on their own judgment. Moreover, the above figure shows that the pressure that comes along will enhance taking decisions and finding solutions quickly compared to the educational perspective of encouraging critical analysis and seeking for solutions in different parts.

The gap in between the left column and the right one from the Figure 8 could be minimalised by changing the way of learning, the practicability of the subjects. Gibb (1987:18) recommends learning by doing- involving the students in problem solving in real-world situations, helping students to develop more independence from external sources of information and think by themselves, encouraging the use of feelings and attitudes. In this line, the educational framework proposed by Fayolle (2008a:572) tries to clarify the five most important questions related to education for future entrepreneurs: why (the goals, objectives), what (the content, theories), for whom (the target), how (methods), for which results (evaluation).

**The objectives and goals** refer to the social needs in the society. As mentioned before, Kirby (2007) offers a complex view of the goals of entrepreneurial education which imply teaching students about entrepreneurship, through enterprise and for enterprise.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University / business school?</th>
<th>Entrepreneurial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Critical judgment after analysis of large amounts of information</td>
<td>1. “Gut feel” decision making with limited information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Understanding and recalling the information itself</td>
<td>2. Understanding the values of those who transmit and filter the information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Assuming goals away</td>
<td>3. Recognizing the widely varied goals of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Seeking to verify absolute truth by study of information</td>
<td>4. Making decisions on the basis of judgment of trust and competence of people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Understanding basic principles of society in the metaphysical sense</td>
<td>5. Seeking to apply and adjust in practice to basic principles of society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Seeking the correct answer with time to do it</td>
<td>6. Developing the most appropriate solution under pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Learning in the classroom</td>
<td>7. Learning while and through doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Gleaning information from experts and authoritative sources</td>
<td>8. Gleaning information personally from any and everywhere and weighing it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Evaluation through written assessments</td>
<td>9. Evaluation by judgment of people and events through direct feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Success in learning measured by knowledge based examination pass</td>
<td>10. Success in learning by solving problems and learning from failure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 8: Effects of focus on the process and utilization of learning (Source: Gibb, 1987:18)*
The content of such an education, based on Hindle (2007) findings could be separated into three dimensions:

**Professional dimension** which relates to more practical knowledge as know-what (what an individual has to do), know-how (how an individual deals within different situations), know-who (the network of useful people in a given context).

**The spiritual dimension** which enables entrepreneurs to position themselves in relation with a certain event.

**The theoretical dimension** which is related to theories and knowledge used to better understand a phenomenon.

The target of entrepreneurship education is important to be clear when designing such a program, so that everyone to have the same goals, and background.

The methods should include the use of real-life cases, the writing of business plans, the development of a new venture creation project, but also it may include more traditional approaches such as interviews with entrepreneurs (Fayolle, 2008a).

The evaluation stage is considered to be unique for every education program. It should consider the social benefits, the skills acquired and the preference for self-employment.

As suggested in the Figure 9, all those phases interact with each other, they influence themselves and in order to define one you have to define each of them. Educators have to pay a lot of attention when designing such entrepreneurship education programs as there are many factors to consider (Fayolle, 2008b).

The dilemma that Kuratko (2005) defines it as security-risk dilemma, referring to the school system as such that promotes risk taking qualities that entrepreneurs should have but that the teacher prefer “playing” it safely, and “leaving the challenges of entrepreneurship education for later in their career” (Kuratko, 2005:589) is one of the problems that arise from a bad design of the educational program, as mentioned before. In this case the message sent to students becomes ambiguous and in spite of having a clear vision on what entrepreneurs have to do and should do, and how, they will start wondering why their professors aren’t promoting the same values. That is a challenge that comes also from the idea that entrepreneurship courses are rather attached to business programs, than having their own program which has some business electives attached to it, as Kuratko (2005) suggests. One way to start promoting, creating and developing entrepreneurs should be by...
first creating the proper environment for them to exist, thus implying proper universities, networks with real entrepreneurs, linkages with businesses in the area, and nevertheless, journals of entrepreneurship- not articles written in management journals, as added ones, but as a different concept with different attributes that usual management or business subjects.

In order to develop entrepreneurs, universities have created special programs and trainings that would attract more and more people into this field (Henderson, 2000): programs that aim to small business start-ups which focus on functional areas as how to raise capital, marketing, etc.; secondly the continuing small business education which aims to update specific skills and to develop new ones; and the third refers to the small business education which is mainly focused on raising the attention of the students on a possible such carrier. There has been discussed whether such classes, which involve “theory and conceptual thinking, involve large amounts of information and knowledge dissemination, tend to be teacher or trainer-led, and have a general, subject or functional focus” (Henderson, 2000: 280) are actually the opposite of how an entrepreneur should act. Operating based on intuition, taking risks and acting in a very short period of time and based on limited information is the usual context for an entrepreneur rather than being prepared to analyze and develop plans that would take time.

Taken as a whole, entrepreneurship education is seen still at its beginnings (Low, 2001) and thus there is not much experience in creating appropriate programs for the students needs. This paper tries to find out how such a program would influence the students towards creating a new venture. Gibb (1987:17) model presents clearly the opposite ways the academic education and the entrepreneurial one function. Based on this model, I will try to find more from the students in order to see, at the present time, how such programs are being taught.

As a conclusion of this section the table below unites the concepts and definitions that will be further used in the study:

**Table 5: Entrepreneurship education, main concepts**

| Entrepreneurship education | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| **Fayolle (2008)**         | The education should develop a taste to entrepreneurship. He developed a model with 5 questions to ask when creating an entrepreneurship program |
| **Kuratko (2005)**         | Challenges in entrepreneurship education is the lack of professors |
| **Henderson and Robertson (2000)** | Challenges for students: unavailability of a model, discouragements from teachers, unsupportive media |
| **Gibb (1987)**            | Underlines that the academic world is too theoretical, killing the entrepreneurial spirit |
This study follows the suggestions of Gibb (1987), advocating a comparison in between the traditional academic education and an entrepreneurial one. He shows the different ways an academic education functions and how and what it teaches, but also how entrepreneurs act and thus how the entrepreneurship education should be designed. As for this study there were chosen only students from a business program, the entrepreneurship education can only be found through the entrepreneurship courses that exist within those programs.

### 3.4 SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature reviews was divided into three main sections, each focusing on one of the main points of the research question.

The first one discussed the nature of the entrepreneur and whether they are born or made. The previous literature in the field argues that there is not yet a common definition of an entrepreneur and thus it is hard to say which are the needed characteristics and skills. Furthermore, the old discussion related to whether entrepreneurs are born or made has not got to any conclusion either, as on both sides there are authors arguing for their view. The creation of a new venture is also discussed in relation to the environment where the entrepreneur will develop its business.

The next section, dealt with the culture and the entrepreneurial orientations. Culture was defined through different models arguing its relation with inner characteristics of an entrepreneur and the society’s view on entrepreneurship. The relationship between entrepreneurship and culture is an ongoing research as culture is such an abstract concept that the researcher could not yet cover all its aspects.

The last part, tries to better understand how the entrepreneurship education is being conducted and what kind of background it offers to the future entrepreneurs. The gap between the theoretical way of teaching entrepreneurship and the needed skills in the real life is presented from different author’s perspectives.

The literature review offered a base for conducting the empirical research, and to better understand the gap in the literature: how does culture and education influence students’ entrepreneurial intentions.

Below are summarized the main concepts and views of the authors cited in the literature review.

After conducting the literature review, several concepts felt closer to the purpose of the study. Those will be the one that will be further considered when doing the analysis. Below are presented the concepts and views chosen for this study.

- **The definition of an entrepreneur** that will be used in this paper is on a general level, Schumpeter’s (1934), emphasizing the entrepreneur as someone looking for something new. On a more specific level, when discussing about the education and motivation, Deakins (1996) has a more in-depth and hence more appropriate definition for this paper. He incorporates characteristics as creativity and personality
in describing the entrepreneur, which further connect to the purpose of the paper, which is centered on education and culture and their influence on the entrepreneur.

- **Culture:** As the cultural aspects will be analyzed through the eyes of the students, Hall’s (1995) model it will be the most clear for this study. His model of three layers onion, ABC, shows that there are layers of culture that can be grasped at different level of observation and analysis. The outer layer, artifacts would be the easiest one to see and analyze as it represents the obvious things that one can see when interacting with a new culture. Second will be the behaviors and actions which take longer time to observe and the last are the core morals and beliefs which can only be identified when discussing and understanding one’s views and perspectives.

- **Relating to the education in entrepreneurship,** this study follows the suggestions of Gibb (1987), advocating a comparison in between the traditional academic education and an entrepreneurial one. He shows the different ways an academic education functions and how and what it teaches, but also what an entrepreneur is focused one, and what and how should he be learning.
4. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

In this chapter the methodological approach is presented, together with the phases of the research as they were conducted: literature review, data collection and data analysis. They will be explained and their choice will be justified.

4.1 RESEARCH PHASES

The research process started with a literature review of the existing theory and articles published in the field, followed by the data collection and data analysis. During the data analysis the author considered that some aspects were not clear enough and a second round of data collection and data analysis was conducted.

The following figure represents the steps taken in the research and depicts the structure of this section:

The first phase in conducting the research was the literature review, as previous studies help in creating a base for the present study but also helps in better defining the existing gap in the research. As stated in Chapter 2, Literature Search, the sources are mainly journal articles and few representative books in the field. The theoretical frame of reference resulting from the literature review will be used when analyzing the findings after conducting the focus groups and the interviews in order to better understand certain aspects.

The second phase was the data collection. The purpose of this study is to explore the influences of culture and education in students’ intents towards entrepreneurial activities. Bryman (1997:77) underlines that the most important quality of a qualitative research is that it aims “to view and express events, actions, norms, and beliefs from the respondents’ perspective”. Hammersley (1992:165) also emphasizes that the main role of a qualitative study is to understand the perspective of the studied people as it is essential when
describing people’s behaviors. Take these into account; a qualitative method would be the most appropriate for this study.

Furthermore, a qualitative research as seen by Bryman (2008) has three main features: an inductive view- relating to the relationship between theory and research and considering that the theory is being created out of the research done, an epistemological position described as interpretivism, underlining that the focus is on understanding the social world through the eyes of the participants, and an ontological view described as constructivism which implies that the social properties are the outcome of the interaction between individuals. This is in the same line with the epistemology and ontology approach chosen, presented in Chapter Two. For this study, I will try to understand the effects of culture and education on the intentions that students have towards creating a new venture through the student’s eyes- interpretivism- also considering that the culture and education are not separated from the students, they are evolving and changing in the same pace with the students-constructivism.

The reality seen by the interpretivists is dynamic, evolving and there might be a wide array of interpretations of realities and social acts (Malhotra, 2007). And since reality is seen differently by people there is no objective truth, but as some views and perceptions are shared by more people those can be considered an objective reality (Easterby-Smith, 1991).

A qualitative method does not automatically imply a specific procedure, as there are several different qualitative techniques such as focus groups, interviews, observations and data analysis (Malhotra, 2007). As the purpose is to study the views and opinions of the students an unstructured setting would probably provide the most information. Thus, a focus group, which is “a form of group interview in which there are several participants; there is an emphasis in the questioning on a particular fairly tightly defined topic; and the accent is upon interaction within the group and the joint construction of meaning” (Bryman, 2008:474), would be the most appropriate for the study. Students are usually interacting easily and as the subject is not considered to be tabu neither in Sweden nor in Romania, an open conversation can be held.

The majority of previous research on entrepreneurship focusing in defining it and clarifying its characteristics is done in a more qualitative way, as in literature reviews and comparisons in between previous research (Aldrich, 2001, Gartner, 1988), whereas the previous research on culture and education was mostly done with quantitative methods such as surveys and questionnaires (Mueller, 2000, Collins, 2004, Kolvereid, 1997). Those quantitative researches were done during large periods of time and on big samples of students from different countries. For this study, as mentioned before, different types of interviews were chosen as they enable a deeper understanding of certain aspects.
4.2 CHOICE OF COUNTRIES AND UNIVERSITIES

Before conducting the study the researcher chose two different countries and two different universities. The criteria used were the different entrepreneurship level and the difference in culture. Furthermore, there had to be similarities too: universities similar in number of students and educational programs.

Considering those criteria, two countries were chosen- Sweden and Romania, and two universities within those countries- Umeå University and Babes-Bolyai University.

Sweden is a country with a population of approximately 8 million people, part of the Nordic Countries. Sweden is considered to have an industrial structure, which has been changing a lot in the past years, according to Eupreface.org. Furthermore, Sweden has a relative low level of entrepreneurship, according to the same source, where only 8.2% are newly started companies, percentage which is below the European average of 9.7%. According to the Global Entrepreneurship monitor in 2002 Sweden was ranked the 5th least entrepreneurial country within European Union. There are very few programs that stimulate entrepreneurial initiatives which have as a starting point a more simplified regulatory system and a better return on capital (Beach, 2001). Furthermore, the Swedish culture seems to make the individuals safer in a job rather than motivating them to take the risk and have entrepreneurial initiatives.

On the other hand, Romania is an ex-communist country where people were thought that a job is the safe choice and the one that will bring them the needed money. With approximately 22 million people, Romania has just started to develop and it is far from most of the other European countries with the economical level. Nevertheless, the integration in the European Union has boosted the confidence in the people and the number of start-up businesses is increasing. CEBR (Center for Entrepreneurship and Business Research) has made a research concerning the level of entrepreneurial activity existing in Romania and out of 2000 individuals investigated, 20% conduct entrepreneurial activity. The culture in Romania is not necessary motivating and increasing the level of entrepreneurship as people are being taught that the security of a job is better than the possible failure of a business (Driga, 2010)

Related to the Universities chosen, in Sweden Umeå University has around 35000 students each year and consists of four main faculties. Umeå was declared “Sweden’s student city of the year in 2006” because of the many activities the university creates for its students. It was founded in 1965 having a long tradition in Sweden. It has many international programs and approximately 500 exchange students each year. In the same line, Babes-Bolyai University From Romania, was founded in 1959 and it is one of the oldest universities in Romania having an old tradition. It has annually around 40000 students and 5000 in exchange programs. It offers many different faculties and an internationalized campus.
4.3 FOCUS GROUPS

As mentioned in the Choice of research method section, a qualitative method was chosen. Afterwards, the interview was seen as the most appropriate as it allows a deeper understanding and offers the possibility to see different angles of the aspects in question.

First two focus groups were conducted. A focus group allows the researcher to find out why the participants feel the way they do (Bryman, 2008), as the focus group allows the participants to probe what they think and to argue for their opinions. As underlined by Bryman (2008) an individual might answer in a certain way when interviewed alone, but when in a focus group as he listens to others he might want to modify his view or to agree with something that he would not have thought of before. Furthermore, in a focus group the participants are challenged to think their opinions and to argue for them, whereas in an interview the participants are only answering to questions, sometimes not even being consistent through out the interview. The students in this study will have as topic the culture and education and those are themes close to their knowledge. And as both themes are broad, the focus group guide will try to structure the discussion but still offering the participants the possibility to discuss the subject from different angles and argue for their views.

Nevertheless, after the analysis of the focus groups there was still not clear the effect culture and education have on the students entrepreneurial intentions. Thus, individual interviews were conducted. Individual interviews were chosen as more precise information was needed and a personal discussion would bring a deeper understanding.

4.3.1 DEFINING FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups are a “discussion conducted by a trained moderator in a non-structured and a natural manner with a small group of participants” (Malhotra, 2007:182). One of the main characteristics of focus groups is the creative discussion (Malhotra, 2007) and the amount of information that can be obtained. The group member have time to think before answering and using words that are confortable for them they can express freely. In this case, talking about the education or culture that might influence their intentions towards new venture creation students can be stimulated by each others’ opinion and thus revealing more information. On the other hand, some students might feel intimidated by others and would not feel confortable to expose their thoughts (Malhotra, 2007).

As the advantages of focus groups, Malhotra (2007) considers the nine S. Among those the most relevant for this study are: synergy- related to the wider range of information that will be gathered from different individuals, snowballing effect- connected to the fact that a persons’ comment can trigger a chain reaction from the other participants, thus new ideas can easily be developed, stimulation- after the moderator presents the topic it also stimulates the participants to come in with their own ideas, security and spontaneity which are related to the feeling of security and confort that a group with some similar ideas would offer to their participants.
On the other hand, the focus groups has its own disadvantages. Below there are presented the disadvantages seen by Malhotra (2007) and how I tried to overcome them during the study. Among the five M’s (the disadvantages) seen by Malhotra (2007) there are: *misjudgement* – related to the analysis and interpretation of the data, which in the case of focus groups might be harder to do, but in this study it can be avoided by having precise questions and the answers were easily transcribed, a second disadvantage would be the *messiness* – related to the codification of the results which comes from the unstructured nature of the focus groups, which in this case was avoided by having a focus group guide in order to have a certain structure and to make sure every aspect is being covered; a third disadvantage would be the *moderation* – relating to the way the focus group is being moderated, and as the participants were students as the author there was not very hard to establish a certain connection and to have a relaxed atmosphere; furthermore, the fourth disadvantage considered is *misrepresentation* – related to the generalisation of the results on wider groups, which in the present study is not being done as the results will only reflect the opinions of students from two different universities in two different countries, thus it can not be generalised to wider populations than that; and the fifth disadvantage is *meeting*, which is related to actual aspect of gathering the participants, which for this study was not a problem as the students agreed easily on a date and a place for the focus group.
4.3.2 PLANNING THE FOCUS GROUPS

When planning the focus group, several steps are important not to be missed. In Figure 10 below the steps as seen by Malhotra (2007) are presented.

**Figure 10: Planning the focus group - steps (source: Malhotra, 2007:189)**

The first step when planning for a focus group is creating the research question and fully understanding what information is needed in order to be able to answer to it. Based on the research question, a literature review was conducted in order to actually see the gap in the knowledge.

The next step was to point out how the focus groups would bring the needed information. Furthermore, it is important to have clear what information you need to find and to focus on it. A focus group guide was designed in order to cover all the needed aspects and to have a certain structure during the focus group (see Appendix 1). The focus group guide has been divided into four sections as follows: in the first part general questions regarding the choice of the educational program and the future expectations of the students when graduating were asked; secondly, a discussion related to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intentions will be developed with focus on the creation of new ventures; The next section will seek to clarify the culture aspects related to new venture creation and to get more insight into the specific national culture that the two chosen countries have; in the end, topics like future challenges for students wanting to create a new venture will be discussed.
As the focus of the study is on students, they were chosen as participants. Seven students in their last year at university in a business program from Umeå University and seven more from Babes-Bolyai University were selected. The sample was selected as mentioned before in the Research Sample section.

Recruiting the students was the next step. Taking into account the conditions mentioned above, seven students in each university were contacted through emails and asked to suggest a date for the focus group. Based on all the suggestions a date and place was set.

There was no experimental group as the information needed was more related to their own views and perceptions. The focus group guide tried to have as objective and not leading questions as possible in order to receive accurate answers. In the next section a discussion related to the evaluation of the question will be presented.

The focus group was conducted in a room in the University- in both Universities- the students felt comfortable to talk about the subject and the discussion had a good flow. Even though it was a discussion, it was more or less structured as the author tried to keep an order in the themes of the discussion and also in the questions, so that to clearly understand whether it was culture or education in behind of certain of the answers the students gave.

After the focus groups findings were analyzed and it was noticed that more details were needed interviews were planned to be conducted. The base for those interviews was the information that was gathered from the focus groups and what felt was missing. A new interview guide was created and questions even more specific related to education and culture were asked. Four students were recruited- two from Romania and two from Sweden- and they participated on the interview through Skype or face to face. Below there will be a presentation of the planning for the interviews and the interview guideline.

4.3.3 RESEARCH SAMPLE – FOCUS GROUP

Taking into account the purpose of this study, the research will be based primary on the focus groups with students from university programs in business/entrepreneurship from both Romania and Sweden. The groups will try to be as similar as possible in order to get the results having the same variables considered. In other words, in order to get to similar results the study has to start from similar variables- same education programs, same type of students- age, location. It is important to mention that in Sweden, Umeå there was a program called Strategic entrepreneurship and which main purpose was entrepreneurship, but that other programs include too courses related to entrepreneurship. In Romania, there is no program in entrepreneurship, nor at neither undergraduate nor graduate level, thus the students were chosen from the program in Business Administration which includes the most entrepreneurship courses already integrated in the program, plus the possibility to choose optional entrepreneurship courses (I based the selection of entrepreneurship courses on my own experience of entrepreneurship courses that I have studied at Umeå University).

The choice of the two countries was based on the differences the two countries have from an economical, entrepreneurial and cultural point of view. The Scandinavian region, mostly Sweden has a more practical way of doing the studies and in addition, the Nordic countries are known for their innovativeness and entrepreneurship concern (Thomas, 2000). On the
other hand, Eastern Europe is made up from countries that only now start to really develop and there is still a long way until their main focus will be on new venture creation (Mueller, 2000). Romania, even though it has Universities that are internationally recognized the style of teaching is still based mainly on theories and very little contact with the real world. There are not university programs focused on entrepreneurship mainly and the concern for young entrepreneurs and new venture creation does basically not exist.

Furthermore, the chosen universities were very similar in the number of students, the variety of programs and the level of internationalization. Babes-Bolyai University has around 40000 students in all the programs and Umeå University has around 35000 students each year. Both have many different faculties and offer a wide range of programs. Both universities receive annually around 700 students from universities all over the world resulting in a internationalized campus.

When creating the samples of the students several criteria were used. One of them was that the students should be in their last year of studies and to have thought of starting a new venture- as the interest is to find the influences of culture and education in those intentions. It is important choose students being in the last year as they are supposed that have thought of their future plans, what they will be doing after graduation. Having a business already created is not a criterion as the interest is to see how their level and specific education and culture influence their intention towards creating a new venture.

A heterogeneous group was chosen with students from different regions in Romania and Sweden, and also with different ages. It is considered (Malhotra, 2007) that a heterogeneous group of participants with different background- in our case different region where they were born and thus different views- would bring a broader perspective into discussion, and as the participants might not always agree, the argumentation process will finally provide a wide variation of different views (Bryman, 2008).

The number of participants was chosen taken into consideration the available time but also the theoretical aspects regarding the size of a focus group (Malhotra, 2007). As mentioned before it is essential for the participants to interact and to challenge each other in arguments, thus a group of around six to eight students it is appropriate. Morgan (1998) suggests that the typical focus groups should have in between six to ten participants, but Blackburn and Stokes (2000) found that in a group of more than eight participants the discussion would be difficult to manage. In the same line Malhotra (2007) argues that groups smaller than six will not be able to create the momentum and groups bigger than ten might be too crowded and hard to manage. Thus, for this study both focus groups had 7 students which during the discussion interacted very well, providing important information.

There were fourteen students with ages between 23 and 25 years, in their last year of university studies. There were 2 focus group conducted- one in Romania at the Babes-Bolyai University and the second one at Umeå University. More details about the sample are found in each section of the empirical study- for the Swedish group the details are found in Chapter 6 and for the Romanian group the details are found in Chapter 5.
4.4 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

As mentioned before a qualitative research was considered the most appropriate for this study. Malhotra (2007) considers that qualitative research is the only method “of data collection sensitive enough to capture the nuances of consumer attitudes, motives and behaviors” (Malhotra, 2007:152). The interview is the most common technique used in qualitative research. There are two types of interviews: unstructured interviews and semi-structured interviews. According to Bryman (2003) the unstructured interviews have basically only one question and then the interviewee is let to speak freely, whereas the semi-structured one has a set of questions and topics that the researcher wants to cover.

As the interviews, for this study, will be conducted as a result of the focus groups findings, there are some specific aspects that need more details, thus the researcher created an interview guide- conducting a semi-structured interview- which is enclosed in Appendix 2.

In depth interviews were chosen to be conducted after the focus groups as they offer a greater depth of insights than the focus groups (Malhotra, 2007), and at this phase there were specific aspects that needed to be made clear, aspects related to culture and its influence on entrepreneurship that could not be seen after the focus groups. Interviews were chosen as they offered the chance to go deeper on some subjects and to give more attention to the interviewee. On the other hand, as in the case of the focus groups the data obtained can be difficult to analyze and interpret.

4.4.1 PLANNING FOR THE INTERVIEWS

The interviews were conducted only after finishing the analysis of the focus groups which revealed some lacking information. An interview guide was designed in order cover the needed information.

Malhotra (2007) suggests that the idea of interview guides is less specific than a structured interview. Although it gives a certain structure, it also allows the conversation to flow and to be rather flexible. It is increasingly popular among researchers to actually offer a copy of the interview guide to the participants, thus increasing the dependability of the research, as suggested by Bryman (2003).

In preparing the interview guide it is important for the researcher to start by putting down phrases or concepts that are not clear enough. Connecting those with the purpose of the study and deciding upon the approach the analysis will have, a certain structure will emerge (Bryman, 2003).

First, the interview questions had to be formulated so that in the end to be able to answer to the research question of the study. In this case, the interview guide was divided into three parts, following the key elements in the research statement. In each section there are questions that would bring a deeper understanding of the topic.

The language used was clear and comprehensive to all participants, and the author tried to avoid formulating leading questions, so that the results not to be influenced.
A testing of the interview guide was done to make sure that the questions would provide the needed information.

The actual interviews:

The interviews were personal and conducted with only one person at a time. There were two interviews conducted face-to-face with Swedish students, and two interviews conducted through Skype with Romanian students. The interviews were conducted in the same way with all the participants. The Swedish interviews were conducted in English and the Romanian ones in Romanian, in order to ensure a more accurate understanding and to avoid misunderstandings and not to limit the respondents’ answers. This is in accordance with Bryman (2007) who suggests that interviews conducted in the respondent’s primary language make the communication more efficient.

The interviews were not recorded as they argued that as the topic is related to their study programs and their views and perspectives over how entrepreneurship is being taught, they would not feel comfortable for their identity to be revealed. Thus, if having a recording someone might recognize their voice. However, during the interviews notes were taken in detail. Those notes were afterwards presented to the interviewee to check their accuracy, and all the students agreed with them.

The answers to each question will be introduced in Chapter 5 for the Romanian interviews and in Chapter 6 for the Swedish interviews and the interview guide is attached in the Appendixes Chapter.

4.4.2 RESEARCH SAMPLE - INTERVIEWS

It is important to mention that the interviews were conducted after the focus groups were analyzed and I saw that there was some information that needed a deeper understanding.

Thus, the sample of students for the interviews was chosen using the same criteria as for the focus groups, as the intention was to deeper some understandings and not to find new things. The students chosen were from the same educational programs as the students in the focus groups and the same universities. The students had to be in their last year of study and to have thought of having a business.

The number of students was two for each country and university as after conducting the second interview I observed that the answers were very much similar and thus a pattern could be seen.

I did not conduct the interviews with the same students used in the focus groups as I considered that new students might offer a better understanding of some aspects, as they were not influenced by the previous discussion conducted during the focus group. They were not connected in any way with the previous research and thus they were answering from their own perspective not knowing what others have previously discussed, which gave to their answers more accuracy and reliability.
The final sample of students comprised four students with the average age of 24, in their last year of university studies: two from the Babes-Bolyai University and two from Umeå University. The interviews were conducted through Skype and face-to-face and it took around 45 minutes each

4.5 QUESTION CONSTRUCTION

Question construction for the focus groups:

When creating the questions for a semi-structured interview or the guideline for the focus group it is important to remember the focus of the research and to make sure they are coherent with it and exempt of bias. While writing the questions the researcher ensures that the areas that he wishes will be covered but paying attention so that the questions not to be too specific (Bryman, 2008). Clarity and simplicity should be the main characteristics of the questions so that the interviewees can understand them and be able to answer accordingly. Furthermore, the questions should be neutral in their content, implying that they cannot be influenced by the thoughts or beliefs of the researcher.

The questions were created around the three main sections of the purpose of the study: education, culture and entrepreneurial intentions. Even though the questions were in a certain order in the guideline, during the focus group the questions were not necessary asked in that order, but rather following the flow of the discussion. Whereas in the interviews, the questions were rather followed as it enhanced a wider coverage of the subject—no topics were forgotten to be asked.

The guideline questions for the focus groups were in direct correlation with the theory presented in the Literature review chapter. Through the questions the author tried to understand the students’ views and perspectives and to make clearer some aspects.

Leading questions and yes/no questions were avoided so that the interviewee not to be influenced or an answer to be suggested to him. I tried to formulate questions without bias, so that the respondents’ answers would be as spontaneous and real as possible.

Question construction for the interviews:

The questions created for the interview had as a base the answers obtained from the focus group, but still keeping in mind the purpose of the study. The questions were thought in three different sections following the structure of the focus group interview guideline, but also following the structure of the study: education, culture, entrepreneurial intentions. As in the case of the focus group, the researcher tried to make sure that the questions are clear and that they cover everything that was needed to find out (Bryman, 2008).

The questions were asked in a specific order so that to make sense for both the interviewer and the interviewee, and to ensure all the topics were covered. As mentioned before, as in the case of the focus group, yes/no questions were avoided in order not to influence the answers of the interviewee.
4.6 RESEARCH ANALYSIS

As mentioned in Chapter 2, this study will be combining elements from both an inductive and deductive approach. As stated by Saunders (2003) it is possible to approach qualitative data collection and analysis from both an inductive and a deductive perspective.

From a deductive perspective, basing the analysis on previous research, the literature used will shape the data collection so that to be in the same line with the purpose of the study. The use of an analytical strategy will provide key themes and patterns that will be used to search for the data (Saunders, 2003). Whereas, from a more inductive perspective, which seeks to explore and understand certain phenomena, the data will be analyzed in the context of the participants and it will evolve while conducting the research.

Nevertheless, I consider appropriate for this study the use of data display and analysis strategy. This implies organizing and assembling the selected data into visual displays (Saunders, 2003). As data collection tends to produce information that is not necessary needed for the specific study, is important to sort it and to display it in matrices, networks or other visual forms (Saunders, 2003). The data display will help to a better understanding and interpretation but also it makes it easier for the reader to relate to the information. For this study, the findings after conducting the focus groups and the interviews were structured into tables. The key answers were stated in order to make the analysis process and the understanding of the findings easier. When comparing the two chosen groups of students from the two countries the tables with the key answers helped in revealing quickly the differences and similarities.

The analysis of the data was done by referring to the literature review and keeping in mind the purpose of the study. Previous research was compared and contrasted with the findings of this study in order to develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between culture, education and the entrepreneurial activities.
5. RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS ROMANIA

In this chapter the empirical findings of the focus group done in Romania will be presented, followed by their analysis. Next, the findings from the interviews conducted in Romanian and their analysis, and it will end with an overall analysis of the Romanian sample of students.

5.1 FOCUS GROUP RESEARCH

5.1.1 BACKGROUND ON THE FOCUS GROUP IN ROMANIA

The focus group in Romania was composed of students in the Business Administration program at the Business Faculty, in Cluj-Napoca. These students were chosen as they are in a similar program as the students in Sweden in the entrepreneurship and business programs. The discussion took about 1h15 min and everyone had time to express their views. The focus group was conducted by the author of the paper and during the actual discussion notes were taken. The names of the students were changed in order to protect their integrity and to assure them that they can speak freely as no one will identify them.

The participant students in the focus group were as follows:

Table 6: Romanian students participating in the focus group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Entrepreneurial experience</th>
<th>Career expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana-Maria</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radu</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arina</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes - virtual projects</td>
<td>Start a company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanziana</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Razvan</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florin</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td>Working for a company</td>
<td>Start a company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrian</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes - virtual projects</td>
<td>Start a company</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1.2 PART 1: UNIVERSITY STUDIES- EDUCATION

This part will try to find the connection between education and future entrepreneurial intentions. The participants were asked questions related to the way they chose their study program and how those courses influenced them in their choice of a career.

When conducting this focus group, it was first necessary to clarify what the meaning of an entrepreneur is, or what an entrepreneurship program includes as those terms in Romania are not very used yet. The students did not clearly understand what entrepreneurship was referring too and thus a definition was given to them, explaining how entrepreneurship is seen in this study. As stated before in this paper, the definition used for entrepreneurship is mostly related to innovation and new venture creation (Schumpeter’s (1934) being the definition used).

5.1.2.1 CHOICE OF PROGRAM AND FACTORS INFLUENCING THEM

The discussion started by discussing the factors that influenced them to chose a certain program of study. There were almost half of the students that argued that their choice was more influenced by their previous studies- bachelor level- than what they would have really liked to study. Both Ana-Maria, Radu and Sanziana thought that “the system was not enabling them to freely choose what they want to specialize in but rather what they are supposed to study as a consequence of their previous knowledge”(Radu). “One cannot chose to change its path at the university level as there is a need of certain courses that should have already been studied in order to pass to other specialization, so if when young you chose something that now you do not like anymore you cannot do anything about it”(Sanziana).

Adrian, argued that even though he would not have seen himself studying business administration or entrepreneurship, during the courses he found them very interesting and that he, now, imagines himself having his own business. Furthermore, there were 2 out of 7 students (Ana-Maria and Radu) that considered that a program that has many practical tasks is better than those purely theoretical, just that in the Romanian system those do not exist and thus they chose one that it would include new courses, such as business planning, leadership and management, as those could be to some extent used in reality too. ”Some courses had real life cases that would give us a more accurate view of the real business world”(Radu).

On the other hand, there were few students that believed that “economists”1 have a future in Romania. ”Economists in Romania are very well seen”(Sanziana), but nowadays that trend

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1 Economists- in Romania it refers to the graduates that finish a program in Economics/Business. Until a few years ago there were no business faculties and programs and everything was under the umbrella of the term “economics” (management, marketing, finance). During the communist period it started a trend that everyone who graduates from an economic program will be better paid and seen as those are the people that “create and develop the economical environment” (and Romania needed new companies and an economical boost at that time)
has lowered a bit and more and more “students are graduating from economics because they think it has a future not because it is well seen” (Sanziana). Furthermore, more and more there is a clear distinction between business administration programs and general economic programs. Even though until now there are no academic programs named “entrepreneurship”, when talking about the business administration programs, there are courses of entrepreneurship that are included. Thus, when the Romanian students are referring in the focus group to their business administration courses they are actually referring to the courses that are most related to entrepreneurship.

Further, in this focus group 5 out of 7 students argued that they were influenced by their parents in choosing this business program as it has a future and two of them said that they felt they would be good at it. On one hand, Adrian believed that when graduating he might “think creating his business because of the lack of jobs on the market”, underlining that it is he would like that because “the chances to find something that you like and to be well paid are very low”, but on the other hand, as Arina stated her parents had a great influence on her decision arguing that “a career in business will always have many opportunities and with a bit of creativity you can be easily successful”.

Overall, the factors influencing them in making those choices were contextual factors and less their own preferences. The lack of practicality, touch with the reality-with the business world-, but also the lack of options were some of the factors they mentioned. Adding up, the fear of creating a venture when being inexperienced and not having knowledge about organizations that could help them, or state stimulation programs is a negative side to choosing a self employed career. It was important to find out how they chose their study program in order to see whether their decision was influenced by their future plans or rather by the economical situation of the country, or by the curricula of the school. Knowing their reasons helps the study by showing whether there is an entrepreneurial intention or not.

**Table 7: Romanian students- choice of program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ana-Maria</th>
<th>Radu</th>
<th>Arina</th>
<th>Sanziana</th>
<th>Razvan</th>
<th>Florin</th>
<th>Adrian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How did you choose your program?</td>
<td>Based on previous courses, its practicality</td>
<td>Based on previous courses, its practicality</td>
<td>She thought it would have future</td>
<td>Bases on previous courses</td>
<td>By chance</td>
<td>It was what he wanted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1.2.2 FUTURE EXPECTATIONS WHEN GRADUATING

When asked about their future expectations four out of seven students agreed that they would want to get a well paid job, compared to only three out of the seven students who said that they would want to start a company. Whereas as mentioned before Adrian would start a company because of the lack of jobs on the market, Florin said that “this was my dream since I started high school, and by the time I will graduate I will find a good idea to develop”.

When furthermore, asked why not choose a self-employment direction, they said that they feel “quite afraid to start something when there is no money and someone to back us up” (Ana-Maria). In addition they argued that it might not be as easy for a young graduate to start its own venture, and that some experience before doing that might be helpful; Razvan saying that he would prefer finding a well paid job now and get some experience so that “when I will open my business to actually be aware of how business is being done and to not make foolish mistakes”.

The next part of the discussion moved to whether the courses they had taken might have also a certain influence in their future choice of career. The majority of the students agreed that the courses that they were taking were important in the sense of their own knowledge and capabilities; “they show us how in theory everything should be, they develop certain analytical skills and should trigger us to want to learn more” (Arina).

The formation they get is, according to them (Ana-Maria, Arina, Radu), their specialization, what they know how to do the best and thus their choice of a career is influenced by it. Nevertheless, there were a few students that argued that because of the so “theoretical” format of the courses at the end they are incapable of applying it and thus they do not feel confident in neither working in the business world nor creating a venture. Sanziana argued that “when having a baggage full of theory that was written years ago, it is as if we would be naked with nothing to back us up”. She argued that students need to be taught practical and applicable things that they can take home and work on –like a business plan, for example- so that to learn how to apply them and to see how things actually change.

On the other hand, there were few students who considered that some of the courses were more of an intro to the field and that if one is interested in it he should be studying further and thus accumulating more knowledge. Florin believed that students should not “learn everything as it is”, that they should take that information that will be useful later and to research more on it, “deepen it so that to actually help them” (Florin).

As with the choice of the programs to study, the future expectations can describe whether they intend to create a business or prefer to stay employed. The fears and the critics from the society could change their expectations and their dreams, as the society has a powerfull influence on people, and mostly on young adults.
Table 8: Romanian students- future expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ana-Maria</th>
<th>Radu</th>
<th>Arina</th>
<th>Sanziana</th>
<th>Razvan</th>
<th>Florin</th>
<th>Adrian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are your future</td>
<td>Well paid</td>
<td>Well</td>
<td>Start a</td>
<td>Find a well</td>
<td>Find a job</td>
<td>Start a</td>
<td>Start a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expectations?</td>
<td>job</td>
<td>employed</td>
<td>company</td>
<td>paid job</td>
<td></td>
<td>company</td>
<td>company</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.3 PART 2: ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVE IN CREATING A NEW VENTURE

This part was focused on finding the participant’s view on entrepreneurs and their skills.

5.1.3.1 SEEING THEMSELVES AS ENTREPRENEURS

The discussion started by asking them if they would see themselves as entrepreneurs. The reasons given in favor of becoming entrepreneurs in the future were related to the new developments and new opportunities offered for students and graduates from the government in order to enhance the creation of new ventures. Lowered taxes, and facilities when hiring employees, were also mentioned by the students. Arina was one of the students that said that she would see herself as an entrepreneur. She also argued that “nowadays the state is doing more for the young entrepreneurs, trying to settle a good environment but also offering incentives to become an entrepreneur”, referring to low taxes if hiring students, for example, which can also motivate the investors to actually give them a chance.

They also argued that it depends whether they will find investors for their ideas. Nevertheless, all of them said that they have ideas and that they think at least some of them could be successful only that there are many pieces missing still until the business will be running as Florin and Adrian emphasized. They also said that there is nothing wrong with seeing yourself an entrepreneur, but “there should be a bit of passion and ambition to pull a business through” (Florin), whereas Adrian said that “being an entrepreneur should be everyone’s dream, as it offers you a different perspective over life”. He admitted that it might be challenging but the final result should be worth in the end.

On the other hand the more pessimistic students argued that an entrepreneur has to come up with something really new and innovative and thus just creating an “ordinary” business would not make someone an entrepreneur. Part of them agreed that one has to be innovative and creative in order to be an entrepreneur, as the entrepreneurs are more than business people. Razvan thought that a reason why he would not see himself as an entrepreneur is that he “would prefer the comfort of a job rather than the frustration and high risk that comes with a business”. Moreover, Sanziana added that “in order to become an entrepreneur you need a vision, a way of seeing things where there is nothing, to always discover new things, qualities which not everyone has or can acquire”. 


Table 9: Romanian students: Seeing themselves entrepreneurs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you see yourself an entrepreneur?</th>
<th>Ana-Maria</th>
<th>Radu</th>
<th>Arina</th>
<th>Sanziana</th>
<th>Razvan</th>
<th>Florin</th>
<th>Adrian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whether they see themselves entrepreneurs in the future or not it was an important section of the focus group, as it is strongly related to their entrepreneurial intentions. They saw the entrepreneur related to creativity, passion, vision and even though the state can come with incentives to motivate the younger entrepreneurs the society and the culture are having a powerful influence.

5.1.3.2 ENHANCING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

Furthermore, there was a general agreement that the entrepreneurial spirit should be enhanced through the courses and the tasks during the educational program, but that as that is not happening now, a motivation could come from the environment- business world, organizations, state- in the form of incentives to start a business. As mentioned before, some students agreed that at the moment there are signs of such things happening in Romania and “there will probably be more doors open for students to join the business world” (Florin).

Two students suggested that promoting entrepreneurship, explaining what it is and that it represents a good thing for the society could also improve the rates of new ventures. As Razvan says “people do not know exactly now what entrepreneurship is, they are more preoccupied with finding a job rather than seeing that there might be a different way”, adding that “the only way to make students to want to open a business is to present it as a better option that the jobs, which at the moment is not done like that. In school we are thought that it is safer and better to find a job and maybe when having enough experience to start a company”. In the same line, Ana-Maria added that “we need to feel that we are encouraged to start a business” adding that students have to be shown that it is a good thing to be an entrepreneur and that they can be successful: “We need the other people in the community to see us like that, to consider that we have a potential, to give us a chance” (Ana-Maria).

On the other hand, Arina suggested that the work should be done in the business community. She argued that as soon as the other business people will see students as possible investments “students will also feel more comfortable to start their business as they will know that someone will take them seriously”. Adrian added that “usually students are very eager to take the challenge and start a business just that they stop being excited about it in the moment they see that they are not valued at their real value”. He continues saying that the entrepreneurial spirit, at least among the business students, exists and that students do not necessary need a motivation, but they need for the others to be aware that
students have potential too, “that entrepreneurship is about risk, and that investors and business people should consider the risk rather than just avoid students because they lack experience” (Adrian). Nevertheless, the students argued also that a more practical approach in school would also motivate more students to start a business. Sanziana said that “the more practical and real life things we do the more the field will look interesting and more students will want to try it”.

Table 10: Romanian students: enhancing the entrepreneurial spirit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How to enhance entrepreneurial spirit?</th>
<th>Ana-Maria</th>
<th>Radu</th>
<th>Arina</th>
<th>Sanziana</th>
<th>Razvan</th>
<th>Florin</th>
<th>Adrian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Facilitating the entrance</td>
<td>Better cultural look towards entrepreneurship</td>
<td>More practical things in school</td>
<td>Promoting entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Better environment</td>
<td>Awareness campaign</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.3.3 BORN VERSUS MADE ENTREPRENEURS

Furthermore, when asked what they think about the old discussion whether the entrepreneurs are born or made, there were very few that believed that they are born. The majority of the students (Ana-Maria, Radu, Sanziana, Razvan, Florin) agreed that they are “made”, that one can learn and become an entrepreneur. Nevertheless, they also said that you have to have “that something” in order to be a good entrepreneur; you have to be talented for it. The needed skills can be acquired, but you need to be passionate about it, to be interested in it. Arina believed that there are those entrepreneurs who have that something more than others and “they manage to see opportunities and to develop them in a certain unique way, different than the ordinary entrepreneur”. She thinks that those are the skills that cannot be though, that only those passionate about it have and that is how they nourish their entrepreneurial skills.

The discussion advanced towards whether the actual skills were also including for example risk taking attitudes, “feelings for some opportunities”. Some of the students argued that those things are more related to the inner characteristics and those cannot be taught, and that those are the ones that actually differentiate a business person from an entrepreneur. In the same line with what Arina suggested before, Adrian said that “there are more subtle things that one cannot be though. Certain abilities have to come from you.”

Others said that in time you learn how to identify opportunities, that you educate yourself to see them and thus you also educate your abilities/skills. Florin argued that even though entrepreneurship and the business environment in general does not have a classical template, “in time you can learn what are the signs for a good opportunity and how you should develop it”. Such things are learnt while acquiring experience, Florin beliefs, but
Razvan said that “there is nothing that is similar and each time you have to be open minded and to think out of the box if you want to be successful.”

**Table 11: Romanian students: born vs. made entrepreneurs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Born vs. Made entrepreneurs</th>
<th>Ana-Maria</th>
<th>Radu</th>
<th>Arina</th>
<th>Sanziana</th>
<th>Razvan</th>
<th>Florin</th>
<th>Adrian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Born/made</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Born/made</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students attitude towards entrepreneurs and whether they are born or made helps this study by underlining part of the reasons why they do not think of such a future career. Nevertheless, as some students argued teaching yourself how to see opportunities, what you can do, is a step forward to become an entrepreneur.

**5.1.3.4. CHALLENGES TO CREATE A NEW VENTURE**

The participants were then asked whether they consider it easy to start a new venture, and which would be the challenges to start one. The opinions here were divided. Some students (Arina, Sanziana) said that creating a new venture is hard and that it requires many resources. Writing a business plan, registering it and actually starting it require time and financial resources as Adrian and Sanziana underlined. They argued that “the process of creating a new venture is hard when having to deal with the registration system- all the papers and the slow rhythm of the people makes it even harder” (Adrian).

Other students argued that the system in Romania was corrupted and unless you had someone to help you financially you couldn’t get it through. Some others believed that it is rather easy to gather the needed information for the business plan, start writing it, but then they considered that you would need the help of a specialized company in order to put it together and in order to make it work for future investors. Ana-Maria argued that there are so many details to be researched and added to the business plan that not even a specialized person would be able to foresee everything. Thus, she believes that “the business plan should be able to guide your business from the first steps. It needs to be perfect” (Ana-Maria)

In addition, there were some students that argued that the hardest part would be to take the risk with a new idea, and that it is hard to convince others that that exact idea will be successful. However, there were students that said that a key to success is to be new on the market and that a good idea does not necessary has to be very costly and that for graduates like them there are plenty opportunities that can be easily implemented. Razvan added that “risking starting a business with a certain idea has to be a very calculated risk even if it is not a big investment”, and that the entrepreneur has to believe in the idea and to send the
same message to the possible investors or to the other business people, whereas Arina underlined that in Romania is not even hard to come up with a great idea that can be transformed in a business “there are so many opportunities that you only have to be a bit attentive to the people’s needs and you will find several”. She believes that there is still place for business with very little investment and this is how students can get some experience. They also agreed that because of the changing economical environment in Romania and because there are still many things missing, there is place for many not that innovative businesses but easy to create.

**Table 12: Romanian students: challenges to create a new venture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ana-Maria</th>
<th>Radu</th>
<th>Arina</th>
<th>Sanziana</th>
<th>Razvan</th>
<th>Florin</th>
<th>Adrian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easy/difficult to create a venture</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Rather easy</td>
<td>Corrupted system-hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Rather easy</td>
<td>Hard to choose an idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges to create a new venture</td>
<td>Business plan</td>
<td>Actually starting it</td>
<td>Starting it-new business idea risk</td>
<td>Financial challenges</td>
<td>New idea risk</td>
<td>Business plan</td>
<td>Financial challenges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to understand how culture and education are influencing the students to develop entrepreneurial activities, it is important to see what challenges they see in creating a new venture, as some of the challenges might be of cultural matter. Even thought it might be hard to fully see what culture in their challenges is, some of them are having cultural roots. For example, they argued that it is hard to put together everything needed to open a business, this being in contrast with the idea that a job is safer and more easily obtained which the culture is transmitting.

**5.1.3.5 THE TREND OF STARTING A NEW BUSINESS**

The students also discussed about the trend related to new ventures in Romania. Almost all of them thought that in the next years there will be a boom in the numbers of new ventures, as more people are going abroad and they see the things that are missing in Romania and could be easily introduced. Arina suggested that the increased trend is not necessary because of the changed Romanian business environment but because “people are seeing opportunities abroad that could be transformed in successful businesses in Romania”, but Adrian argued that “just considering an opportunity that would become a success in Romania, makes from those people entrepreneurs - they assume a risk and they try to make it work.”
They also argued that the young entrepreneurs- their generation- will most likely be the one creating those new ventures as they are more open to new and to taking risks. As, Radu said “this generation was raised in a more open minded society”, more eager for new and as they grew up with the internet they are more attentive to everything around them and that makes them take challenges and risks and sometimes start businesses. As well, the bureaucratic system will improve thanks to the EU regulations that force the state to act as mentioned also by Razvan, who believes that the EU regulations will make Romanians move faster so that to “decrease the gap between us and the rest of Europe”. Razvan also said that those regulations create a better environment for creating new businesses by helping and encouraging entrepreneurs.

However, there were also opinions against this view, arguing that more and more young graduates prefer going abroad and working or opening a new venture, as they are better seen and helped in creating it. The trend, when talking about students and young graduates, was in the last years towards a more “friendly and optimistic” view regarding Romania and its possibilities, but there are still many that are saying that prefer to look outside for a better salary and position. Ana-Maria and Sanziana thought that the very well educated and specialized students would firstly “prefer to go abroad and look for a job or even open a business and only in time maybe coming back”. She said that a friendlier environment for young graduates, high salaries and maybe the possibility to open a business attracts them and it is very easy to leave from Romania as there is not much that they offer here now.

Table 13: Romanian students: the trend in creating new ventures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ana-Maria</th>
<th>Radu</th>
<th>Arina</th>
<th>Sanziana</th>
<th>Razvan</th>
<th>Florin</th>
<th>Adrian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The trend of creating new ventures</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.4 PART 3: NATIONAL CULTURE

5.1.4.1 HOW OPENING A BUSINESS IS SEEN

In this part the participants were asked to think how the students/young graduates are seen by the society when creating a new venture, what support they can get to evolve and whether failure is seen as the incapability to run a business and thus the society rejects those people.

The cultural context was seen by students as a very powerful influence. They considered that “culture is in everything” and thus it leads everyone through its norms and beliefs. Part of the students believed that culture is something that “we are born with” (Arina) and thus it
cannot change and everything is being done accordingly. Others felt that some aspects of the culture can be left behind if one is open enough and has different perspectives over things. They thought that even though there are preconceptions and certain attitudes towards things, the young generation is more apart from them and it act not considering all those aspects.

Radu considered that because the system in Romania is so corrupted “opening a business is seldom seen as another way to gain some illegal money”. Razvan also believed that most people that you hear that open businesses are already established business people who do not necessary have a good reputation, thus “the tendency is to associate the opening of a business with them”. Nevertheless, as Florin believes, “the society is more open nowadays...they give a chance to the new ones” and he thinks that the communities are even supporting them. Adrian argued that “opening a business is seen as a high risk because we are in a very difficult economical period now”, but that otherwise it is associated with the creation of new jobs which is liked by the society.

Table 14: Romanian students: opening a business perspective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening a business is it seen positively?</th>
<th>Ana-Maria</th>
<th>Radu</th>
<th>Arina</th>
<th>Sanziana</th>
<th>Razvan</th>
<th>Florin</th>
<th>Adrian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not necessary</td>
<td>Not necessary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not very positive</td>
<td>Not very positive</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.4.2 HOW THE STUDENTS THAT OPEN A BUSINESS ARE SEEN

Almost all of the students agreed that creating a new business is not seen badly, but that young graduates are not seen very trustful and knowledgeable enough in order to create a new venture. They said that the biggest challenge would be to convince people in the beginning to trust them, and to see them as more than young ones. Creating the needed network of people in order to make the business work was considered an important step but also a very difficult one, as usually the business men involved need proof of their capabilities and some sort of assurance. Both Arina and Florin agreed that “in the real life if you cannot prove that you have experience in a field there are going to be very few people that will invest in you” (Arina). The problem with trust in new graduates is seen by the students the biggest challenge for them to open a business. Adrian underlined that yet there is no attitude towards students opening a business as there are not many doing it, but as more and more students are coming back from their studies abroad and they have the needed knowledge they will want to start a business and by then “the society will adapt accordingly” (Adrian).
Table 15: Romanian students: society’s view on students opening a business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How are students seen when opening a business?</th>
<th>Ana-Maria</th>
<th>Radu</th>
<th>Arina</th>
<th>Sanziana</th>
<th>Razvan</th>
<th>Florin</th>
<th>Adrian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rather negative</td>
<td>Mistrusted</td>
<td>No experience</td>
<td>No experience</td>
<td>No attitude as there are not many students entrepreneurs</td>
<td>No experience = no trust</td>
<td>Very few doing it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.4.3 HOW FAILURE IS SEEN

The students also discussed whether failure is seen bad or it motivates them to try harder, and they argued that the society does not exclude the people that fail, but that it is very hard to start over and that very few are even trying.

Few of them thought that if they would fail they would rather try finding a job than trying again with a new business. Razvan though that “failure is never a good sign, and if you failed once you do not have the luxury to try again”. They believed that is hard enough to get a well paid job and that if it was not meant to be with the business they should look for a simpler solution.

On the other hand, some students said that failure would only ambition them to try more and harder, maybe with another idea if not the same one: “it should not be a discouraging moment. Try again maybe with a different idea, maybe the same and try do things differently” (Florin). They also said that in Romania if you are attentive to what consumers want and you give your best in improving your business every day you cannot fail.

Furthermore, they underlined that most of the young entrepreneurs are expecting to be very rich in a very short time and that is another factor that makes them quit, as they do not have patience enough to grow the business: “hurrying up and wanting to have a successful business over night will make you skip some steps” (Ana-Maria) which on long run will probably make the business fail and thus making the society to see the students as lacking experience and not being wise, but not necessary considering failure as a bad thing. There were some students (Adrian, Florin) that believed that failure is the sign that you “missed a step” in the process and that you have to start over and check what you did wrong, and that if you are careful from the beginning everything will work fine.

There were few students that connected failure with culture, saying that Romanians are used to give up easily and thus there can be seen a high rate of business failures nowadays. They emphasized that the environment influences strongly the attitudes towards failure or success and that more incentives would probably reduce the failure rate.
Table 16: Romanian students: failure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How failure is seen?</th>
<th>Ana-Maria</th>
<th>Radu</th>
<th>Arina</th>
<th>Sanziana</th>
<th>Razvan</th>
<th>Florin</th>
<th>Adrian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bad expectations leading to failure</td>
<td>Something related to culture</td>
<td>Motivates them to try more</td>
<td>If fail not made for it</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Motivating-try again</td>
<td>Missed a step- try again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.5 PRACTICAL METHODS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS

When asked whether they know any organization/institution that can help young graduates in the creation of a new venture, they mostly agreed that there is none. Some of them said that there are some programs running from the government that would enhance young people to create new businesses and that would help them with the bureaucracy. They thought that still there is not enough attention on this subject from the state and thus there are not many programs and incentives for the creation of new ventures. Furthermore, the students agreed that the national culture might be open minded to the creation of new ventures in terms of new job being created, but that the society would not probably put on the same line new venture creation with young graduates.

It was interesting to ask the students what they see as methods to encourage them to become entrepreneurs as those ideas could be implemented in school for example, to motivate students to pursue a career as an entrepreneur.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS FOCUS GROUP

The focus group purpose was to find out information related to the education that students chose and how it would influence them in their future career decisions, but also information related to the cultural aspects connected to the creation of a new venture.

Overall, the discussion clarified aspects related to the Romanian system of studies and also how students think about creating a new business. Students argued about the system that would automatically chose for them their next steps in education programs and how difficult it is to choose something that you really want. There was not enough information related to how they see the courses in entrepreneurship, how those courses should be taught, how could it be done differently so that to be more realist as a program.

Furthermore, they discussed about the entrepreneurial initiative and how could the entrepreneurial spirit be enhanced. They argued that a better promotion of entrepreneurship would make it more known, understood and accepted. Creating a new business was seen as a difficult process and would mostly be challenged by the financial resources, the actual business plan writing and the concrete business idea and the risk that comes with it.
The students also discussed how students that open a business are seen and how failure is perceived by the society. They agreed that students are seen as inexperienced people and thus they are not always trusted. Failure was seen both as a motivator for trying again but also as a barrier that would rather make them give up and change the field.

There was not much discussion related to how to improve the environment in order to motivate students to create new ventures. Moreover, more details related to what factors they see influencing the process of creating a new business would be useful in understanding the students’ attitudes towards new venture creation. Also from the focus group it was not possible to clearly understand how culture was influencing them in their decisions; how the society perceives young entrepreneurs or if the attitudes have changed in the last years.

It was clear after the focus group research that a more direct approach would be needed in order to find more subtle aspects. Thus the next step was to conduct interviews based on the lacking information presented above.

### 5.3 INTERVIEWS ROMANIA

#### 5.3.1 BACKGROUND OF THE INTERVIEWS

There were two interviews conducted with students at the Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, studying the program Business Administration. The interviews were taken in between 19th and 22th of April 2010 and they were conducted through Skype. The length of the interviews was on average 50 min each and the author took notes during the interview. No recording was done.

The students that participated in the interviews were as follows:

*Table 17: Romanian students participating in the interviews*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Entrepreneurship courses taken</th>
<th>Business experience</th>
<th>Future career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timea</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Management, Leadership, Corporate finance, Marketing</td>
<td>Virtual business project</td>
<td>Open a business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marius</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>Working half time in consultancy company</td>
<td>Create a company/ work in consultancy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The two students interviewed were asked first how they perceive their entrepreneurship courses that they had. Timea said that “the courses even though were compulsory they were very well structured and followed a certain line. You would be first taught basic things and in the end to be able to learn and to mix more complex aspects”. She argued that the courses had a strong theoretical view and that in some parts more practical, real life examples would have gave them more input. Marius had the same opinion, also adding that “the content of the courses was in some parts very well up-dated and it would provide a very good overview of the subject”.

Both interviewees thought that entrepreneurial courses should teach the “necessary steps to start a business, how to develop an existing business” (Timea), “the possible difficulties you might encounter, how to finance your project, how to enter a market” (Marius). Timea emphasized that it is essential to “know the basic steps in creating a business, to learn from others’ mistakes”. Marius said that “as much practicality the courses have the more we are going to be prepared for the real world”.

Furthermore, as mentioned before, they believed that in order to make the courses more practical and real, business people could also be teaching them. Timea added that “we should not only have business people or entrepreneurs coming to teach us, because the theoretical part is important too and the professors are doing it very well now” and she suggested that the teachers should search for newer books and references where possible in order to keep the same rhythm with the new research done in the field. In the same line, Marius believed that “entrepreneurs nowadays do not use much theory, they follow their instincts and listen to the consumers and adapt fast in order to be successful”. He thought that education and theories can “kill the entrepreneurial spirit… it diminishes it, by making them more calculated and more aware of the losses involved” and thus transforming the entrepreneur in a more like business man. Timea believed that “if the education point out the risks and makes you more aware of them, it should also show you how to maximize the profit and to minimize the risks”. She believed that there are many teachers that just prefer showing the risky part and advice you to find a stable job rather than explaining to you what you can do, how it is done in real life.

They both agreed that there has to be a certain level of education and that the entrepreneurship courses are good for establishing a base. As mentioned before, both suggested that a more practical approach would be the perfect combination between theoretical and academic world and the real business one. Timea said that “more real cases to solve, or direct interaction with real entrepreneurs would increase the students’ awareness about entrepreneurship and also would maybe influence them to become like them”. In the same line, Marius believed that “there is nothing better for a student than actually learning by doing, experimenting… virtual projects and real life cases that makes them research a real market and see how different factors interact with each other”.
5.3.3 PART 2: ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVE

In the next part of the interview the two students were asked about the factors that would influence the creation of a new venture and the measure that could be taken to improve the business environment in order to motivate more graduates to create new ventures.

Timea said that opening a business is rather hard as “finding a niche and a brilliant idea it is very hard to do even in a country like Romania”, as she mentioned Romania is still supposed to be lacking in many things. The reasons might be the society as a barrier, the consumers and thus one has to adapt his idea to their needs “even though it might have been a unique brilliant idea” (Timea). On the other hand, Marius believed that “the biggest challenge would be to find the capital that you need, as there are not many institutions that can provide such loans in Romania, even more to a company that does not have a history”.

Furthermore, Timea believed that factors as the economic background of the country, the political stability and the financial power are having a strong impact on the creation of new ventures. She added that those might even work as barriers for not very experienced entrepreneurs. Marius had a similar opinion, adding that the context in which the new business will be created should always be considered very important. He underlined that “the first interactions of the new venture will be within the environment where it is created, considering all the existing influencing factors could save the venture from a possible failure” (Marius). They suggested that “by promoting the idea of setting up a business” (Timea) students would become more interested in the field, and “facilitating the financing of good projects, of those with fresh and good ideas” (Marius) should motivate others too to start a business.

When asked how they think students should be motivated to create a new venture, Timea said that a solution would be “the creation of incubators where experienced entrepreneurs can coach the young graduates, teach them how things are done in the business world”, and Marius said that “in addition to direct contact with entrepreneurs, there should also be an incentive from the state”, through for example preferential interest rates, tax deductions to promote entrepreneurship.

By getting more information related to how and why the students would develop entrepreneurial activities, there can be seen whether there are cultural aspects specifically related to the country from where they come or more contextual aspects related to the business environment. The cultural aspects that some students underlined as being very strong concerns society in itself; on a societal level there is not yet all the infrastructure that is needed to sustain new entrepreneurs, something which dampen he enthusiasm and energy of the students to actually become entrepreneurs.

5.3.4 PART 3: CULTURE

The two interviewees were asked to characterize a typical Romanian and Romania as country. Timea said that “Romanians are having strong relations with their families and they care about traditions”, whereas Marius believed that “they have good relationship with their families, they like to socialize and they do not necessary have high expectations from the future”. Both of them agreed that they are rather relaxed people and mainly
concerned with the present day and their present job. They prefer the security the job offers them and they do not feel open to change and risks. Timea characterized Romanians as collectivists – group working and group opinions rather than individual actions- and a low level of independence- as they do not need to feel independent from others, preferring to be within groups. Marius characterized Romanians in a similar way, arguing that they are a “people that reacts very well in groups”, they do not take actions by themselves but if the groups says it is ok they will very easily take a chance and they need to have their efforts recognized.

Both interviewees believed that Romania is a country full of possibilities that wait to be discovered. And even though the society is “skeptical towards young entrepreneurs” as Arina said, there is still place to adapt. “Because of the lack of many things in the country I think we can adapt easily and mostly the young generation which is eager towards new and challenges”, Marius believes. Furthermore, they also agreed that the attitude towards young entrepreneurs has changed in the last years. Arina thought that “it is the result of the increased awareness among people about the need of new ventures and also because of the amount of courses that are offered to the students”

5.4 ANALYSIS FOCUS GROUP AND INTERVIEWS

This chapter compares and discusses the empirical findings from the Romanian students with the theories and definitions discussed in the literature review chapter in order to determine whether they are consistent with previous research or not. First, the empirical findings related to entrepreneurship education will be analyzed to see if in practice such an education is seen like in theory. The second part analyzes the students’ perceptions on entrepreneurial initiatives. The third part will discuss the culture and its influences on the entrepreneurial actions.

5.4.1 ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

The entrepreneurship education, as described earlier, aims at “developing a taste of entrepreneurship” (Fayolle, 2008b:575), is “concerned with raising awareness of entrepreneurship” (Kirby, 2007 in Fayolle, 2008b:575).

Below is presented a summary of the empirical findings after conducting both the focus group and the interviews.
Kirby (2007) emphasizes the importance of entrepreneurship education related to its “role and functions in the economy and society” (Kirby, 2007 in Fayolle, 2008b:575). The empirical findings of this study indicate that students are aware of the role the entrepreneurial education has in the society, in the community. Even though the majority of the students did not necessary chose the program because they wanted it, but because of the previous educational background, all of them agreed that the courses “show us how in theory everything should be, they develop certain analytical skills and should trigger us to want to learn more” (Adrian). This argument is in the same line with Fayolle’s (2008b) view of entrepreneurship courses which argues that entrepreneurship programs should make “the students to see in entrepreneurship education a career option” (Fayolle, 2008b:576).

On the other hand, part of the students said that their decision was influenced by their relatives or by the future perspectives and less by what they really wanted. Kuratko (2005) argues that “entrepreneurship education must have the same innovative drive that is expected from entrepreneurship students” (Kuratko, 2005:591), thus when starting a program being influenced by someone else and not because of the passion for the subject, in the end those unique characteristics of the entrepreneur- the passion and innovativeness- might not be there, as during the courses there was no interest in developing the required skills. Mgaya and Magembe (2007) suggest that factors such as productivity, future income, challenges should be the ones influencing students to become entrepreneurs.

Furthermore, the empirical findings suggest also that the entrepreneurship educational program does not necessary exists in Romania. As Kuratko (2005) suggests there are cases where entrepreneurship courses are attached to business programs rather than having their own program and having business courses attached to it. As suggested by the interviewed students, this is the case in Romania; the knowledge about entrepreneurship basically does not exist, everything that could be related to this field is integrated in the Business Administration program.

When interviewed about their business program and its structure, the students argued that there is a rather big part of theory and it lacks in practicality. As presented by Gibb (1987) the academic programs focus of learning is on the past- understanding phenomena that already happened by passive understanding- by detaching from the events and being as objective as possible, by learning concepts and critically analyze everything. On the other
hand on the entrepreneurial side the focus should be on teaching students to be creative, to actively understand, to think about the future and get involved in the events. The students believed that what they are taught is old and it can be very hard to apply it. “When having a baggage full of theory it is as if we would be naked with nothing to back us up” (Sanziana). Some students argued even that education and theories can “kill the entrepreneurial spirit” (Marius), diminishing it, by making them more calculated and more aware of the losses involved and thus transforming the entrepreneur in a more like business man. They argued that a tighter relationship with actual entrepreneurs and real cases to analyze would to some degree connect the two worlds. Gibb (1987) recommends learning by doing, involving the students in problem solving in real-world situations.

Moreover, they argued that the education should only be the first step, that it should motivate you to learn more by yourself: “learn everything as it is” (Florin), and afterwards take that information that will be useful later and research more on it, deepen it so that to actually help. This is in the same line with Hannon, Collins and Smith (2005) who recommend that universities should promote motivation and the capacity of students to develop entrepreneurial activities. As the students also suggested, Hannon et. al. (2005) argues that the role of universities in the entrepreneurial programs should mostly be focused on creating the awareness about the field and presenting it in a positive way.

The empirical findings also show that the students would not prefer having as professors only business people, as they acknowledge that a base of theory and previous research is always needed: “we should not only have business people or entrepreneurs coming to teach us, because the theoretical part is important too and the professors are doing it very well now” (Timea). They believed that a mixture between professors and entrepreneurs would bring them a good perspective.

On the other hand, if considering Hindle’s (2007) definition of entrepreneurship education: “knowledge transfer regarding how, by whom, and with what effects, opportunities to create future goods and services are discovered, evaluated and exploited” (Hindle, 2007 in Fayolle, 2008b:573), then the students need of having other entrepreneurs teaching them, rather than just professors, is justified, as entrepreneurs have more know-how and experience to share, making it more attracting and motivating for the students. In the same line with the previous definition Kuratko (2005) distinguishes a gap in between the business world and the academic one and he suggests that in order to “bridge it”, students need “the exposure to those entrepreneurs who have paid the price, faced the challenges, and endured the failures”(Kuratko, 2005: 589).

Overall, the results from this part of the study are consistent with the previous research done. The reasons for the slightly small differences might be because this field – entrepreneurship education- is still “very young, emergent, and in its adolescence phase” (Fayolle, 2008a:325) and there is still not a common framework regarding to how it should be taught (Fayolle, 2008b). Entrepreneurship programs might be seen from different perspectives and thus being interpreted differently.

Nevertheless, the results from this section of the study clearly indicate that the students in Romania are aware of the need of entrepreneurship education and consider it essential to the development of the future entrepreneurs. Further, this implies that the entrepreneurship
courses do influence students in their future career and on how they perceive risk, see the opportunities, act in the real world.

5.4.2 ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVE

Below are summarized the findings from both the focus group and the interviews conducted with the Romanian students.

Table 19: Analysis entrepreneurial initiative (Romanian group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Romanian Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeing as an entrepreneur</td>
<td>Majority “maybe” and yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing the entrepreneurial spirit</td>
<td>Promoting entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitating the entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More practical tasks during education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born vs. made entrepreneurs</td>
<td>Majority “made”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges to create a venture</td>
<td>Writing a business plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Starting the business-first steps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As mentioned in the beginning of the focus group, the Romanian students did not understand the actual term of entrepreneurship, thus a definition was given to them. Schumpeter’s (1934:93) view over the entrepreneurs as someone “motivated by the dream and the will to find a private kingdom; the will to conquer: the impulse to fight, to prove oneself superior to others; the joy of creating” was used to clarify how the entrepreneurs are seen in this study. The empirical findings show that the majority of the students do not necessary see themselves entrepreneurs. This might be a result of both the educational system and the general attitude towards entrepreneurship.

As Henderson (2000) states entrepreneurs are associated with creativity, imagination, self-determination, characteristics that can easily be diminished by an educational program mostly based on theory, deep analysis and structures. As mentioned before, the students believed that they are taught too much theory and that there is very little place for innovation in the programs that exist in the universities. Deakins (1996) found the same fact as suggested by the students: there is more attention on the personality of the future entrepreneur than on the actual learning processes in order to acquire those skills or to develop the ones that they have.

Further, the attitude that the society has towards entrepreneurs is considered by the students as a not very open one. They argued that an attitude of the people which does not encourage the development of new ventures inhibits their entrepreneurial spirit. The students suggested that an awareness campaign that would promote entrepreneurship as a positive thing and doing more practical tasks in school could motivate more students to become entrepreneurs.
Furthermore, the empirical findings related to whether entrepreneurs are born or made; show that the students think that they are mostly made. There were few that argued that some skills are innate to each individual and those qualities make those entrepreneurs unique. Gibb (1987) suggested that this view comes from the “populist belief” (Gibb, 1987:6) that entrepreneurship as a characteristic is a basic one, but characteristics such as risk taking or the need of achievement are innate to the individual. The majority of the students believed that the required skills and aptitudes can be taught and in time someone dedicated can become an entrepreneur. In the literature most of the theories are in the same line with McClelland’s (1961) big five personality dimensions: achievement level, the need for autonomy, the locus of control, risk taking attitude and self efficacy, which in other words means that more recent theories based their descriptions of entrepreneurs qualities on his theory. As mentioned by the students skills like the risk taking attitude or the achievement level can be developed during life, studies and experiences. Nevertheless, as Fayolle (2008a) suggested there are people that argue that entrepreneurship is a matter of personality and psychological characteristics and thus it cannot be taught. In the study, there were students that argued that the extent to which entrepreneurship can be taught is limited, that entrepreneurs have to be a mix in between made and born-should have innate characteristics of entrepreneurs and learn everything else needed to become a successful one.

When discussing the challenges to create a new venture, the students believed that the process is hard and it requires many resources. Furthermore they argued that if the needed information for writing the business plan can be found the capital, the Romanian system of registering a company, and the first steps are the most difficult steps to overcome. Gartner (1985) created a framework which includes the different factors that might influence the creation of a new venture. As mentioned by the students, Gartner (1985) also found that there is an interaction between the environment where the company will be created, the organization that will be created, the individual and the actual process. He argues that those four interact with each other, changing along the process.

Furthermore, as suggested by Gibb (1987) in his framework, there are certain environments that are more probable to promote and motivate entrepreneurship initiatives, and as presented by the students, Romania does not seem to promote very much the entrepreneurship either. They argued that Romania has a system that might offer motivation to some categories of people to create new ventures, but on the other hand there are still taxes to be paid, people to deal with as they are not very open-minded, thus making it hard to maintain the motivation to create a new venture. According the Gibb’s (1987) framework, Romania would fit in the environment type B (see Figure 3): uncertain customer behavior, orders fluctuate, suppliers not guaranteed. However, there were students that said that having a great idea is a key to success and that there are many opportunities to take advantage of. This is in the same line with Townsend (2010) findings, that suggest that the main actor in the creation of a new venture is the entrepreneur in itself. He believes that even though entrepreneurs enter in the business environment with a high level of uncertainty, in time they learn how to trust and develop their skills. As the students also suggested, it is more important the entrepreneurs’ motivation and passion and its abilities rather than the environment that surrounds it (Townsend, 2010).
5.4.3 CULTURAL ASPECTS

Below there is a summary of the most important aspects found after conducting the focus group and the interviews.

Table 20: Analysis cultural aspects (Romanian group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Romanian Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How opening a business is seen</td>
<td>Not necessary positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How students that open a business</td>
<td>Mistrusted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are seen</td>
<td>Lacking experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>Motivating one to try more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As a bad sign- try something else</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Related to culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cultural part is a separate section in the research, but many cultural aspects were also found in the other sections. It is difficult to take culture out of someone’s views completely and thus without acknowledging it the participants were basing their answers on their cultural beliefs rather than their real experiences.

Hofstede (1980) defined culture as being a ”set of shared values, beliefs, and expected behaviors” of a population and it can be a challenge to differentiate what is related to culture and what comes from education or other factors (in Hayton, 2002:33). Nevertheless, the guides for both the interviews and the focus group were designed so that to get answers as specific as possible.

The relationship between culture and entrepreneurship is very tight as culture represents an important influential factor when creating and developing a business. People’s attitude towards new ventures was one of the topics discussed with the students. They believed that the culture has a powerful influence on the new ventures, but that the young generation is not that much influence by the culture as older ones are, as they grew up in a more international environment, adapting to different other cultures. Hayton (2002) suggests that culture is a moderator in the relationship between contextual factors and entrepreneurial outcomes, meaning that in a way it can develop entrepreneurial behaviors. The people as a country will create institutions and an environment according to their beliefs and set of values, thus as mentioned before some cultures may be more entrepreneurial than others.

When asked about the general attitude towards students that open a business, they believed that among people there is still the old attitude that one should first work and gain experience in order to be treated with respect and trust. But, as there are not many students that actually open new ventures, or at least try doing it, there is not necessary neither a good nor a bad attitude towards them. The empirical findings show that the environment is should be motivating students to create new ventures, as in the past years the state has developed a package of laws and incentives to motivate them. This is in the same line with
Hayton (2002:37) findings that suggest that the national culture would influence the “supportiveness of the environment so as to make it more legitimate to form businesses”.

Furthermore, “failure” was a concept that was discussed during the focus groups as it reflects the communities’ attitude towards the entrepreneurs that try to create a business and for some reason fail. It is important to have a community that sustains and helps people to try again, to research what went wrong and not to discourage them. The empirical findings for this part show that the society does not see failure bad, nor it discourages entrepreneurs to try again, but that taken into account the economical situation of the country once you failed you look for more security and thus most probably try finding a job. This type of attitude underlines that even though the society might not discourage you to try again and create a new business; there are the contextual factors that make one to reconsider its decisions.

Moreover, Hayton (2002) suggests that certain types of cultures promote more entrepreneurial initiatives than others. According to the level of individualism, masculinity, and independence a culture can be characterized whether it is facilitating entrepreneurship or not. The empirical findings show that Romanians are rather collectivists and that they feel good in groups, working together and taking decisions together. Furthermore, they have low expectations about the future and do not think of it very much as it is more important to pass over the day. In addition, they are hesitating to change their employment status, which implies that they are not likely to take risks. Overall, this type of culture does not necessary motivates people to become entrepreneurs, and as certain behaviors are strongly rooted in people it is also very less probable to change in the future.
This chapter includes the findings from the focus group and interviews conducted with Swedish students. The chapter is divided as follows:

6.1 FOCUS GROUP RESEARCH

6.1.1 BACKGROUND ON THE FOCUS GROUP IN SWEDEN

The focus group in Sweden was composed of students in Business programs at the Umeå University, in Umeå. There were 7 students with ages between 23 to 26 years, in their last year of university studies. The focus group was conducted in a room in the University on the 29\textsuperscript{th} of March 2010. The discussion took about 1h and everyone had time to express their views. The discussion was conducted by the author of the paper and notes were taken during it.

The students participating in the focus group were as follows:

*Table 21: Swedish students participating in the focus group*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Entrepreneurial experience</th>
<th>Career expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tobias</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Master in management</td>
<td>Internet based business</td>
<td>Job in consultancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Master in management</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mari</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Business Administration and economics</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanna</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Service management</td>
<td>Summer jobs</td>
<td>Start a company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oscar</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Business administration and economics</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frida</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Master in management</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Start a company</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.1.2 PART 1: UNIVERSITY STUDIES-EDUCATION

This part was focused on finding information related to their education and future entrepreneurial intentions. The students were asked questions related to the factors that influenced them to choose a certain study program, whether those courses helped them in their choice of the future career.

6.1.2.1 CHOICE OF PROGRAM

When conducting the focus group, first they were asked how and why they chose that study program. Out of the seven students tree (Simon, Mari, Bjorn) said that was mostly based on their previous studies and that was very little to choose. They argued that they had a certain amount of credits for certain courses that enhanced their entrance to such a program. On the other hand, two of them argued that the program was interesting and had future: “it will offer me many possibilities in the future when I will graduate” (Frida), “It seemed interesting and challenging, having interesting classes to study in the future years” (Tobias). Two of the students believed that it was what they wanted: “it was a program that would fit me best” (Hanna) and Oscar said that “it felt that the program would offer me exactly what I wanted to specialize in”.

Overall, all the students discussed that the programs that they chose were in a way representing what they would want to do in the future. They argued that even though not all the courses seemed useful or interesting overall they offered a good perspective over the business field.

6.1.2.2 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE OF PROGRAMS

Students were asked to think of the factors that have influenced their decision in choosing a certain program of study. Most of them- three out of seven (Tobias, Oscar, Mari) - said that they were also thinking of the future possibilities when choosing a certain program. They believed that it is important to “check the markets’ needs and to see if what you will be is still needed” (Tobias). In the same line, Mari and Oscar argued that “when choosing a program you have to consider first what you really like doing and secondly what would bring you both personal and financial satisfaction” (Mari). Frida said that she always saw herself an entrepreneur, having her own company and thus this was the “the road to follow” (Frida).

In addition some of the students considered that talking with their friends and parents influenced their decision. Simon argued that his friends brought convincing arguments for choosing the marketing program against any other. They argued about its variety of fields where in the future can be applied but also for the financial gains.

On the other hand, Hanna argued that the applicability of the future skills were an important aspect that was considered when she chose her subject. She also added that “the more
varied skills one has the more opportunities can find” and that it is important to be able to apply those also in other countries, as she thinks that “the future stays in the capability to adapt and thus to adapt our skills and what we have learnt to different countries, cultures”.

### 6.1.2.3 FUTURE EXPECTATIONS WHEN GRADUATING

The students were asked to describe what their future expectations after graduating from the university studies are.

Three of them (Simon, Mari, Oscar) said that they would mostly want to find a job and to be satisfied with what they are doing. They argued that when graduating from such a program- management, business administration, marketing- the chances to find a job are higher than in other fields such as humanistic ones- psychology, languages, or even IT. Furthermore, Hanna was among the only ones who said that the main reason she chose the program was that she wanted to start a company somewhere in the future. She believed that such a program- service management- would help her with the basic notions and some practical experiences. She considers that “having an overall image of the field, knowing a bit of everything will help in the future at least to know where to further look for more practical methods.” In the same line, Frida argued that “the university studies are there to offer you a support for your future career, not necessary to make you an expert in it”. She said that is everyone’s job to further learn in the real life how to apply what was taught in school. Frida, as Hanna, would want to start a company at some point in her future as she says that “being your own employee is the best job ever”.

On the other hand, two of the students were more reserved about their future expectations just saying that working in a field that they like would be already an accomplishment. Tobias believes that when graduating he would want to first maybe work in a consultancy company to gain some experience and maybe later to start a business. He said that “it is important to have some experience before you run your own business, as you might make basic mistakes that otherwise could have been avoided”. In contrast, Bjorn would see himself working in a field that he likes and not complicating himself with creating a new business.

**Table 22: Swedish students: future expectations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tobias</th>
<th>Simon</th>
<th>Mari</th>
<th>Hanna</th>
<th>Oscar</th>
<th>Frida</th>
<th>Bjorn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How did you choose your program?</strong></td>
<td>Seemed interesting</td>
<td>Previous studies</td>
<td>Previous studies</td>
<td>It was what he wanted</td>
<td>Classes he wanted to specialize in</td>
<td>She thought it would have future</td>
<td>Previous studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What factors influenced you?</strong></td>
<td>Future possibilities</td>
<td>friends influence</td>
<td>Future possibilities</td>
<td>Applicability of the skills</td>
<td>Future possibilities</td>
<td>His future dreams</td>
<td>Family/future prospective jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are your future</strong></td>
<td>Consultant/new</td>
<td>Find a</td>
<td>Find a job</td>
<td>Start a</td>
<td>Find a job</td>
<td>Start a</td>
<td>To work in a domain that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.1.3 PART 2: ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVE IN CREATING A NEW VENTURE

This part was focused in finding the students views related to entrepreneurial initiatives in creating a new venture but also related to entrepreneurship in general.

6.1.3.1 SEEING THEMSELVES ENTREPRENEURS

The students were asked if they would see themselves as entrepreneurs in the future. Four out of the seven students said that at least in the near future they do not see themselves as entrepreneurs. Tobias and Bjorn argued that it is not their main objective and thus they would probably prioritize finding a job rather than thinking of a business idea. Tobias said that “being an entrepreneur is much more difficult than being employed, too much responsibility”, whereas Bjorn argued that being entrepreneur does not automatically mean that you are going to be rich and known and everything will be on the right track from the beginning, thus “being employed might be the key to the successful road in front rather than being an entrepreneur”.

On the other hand, Hanna and Frida were more inclined to sustain the idea of becoming an entrepreneur. Hanna argued that she has been thinking for a while to start a business and that she thinks that as soon as she will graduate she will start thinking more seriously. She said that “starting a business was in the plans since I started the master program and I saw that there might be some opportunities out there”, whereas Frida argued that “if there will be an opportunity that I could take advantage of and I would feel confident doing it I would see myself as an entrepreneur”, but she believed that she is not a very creative person and probably she will not be able to come up with an innovative solution for something, as entrepreneurs do.

Oscar on the other hand, was more in between. He would not reject the idea but he was not very excited about it either. He was underlining that “keeps the mind open to opportunities and possibilities but that I do not do of it a purpose”. He said that if there will be a great job he would accept it, but if someone would propose him to become his partner in a business or to help him develop a certain idea, if it will be a potential successful one he will get involved too.

Table 23: Swedish students: Seeing themselves entrepreneurs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tobias</th>
<th>Simon</th>
<th>Marie</th>
<th>Hanna</th>
<th>Oscar</th>
<th>Frida</th>
<th>Bjorn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you see yourself an entrepreneur?</td>
<td>Not much</td>
<td>Maybe in 3/4 yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe, but not very soon</td>
<td>Yes, Why not</td>
<td>Not necessary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.1.3.2 ENHANCING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

The students were asked to think of ways to enhance the entrepreneurial spirit. The majority of the students believed that by presenting it as a positive thing (Oscar), by creating a friendly attitude towards it (Frida) more people and thus more students would feel attracted to it and they would create more ventures. Bjorn said that entrepreneurship “should be promoted more, should be explained better so that everyone understand what it is and what is its purpose”, whereas Mari believed that the problem exists in the law system, “in the way the law system in spite of encouraging more and more entrepreneurs it lays so many barriers” thus, people just feel helpless and they quit trying opening a business. In addition, Tobias believed that more effort should be put into creating a more friendly culture, “ensuring that everyone sees it as a positive thing that not only helps the entrepreneur but also the local/regional society that interacts with the entrepreneur.”

Overall, the students believed that a better promotion of the entrepreneurship and what it means to everyone that interacts with a certain entrepreneur is the first and most important step to take.

Table 24: Swedish students: enhancing the entrepreneurial spirit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How to enhance the entrepreneurial spirit?</th>
<th>Tobias</th>
<th>Simon</th>
<th>Mari</th>
<th>Hanna</th>
<th>Oscar</th>
<th>Frida</th>
<th>Bjorn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture friendly attitude</td>
<td>By presenting it as a good thing to do</td>
<td>By promoting entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Presenting it as a positive thing</td>
<td>By having a friendly attitude towards it</td>
<td>By promoting it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.1.3.3 BORN VERSUS MADE ENTREPRENEURS

In this part the students were asked to discuss whether they believe the entrepreneurs are born or made. The majority of the students (five out of seven) agreed that the entrepreneurs are made, believing that the needed skills can be acquired and that everything can be learned. On the other hand there were two students (Simon and Mari) who believed that some skills only the born entrepreneurs can have- certain senses. Simon thinks that “even though everything can be taught the best entrepreneurs are those that have it in their blood, they can see opportunities where no one else sees anything”; in the same line, Mari argues that skills such as high risk taking or creating something new out of something ordinary and knowing exactly what to do with it are “qualities of born entrepreneurs- not everyone can do those things even with the best masters finished”.

The discussion continued on both sides, with arguments for and against the born or made entrepreneurs, but overall the students agreed that most of the aptitudes and skills could be taught and that the born entrepreneurs are those that “you see once in a lifetime, and you remember their innovations and business for a long time” (Mari).
Table 25: Swedish sources: born vs. MADE entrepreneurs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Born vs. Made entrepreneurs</th>
<th>Tobias</th>
<th>Simon</th>
<th>Mari</th>
<th>Hanna</th>
<th>Oscar</th>
<th>Frida</th>
<th>Bjorn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Born- some skills</td>
<td>Born- some skills</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Made</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.1.3.4 CHALLENGES TO CREATE A NEW VENTURE

For this part the students were asked to think how difficult or easy creating a business is and which would be the challenges in doing that. All the students agreed that creating a business is difficult, and that the process is long and full of challenges that one might not even think of in the beginning.

Tobias thought that “coming up with a great idea and trying to put it in a business plan to see if it is actually doable might be the hardest thing”, as it is the base of the future business. Similar, Simon said that “developing an idea to make it commercial, to find its market and to still be creative” for him was the biggest challenge. Furthermore, Mari and Bjorn argued that actually getting founds to start the business is very hard to do. Bjorn said that as students banks do not really trust you to give you a loan, there are very few institutions that might invest in you, thus “the chances finding an investor that would share your vision and trust that you did your homework and the business will actually be a success are very little”, whereas Hanna referred to the “unfriendly environment” as “the people that should believe in us, the graduates, and should at least give us a chance- maybe entrepreneurs that maybe themselves started when young- they are looking skeptical and doubting everything”. Oscar on the other hand, complained that the bureaucracy that you have to pass over would discourage even the most motivated entrepreneur, a system that should encourage entrepreneurs is instead putting them down: “there are too many papers to fill in, too much time lost waiting for papers to be returned and checked. It feels like they do not want entrepreneurs”.

Table 26: Swedish students: challenges to create a new venture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges to create a new venture</th>
<th>Tobias</th>
<th>Simon</th>
<th>Mari</th>
<th>Hanna</th>
<th>Oscar</th>
<th>Frida</th>
<th>Bjorn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coming up with a new idea</td>
<td>To find an idea and to develop it</td>
<td>Getting the founds</td>
<td>An unfriendly environment</td>
<td>Bureaucracy</td>
<td>Developme of the venture</td>
<td>Lack of funds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.1.3.5 THE TREND RELATED TO THE CREATION OF NEW VENTURES

When asked what is their impression related to the trend in the past years related to the numbers of new ventures, most of the students agreed that is decreasing (five out of seven). They argued that the state system in spite of improving is becoming more and more challenging for entrepreneurs and that they either chose to create their ventures abroad or to get employed.

Mari thought that the risk involved was perceived as high and thus very few entrepreneurs actually wanted to take it. Frida on the other hand thought that in a very slow pace the trend is increasing and that more and more entrepreneurs will be seen in the next years. She argued that it is not probably because there are incentives to do it but that rather this generation is more open minded to try new things, to be different- not as everyone else, employed for example.

Table 27: Swedish students: the trend to create new ventures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tobias</th>
<th>Simon</th>
<th>Mari</th>
<th>Hanna</th>
<th>Oscar</th>
<th>Frida</th>
<th>Bjorn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The trend of creating new ventures</td>
<td>decreasing</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Risk perceived as higher</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Increasing very slow</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.1.4 PART 3: NATIONAL CULTURE

In this part the students were asked to discuss about how the society sees the young entrepreneurs, how creating a business is seen and also what types of support they know that could encourage new venture creation.

6.1.4.1 HOW THE CREATION OF A NEW BUSINESS IS SEEN

The general attitude among the students was that the being employed is seen more “safe” (Simon, Oscar) and creating a business is “rather crazy” (Simon) and “a combination of bravery and foolishness” (Mari). Tobias argued that he thinks that the society inclines in supporting more people being employed rather than having their business. He thought that to some degree no one cares but that as soon as you have a bit of success they will start judging and assuming bad things.

Hanna and Frida did not agree with this view saying that there are entrepreneurs that are encouraging more and more entrepreneurs to create new ventures and that “even though the society in general might not have a positive impression of creating a business, it matters how you present it, how you introduce your business to the society” (Frida). Hanna also added that the new business creation is seen mostly positive from the business environment, more than the employed people, underlining that “the business environment where you want to be with your business will most probably welcome you but the people
that are outside of this circle will always feel envy or they will try to create lies”. Bjorn added that those types of lies are “a big barrier for weak entrepreneurs. The society’s perceptions can sometimes kill an idea from the bottom.” Making people feel bad that they are opening a business and that they should better find a job can sometimes discourage entrepreneurs that care of how they are seen by others, Bjorn believed.

Table 28: Swedish students: how a new venture is seen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening a business is it seen positively?</th>
<th>Tobias</th>
<th>Simon</th>
<th>Mari</th>
<th>Hanna</th>
<th>Oscar</th>
<th>Frida</th>
<th>Bjorn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More getting employed</td>
<td>50/50</td>
<td>good bad</td>
<td>General attitude is brave foolish to open</td>
<td>Yes, by some entrepreneur s</td>
<td>Safer to be employed</td>
<td>Rather yes, but the society does not necessary sees it positive</td>
<td>Not really, is being judged</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.1.4.2 HOW ARE STUDENTS THAT OPEN A BUSINESS SEEN

In this section the students were asked to discuss how students that open a business are seen. Two out of seven students said that because of the lack of experience students are not necessary seen very well. Simon argued that “when asked what is the experience on which I base my assumptions, business plan and the answer is from education, most investors become skeptical and prefer not to invest as it is considered a very high risk”, thus not giving the students a chance to prove their skills. Other entrepreneurs, as argued by Tobias, see students that open a business as “an unusual phenomena”, as it is supposed that you first work and get some experience and then you open a business, thus when a student comes with a business plan or with a business idea they are seen as “excentric and uncommon”(Tobias). In addition, Bjorn said that they are also considered “unique“, thus “some entrepreneurs even encourage them to continue, to stimulate them as it is not very often that they see students getting involved in a business”. The same thought Hanna had as she said that “some entrepreneurs are more open to hear students’ ideas and to consider their proposals and to treat them as young entrepreneurs no matter their experience”. Mari added that she even knows some students that opened a business and with the help of some entrepreneurs they were able to quickly create their networks. She said that “even though the businesses might not be very big-as there might be websites, selling things through internet”, it can be considered a start and she admires those that manage to pull it through, and that they should be encouraged to continue to develop.
Table 29: Swedish students: how students that open a business are seen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How are students seen when opening a business?</th>
<th>Tobias</th>
<th>Simon</th>
<th>Mari</th>
<th>Hanna</th>
<th>Oscar</th>
<th>Frida</th>
<th>Bjorn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seen as unusual</td>
<td>Not very well as they are inexperienced</td>
<td>Students that opened and they quickly made networks</td>
<td>Positive, even encouraged by some entrepreneurs</td>
<td>As an unusual thing</td>
<td>Not necessary positive as it is thought that they do not have experience</td>
<td>Rather positive and as a unique thing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.1.4.3 HOW FAILURE IS SEEN

Failure was seen by some of the students (three out of seven) as something rather negative, they arguing that when one fails “the society will consider that you are not good enough for that business, or that you lack skills and experience” (Tobias), or that “after failing you should try something else or try finding a job as it means you are not made for running a business” (Oscar). As said before they thought that it was too expensive to try again thus “considering trying again with some other idea is seen as foolish” (Simon). On the other hand, Hanna and Frida believed that a fail “should make you try again, motivate you and encourage you to see where the mistake was and to try do it better even with the same idea” (Frida). Hanna argued that she does not think it is a bad thing and that the society does not necessary cares about small entrepreneurs’ failures. She said that “just quitting and finding a job is for weak people that do not handle the pressure”. She believes that the key is to start small so that even if you fail you will not lose a lot of money and in this way gaining experience and later you can invest more. Mari added that failure means that you “missed something when you did your business plan or your forecasts thus it should be a challenge to you to find what was wrong. It is a try that you owe yourself”.

Overall, the students did not argue that it is embarrassing to fail, just that it might be very expensive and thus one should calculate the risk attentively before starting. They considered that failure should motivate and encourage one to try again.

Table 30: Swedish students: Failure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How failure is seen?</th>
<th>Tobias</th>
<th>Simon</th>
<th>Mari</th>
<th>Hanna</th>
<th>Oscar</th>
<th>Frida</th>
<th>Bjorn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Society will consider they are not made for it</td>
<td>Not good for the business</td>
<td>Something you missed when planning</td>
<td>Not a bad thing</td>
<td>Try something else</td>
<td>Encourages you to try more</td>
<td>To re-try, learn from mistakes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.1.5 PART 4: PRACTICAL METHODS TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS

All the students agreed that more contact with real entrepreneurs and to actual business would increase the awareness and thus maybe encourage students to follow this road. Tobias and Frida thought that interaction with entrepreneurs would make students see how the reality is and consider whether they would want to become like that or not. Simon and Hanna believed that writing business plans and make them as accurate as possible would also provide a glimpse in the reality, making students realize the challenges and efforts that the creation of a business implies. “Being taught practical things” was a method that both Bjorn and Mari underlined as being very important. They argued that “sometimes we learn a lot of theory that we will never apply in the real life, thus we would prefer have more practical classes” (Mari), with for example real life cases and discuss what others did and what should had been done.

Furthermore, they argued that institutions like Uminova, Handelskammaren and SIFE could help students develop their ideas or at least to encourage them by giving them advice and information. Tobias said that “such organizations are a good place to be in contact with, as they do believe in students”. Hanna said she knows students that with the help of Uminova managed to find investors and to develop their company. “The fact that they offer you support and advice and help you create and develop your ideas is an immense help and students should know about it” (Hanna). She emphasized that as they already have an infrastructure that you can use for a starting business means a lot.

In order to motivate students to develop entrepreneurial activities the different institutions have to listen to the needs of the students. Thus, the different educational programs should include real life cases to teach and face-to-face activities with the business world. The role of education in influencing students to become entrepreneurs could become a more powerful tool if the student’s needs would be more taken into account.

6.2 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS FOCUS GROUP

The aim of the focus groups was to find out information related to the Swedish students and their views on entrepreneurship education, national culture and how those influence the decision of starting a new venture.

The information gathered referred to the reasons why a certain educational program was chosen and the factors influencing the decision but there was not clear enough how the students saw those courses. Furthermore, the students expressed their future expectations and how those were related to the courses they had taken. Nevertheless, there was no discussion related to who should be teaching those courses and whether it is a must on order to become a successful entrepreneur.

Furthermore, the students discussed about the entrepreneurial initiative and how do they perceive entrepreneurs. They argued that entrepreneurs are made, as everything can be taught, but there are some unique features that only few have which come from the inner individual. A deeper discussion on the factors that would motivate students to become
entrepreneurs could have brought a deeper understanding of how students see the process of creating a business.

Related to cultural aspects, the students discussed about how new ventures are seen and also how the new ventures created by students were perceived by the society. They believed that creating a business was a challenge and the unfriendly environment was not helping them very much. Failure was seen as a clue that something went wrong or that the person was not meant to be an entrepreneur. The high costs and the society’s attitude would make most of the entrepreneurs to look for an employment rather than trying again.

There was not much discussion on how to improve the environment in order to motivate students to create more ventures. Also, a better understanding of the unique characteristics of Swedes would clarify certain cultural aspects that would influence the way an entrepreneur is seen.

Taking all the above into consideration, a new interview was needed. An interview guide was created based on the lacking information and two interviews were conducted with two other students.

6.3 INTERVIEWS SWEDEN

6.3.1 BACKGROUND

There were two interviews conducted with students at the Umeå University in Umeå, studying in different business programs. The interviews were taken in between 19th and 26th of April 2010 and they were conducted face to face. The length of the interviews was on average 45 min each and the author took notes during the interview. No recording was done.

The students that participated in the interviews were as follows:

Table 31: Swedish students participating in the interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Entrepreneurship courses taken</th>
<th>Business experience</th>
<th>Future career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caroline</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Maybe opening a business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Service Management</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Maybe opening a business</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.3.2 PART 1: EDUCATION

In the beginning of the interview both students were asked to describe their entrepreneurship courses, how they perceived those courses. David argued that “it gave me rudimentary knowledge about how to create a business plan and some of the key concepts of success in business. It was a part of my program”. In the same line, Caroline said the courses she took were entrepreneurship courses but within her Business Administration program. She said that the courses were interesting and useful related to how to start a business.

When asked what should be the aim of entrepreneurship courses, they both believed that those courses should teach the students how to develop a business, how to spot opportunities. David said that “their aim should be to develop the students’ ability to spot opportunities and turn them into business ideas”. David believed also that how to write a business plan should only be one part, and creativity and what attributes, skills and personality traits an entrepreneur should have, should also be taught, whereas Caroline argued that “the entrepreneurship courses should bring those basic concepts that a student must have in order to create and develop a business”.

Furthermore, David considered that the focus of the entrepreneurial courses should be more on “general development of the persons’ entrepreneurial mind” and less on theories. In the same line, Caroline argued that sometimes there is too much theory that will most probably not be ever applied in real life and thus more practical cases would bring a greater input to the students. David also added that “it is also important to educate the student on risk taking, risk assessment and so on since one of the major barriers in my perception is the perceived risk involved with starting a business.”

Nevertheless, both interviewees considered that having professors teaching part of the entrepreneurial courses it is important, as they know the theory and previous research very well. David said that “both are needed, the pedagogical part of a teacher and the creativeness of an entrepreneur. It is important to get a feeling of how an entrepreneur develops ideas”, and Caroline said that “even though theory is not nice to learn there is a need of some basic knowledge, which an entrepreneur cannot offer”. Moreover, the opinions were very different when considering whether entrepreneurship education is a must in order to create successful businesses. On one hand, David argued that entrepreneurship education is not something necessary, that there are many other ways of gaining the needed knowledge without education especially: “I do however think that it is important to get an idea of how other people have done it before you. People who start a business without any knowledge usually end up failing a couple of times before they get it right, something that is a hard process and many people quit after their first failure”. On the other hand, Caroline thinks that education should be the first step to be taken towards entrepreneurial initiative: “it is the education that should guide you and make you see the risks and opportunities, without it you would make probably the most basic mistakes that otherwise could have been avoided”.

When discussing about the existing of a gap in between the academic world and the real business one, both interviewees believed that what is being taught in school is of a more abstract content. David said that “mostly the gap lies in the personal development of the
entrepreneur”, whereas Caroline emphasized that “not always what we are taught is updated, and there are theories and methods that are very old and which cannot be applied nowadays”. They also argued that the more education the students get the more they acknowledge the risks and are less willing to take it. David believes that education should also teach students how to deal with the high risk, how to manage it.

6.3.3 PART 2: ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVE

In this part the interviewees were asked how they see the process of creating a new venture. Both of them said that it is a very difficult and challenging process, but that “one of the main characteristics of an entrepreneur should be to be persistent and not give up” (David) and to “know when an idea is not going to succeed and to stop” (Caroline).

Furthermore, they considered as the most important factors that influence the creation of a new business the idea, the opportunities on the market and the financial resources. David said that the idea is the first and most important factor as it is the starting point of the future business. Caroline believed that besides the idea another important factor would be the opportunities on the market, whether they will make the idea grow or not.

When discussing about what could be done to improve the environment and motivate students to create more ventures both interviewees agreed that there has to be a certain mentality, culture that supports the entrepreneurs. David believed that “it is important to have a culture and a mindset that breeds innovation and risk taking and does not view failure as something final and ultimate”. Furthermore, he said that obtaining the needed capital is a challenge at the beginning, so “having somewhere where you can present your ideas to investors or come in contact with investors would help”. Caroline also believed that, and furthermore she added that “having real discussions with entrepreneurs within the courses in class, and showing the students the bright part of entrepreneurship” could also be a way to motivate them.

Moreover, both interviewees thought that young entrepreneurs should not be treated different from the other more experienced ones. Of course, as David said, there has to be a limit to what to expect from a young graduate but they should be challenged to do their best. Caroline also suggested that they should be given the chance to tell their ideas and to present their plans and not to be underestimated just because they are young.

6.3.4 PART 3: CULTURE

The discussion started by asking the two interviewees to describe a typical Swede. David thought that the general attitude of a Swedish person is “to live in moderation. Not to want too much and also to dislike people who live in abundance. There are so many hidden or unspoken codes that have been created during a century of socialism related to living in
moderation. It is beginning to change though and I think it is possible to run a business nowadays without people having too much objections about it”. In the same line Caroline said that a typical Swede would be satisfied with his job and the commodity it offers and would not want more if he/she does not need it.

In relation with the level of individualism, both interviewees thought Sweden has a low level, thus they prefer working in groups, having someone to count on and as David said “two heads are wiser than one”. The level of recognition was also considered low, but both Caroline and David believed that is something individual. Caroline said that “Swedes do not necessary want to be on the front page for something, they are more shy and thus if the community, people around them acknowledge their efforts for them is enough”.

The communities’ attitude towards entrepreneurial intentions was seen by the interviewees as an important influential factor. They argued that “the job security” (David) is seen as one of the major things that holds back the entrepreneurial spirit. David said that during time the attitude towards young entrepreneurs has changed “due to internet and better communication” as it is easier to get in contact with people with similar ideas and start your business faster, but also because of the level of information- people understood that “creating a new venture creates also jobs for example” (David).

The future of the entrepreneurship in Sweden was not seen very well by the two students. David argued that the “the corporate climate of Sweden is going to continue driving businesses away and more and more corporations are fleeing to other countries or have their main production there”, whereas Caroline thought that “that the system does not motivate the new venture creation....it is too expensive and in the end people give up because of all the steps they have to take”.

6.4 ANALYSIS FOCUS GROUP AND INTERVIEWS SWEDEN

6.4.2 PART 1: EDUCATION

Below it is a summary of the main findings during the focus group and the Swedish interviews.

Table 32: Analysis Education (Swedish group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Swedish Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choosing the program</td>
<td>Seemed interesting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Based on previous studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors influencing the decision</td>
<td>Friends influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Future possibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What he/she dreamt of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future career expectations</td>
<td>Finding a job in a field that he likes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start a company (2/7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The research started by trying to find the reasons behind choosing an entrepreneurship program. The empirical findings show that the students believed that entrepreneurship education was a continuation of their previous studies. They considered that the courses seemed interesting and had a future. This is in the same line with Roudaki (2009) who suggests that the entrepreneurship education is an important factor in forming the intent to start a career or a business when graduating but also with Fayolle’s (2008b) statement that says that entrepreneurship education should make the students to see entrepreneurship as a career option. As one of the students said “the university studies are there to offer you a support for your future career, not necessarily to make you an expert in it” (Frida). In his studies, Kirby (2007) suggests the same thing, as entrepreneurship education should be concerned with raising the awareness about entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, the students believed that entrepreneurship education should be about the future, about risking to create something new, which says in other words what Shane (2000:218) argued that entrepreneurship education represents: “the examination of how, by whom, and with what effects, opportunities to create future goods and services are discovered, evaluated and exploited”. As presented by Gibb (1987) in his framework (see Figure 7) while academic education focuses mostly on the past, teaching the students to analyze, to be critical, to be detached from the subject, the focus of entrepreneurship is on the future, to actively understand, to be emotionally involved, to be creative. The students also felt that there was a gap in between what they were taught during the courses and what they have heard from entrepreneurs and that they would have liked even more practicality from the courses. As Kuratko (2005:589) underlined, the students have to be exposed to the entrepreneurs that “have paid the price, faced the challenge and endured the failure”, to be aware of the real life situations and how a real entrepreneur deals with them. On the other hand, the empirical findings show that students do not want only the entrepreneurs to teach them, as they do acknowledge the importance of theory too: “pedagogical part of a teacher and the creativeness of an entrepreneur” (David), “even though theory is not nice to learn, there is a need of some basic knowledge, which an entrepreneur cannot offer, as the majority of them did not follow any previous steps” (Caroline).

A general belief within the Swedish students was to say that they only had very little entrepreneurship courses, or even not at all, when actually the courses were under the global umbrella of business programs, and not being called entrepreneurship. This trend was also seen by Kuratko (2005) who found that entrepreneurship courses are for the most of the times included in the business programs. But as Fayolle (2008a:325) states, entrepreneurship education is still “very young, emergent, and in its adolescence phase”, thus still having time to develop and evolve according to the needs of the students.

Their expectations when graduating from a business or entrepreneurship program was in general to look for a job- and as stated by some of the students, a job is similar to security – rather than creating a new venture. The reasons for that were several: having some experience before actually having your own business, the fears, and the high uncertainty. Their need of experience first is also sustained by Gibb’s (1987) findings, which recommend learning by doing, involving the students in problem solving in real-world situations. On the other hand, Gibb (1987) also suggests that a unique characteristic of an entrepreneur is his “gut feeling”, his creativity and self-determination (Henderson, 2000)
which would motivate and drive an entrepreneur to go forward following his instincts rather than choosing a comfort zone.

Overall the results suggest that the Swedish students think that young entrepreneurs would most probably look for something that offers them security - financial and personal - rather than taking risks. But they also think that the educational system in Sweden involves still theory that is not updated and thus not necessary to learn. Moreover, those statements can also be identified in the previous research done in the field, as authors like Gibb (1987), Kuratko (2000) and Fayolle (2008b) have similar findings in their studies. Furthermore, it can be said that the Swedish group of students did not feel motivated to start a venture and this maybe is the cultural background that would make them chose a job.

6.4.3 PART 2: ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVE

A summary of the most important findings after conducting the focus group and the interviews are presented below.

**Table 33: Analysis entrepreneurial initiative (Swedish group)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Swedish Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeing as an entrepreneur</td>
<td>Majority “not very soon”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing the entrepreneurial spirit</td>
<td>Promoting entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presenting it as a positive thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Change the Cultural attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born vs. made entrepreneurs</td>
<td>Majority “made”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges to create a venture</td>
<td>Finding a good idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unfriendly environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This Part refers to the intentions that students have towards an entrepreneurial career. The empirical findings show that the Swedish students are not considering creating their own business in the first years after graduating. This might be as a result of the general attitude that a job represents more security and when being young the lack of experience brings a high level of risk. Sven (1998) considers the entrepreneurs an uncertainty-bearer, an innovator, an alert discoverer but also a coordinator; whereas when students prefer to chose a safe work place rather than creating a business might mean that they are not yet ready to be entrepreneurs.

The students were then asked if they think the entrepreneurs are born or made, and the general attitude was that they are made. They said that the needed characteristics and abilities can be taught and acquired in time through experience. Nevertheless, as Fayolle (2008a) underlined entrepreneurship is a matter of personality too and those cannot be taught. The empirical findings sustain this affirmation too, as some of the students argued
that some skills are innate to an entrepreneur, being a mix of born and made entrepreneur: “even though everything can be taught, the best entrepreneurs are those that have it in their blood- that have certain senses more accurate- they can see opportunities where no one else sees anything” (Simon). Gibb (1987) also suggested in his research that characteristics such as risk taking or need of achievement are innate to the individual. Moreover, if considered that entrepreneurship is associated with creativity, imagination, self-determination, risk taking, characteristics that are personal and individual, as Henderson (2000) suggests, the empirical findings suggest that the Swedish students are not born entrepreneurs. As stated by Gibb (1982) in his figure (see Figure 1) from early age students can be influenced by several factors: their parents, community, friends. Those types of aspects build the entrepreneur in time, developing its skills and motivating him to acquire others. Nevertheless, the empirical findings show that the Swedish students were rather independent in their decisions and that there was no strong influence over them, thus implying that they either discovered their inclinations towards entrepreneurship during the university studies or they will be graduating without being passionate about it, thus not intending to practice entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, when discussing the challenges to create a new venture the students believed that finding a great idea, and developing it in to a business plan would be the most difficult step, followed by the raising of the capital. Gartner (1985) underlines that the key element in the creation of a business is the individual in itself. He suggests a framework in which the individual interacts with the environment and the actual organization that will be created. From the empirical findings it can be seen that the students treat separately the business and the environment in which it will be created. They emphasize the important role the idea of the business is and that if this step is not successfully passed, the business will most probably fail. Gartner (1985), on the other hand, found that the entrepreneur, the business and the environment actually influence each other and constantly change, develop. In other words, even if the entrepreneur comes with a very good idea, but the customers are not ready for it, he has to adapt it so that it can fit in that specific context. As well as, if there are an increased number of entrepreneurs wishing to create new ventures but there is no infrastructure available, the environment will also react and create the dynamics needed.

Nevertheless, the students believed that there are factors that influence or motivate the creation of a new venture, such as the attitude towards entrepreneurship or the national system. As presented in Gibb (1987) framework (see Figure 3), certain environments are more suitable for entrepreneurship initiatives than others. According to the descriptions made by the students, Sweden would fit in the type of environment A: a steady market with low competition, long contracts, suppliers assured and product technologically straight forward. Moreover, the students believed that the trend of creating a new venture is decreasing every year, due to the high level of taxation, the high risk involved, and the community’s attitude towards entrepreneurs. This is in the same line with Gartner’s (1985:700) findings which underline the fact that “the entrepreneurs do not operate in vacuums- they respond to their environments”, thus when an environment does not motivate one to initiate entrepreneurial actions, the level of new businesses decreases and less and less entrepreneurs appear. The university studies, was a factor mentioned by the
students as not motivating them enough, and this was also seen by Henderson and Robertson (2000) in their studies. They argued that an educational environment that does not continuously acquire new information, new teaching techniques, and the lack of a model combined with the discouragements from the teachers, that present entrepreneurship as a high risk area, discourages and inhibits students.

In conclusion, the empirical findings show that the students are more inclined towards finding a stable job than initiating entrepreneurship initiative. As mentioned before there are different factors that discourage students to create a venture, but nevertheless, they see it with a positive eye. The findings are similar to Gartner’s (1985) and Gibb’s (1987) environmental frameworks which emphasize once more that entrepreneurship is influenced and influences the environment and the people within it. Sweden is no exception, as the students believed that the context was discouraging them to create a business and not their lack of entrepreneurial spirit.

6.4.4 PART 3: CULTURE

The empirical findings from both the focus group and the interviews were gathered in the table below.

Table 34: Analysis cultural aspects (swedish group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Swedish Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How opening a business is seen</td>
<td>Not necessary a positive thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safer to get employed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How students that open a business are seen</td>
<td>Unusual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students lack experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraged by some entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>Motivating one to try more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The society will consider it a sign for not being good at it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Swedish students believed that culture is something well rooted in ones character. They argued that even though the young generation is not as much influenced by the traditions and beliefs of the people there still are certain aspects that represent the core values of the national culture which are hard to avoid, as they represent the perceptions people have on things. Hall (1995) described culture through an ABC model, where A stands for Artifacts and Etiquette, B for Behaviors and actions and C for core morals, beliefs and values. As the students suggested the core values are also seen by Hall (1995) as the deepest and most unique characteristic of a nation’s culture.

When talking about the creation of a new venture and how it is seen by the society, the students believed that within the business community the creation of a new venture is seen positively, but that otherwise the society sees it rather negative. Furthermore, they consider that the society represents a strong barrier for a new entrepreneur, as like Hayton (2002:45)
underlines, culture is “captured in different forms in behavior”, and it can even shape the institutions that could promote entrepreneurship.

In addition, students that create a new venture are seen by the community, as believed by the interviewed students, as an unusual thing. The preconceptions the business people have that students are inexperienced makes them skeptical when considering their business ideas and thus discouraging them. But on the other hand there were students that said, as mentioned before, that the business people and the other entrepreneurs are actually helping the students - through Incubators or mentoring - to develop their ideas.

Furthermore, the attitude towards failure reveals the community cultural beliefs related to the chances given to entrepreneurs. The students believed that the society will not encourage someone who has failed to try again, both because it is expensive and because they think that once you failed it means that you were not meant to be an entrepreneur.

Hayton (2002) suggested several dimensions with which a culture can be measured related to entrepreneurship. The level of independence, the individualism, or the willingness to take up risks are among the most important ones. As the empirical findings show, the Swedes are rather collectivists - working better in teams, supporting each other and taking decisions considering everyone; it is very important for them to have their right respected and of others too and the “overwhelming majority values job security” (David) rather than taking risks. Following Hayton’s (2002) dimensions the Swedish culture could be seen as a culture where entrepreneurship is not necessary being stimulated but when considering their level of innovativeness and the more and more powerful competitiveness, it seems that the culture tends to adapt. As underlined by the students, the socialist view where everyone has to be equal, no one to earn more or to be more successful tends to change or even to disappear, making place for the young generation that is eager to be recognized.
7. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In this section a comparative analysis in between the two groups of students from Romania and from Sweden will be conducted. The interviews will also be considered.

7.1 EDUCATION

In this section the findings related to education from both samples of students (Swedish and Romanian) will be analyzed to better understand the role of education from their perspective.

In the table below are summarized the main ideas the students provided during the interviews and focus groups.

**Table 35: Comparative analysis: education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Swedish Group</th>
<th>Romanian Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choosing the program</td>
<td>Seemed interesting</td>
<td>Seemed interesting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Based on previous studies</td>
<td>Previous studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Would have future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors influencing the decision</td>
<td>Friends influence</td>
<td>Parents influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Future possibilities</td>
<td>Economic situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What he/she dreamt of</td>
<td>Future possibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future career expectations</td>
<td>Finding a job in a field that he likes</td>
<td>Find a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start a company (2/7)</td>
<td>Start a company (3/7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to understand the reason behind becoming an entrepreneur the students were first asked to say why they chose a certain educational program, the influential factors and their future career expectations.

An important factor in choosing the educational program was, for most of the students, the previous studies. They considered the entrepreneurship or the business courses as a continuation of their previous studies. Whereas the Swedish group of students believed that the courses seemed interesting and had a future, the Romanian group thought of them from a more practical perspective: it “shows us how in theory everything should be, they develop certain analytical skills and should trigger us [them] to want to learn more” (Adrian). A similar view also the Swedish students had as they argued that “the university studies are there to offer you a support for your future career, not necessary to make you an expert in it”, which furthermore, is also argued in the literature by Kirby (2007). Both groups of students were in the same line with Fayolle (2008b), who believes that entrepreneurship courses should make the students see in entrepreneurship a career option.

Furthermore, discussing about the educational program and its practicality, the Romanian group of students and also the Swedish ones believed that there are few if any programs
that are purely entrepreneurship. But as Kuratko (2005) underlines, many of the entrepreneurship courses are still under the umbrella of the business programs, as the students also noticed. In addition, Fayolle (2008a) argues that entrepreneurship is still a young field and it has not reached its' fully development yet, thus there are still ongoing processes of fully recognition, which means that there will still be some time in countries like Romania, until fully developed and organized entrepreneurship programs will be developed. Until then, at least courses that are related to entrepreneurship should be promoted more and made known to the students.

There was a common view from both groups of students related to the practicality of the entrepreneurship programs. On one hand, the Romanian group of students complained about the increased level of theories that exists and the lack of any practical methods, and on the other hand the Swedish group of students saw that there was a gap in between what they were taught in school and what was actually happening in the real life. Those arguments are sustained by Gibb’s (1987) framework which shows that in most cases the educational programs are focused on the past, on previous research and less on the future; the academic programs are teaching the students how to analyze and how to take decisions based on a critical and detached mind set whereas entrepreneurship is characterized by creativity and innovation, and decisions are taken on spot considering the factors involved in that moment. There is a clash in between the two types of education and the students interviewed distinguished it. They suggested that more real life cases and entrepreneurs talking and teaching them would bring the education in entrepreneurship to the next level. Gibb (1987) also suggested that learning by doing and involving the students in problem solving in real life situations would increase their awareness of what entrepreneurship actually means in the real world.

Nevertheless, there was a discussion among students whether entrepreneurs or professors would be most appropriate to teach in such a field. Here again, both groups believed that there should be a mix of the two, as the professors are giving the base and the knowledge necessary and the entrepreneurs are bringing the innovativeness and creativity and the risk-taking attitude, as Kuratko (2005:589) underlined “the students have to exposed to those entrepreneurs that have paid the price, faced the challenge, end endured the failure”. In the same line, one of the Swedish students said that entrepreneurship education should have the “pedagogical part of a teacher and the creativeness of an entrepreneur” (David).

Entrepreneurship involves a high risk and uncertainty and challenges, but the entrepreneurship education should teach the students how to overcome them and to go forward. One of the main reasons why most of the interviewed studies did not think of a career in entrepreneurship is the level of risk that comes with it. They argued that what they are taught in school is too theoretical and most of it cannot be applied in real life situations, thus they feel inexperienced and with any advantages when going in the business world. Both the Romanian group and the Swedish group of students said that they prefer the security of a job in the first years so that they can acquire the needed skills and knowledge that would help them later succeed with their own business. There were however, students that said that they would see themselves creating a business after graduating as learning from their own mistakes is faster and better. In the same line with this view, Hannon, Collins and Smith (2005) argued that educational program’s role is to create that awareness
of what entrepreneurship represents with all its aspects and encourage students to follow it. Even more, Fayolle (2008b) suggests that entrepreneurship educations should develop in students a taste for entrepreneurship and to stimulate the enterprise spirit towards new venture creation. But, as seen by both student groups, but mostly in the Romanian one, this does not happen in reality. The teachers are using the education as an excuse to the high level of risk and uncertainty, considering that more education you have more one will be able to better assess the risks. On the other hand, previous research showed that education can also kill the entrepreneurial spirit and as stated by one of the Swedish interviewees it “it diminishes it [the entrepreneurial spirit], by making them more calculated and more aware of the losses involved”(David) and thus transforming the entrepreneur in a more like business man. Furthermore, Timea believed that “if the education points out the risks and makes you more aware of them, it should also show you how to maximize the profit and to minimize the risks”. But, as entrepreneurship education is still in its beginnings, as Fayolle (2008b) argues, there is still no framework regarding how it should be taught or what should be taught.

7.2 ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVE

The empirical findings related to entrepreneurial initiative gathered from both sample of students are presented in the table below.

Table 36: Comparative analysis: entrepreneurial initiative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Swedish Group</th>
<th>Romanian Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeing as an entrepreneur</td>
<td>Majority “not very soon”</td>
<td>Majority “maybe” and yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing the entrepreneurial spirit</td>
<td>Promoting entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Promoting entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presenting it as a positive thing</td>
<td>Facilitating the entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Change the Cultural attitude</td>
<td>More practical tasks during education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born vs. made entrepreneurs</td>
<td>Majority “made”</td>
<td>Majority “made”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges to create a venture</td>
<td>Finding a good idea</td>
<td>Writing a business plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial challenges</td>
<td>Financial challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unfriendly environment</td>
<td>Starting the business-first steps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When discussing about entrepreneurship, the Romanian students asked for a definition of entrepreneurship, as it was not clear for them what it was. The Schumpeter (1934) definition was used in order to make it as clear as possible. The fact that they did not know what entrepreneurship is was rather surprising as they do have classes of entrepreneurship just that not literally called entrepreneurship. In Romania there is no distinction in between Business Administration and Entrepreneurship yet, and thus the students were confused at the beginning of the conversation. Nevertheless, they quickly understood and were able to say that the majority would not see themselves as entrepreneurs after graduating. The same opinion the Swedish students had as they said that they would prefer finding a job. In both cases this might be the result of the academic system and the communities’ attitude towards young entrepreneurs, as the students also suggested. Deakins (1996) found that in the
In the academic world there is more accent on how an entrepreneur should be and what skills he should have rather than on the process to create and develop those characteristics. Furthermore, both groups of students believed that by promoting entrepreneurship as a positive action, by having more practical tasks in schools and being closer to the business world would probably increase the number of young entrepreneurs and thus the number of new ventures. This is in the same line with Henderson and Robertson (2000) findings that suggest that in the lack of a model, of new teaching techniques, and practical aspects students will not be motivated to follow entrepreneurship as a future career.

Moreover, when discussing about the teaching methods and what actually can be taught in entrepreneurship, the discussion whether entrepreneurs are born or made was brought. Gibb (1987) believes that this discussion continues to take place because it comes from the “populist belief” (Gibb, 1987:6) that characteristics as risk taking and the need of achievement are innate to each individual. Both groups of students believed that entrepreneurs are made, that they accumulate experiences and skills during life that will help them become successful entrepreneurs. On the other hand, Fayolle (2008a) considers that entrepreneurship is a matter of personality and thus it cannot be taught. In the same line, there were some students that argued that an entrepreneur should have a mix of born and made characteristics; but that there has to be a certain passion and motivation as a basis as not everyone can be taught to become an entrepreneur.

Furthermore, if considering that entrepreneurship is characterized by creativity, innovativeness and self-determination, as Henderson (2000) suggests, the empirical findings show that among the students interviewed there is very little entrepreneurial initiative. More, when asked to describe the most important challenge when creating a new venture, most of the students believed that finding and developing a good idea is the most difficult, this implies that they do not feel confident in their own creativity and skills or are lacking in self determination and motivation. In addition if the Romanian group of students believed that after writing the business plan the next hard step is to raise the capital, the Swedish students thought that a big challenge is the people’s attitude. They believed that as Swedes are taught “to live in moderation; not to want too much and also to dislike people who live in abundance. There are so many hidden or unspoken codes that have been created during a century of socialism related to living in moderation” (David) there are still people that do not see with good eyes someone having its business. Nevertheless, as they also stated, the trend of new business creation is increasing and more and more businesses will probably appear. This statement is also sustained by Gartner (1985:700) who found that the environment is very important for an entrepreneur as they “do not operate in vacuums- they respond to their environments”. Even more, Gartner (1985) suggested in his framework (see Figure 2) that there is a constant interaction between the environment, the future organization and the entrepreneur in itself. Those factors influence each other and change during the process according to the decisions taken by the entrepreneurs and the changing in the environment- economical, political, and social.
7.3. CULTURE

In this section, the cultural aspects found in both groups were summarized in the table below and analyzed afterwards.

Table 37: Comparative analysis: cultural aspects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Swedish Group</th>
<th>Romanian Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| How opening a business is seen | Not necessary a positive thing  
Safer to get employed | Not necessary positive                                                            |
| How students that open a business are seen | Unusual  
Students lack experience  
Encouraged by some entrepreneurs | Mistrusted  
Lacking experience                                                               |
| Failure                        | Motivating one to try more  
The society will consider it a sign for not being good at it | Motivating one to try more  
As a bad sign- try something else  
Related to culture                                                                  |

In order to get more insight on how culture influences students’ decisions and perceptions upon entrepreneurship, topics related to how new business are seen, and how failure is perceived were discussed.

The relationship between culture and entrepreneurship was well established during time by researchers (Hofstede, 1980, Shane, 1992). There is a strong connection in between the level of entrepreneurship and the type of culture that country has. Hayton (2002) showed in his study that certain cultures promote the entrepreneurial initiatives more than other. The empirical findings show that Romanians and Swedes are rather collectivists and they feel good in groups, working together and taking decisions together. Furthermore, whereas Romanians have low expectations about the future and do not think of it very much as it is more important to pass over the day, the Swedes are looking forward to the future, and even though they do not necessary like to take risks, preferring the security of a job they are less hesitant than Romanians. Overall, this type of culture does not necessary motivates Romanians to become entrepreneurs, and as certain behaviors are strongly rooted in people it is also very less probable to change in the future, however for the Swedes when considering their level of innovativeness and the more and more powerful competitiveness (Davidsson, 1995), it seems that the culture tends to adapt.

Furthermore, how a new venture is seen reflects the society’s understanding upon the need and benefits of a new venture. The Romanians’ attitude was that among people there is still the old thought that one should first work and gain experience in order to be treated with respect and trust. The same attitude could be seen from the Swedish students who said that in the business world there is still the preconception that young graduates represent a high risk because of their lack of experience. Moreover, the Swedish students thought that the biggest barrier for entrepreneurs is the society. In an environment that promotes new ventures and motivates students to create new ventures the level of innovativeness is high and the community appreciates the new ventures. Maybe the lack of ventures, and thus the lack of jobs, makes the Romanian society to encourage the creation of new ventures. In this...
case is the need of jobs that motivates young graduates to create new ventures and the state to create the needed environment for them. In Sweden, there is no high demand on jobs nor on new ventures thus there is less concern from the state to take measures that would increase the number of new ventures. But, Sweden promotes research and thus the level of innovativeness and new is high, as there are more people finding or developing new things. Their new ventures come from researchers and their findings, rather than from young graduates.

How failure is seen is also part of the beliefs and perceptions related to the national culture. Failure can be seen as a motivation to try again and learn from what went wrong- as the students from Romania suggested- or it can be seen as a negative thing and thus a sign that something else should be tried. The failure attitude comes from the attitude the society has on others gaining more than them, how competition is seen and how success is seen. In a society like Sweden were people were “taught” not to want more than what they need, and that everyone should be equal, someone’s’ success can be perceived as an attitude against the system and it is not well seen. On the other hand in Romania there has never been equality and thus people are from early age taught to be competitive, thus success of someone is a trigger for others to try harder. In the same line, failure in Sweden is seen as a proof that one should had never tried to get more than the others and that this was his lesson, whereas in Romania failure motivates others to try again, as failing at the beginning it is not an unusual thing. But, as some Swedish students believed, the attitude in Sweden is changing too, as the new generation wants to try new things, challenges.

Nevertheless, what students argued about culture and its aspects comes from their own beliefs and attitudes. Thus everything seen through their eyes reflects a certain part of the culture that they have innate in themselves. When discussing about how the society sees the young entrepreneurs and the new ventures, they were presenting their thoughts, from what they believed, heard or were taught, as most of them did not had any previous entrepreneurial experience. It was the cultural aspect that was talking rather their knowledge. The level to which culture would influence their views and ideas is hard to appreciate.
8. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter summarizes the present study and presents the conclusions from the empirical findings related to the influence of culture and education on student’s entrepreneurial intentions. Further, the chapter presents the theoretical implications, the limitations of the results and suggestions for future research.

8.1 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study included three main key words: culture, education and entrepreneurial intentions. Those concepts were treated in different sections along the paper, but they were seen as a whole when analyzing them. The most obvious example is that cultural aspects could also be taken from the students’ answers related to education, for example. It was important to find the students understanding and perception on the entrepreneurship education and how it relates to their entrepreneurial intentions.

To conclude, the results can be summarized in the following points:

- First, the results show that the level of entrepreneurship initiative is low in both Sweden and Romania. Students do not see entrepreneurship as a career because of the risks involved and because of the lack of incentives.

- Second, the study shows that there is a strong connection in between the courses the students take and their entrepreneurship initiative. The lack of practicality and the excess of theory were reasons underlined by both group of students emphasizing the difficulty in applying what they learn in the real life. The educational programs are focused too much on analyzing and being critical whereas entrepreneurs have to know how to take decisions on spot with very little information.

- Third, the results suggest that the students believe that anyone can become an entrepreneur if taught what it is needed. The study shows that both group of students think that education can bring the needed skills to became a successful entrepreneurs, but they also suggest that one can be taught this outside of the university too: through life experience and non-academic literature.

- Fourth, the present study indicates that culture can be a strong influence on the level of new venture creations. The perception of the society upon entrepreneurs and mostly young graduates can either motivate or inhibit the entrepreneurial spirit. Swedish culture used to promote security and equality, but the empirical findings show that it tends to change and to perceive entrepreneurship more positive and to educate students to become entrepreneurs. Romania’s culture is more open to entrepreneurship but it lacks in the education that would help students consider it as a career.

- Last, there is a growing interest from graduate students towards entrepreneurship but they would suggest that an education of the teachers, a change in the studies programs in order
to make entrepreneurship a program by itself and more contact with real entrepreneurs and real cases would increase the number of new ventures.

Considering these conclusions, a framework that incorporates the main concepts has been created.

FIGURE 11: FRAMEWORK RATHER STATE WHAT THE FRAMEWORK IS ABOUT THAN THAT IT IS ABOUT MAIN CONCLUSIONS
As a conclusion to the study the author has created a framework which could explain the different connections between entrepreneurship education, culture and the new ventures created as seen by the author. In the framework, culture is the basis for almost everything done in the society, and as Hayton (2002:45) suggested culture is the “catalyst rather than a casual agent of entrepreneurial outcomes”. The core morals, which are the values and perspectives of a society, specific to a certain country, are influencing the community’s views upon entrepreneurship, in this case. Furthermore, the community is influencing one in his choice of education which in the end will influence the entrepreneurship initiative of that person. In addition, from the framework it can be seen that the society’s views influences the institutions and the structures of that country and this can also influence the entrepreneurial initiative, by offering incentives to pursue this career, and even the education-as entrepreneurship can be promoted more in order to motivate more students to follow those courses. But, on the other hand, the day-by-day actions could influence one to consider entrepreneurship as a career- the daily needs or the economic situation of the country are such examples. Nevertheless, in the end they lead to new venture creation, which can be considered entrepreneurship.

With this model the author tried to make it more clear how the different parts of this study came together and how they interact- based on the empirical findings. As a theoretical framework it can be considered as a suggestion of how the different aspects come together based on the authors’ view after understanding and analyzing the findings of this study.

8.2. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Considering the results of the study and the conclusions presented above, it is possible to identify four theoretical contributions or implications.

First, the results increase and develop the understanding within entrepreneurship of the role played by culture and education in the decision making process related to the creation of new ventures. Furthermore, the study increases the understanding of how students perceive education and its role in developing their future career in entrepreneurship, and also how culture affects their perceptions. The relation between education and entrepreneurship career has already been indicated in previous research (Fayolle, 2008, Kuratko, 2005), but the few number of studies was mostly focused on how to develop entrepreneurship programs and what should they include rather than their effect on future entrepreneurs.

Third, the results show that there is a relationship between the country’s culture and the attitude towards entrepreneurship and new venture creation (Hayton, 2002). Previous studies, however, focused on defining a certain culture through different dimensions, and relating entrepreneurship to it (Hayton, 2002, Shane, 1992), whereas this study tries to understand culture through the eyes of the students, to understand their perceptions on culture. In this sense, this study brings a new angle of the way culture is seen and interpreted.

Finally, the present study brings a new perspective over the needs students have related to the entrepreneurship programs but also related to the cultural attitude from the society towards the young entrepreneurs.
8.3 LIMITATIONS

Considering the results of the study several limitations can be observed.

- First, the study was conducted on a sample of students from a university in Romania and a university in Sweden. The criterion on which the students were chosen was to be in their last year of university studies and to have studied a business program.

The study is limited to students from two universities, as the purpose was to better understand what happens in two different cultures and countries. The two universities were chosen as they have similar characteristics (number of students, programs), and the two countries are different from economic, cultural, and entrepreneurial perspectives.

- Second, the number of students interviewed is representative for a small scale research when a better understanding of a certain phenomenon is desired. The results cannot be generalized to other countries or universities, but it can offer a start for future research and it provides an insight in the student’s perceptions related to education and entrepreneurship.

The chosen students did not prefer to study entrepreneurship as a program in the university, but rather business related courses. This could be seen as a limitation of the results, as the perspective offered was from students that did not know practically what such a program consists of, but rather from what they knew from others. But, on the other hand, the entrepreneurship program exists only in the chosen university in Sweden, and by not having students that were enrolled in it, but rather in business programs, the contrast in between the two student groups is not that strong. And even more, the fact that they chose business programs was useful when discussing their entrepreneurial intentions.

- Third, interviews were chosen as they offer a deeper understanding of the cultural aspects and the students discussed freely about their views and perceptions. On the other hand, interviews take longer time than a more quantitative method, thus a smaller number of students was selected. Furthermore, a critique brought to qualitative studies is that is subjective and hard to replicate; however, it is essential when aiming at getting a contextual understanding of a social phenomenon. Qualitative studies tend to be very descriptive, but what might seem as details on surface are actually important details for the participant in the context in which the behavior takes place, thus offering a detailed description of the environment that they act in.

- Fourth, the cultural aspects were understood through the eyes of the students, while they were expressing their perceptions on education, entrepreneurship and culture. They are specific to this group of students and it might be hard to replicate.

- Finally, as the interviews and the focus groups were not recorded there might have been information that was lost while doing the transcription and that might have improved the study. But, when dealing with people and their personal views it is important to respect their wishes- in this case to not record the discussion.
8.4 FUTURE RESEARCH

The limitations stated above might be the base of a new research, a deeper research on the topic. This study has covered three theoretical areas that have not been combined in previous studies on entrepreneurship research: culture, education and entrepreneurial intentions. More research should focus on these topics and the interaction between them. Regarding culture, more studies should focus on the effect that culture has on students’ decisions regarding entrepreneurship and how the society’s view can be changed in order to enhance entrepreneurial actions. Considering that each culture is different would be interesting to further study to what extent there is a common base and how starting from there could some culture be adapted so that to sustain the creation of new ventures.

Furthermore, the education that students receive is an important factor in their decision to become entrepreneurs. Further research in how to develop those programs and how to better mix them with real life activities, involving the business community and people from the community would help in creating a better environment for the students. Interesting subject could, for example, be how to motivate and induce the same excitement and entrepreneurial spirit to the professors that teach entrepreneurship, as they have a major importance in students’ development.

The results of this study indicate that, at least for the two countries chosen, there is not a well established entrepreneurship culture. More research would help in providing information on how the society sees now entrepreneurship and what could be done to improve the attitude. A deeper research on a bigger sample would give a more general view over the perceptions that exist related to entrepreneurship.

8.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the results of the study, it can be said that a better promotion of entrepreneurship would probably increase the number of new ventures. In countries like Romania, where the concept of entrepreneurship does not exist it is important to make it know to the society, to describe it as a positive thing to do. But no matter the society where it is implemented, entrepreneurship developers should give more attention to students. Creating an environment that would motivate following such a career ensures more new ventures on the long run.

As entrepreneurship is a big source of wealth, there should be more incentives and programs offered to motivate and attract more people to become entrepreneurs. Forming and attracting graduates should be the main concern, as students are creative and innovative, thus it is easier to shape their skills in order to develop the needed entrepreneurial characteristics.

Furthermore, when designing educational programs in entrepreneurship it is very important to pay attention to the needs a future entrepreneur has. Practicality and interaction with the business world are a must in order to offer a real experience for the students. A constant update on the information and courses that are related to everyday life events will lead to a successful entrepreneur.
In addition, motivating the professors that teach entrepreneurship, to have the same innovative drive and creativity as the students that they are teaching, would not only create a better connection between the students and the professors but would also bridge the gap that exists between the academic world and the business world.
In this chapter it is discussed the quality and trustworthiness of the study and of its results.

Among qualitative researchers has been the discussion whether reliability and validity – which are criteria for quantitative studies – can be assimilated to qualitative studies but with some changing in their meaning (Bryman, 2003). On the other hand, researchers suggest that qualitative studies should be judged using different criteria than the ones used for quantitative research. Guba and Lincoln (1995) proposed that there should be an equivalent to reliability and validity. They argue that reliability and validity presuppose that “a single absolute account of social reality is feasible” (Bryman, 2003:288). In other words, they argue against the realist view, which sees that there is only one absolute truth, by saying that there actually might be several different accounts of the social world (Bryman, 2003). They propose the concepts of trustworthiness and authenticity to evaluate a qualitative research. Trustworthiness is made up of transferability, credibility and dependability (Bryman, 2003). Bryman (2007) suggests also the intersubjectivity criterion which is closely related to the credibility criteria suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1995).

### 9.1 Transferability

This criterion refers to the generalization of the findings, whether they can be transferred to other contexts. Stenbacka (2001) states that analytical generalization is a truth criterion used in the qualitative research, which in other words means that the understanding of a phenomena can be transferred to other contexts rather than the actual empirical findings, since qualitative research is related to a certain context (Bryman, 2007). This is also in the same line with the epistemological position taken in this study, interpretivism, which as discussed in section 2.2.1 Epistemology and ontology, views social phenomena contextually bound.

For this case, this means that the general findings of this study related to the scope of the thesis could be transferred to other contexts but not specific results related to the Swedish or Romanian culture, for example. The general attitude of the students that the entrepreneurship programs are very theoretical and that it lacks practicality can be transferred to other contexts within entrepreneurship research. In the same line, the empirical findings related to culture and its strong connection with society’s perception to entrepreneurship could also be transferred to other cultures and see its impact on the entrepreneurship field.

### 9.2 Authenticity

This criterion refers to what level the research would help members of a society to better understand their milieu and also to appreciate other people’s perspectives of the social setting (Bryman, 2003). This study searches to understand through the eyes of students, which are the main target, their perspectives over entrepreneurship and the relation with
culture and the academic education. The findings are interesting for the universities as it provides an insight in student’s views and needs related to entrepreneurship. The results could help the universities to develop programs that would suit better the future entrepreneurs. Furthermore, they could find ways to motivate both students and teachers to improve the environment and the relationships with the real world- as suggested in the Future research chapter.

9.3 INTERSUBJECTIVITY

The findings of a qualitative research are based on interpretations implying that there might be the risk of subjectivity in the results and that they might not be trustworthy or even accurate. In order for the quality of the results not to be influenced, intersubjectivity is the criterion used. This criterion refers to whether the interpretations of this study were accepted by others, the participants in the study or others taking part in the study (Bryman, 2007). One way to do this, as suggested by Stenbacka (2001), is to describe the research process thoroughly so that the reader to evaluate and understand how the data was processed and the quality of the results, thus to ensure a satisfying level of intersubjectivity. For this study, the process of gathering the information, and the process of analyzing them was presented in the Methodological Chapter. A detailed description on how the interview method was chosen and further how the analysis strategy helped at interpreting the findings are presented.


APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1: FOCUS GROUP GUIDELINE

Purpose:

What is the role of national/regional culture and education in the development of new ventures among young graduates?

The aim of this study is to explore the influences of culture and education in student’s attitudes towards entrepreneurial activities, new venture creation in Sweden and Romania. By comparing two countries so different—economically, culturally, overall level of innovation and creation of businesses—the purpose is to see how those factors influence the young graduates, in what proportions. National culture and education were selected for this study as among others essential factors influencing attitudes towards new venture creation by students in two universities, one in Sweden and one in Romania. Those Universities chosen have programs in business and entrepreneurship and thus students with similar factors influencing them. As there is a limited time frame the main focus will be on those two universities and on the students from those universities specifically.

We will be discussing today about the creation of new ventures, focusing on students that create new ventures and the relationship between university studies, national culture and the entrepreneurial spirit in Romania/Sweden.

(Starting from general questions to more specific ones in order to first create a more relaxed, friendly atmosphere)

First, we will be discussing about your university studies:

1. How did you choose your program? Why?
2. What factors influenced you to choose it?
3. What are your expectations in the future? What do you see yourself working as? (field of working, employed/self-employed)
4. Do your studies help you achieve that? How you think the classes you had are influencing you in your future option regarding your professional choice? (maybe entrepreneurial one?)

Now we will have a discussion related to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial initiative in creating a new venture

1. Would you see yourself as an entrepreneur? Why/why not?
2. How should the entrepreneurial spirit be enhanced/developed?
3. Do you have to be very creative or is it enough to come with a good idea?
4. Do you think entrepreneurs are born or made? (Can they acquire the needed skills?)
5. What do you think would be the reasons to create a new venture? Why not get employed?

6. Do you consider it is easy / difficult to create a new venture? Why?
7. Which would be the challenges to create a new business in Romania/Sweden?
8. How does the national business environment would influence the creation of a new venture, mostly by students?
9. What do you think is the trend of creating new ventures in Romania/Sweden? (More new ventures. Business incubators…)

Next, I would like to ask you some general questions related to the national culture:
1. What do you think about the process of opening a business, is it seen as a positive action?
2. From what you know how are students seen when opening a business? Are there preconceptions related to age/experience? Do you know students that created new ventures?
3. Is the national culture open minded to young entrepreneurs?
4. How do you think failure is it seen in Romania/Sweden?
5. What do you think motivates/discourages students to involve in creating new ventures? Why?
6. What type of support is there in order to encourage new venture creation? (are there state institutions/organizations that have projects/funds to increase the number of new ventures?) Do they believe in the need of new ventures? Do they encourage it? How?
7. Would you create a new venture in Romania/ Sweden? Why, why not?

Future challenges
1. What kind of practical methods you see necessary/good to develop skills in entrepreneurial fields for students? (Actual business meetings with real entrepreneurs, writing business plans….)
2. Are you aware of any incubators or places where students to get help to improve/develop their ideas? What functions they have?

Conclusions:
1. What do you think about the subject discussed? Do you think it was interesting?
2. Thank you all for your ideas and time. This has been extremely helpful.
APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDELINE

Background:

1. What is your name?
2. What program are you following?
3. What courses have you taken in entrepreneurship/business?
4. Have you been involved in any venture creation projects? (real/virtual competitions?)
   a. If yes, what was about?
   b. What did you learn from it?
   c. How did it help you personally?

Education: University Studies:

5. How do you perceive the entrepreneurship courses that you have participated in? Why did you take the course? What did they offer you?
6. What do you consider to be the aim of entrepreneurship courses? What should be taught?
7. How could the entrepreneurship courses be improved in order to develop more entrepreneurs? More theory/practical methods
8. Who do you see more appropriate to be teaching entrepreneurship given that the aim is more entrepreneurs? Why?
9. Would you see entrepreneurship education as a must in order to create a successful business?
10. Do you believe that there is a gap between the entrepreneurship programs and the real life of entrepreneurs?
    a. If yes, how do you think it should be filled? (Considering Education implying evaluation and calculated risks, knowledge based decisions VS. Entrepreneurial education gut-feeling, decisions on spot, evaluation along the process)
11. How do you think the education may influence the risk taking attitude? What should the role of education be related to risk taking?

Entrepreneurial Initiative:

12. How do you see the process of creating a new venture? Can you describe it? (easy/difficult, challenges)
13. What factors do you think influences the creation of a new venture? Which factors do you consider to be the most important ones in affecting the future venture?
14. What do you think could be done to improve the environment for creating a new business? What measures should be taken? By whom?
15. What type of help should there be to motivate more students to create new ventures?
   a. How could students be motivated/ stimulated to create a new venture?
16. Should students/young graduates be treated different from other entrepreneurs? Why/why not? Should they get more/less support?

National Culture:

17. How would you describe a typical Swede?
18. How would you characterize Sweden as a country?
19. Could you please describe a typical Swede considering:
   a. the level of individualism
   b. the need of recognition
   c. the need of independence as characteristics?
20. How do you think the society in Sweden perceives young entrepreneurs?
21. How do you think the culture affects whether students want to become employed or become an entrepreneur? What do you see happening among your friends?
22. Do you think that the cultural attitude towards young entrepreneurs has changed in the last years?
   a. Why do you think that happened?
   b. How do you see it evolve?
   c. What do you think might influence the change in cultural attitudes?
23. What kind of values or beliefs in society do you think would be supportive for young entrepreneurs?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tobias</th>
<th>Simon</th>
<th>Mari</th>
<th>Hanna</th>
<th>Oscar</th>
<th>Frida</th>
<th>Bjorn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did you choose your program?</td>
<td>Seemed interesting</td>
<td>Previous studies</td>
<td>Previous studies</td>
<td>It was what he wanted</td>
<td>By chance</td>
<td>She thought it would have future</td>
<td>Previous studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What factors influenced you?</td>
<td>Future possibilities</td>
<td>Friends influence</td>
<td>Future possibilities</td>
<td>My decision</td>
<td>Future possibilities</td>
<td>His future dreams</td>
<td>Previous studies background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are your future expectations?</td>
<td>Consultant/new business</td>
<td>Find a job</td>
<td>Find a job</td>
<td>Start a company</td>
<td>Find a job</td>
<td>Start a company</td>
<td>To work in a domain that he likes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entrepreneurial Initiative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you see yourself an entrepreneur?</td>
<td>Not much</td>
<td>In 3 to 4 years, yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe, but not very soon</td>
<td>Yes, Why not</td>
<td>Not necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to enhance the entrep. spirit?</td>
<td>Culture friendly attitude</td>
<td>By presenting it as a good thing to do</td>
<td>Law system</td>
<td>By promoting entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Presenting it as a positive thing</td>
<td>By having a friendly attitude towards it</td>
<td>By promoting it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born vs. Made entrep.</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Born- some skills</td>
<td>Born- some skills</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy/difficult to create a venture</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>Rather ok</td>
<td>Rather difficult</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges to create a new venture</td>
<td>Coming up with a new idea</td>
<td>To find an idea and to develop it</td>
<td>Getting the founds</td>
<td>An unfriendly environment</td>
<td>Bureaucracy</td>
<td>Development of the venture</td>
<td>Lack of funds</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The trend of creating new ventures</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Risk perceived as higher</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Increasing very slow</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening a business is it seen positively?</td>
<td>More getting employed 50/50 good bad</td>
<td>Safer to be employed, rather crazy to create a business</td>
<td>General attitude is brave foolish to open</td>
<td>Yes, by some entrepreneurs</td>
<td>Safer to be employed</td>
<td>Rather yes, but the society does not necessary sees it positive</td>
<td>Not really, is being judged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are students seen when opening a business?</td>
<td>Seen as unusual</td>
<td>Not very well as they are inexperienced</td>
<td>I Know…students that opened and they quickly made networks</td>
<td>Positive, even encouraged by some entrepreneurs</td>
<td>As an unusual thing</td>
<td>Not necessary positive as it is thought that they do not have experience</td>
<td>Rather positive and as a unique thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How failure is seen?</td>
<td>Society will consider they are not made for it</td>
<td>Not good for the business</td>
<td>There is something you missed when planning</td>
<td>Not a bad thing</td>
<td>Try something else</td>
<td>Encourages you to try more</td>
<td>To re-try, learn from mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical methods</td>
<td>Meetings with entrepreneurs--trainings</td>
<td>Writing business plans</td>
<td>Learning practical things</td>
<td>Writing business plans</td>
<td>Having stages</td>
<td>Practicing with some entrepreneurs</td>
<td>Being taught practical things</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX 4: FOCUS GROUP ROMANIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ana-Maria</th>
<th>Radu</th>
<th>Arina</th>
<th>Sanziana</th>
<th>Razvan</th>
<th>Florin</th>
<th>Adrian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did you chose your</td>
<td>Based on</td>
<td>Based</td>
<td>She thought it would</td>
<td>Bases on previous courses</td>
<td>By chance</td>
<td>It was</td>
<td>The courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program?</td>
<td>previous</td>
<td>previous</td>
<td>have future</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>what he</td>
<td>were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>courses,</td>
<td>courses,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>wanted</td>
<td>interesting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>its practicality</td>
<td>its practicality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What factors influenced</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Parents and friends</td>
<td>Future possibilities,</td>
<td>“Economists” have more</td>
<td>Parents influence</td>
<td>His future</td>
<td>Economic</td>
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<tr>
<td>you?</td>
<td>influence</td>
<td>influence</td>
<td>parents influence</td>
<td>possibilities</td>
<td></td>
<td>dreams</td>
<td>situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are your future</td>
<td>Well paid</td>
<td>Well employed</td>
<td>Start a company</td>
<td>Find a well paid job</td>
<td>Find a job</td>
<td>Start a</td>
<td>Start a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expectations?</td>
<td>job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>company</td>
<td>company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes influencing</td>
<td>Important as they represent their knowledge</td>
<td>Their knowledge</td>
<td>They represent their</td>
<td>Too theoretical and</td>
<td>Important but not</td>
<td>They offer the</td>
<td>Important base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you to your future</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>specialization/skills</td>
<td>enough</td>
<td>“intro” in the field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>career?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entrepreneurial initiative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you see yourself an</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not in the near future</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>entrepreneur?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to enhance the</td>
<td>Promoting</td>
<td>Facilitating the</td>
<td>Better cultural look</td>
<td>More practical things in</td>
<td>Promoting</td>
<td>Create a better</td>
<td>Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entrep. spirit?</td>
<td>entrepreneurship</td>
<td>entrance</td>
<td>towards entrepreneurship</td>
<td>school</td>
<td>entrepreneurship</td>
<td>environment</td>
<td>campaign</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born vs. Made entrep.</td>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Born/made</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Made</td>
<td>Made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy/difficult to create a venture</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Rather easy</td>
<td>Corrupted system-hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Rather easy</td>
<td>Hard to choose an idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
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<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
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<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges to create a new venture</td>
<td>Business plan</td>
<td>Actually starting it</td>
<td>Starting it- new business idea risk</td>
<td>Financial challenges</td>
<td>New idea risk</td>
<td>Business plan</td>
<td>Financial challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The trend of creating new ventures</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Culture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening a business is it seen positively?</th>
<th>Not necessary</th>
<th>Not necessary</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Not very positive</th>
<th>Not very positive</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How are students seen when opening a business?</td>
<td>Rather negative</td>
<td>Mistrusted</td>
<td>No experience</td>
<td>No experience</td>
<td>No attitude as there are not many students entrepreneurs</td>
<td>No experience= no trust</td>
<td>Very few doing it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How failure is seen?</td>
<td>Bad expectations leading to failure</td>
<td>something related to culture</td>
<td>Motivates them to try more</td>
<td>If fail not made for it</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Motivating- try again</td>
<td>Missed a step- try again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>