“Current research streams in entrepreneurship and SME management”

The seminar is aimed at students of the masters’ programme in business administration who wish to acquire a seminar certificate.

**Topic I: Drivers, barriers and success factors of academic spin-offs**

Knowledge- and technology-based spin-offs are considered as central drivers of economic and social prosperity (Block et al., 2017). However, this welfare-economic benefit can only be realised when people who are interested in establishing a business actually implement their plans. Studies for Germany show that around 28% of all scientists consider start-ups as an attractive employment alternative, whereas only 3.2% of all scientists put their ideas into practice eventually (Fritsch & Krabel, 2012).

Empirical findings indicate that this discrepancy can essentially be explained by the challenges and obstacles perceived throughout the venturing process (Müller 2010; Werner 2011; Block et al. 2008). However, studies pertaining to this subject are still very incomplete. Most literature regarding the topic academic spin-off focus almost exclusively on factors that influence either the propensity to start a business or its early success. Whether or to what extent these factors also affect the perception of obstacles along the venturing process have still not been studied (Hossinger et al. 2019; Miranda et. al 2017; Djokovic & Souitaris 2008; Rothaermel 2008).

Moreover, what role the founders’ individual motivations play in this context is unknown as well. According to the existing literature, only market, financial, management and physical barriers have a decisive influence on the growth and early success of academic spin-offs (Geenhuizen & Soetanto 2009; Müller 2010; Miranda et al. 2018). However, it remains unclear, especially in the academic context, how academics’ individual motivations towards entrepreneurship affect the venturing process.

In order to improve the foundation conditions in the academic context and to explain the high discrepancy between the propensity to start a business and its final implementation, it is important to know what influences the achievement of each venturing phase.

Therefore, the objective of this course is to answer the following two research questions:
1) What drives and impedes the venturing process of academic spin-offs?
2) How different motivations affect academic entrepreneurship?

by following the basic procedure outlined by Tranfield et al. (2003) for conducting a systematic literature review

References and Basic Literature


Topic II: Entrepreneurial Well-Being

The wellbeing of individuals is getting more important these days as wellbeing is regarded to have correlation with social progress (Andersson, 2008; Straum Vittersø, 2015). Also policy makers (e.g. OECD) are more than ever interested in the question how people feel about their lives and want to focus indicators beyond traditional economic measures such as GDP (European commission, 2016). Wellbeing is often associated to mental health and indicates a state in which the person can productively and fruitfully deal with life (WHO, 2014). Furthermore, running a business is seen as a solution to a number of social and environmental problems and thereby a key driver of economic growth and development. Current entrepreneurship research is facing the question: how is the wellbeing of individuals affected by self-employment? The Journal of Business Venturing, one of the most
popular and famous research journals in the field of entrepreneurship has recently even published a special issue about entrepreneurial wellbeing. In other words: also entrepreneurship research is longing to expand beyond financial measures (Shepherd, 2015). In current research exists no general consensus how entrepreneurship impacts the well-being of individuals. The aim of students dealing with topic 2 is to explore the following questions:

1) What so far has been investigated in current research to fill the research gap how wellbeing is affected by entrepreneurship?

2) What impacts entrepreneurship has especially on family-life of the entrepreneur when regarding the household of the entrepreneur as a site of entrepreneurial activity?

References and Basis Literature


Topic III: Corporate Social Responsibility in SME

Due to globalisation and the advancing climate change, sustainability is becoming more and more present and important in society. Therefore, society demands companies to act in a sustainable manner and adapt such approaches in the various corporate activities. Since companies have to adapt to the expectations of their stakeholders in order to be fit for the future, they cannot avoid those issues (Zamir and Saeed 2018; Campopiane and Massis 2015; Du et al. 2016; Shahzad et al. 2018). The corporate commitment towards those demands can be measured by Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (Dahlsrud...
2008; Matten and Moon 2008; Campopiano and De Massis 2015). Generally, CSR is understood as a responsible and sustainable action towards society and the environment (Carroll 1991). One of the first to discuss the concept of CSR was Bowen (1953), who sees CSR as an obligation for the entrepreneur. Since companies benefit from conditions set within the social framework, companies should, if possible, give something back to society (Fatemi et al. 2015). Friedman (1970) contradicts this view by stating that the only social obligation of companies is to earn money for their shareholders. Nevertheless, it should be noted, that voluntary CSR measures, even if costly, can be financially profitable in the long run. Orlitzy et al. (2003) therefore were able to demonstrate that CSR is linked to better financial performance. The measures are also reflected in reputation and branding effects among stakeholders and in the resulting competitive advantages (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2017; Di Giulì & Kostovetsky 2014; Jha and Cox 2015; Edmans 2012). As a result, a CSR orientated leadership, which is characterized by a commitment to sustainability, has become increasingly important for companies over the years (Di Giulì and Kostovetsky 2014). The recurring question for companies in this context is whether CSR should be implemented or not.

1. **CSR as a strategic success factor in SMEs - Acting sustainably or not?**

2. **The influence of CSR on company performance in family-owned companies.**

References and Basic Literature


General Information for the course:

I. Requirements for participation

- The course language is German and/ or English.
- Regular and active participation in the courses.
- Summarise and synthesise existing literature in the field by conducting a systematic literature review.
- Presentation of the results in the plenum including a short discussion.

II. Application procedure

For more detailed information on the application and admission procedure, please contact the Examination Office.

III. Acquisition of a certificate

A certificate can be acquired if requirements mentioned above are fulfilled and the seminar paper as well as the presentation followed were at least adequately assessed.

IV. Contact

For further questions and information about the course, please contact

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