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Achievement motivation among habitual entrepreneurs in urban and rural areas

Nowadays researchers are relatively unanimous in their opinion of the characteristics of the individuals pursuing an entrepreneurial career. The characteristics connected to entrepreneurs in the studies are, for example, the need for achievement, the need for independency and the high tolerance for risks. Especially the need for achievement has been connected

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to entrepreneurs in the studies. However, the achievement motivation of habitual entrepreneurs is still, to a great extent, an unknown subject. This is quite surprising because habitual entrepreneurship has become one of the most studied phenomena in the field of entrepreneurship.

This study sets out to add understanding by introducing some preliminary findings of achievement motivation among habitual entrepreneurs. The main interest is to explore what kind of dimensions of the achievement motivation are emphasised among habitual entrepreneurs and do urban and rural habitual entrepreneurs differ in this sense. The study was carried out in the region of Northern Savo in Eastern Finland and propositions developed by Cassidy & Lynn (1989) were used to measure entrepreneurs' achievement motivation. The study exploits most commonly used definition of habitual entrepreneurship, according to which a habitual entrepreneur is everyone who owns or has owned at least two independent firms either one after another (serial entrepreneurs) or simultaneously (portfolio entrepreneurs).

The results of this exploratory study are tentative and are based on the answers of 53 habitual entrepreneurs concerning achievement motivation. Of all 53 habitual entrepreneurs, 33

operated in urban areas (at least 10 000 inhabitants per a town or a city) and 20 in rural areas (less than 10 000 inhabitants). The main method in analysing the data was logistic regression analysis.

The results indicate that there are differences in achievement motivation among urban and rural habitual entrepreneurs. The dimension of dominance (i.e. aiming at a superior position and have strong faith in his/her abilities to lead) was emphasised among the urban habitual entrepreneurs in comparison with habitual entrepreneurs operating in rural areas. In rural areas, instead, entrepreneurs emphasised more the dimension of work ethic. In the light of these results rural habitual entrepreneurs seem to be individuals who aim at a performance within their own capabilities without necessarily comparing their achievement to that of others, but experiencing success when doing their best.

Despite the limitations of the study, it provides some useful insights, which may help policy developers to understand the essence of habitual entrepreneurship. Hopefully, it also intrigues researchers to clench on this issue and to start both quantitative and qualitative studies concerning the personal characteristics and achievement motivation of habitual entrepreneurs. ■