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FOREST EDUCATION AS THE MANIFESTATION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP OF THE STATE FORESTS NATIONAL FOREST HOLDING

Abstract: State Forests⁵², having the resources of the State Treasury at their disposal, undertaking the actions of wildlife-forest education and developing the forest infrastructure, play an important role and have a crucial impact on environmental awareness of the society. These actions are a manifestation of entrepreneurship. The aim of the paper is to identify the role and importance of forest education in the field of entrepreneurship of the State Forests National Forests Holding⁵³. In the article the study of definition of term *entrepreneurship* in theory of economy and management is made. The research is based on literature review and interviews with the representatives of the SF and the local societies. Inductive research approach is applied.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, entrepreneur, stakeholders, forest education

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is a study field combining economy and management. It is understood very broadly, therefore its one widely-acknowledged definition does not exist. The thematic literature and different authors have different approaches to defining this term. According to them, entrepreneurship can be treated as a process or can refer to the person of an entrepreneur. Consequently the wide range of definitions of the term exists.

The aim of this paper is to identify the role and importance of forest education in the field of entrepreneurship of SFNFH. The hypotheses are as follows: a) The forest education is a key element of SFNFH entrepreneurship b) Forest education shapes the ecological attitudes of young generation and lead to better understanding of forest management of adults. In the article the study of definition of terms *entrepreneurship* and *entrepreneur* in theory of economy and management will be made. The role of SFNFH as a unit conducting sustaining development of forests in the modern economy will be shown. The activities of SFNFH in the field of forest education will be presented. The research will be based on literature review and interviews with the representatives of the SF and the local societies. Inductive research approach will be used.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN ECONOMIC AND MANAGERIAL THEORIES

Economy, from its beginnings, was connected with working, activity, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs. The human beings from the dawn of history encountered the problems of survival, food-getting, warmth and shelter, not only as a unit but also as the member of the social group and family (Heilbroner 1993). Nevertheless, neither all the economies nor political systems provided conditions supporting the development of entrepreneurship.

The history of thought on the entrepreneurial man and entrepreneurship began when the first manufactures started to function. Those days the free entrepreneurial activities started. Then they founded the scientific base. In the times of classical economics (eg. Ricardo theory and Marxist theory) the importance of entrepreneurship remained unnoticed. During time and opinions of J. Schumpeter the entrepreneurship was perceived as the driving-force of economy, progress engine, accelerator of growth and economic development (Piecuch 2013). The representatives of classical

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⁵² In the text State Forests will be referred to as SF.

⁵³ In the text it will be referred to as SFNFH.

English economics presented a reluctant approach to entrepreneurship. They did not acknowledge the positive influence of the entrepreneurs on the economy. Such an approach was characteristic for the majority of English classical economists. They simply did not accept entrepreneurs. For example, D. Ricardo hardly ever used the term “entrepreneur”. The exception was made by A. Smith who used words “entrepreneurship” and “entrepreneur” (Piecuch 2013).

The economists regard J.B. Say to be the one who started serious scientific reflections on entrepreneurship. His publications on this subject are well-known. Moreover, he used the term “entrepreneur” in such a meaning as it has nowadays. He was also the first person to distinguish, apart from tangible capital, the intangible capital (talent, knowledge, competences, skills) and defined the entrepreneur as the hard-working, active, inventive manager who contributes towards creation of intangible capital (Piecuch 2013). A. Lincoln is acknowledged as the pioneer of the entrepreneurship in the American literature. He defined the goals of the society of his times by stating that each American should be the employed worker at the beginning of his work life, afterwards should work independently in his own company and finally should develop his company in order to be able to employ other people so they can work for him (after: Hirsch and Peters 1989).

In the management literature one of the first to present the essence of entrepreneurship was P. Drucker. He introduced the understanding of it as introduction of innovations which constitute the basis for the future business with the optimal usage of available resources (Kwiatkowski 2000).

The most commonly spread terms relating to the definitions of entrepreneurship are: starting up, establishing, creation of new enterprise, innovations, new markets, searching for opportunities, risk taking, searching for profit, new combinations of resources, management, gaining resources, value creation (Gaweł 2017). Entrepreneurship is also understood as a process of creating something different from the value point of view, with contribution of necessary time and effort, with assumption of accompanying financial, psychological and social risk and gaining the financial award and personal satisfaction as a result (Hirsch, Peters 2006).

According to Shane and Ventakaraman (2000) the entrepreneurship means all the activities of identification, assessment and exploration of opportunities to introduce the new goods and services to the market or the methods of organization of new markets (Shane 2003). Those authors assume the existence in the entrepreneurship of such elements as: existence of market opportunities is necessary condition; risk-taking is a immanent aspect of entrepreneurial process; entrepreneurial process needs organization understood as creation of new combinations of resources; entrepreneurial process needs the introduction of innovations, not necessarily of typically production-related character. as (Shane 2003)

Eckhardt and Shane (2013) notice that discovery and creation are both ways in which entrepreneurs formulate business ideas/conjectures. Those ideas/conjectures are formulated from the interaction between individual perceptions and technical and market constraints (opportunity). Koźmiński (2004) indicates the specific functions of entrepreneurship, depicted at the figure 1.

The functions of entrepreneurship are fulfilled by human capital through entrepreneurs. The word *entrepreneur* probably comes from French language and was for the first time used in the middle ages. The term was understood as a person who supervised and controlled the manufacturing of goods, products and services and in the XVII was perceived as the person undertaking the risk and gaining the profit (or the loss) from the state contracts. Veblen started the “management capitalism” in economy. He understood the entrepreneur as the manager, seeing his crucial role in the skillful organization management.

In the Polish law the definition of entrepreneur is included in the Economic Freedom Act from 2nd of July, 2004. According to it, entrepreneur denotes a natural person, a legal person, or a non-corporate organizational unit with legal capacity under provisions of a separate act, conducting economic activity on its own behalf. The term ‘entrepreneur’ also denotes partners in civil partnerships within the scope of their economic activities (Ustawa z dnia 2 lipca 2004 r. o

swobodzie działalności gospodarczej, art. 4). According to Polish Civil Code entrepreneur is a natural person, legal person or unit defined in the article 331 § 1 conducting the business or professional activity in its own behalf (Ustawa z dnia 23 kwietnia 1964 r. Kodeks cywilny, art. 43) Therefore in the legal terms the entrepreneur is understood as the owner. Nevertheless the economic literature stresses that the entrepreneur is also (Klonowska-Matynia and Palinkiewicz 2013): a manager or a supervisor, an innovator, a person employing the production factors, the coordinator of resources, a person who exhibits the leadership skills.

The entrepreneur is creative, ready to undertake the innovative tasks. He/she is not afraid of new challenges and consequently fulfills his goals. He/she has the strong motivation, usually connected with passion. Entrepreneurship needs creativity which determines the searching for opportunities and their creation. It also means the skill of going beyond the standard thinking frames, knowledge and experience (Karpacz 2011).

In 2000 Shane and Ventakaraman (2000) argued that entrepreneurship research lacked theoretical paradigm and was just a mixture examining settings arbitral have chosen. Therefore it had not distinctive area of intellectual inquiry. Shane and Ventakaraman (2000) postulated to make the entrepreneurship a legitimate scholarly field by giving the theoretical framework to explain or predict phenomena neither explained nor predicted by other fields. The paper was awarded in 2010 Academy of Management Review Decade Award and was cited by 2686 articles. Analysis of the quotations made by S. Shane identified four main dimensions appreciated by other authors: The idea of entrepreneurship as a distinctive scholarly domain; The definition of entrepreneurship as a process rather than an event or embodiment of a type of person; The nexus of opportunities and individuals; Means-ends relationships, innovation, and new combinations (Shane 2012).

The popularity of entrepreneurship research reflects in the number and differentiation of publications. The papers by Nicolau et al. (2008) prove that the tendency to be an entrepreneur is heritable and that common genes influence both sensation seeking and entrepreneurial tendency and provide the evidence of an association between a genetic polymorphism and the tendency to be an entrepreneur (Nicolau et al. 2011). The research of Ahlin et al. (2014) suggests that entrepreneurial creativity affects directly the level of innovation outputs and this relationship is moderated by the strength of an entrepreneur's perceived self-efficacy beliefs.

The interesting fact about entrepreneurial research is that some of the leading authors on the subject are critical about unlimited enthusiasm of other authors and policy makers directed towards the entrepreneurship. For example, Shane (Shane 2009) ironically notices that the policy-makers treat the start-up companies like "magic bullets". As an example of such an exaggerate opinion he quotes Lazear (2005) who claims that "the entrepreneur is the single most important player in a modern economy".

THE POSITION OF STATE FOREST NATIONAL FOREST HOLDING IN THE MODERN ECONOMY

SFNFH manages the forests which belong to the Treasury of Poland. It is a state non-corporate organizational unit with legal capacity. The economic-forestry activity is conducted on the basis of the economic. The economic calculus however is difficult due to the multidimensional economic goals defined by the specific character of production.

In the organization of SFNFH following units function: General Directorate of SF, Regional Directorates of SF, Forrest Districts and other organizational units, called Forest Departments.

Forrest districts are the main units in the forest management system. Forest district manager, according to the Forest Act (Ustawa z dnia 28 września 1991 r. o lasach, art. 35, ust. 1) organizes in

the independent way forest economy in the forest department on the basis of the forest maintenance plan and is responsible for the forest condition⁵⁴.

The entire forest management, including tasks realization and goal fulfillment, is performed depending on the forest function: ecological, productive and the social one (SFNFH Strategy for Years 2014-2030). The performance of all of the forest management functions needs inter-sector cooperation, access to information and effective communication within the actions of SFNFH which will ensure the mutual profits for all the stakeholders. While realization of the goals which are imposed on SF⁵⁵ the requirements of different groups of stakeholders should be met (Szramka et al. 2016) They are presented at the figure 2.

SFNFH by ensuring the sustained balancing of all the functions meets the expectations of all the information users through the proper planning of the goals and tasks of forest management. The strategic goals of SFNFH defined in the SFNFH Strategy for Years 2014-2030 are following: to manage a common (shared) good which the forests are, to ensure sustainability of the forests, to ensure the access to the forests for society, to ensure the crucial contribution of the SF for the economy, to become a modern, properly-managed and efficient organization, to develop human resources and competences and motivate people towards realization of the strategy, to ensure the ability to self-financing.

It should be stressed, that non-productive functions of forest, such as forest education, were taken into account, even during the industrial revolution of the XIXth century introducing to the legal documents issues on social, societal, ecological and protective meaning of the forests. In Polish territories the first document which contained the information on the public functions of forests was the Russian legal act refereeing to the forests of the Kingdom of Poland. The forest as a public good was appreciated and protected (Zydroń, Kayzer 2015).

SFNFH and its environment penetrate and influence each other. Therefore the activities of SF are subject of direct and indirect interest of different stakeholders (Adamowicz, Noga 2014). Each of these groups has different needs and expectations. Their identification is a starting point for building of entrepreneurial attitudes. It is also an initial point for undertaking of actions and fulfilling the goals which are consistent with the expectations of stakeholders including social ones such as forest education.

FOREST EDUCATION AS THE MANIFESTATION OF STATE FORESTS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurial means active, dynamic, involved, creative. Entrepreneurship means actions which are dynamic and creative, means involvement in accomplishment of a new task, means new initiatives and means creativity. One of the aspects of entrepreneurial activities of the SFNFH is a forest education. Its form of an obligatory task of Forest Service was decided when the Promotional Forest Complexes were established by regulation no. 57/2003 (which was the first formal regulation of Forest Service). From the 2004 the "Program of forest education" exists in each of the forest departments. The task of Forest Promotional Complexes are following: the identification of forest ecosystems sustainability and their changes (wildlife inventory); re-creation of forest values or sustaining them through ecology-based forest management; integration of economic goals with forest sustainability goals; conducting and promoting multidimensional, balanced and sustainable

⁵⁴ Due to this act and related ordinations which are based on it, the main goal SFNFH is conducting of forest management according to the basic rules such as: wide spread protection of forests, their sustainability, balances usage of different forest functions, increase of forest resources. The goal is being fulfilled by sustainable, balanced, multifunctional forest management, which is performed in the accordance with the plan of forest maintenance elaborated for each of the forest districts for the ten-years period.

⁵⁵ More detailed information on the functions, goals and operational tasks is can be provided by the study of Forests Act (Ustawa z dnia 28 września 1991 r. o lasach)

forest management; conducting research aimed to implement and spread sustainable forestry; building an ecological awareness in the society through the education and training of Forest Service (Fronczak 2007).

SFNFH in its strategy balances all the expectations of internal and external stakeholders securing realization of forests productive non-productive functions. State Forests, among their activities, promote forests, educate society, ensure the access to the forests for society. There are bases of the forest education units which secure the multitude and differentiation of the forest education and promotion. The increase of the number of school children included by the educational actions can be observed. The majority of those activities is financed by the SFNFH own financial sources.

SFNFH undertaking the activities related to environmental and forest education and developing the educative-forest infrastructure performs a crucial role in shaping of ecological knowledge of the society. The foresters are the source of the rich knowledge on the Polish forests, their history, environmental values etc. They are involved in the educative and promotional actions which make Polish people perceive forests as the important element of national heritage. SFNFH publishes books, journals and brochures. It also provides forest information at their website www.lasy.gov.pl. Additionally, it has the special internet portal for children and teachers "Las Rysia eRysia" (www2.lasy.gov.pl). Foresters keep supporting schools of different levels. In cooperation with non-governmental organizations they organize separate and periodic actions which are aimed to widen the knowledge on the forests, wildlife and ecology. The organizational units of SFNFH also cooperate with the research centers and support the research on forestry.

The forest education activity report (Chrzanowski 2016) states that in the SFNFH used in the 2014 above 6500 different units, such as education centers, forest chambers, educational shelters, educational paths in forest education. SF organize periodical open-air events, family picnics, field workshops in forest departments. In spite of many advantages of such entrepreneurship manifestation, it has also its weaknesses, which are following: lack of coherent programs of performing forest education and promotion; lack of measurement of efficiency and efficacy of educational and promotional actions; insufficient educational activities directed towards some age groups, including adults; insufficient usage of the electronic media in the forest education; lack of system of development of merit and didactic competences for forest educators.

SFNFH means to continue their educational and promotional actions with the usage of forest potential, highly-skilled personnel and existing infrastructure, simultaneously stressing the importance of quality and efficacy of conducted activities and rationality of incurred expenditures which relate to them. Particularly, SF plan to: elaborate consistent educational programs including goal definition, improve long-term plans of Forest Promotion Complexes usage for effective wildlife-forest education and promotion SFNFH activities; run the campaigns promoting Forest Promotion Complexes and other forest areas such as the places of leisure, tourism, sport and contact with nature; support the usage the forest areas by the society; to participate in formulating educational programs in the scope of forest and wildlife education; participate in conducting of wildlife and forest classes; cooperate with educational sector in the purpose of decreasing of forest and wildlife teachers competences; survey the efficiency of conducted educational actions.

The indicators of forest education are following: number of educative workshops participants and educational objects users, number of joint enterprises realized together with other organizations, number of employees of SF involved in the educational activities.

In the education for the sustained development and entrepreneurship, shaping of awareness and attitudes is crucial. Among them most important are: the understanding of interdependence between humans and the environment, making responsible choices by consumers, taking the responsibility of the world's future. It can be asked whether the entrepreneurship manifested by the forest education of the SFNFH makes sense. Apparently, it has the crucial meaning in the modern sustainable forest

management. Zuberthat (2016) states that *There is a lot to do concerning children and adults to avoid the situation described by doctor Toeplitz, that leafy, needle and birch trees are distinguished and a hedge is the best-known leafy park tree.*

SUMMARY

SF belong to all the nation. It was stressed by the Loret, first director of the SF, and the big role model of the foresters: The meaning of forests is not limited to the merely economic sphere in the life of nation. The forests possess numerous properties which are indispensable for country (...). Only the State, as the owner, is able (...) to punctuate all the economical, ecological and cultural benefits obtained by country from forests. The State, whose existence is not measured by the human life age, is constituted for the care of the present and future being of the nation (www1).

Summing up the considerations on the role and importance of forest education in the area of the entrepreneurship of SFNFH, the following conclusions emerge:

1. The definitions of *entrepreneurship* and *entrepreneur* are rooted in management and economy theory. Since 2000 some theoreticians treat entrepreneurship as the separate field of knowledge with its own assumptions and paradigms.
2. SFNFH is an organization which performs the sustainable forest management, including productive and non-productive functions of the forest. One of the non-productive functions of SFNFH is forest education. Goals, tasks and activities belonging to forest education fit in the entrepreneurship of the SFNFH.
3. The educational activities are conducted actively and dynamically with the involvement of many foresters. The foresters who conduct the forest education implement the creative programs of the field work, organize inventive workshops and introduce creative games, competitions and lessons. All those activities manifest entrepreneurial approach.
4. Forest education as the manifestation of entrepreneurship of SFNFH contributes to the building of awareness and attitudes of young generation and to better understanding of the sustainable forest management by the adults.

The following hypotheses of this paper a) The forest education is a key element of SFNFH entrepreneurship b) Forest education shapes the ecological attitudes of young generation and lead to better understanding of forest management of adults were proven to be true.

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