**Cognitive Styles of Entrepreneurs and Non-entrepreneurs in the Republic of Macedonia**

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**Abstract:** The aim of this study is to explore and compare the cognitive styles of entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs. Cognitive styles are ways of processing information, thinking and knowledge and most authors emphasize that there are two overarching styles: analytical and intuitive. The study which is first of its kind the Republic of Macedonia showed no-difference in the cognitive styles of entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs. Moreover, both groups showed preference for the analytical cognitive style. The study calls for further exploration of the factors that lead to the preference of the analytical cognitive style.

**Key words:** cognitive styles, entrepreneurs, decision making, intuition
I. Introduction

The fast moving changes and processes happening in today's business environment call for crucial strategic decisions. It is not only important for the right decisions to be made, but also to make them in a timely and appropriate manner. It is also important for the decisions to be based on the practice in particular context and having the future in mind (Nonaka & Toyama, 2007). The traditional approach to decision making emphasised the rational decision making aspect, assuming rationality of the individual making decisions. According to this, decision-making is a process where individuals calculate costs and benefits of various alternatives and choose the ones that maximize their chances of success (Sparrow, 1999). This means that the decision usually has a structured and specific goal as well as known constraints on the possible means to achieve a certain effect and the choice is made on how to achieve a particular goal or set of goals (Sarasvaty, 2001).

However, in recent years it has been recognised that decisions can be made in a different manner. Instead of starting with the desirable end result, some people and some decisions start with a given set of means, set of effects that can be achieved using those means, taking into consideration the constraints for every effect and criteria for selection (usually level of affordable loss or acceptable risk). This approach is known as effectuation (Sarasvaty, 2001) and is connected to using intuition and creativity in decision making. Authors emphasise the value of intuitive approaches and more holistic ways

I. Вовед

Брзите промени и процесите што се случуваат во денешното бизнис окружување бараат клучни стратешки одлуки. Повеќе не е важно само да се донесат одлуки туку е истотака важно тие да бидат донесени брзо и навремено. Исто така одлуките мора да соодветствуваат на контекстот во кој се донесени и да се насочени кон иднината (Nonaka & Toyama, 2007). Традиционалниот пристап кон донесувањето одлуки го нагласуваше рационалното донесување одлуки, претпоставувајќи рационалност на поединците. Процесот на донесување одлуки е процес во кој поединците ги пресметуваат ризиците и придобивките од различните одлуки и ги одбираат алтернативитите што ги зголемуваат нивните шанси за успех (Sparrow, 1999). Ова значи дека одлуката има структурирана и јасна цел, како и јасни ограничувања за начините за постигнување на целта, па изборот се однесува на одбиране на начин за постигнување на одредена цел или цели (Sarasvaty, 2001).

Сепак, во поново време се повеќе се истакнува дека одлуките може да бидат донесени и поника. Наместо да се почне од посакуваната цел, некои ликуваат и некои одлуки почнуваат од дадените средства и ефектите кои ќе се добијат со користење на тие средства, земајќи ги во предвид сите ограничувања за ефектите и критериумите за селекција (најчесто нивото на дозволен губиток или прифатлив риск). Овој пристап е познат како ефектуација (Sarasvaty, 2001) и е поврзан со користење на интуиција и креативност во донесувањето одлуки. Различни автори ја истакнуваат важноста на интуитивните и холистичките пристапи во донесувањето одлуки, за успехот на компанијата (Dane & Pratt,
of decision making as also important for the success of a company (Dane & Pratt, 2007; Khandelwal & Taneja, 2010; Miller & Ireland, 2005; Weston, 1989). The intuitive approach and using intuition can also be very helpful in crafting the company’s vision (Khandelwal & Taneja, 2010). As such it is emphasised that a balance between intuition and analysis is needed in managerial decisions and approaches to decision making (Sadler-Smith & Shefy, 2004). Literature also points that entrepreneurs usually apply more intuition in the decision making processes (Armstrong & Hird, 2009; La Pira, 2011; La Pira & Murray, 2004; Sarasvaty, 2001).

The type of decisions that people are most likely to make is connected to their different styles and approaches in making decisions (Cheng, Rhodes & Lok, 2010; Kunc & Morecroft, 2010; Lynch, 1986). The approach to decision making and information processing which is in turn reflected to all the decisions a person makes is dependent upon the cognitive style a person has (Hayes & Alison, 1994). The cognitive styles are therefore overarching phenomenon reflected in all the other cognitive domains of functioning and as such on decision making.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to contribute to this body of knowledge by studying the cognitive style of entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs (managers of businesses, public administration and NGO). This study is especially important as it studies cognitive styles and makes comparisons for the first time in the Republic of Macedonia. The paper will start by presenting a literature review on the cognitive style concepts and definitions; it will then outline previous findings regarding the cognitive style of entrepreneurs. The methodology and the results will be presented next and a conclusion based on the literature and the data will be outlined at the end.

II. Cognitive styles

Cognitive styles are conceptualised in terms of processing information, thinking and knowledge. It has been recognised 2007; Khandelwal & Taneja, 2010; Miller & Ireland, 2005; Weston, 1989). Интуитивниот пристап и користењето на интуицијата може да бидат многу корисни при креирање на визијата на компанијата (Khandelwal & Taneja, 2010). Токму затоа се посочува дека за донесување на одлуки и при различните пристапи кон донесување на одлуки потребно е да се најде баланс помеѓу интуицијата и аналитичноста (Sadler-Smith & Shefy, 2004). Литературата исто така истакнува дека претприемачите повеќе се потпираат на интуицијата при донесување одлуки (Armstrong & Hird, 2009; La Pira, 2011; La Pira & Murray, 2004 Sarasvaty, 2001).

Типот на одлукашта што ѝ го донесуваат е поврзана со различните стилови и пристапи кон донесувањето одлуки (Cheng, Rhodes & Lok, 2010; Kunc & Morecroft, 2010; Lynch, 1986). Пристапот кон донесување одлуки и обработка на информации се рефлектира на сите одлуки што едно лице ги носи и зависи од когнитивниот стил (Hayes & Alison, 1994). Токму затоа когнитивните стилови се рефлектираат на другите домени на когнитивното функционирање како што е донесувањето одлуки.

Затоа целта на овој труд е да даде придонес на ова поле преку истражување на когнитивниот стил на претприемачите и менаџерите (менаџери на компани, невладин сектор и раководните лица од јавната администрација). Ова истражување е особено важно бидејќи за првпат во Република Македонија ги истражува и прави споредби на когнитивните стилови. На почетокот на трудот ќе биде изложен прегледот на литературата поврзан со когнитивните стилови; потоа ќе бидат разгледани претходни наоди за когнитивните стилови на претприемачите. Во следниот дел на трудот ќе бидат изложени методологијата и резултатите и на крајот ќе биде изнесен заклучокот базиран на литературата и добиените податоци.

II. Когнитивни стилови

Когнитивните стилови се разгледуваат од аспект на процесирање информации, мислење и знаење. Тие се однесуваат на склоноста на поединците континентално да процесираат информации на начин различен од другите (Hayes & Allinson,
that cognitive styles refer to the individual's tendency to process information in a consistent manner differently from others. As such, the concept is connected to the form rather than the content of information processing and decision making. The concept also outlines that people might prefer an analytical – logical, rational approach to information processing or intuitive – holistic, instinctive approach (Armstrong & Hird, 2009; Hayes & Allinson, 1994). Individuals with analytical styles prefer more structured approach to decision making and apply systematic information processing and step-by-step solutions to problems. On the other hand, individuals with intuitive cognitive style rely on random methods of exploration and prefer rapid, holistic and open-ended approach to problem solving (Allinsons & Hayes, 2000; Armstrong & Hird, 2009; Dane & Pratt, 2007).

Although there are a number of classifications of different cognitive styles, Allinson & Hayes (1996) emphasise that intuition and analytical approach to information processes make a continuum of decision-making styles. This means that each individual can be positioned along the continuum with a decision making style involving a combination of both approaches. Some individuals will be more prone to use analysis than intuition while others might prefer to use intuition over analysis.

The implications of cognitive styles and approaches to decision making have been found in a number of studies related to management and human resource management ranging from strategic decisions (Kutschera & Ryan, 2009) to everyday human resource management decisions (Sadler-Smith, 1998). By knowing the different cognitive styles and strengths and weaknesses of different individuals, the decision making process can utilise various individuals to enhance the organisational effectiveness (Hough & Ogilvie, 2005). Certain authors even point that there might be difference in the cognitive style based on the stage of industrial development where managers from less developed countries use more analytical cognitive approaches.
styles, and managers from the developed countries use more intuitive cognitive style (Allinson & Hayes, 2000; Elbanna & Child, 2007). The studies point out that in less developed countries managers might use more rational decision making due to the higher level of environmental uncertainty (Elbanna & Child, 2007). Another factor which might be important in Eastern Europe might have been the long time enduring bureaucratic order which might have stimulated a more left-brain analytical approach, while the managers in the more developed countries faced with rapid changes in the business environment and faced with an enormous amount of information might resort to intuitive cognitive style better adapted to coping in rapidly changing business scenarios (Allinson & Hayes, 2000). However, the interaction between the environment and the decision making style needs to be explored further and more research in the area is needed (Allinson & Hayes, 2000; Elbanna & Child, 2007). Although, the importance of cognitive styles is emphasised for strategists and managers special attention has been paid to this issue when it comes to entrepreneurs.

III. Research on cognitive styles and entrepreneurship

One of the major characteristics that separate entrepreneurs from others is their ability to perceive, act and exploit opportunities as well as successfully using opportunities and potential to create business ventures (Armstrong & Hird, 2009). In recognising the opportunities where others do not, entrepreneurs usually rely on their intuition (La Pira, 2011). It is accentuated that one of the most important characteristics of entrepreneurial mindset is cognitive adaptability meaning that entrepreneurs are dynamic, flexible, self-regulating in their own cognitive dynamic and also in uncertain and changing environment (Haynie et al., 2010). They tend to show bigger originality in their thinking and produce unexpected solutions by using holistic and conceptual thinking (Sanchez, Carballo & Gutierrez, 2011). Entrepreneurs are more prone to use ef-
fectuation in their thinking and decision making (Sarasvaty, 2001), which is again connected to the intuitive cognitive style.

Therefore it has been pointed that one possible way of distinguishing entrepreneurs from non-entrepreneurs is their cognitive style (Boockhenooghe, et al., 2005). Different authors even point that possibility of becoming an entrepreneur can be revealed by the preferred cognitive style, as most entrepreneurs show intuitive cognitive style in various studies (Armstrong & Hird, 2009; La Pira, 2011; La Pira & Murray, 2004; Sanchez, Carballo & Gutierrez, 2011). They rely on their intuition especially in situations when outcomes are difficult to predict and they are willing to make a decision even when they do not have all the information they need readily available (La Pira, 2011). Studies have also found that individuals with more intuitive cognitive style had higher entrepreneurial drive (Armstrong & Hird, 2009). Based on the previous findings the hypothesis explored in this study is:

*Entrepreneurs will use intuitive cognitive style more than non-entrepreneurs.*

**IV. Methodology**

This research utilised the Cognitive Style Index (CSI) to gather information on the preferred cognitive style of the participants. Although there are a number of instruments available this study utilised CSI as it is adapted for interpretation of the intuitive versus analytical cognitive style typology developed by Allinson and Hayes (2000). The instrument was developed by Allinson & Hayes (1996) and was later validated in further studies (Allinson & Hayes, 2000; Sadler-Smith, Spicer & Tsang, 2000) showing good psychometric properties in various countries and with people from various backgrounds and professions. In our study the Cronbach Alpha for the instrument was 0.821. This instrument is convenient because it is a self-reported measure and it does not require too much time to answer. The downfall of using this type of instruments is that the respondents might try to give socially acceptable

2011). Претприемачите се посклони да користат ефектуација во нивното размислување и донесување одлуки (Sarasvaty, 2001), што е повторно поврзано со интуитивниот когнитивен стил.

Токму затоа авторите укажуваат дека може да се направи разлика помеѓу шретпримаечите и не-претприемачите врз основа на нивниот когнитивен стил (Boockhenooghe, et al., 2005). Различни автори дури и истакнуваат дека преддреденоста да се стане претприемач може да се увиди преку осознавање на префериранит когнитивен стил на поединецот, бидејќи во различни истражувања се покажува дека претприемачите најчесто имаат интуитивен стил (Armstrong & Hird, 2009; La Pira, 2011; La Pira & Murray, 2004; Sanchez, Carballo & Gutierrez, 2011). Тие се потпираат на својата интуиција особено во ситуации кога е тешко да се предвидат исходите и се подготвени да донесуваат одлуки дури и кога не им се достапни сите информации (La Pira, 2011). Истражувањата исто така укажуваат дека ѕугето со поистакнат интуитивен стил покажуваат повисок степен на подготеност да станат претприемачи (Armstrong & Hird, 2009). Врз основа на овие претходни сознанија ова истражување ја разгледува следнава хипотеза:

Претприемачите ќе користат повеќе интуитивен когнитивен стил отколку оние кои не се претпримачи.

**IV. Методологија**

Ова истражување го користи Cognitive Style Index (CSI) инструментот за прибиране податоци за префериранит когнитивен стил. Иако зе мереење на когнитивните стилови постојат повеќе инструменти во ова истражување се користи CSI заради неговата прилагоденост на типологијата за интуитивен и аналитички когнитивен стил развиена од страна на Allinson & Hayes (2000). Инструментот бил развиен од страна на Allinson & Hayes (1996) и подоцна бил валидиран во различни истражувања (Allinson & Hayes, 2000; Sadler-Smith, Spicer & Tsang, 2000) при што покажал добри психометриски карактеристики во различни земји и кај љубе со различно потекло и занимане. Во сегашното истражување, Кронбах Алфа за инструментот изнесува 0.821. Овој инструмент
answers and not be honest in giving the answers. However, self-reported measures are extensively used because they provide insight into the respondents’ perspectives of themselves which cannot be gauged in any other way (Coolican, 2004). The instrument contains 38 items with trichotomous true-false-undecided choice. During the analysis, some statements are reverse coded. The total score is based on computation of the individual statements. Higher scores mean that the individual is more prone to analytical cognitive style.

The questionnaire was distributed among 300 people out of which 98 replied. The sampling used was convenient snowball sampling to get to as many people as possible. Although this type of sampling might result in gathering participants that share the same opinion, it is particularly useful for studies where the sampling frame is difficult to establish and as a starting point for bigger research (Coolican, 2004). As this study is the first of its kind this method of sampling was deemed appropriate. More than half of the participants that replied were non-entrepreneurs (57) and the rest (41) were entrepreneurs. In the entrepreneurs groups all the participants classified themselves as being one, based on their previous experience of starting a business. Among the non-entrepreneurs, participants coming from managerial positions were included comprising of 49.1% from the business sector, 26.3% from the Non-Governmental sector and 24.6% from the public administration. Both the entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs from the business sector came from various industries. Having in mind that the aim of the research was to compare entrepreneurs versus non-entrepreneurs the groups of non-entrepreneurs were merged into one and the results were compared between that group and the entrepreneurs. The respondents were gender balanced, although there were more males in the entrepreneurship group (61%) and more females (56.1%) in the non-entrepreneurship group. When it comes to work experience most of the participants that replied were non-entrepreneurs (57) and the rest (41) were entrepreneurs. In the entrepreneurs groups all the participants classified themselves as being one, based on their previous experience of starting a business. Among the non-entrepreneurs, participants coming from managerial positions were included comprising of 49.1% from the business sector, 26.3% from the Non-Governmental sector and 24.6% from the public administration. Both the entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs from the business sector came from various industries. Having in mind that the aim of the research was to compare entrepreneurs versus non-entrepreneurs the groups of non-entrepreneurs were merged into one and the results were compared between that group and the entrepreneurs. The respondents were gender balanced, although there were more males in the entrepreneurship group (61%) and more females (56.1%) in the non-entrepreneurship group. When it comes to work experience most of the
entrepreneurs had more than 10 years working experience (39%) and most of the non-entrepreneurs had 5 to 10 years working experience (40.4%). The overall distribution by gender and work experience can be seen in Table 1.

V. Results

Table 1. Distribution of participants by gender and work experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender / Пол</th>
<th>Work experience / Работно искуство</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male / Машки</td>
<td>Less than 5 years / Помалку од 5 години</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female / Женски</td>
<td>5-10 years / 5-10 години</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-entrepreneurs / Не-претприемачи</td>
<td>More than 10 years / Повеќе од 10 години</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entrepreneurs / Претприемачи</th>
<th>25 (61%)</th>
<th>16 (39%)</th>
<th>13 (31.7%)</th>
<th>12 (29.3%)</th>
<th>16 (39%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-entrepreneurs / Не-претприемачи</td>
<td>25 (43.9%)</td>
<td>32 (56.1%)</td>
<td>19 (33.3%)</td>
<td>23 (40.4%)</td>
<td>15 (26.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To gain insight into the cognitive style of the entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs the data was analyzed using t-tests. The analysis compared the scores of the entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 2.

As it can be seen from Table 2 there is no statistically significant difference between the entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs in their cognitive style. The Hypothesis 1 was not supported. To enhance the understanding of the results one sample t-test was performed with a cut-off point at 38 points (the theoretical mean on the scale 0-72). The results of that test showed that both the entrepreneurs (p=0.035, p<0.05) and the non-entrepreneurs (p=0.020, p<0.05) showed statistically significant preference for the analytical cognitive style. The results of the study

Como se гледа од Таблица 2 нема статистички значителна разлика помеѓу когнитивните стилови на претприемачите и не-претприемачите податоците беа анализирани со користење на т-тестови. Анализата ги спореди резултатите добиени од претприемачите и не-претприемачите. Резултатите од анализа се прикажани во Таблица 2.

Table 2. t-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean/Аритметичка средина</th>
<th>t-test</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs/ Претприемачи</td>
<td>41.63</td>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-entrepreneurs/ Не-претприемачи</td>
<td>41.72</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
are in line with some results of previous studies (Allinson & Hayes, 2000; Elbana & Child, 2007) which showed preference for analytical cognitive style in less developed countries. Further exploration is needed to see why entrepreneurs in Macedonia tend to use analytical cognitive style which is not in line with previous findings (La Pira, 2011; La Pira & Murray, 2004; Sanchez, Carballo & Gutierrez, 2011).

VI Conclusions and recommendations

The analysis showed that there is no difference in the cognitive styles between the entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs. This means that the research Hypothesis was not supported. Moreover, the whole group of participants leaned towards the analytical cognitive style.

There are several explanations as to why the hypothesis was not supported. One explanation might be that the sample size was too small and convenient sampling was used. This is an obvious shortcoming of the study. If a bigger sample and different sampling frame were used the results might have been different. However this is a first study of its kind in the Republic of Macedonia used to get an overview of the situation. Further studies should try to use probability samples and obtain larger samples to further elaborate on this issue.

However, one of the more plausible explanations is that people in different countries are more prone to one or the other cognitive style (Allinsons & Hayes, 2000). Namely people in less industrially developed countries tend to show more analytical cognitive style than those in developed countries due to the differences in the environment, the culture and the educational and economic systems that they have experienced (Allinson & Hayes, 2000). Having in mind the difficult transition of the Macedonian economy, business people in the country might be more prone to analytical thinking to alleviate the uncertainty of the external environment, which is something pointed by other studies as well (Elbana & Child, 2007).

Since various authors emphasised the importance of this issue, it is not surprising that entrepreneurs in Macedonia tend to use analytical cognitive style which is not in line with previous studies (Allinson & Hayes, 2000; Elbana & Child, 2007) coi because of the specific conditions in Macedonia. Further exploration is needed to see why entrepreneurs in Macedonia tend to use analytical cognitive style which is not in line with previous findings (La Pira, 2011; La Pira & Murray, 2004; Sanchez, Carballo & Gutierrez, 2011).

VI Заключоци и препораки

Анализите покажуваат дека нема значајна разлика помеѓу когнитивните стилови на претприемачите и не-предприемачите. Ова значи дека Хипотезата ја отфрламе. Дури и целата група на испитаници е наклонета кон аналитичкиот когнитивен стил.

Има неколку објаснувања за отфрлањето на хипотезата. Едно објаснување може да се темели на многу малот број на испитаници и начинот на избор на испитаници. Ова е очигледен недостаток на истражувањето. Сепак ова е прво важно што да се истражуваат во Република Македонија и е корисно како привечен увид во ситуацијата. Идните истражувања треба да користат поголем примерок испитаници по случаен избор за да ги добијат наодите на ова поле.


Имајки во предвид дека многу автори ја истакнуваат важноста на користењето на интуитивниот когнитивен стил и „целот мозок“ при донесувањето од-
portance of using intuitive cognitive styles and whole-brain approach to decision making rather than only analytical cognitive style (Allinson & Hayes, 2000; Dane & Pratt, 2007; Khandelwal & Taneja, 2010; Miller & Ireland, 2005; Weston, 1989) further studies should focus on exploring the factors that influence both entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs to have more analytical cognitive style. Furthermore, the attention should be focused on developing various formal and non-formal educational interventions (Allinson & Hayes, 2000; Sanchez, Carballo & Gutierrez, 2011) that will focus on stimulating the development and use of intuitive cognitive style in decision making and using it where appropriate. By utilizing both cognitive styles both managers and entrepreneurs might be able to enhance their decision making process in the rapidly changing business environment (Allinson & Hayes, 2000). The results of the study might also be used as a starting point in understanding the cognitive styles of entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs in the Republic of Macedonia which is relevant for cross-cultural communication and preventing conflicts arising from differences in thinking and approach to decision making (Allinson & Hayes, 2000). The results point that both entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs in Macedonia should be educated to understand and communicate proficiently with people coming from countries where the different cognitive styles and approaches to decision making are used and to utilise the use of people with both cognitive styles during the decision making process to enhance the effectiveness of the process and possibly reach better decisions. 

луките наместо само аналитичкиот стил (Allinson & Hayes, 2000; Dane & Pratt, 2007; Khandelwal & Taneja, 2010; Miller & Ireland, 2005; Weston, 1989) идните истражувања би требало да бидат насочени кон откривање на факторите кои влијаат на претприемачите и не- претприемачите во преферирањето на аналитичкиот когнитивен стил. Вниманието исто така треба да биде насочено и кон развијање на различни формални и неформални образовни интервенции (Allinson & Hayes, 2000; Sanchez, Carballo & Gutierrez, 2011) насочени кон стимулирање и развој на користењето на интуитивниот когнитивен стил при донесувањето одлуки и негово користење во соодветни ситуации. Со користењето на двата когнитивни стила менацерите и претприемачите може да дадат подобрат донесувањето одлуки во услови на брзи промени во бизнис операција. Наодите на истражувањето исто така би можеле да се користат како подновна точка за разбиране на когнитивните стилови на претприемачите и не- претприемачите во Република Македонија што е релевантно за междукултурна комуникација и спречување на конфликти кои произлегуваат од различните пристапи во размислувањето и донесувањето одлуки (Allinson & Hayes, 2000). Резултатите упатуваат дека и претприемачите и не- претприемачите во Македонија треба да научат да комуникираат со луѓе кои доаѓаат од различни држави со различни когнитивни стилови и пристапи во донесувањето одлуки, како и користење на луѓе со различни когнитивни стилови во процесот на донесување одлуки за да се подобри ефективноста на процесот и да се тежнее кон донесување подобри одлуки.
Reference/Литература


