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Perception of the quality of higher education by university students: the role and importance of the public sector

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***Abstract*:** The public sector is perceived as a cornerstone of societal growth and development, innovation, social inclusion, and economic progress. Ensuring an environment that supports these key aspects requires effective governance, transparency, and investments, including investments in education. The role of the public sector should include providing high-quality and accessible higher education, which significantly influences students' entrepreneurial motivation. Offering a solid foundation for developing entrepreneurial skills, competencies, creativity, and self-confidence is an essential component of the quality of higher education. This study focuses on examining the perception of the quality of higher education by university students in selected Central European countries in the context of entrepreneurial intentions. It also highlights the role and importance of the public sector in shaping students' entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes, thereby providing new insights into the impact of the educational environment on entrepreneurial motivation. The research employed quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and analysis. The empirical research was conducted in May 2024 on a sample of 1,783 university students in Central European countries. The study included 576 respondents from Slovakia (16 universities), 612 respondents from the Czech Republic (11 universities), and 595 respondents from Poland (15 universities). Scientific hypotheses were tested using chi-square and Z-score tests.

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Emphasis was placed on examining differences in attitudes across countries, genders, levels of study, and fields of study. The results confirm that the perception of educational quality and its impact on entrepreneurial intentions are relatively homogeneous, although certain regional differences exist among the studied countries, as well as when comparing countries by gender, level of education, and field of study. The findings contribute to original knowledge about regional differences and opportunities for improving educational policies, which is significant for policies and practices in higher education and entrepreneurship support. The study serves as a unique foundation for potential future research with broader scope and impact.

Keywords: public sector, quality of education, student entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial skills, university education

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Introduction

Higher education represents a critical factor in the development of a modern economy and society. Its quality significantly influences students' ability to create, shape, and realize entrepreneurial intentions. Fostering entrepreneurial thinking at the university level has the potential to motivate students to perceive entrepreneurship as a viable career path. Adapting educational systems to better reflect students' needs and enhance their skills is a key approach to increasing their preparedness for entrepreneurial challenges. Such support for entrepreneurship not only contributes to the creation of new economic activity but also promotes overall economic and societal development.

Offering entrepreneurship courses at the university level should involve the suitable teaching approach, which equips students with actual and first-hand awareness about enterprise simultaneously with practice. Paying attention to the programmes and methods or approaches of teaching practical entrepreneurship subjects to these students will create an even better entrepreneurial attitude.

Modification of educational approach from teacher-centered to learner-centered will cause that students will strengthen their critical thinking about entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship can be educated and developed, like other disciplines, under academic activities that includes practicalities of organisational management, financial arrangement, and additional aspects involved in opening and then growing a business.

Besides the above, institutional assistance cannot be overlooked. Institutional support, including the development of entrepreneurial mindsets, plays a significant role in shaping students' entrepreneurial intentions, and educational policies should reflect the needs and expectations of both students and the broader environment. High-quality education has the potential to mitigate societal barriers to entrepreneurship and strengthen entrepreneurial activity.

This study focuses on evaluating the attitudes of university students toward the quality of higher education and the applicability of acquired knowledge in entrepreneurship across three Central European countries. The aim is to identify differences in attitudes based on gender, level of study, field of study, and country, utilizing empirical analysis of data collected from research conducted in the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic, and Poland.
The structure of the article is as follows. The theoretical section presents expert perspectives on education and the formation of entrepreneurial intentions, analyzing relevant theoretical findings from the past five years. The methodological section outlines the objectives, methods, and data used to test scientific hypotheses. The empirical section presents the research results. Finally, the main findings are summarized, and recommendations for future research and policies aimed at enhancing the quality of higher education focused on supporting entrepreneurship are proposed.

1. Literature review

Higher education plays a pivotal role in economic development. According to Ashwin (2022), university education fosters social inclusion, innovation, and equality, necessitating balanced prioritization from the public sector. This broader societal framework is particularly significant in shaping students' entrepreneurial intentions, as it serves as a source of creativity and innovation for new ventures (Bazan, 2023). The quality of education, alongside socioeconomic and cultural factors, influences students' entrepreneurial intentions, as demonstrated by Mukhtar et al. (2021) and Cui et al. (2021). While the intensity of education is crucial, it is insufficient without considering these contextual factors (Rippa et al., 2023). Meoli et al. (2020) emphasize that the organization of university programs and the institutional environment are critical for translating intentions into actions. University support systems encourage students to view entrepreneurship as a viable career path, with Bayesian analysis confirming their effectiveness (Bazan, 2023). Entrepreneurial education thus positively impacts students' intentions and their perception of entrepreneurship as an achievable goal (Ntshangase et al., 2023). Programs that address social and economic needs foster practical skills and the ability to contribute to innovation (Trinth, 2023; Marginson et al., 2024; Brooks et al., 2021). Consequently, adapting education to students' needs and implementing reforms or new courses to enhance their skills and confidence is essential (Ntshangase et al., 2023). Supporting entrepreneurship generates new economic activity and contributes to both economic and societal progress (Saude et al., 2020).
A critical factor in shaping entrepreneurial intentions is students' self-confidence and their perception of the entrepreneurial field. Maheshwari and Kha (2022) highlight the importance of programs focused on developing entrepreneurial skills and self-confidence. However, external support, as noted by Kara et al. (2022), can mitigate the influence of self-confidence on entrepreneurial intentions, suggesting that the

environment may be a key determinant in their formation. Beyond self-confidence, other factors such as propensity to act, desire for excellence, perceived resilience, or narcissism also enhance entrepreneurial ambitions (Chaudhary & Biswas, 2023).

Experiences with entrepreneurship and participation in industry-related research projects significantly influence students' entrepreneurial intentions. According to Muscio et al. (2021), doctoral students engaged in such projects are more likely to establish startups. This trend is supported by the broader role of universities, as emphasized by Sansone et al. (2024). University education equips students with knowledge and experiences that facilitate resource acquisition and the identification of entrepreneurial opportunities. Corazza and Saluto (2021) add that universities fulfill their third mission—supporting innovation and entrepreneurship—through courses and student organizations (Sansone et al., 2021). These activities increase students' interest in entrepreneurship, with some prepared to launch their own ventures during their studies.

Entrepreneurial attitude, self-efficacy, and proactivity are critical in predicting entrepreneurial intentions, and these are cultivated through entrepreneurial education (Sharma & Jamwal, 2023). Anwar et al. (2021) argue that these factors directly influence intentions and mediate the relationship between education and students' ambitions. Adu et al. (2020) and Debarliev et al. (2020) note that risk-taking and behavioral control, supported by education, enhance entrepreneurial propensity. Chaurasia (2023) confirms that developing entrepreneurial skills is essential for success. Experiential learning and behavioral control are integral components of education (Nayak et al., 2024). A propensity for learning and the development of logical and analytical thinking are crucial for educational effectiveness, according to Kim and Park (2023). Jena (2020) emphasizes that cognitive, affective, and behavioral components of attitude shape entrepreneurial intentions. Chursinova and Stebelska (2021) as well as Podolchak et al. (2024) highlighted that managers should have a sufficient level of emotional intelligence that helps build a successful career, be productive, unite the team and stay motivated.

Institutional support and students' entrepreneurial mindset significantly influence their intentions. Bilal et al. (2024) and Lu et al. (2021) demonstrate that education, faculty support, and skill development are decisive factors. Entrepreneurial education also mitigates societal barriers to entrepreneurship for women, with a greater impact on women than men (Pergelova et al., 2023). In various regions, the university context strengthens entrepreneurial activities, although political, industrial, and cultural factors have diverse impacts (Leiva et al., 2023). Ferreira and Smail (2024) further note that education has a stronger effect on the entrepreneurial intentions of students in technical and vocational schools.

Entrepreneurial mindset and attitudes on entrepreneurship have dual variables, including personal background and environment, Davis et al. (2016). Jabeen et al. (2017) remarked a connection between attitude and entrepreneurial mindset. The relationship between those variables is symbolized as an entrepreneurial image (Ludi, et al., 2020).

Sułkowski et al. (2020) emphasizes the importance of cooperation between universities and the social or economic environment. This collaboration is typically established on mutual benefit. On the one hand, universities make their educational programmes more practical, boost the value of the diploma and modify the profiles of their graduates to the constraints of the labor market. From the entrepreneur's perspective, a key aspect of such collaboration becomes a graduate who has the education, skills and competences pursued by employers that allow him immediately to take up a job. Moreover, according to Milosavljević, et al., (2025) inclusion of more interactive and participatory model of teaching entrepreneurship in secondary and tertiary education has particular importance, as students can utilise the knowledge gained to start a business upon graduation.

High-quality education plays a significant role in the context of students' future entrepreneurial activities. This study presents and evaluates the attitudes of university students in selected Central European countries regarding the impact of higher education on shaping entrepreneurial activities and underscores the importance of the public sector in this process.

2. Research methodology

The primary objective of the study is to define the attitudes of university students toward the quality of provided education, quantify and examine differences in attitudes based on gender, level of study, field of study, and the country in which the education is delivered.

The empirical research focused on investigating the attitudes of university students toward the quality of higher education in relation to entrepreneurial activities in the Slovak Republic (SR), the Czech Republic (CZ), and Poland (PL). The research was conducted from March to June 2024. The target group consisted of 1,783 university students from 42 universities. Within the countries included in this study, the empirical research involved 16 universities from Slovakia (n=576 respondents), 11 universities from the Czech Republic (n=612 respondents), and 15 universities from Poland (n=595 respondents). All these universities provide education in the fields of economics and management.

Data collection was carried out using the Google Forms tool in collaboration with the universities in these countries. A separate language version of the questionnaire was prepared for each country. Four basic questions were used to identify classification characteristics (name of the university, field of study, level of study, and gender). Questions aimed at identifying attitudes related to the quality of higher education were defined on a 5-point response scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree).

Within the scope of this study, the attitudes of university students toward the following statements were examined:

ST1: I consider the higher education in my country to be of high quality.

ST2: I consider the education system at my faculty (university) to be of high quality.

ST3: The knowledge I acquire at my faculty (university) will help me in entrepreneurship.

Several hypotheses were formulated in the study:

H1. There are no statistically significant differences in the overall response structure or in the structure of positive responses among university students regarding the perceived quality of higher education across the selected countries.

H1a. There are no statistically significant differences in the structure of positive responses among university students regarding the perceived quality of higher education in individual countries when analyzed by gender, level of education, and field of study.

H2. There are no statistically significant differences in the overall response structure or in the structure of positive responses among university students regarding the perceived quality of higher education at their respective faculties across the selected countries.

H2a. There are no statistically significant differences in the structure of positive responses among university students regarding the perceived quality of higher education at their respective faculties when analyzed by gender, level of education, and field of study.

H3. There are no statistically significant differences in the overall response structure or in the structure of positive responses among university students regarding the perceived importance of higher education for entrepreneurial activities across the selected countries.

H3a. There are no statistically significant differences in the structure of positive responses among university students regarding the perceived importance of higher education for entrepreneurial activities when analyzed by gender, level of education, and field of study.

To test the formulated hypotheses, the chi-square test and Z-score were employed at a significance level of p-value 0.05. In this study, the chi-square test was used to assess differences in the overall response structure of university students. The Z-score was utilized to quantify differences in the structure of positive responses. A hypothesis was considered confirmed if more than 60% of the p-values exceeded 0.05. For the Z-score analysis, input data were recategorized. The level of study was divided into two categories: bachelor's degree as one variable, and master's and doctoral degrees combined as the second variable. Another recategorization involved the field of study, which was classified into several categories, including social sciences, natural sciences, humanities, applied sciences, and technical sciences. For the Z-score analysis, the most prevalent categories were considered: humanities and social sciences for Slovakia and the Czech Republic, and social sciences and technical sciences for Poland. Across all countries, social sciences represented the most dominant category.

The selected methodological approach enables a thorough examination of the diverse factors influencing university students' attitudes toward the quality of higher education. The findings of this study contribute to a deeper understanding of students' perceptions of the quality of higher education in relation to entrepreneurial

activities across different countries, providing valuable insights for policymakers in education and entrepreneurship.

3. Research results and discussions

The research findings are presented in the following tables.

Table 1. Responses of university students to the question related to H1

ST1: I consider the higher education in my country to be of high quality	SR Number/ Share in percentages	CR Number/ Share in percentages	PL Number/ Share in percentages
1. strongly agree	54/9.38	91/14.87	65/10.92
2. agree	359/62.33	375/61.27	384/64.54
3. neutral	62/10.76	85/13.89	54/9.08
4. disagree	84/14.58	54/8.82	77/12.94
5. strongly disagree	17/2.95	7/1.14	15/2.52
Total Respondents	576	612	595

Source: own processing

The students' answers to the question of whether the university education in their country listed in Table 1 is not very different as good. The most frequent response in all examined countries is "agree," with 62.33% in the Slovak Republic (SR), 61.27% in the Czech Republic (CZ), and 64.54% in Poland (PL). Slight differences were observed in the responses "strongly agree," "neutral," and "disagree." The most notable differences in the responses "strongly agree" and "disagree" were recorded between Slovakia and the Czech Republic. For the response "neutral," the largest difference was observed between the Czech Republic and Poland (4.81%).

Table 2. Statistically significant differences in the overall response structure and positive attitudes of university students in the studied countries

ST1	SR/CR	SR/PL	PL/CR
Chi-square/p-value	23.0074/0.0001	2.5314/0.6390	18.0651/0.0012
Z-score/p-value	-1.7444/0.0819	-1.4598/0.1443	-0.2765/0.7795

Source: own processing

The results listed in Table 2 indicate that there are no statistically significant differences in the overall structure of answers between students from the Slovak Republic and Poland (p-value = 0.6390). Regarding the positive attitudes of respondents, no differences were observed across all combinations of the studied countries. Based on the analysis of the results, it was determined that the attitudes of students toward ST1 are more similar between Slovakia and Poland in the overall response structure, and in the structure of positive responses across all combinations of the studied countries (SR/CZ, SR/PL, PL/CZ). The proportion of p-values greater than 0.05 exceeds 60%.

H1 was confirmed.

Table 3. Statistically significant differences in the positive attitudes of university students in the studied countries by gender, level of study and field of study

ST1		**SR** **By gender (X)** **By degree level (Y)** **By specialization (Z)**	**CR** **By gender (X)** **By degree level (Y)** **By specialization (Z)**	**PL** **By gender (X)** **By degree level (Y)** **By specialization (Z)**
absolute values		169/244 X 233/180 Y 42/344 Z	196/270 X 362/104 Y 34/430 Z	295/154 X 326/123 Y 361/48 Z
Z-Score/ p-value	X	0.636/0.5222	-3.1309/0.0017	2.5182/0.0117
	Y	-1.0799/0.2801	-3.4019/0.0007	0.7993/0.4237
	Z	-1.0523/0.2937	1.0661/0.2846	2.4849/0.0131

Source: own processing

No statistically significant differences were observed in Slovakia based on any of the examined criteria (see Table 3). In the Czech Republic, no statistically significant differences were identified in the distribution of positive responses based on the field of study (p-value = 0.2846), and in Poland, based on the level of study (p-value = 0.4237). The proportion of p-values greater than 0.05 does not exceed 60%.

Hypothesis H1a was rejected.

Table 4. Responses of university students to the question related to H2

ST2: I consider the education system at my faculty (university) to be of high qualit	**SR Number/ Share in Percentages**	**CR Number/ Share in Percentages**	**PL Number/ Share in Percentages**
1. strongly agree	128/22.22	108/17.65	95/15.97
2. agree	319/55.38	349/57.03	359/60.34
3. neutral	70/12.15	73/11.93	71/11.93
4. disagree	46/7.99	78/12.75	56/9.41
5. strongly disagree	13/2.26	4/0.65	14/2.35
Total Respondents	576	612	595

Source: own processing

As with ST1, no substantial differences were observed in responses to ST2 (see table 4). The most frequent response across all three countries was “agree.” The largest differences were found in the response “strongly agree” between Slovakia and Poland (6.25%), in the response “disagree” between Slovakia and the Czech Republic (4.76%), and in the response “strongly disagree” between Poland and the

Czech Republic (1.7%). The smallest differences among the countries were recorded in the response "neutral." The highest proportion of positive responses to ST2 was recorded in the Slovak Republic (77.6%).

Table 5 Statistically significant differences in the overall response structure and in positive attitudes of university students in the surveyed countries

ST2	SR/CR	SR/PL	PL/CR
Chi-square/p-value	15.0508/0.0046	7.9616/0.9299	9.9316/0.0416
Z-score/p-value	1.1838/0.2380	0.5287/0.5961	0.6578/0.5093

Source: own processing

The results listed in Table 5 indicate that there are no statistically significant differences in the overall response structure only in the countries of the Slovak Republic/PL (p-value = 0.9299). In the structure of positive responses, no statistically significant differences were observed between Slovakia and the Czech Republic (p-value = 0.2380), Slovakia and Poland (p-value = 0.5961), and Poland and the Czech Republic (p-value = 0.5093). The proportion of p-values greater than 0.05 exceeds 60%.
Hypothesis H2 was confirmed.

Table 6. Statistically significant differences in positive attitudes of university students in the surveyed countries by gender, level, and field of study

ST2		SR By gender By degree level By specialization	CR By gender By degree level By specialization	PL By gender By degree level By specialization
absolute values		181/266 259/188 43/377	195/262 357/100 31/424	292/162 328/126 363/51
Z-Score/ p-value	X	0.3537/0.7263	-2.4893/0.0128	1.3226/0.1868
	Y	0.117/0.9045	-2.8004/0.0051	0.4687/0.6384
	Z	-2.1016/0.0357	-2.447/0.0143	1.8416/0.0658

Source: own processing

The existence of statistically significant differences was recorded in Slovakia and the Czech Republic (see Table 6). In Slovakia, statistically significant differences were found based on the field of study (p-value = 0.0357). In the Czech Republic, significant differences were observed for all examined criteria (gender, level, and field of study). No statistically significant differences were identified in Slovakia based on gender (p-value = 0.7263) and level of study (p-value = 0.9045). In Poland, no statistically significant differences were found for any of the criteria (gender, level, or field of study). The proportion of p-values greater than 0.05 does not exceed 60%.

Hypothesis H2a was rejected.

Table 7. Responses of university students to the question related to H3

ST3: The knowledge I acquire at my faculty (university) will help me in business.	SR Number/ Share in Percentages	CR Number/ Share in Percentages	PL Number/ Share in Percentages
1. strongly agree	81/14.06	96/15.69	77/12.94
2. agree	317/55.03	299/48.86	321/53.95
3. neutral	103/17.88	130/21.24	112/18.82
4. disagree	60/10.42	77/12.58	65/10.92
5. strongly disagree	15/2.60	10/1.63	20/3.36
Total Respondents	576	612	595

Source: own processing

The highest percentage across all surveyed countries for question ST3 corresponds to the response "agree." (see table 7). The highest number of positive responses was recorded in Slovakia and Poland, where the numbers were identical. Notable differences were observed in the response "neutral," with a difference of 3.36% between Slovakia and the Czech Republic, 2.42% between the Czech Republic and Poland, and 0.94% between Slovakia and Poland. For the response "disagree," the largest difference was also recorded between Slovakia and the Czech Republic (2.16%). Smaller differences were observed for the remaining response options. Regarding the examined question ST3, the highest proportion of negative responses was found in Poland (14.28%).

Table 8. Statistically significant differences in the overall structure of responses and in positive attitudes of university students in the surveyed countries

ST3	SR/CR	SR/PL	PL/CR
Chi-square/p-value	6.9509/0.1385	1.1094/0.8928	8.3158/0.0807
Z-score/p-value	1.6654/0.0949	0.8090/0.4179	0.8592/0.3898

Source: own processing

The results listed in Table 8 indicate that among the attitudes of students from the Slovak Republic (p-value = 0.0949), SR/PL (p-value = 0.4179) and PL/ČR (p-value = 0.3898) there are no statistically significant differences and their views on ST3 question are similar. The number of values larger than 0.05 exceeds 60 %. Hypothesis H3 was confirmed.

Table 9. Statistically significant differences in university students' positive attitudes across the surveyed countries by gender, study level, and academic focus

ST3		SR By gender By degree level By specialization	CR By gender By degree level By specialization	PL By gender By degree level By specialization
absolute values		164/234 221/177 27/351	174/221 317/78 23/371	251/147 295/103 333/40
Z-Score/ p-value	X	0.8068/0.4179	-1.0304/0.3030	0.1494/0.8808
	Y	-1.6604/0.0969	-0.3941/0.6965	1.8146/0.0703
	Z	-5.1097/0.00001	-1.1773/0.2380	3.119/0.0018

Source: own processing

Statistically significant differences (see Table 9) were observed for only one criterion (field of study) in Slovakia (p-value = 0.00001) and Poland (p-value = 0.0018). In Slovakia, no statistically significant differences were found based on gender (p-value = 0.4179) or level of study (p-value = 0.0969). Similarly, in Poland, no statistically significant differences were identified based on gender (p-value = 0.8808) or level of study (p-value = 0.0703). In the Czech Republic, no statistically significant differences were found for any of the examined criteria (gender, level, or field of study). The proportion of p-values greater than 0.05 exceeds 60%.
Hypothesis H3a was confirmed.

Overall, it can be concluded that university students' views on the quality of education and its relevance to entrepreneurship are, in most cases, homogeneous across the surveyed countries. Hypotheses H1a and H2a suggest that students' personal characteristics influence their perceptions of education quality, whereas H3a indicates uniformity in their views regarding the importance of education for entrepreneurship. These findings may indicate a need to tailor educational policies and practices to better reflect students' diverse needs and expectations, with the aim of improving both the quality of education and its relevance to the entrepreneurial environment.

4. Discussion

In the current dynamic environment, the importance of supporting the potential of young people is indisputable. Encouraging youth entrepreneurship is crucial for generating new job opportunities, reducing unemployment, enhancing national economic competitiveness, and strengthening global competitiveness. Education, and particularly educational systems that foster the development of entrepreneurial spirit and ecosystem, represents a fundamental tool for achieving these goals. Supporting youth entrepreneurship and ensuring high-quality education are thus key

pillars of sustainable societal development and economic stability (Rachmawati et al., 2022; Cunningham et al., 2024).

Both theoretical approaches and the findings of our study confirm that the quality of education and support for entrepreneurial thinking are universally critical factors influencing students' entrepreneurial motivation (Ashwin, 2022; Bazan, 2023; Mukhtar et al., 2021). The perception of the quality of higher education and its impact on students' entrepreneurial intentions in selected Central European countries appears largely homogeneous. No substantial statistical differences were observed among Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Poland in most of the analyzed parameters. Higher education, the prevailing educational system, and the knowledge students acquire play a significant and positive role in shaping entrepreneurial intentions in the surveyed Central European countries.

A more in-depth analysis revealed the importance of personal characteristics—specifically gender, level of study, and field of study—which influence student opinions, particularly in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. In both countries, statistically significant differences were identified. These findings align with theoretical frameworks that emphasize individual factors and personality traits as key determinants in the perception of education quality (Maheshwari & Kha, 2022; Nayak et al., 2024).

The results of the study confirm that high-quality university preparation is perceived as essential for students' ability to implement entrepreneurial plans, which supports theoretical conclusions about the role of universities as drivers of innovation and entrepreneurship (Corazza & Salutu, 2021; Trinth, 2023). Findings related to the perception and significance of education quality in different countries highlight the possible influence of cultural and social environments on student attitudes.

Entrepreneurial practice confirms that high-quality education must encompass not only principles of strategic and financial management, as emphasized by several authors (Wall, 2021; Gallo et al., 2023; Belas and Rahman, 2023; Rostami et al., 2022; Vukovic et al., 2022), but also tools of soft business management such as Corporate Social Responsibility, business ethics, and the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) concept, as highlighted by others (Betakova et al., 2023; Metzker, 2024; Belas et al., 2024a; Bax et al., 2024; Belas et al., 2024b). In this context, innovation in academic programs by public sector institutions could bear fruit in the form of greater student engagement in entrepreneurial activities.

5. Conclusions

The aim of our study was to examine students' attitudes toward the quality of higher education and its significance for entrepreneurship. Based on our research, we conclude that the quality of higher education and the promotion of entrepreneurial thinking are universally key factors influencing students' entrepreneurial motivation. These conclusions are supported not only by theoretical frameworks but also by empirical data collected in our study conducted in selected Central European

countries—namely Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Poland. The results confirm that perceptions of education quality and its impact on entrepreneurial intentions are largely homogeneous, with no major statistical differences observed across most of the examined parameters. This points to a certain universality of these factors and their shared relevance for students across the cultural and educational environments of Central Europe.

However, a more detailed analysis revealed the importance of personal characteristics, such as gender, level of study, and field of study. These factors have a significant impact on students' attitudes, especially in Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

The findings also confirm that high-quality and relevant university preparation plays a crucial role in students' ability to pursue their own entrepreneurial goals, highlighting the role of universities as engines of innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic development. Educational institutions play a key role in fostering the entrepreneurial potential of young people by providing not only technical knowledge and skills but also developing soft competencies such as creativity, entrepreneurial ethics, problem-solving abilities, and leadership. These aspects are essential for the successful implementation of entrepreneurial initiatives in today's dynamic and competitive environment. Fostering entrepreneurial spirit within universities is critical for creating innovative and competitive entrepreneurs, which has a long-term positive impact on national economies and their capacity to adapt to global challenges.

The achievement of the study's objectives and its results showed that students' attitudes toward the quality of higher education are predominantly positive. To a large extent, these attitudes are similar across countries and personality groups. The insights gained provide valuable input for policymakers and strategic stakeholders in shaping educational policies and development strategies focused on supporting entrepreneurial spirit, enhancing the quality of higher education in the region, and guiding the transformation of educational systems.

Conflict of Interest Statement

We declare that the author's team has conducted research without any business or financial relations that could be interpreted as a potential conflict of interest.

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