Fostering Community-Based Entrepreneurship in the Rural Areas of Lithuania
Summary of the Doctoral Dissertation (Social Sciences, Management and Administration)

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Every single generation at the junction of the past (the experience gained by the mankind over years) and the present being (designation of commitments relevant at a certain period) has been considering the prospects of the future (the continuity of natural evolution) and the future being (the progress of human activities) and tries to deal with them using various techniques and methods.

The entire development of political and social mind from the Greek to Roman times can be understood as the community’s aspiration for dialogue, partnership and sense of community.

Globalization that emerged in the XX century is one of the piercing factors that has the strongest influence on nations, businesses, labour markets, communities and human lives in general. Information technologies, communication means, travel and trade unite the world and thus make quite a revolutionary impact on the world itself and affect the communal lifestyle.

The basis of co-existence in the European civilization is considered to be interactive thinking, which is determined by the sense of community as a qualitative expression of communal lifestyle shaped by:

- **the way of thinking** – the basis of sharing is the culture and history determined by a person’s education and intellect, which shapes the mentality and cultural values of the nation;
- **the lifestyle** – the basis of sharing is the tradition and statehood determined by the family, the local community, and the society, which shapes the communal lifestyle and the attitude towards the status of a citizen;
- **the way of acting and cognition** – the basis of sharing is the profession as well as individual and community wisdom determined by an institution, a corporation or an organisation, which shapes the organisational culture and the attitude towards the status of a professional worker;
- **the type of governance (self-governance)** – the basis of sharing is the residential area determined by the local and state affairs and consistency, which shapes the attitude towards the status of local resident.

The rural areas of Lithuania are still confronting some issues of the co-operation and entrepreneurship, the ability of self-governance and independency, while the problem of sense of community, employment and occupation is becoming ever more relevant.

Recently, in attempt to address the rural issues, much emphasis has been placed on the development of communities and their entrepreneurship.

A number of foreign and some Lithuanian scientists have been analysing community-based entrepreneurship which influences the development of an organisation. However, the management science lacks complex research of community-based entrepreneurship in the light of territorial development. Thus, the novelty of the work is rooted in the idea that the formation of community-based entrepreneurship in rural areas is related to a new form of social culture determined by a dialogue, partnership and cooperation coupled with responsible social behaviour as an instrument for adaptation and a guarantor for cohesion between investments and territorial development, where:

- the formation of community-based entrepreneurship in rural areas is analysed from the holistic-system point of view (formation of the sense of community, setting-up autonomy and activation of professionalism);
- the formation of community-based entrepreneurship in rural areas is comprehensively analysed from the point of view of marketing studies (development of community-based organisation, development of activities that bring organisations together, and strengthening of territorial competitiveness);
- the formation of community-based entrepreneurship in rural areas is analysed in the context of priority directions influencing the development of rural areas in Lithuania (repetitiveness of the living conditions, vitality of the residential area, and improvement of the quality of life).

Researches have shown that the activities of territorial rural communities are mostly oriented towards the social affairs and they are not strong enough to implement rural development in a complex way.

Thus, the fostering community-based entrepreneurship is one of the most important tools for the development of rural areas in Lithuania, which empowers rural communities and organisations to commit and take responsibility for the future of their own territory.

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