



A Review of the Literature on Factors That May Influence Entrepreneurial Intention among University Students

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to present a review of the literature on the variables that can influence students' entrepreneurial intention, as well as the theories underlying our research work. Several theories have been mobilized to explain entrepreneurial intention, notably Sokol and Shapero's theory (1982) and Ajzen's theory (1991). But among students in particular, we must ask what factors spark the idea of starting a business. After examining several articles in the literature on entrepreneurial intention (about thirty), we were able to identify, through an archiving method, three essential variables that act on entrepreneurial intention: The desire to undertake, the social factor and the degree of feasibility. But isn't it important to look at other variables that can influence the entrepreneurial act ?

Keywords: Entrepreneurial intention, Ajzen's theory, Literature review

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a strategic lever for the development of society through the creation of wealth, jobs and the fight against unemployment. Today, Morocco encourages the use of entrepreneurship to alleviate the problems of insufficient employment. This is the reason why Morocco has adopted policies to accompany and support business foundations.

It goes without saying that entrepreneurship is not a new concept, but it dates back several years (1930). In his article on "The field of entrepreneurship: history, evolution and trends", (Filion 1997) presents two categories of thinkers: economists and behaviourists. The latter are composed of psychologists, psychoanalysts and sociologists. They are very interested in the behavior of the entrepreneur to understand entrepreneurship.

According to behaviourists, it is necessary to study in depth the behaviour and the characteristics of the entrepreneur, in particular the psychological and social factors which can lead the individual to launch out in the entrepreneurship. For (Ajzen 1991), who is a social psychologist, he explains the behavior of the entrepreneur by three constructs, namely attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioral control. (Shapero and Sokol 1982), for their part, propose the theory of the entrepreneurial event by referring to four factors, namely negative displacement, positive displacement, the degree of desirability, and the degree of feasibility.

Based on these different theories, researchers hypothesize about entrepreneurial intention, and propose variables that explain the behavior of the potential entrepreneur (Benredjem and Sahut 2016; Boissin, Chollet, and Emin 2009; KOUBAA and EDDINE 2012; Przepiorka 2017; Tounés 2006).

After highlighting these theories, it would be relevant to ask about the explanatory factors that determine university students' entrepreneurial intention.

In order to solve this problem, we first propose a review of the literature on the key concepts and theories mobilized, as well as the research methodology on which our work is based. We then present the results of our analysis and draw a conclusion.

2. Review of the literature

2.1 Entrepreneurial intent

Epistemologically, intention comes from the Latin verb "intendere", i.e. to tend towards, which means the fact of proposing a certain goal (Le Robert). Historically, intention was the first to appear in criminal law and is integrated into the concept of the offence, which is the trigger for criminal liability.

The notion of entrepreneurial intent has attracted the attention of several researchers since the 1980s. By the 1990s, the term "intent" was

replaced by the term "strategic intent. In fact, strategic intention is, according to (Varrault 1998), a set of pending tasks characterized by a mental attitude that leads the attention of the owner and manager of the company to the search and development of specific methods and tools, whose objective is to make a specific strategic project. In social psychology, intention is a solution by which the person wants to achieve a project. For (Ajzen 1991), intentions are agents of the degree of determination, motivating factors and tenacity that one can do to achieve something. In entrepreneurship, for (Krueger and Carsrud 1993) the intention is a cognitive structure of both a determined objective and the tools to achieve them. Neveu (1996), joins the same definition by replacing the structure by representation. For (Verstraete 1999), identifying intentionality implies an early identification of the goal in order to understand the behaviors of an entrepreneur. Intention is also a determination of purpose (Bruyat, 1993; Tounés, 2003; Vesalainen and Pinkala 1999).

It directs experience and action toward the goal of creating a business (Bird 1988). Some researchers have associated intention with motivations, needs, values and beliefs, such as (Bird 1988). For (Vesalainen and Pihkala 1999), intention is a process influenced by contextual variables. (Tounés 2006) had joined this definition by explaining the 4 phases of the business creation process and defining the contextual fields that can influence it. That is why he said that the intention is an individual will that is inserted within a process composed of 4 stages that are: The propensity, the intention, the decision, and the act. (Benredjem and Sahut 2016), explain intention as a mental manifestation that involves a will, a conviction to achieve a certain goal such as creating a business. (Emin 2003), explains that intention is at the beginning of a process composed of several steps from a simple vision and intention to the actual creation of the business.

For our purposes, we consider that the intention is a phase of the entrepreneurial creation process, which is positioned before the act of undertaking. It is conditioned by a certain number of environmental, social, cultural and economic factors.

2.2 Theories mobilized

It seems to us that the behavioural approach, in particular social psychology, is an effective way to predict and understand the behaviour of the individual. Thus, the theory of the entrepreneurial event of (Shapero and Sokol 1982), and the theory of planned behavior of Ajzen, are very important to explain the entrepreneurial intention (Krueger and Carsrud 1993). Therefore, we consider it necessary to explain the two theories that are so often used by researchers to study entrepreneurial intention.

2.2.1 The theory of the entrepreneurial event of Shapero and Sokol 1982

(Shapero and Sokol 1982) are the initiators of the intentions approach in the field of entrepreneurship and their model has been taken up and verified by (Krueger and Carsrud 1993).

(Shapero and Sokol 1982) present the social dimensions of entrepreneurship and pose a model (fig 1) that describes the formation of the entrepreneurial event. They suggest that the formation of the entrepreneurial event is the result of the interaction between situational and cultural factors and postulate that for a person to begin a transformation in his or her life, an action must result in such a decision.

They therefore refer to four essential factors that explain the entrepreneurial intention, namely negative displacements such as redundancy, dissatisfaction at work, positive displacements that concern, for example, obtaining a gain or an inheritance, and factors of perceived desirability (culture, colleagues, family, etc.) and feasibility (financing, advice, help, training, etc.) that are in interaction.

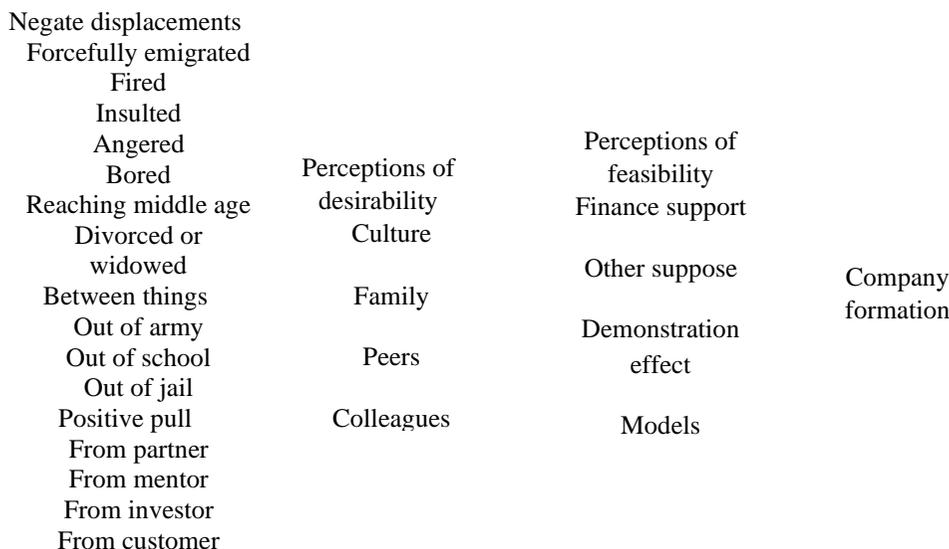


Fig 1.The model on the formation of the entrepreneurial event of Sokol and Shapero, 1982

2.2.2 The theory of planned behavior of (Ajzen 1991)

For many researchers, psychology is a means of predicting the behavior of each individual, which is why some researchers have mobilized, in entrepreneurship, the theory of planned behavior presented by (Ajzen 1980) which explains the behavior of the individual by three constructs, namely attitudes, subjective norms and behavioral control (fig 2).

Attitudes associated with behavior lead to social and cultural factors that influence the values of the individual. In the field of entrepreneurship, the more interest there is in innovation and risk-taking, the more businesses are created. Defeat in entrepreneurial ventures and previous experiences also influence the individual and therefore their desire to create. This is explained as desirability by Sokol and Shapero.

Social norms are the result of social pressure, wishes from friends and family regarding becoming an entrepreneur. They refer to desirability in Sokol and Shapero's model.

Finally, perceptions of behavioral control refer to the knowledge, skills, and financial resources that the individual has to carry out the intention. This is called feasibility in Sokol and Shapero's model.

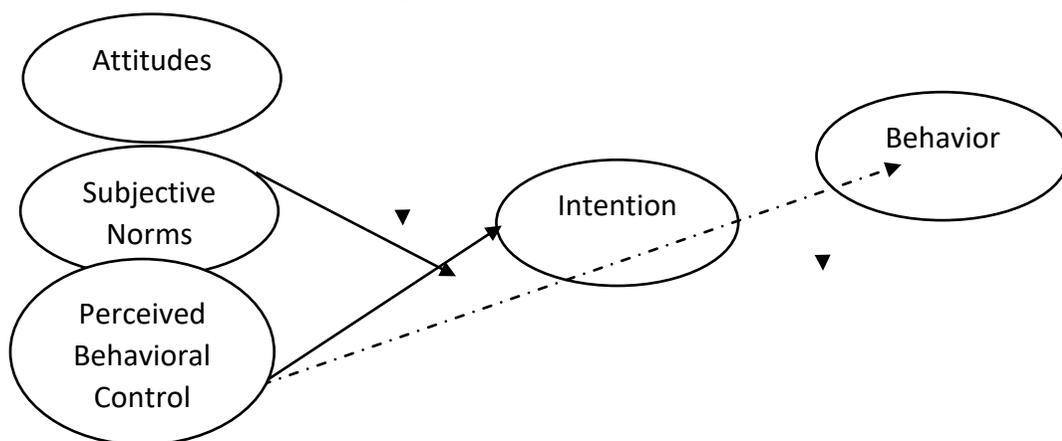


Fig 2. The theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991)

3 Research methodology

3.1 Data collection method

In order to explain the choice of our variables, we chose to collect the data based on a brief literature review of some of the research conducted in entrepreneurship.

The search for articles was developed via the search engine "Google Scholar", inserting keywords related to our research area, namely "intention", "entrepreneurial intention", "student entrepreneurial intention".

In a first step, we typed the word "entrepreneurial intention", and this gave us 13,000 results. In a second step, we typed in the keyword "entrepreneurial intention of students" in order to better define our results, and so that they are related to our research topic. We then obtained 6880 results.

In a third step we excluded searches based on the title of the article, which reduced the number of results to 2810. In a 4th and 5th step we tried to

narrow down our search further and we sorted on the basis of the abstract, or on the basis of the full text concerning abstracts that were more or less ambiguous. Thus, we obtained 460 results.

Finally, we excluded repeated searches, and those containing unclear data. Thus, we obtained 60 results. It should be noted that we excluded all research that did not mobilize Ajzen's or Sokol and Shapero's theory. We then retained 26 articles dealing with the determinants of entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, we summarize our methodology in the following steps (table 1) :

Table 1. Excluded and retained items

| Step number | Steps of the census | Number of excluded items | Number of articles retained |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <u>Step 1:</u> <u>13 000</u> | <u>Step 2:</u> entrepreneurial intention of students | 6120 | 6880 |
| | <u>Step 3:</u> Title | 4070 | 2810 |
| | <u>Step 4:</u> Abstract | 1400 | 1410 |
| | <u>Step 5:</u> Full text | 950 | 460 |
| <u>Step 6</u> <u>460</u> | <u>Step 7:</u> research identified | 200 | 260 |
| | <u>Step 8:</u> thesis/communication work | 200 | 60 |
| | <u>Step 9:</u> research mobilizing Ajzen's theory | 35 | 25 |
| Number of articles selected | | | 26 |

3.1.1 Analysis of collected data

The presentation of the collected data is made in the form of a table with 4 entries:

- 1st entry: title
- 2nd entry: author
- 3rd entry: problematic
- 4th entry: variables

Because of the variability of the terminology used by each researcher, we have tried to group the variables according to the category to which they belong. For example:

- "environment", "surroundings", "friends", "family" are grouped into: social norms.
- Abilities", "training", "experiences" are grouped into: behavioral control.
- Motivations", "failure", "gain", "resignation" into: attitudes

Table 2. Variables mobilized by the researchers

| Title | Author | Country | Issue | Variables |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Prediction en employment status choice intentions | (Kolvreid 1996) | Norway | What are the elements that influence the entrepreneurial intention ? | Attitudes, social norms, perceived behavioral control |
| Entrepreneurial intent among students : intent model in Asia, Scandinavia and the USA | (Autio et al. 1997) | Asia Scandinavi anUSA | What are the factors influencing the development of entrepreneurial intention? | The image of entrepreneurship, attitudes, the university |
| Entrepreneurship as a potential career: an assessment in a university setting | (Filion 2002) | Canada | What are students' perceptions of entrepreneurship? | Student perceptions |
| A longitudinal study of the entrepreneurial intentions of university students | (Audet 2004) | Canada | What impact do desirability and feasibility have on the formation of entrepreneurial intention? | Desirability (attitudes, subjective norms), feasibility (perceived behavioral control) |
| L'intention entrepreneuriale des étudiants : le cas français | (Tounés 2006) | France | Can entrepreneurship training in academic institutions influence the entrepreneurial intentions of French students? | attitudes, subjective norms, perceptions of behavioral control |
| Students' beliefs about starting a business | (Boissin, Chollet, et Emin 2007) | France | How do students value an entrepreneurial career? What is the difference between those who have received entrepreneurial training and other students? | Attitudes, social norms, feasibility (behavioral control) |
| Entrepreneurial intentions of university students: a comparison | (Gasse, Camion, et Ghamgui 2007) | France Tunisia Canada | How can students' values, attitudes, and behaviors initiate | Desirability (social norms), feasibility (behavioral) |

| | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--|--|
| between France, Tunisia and Canada | | | them to create a business, their own work, or intend to have their own project? | control), beliefs about entrepreneurship, personality traits (attitudes and motivations) |
| Title | Author | Country | Issue | Variables |
| Determinants of students' intention to start a business | (Boissin, Chollet, et Emin 2009) | France - Arab countries | What are students' beliefs and attitudes towards entrepreneurship? | Attitudes, social norms, perceived behavioral control |
| Comparison of students' entrepreneurial intentions: France - Arab countries | (Boissin et al. 2009) | France - Arab countries | What are the elements acting on students' entrepreneurial intention? | Behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, control beliefs |
| Cultural Perceptions and Entrepreneurial Intention: A Comparison of Brazilian and French Students | (Barbosa et al. s. d.) | Brésil France | What is the impact of the different dimensions of culture on entrepreneurial intention? | Ability to start a business, taking responsibility, fear, entrepreneurial characteristics, conquering opportunity, entrepreneurial motivations |
| The entrepreneurial intention of young graduates | (Boudabbous 2011) | Tunisia | What factors make young graduates want to start a business? | Attitudes, subjective or social norms, behavioral control |
| Entrepreneurial intention of students in Morocco: a PLS analysis | (KOUBAA et EDDINE 2012) | Morocco | What are the factors that can influence entrepreneurial intention among students in Morocco? | attitudes, desirability, feasibility |
| The effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions of university students in Turkey | (Doğan 2015) | Turkey | What are the factors that influence the entrepreneurial intention of university students a few months before | Behavioral control (training), social norms (entrepreneurial parents), desirability. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|----------------|--|---|
| | | | starting their professional career in Turkey? | |
| Crossed perspectives on the determinants of students' entrepreneurial intention | (Benredjem et Sahut 2016) | Algeria | In a distinct environment, what are the determinants that explain entrepreneurial intention among students? | attitudes, perceived behavioral control, subjective norms |
| Title | Author | Country | Issue | Variables |
| Psychological determinants of entrepreneurial success and life satisfaction | (Przepiorka 2017) | Poland | Why do some entrepreneurs succeed in the pre-launch phase, while others do not? And to what extent can the psychological character be a determining factor in the success of an entrepreneurial project? | Action orientations related to decision, action orientations related to failures (failure), hope, will. |
| Academic entrepreneurship in Spanish universities: An analysis of the determinants of entrepreneurial intention | (Miranda, Chamorro-Mera, et Rubio 2017) | Spain | What are the determinants of entrepreneurial intention? | Subjective norms, Attitudes, Behavioral control |

| | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|--|---|
| Effect of entrepreneurship education programs on the entrepreneurial intention of university students. | (González López, Perez-Lopez, et Rodriguez Ariza 2017) | Spain | What is the impact of entrepreneurship training on students' entrepreneurial intention? | Attitudes, Self-efficacy, Social norms, Entrepreneurship training |
| Validation of the Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire in a sample of university students in Colombia. | (Laguía et al. 2017) | Colombia | What are the psychosocial factors that may lead the student to entrepreneurship? | Subjective norms, attitudes, behavioral control |
| Impact of subjective social norm on sustainable entrepreneurship intention: a case study. | (Gálvez-Albarracín, Guauña-Aguilar, et Pérez-Uribe 2018) | Colombia | What is the level of interest among Valle University students in starting a business? | Subjective norms, attitudes, behavioral control |
| Title | Author | Country | Issue | Variables |
| Entrepreneurial education and students entrepreneurial intention: does team cooperation matter? | (Li et Wu 2019) | China | What impact does entrepreneurship training have on students' entrepreneurial intention? | self-efficacy, entrepreneurial passion, team cooperation, entrepreneurship training |
| Determinants of entrepreneurial intention among Dosso students | H. Moctar (2020) | Niger | What are the determining factors in the process of triggering the entrepreneurial intention of students: the University of Dosso in Niger? | Attitude, subjective norms, behavioral control |
| Entrepreneurship education as a predictor of entrepreneurial intention of university students. | (Vélez et al. 2020) | Ecuador (South America) | What is the impact of entrepreneurship training on university students? | Attitude, subjective norms, behavioral control |

| | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--|--|
| Entrepreneurship intention in Mexico City students. | (García et Adame 2020) | Mexico | What aspects influence the entrepreneurial intention of students in Mexico? | Attitude, subjective norms, behavioral control |
| Structural equation modeling to determine students' entrepreneurial intentions | (Idrovo Poveda et al. 2020) | Ecuador (South America) | What are the key indicators that can help generate entrepreneurial behavior among students ? | Attitude, subjective norms, behavioral control |
| The entrepreneurial intention of students to the test of gender stereotypes: case of the University of Bejaia | (ADJOUT & BOUMOULA, 2020) | Algeria | What is the role of socially constructed gender stereotypes in entrepreneurial intentions? | Attitude, subjective norms, behavioral control |

Table 2. Continued

4 Results

In view of this bibliographical research, we note the repetition of certain variables in the analysis of entrepreneurial intention undertaken by the various researchers mentioned above. This has led us to focus on three variables that make up Ajzen's model, namely attitudes, social norms and perceived control.

In order to have a clear vision of the most theoretically cited variables, we present below the frequency of the words generated by the Nvivo software.

In view of this bibliographical research, however humble, we note the recurrence of certain variables in the articles that were the subject of our study. Thus, we are interested in three recurring variables that make up Ajzen's model, namely attitudes, social norms and perceived behavioral control.

In order to have a clear vision, we present below (fig 3) the word frequency generated by the Nvivo software.

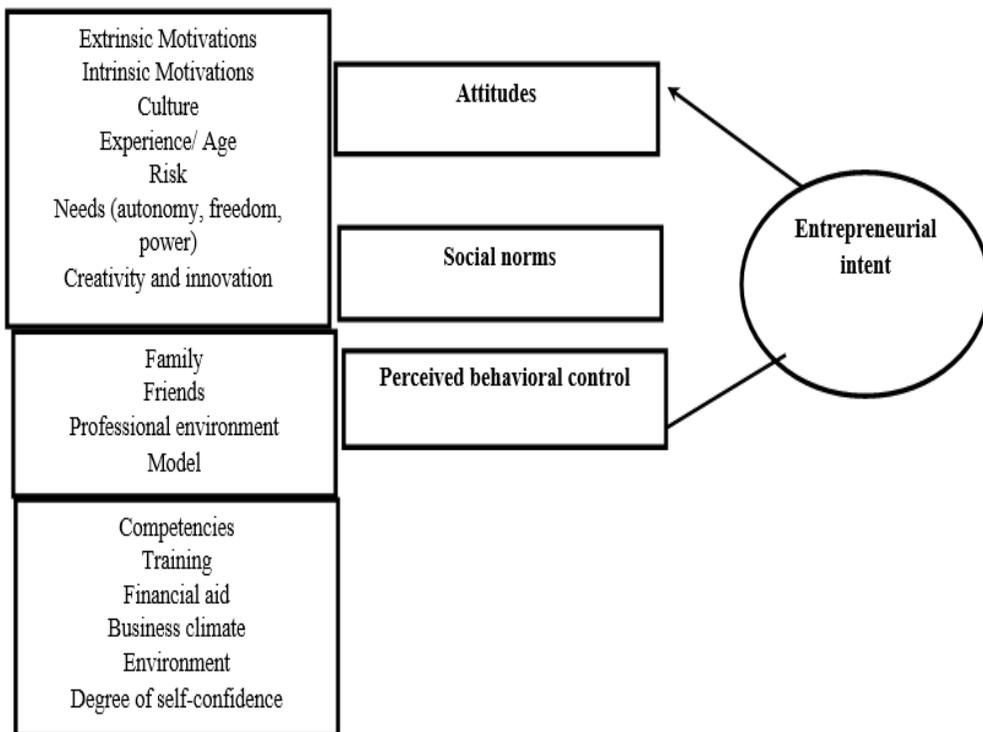


Fig 4. Summary of the variables mentioned (ourselves)

5 Discussion and conclusion

The review of the literature on entrepreneurial intention allowed us to identify the variables that explain entrepreneurial intention through different behavioral theories.

For Ajzen (1991), the behavior of the individual can be explained by three constructs:

- Attitudes: which involve the degree of evaluation, attraction or aspiration, favorable or unfavorable, that the individual has of a well-determined behavior. Attitudes can be synonymous with intrinsic and extrinsic motivations;
- Social norms: the result of social pressure on the individual's future, notably from family, friends, employers, or faculty;
- Perceived behavioral control: which incorporates the availability of resources, opportunities, disincentives, skills, academic training, or work experience.

In light of this analysis, however humble, we note that the variables chosen to study students entrepreneurial intention are recurrent in several

articles dealing with the problem, and that the degree of their relevance is relative and varies from one context to another. Thus, we rely on these recurring variables: attitudes, social norms and perceived control, which we believe are relevant to the sample we have chosen for our research.

In sum, it should be remembered that the main focus of our work is to present the variables that determine the entrepreneurial intention of university students, as well as the model on which we base our research work. Therefore, this article can be a starting point for a researcher to test the variables and verify the impact of each on entrepreneurial intention. In addition, it will also help to evolve thinking on the subject, to find new variables that may influence the entrepreneurial act and to update previous studies. At the managerial level, the objective of this work is to find answers to certain questions related to the entrepreneurial act and to help coaches better understand potential entrepreneurs.

Finally, we can say that according to this article, intention is undoubtedly a very important element in the prediction of entrepreneurial behavior, but it is not sufficient to approve that a person who has the intention will undoubtedly take the entrepreneurial act. Indeed, it is very important to add other moderating variables that can act on entrepreneurial intention, such as experience or age, because for students in particular, experience can be an important brake in the passage to the entrepreneurial act. Hence the need to focus on other variables that can predict behavior besides entrepreneurial intention.

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