

## **Entrepreneurial intention among students: an exploratory study of the determinants**

### **L'intention entrepreneuriale chez les étudiants : Une étude exploratoire des déterminants**

**RETAL Fatiha**

Doctor in Economics and Management

Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences - Souissi - Rabat

University Mohamed V- Rabat

Research laboratory in Organization Management, Business Law and Sustainable  
Development  
Morocco

**Date de soumission :** 25/10/2024

**Date d'acceptation :** 01/06/2025

**Pour citer cet article :**

RETAL. F (2025) « Entrepreneurial intention among students: an exploratory study of the determinants. », Revue Internationale du chercheur « Volume 6 : Numéro 2 » pp : 1006 - 1029

## Abstract

The analysis of entrepreneurial intention is located in upstream of the entrepreneurial behavior. This research is part of this framework, it aims to study the impact of factors linked to attitudes associated with behavior, subjective norms and perceptions of behavioral control on the entrepreneurial intention of students.

Theoretically, this article is based on the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and the model of entrepreneurial intention (Tounes, 2006).

In terms of methodology, we adopted an exploratory qualitative methodology through semi-structured interviews conducted with a sample of 13 students and entrepreneurs at the national level.

The research results show that our analysis model is validated in the Moroccan student context. Additionally, the active participatory teaching approaches, the teacher's posture and students' engagement in extracurricular activities have a significant impact on the entrepreneurial intention of students.

**Keywords:** attitudes with behavior, subjective norms, perceptions of behavioral control, intention, student.

## Résumé

L'analyse de l'intention entrepreneuriale sert à se positionner en amont du comportement entrepreneurial.

Cette recherche s'inscrit dans ce cadre, elle vise à étudier l'impact des facteurs liés aux attitudes associées au comportement, aux normes subjectives et aux perceptions du contrôle comportemental sur l'intention entrepreneuriale des étudiants.

Théoriquement, cet article s'appuie sur la théorie du comportement planifié d'Ajzen (1991) et sur le modèle de l'intention entrepreneuriale de Tounés (2006).

Sur le plan méthodologique, nous avons adopté une méthodologie qualitative exploratoire à travers des entretiens semi-directifs conduits avec un échantillon de 13 étudiants et lauréats entrepreneurs à l'échelle nationale.

Les résultats de recherche montrent que notre modèle d'analyse est validé dans le contexte étudiant marocain. En outre, la pédagogie active participative, la posture de l'enseignant et l'engagement dans les activités parascolaires exercent un impact considérable sur l'intention entrepreneuriale des étudiants.

**Mots clés :** attitudes associées au comportement, normes subjectives, perceptions du contrôle comportemental, intention, étudiant.

## Introduction

Many researchers in the fields of psychology, social sciences and management sciences have been interested in studying the concept of intention. In addition, and specifically in the field of entrepreneurship, several researchers have tried to understand the concept of intention, as being a crucial notion in the understanding of the entrepreneur (Krueger and Carsrud, 1993; Bruyat, 1993; Bird, 1988; Tounes, 2003). Entrepreneurial intention is considered also as the best predictor of entrepreneurial behavior, which would improve performance and behaviors in a venture (Boutaky. S & Boutaky. G, 2021).

Furthermore, the term entrepreneurial intention has been the subject of several theoretical explanatory models for the training of entrepreneurial behavior, and it has been mobilized by many researchers (Krueger and Carsrud, 1993).

This research is located in this context related to the business creation process, because it studies the central phase of the entrepreneurial process, which is the entrepreneurial intention. Indeed, the objective of this research is to analyze the determinants of the entrepreneurial intention of students and graduates of higher education establishments, by referring to the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and the model of entrepreneurial intention (Tounes, 2006).

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to answer the following research question: What are the factors that influence the intention to create a business among students?

To answer this, we will conduct an exploratory qualitative analysis based on semi-structured interviews conducted with entrepreneurs and students from higher education establishments in Morocco, in order to identify the factors that triggered entrepreneurial intention among them, and to determine the role that should be played by training establishments in stimulating the entrepreneurial spirit among students.

In this article, we first provide a literature review on the concept of entrepreneurial intention which is positioned upstream of the entrepreneurial process, after we present the importance and definitions of the concept, as well as its main theoretical models. In addition, we discuss some empirical studies in relation with the determinants of entrepreneurial intention. Then, we present the analysis model and research propositions. Finally, we describe the exploratory methodology employed and the research results.

## 1. Theoretical framework

### 1.1. Definition and theoretical models of entrepreneurial intention

#### 1.1.1 Concept of entrepreneurial intention : definition and importance

Since the 1990s, entrepreneurial intention has been considered the basis of numerous research studies, notably through the mobilization of the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1977).

Intention can be evaluated in the short, medium or long term (Autio, Keeley, Klofsten and Hesinki, 1997; Reitan, 1996). In the case of students, their intentions are often evaluated according to three phases: during studies, just after obtaining the diploma or even long after obtaining the diploma.

Intention is a state of mind that directs action. It is a cognitive framework focused on goals and means (Ajzen, 1987), and which mediates between attitudes and behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1977). There are different acceptances of the concept of entrepreneurial intention. Indeed, some authors illustrate it as a mental state, some of them studies it as a personal will, and others consider it a cognitive structure. The table below presents the major definitions of the concept of intention:

**Table 1: Definitions of entrepreneurial intention in the literature**

Author(s)	Definitions
<b>Hernandez and Smith (1991)</b>	Intention reflects the objective of the potential entrepreneur(s), which results in the search for useful information for action.
<b>Bird (1992)</b>	Entrepreneurial intention corresponds to a cognitive process, which begins with motives, needs, and beliefs of a person. The development of a business is the direct result of intentions that are influenced by environmental factors.
<b>Bruyat (1993)</b>	Entrepreneurial intention corresponds to an individual will or a state of mind geared towards business creation.
<b>Krueger and Carsrud (1993)</b>	An entrepreneurial intention is a mental representation of a clear goal and the tools to achieve it.
<b>Tounes (2003)</b>	Entrepreneurial intention represents an individual desire rooted in a cognitive process. A view of the viability and desirability of entrepreneurial behavior is necessary for the formation of entrepreneurial intention.
<b>Linan and Chen (2009)</b>	Intention is the key stage of the entrepreneurial process; it plays a crucial role in the choice to pursue an entrepreneurial career.

### **1.1.2 Main theoretical models of entrepreneurial intention**

Intention models provide a coherent, simple and robust framework for a better understanding of entrepreneurial intention and behavior.

#### **❖ Theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991)**

Ajzen's planned behavior theory (1991) served as a scientific basis for studies on the emergence of entrepreneurial intention. This theory helps to predict and explain a person's behavior in a variety of contexts by examining the intention behind their actions.

According to the theory of planned behavior (TCP), the intention depends on three precursors: attitude towards behavior, perceived subjective norm and perceived behavioral controllability. Consequently, a person's intention is determined by his attitude towards the behavior concerned, the way in which he interprets the social norms and the degree of control he believes to have on the situation.

Concerning attitudes, they refer to the notion of desirability used by Shapero and Sokol (1982) in entrepreneurship. These attitudes include both a personal attitude of the person towards the behavior in question as well as a social attitude that results from perceived pressure in the immediate environment. As for control, it reflects a person's perception of his ability to carry out a behavior and it is similar to the concept of personal effectiveness of Shapero and Sokol (1982); Bandura (1977).

#### **❖ Model of entrepreneurial intention of students following entrepreneurship training (Tounes, 2006)**

Concerning the entrepreneurial act, we have in the literature the model of Shapero and Sokol (1982). This model was taken up and presented by Tounes (2006) and becomes a model of intention applied to entrepreneurship.

Inspired by the model of the social dimensions of entrepreneurship by Shapero and Sokol (1982) and the theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1991), Tounes (2003) carried out a study with a sample of 178 French students following courses with an entrepreneurial focus (bac + 5). His objective is to determine the explanatory factors of entrepreneurial intention, by considering three groups of factors: attitudes associated with behavior, subjective norms and perceptions of behavioral control.

This research highlighted the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention. Furthermore, the hypotheses relating to attitudes associated with behavior, subjective norms and professional experiences were validated. On the other hand, those relating to perceptions

of the availability of resources and perceptions of skills acquired through associative experiences were rejected.

**Table 2: Synthesis of the main intention models and theories**

Theory/model	Author and year	Determinants of intention
<b>Entrepreneurial event model</b>	Shapero et Sokol (1982)	Feasibility ; Desirability ; Displacements.
<b>The theory of planned behavior</b>	Ajzen (1991)	Attitudes associated with behavior; Subjective norms ; Perceptions of behavioral control.

### 1.2. Empirical studies related to entrepreneurial intention

Entrepreneurial intention and its determinants have been the subject of various scientific research, part of which can be summarized in the table below:

**Table 3: Some empirical studies related to entrepreneurial intention**

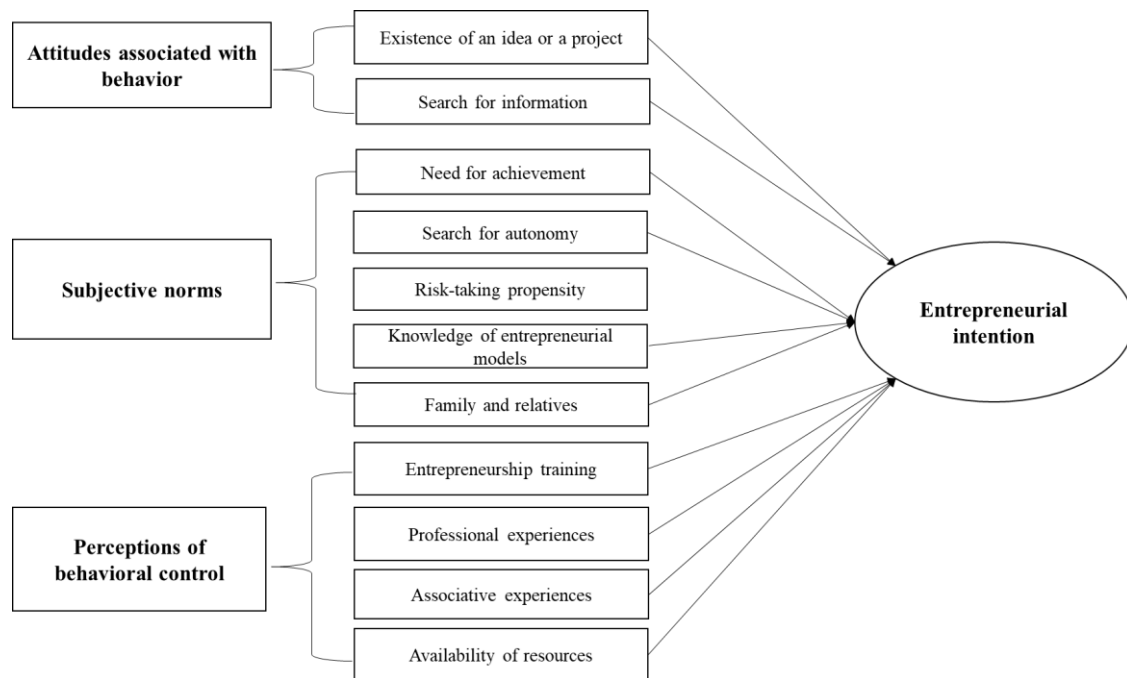
Authors(s)	Results
<b>Liñán, and al. (2011)</b>	Personal attitude and perceived behavioral control constitute relevant factors in explaining entrepreneurial intentions.
<b>Salhi and Boujelbene (2013)</b>	Desirability and perceived feasibility constitute necessary concepts in the development of an entrepreneurial intention. Thus, the existence of an idea or a project and the collection of associated data constitute the major elements, which contribute to the understanding and prediction of entrepreneurial intention.
<b>Bachiri (2016)</b>	Opinions regarding entrepreneurial behavior and perceptions of behavioral control constitute the main elements influencing students' entrepreneurial intention. On the other hand, the impact of subjective norms on entrepreneurial intention remains negligible.
<b>Ebewo, and al. (2017)</b>	The three determinants of entrepreneurial intention, namely attitude towards entrepreneurship, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control, directly influence entrepreneurial intention.
<b>Puni, and al. (2018)</b>	Entrepreneurial self-efficacy contributes to the stimulation of entrepreneurial intention. It is a central psychological mechanism that can translate entrepreneurship education into entrepreneurial intention.
<b>Tung, and al. (2020)</b>	Subjective standards, entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial desirability are positively linked to perceived feasibility.

## 2. Analysis model and research proposals

### 2.1. Analysis model

Referring to the theory of planned behavior (TCP) (Ajzen, 1991) and to the model of entrepreneurial intention of students following entrepreneurship training (Tounes, 2006), we have conceived the conceptual model of our research as follows:

**Figure 1 : Model of students entrepreneurial intention**



Source : Ajzen (1987-1991) ; Tounes (2006)

### 2.2. Research proposals

Based on our analysis model, we formulate the following research propositions:

**P1:** The existence of a business idea or project influence positively the entrepreneurial intention of students.

**P2:** The search for information to formalize aspects linked to the business project influence positively the entrepreneurial intention of students.

**P3a:** The need for accomplishment influence positively the entrepreneurial intention of students.

**P3b:** The search for autonomy influence positively the entrepreneurial intention of students.

**P4:** The risk-taking propensity influence positively the entrepreneurial intention of students.

**P5:** Knowledge by students of inspiring entrepreneurial models influence positively their entrepreneurial intention.

**P6:** The immediate entourage of students influence positively their entrepreneurial intention.

**P7a:** The perceptions of the entrepreneurial skills that students acquire through entrepreneurship training influence positively their entrepreneurial intention.

**P7b:** The perceptions of entrepreneurial skills that students acquire through professional experiences influence positively their entrepreneurial intention.

**P7c:** The perceptions of entrepreneurial skills that students acquire through associative initiatives influence positively their entrepreneurial intention.

**P8:** Perceptions of the availability of resources influence positively the entrepreneurial intention of students.

### 3. Research methodology

Given the nature of our research subject, we adopted an exploratory qualitative approach used to analyze entrepreneurial intention among students, through different factors linked to attitudes associated with behavior, subjective norms and perceptions behavioral control.

In this context, we chose semi-structured interview as a method of data collection, conducted with a sample of 13 students and graduates in Morocco. These were chosen based on the criteria of convenience, accessibility and geographical proximity (Yin, 1994). The method of content analysis (ACT) was used to examine the data gathered during this exploratory study.

When constituting our sample, we selected students and graduates with and without professional experience whose age varies between 20 and 35 years, with levels of study ranging from BAC to BAC+5, and pursuing different fields of study (management, engineering and finance). The objective is to evaluate the entrepreneurial culture of students belonging to different teaching environments. Also, we felt the saturation reached for this study between the twelfth and thirteenth cases studied. The investigative work lasted a period of 6 months.

The majority of interviews were carried out remotely, on the date and time requested by the interviewees, in order to ensure their complete availability. These interviews lasted from 32 minutes to approximately 1 hour 12 minutes, and the average duration of the interviews was around 45 minutes. Based on the interviews carried out, the proposals for developing training and entrepreneurial support systems in educational establishments are as follows:

**Table 4: Proposals for developing training and entrepreneurial support**

Entrepreneurial training	Entrepreneurial support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Regular programming of personal development training;</li> <li>-Increase in action-oriented educational training methods;</li> <li>-Training of teachers in the academic coaching of student entrepreneurs;</li> <li>-Integration of teachers with entrepreneurial experience;</li> <li>-Promotion of territorial adaptation of programs training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Promotion of communication on business creation formalities and financing facilities;</li> <li>-Optimization of the results of partnerships concluded for student entrepreneurship;</li> <li>-Development of material and financial support for student entrepreneurs;</li> <li>-Generalization of entrepreneurial support spaces;</li> <li>-Development of entrepreneurial culture, risk-taking and acceptance of failure.</li> </ul>

## Results and discussion

### 1. Attitudes associated with behavior

#### ❖ Existence of an idea or a project

The idea of entrepreneurship can be developed through entrepreneurial training. This is thanks in particular to the project-based teaching method used by the teacher, and his support of students from the idea to the creation of a business.

Furthermore, the idea of starting a business can emerge during the exercise of a professional activity after the end of higher education. During this period, young people perceive the importance of creating added value in a particular field through entrepreneurship.

**Verbatim 1:** « *My idea of entrepreneurship was not in relation with my studies, I have already chosen a course of study in economics, because I had the idea of creating my business since my childhood at the age of 10 years, so it is not the studies that guided me to do entrepreneurship, but it was entrepreneurship that pushed me to choose the economy as a study specialty ...* ».

**Verbatim 2:** « *...the idea of creating a business started since my first year of Bachelor's degree...it's the first time in which I tried to test several aspects in the digital field,...to find a profession, you have to start first by discovering your passion,...my passion is linked to different areas of digital such as e-commerce and digital marketing,...concerning the e-commerce and during the third year of my undergraduate studies, I worked on the conception of an e-commerce platform on which I sell products,...through this project, I was able to integrate the SALEEM pole...this experience allowed me to establish a business model of the project, it helped me to develop soft skills, to know how to communicate, to present ideas,... there are several qualities that we learned within this center...».*

**Verbatim 3:** « *The idea of creating a business always comes to my mind but I didn't know how to make it a reality..., through entrepreneurial training I learned the details and how to create a business..., I have a Mechanical profile and this training in management which I attended, allowed me to mix between technical and business management, so now I am creating a company which is specialized in mechanics moreover, I have the management skills to go all the way...* ».

**Verbatim 4:** « *As part of my studies this year, we were required to carry out a business creation project. We have a teacher who has a magnificent pedagogy, he told us why not create a business project instead of doing a theoretical course..., so we started with an innovative idea, which does not exist in the market, and we worked on several business creation studies..., we calculated different costs, and we found that this project is profitable...* ».

#### ➤ Is the entrepreneurial spirit innate or acquired?

The entrepreneurial spirit may be innate or acquired through training and contact with professionals in the entrepreneurial field. The idea of entrepreneurship has existed among some students since their childhood or at the primary level of study, while other students acquired it during their higher studies.

Moreover, and even if the entrepreneur has an innate entrepreneurial spirit, training in the business creation process as well as mastery of multidisciplinary knowledge are very important for the entrepreneurial career, and for achieving professional maturity in making strategic decisions.

**Verbatim 1:** *« My point of view is both, the entrepreneurial spirit may be innate or acquired, because I can be born in an entrepreneurial environment and be an entrepreneur, as I can be trained to entrepreneurship and adopt it as a career, personally I have developed my entrepreneurial spirit just in recent years thanks to Injaz Al Maghrib... ».*

**Verbatim 2:** *« The entrepreneurial spirit can perhaps be acquired through training, a simple example I take from myself, previously I did not have the idea of creating a business, but through training, contact with the professionals...I began to have an entrepreneurial orientation,...the idea is that the entrepreneurial path can emerge over time thanks also to the mastery of the tools with which the business creator works such as the study market, legal study, financial study...etc».*

**Verbatim 3:** *« ...I can say that the entrepreneurial spirit may be innate or acquired, ... when the child is born he observes his environment, how people speak, act and react, ... he is inspired by them, so we can say that the environment in which the student lives has an impact on his entrepreneurial spirit, also this spirit can be acquired, but in my opinion entrepreneurship is only learned through courses, workshops, etc. and it develops through practice, ... ».*

#### ❖ Search for information

The search for information to formalize aspects of a business project serves to develop self-confidence, mastery of the field of activity in which the student wishes to create a business and knowledge of the opportunities & difficulties of the market.

As a result, the search for information contributes to nourish the entrepreneurial spirit in students and to give rise to their entrepreneurial intention.

Our findings are consistent with the conclusions of the study by Salhi & Boujelbene (2013), stipulating that the existence of an idea or a project and the collection of associated data, constitute the major elements which contribute to the understanding and prediction of entrepreneurial intention.

**Verbatim 1 :** *« The idea of my entrepreneurial project began during my studies in a professional degree, and as a student who loves design and manufacturing,...I was thinking of any type of project that we could carry out in connection with this field, so I saved my pocket money, I looked for printers that are not relatively very expensive, I researched additive manufacturing... and finally I bought a printer..., I made a small personalized key ring for a friend's car, then I received an order from another friend..., and I started to have more and more customers, that's how I started my entrepreneurial career».*

**Verbatim 2:** *« ...also the availability of means is an important factor for starting an entrepreneurial adventure, ... we must not limit ourselves only to what we learn at school but*

*we must develop self-training, which constitutes a factor that contributes to the development of entrepreneurial intention and it gives a certain self-confidence in relation to what we master, and we are better informed about what is happening on the market».*

**Verbatim 3:** *« I would like to emphasize the importance of developing the entrepreneurial spirit, ... it is necessary to establish the entrepreneurial spirit in students, develop their culture of researching information, ... entrepreneurship is a question of mentality and motivation too».*

**Verbatim 4:** *« ...Since my studies in high school and more precisely at the Baccalaureate, I had participated in entrepreneurial initiatives, in the third year of higher studies, ... I tested several domains including e-commerce, ... I carried out certain activities such as transport, delivery of goods, advertising, ... I attended training courses related to the digital world, ... after that I began to have the idea of entrepreneurship, ... ».*

## **2. Subjective Norms**

### **❖ Need for achievement**

The choice of an entrepreneurial career is mainly linked to the desire to stand out, to go beyond what is ordinary, and to create added value in our society. Sometimes, the motivation towards an entrepreneurial career comes from certain personal circumstances.

Certainly, entrepreneurship is a path that requires considerable sacrifices but in return it provides significant gains. It's about getting out of the comfort zone in order to create, to innovate, and to test new things.

Entrepreneurship is a field of passion that provides personal fulfillment, and gives the business creator the privilege of realizing its own vision of life. For his part, McClelland (1998) considers the need for accomplishment to be the main characteristic of entrepreneurs.

**Verbatim 1:** *« ...During my first year of higher education, I tried to test the different aspects of the digital domain, ... in this period I was looking for my passion ... so before talking about the benefit or other things, I can say may the choice of entrepreneurial career comes from my passion to work in the digital world, ... and since it is a passion, I give all my efforts in this job, I can work 24 hours per day without feeling tired, .... when a customer comes to my house, I try to satisfy him as much as possible... ».*

**Verbatim 2 :** *« What motivated me more in this career is the fact of having a situation that provides comfort and financial security, in addition to autonomy and independence, because you want to be free, usually in the business world...also to survive, you have to diversify your portfolio, I consider that working in a company as an employee is part of this portfolio,...but I think it would be wise to devote the effort allocated for your structure to make it profitable for your own account,...I said I have a spirit of adventure and entrepreneurship, I studied and I have experiences in structures, which I accompanied as a collaborator in the development of their projects... so why not combine all these elements and deploy them in something specific to me».*

**Verbatim 3:** *« My entrepreneurial motivation started during my second year of the “DUT” training program, and more precisely when I attended an entrepreneurship module... , as soon*

*as the first two hours of the course were over, my whole perception of career was turned upside down in a good way, and my reflective question was: why work at someone's place? while that someone can be me"...also, I think if we don't create things and work only on repetitive things, we wouldn't have an added value in this world that we need to build together».*

**Verbatim 4:** *« What motivated me towards an entrepreneurial career was mainly the academic environment and more precisely my teacher, he inspired us through his way of transmitting the message..., and he encouraged us to move towards entrepreneurship..., I currently work in a call center and it's a bit of a stressful job, so I like to create my own job and be the boss of myself but generally motivation is not enough, we have to be well prepared because to create a business you have to touch all areas..., I remember well a sentence that my teacher said to me, he told me if you don't have objectives, you will work to achieve the objectives of others...and therefore you must set the objective of creating your own business, be well trained and work well to achieve it.... ».*

#### ❖ Search for autonomy

The non-satisfaction of monotonous work by employees lead to the choice of creating their own business project. Entrepreneurship guarantees profit, leadership as well as autonomy in work and decision-making.

The students interviewed specified in this regard that it is wise to deploy the effort made for the benefit of their professional structures in order to make them profitable, for their own account within the framework of their entrepreneurial projects.

**Verbatim 1:** *«...What guided me towards an entrepreneurial career was the search for profit and autonomy, because I do not accept being under the authority of someone and I do not see much interest in working all my life to earn a salary that will not reward correctly my own efforts, on the other hand in my business,...if I deploy important efforts and if the conditions are favorable of course, I will obtain a significant gain...».*

**Verbatim 2:** *« ..., when I started to discover the entrepreneurial world, I really appreciated it,...I said to myself that it's an opportunity for us young people to be able to find a solution to the problems of our society,...because an entrepreneur is ultimately someone who tries to take initiatives to find solutions to these problems,...I am very interested in social entrepreneurship and therefore projects with a social contribution,...because I like the combination to be able to generate money and at the same time help a category of our society, that's the driving force that encouraged me to start the adventure in the field of entrepreneurship, and of course there is also the side of autonomy,... being independent, being able to manage your own project in the way you want and being the leader of your team, making decisions,... this environment is great for me and it is more interesting for me than being an employee... ».*

**Verbatim 3:** *« In fact, I started professional activity at a young age, 21 or 22 years old, and sincerely I didn't like the monotonous work of every day..., I wanted to do a personal project, and manage myself, my time..., in addition when we have an entrepreneurial project, we will develop a certain maturity in the choice of strategic decisions... ».*

### ❖ Risk-taking propensity

Risk-taking propensity is a determinant of students' entrepreneurial intention. Indeed, to pursue an entrepreneurial career, you must have a certain tolerance for the risk of failure and the desire to leave your comfort zone.

In this context, Schumpeter (1954) believes that through initiatives and risk-taking, the entrepreneur brings essential change to the company.

**Verbatim 1:** *« Entrepreneurship is above all a state of mind, of course it is supported by teachers and by the environment, but it is something that exists among us, it is like the risk of a leader, which pushes us to pass to action ».*

**Verbatim 2 :** *« Entrepreneurship is related to circumstances because it depends on several things, there are entrepreneurs or businessmen who lived a bad experience in the beginning of their career, there are those who did not find a job, there are those who were very poor, and who did not have the resources ..., so you should have the motivation, the ambition, the risk taking, you have to look for information ... that's why I told you it is not an innate thing and the person must find the right timing to seize the opportunity because it will not remain forever ... ».*

**Verbatim 3 :** *« When I did my studies, I did not have the intention to be an entrepreneur but I had the ambition to create something,...during our studies you learn a lot of things, ....and of course there is no common vector, there are several parameters that you must combine to have visibility on the path to take,...unfortunately when we study the risk part, we become cautious, and we say why am I looking for something complicated and is not stable enough...my ambition to become an entrepreneur was crowned by my professional experience in the private sector....which allowed me to get closer to aspects that seem secondary to me in launching into entrepreneurship, in the meantime I worked with two people, who explained to me the parameters that help to sustain a project, I found that I have 70% of these elements, ..... these two feedbacks gave me the GO to launch the studies,....after I began little by little to have a clear vision of my entrepreneurial project».*

**Verbatim 4:** *« In fact, entrepreneurial skills are developed during professional life, but to create a business, you need to take risk, to have an organizational sense, you have to know how to interact with actors in the ecosystem ... This is why teaching must focus on personal development to form the managers of tomorrow, ... ».*

### ❖ Knowledge of entrepreneurial models

Entrepreneurial intention comes either from a personal will, an inspiration from a successful experience of an entrepreneur or from a specific field of study. Thus, it is essential to involve entrepreneurs and actors in the professional field in training and raising awareness of entrepreneurship to have an impact on the entrepreneurial intention of students. Discovering experiences of entrepreneurs, especially those who started from scratch and who have succeeded, allows the student to approach the entrepreneurial environment and to give rise to entrepreneurial intention.

**Verbatim 1 :** « ..., today I would like to create an entrepreneurial project in my field of work,...before I didn't have the idea of starting a business, I don't want to take the risk, of course there is a gain in the entrepreneurial field but behind it there are several things that we do not know...when we know the right path we master the project from beginning to end, ... our teacher explained to us the problem we are facing, he told us to think about the solutions, and since he is experienced in the field, he guided us towards the optimal solution, and has accompanied us since the idea until the creation of the company».

**Verbatim 2 :** « ... a child who has entrepreneurial parents will be more likely to have genetic capital compatible with an entrepreneurial career, the fact of being born in this environment will increase his chances of choosing this profession...he will hear about entrepreneurial projects frequently, ...he will have the privilege of discovering and being around the business, and of understanding what an entrepreneur does at a young age, as well as the positive points and the negative points of this field....thus, the idea of becoming an entrepreneur will be present in his mind, the desire to be an entrepreneur may be perceptible in him from his childhood, and therefore entrepreneurship will be one of his dream».

**Verbatim 3:** « ...for me what really motivated me towards entrepreneurship was my entourage, my brother is also an entrepreneur, and he is one of the shareholders in my company now...I put the existence of models 'entrepreneur as the first influencer».

**Verbatim 4 :** « In my opinion, when you appreciate something, you give all your efforts to achieve it, either you have the entrepreneurial spirit, or you will work to have it..., entrepreneurial spirit can be acquired and developed in the person, for example, I may not previously have the idea of creating a business, but working with a person who has carried out a successful project and who has been able to generate a lot of money, will motivate me to launch an entrepreneurial project....on the other hand, if I meet a person who created a business, which was not successful, this will negatively impact my desire to be an entrepreneur... ».

#### ❖ Motivation to satisfy the expectations of family and relatives

The actors in the student's immediate environment contribute to his motivation towards an entrepreneurial career. This observation is consistent with the results of the Fondapol study carried out in 2011, which revealed that entrepreneurial intentions can be supported by a favorable environment.

Moreover, entrepreneurial intention must be developed in the student since adolescence or even since childhood. Thus, parents and primary or secondary school have an important role to play in terms of training the entrepreneurial spirit in students. In addition, feedback of entrepreneurs from the student's immediate entourage has a positive or a negative impact on his perception of an entrepreneurial career.

**Verbatim 1:** « ...there are some people in society who say it is important to have a stable salary, but we find families that encourage their children to adopt an entrepreneurial career, it depends on the risk evaluation..., it is easier for someone who comes from a rich family to move towards

*entrepreneurship compared to someone who will start from scratch and who has no financial support ».*

**Verbatim 2:** *« ...I consider that the immediate environment has an influence on entrepreneurial intentions, because certain entrepreneurs have the privilege of coming from a rich family, and of having resources at their disposal..., therefore they create their business in good conditions, but there are some entrepreneurs who suffer during the entrepreneurial path, because of harsh circumstances related particularly to the financial side ... ».*

**Verbatim 3 :** *« the immediate entourage is crucial and has a considerable impact, ... young people need the motivation to launch into entrepreneurship, they listen to those close to them and they are generally influenced by their words, but it also depends on the person ,... we can find an entourage namely family, friends,... where there is a lot of positivity, who encourages the person to create his own business, to be the boss of himself instead to go to work for another, but unfortunately there is an ecosystem which doesn't stimulate entrepreneurship, for me social capital has an important influence on the entrepreneurial intention ».*

**Verbatim 4:** *« the family impacts the child's vision of seeing things..., if the young person does not have a strong determination, the family can push him towards employment..., generally those who take the risk are those who have a financial security ».*

**Verbatim 5:** *« I think that entrepreneurial intention must be developed in the student since adolescence or childhood, we spend the majority of our time at school and at home, so the parents, the primary and secondary school constitute the original factors of entrepreneurial intention, so they should play the role of giving birth to the entrepreneurial spirit in children ».*

➤ **Personality as a determinant of entrepreneurial intention:**

The intention to follow any career depends on the character of the person and his own vision of life. Entrepreneurial intention is formed in childhood, and is nourished over time through the person's environment.

Given that personality traits constitute a determinant of entrepreneurial intention, it is essential to create working sessions between professional coaches and students, in order to discover and to develop the hidden potentials of student's personality, and to determine if entrepreneurship is part of their centers of interest.

**Verbatim 1:** *«... Generally the social environment does not encourage entrepreneurship, and some parents tell their children they must work in the public or the private sector to have a stable wage..., but if the person is convinced of his ideas, he will only apply what he has in mind, it depends on the person, but to develop students' awareness of what they are going to do, it is necessary at least to improve awareness practices in the university, ...during his studies, the student will have the opportunity to think about an idea of business project, to develop it, to create the legal status of his start-up,....etc».*

**Verbatim 2:** *« ...it is important to develop our Moroccan society, to create exceptional people who understand the importance of entrepreneurship and the value of creating achievements for this society, who are risk-takers, full of enthusiasm..., who find fulfillment in an entrepreneurial project and lead the change ».*

**Verbatim 3:** *« Of course, when family or friends tell you, what you are doing is not going to succeed, you will lose..., in one way or another it will impact you, but in fact it all depends on the person, there are people who are influenceable, there are some who are not, basically social capital has an impact on the person, it will motivate or demotivate the person towards entrepreneurship».*

### **3. Behavior control perceptions**

#### **❖ Entrepreneurship training**

Entrepreneurship teaching pedagogies must be action-oriented, with the aim of motivating students towards this subject and promoting the entrepreneurial spirit among them. Furthermore, behavioral skills can only be acquired through a course based on action learning. On the other hand, entrepreneurship education is expected to involve professionals in the entrepreneurial field, to allow students to draw inspiration from their experiences and know the challenges of this career. Finally, the knowledge in entrepreneurship “know-how” offered by training establishments must be accompanied by training in soft skills for personal development.

**Verbatim 1:** *« I think we need to develop professional training, I mean we should invite models of young successful entrepreneurs to share their experiences, this encourages people to be engaged in entrepreneurial career,...entrepreneurial intention must be developed during training by associating this professional aspect, this is the best way... ».*

**Verbatim 2:** *« I have my brother who has a master's degree in economic studies, he always suggested me to do entrepreneurship, he told me try to create your own project, and I never paid attention to what he says, ...thanks to the entrepreneurship training that I attended and the pedagogical method of our teacher, I was positively influenced by this career, now I plan to do my master's degree abroad and after returning to Morocco I will create my business project».*

**Verbatim 3:** *«...after attending an entrepreneurial training, I felt a radical change in my entrepreneurial intention, this is mainly thanks to the use of learning by doing, ...if the course was based on theory, it wouldn't impact my entrepreneurial intention,... because I experienced things...and I saw the result of that in front of me,...this experience radically changed my mindset, because before I wanted to be an employee in a company, ... ».*

**Verbatim 4 :** *« before attending the entrepreneurial training, each of us does not know how to create a business, we know that we should have an idea and money to get started, but we did not know that there is competition, difficulties, we have to carry out a market research, to look for customers, to have an approach, ... and it is thanks to this training we began to understand that,..., in my opinion I think that the best method of teaching entrepreneurship which form the entrepreneurial intentions and skills of students, is to create a small business project from the first year of study».*

**Verbatim 5 :** *« There was a radical change in our entrepreneurial intentions, at the beginning I did not have the idea of creating a business, because I saw the risk taken by my colleagues who created their business, and the majority of them lost,... but after the training, I discovered the source of the failure, it was the absence of feasibility studies, these people lost because they*

*did not do a study of what they want to create, ....in class, we had thought of creative ideas thanks to the teacher in particular, he taught us a lot of things, he transferred his know-how to us, he let us try a lot of things, so ideas have changed since that time».*

➤ **Pedagogical approach and entrepreneurial experience of the teacher:**

The teacher's pedagogical method is crucial, because it affects the student's motivation towards entrepreneurship. To this end, the teacher is required to evolve in his way of teaching, to be a learning facilitator, an inspirer and a coach of the student. The entrepreneurship teacher is expected to have entrepreneurial experience to be able to influence the minds of students and to push them towards entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is a person's dream, and the teacher's role is to make the student live in this dream and transform it into reality.

In this context, Verzat and Toutain (2014) underlined that the networks of actors regularly involved in the life of the school (teachers, associations, parents and other stakeholders), are important in the success of the establishment of pedagogies that have a favorable impact on the student's self-confidence and on the entrepreneurial desirability.

**Verbatim 1 :** *« I think that the best teaching approach is based on valorization and concretization....teachers must work on the concretization and incubation of students in their entrepreneurial projects, from idea to creation, the objective is to have outputs that can be transferred to industry..., the teacher must have skills in teaching and in industry,...for example when the teacher comes to teach, he must give a course in reference to his experience in the industrial field,...in fact, the experience of the teacher in the entrepreneurial field is very important to inspire the student towards the entrepreneurial career..., as you know, a professor is an example for students...and when students see that the professor gives everything they need and shares his entrepreneurial experience with them, he becomes a reference for them ».*

**Verbatim 2:** *« ...I think that the teacher must have an entrepreneurial experience, ... to know how to convey the message well, he must know the entrepreneurial world well to support the students and coach them towards the right path... ».*

**Verbatim 3 :** *« ...the teacher's method allows the student to have this idea of creating a business, because when the teacher explains to you the steps of creating a business, this gives you a clear vision of the entrepreneurship, also when the teacher has a deep knowledge in entrepreneurship, this motivates the students towards this career,...our teacher told us you can fail it's not a problem and this is what you are going to do in this case , it's the perseverance that counts and the failure is just the beginning, so if we have the motivation and the perseverance, we will arrive and succeed».*

**Verbatim 4 :** *« the teacher has a direct impact on the orientation of students, concerning my case, I did not have the idea of creating a business, but it's my teacher who pushed me to work on a creative business project, I began to develop this idea, thanks to his method, his pedagogy ,...how he transmits the message, how he talks to us about his own experiences with the creation of a business, the failures that he experienced with his own company,...we learn from all this, and of course he inspires us....».*

### ❖ Professional experiences

Entrepreneurial skills such as leadership, risk-taking and spirit of initiative can only be acquired through real-life scenarios and experiences. Of course, part of these entrepreneurial skills can be developed through training, but the majority is acquired from the fieldwork.

Moreover, it is necessary for a person who wants to create a business to have a minimum of experience within the professional environment, to help them know all the aspects related to business, to develop a professional network and to have a certain maturity in decision-making.

**Verbatim 1:** *« skills are related to experiences, because we can have skills through professional experience..., concerning the university or the school, it gives the knowledge which is developed into skills with internships, professional experiences..., I consider that we can't have entrepreneurial intentions without touching the professional field even as an employee, because many people start as employees to have these intentions and subsequently they can create their own business... ».*

**Verbatim 2:** *«...also alternate training is important, like what we did with my teacher, after studying courses in the class, we go to the market, ...to familiarize ourselves with business life, look for products,... so we study the theory and we go to apply it in the professional field, in fact for my case, it's the real situations and the contact with professionals' which encouraged me to think about entrepreneurship».*

**Verbatim 3 :** *« ...Our training establishment has to conclude partnerships with companies to integrate the student in real situations... , we can't tell him to create a company that he doesn't know how it works,... also, the important thing that my school can do is to organize internships which allow students to go to companies to learn, to discover the real life of an entrepreneur, to know how they act..., and at this time students who have the entrepreneurial intention, will learn how to develop their own business projects ».*

**Verbatim 4:** *« ...also I find that students who have worked in parallel with their studies can make connections between the entrepreneurial world and the theory, ...and they wouldn't find big difficulties in integrating this entrepreneurial world... ».*

### ❖ Associative experiences

Students' engagement in extracurricular activities has a positive impact on their entrepreneurial orientation. These activities constitute a practical field in which they can establish professional relationships, learn from other experiences, approach corporate life, its various challenges and develop their interpersonal skills. Consequently, it is important to integrate extracurricular activities into teaching programs, because of their contribution in stimulating students' minds towards an entrepreneurial career and in developing their interpersonal skills.

This finding is consistent with the results of Morris, et al. (2017), stating that student participation in extracurricular activities focused on entrepreneurship is positively linked to entrepreneurial initiatives carried out by these students.

**Verbatim 1:** « *extracurricular activity is certainly one of the factors that allowed me to discover real-life situations and problems, it is from there that we realize our true capacities for leadership, problem solving, working in team etc. these are essential skills for an entrepreneur to lead his project to success... in summary, I consider that involvement in extracurricular activities allows you to develop a network, to discover the professional life, to have an idea on the constraints of an entrepreneurial career, which enriches ambition, helps students take action and discover potential in the field,...* ».

**Verbatim 2:** « *Yes, extracurricular activities allow you to know a lot of things, for example the professional issues of entrepreneurship, which gives a very great desire to create a business, I joined the ENACTUS club, and I participated in various competitions in which I learned to be sure of myself, to have the courage to express myself in front of several people, to present and defend my ideas, to develop my network... there are lots of positive things...* ».

**Verbatim 3 :** « *...100% yes, extracurricular activities have a positive impact on students' motivation towards entrepreneurship, I see for example that through the involvement of students in the activity of entrepreneurial associative clubs, their entrepreneurial intention is developed,... so I think it is important to develop the profiles of students responsible for everything related to events who participate, for example, in the creation of associative clubs, sporting activities, etc. we must develop communication and awareness concerning this type of activities...* ».

**Verbatim 4:** « *... I took the initiative to launch an associative club and to develop student entrepreneurship through this club..., now we are more than 100 people with more than 20 projects, we are trying to bring out entrepreneurial intention among students..., the objective of this year is to impact more than a million people, ... I am the president of this club for two years,... through these initiatives I develop many things,... how to manage a team, how to manage conflicts, how to develop projects, ... which allows me to boost my personality, live the entrepreneurial experience, and develop things that will not be offered during a course or training,...* ».

**Verbatim 5:** « *Extracurricular activities such as competitions, hackathons, etc. must be scheduled during higher academic training from beginning to end, ...they motivate the person, because they are not carried out in a stressful environment, these activities are done in a friendly environment, and at the same time, the student learns things, if the person will have the opportunity to be engaged in these activities, this will help him a lot in his future by developing his interpersonal skills*».

#### ❖ **Availability of financial resources, information and advice**

The involvement of training establishments in providing human, material and financial resources to realize students' entrepreneurial ideas is of great necessity. This entrepreneurial support can be formalized in particular through:

- The mobilization of entrepreneurs in raising awareness of entrepreneurship in the form of an entrepreneur incubator;
- The creation of coworking spaces facilitating meetings with professional consultants in the entrepreneurial field;

- The creation of partnerships with companies, with the objective of mobilizing the potential of students in the business world;
- The creation of a structure responsible for managing internships, because the internship constitutes a major opportunity to discover the business world and its challenges.
- Providing the necessary financing to realize business ideas.

In this context, Arlotto, et al. (2014) consider that the networking of incubators promotes feedback, the sharing of best practices and collective dynamics.

**Verbatim 1 :** « ...support of training establishments can be done through the launch of competitions, which allow the selection of start-ups by referring to objective indicators,...and then support these start-ups, and help them to find funding..., participation in the path of entrepreneurial support requires the cooperation of everyone, it is important to bring entrepreneurs to share their experiences...and to organize awareness sessions in which it is necessary to invite the organizations that operate in the entrepreneurial process,...to create an association between entrepreneurial actors, each one assumes a mission in incubation,..., if we bring all these elements in the university, which will play the role of conductor, we can have support to creation from A to Z... ».

**Verbatim 2:** « In Morocco, the entrepreneurial project must be successful in order to be funded by financial actors, and therefore it is important to be inspired from foreign higher education structures, in which students are supported in all aspects of research and development applied to the creation of start-ups...what we call the valorization of research, and to grant students the necessary financing to test the feasibility of their business creation projects, ...».

**Verbatim 3 :** « In addition to the effort of the teacher and the motivation of the student, the entrepreneurial intention is also impacted by financing, and the availability of means..., because when there is no funding, the student gives up... also the teacher has an important role because he guides the student to overcome his worries,... when the student knows that there is an entrepreneurial support, he is encouraged to embark on entrepreneurship, it acts as a catalyst that develop his entrepreneurial intention, ... ».

**Verbatim 4 :** « I think that each training establishment must engage students in entrepreneurship, and in managing critical situations in business..., it must develop a climate of exchange with the student and this is not necessarily within the framework of internships..., these situations allow students to search, to think... to find solutions... and therefore to develop entrepreneurial skills, you have to put the student in the fieldwork... certainly you need theory to learn different things, but it must be accompanied by practice, what we call “learning by doing, ... ».

The table below summarizes the research results by theme as follows:

**Table 5: Synthesis of research results**

Theme	Results
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<b>Social capital</b>	Entrepreneurial intentions are significantly impacted by social capital. It is essential for young entrepreneurs to expand their social networks and to connect with members of the business ecosystem (associations, support systems, professionals, etc.).
<b>Entrepreneurial awareness</b>	It is necessary to develop the entrepreneurial awareness process since childhood, because it enables students to get fully involved in the business and entrepreneurship world.
<b>Entrepreneurship teacher</b>	<p>The teacher's posture has a significant impact on students' motivation for an entrepreneurial career. The teacher should facilitate learning for students and support them in the creation of their businesses.</p> <p>A teacher of entrepreneurship needs to have some entrepreneurial experience in order to inspire students and encourage them to pursue entrepreneurship.</p>
<b>Training and entrepreneurial intentions</b>	<p>Entrepreneurship training can affect students' entrepreneurial intentions through the use of active pedagogical approaches (project-based learning, case studies, etc.).</p> <p>Furthermore, contact with professionals in the field, workshops, and internships can foster the entrepreneurial spirit in students and attract them to entrepreneurship.</p>
<b>Entrepreneurial coaching</b>	Entrepreneurial support should be formalized within the academic environment by establishing coworking spaces & entrepreneurship centers, mobilization of entrepreneurs in awareness & support, and providing the funding resources required to concretize student's business projects.
<b>Extracurricular activities</b>	The participation in extracurricular activities affects students' motivation towards entrepreneurship, and enables them to develop social networks and entrepreneurial skills.

## Conclusion

In this research, we attempted to explain students' entrepreneurial intentions through different factors related to attitudes associated with behavior, subjective norms and perceptions of behavioral control. Our analysis model was validated in the Moroccan student context, which

is consistent with the conclusions of the study conducted by Ebewo, et al. (2017) stating that the three determinants of entrepreneurial intention, namely attitude towards entrepreneurship, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control, directly influence entrepreneurial intention.

Social capital significantly influences students' entrepreneurial intention. In addition, it is necessary to instill entrepreneurial intention in the person since childhood or adolescence, hence the role of those around them in terms of raising awareness of entrepreneurship. Furthermore, it is essential for the young entrepreneur to develop his social network and to open up to other actors in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, particularly associative clubs, support structures and professionals.

Entrepreneurship training can have an impact on students' entrepreneurial intention through the active participatory teaching approaches. Indeed, the teacher's posture plays an important role in the student's motivation towards an entrepreneurial career. The teacher should facilitate learning, inspire and support students in creating their business.

Students' engagement in extracurricular activities has a positive impact on their entrepreneurial orientation. Furthermore, contact with professionals in the field, workshops and internships can also foster an entrepreneurial spirit among students and attract them towards entrepreneurship. Also, training must be associated with support to forge an entrepreneurial spirit. The objective is to couple theory with practice to exert an influence on entrepreneurial intentions.

Furthermore, the limits of our work are mainly methodological, linked to the size and composition of the sample, which are limited. Therefore, we plan to deepen this research through a confirmatory quantitative study, which will be devoted to a large and diverse sample of students, in order to better understand entrepreneurial intentions, and to identify if there are new factors, which have not been integrated into our model influencing or inhibiting entrepreneurial intention.

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