

Student's Global Experience and Entrepreneurship Intention

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Abstract

We analyze the impact of global experience on entrepreneurship intention in Brazil. We build on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) which has been widely employed to predict intentions. We argue that attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural are affected by the global experience and leads to more entrepreneurial orientation. We use a natural experiment of engineering students who participated in the exchange program to analyze how this global experience affected their entrepreneurial intention. The results support that students with an international experience reduces the perceived disadvantage of being an entrepreneur.

Key words: Entrepreneurial intention; Theory of planned behaviour; Sciences without borders program; Emerging economies

1.0 Introduction

Entrepreneurship is often viewed like a stimulus to economic growing, innovation, jobs creation and new venture (Gerba, 2012). However, developing countries, like Brazil, have been neglected on the research about this subject (Mueller, Zapkau & Schwens, 2014).

Edmundo Jr, Machado, Gimenez, and Morini (2014) presents a survey of brazilian studies on entrepreneurship, the results reveal that the publications about this subject are insufficient and need to be stimulated despite existing efforts. Entrepreneurship has become a topic in public policies in several countries. Some of these initiatives like government programs, business plan competitions, education centers and entrepreneurship courses are targeted to students as future entrepreneurs.

Actually, professionals from technical disciplines such as engineers, are more likely to start business than others. The engineers usually creates companies in dynamic and innovative areas, and it promotes significant economic growth and increased employment (Roberts, 1991). In Brazil, we can mention the creation of the science without borders government program (mobility program) as a way to give students an immersion in the universities in developed countries. Among other benefits, this program

wants to stimulate the students to have an experience in an environment of high competitiveness and entrepreneurship (Ministry of Education, Science Without Borders Program).

According to Mueller, Zap Kau and Schwens (2014), entrepreneurial education and training programs in developing countries facilitate the development of the local economy. The literature reinforces the thesis that the professional training environment can influence the entrepreneurial intention of students (Venkataraman, 1997; Krueger, 1993; Crant, 1996; Mattheus & Moser, 1995;. Autio, Keeley, Parker, & Hay, 2001; Goethner, Obschonka, Silbereisen, & Cantner, 2012; Schlaegel, He, & Engle, 2013).

Therefore, the literature review of this article is based on studies that have shown the factors influencing human intention's (Shapiro and Sokol (1982), Ajzen, 1991; Liñán, 2008; Gerba, 2012; Dabic et al, 2012). We use the Ajzen model's (1991), the theory of planned behaviour, which considers that the intention precedes action. It reveals robust and relevant to explain the intention of start-up creation as shown in others studies (Bagozzi et al., 1989; Kim & Hunter, 1993; Busenitz & Barney, 1997; Liñán & Chen, 2009; Kautonen van Gelderen & Fink, 2013). However, to understand the factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions more studies are necessary about this subject (Liñán & Chen, 2009).

There is too many previous studies comparing the applicability of TPB on student's entrepreneurial intentions across different cultures. The most of them are comparative studies between two or more countries (Liñán & Chen, 2009; Nabi & Liñán, 2011; Iakovleva, Kolvereid, & Stephan, 2011; Schlaegel, He, & Engle, 2013; Mueller, Zap Kau & Schwens, 2014) or based on ethnic background of participants within only one country (van Gelderen et al., 2008; Byabashaija & Katono, 2011; Kilonzo & Nyambegera, 2014). However, our question is about the influence of international experience of brazilian students in their entrepreneurial intention.

Based on the arguments above, this article aims to contribute to research on the entrepreneurial intention in emerging countries, particularly in Brazil. The research question is: Does the sciences without borders program influenced the student's intentions to create their own business? This study goal is to analyze the impact of global experience on entrepreneurial student's intentions from emerging economies.

This paper is organized as follows: The next topic is the literature review, followed by the research design. In the next section, we test the hypotheses using the database from the engineering students. Finally, we close this paper with a discussion of empirical findings and concluding the practical and theoretical implications and the study limitations.

2.0 The Theory of Planned Behaviour describing entrepreneurial intentions

According to the dictionary definition, intention is "*an act or instance of determining mentally upon some action or result.*" However, when the individual has an intention to do something, there are some factors that influence the process before there is an attitude. According to Schlaegel, He, and Engle (2013), endogenous preferences of the individual may be indirectly affected by people, norms, values, culture, etc.

Concerning the business creation, the intention is influenced by different variables, thus there are several factors which influence this intention (Ruskovaara Hämäläinen & Pihkala, 2016). For example, the perceived difficulties in obtaining financing to start a business may adversely affect the entrepreneurial intention (Roper & Scott, 2009).

On one hand, entrepreneurship is a dynamic process of wealth creation, done by one or more persons (Sathlabama, 2010). On the other hand, the entrepreneurial intent is a personal engagement to open his own business (Krueger & Carsrud, 1993; Kolveired, 1996; Fayolle, Gailly, & Lassas-Clerc, 2006). However, endogenous and exogenous factors influence this dynamics. In this context, entrepreneurship can be measured in two ways: the current entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial intention. The first one is the people who have their own business and the second one concerns the people who have the intention to start a business. In any case, entrepreneurial intentions are a deciding factor for performing entrepreneurial behavior (Kolvereid & Isaksen, 2006).

The intentions and behaviour of individuals are incorporated into the institutional context in which they are inserted. The context directly influences the decisions of individuals (Dequech, 2003; Ruskovaara Hämäläinen & Pihkala, 2016). The behaviour may be encouraged to open a new business when the environment supports this choice (Liñán, 2008) or when the environment provides entrepreneurial education (Gerba,

2012). Several authors studied the influence of the environment on individuals behaviour. According to Dabic et al. (2012) the most widely accepted models for the study of the intentions are Shapero and Sokol (1982) and the Ajzen (1991). Shapero and Sokol (1982), developed the Entrepreneurial Event Model and he argues that entrepreneurial intentions are directly constitute by a mix of factors related to the individual and the context, ie the perceived viability, for the convenience of business activity and the propensity to act. Ajzen (1991) developed the Theory of Planned Behavior-TPB and concentrated on explaining the human behaviour based on beliefs that composed the intention. The intention is the best forerunner of planned behavior (Bagozzi, Baumgartner, & Yi, 1989; Kim & Hunter, 1993). These two theories have similar elements to explain the human behavior but the TPB is used on the most studies of entrepreneurial intention (Liñán & Santos, 2007; Engle et al., 2010). However, we use the Ajzen model's (1991), because it seems more close with our research problem.

The theory of planned behaviour considers individual beliefs as fundamental factors that constitute the human intention, they are: 1. Attitude toward behaviour or behavioural beliefs, represent the link between interest of the expected results with the behaviour. It is the subjective probability that the behaviour produce a particular result. 2. Subjective norm or normative beliefs is the perceived social pressure to commit or not a behaviour. It is determined by the total number of accessible normative beliefs about the expectations of important references. 3. Perceived behavioural control or beliefs control, is the perceived presence of factors that may facilitate or impede the realization of a behaviour. Each of these beliefs have a strong influence on intention and consequently on the individual's behaviour.

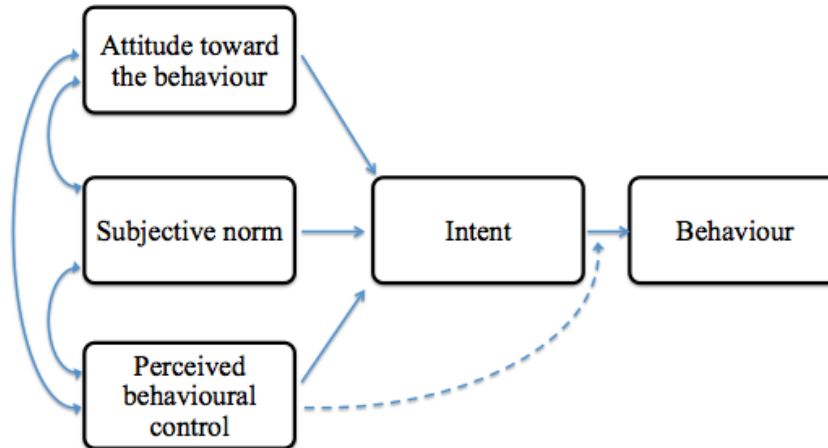


Figure 1. Illustration of Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991, p.182).

One of our goals is identify which TPB's factors is the most strong to explain the students entrepreneurial intention. This goal was adopted in previus studies and it confirms the legitimacy of using TPB to explain entrepreneurial intention across cultures. However, in this case we don't have a specific country to study but a group of brazilian students in various countries with diferentes experiences (about 15 countries). In this context, our first hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 1a) Entrepreneurial intention relates positively to positive attitudes toward entrepreneurship. Hypothesis 1b) Entrepreneurial intention relates positively to supportive subjective norms; and Hypothesis 1c) Entrepreneurial intention relates positively to high perceived behavioural control.

3.0 Global Experience and Entrepreneurial Intentions

In 2014, the annual Global Entrepreneurship Monitor revealed that 55.5% of brazilians have a positive perception for start up in Brazil .Such a high rate is in the United States and Mexico, 50.9% and 48.9%, respectively. However, in 2017 this ratio changed to 46,42%, after all it still high for an emerging country. This shows that Brazil is among the countries with the most positive face opportunities available perceptions. Another fact that impresses is about the skills and experience needed to become an entrepreneur, half the population claims to have the skills to be an entrepreneur. Brazil

occupies the tenth position in the ranking of 31 economies focused on efficiency (efficiency-driven economies) with a TEA of 17.2%. This rate is much higher than the rates of Germany, 5.3%, and even the United States with 13.8% who are very focused on saving innovation. However, 45 million Brazilians involved in entrepreneurial activity do so for profit or for individual salary complementation. There is still the entrepreneur by necessity, as a way to offset unemployment.

The expansion of the internal market in the 2000s increased the number of companies created 42% in 2002 to 71% in 2014 with the aim to pursue a market opportunity. Despite this, the companies created in Brazil are not innovative or operating a significant jobs creation, but they have a positive impact on the socio-economic context on the country. The Brazilian government has created an incentive programs to develop businesses, such as the individual entrepreneur and the creation of simplified tax package. However, excessive bureaucracy, inefficiency and corruption and encourage informality hinders business growth.

Several authors studied the influence of the environment on individual's behaviour. The environment in which the individual is inserted also exerts an influence on their intentions (Venkataraman, 1997; Krueger, 1993; Crant, 1996; Mattheus & Moser, 1995; Autio, Keeley, Parker, & Hay, 2001; Goethner, Obschonka, Silbereisen, & Cantner, 2012; Ruskovaara Hämäläinen & Pihkala, 2016).

We consider the context would be the institutional environment of the countries in which the students lived. The expected behaviour is the act of opening a business or the actions to open a business (creation of a business plan, training, funding, etc.).

Some studies about entrepreneurial exposure focus on business experience to explain the entrepreneurial intention (Venkataraman, 1997; Krueger, 1993; Crant, 1996; Mattheus & Moser, 1995; Autio, Keeley, Parker, & Hay, 2001; Goethner, Obschonka, Silbereisen, & Cantner, 2012). In other words, this theory is also based on the context which the individual is exposed (role models) as an element that plays a key role in the entrepreneurial intention. The entrepreneurial exposure is directly linked to the entrepreneur context which the individual is inserted, as well as entrepreneurial experience he got (Bandura, 1977; Latham & Saari, 1979). Thus, direct influences from parents or friends who opened a company or even work an experience in a newly created

company are factors that influence the entrepreneurial intention (Krueger & Carsrud, 1993).

Individuals factors like demographic variables (gender and family background) attitudes, values or psychological factors also influence the individual's behavior, (Ashley-Cotleur, King, & Solomon, 2009). The country's culture is another important dimension and that interferes with the entrepreneurial intention (Engle et al., 2011; Autio, Keeley, Parker, & Hay, 2001; Mueller & Thomas, 2001; Mueller, Zapkau & Schwens, 2014). The individuals behaviour differs greatly in different country's culture (Hofstede, 1980). In individualist cultures (such as United States of America, Germany, France) people highly value freedom, autonomy and independence. In collectivist cultures (such as Brazil, Poland, India) the relationship and cohesion with the group members is highly valued in this case, the group's opinion has a great influence on the individual's behavior (Moriano et al., 2012; Mueller, Zapkau & Schwens, 2014). According to Hofstede et al., (2001) culture is a collective phenomenon shared among people living in the same social environment. Factors such as hierarchy, individualism versus collectivism, aversion to uncertainty, gender, etc. They have been widely used in the literature to explain the entrepreneurial intention in different cultures (Hofstede, 1980; Hayton, George, & Zahra, 2002).

The aim goal of this study is explain the influence of international experience in developed countries (individualist cultures) on the students entrepreneurial intention. In this context, our second hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 2: Subjective norm will be more strongly associated with entrepreneurial intention in a students group who don't participated on sciences without borders program than in a students group who participated on sciences without borders program.

4.0 Method

4.1 Sample

The University consulted for this study has 3,607 engineering undergraduate students registered in first semestre of 2015, on its main campus, where the research was conducted. It's located in northeast region of Brazil. The study included 382 students from different engineering courses. Data were collected between April and May 2015.

4.2 Data collect

The students participation in this study were voluntary. The questionnaire was developed in portuguese. We conducted this survey in two phases: the first phase or qualitative phase of data collection was held in December 2014, where 110 students spontaneously answered a questionnaire containing open questions in print version in the classroom with the permission of their teachers. From the set of identified responses, we created the categories of response to our questionnaire. In the second phase or quantitative phase of the research, questionnaires were sent by e-mails to students registered in the first semester of 2015 and answered anonymously. We have been helped by the course coordinators to access the student's emails and thus can send the survey link in question. We had two students group, the first one with the students who participated on sciences without borders program and the other one who didn't. We used a data from 382 students, which were collected by sending an electronic questionnaire applied in the first half of 2015.

4.2 Measures Instruments

The dependent variable, entrepreneurial intention was measured using a 5-item scale. The independent variables was measured using a 6 itens scale to attitudes towards entrepreneurship: outcome beliefs and to attitudes towards entrepreneurship: disadvantages. the subjective norms was measured using a 3 itens scale. We consider the fact that engineering students have a full time formation (have classes every day in different schedules in the morning and in the afternoon). In this case, we decided to include the variable perceived behavior control, an independent variable, as a dichotomous variable 0/1, regarding the actions taken to open a company. Most of the

questions were based on previously published studies (Morianio et al., 2012; Gardetti & Torres, 2013; Kautonen, van Gelderen & Fink, 2013), the qualitative phase of this research, especially involving the context and the Azjen's (2006) guidelines for the creation of data collection instrument using the Theory of Planned Behaviour. The questionnaire has four dimensions: attitudes toward entrepreneurship, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention. The scales measures presented bipolar adjectives in seven-point scales. These are typically applied in studies using this model (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). The most items in the questionnaire were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 to 7. For example, the sentence of the scale intent: I have a intent to open my own business when I graduate: 1. Totally agree 2. Strongly agree 3. Agree 4. Neutral 5. Disagree 6. Strongly disagree 7. Totally disagree. The students age is shown in years, it was an open question. The others demographic variables are dichotomous 0/1. The value 1 means male (in the variable "Gender"), if the student participated of the exchange program or if the student had management courses. The value 0 indicates otherwise. It was expected positive relationships for these demographic data associating these characteristics with positive perceptions to start a business. We used the software Statistica for the analysis.

Attitudes toward entrepreneurship were measured with two sets of six items that assess expected outcomes of an entrepreneurial intention as well as disadvantages of entrepreneurship.

Subjective norms were measured with one set consisting of three items measuring how significant others would view their entrepreneurial intention as well as their motivation to comply with these reference people.

The perceived behaviour control through entrepreneurial self-efficacy was measured using a 6-item.

4.3 Data analysis

Since the dependent variable is constrained to an interval that runs from 1 to 7, I analyze the sample using a tobit model. A regression model may yield biased results in such situation. The model I run is the following: Entrepreneurial orientation = $a_0 + a_1$

attitudes (Perception; Advantage; Disadvantage; Actions; CSF students; Semester; Gender; Age; Management class).

Hypotheses 1a, 1b and 1c are supported if the coefficients of attitudes toward entrepreneurship, subjective norms and perceive behavioral control are positive and statistically significant. Hypothesis 2 is supported if when separating the sample into students who participated in the sciences without borders programs and students who did not and the coefficient of the first one is larger than the coefficient of the second one.

5.0 Results

In this study, I analyzed the impact of global experience on entrepreneurial students intentions. According to the theory of Ajzen (1991), the variables: attitudes towards behaviour, Subjective norms and perceived behavior control precede and directly influence the intention. They represent external factors that influence the intention to start a business. The Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and correlation matrix.

The results show that perceived advantage correlated with the subjective norms reveal a correlation on the matrix, with a value of 0.49 for students who don't participated on the CSF program. The CSF students show a value of 0.25. In other words, the students who didn't have an international experience are most impacted by people opinions such as parents or friend's opinions, than those students who lived abroad.

Cultural factors may explain this phenomenon. Actually, in emerging countries the collective culture is strong and people are very dependente of the group's opinion. Advantage and attitudes. The students who don't participate on the CSF program realized more advantage to open a new business than the CSF students with values of 0.52 and 0.21, respectively. An important factor is the relationship with the Competitiveness Business context. Emerging countries have a lack innovation while developed countries have high competitiveness based on exactly this point. In other words , students who lived abroad realize less advantages to open a new business in Brazil. The influence of this variable on the intention was initially designed to reflect the possibility of correlation between attitudes towards behavior, Subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention. So

for the hypothesis 1c, another test became necessary to check the impact of the pcb with the intention to open a business.

Table 1. descriptive statistics and correlation matrix

	Mean	Std Dev	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Entrepr. Orientation	4.765	1.353	1.000								
2. Perception	4.166	2.395	0.485*	1.000							
3. Advantage	5.770	0.754	0.519*	0.312*	1.000						
4. Disadvantage	5.665	0.777	-0.162*	-0.047	0.129*	1.000					
5. Actions	1.748	0.349	-0.339*	-0.170*	-0.139*	0.096	1.000				
6. CSF Student	0.152	0.359	-0.054	0.061	-0.093	0.018	-0.036	1.000			
7. Semesters	5.670	2.771	-0.081	0.007	-0.148*	-0.009	-0.042	0.295*	1.000		
8. Gender	0.312	0.464	-0.052	-0.095	0.063	0.069	0.028	-0.048	-0.098	1.000	
9. Age	21.512	2.684	0.036	0.085	-0.073	-0.063	-0.107	0.202*	0.597*	-0.138*	1.000
10. Management class	0.708	0.455	0.027	0.067	0.034	-0.050	-0.074	0.224*	0.550*	0.022	0.395*

Significance: * $p < 0.05$

The entrepreneurial intention model has been tested and shown on Table 2. Table 2 shows the results of the analysis. The analysis of the overall sample shows support for hypothesis 1a, 1b and 1c. The coefficients of perception, advantage and disadvantage are statistically significant as expected.

The results so not provide support for hypothesis 2. The coefficient of perception and advantage is positive and statistically significant for the CSF students (Model 1.c) but not statistically different from the coefficients for the sample of non CSF students (Model 1.b). However, whereas disadvantage is negative and statistically significant for non CSF students it is not statistically significant for CSF students. Hence, it appears that

participating in the CSF program reduces the perceived disadvantage of being an entrepreneur.

Table 2. Analysis of entrepreneurial orientation

	Model 1.a	Model 1.b	Model 1.c
	All students	No CSF students	CSF students
Perception	0.346*** (0.051)	0.341*** (0.059)	0.368*** (0.095)
Advantage	0.793*** (0.089)	0.822*** (0.103)	0.713*** (0.169)
Disadvantage	-0.332*** (0.079)	-0.375*** (0.091)	-0.102 (0.159)
Action	-0.830*** (0.178)	-0.734*** (0.199)	-1.629*** (0.368)
Semesters	-0.040 (0.031)	-0.043 (0.036)	-0.020 (0.064)
Gender	-0.182 (0.135)	-0.168 (0.155)	-0.155 (0.237)
Age	0.026 (0.029)	0.038 (0.032)	-0.048 (0.067)
Management class	0.047 (0.163)	-0.001 (0.179)	0.626 (0.452)
Constant	1.415 (0.935)	1.133 (1.028)	2.775 (2.388)
Chi square	190.77 ***	148.34 ***	57.22 ***
Observations	296	246	50

Standard errors appear in parenthesis. Significance: * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

6. Discussion

This study aimed to contribute to understanding of how international experience might affect student's entrepreneurial intentions. It tested the TPB for predicting students' entrepreneurial intentions in two different groups. The theoretical specification

and empirical operationalization of the model follow Ajzen's (2006) guidelines. The empirical analysis shows that the most hypothesized relationships are positive and significant as expected. The results do not provide support for hypothesis 2.

Our results reveal the relationship between the TPB components are strong and comparable on the two groups, the one exception is the relationship between subjective norms and intentions.

Taken together, our results support the relevance of the TPB on the student's entrepreneurial intentions. One major contribution of this study is thus to show that the students who had an international experience see less disadvantages in becoming entrepreneurs than students who didn't participate on the CSF program.

This result differs from the other studies that compared the influence of the country's culture with the entrepreneurial intention on their habitants. In our case, we tested two groups of students to understand the influence of the international experience in their entrepreneurial intention. Actually, we want to know the influence of individual's culture from developed countries on the student's entrepreneurial intentions.

In the both groups, the attitudes forward the behavior related to intention was the strongest predicted of entrepreneurial intention, followed by subjective norms and perceived behavior control. The PBC was the least entrepreneurial intention predictor of students in the both groups. The subjective norms do not vary across the groups. However, this result was not as expected in our second hypothesis, that is, the influence of subjective norms do vary across groups.

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