SEM Analysis in the Entrepreneurial Intention of University Students

Marco Antonio Nolasco-Mamani¹, Klinge Orlando Villalba-Condori², Deysi Yvon Flores-Llerena², Doris Cornejo-Paredes²

- ¹ Universidad Privada de Tacna, marnolasco@upt.pe, Tacna, Perú
- ² Universidad Católica de Santa María, Arequipa, Perú

Abstract

The objective of this study was to determine the level of influence of Entrepreneurial Attitude (EA), Subjective Norms (SN) and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) on Entrepreneurial Intention (EI) of university students at a private university in the city of Tacna, Perú. The methodology used was a quantitative approach, non-experimental and cross-sectional design, the data were collected through a structured questionnaire and answered by 207 students from different faculties. To obtain the results and contrast the study hypotheses, an explanatory model of structural equations was carried out using SPSS Amos software. The results of the study showed that there is a positive influence of Entrepreneurial Attitude (EA), Subjective Norms (SN) and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) on Entrepreneurial Intention (EI), thus positively confirming the influence of the stated hypotheses. The present study makes a significant contribution to the theory, thus opening the way for future research that contemplates the inclusion of an additional variable to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).

Keywords

Entrepreneurial intention, Entrepreneurship, TBP

1. Introduction

Promoting entrepreneurial intention on the part of university students is key as a mechanism for job creation [1] and the economic development of a country [2], [3]. Nowadays, university education plays a very important role in the economic development of countries [4]. For this reason, entrepreneurship over the years has acquired a fundamental role in the economy of various countries, even contributing innovation to the market. [5], [6] and digital transformation. In accordance with Sarhan y Ab. Aziz [7] micro, small and medium-sized businesses are responsible for generating most of the jobs. People can come into contact with entrepreneurship through entrepreneurship education, the influence of role models, previous experience in starting a business, working in small businesses, or through current participation in entrepreneurial activities [8].

In the current context, countries are in a post-pandemic recovery process, in addition to facing multiple challenges, including the digital transformation in entrepreneurship, as well as the delays that Covid-19 has left in many economies around the world. According to National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (NISI) from Perú, During the second quarter of 2023, the unemployment rate was 5.3%, which represents an increase of 1.1 percentage points compared to the same quarter of 2022, when it was 4.2% [9]. Thus, the entrepreneurship has the potential to be a major force in driving innovation, generating employment opportunities and promoting

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^{© 0000-0002-7511-4462 (}M. A. Nolasco-Mamani); 0000-0002-8621-7942 (K. O. Villalba-Condori); 0000-0001-



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marnolasco@upt.pe (M. A. Nolasco-Mamani); kvillalba@ucsm.edu.pe (K. O. Villalba-Condori); dfloresl@ucsm.edu.pe (D. Y. Flores-Llerena); dcornejo@ucsm.edu.pe (D. Cornejo-Paredes);

economic growth in developing countries [10]. This is because entrepreneurs often introduce new ideas and solutions to the market, which can drive economic growth and create employment opportunities for local people. Furthermore, by encouraging young people to become entrepreneurs, creativity and entrepreneurship are promoted, which can have a positive impact on society as a whole.

A recent study establishes that university graduates do not present or express entrepreneurial intentions or skills [11]. The question of how to foster entrepreneurship has attracted the attention of scholars from various areas of study [12]. Consequently, to establish an entrepreneurial vision, it is very important that young students when they graduate from universities cannot depend solely on the government and companies that offer jobs, if higher education must have the fundamental objective of preparing young people. so that they become entrepreneurs, develop problem-solving skills and acquire the ability to make decisions and initiatives independently [13], [14].

Currently, theoretical review and the use of modeling in research are common procedures mainly in studies that are related to the determination of intention and behavior in business [15]. Among the different models or theories used, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) stands out [16]. However, to promote entrepreneurship it is essential to understand the reasons why certain people choose to become entrepreneurs and others do not. The present study aims to determine how factors from the theory of planned behavior influence entrepreneurial intention. However, in recent years, studies have confirmed that entrepreneurial intention is a reliable indicator of actual entrepreneurial behavior [17], [18]. Likewise, several authors have studied university entrepreneurship and have even generated models that predict entrepreneurial intentions [19]–[26].

Therefore, the focus of this research work is to contribute to the area of knowledge using empirical data, for its development we rely on Ajzen TPB (1991) [16]. There is previous research in the Peruvian case, but this work differs from it because it collects data from the different faculties of a private university in the city of Tacna, Perú, that is, a sample that allows us to analyze from a more complete perspective the entrepreneurial intention of university students.

1.1. Entrepreneurial Intention

When we talk about entrepreneurial intention (EI), whether in academic or business life, it has a main concept in the research of phenomena related to entrepreneurship [27]. As well as knowing that entrepreneurship or entrepreneurship does not arise by chance [28]. Particular personal attributes are required to successfully take advantage of a business opportunity when it presents itself [29].

Recent research has shown that entrepreneurial intention is an important indicator of entrepreneurial behavior [2], [4], [19], [30]–[34]. The EI is often considered the starting point of entrepreneurial activity [35]. Therefore, people who express a clear entrepreneurial intention are more likely to take concrete actions to create and develop their own business.

1.2. Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) was developed by Ajzen [16] This model states that some elements anticipate the behavior and attitude of an individual. The TPB model has been used in several published studies. Many of the studies have been conducted in order to predict a person's inclination to adopt a specific behavior at specific times and places [36]. The TPB is based on three main elements and explains that Entrepreneurial Attitude (EA), Subjective Norms (SN) and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) influence Entrepreneurial Intention (EI) (see Figure 1).

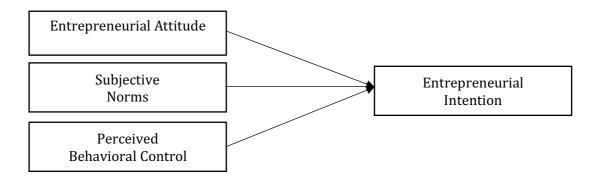


Figure 1: Model adapted from the Theory of Planned Behavior Ajzen (1991).

1.2.1. Entrepreneurial Attitude

Within the literature related to entrepreneurship, it is argued that entrepreneurial attitude plays a fundamental role by playing an essential role in entrepreneurial intention [37]. The entrepreneurial attitude is of vital importance in the creation of new businesses, and the educational process aimed at fostering this attitude is known as entrepreneurial education [38], [39].

H1. Entrepreneurial attitude (EA) positively influences entrepreneurial intention (EI).

1.2.2. Subjective Norms

The perspective of family members or friends acts as an influence [40] and in a study conducted by Lie et al. [41] It is indicated that subjective norms play a crucial role in behavioral intentions. That is, beliefs about what significant people think.

H2. Subjective norms (SN) have a positive influence on entrepreneurial intention (EI).

1.2.3. Perceived Behavioral Control

It is focused on personal belief and the ability to carry out a specific action [42] and their participation in the company can be considered a simple or complex task for students, depending on their level of preparation [4] which refers to the perception of one's own ability to carry out the desired action. In this regard, there are some studies that show a relationship between perceived behavioral control and entrepreneurial intention [42], [43].

H3. Perceived behavioral control (PBC) positively influences entrepreneurial intention (EI).

2. Method

A quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional design approach was used in this study. The sample was made up of students from the different faculties of the Universidad Privada de la Ciudad de Tacna, Perú. The primary data were obtained through the application of a structured instrument proposed by Mohammed et al. [44] The same was translated for the better understanding of Spanish-speaking students. The sample consisted of 207 university students, 66% of whom were female and 34% male. The main objective of the study was to determine the influence of Entrepreneurial Attitude (EA), Subjective Norms (SN) and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) on Entrepreneurial Intention (EI) of university students. From the literature review, it was possible to demonstrate the influence of these variables on entrepreneurial intention (EI).

3. Results and Discussion

Covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) was used to test the hypothesis using Amos v.24 of SPSS, which is appropriate for the use of numerical variables because it is robust to deviations from inferential normality [45]. This technique analyzes latent variables with respect to observed variables, produces reliable results and is used in several studies, and is considered a nonparametric technique [34].

As a first step, we traced the model proposed by Ajzen [16]. In the analysis of the initial theoretical model (see Figure 2) the indices do not have a good fit, therefore, the fit indices of the initial model have the following results DF = 24, P = .000, CFI = .931, RMSEA = .106, according to the results shown, the research model is not the correct one. Therefore, it was necessary to respecify the theoretical model that initial (see Figure 3) obtaining the following indexes in the standardized model DF = 20, P = .006, CFI = .976 and RMSEA = .068, the RMSEA is less than .80 which according to Kline [46] se considera un ajuste aceptable.

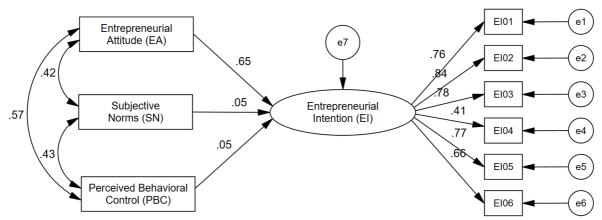


Figure 2: Initial Theory of Planned Behavior model.

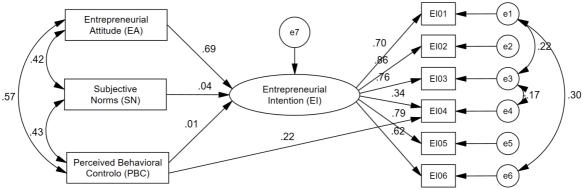


Figure 3: Adjusted Theory of Planned Behavior Model.

The SEM analysis conducted in this study highlights the significant influence of the variables of the Theory of Planned Behavior on entrepreneurial intention. The Entrepreneurial Attitude variable stands out as one of the factors with the greatest positive influence on EI, having a positive influence of \mathfrak{G} = .69; as confirmed by Acosta-Prado, et al. [47], Valencia-Arias, et al. [48], Valenzuela-Keller, et al. [49] and Kobylinska [50] in its recent research. Therefore, it can be seen that universities play a very important role in entrepreneurship education and should continue

to foster entrepreneurial attitude factors so that their students have the intention to engage in entrepreneurship. The findings also show the incidence of the Subjective Norms with a & = .04 and the Perceived Behavioral Control variable with a & = .01, all the variables have a positive impact on the entrepreneurial intention of university students as stated by Ajzen in his theory [16] and proven by a study developed by Amofah and Saladrigues [51] that entrepreneurial intention is influenced by all three variables.

This study reveals that Conscious-Controlled Behavior (CCB) has a significant influence on one of the components of entrepreneurial intention, with coefficient ß from .22. This is related to the confidence that university students have in their ability to make the decision to create a company in the future. Taking into account that, from the literature reviewed above, it is clear that the feeling of control is an important factor in the decision to start a company, it is important to consider the following factors.

The research hypotheses proposed in this study have been confirmed. Entrepreneurial attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control have been shown to positively influence students' entrepreneurial intention. In particular, as one of the most notable relationships, entrepreneurial attitudes have been found to have a very significant influence on students' entrepreneurial intention. This suggests that students have a positive attitude towards risk-taking in entrepreneurship, which could be related to their personal characteristics and their favorable disposition towards entrepreneurship. In addition, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control also exert a positive influence on entrepreneurial intention, supporting similar findings from other studies in this field.

4. Conclusions

The purpose of the present study was to investigate how Entrepreneurial Attitude (EA), Subjective Norms (SN) and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) influence Entrepreneurial Intention (EI) of college students. The results obtained in the present study clearly show that the entrepreneurial intention of university students is influenced by the factors of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). It is highlighted that entrepreneurial intention is strongly influenced by the entrepreneurial attitude variable and to a lesser extent by the subjective norms and perceived behavioral control variables. Likewise, the results of this study support the results of previous studies and define the importance of universities implementing initiatives to support student entrepreneurship.

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