Chapter 5

Nascent Entrepreneurs, Psychological Characteristics, and Sociocultural Background: Psychosociocultural Background of Nascent Entrepreneurs

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurial intention as a psychological process has been investigated from several points of view which, although employing similar methodologies, have used different variables. Our aim here is to explain the reasons why some individuals tend more towards entrepreneurship than others. For these explanations we look towards Schwartz’s Theory of Cultural Values. Schwarz structures cultural values in relation to three bipolar dimensions: conservation vs autonomy, hierarchy vs egalitarianism and mastery vs harmony. To analyse these variables, we applied the EOQ scale to a sample of 600 nascent entrepreneurs aged between 25 and 35, pertaining to different autonomous communities in Spain. After application and evaluation of the results, it can be concluded that there are significant differences in the personal, contextual and entrepreneurial intention variables as regards gender, parent’s occupation(s) and autonomous community.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in the development of a country, since its considered a critical factor in promoting innovation, creating employment opportunities and generating social welfare and development (Wong, Ho & Autio, 2005). Such is its impact that some authors have labelled entrepreneurs as the “engines of economic growth” in the development of a given country (Baron & Shane, 2008). More specifically, job creation has been considered as one of the principal contributions of entrepreneurs.

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Researchers also agree that entrepreneurs are made and not born and that entrepreneurs can be trained (Boulton & Turner, 2005; Mellor et al., 2009; Sánchez, 2013). Thus, the importance of considering the factors that make someone an entrepreneur, as well as the topics related to the forming of entrepreneurs (Kadir, Salim & Kamarudin, 2012). In other words, people do not suddenly turn into entrepreneurs without certain triggering factors, and more importantly, without having the intention to be an entrepreneur. It is therefore critical for us to understand what factors influence self-employment intention; hence investigating the determinants of such an intention is a crucial step for identifying ways in which to train competitive entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurial intention has been widely studied (Carr & Sequeira, 2007; Kautonen, Luoto & Tornikoski, 2010; Tornikoski, Erno & Kautonen, 2009). Nonetheless, the results of studies into the determinants of entrepreneurial intention vary in relation to different countries and cultures (Boulton & Turner, 2005). More studies are thus needed in local contexts to increase the relevance and validity of previous results. Furthermore, although many studies use the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) to predict entrepreneurial intention, certain limitations can be identified in this type of approach. Some recent studies (do Paço, Ferreira, Raposo, Rodrigues, & Dinis, 2011; van Gelderen et al., 2008) do not consider any other variables in their TPB model for predicting this intention. Although Fini, Grimaldi, Marzocchi, and Sobrero (2012), Schwarz, Wdowiak, Almer-Jarz, and Breitenecker (2009), and Sommer and Haug (2011) have extended the model, certain variables were not considered in their studies either, such as the participants’ personality traits or beliefs regarding entrepreneurship. These limitations mean that the determinants of entrepreneurial intention still need to be clarified.

Previous research has shown that personality traits influence venture creation (Mueller & Thomas, 2001). It can even be said that the influence of personality traits is the strongest determinant in the intention to start a business (Nga & Shamuganathan, 2010). Individuals with personality traits such as risk taking propensity and internal locus of control tend to be more entrepreneurial and committed to entrepreneurial activities such as starting up a new business (Thomas & Mueller, 2000; Utsch & Rauch, 2000).

Nevertheless, these personality traits only partially explain business start-ups and the entrepreneurial process. Studies that defend the influence of these personality traits have not taken into account the individuals’ entrepreneurial beliefs. This gap in the field of entrepreneurial research is surprising, given that beliefs have been identified as influential factors in an individual’s entrepreneurial behavior. Thus, some studies have clearly demonstrated that entrepreneurial behaviour is strongly influenced by people’s values and beliefs (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994; Krueger & Carsrud, 1993).

This combination of psychological traits with individuals’ values and beliefs is what makes some people more likely to attempt to start a business (Learned, 1992). Individuals’ psychological traits and socio-cultural background act as a stimulant and/or motivator of their entrepreneurial behaviour (Mueller & Thomas, 2001).

However, although there is already an established literature on entrepreneurial intention, much of this literature has used students as participants in the study samples. In contrast, little research has been done by applying models of entrepreneurial intentions to samples of nascent entrepreneurs. That is, although the literature widely acknowledges the importance of intention as the first step towards a behaviour, there is no direct relationship established between intention and action. Ajzen (1987) showed that intentions explain only about 30% of the variance in behaviour. This result was confirmed by a meta-analytic review of 185 studies by Armitage and Conner (2001), which found that, on average, 27% of the variance in behaviour is explained by behavioural intentions. In the business context, Schlaegel and Koenig (2014) reached similar conclusions since they found that 37% of business behaviour can
be explained by business intentions. All these results show that the relationship between intention and behaviour is not systematic, as many authors (Kolvereid, 1996; Wiedemann, Schütz, Sniehotta, Scholz, & Schwarzer, 2009) highlight. In line with Kautonen, van Gelderen, and Tornikoski (2013), who argue that intention and perceived behavioral control are significant predictors of subsequent behaviour, this chapter focuses on the relationship between intentions and behaviour/action (nascent entrepreneurs). Our goal is to theoretically determine what can explain the progression between these stages, using a psychosocial approach. In the business world, some authors have tried to close the gap, like Carsrud and Brännback (2011), who argue that motivation is a link between intention and behaviour, especially for entrepreneurs. However, no model has been proposed so far.

This chapter will attempt to overcome these limitations by researching entrepreneurial intention, considering personality traits and beliefs. More specifically, in this study we first analyse the influence of different traits on participants’ intentions for starting a business; secondly, we study the influence of the participants’ beliefs on entrepreneurial intention, and thirdly we consider whether these beliefs are a moderating factor between entrepreneurial traits and intentions.

**BACKGROUND**

Human beings are enterprising and innovative by nature. The evolutionary milestones that have allowed humanity to progress from a prehistorical way of life to today’s world can be traced back to this fact; that is, from the invention of the wheel to the sophisticated technological innovations being celebrated today. Nonetheless, the scientific study of the figure of the entrepreneur is a relatively recent concern. One of the aspects most considered in these scientific studies is that entrepreneurship is the result of entrepreneurial intention.

Entrepreneurial intention has been widely investigated as a psychological process from different perspectives, for example, Carr and Sequeira (2007), Kautonen, Luoto, & Tornikoski (2010), Shapero and Sokol (1982). However, although most of these studies base their methodology on the Ajzen’s (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour of (Autio, Keeley, Klofsten, Parker, & Hay, 2001; Fayolle, Gailly, & Lassas-Clerc, 2006; Kolvereid, 1996; Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000; Moriano, Palací, & Morales, 2006; Liñán, 2004; Tkachev & Kolvereid, 1999), not all of them consider the same variables; these mostly suggest entrepreneurial intention is primarily a result of cognitive processes. Some studies have extended the model with certain variables that were not used in previous studies, such as personality traits or sociocultural and regional influences on entrepreneurial intention (Gurel, Altinay, & Daniele, 2010; Hopp & Stephan, 2012; Iakovleva, Kolvereid, & Stephan, 2011; Prabhu & Pouloue, 2012) and in this sense different models have been proposed, such as the Entrepreneurial Event model by Shapero and Shokol (1982), the Entrepreneurial Potential model (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994), the Entrepreneurship Attitude Orientation model (Robinson, Stimpson, Huefner, & Hunt, 1991), the Determinants of Entrepreneurial Intention model (Davidsson, 1995), and the Entrepreneurial Intention model, among others. All of these models attempt to seek or explain the reasons why some individuals are more inclined to entrepreneurship, and therefore the elements that lead individuals to tend towards entrepreneurial behaviour should be identified (McMullen & Sheperd, 2006).

Broadly speaking, we can affirm that the configuration process of entrepreneurial intention is determined by many influential factors, such as personality, social support, economic system, culture, values, and so on. This idea is proposed in the wider sense by Bird (1988), who states that personal aspects
and the social context interact specifically with rational or intuitive thought during the configuration of entrepreneurial intention.

Different studies have shown that personal characteristics behave as predictor variables in entrepreneurial intention and also explain a considerable amount of its variance (Sánchez & Yurrebaso 2012). Individuals with a certain degree of self-efficacy, internal locus of control, and proactiveness are more likely to be entrepreneurial and are more committed to the entrepreneurial activities they carry out (Gurel, Altinay, & Daniele, 2010; Iakovleva, Kolvereid, & Stephan, 2011; Koh, 1996; Mauer, Neergard, & Kirketerp, 2009; Prabhu & Poulose, 2012).

Entrepreneurial intention roots down from its precursor, Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO). Pivotal on exploring the psychological face of enterprising, essentially, it brings it down to a behavioral level. In other words, how an entrepreneur acts becomes center stage. Since research has shown that entrepreneurial firms generally outperform other conservative means of managing business, EO has taken a substantial amount of attention since its proposal (Rauch, Wiklund, Lumpkin, & Frese, 2009).

The first approach to conceive EO was substantiated by Covin and Slevin (1986; 1989; 1991), defined as a three-dimensional construct related to the decision-making practices, managerial philosophies and strategic behavior that an entrepreneur possesses: Innovativeness, Risk-Taking, and Proactiveness (Anderson, Covin, & Slevin, 2009). Using these three core behaviors, Covin and Slevin (1986, 1989) developed what is still the most commonly researched self-report scale for Entrepreneurial Orientation. Lumpkin and Dess (1996) define Innovativeness as the tendency to engage in and support new ideas, novelty experimentation, and creative processes that may result in new products, services, or technological processes. Brockhaus (1980), Miller, (1983), and Lyon, Lumpkin, and Dess (2000), call Risk-Taking to act boldly and spontaneous in less calculated fashion, while borrowing heavily and committing resources into unknown environments and uncertain outcomes in a fearless manner. Lastly, Proactiveness involves the engaging in anticipative, opportunity-seeking, forward-looking behaviors that allow for the creation and exploitation of environmental opportunities (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Sandberg, 2002).

Researchers have also explored personality differences between entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs based on the idea that certain psychological characteristics are requisite preconditions for entrepreneurship (Utsch & Rauch, 2000). An individual with certain personality traits can feel more attracted than others towards entrepreneurship. Yusof, Sandhu and Jain (2007) defend the idea that young people today are more inclined towards entrepreneurship because they show psychological characteristics typical of entrepreneurs, such as high self-efficacy, a tendency to act, and a high internal locus of control. Based on the review works and meta-analyses by different authors (Collins, Hanges, & Locke, 2004; Rauch & Frese, 2007; Stewart & Roth, 2001; Stewart & Roth, 2007; Zhao & Seibert, 2006; Zhao, Seibert, & Lumpkin, 2010), here we propose the following personality characteristics for analysis: self-efficacy, internal locus of control (ILC) and proactiveness.

With respect to the social context, it is thought that an entrepreneurial personality is created by society, that is, it is the result of the influence of cultural factors on individuals, such that social norms would shape the person. Thus, culture is understood as the creator of an enterprising spirit.

A society’s predisposition towards entrepreneurship is linked to the role of culture, and vice-versa, we can say that the national culture, that is, the specific culture of each country, affects the characteristics of entrepreneurs.

According to Schwartz’s Theory of Cultural Values (1992), which we invoke here, there is a series of basic problems that societies must face in order to regulate human activity. These problems are: the nature of the relations between individuals and the group, guaranteeing responsible behaviour among citizens
that will help to preserve the society, and maintaining humanity’s relation to nature and the social world (Kluckhohn, 1951). These basic problems are reflected in the cultural dimensions of values. To find the solution to these problems, Schwartz distinguished a series of cultural values structured into three dimensions of polar opposites that demonstrate the cultural incompatibilities among different types of values.

These are as follows:

1. **Conservativism Versus Autonomy**: This dimension analyses the differences among the cultural solutions that have been given to the conflictive relation between individuals and the group.

2. **Hierarchy Versus Egalitarianism**: This dimension reflects the forms in which cultures socialize individuals so that they take into consideration the welfare of others and manage social interdependencies.

3. **Mastery Versus Harmony**: This dimension reflects the cultural solutions to the problem of humanity’s relation to nature.

Schwartz (1992) criticises the dichotomous position with respect to collectivist-individualist values, positing that some values can serve both categories. He proposes a two-dimensional structure of values, in which individuals can have a mixed profile, giving priority to both individualistic and collectivist values.

The ten types of values proposed by Schwartz are grouped within the dimensions of individualism and collectivism. The Individualism dimension comprises the values of power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation and self-direction; the Collectivist dimension prioritizes values such as benevolence, tradition and conformity; and the Mixed Values would be universalism and security.

Cultures that favour entrepreneurship are those in which the prevailing values are linked to autonomy, individualism and competition, as opposed to those that promote conservativism, maintaining the status quo and acceptance of the way things are.

A culture is considered to foster autonomy and individualism when it emphasizes the development of ideas, individual thought, curiosity, creativity, open-mindedness, and in general, considers the individual as difference. By the same token, a culture is considered to favour competition, understood as the emphasis on getting ahead, when it promotes self-affirmation, active participation in changing the world, and the taking on of risk when seeking success.

Inglehart’s Theory of Cultural Values (1991) establishes a social dichotomy between the cultures that endorse materialistic values (associated with the maintaining of order and economic stability) as opposed to those that promote post-materialistic values, in which ideas count more than money and a less impersonal society is promoted in which people participate more in work. Thus, the societies in which these latter values prevail are more likely to develop entrepreneurship initiatives. This theory, applied to entrepreneurship, considers that societies in which materialist values prevail are less inclined to entrepreneurship, in contrast with societies in which post-materialistic values are well-established, which promote entrepreneurship.

Hurtado, Ordaz, and Rueda (2007) support the argument that national culture explains the differences among different countries, and these differences are also linked to entrepreneurship. Hofstede (1980) proposed the following dimensions to define the culture of a country in relation to business: the distance to power, the avoidance of uncertainty, individualism vs. collectivism and masculinity. Note that Hofstede (1980) also includes the “individualism” factor like Schwartz (1992), thus appealing to values linked to independence and individual decision-making, and thereby ratifying the argument that states that the higher the level of individualism in a society, the more favourable it is to entrepreneurship.
Again, according to Hofstede (1980), high individualism is associated with emphasis on initiative and individual achievement, whereas low individualism would be associated with a belief in group decisions over individual decisions.

There is evidence that some cultural values, such as individualism and low avoidance of uncertainty, are associated with traits such as internal locus of control, risk-taking and innovation, which in turn are associated with entrepreneurial development (Mueller & Thomas 2000). Thus, an entrepreneurial attitude would be favoured by cultures with a high degree of individualism, low avoidance of uncertainty, short distance to power, and high masculinity, which can be compared with Schwartz (1992). Albertos (2002) states that culture influences several aspects of the economy, among which is economic effectiveness; that is, cultural values can drive (or not) more effective decision-making, rapid innovation, and better adaptations to a changing environment, as well as the economic goals themselves, that is, the wishes of the population in relation to the economy.

Another series of factors should also be taken into account. These are, on one hand, a result of the national culture, but on the other, the action or effect of these factors has repercussions on the entrepreneurship culture itself. Among them we would highlight the role of institutions, employment policies, and social networks, as well as motivation for or hindering of entrepreneurship in that society. The institutions involved in the social and cultural aspects of a society play a very important role in regard to an entrepreneurial orientation and the creation and promotion of an entrepreneurial profile.

Another ongoing concern on entrepreneurship is also its gender gap. Research has shown that entrepreneurship, as business, is typically associated with masculine characteristics (Baron, Markman, & Hirsa, 2001; Marlow, 2002), and that entrepreneurs themselves also seem to carry this burden (Ahl 2006; Lewis 2006). In societies where people pursue tasks positively associated with gender but avoid those which are not (Heilman, 1983; Miller & Budd, 1999), it could become influential on women’s intention to pursue entrepreneurship (Fagenson & Marcus, 1991; Gupta, Turban, Wasti, & Sikdar, 2005), adversely affecting their involvement and development on the domain (Marlow & Patton, 2005). Effectively, women possess a higher chance than men of diminishing her potential on entrepreneurial endeavors because of the lack of confidence on their skills to fulfill the job (Chen, Greene, & Crick, 1998), and have lower expectations of success than men on a wide range of other occupations (Eccles, 1994). Specifically, research has proven women to have lower entrepreneurial intentions (Chen et al., 1998; Chowdhury & Endres, 2005; Gatewood, Shaver, Powers, & Gartner, 2002; Kourilsky & Walstad, 1998).

**MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER**

In this study we analysed the values proposed by Schwartz (1992), using the Entrepreneurship Orientation Questionnaire (EOQ, acronym in Spanish: COE) (Sánchez, 2010), in which these values are one of its core components, to approach these dimensions. By the same token, the motives, resources and barriers perceived by our subjects in relation to entrepreneurship were evaluated and examined in relation to their entrepreneurial intention, which we treat as a construct, and is also included among the measuring scales of the EOQ questionnaire. Another cultural aspect that helps us to establish differential patterns of influence and around which our analysis will revolve is the region of Spain which each participant comes from. This will shed light on the virtues and defects of entrepreneurial culture throughout the country, and enable us to elucidate aspects that can help us to promote an enterprising spirit, which at this point in time is key to our economic recovery. In short, our research study was aimed at analysing
the influence of culture on entrepreneurship by examining cultural values and the role of other factors that can influence culture. The study operated on the assumption that, in a national-wise scope, culture values and standards will transpose into the regional level. As such, it is interpreted as a given the overall values of a nation (Spain) will influence on its different Autonomous Communities.

In our understanding, then, the nascent entrepreneur is the result of the relation between a series of internal personal factors –self-efficacy, internal locus of control and pro-activeness- and his or her socio-cultural back ground –attitude, perceived control, subjective norm and feasibility. These personal factors were selected in accordance to its predictive values on entrepreneurial intention from previous studies (Sanchez, Lanero, & Yurrebaso, 2005; Sanchez & Licciardello, 2012). In the absence of studies positing a model to justify this idea, and in order to bring these perspectives together and offer a broad and relational explanation of these aspects, we present the following study.

**METHODOLOGY**

A sample of 600 nascent entrepreneurs (with businesses less than three years old) was asked to complete the EOQ, which contains the variables we wished to study. The sample comprised 450 men and 150 women, aged between 25 and 35, and hailing from different Autonomous Communities (regions) in Spain. Potential participants for the study were recruited through the use of Chamber of Commerce directories in Spain, in order to identify business owners who had started their own business in the last three years. Participants were contacted via telephone and e-mail and asked to complete a questionnaire, which was directly administered by a member of the research team.

Data were collected in the same organizations that gave their authorization for participating in the research and with the managers who signed the consent protocol. Participants were informed of the objectives of the research and were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality in regard to the information they were about to give. They also received instructions as to the response mechanics of the questionnaire and were encouraged to offer sincere answers and not to leave anything blank. Any questions they had were addressed individually and in a personalized way during the data collection. In all cases, together with the note seeking authorization from the participating companies, it was given an express written commitment to provide information about the results once the study had finished.

The data collected from these entrepreneurs addressed the following aspects: personal profile of the entrepreneurs, including personality traits and competences, as well as attitude, feasibility, social norm and social value afforded to entrepreneurs (social appreciation). A second block of data included the context variables that the literature has shown to have an effect on entrepreneurial intention. Finally, cultural values were assessed.

The data collected from the EOQ were analysed with SPSS version 19.0 for Windows. First, we carried out correlation and reliability analyses among the variables in question. Subsequently, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run to verify the differences between the study variables as a function of the participants’ gender, their parents’ occupations, and the Autonomous Community to which they belonged. Regression analyses were then carried out to observe to what extent entrepreneurial intention was explained by the variables considered. Finally, moderation analyses were run to check the moderation effect that feasibility, attitude, and the social appreciation of entrepreneurs can have on the relation between personal, contextual and cultural values and entrepreneurial intention. Items that could potentiate social desirability bias had their values inverted at the moment of analysis.
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RESULTS

Table 1, found in the appendix, shows the reliability values of the scales as well as the coordination between them. Analysis of variance showed differences between men and women in self-efficacy, proactiveness, attitude towards entrepreneurship, perceived control, feasibility and intention. In all of these aspects, the men scored significantly higher than the women. In regard to the motives for creating a business, women valued personal success significantly more than men, and the men valued routine work and freedom at work significantly more than women. No significant gender differences were found in the rest of the motives (power-prestige, pleasure, novelty, independence, personal fulfilment, job security and “as a last resort”).

In relation to the resources they considered important for enterprise creation, there were significant gender differences in “Education”, “Work experience”, “Own financial resources”, “Being creative”, “Seizing opportunities”, “Effort capacity”, “Self-confidence” and “Risk-taking”. These resources were considered significantly more important by women. Among the barriers considered as obstacles for entrepreneurship, the only one that turned out to be significantly different between men and women was the lack of work experience, considered more of a barrier by women. Finally, gender differences were also found regarding the importance that certain aspects can have for entrepreneurship: “Risking loss of income”, “Social appreciation of self-employment” and “Access to source of information”. These aspects were all considered significantly more important by women.

The occupations of the participants’ parents were divided into: self-employed, private sector, public sector, and does not work. In regard to personal characteristics, there were only differences between the groups according to the father’s occupational category in the case of the job intention variable. Thus, individuals whose parents were self-employed were significantly more orientated towards entrepreneurship than those whose parents worked in the public sector. In regard to personal characteristics, only the job intention variable produces differences among the groups depending on the maternal job category. Individuals whose mothers were self-employed were significantly more favourably disposed towards entrepreneurship than those whose mothers worked in the public sector. We also found that if the mother belonged to the self-employed category, there seemed to be a positive and significant difference in relation to the rest of the categories: private sector, public sector, and does not work.

The mother’s occupation shows that there are significant differences between nascent entrepreneurs with self-employed mothers and nascent entrepreneurs whose mothers work in the public sector. Although there is no variation in relation to the personal variables, there is indeed a significant difference in the attitude and intention variables, both of which were proposed by Ajzen (1991), and the feasibility variable proposed by Shapero and Sokol (1982), all of them being more favourable in the case of nascent entrepreneurs whose mothers were self-employed. Personal fulfilment is the main differentiating motive for entrepreneurship pointed out by nascent entrepreneurs with mothers who are self-employed or work in the private sector; it seems that learning from models as proposed by Bandura (1997) exerts a large influence.

In the case of the individual regression analyses, the results are as follows: a) the personal variables explained 23% of the variance in entrepreneurship intention, the variables self-efficacy, proactiveness, and entrepreneurship competences being significant; b) the variables attitude, feasibility, norm and perceived control explained 61.5% of the variance, “norm” being the only one that was not significant; c) in the case of the contextual variables (motives, resources, obstacles and importance of being an entrepreneur), the percentage of variance explained was 20.2% (F 4;673 = 43.91, p<000), the variable “motives” being
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the only one of them that was significant; d) when the block of social variables were entered (social and cultural appreciation of entrepreneurs), the percentage of variance explained was 32.20% (F 5,669 = 64.87, p<000) and the “self-transcendence” variable was the only one that was not significant.

When all the variables were entered into the regression analysis in order to evaluate the contribution of each of them in relation to the criterion variable, entrepreneurial intention, the percentage of variance explained was 64.8% (F =72,780, p<.000); the variables that turned out to be significant were the following: feasibility (53.8%), attitude (7.10%), social appreciation (3.3%), and competences (0.5%).

When analysed by Autonomous Community, the significant variables were as follows. In Castile & Leon, feasibility, attitude, social appreciation and perceived control were significant, explaining 68.7% of the variance; as can be observed, the first three coincide with the pattern obtained for the total sample. In the Basque Country, the significant variables were feasibility, social appreciation, attitude and importance, explaining 50.5% of the variance; as we can see, the first three coincide with the pattern obtained for the total sample, although in a different order. In Asturias, feasibility, attitude and social appreciation explained 46% of the variance; these coincide with the first three we obtained in the total sample. In the Community of Madrid, attitude, internal control and importance explained 73.10% of the variance, but only attitude coincides with the pattern of significant variables in the total sample. In Catalonia, attitude, feasibility, social appreciation and competences explained 63.40% of the variance; this is the Autonomous Community showing most similarities to the pattern of the total sample.

In regard to the results of the mediational analyses:

1. When personality variables are considered the predictor variables. Figure 1 shows the relations among the predictor variable (personal variables), the mediating variables (feasibility, attitude and social appreciation) and the criterion variable, entrepreneurial intention.

Figure 1. Relation among predictor (personality) variable, mediating variable, and criterion variable
2. When the contextual variables are considered predictor variables. Figure 2 depicts the relations among the predictor variable (contextual variables), the mediating variables (feasibility, attitude and social appreciation) and the criterion variable, entrepreneurial intention.

3. When the cultural variables are considered predictor variables. Figure 3 shows the relations among the predictor variable (cultural variables), the mediating variables (feasibility, attitude and social appreciation) and the criterion variable, entrepreneurial intention.

In short, the models found indicate that feasibility, attitude, and social appreciation mediated the effects of the personal variables, the context variables, and the cultural variables on entrepreneurial intention.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to results, a main issue is that both genders perceive differently the prospects self-employment, and for such, it is of imperative reason to heed both genders differently when pursuing enterprise opportunities. As discussed earlier, entrepreneurship is a domain predominantly masculine in terms of vocabulary and defining characteristics (Baron, et al. 2001; Marlow 2002) in which women are affected by it in a way that hinders their involvement. It is evident that more effort is needed, not only to promote and prioritize equality between men and women, but also to internalize certain values in society that would allow both sexes to feel efficacious and capable, such as those valued highly by women like social appreciation and personal success among others, at the time of shaping the overall entrepreneurial image.

Figure 2. Relation among predictor (contextual) variable, mediating variable, and criterion variable
Also, the fact that Spain is comprised of Autonomous Communities implies that, even though it classifies as a single nation, it is diverse enough to operate differently the way entrepreneurship is promoted on each of its regions. Studies like this one hope to shed light on exactly what factors should be prioritized at the time of building and educating entrepreneurship, in a way that appeals individually to each of its Autonomous Communities’ interests. For example, it would be more practical to promote entrepreneurship as an autonomous job domain in the Castile & Leon region, as opposed to the Basque country, which would value more the significance of the job at a personal level.

Noteworthy, the study also carries its limitations. To reach more asserting results, the researcher of this study lists possible recommendations. First, the study is geographically confined, but does not extend to all its areas and, while it comprised four different Autonomous Communities of Spain, it is a culturally diverse country which cannot overall correspond to its different regions equally. For a more thorough continuation on this research, its strongly recommended to expand the number of regions of study. Second, the objective of the study was entrepreneurial intention, but intention does not directly imply behavior (Kolvereid, 1996; Wiedemann et al., 2009). A longitudinal approach is recommended, as it can explore throughout the course of time how the nascent enterprisers evolve in valuing each of the factors studied. Third, a more equilibrated sample between genders is suggested as means of obtaining a more reliable measurement. Lastly, the study limited to only measure factors used on previous studies by the same researcher (Sanchez et al., 2005; Sanchez & Licciardello, 2012), namely: internal locus of control, pro-activeness, attitude, perceived control, subjective norm, feasibility and social appreciation. It is unknown how different results may be by utilizing different factors.
FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

New types of studies like this one, in which personal and geographic variables are analysed jointly, together with the influence that this combination of variables can have, contributes knowledge and new research lines to the study of entrepreneurship. Future studies will be able to answer the questions we have posed here, so that entrepreneurship in Spain can become a referent for the creation of jobs and the economic development of each of its Autonomous Communities.

As for expanding on the research, it would be interesting to learn whether the personal variables which seem to differentiate men and women when it comes to entrepreneurial intention, are valued equally by men and women in families which the mother is self-employed. Finding, for example, that daughters of self-employed women attain scores similar to sons in that family would prove to be important for the fostering and development of entrepreneurship in women.

Regarding the relation between the occupations of nascent entrepreneurs’ parents and the variables considered in this study, it would also be interesting to see if there are any gender differences in how the mother’s occupation affects entrepreneurship intention in daughters and sons, and thus determine whether the learning that Bandura (1997) speaks of also yields a model that is differentiated by sex.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that there are significant differences in the personal and contextual and entrepreneurial intention variables according to gender, parents’ occupations, and Autonomous Community.

In regard to gender, men are more inclined to entrepreneurship than women. The personal variable internal locus of control shows a non-significant difference, the same as occurs with norm; however, the personal variables of self-efficacy and proactiveness are favourable to men, as well as the variables proposed by Ajzen (1991): attitude and perceived control, and entrepreneurial intention.

Women afford more importance to the resources needed to begin a venture. The motives that are significantly different in relation to gender are: personal success, avoiding routine work, and freedom at work. Starting an enterprise for reasons of personal success is a motive more highly considered by women, whereas avoiding routine work and having more freedom in relation to work are more important reasons for men. These data, and the fact that women give greater importance to social appreciation, lead us to think that women are more conditioned by social factors, such as personal success, whereas men are more motivated by factors that are directly work-related, such as avoiding routine and having freedom.

Gender differences regarding the resources considered important for creating an enterprise were significant for “Education”, “Work experience”, “Own financial resources”, “Being creative”, “Seizing opportunities”, “Effort capacity”, “Self-confidence” and “Risk-taking”, all of which are considered more important by women. Differences regarding the importance that certain aspects can have for entrepreneurship are found in: “Risk of losing income”, “Social appreciation of self-employment” and “Access to sources of information”. These were found to be significantly more important for women. The fundamental difference when determining obstacles for entrepreneurship is that women concede more importance to a lack of work experience. These gender differences found may be behind the data obtained in the GEM 2013 report, which reflects that entrepreneurship in Spain is still an activity mainly dominated by men. In 2013, approximately six out of every ten entrepreneurs were male.
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We can thus conclude that women afford more importance to resources and perceive a lack of work experience as the main hindrance to entrepreneurship. These data may suggest that women find more obstacles and feel less secure when considering entrepreneurial intention, since many of the aspects they point out are part of the personal variables, such as self-confidence or effort capacity.

These findings in relation to the differences in the parents’ occupations, especially that of the mothers, show how necessary it is to support entrepreneurship in women, which could take the form of policies of equality and greater social awareness of gender roles. We found that the father’s occupation was not as differentiating as that of the mother, since we did not find differences in as many variables. We also observed that the group of entrepreneurs in which the mother did not work outside the home granted more importance to financial aid or subsidies and lack of assessment when it came to entrepreneurial intention.

Our study also shows that the pattern of predictors of entrepreneurial intention depends on the Autonomous Community in question. The difference in the predictive factors of each Autonomous Community and the mediation of the variables attitude, feasibility and social appreciation mean that entrepreneurial intention is different in each one.

The reality of Spain is highly complex and diverse, meaning that many initiatives can be developed from different areas. Socio-cultural factors are determined by the region to which one belongs, since they behave differently in each Autonomous Community (Liñán, Urbano, & Guerrero, 2011). This diversity in the values of each region in Spain may be a hindrance to the potential and possibilities for work and economic development that may exist in each region, values that Schwartz (1992) associates with the conservative and hierarchical dimensions, and Inglehart (1991) with materialist values. Our study has made it possible to know which variables affect each region so that specific entrepreneurship development programmes can be established to work towards changing the existing culture. Eminently constructive interventions should be addressed to moving towards a culture that values entrepreneurial initiatives and mentality, for example, with the creation of policies at regional level to promote and facilitate the development of entrepreneurship, as well as transposing the entrepreneur principles at a scholar level.

REFERENCES


Nascent Entrepreneurs, Psychological Characteristics, and Sociocultural Background


**KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

**Autonomous Community:** First-level administrative division within the country of Spain, which allows its different regions, in accordance to the Spanish constitution of 1978, limited autonomy, political and administrative rights. The country comprises of 17 autonomous communities within the nation, in which each has its own Executive, Legislative and Judicial Power.
Culture: Set of shared attitudes, ideas, customs and social behavior of a particular society.
Entrepreneur: Individual who launches new ventures by identifying new opportunities, obtaining resources and exploiting it by developing new products or services.
Entrepreneurial Intention: The perceived desirability and feasibility of becoming an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurial intention is determined by one’s personal attitude toward the behavior, perceived social norms and perceived behavioral control.
Entrepreneurial Orientation: Three-dimensional construct related to the decision-making practices, managerial philosophies and strategic behavior that an entrepreneur possesses: Innovativeness, Risk-Taking, and Proactiveness.
Innovativeness: The tendency to engage in and support new ideas, novelty experimentation, and creative processes that may result in new products, services, or technological processes.
Internal Locus of Control: Generalized expectation held by the individual concerning whether he/she possesses or lacks power over what happens to him/her. For Internal Locus of Control, the individual believes life outcomes are controllable within his reach.
Proactiveness: The engaging in anticipative, opportunity-seeking, forward-looking behaviors that allow for the creation and exploitation of environmental opportunities.
Risk-Taking: To act boldly and spontaneous in less calculated fashion, while borrowing heavily and committing resources into unknown environments and uncertain outcomes in a fearless manner.
Self-Efficacy: Degree to which an individual perceives himself as capable of managing internal and external life experiences.
Table 1. Correlations among the variables

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**THE CORRELATION IS SIGNIFICANT AT THE 0.01 LEVEL (bilateral). * THE CORRELATION IS SIGNIFICANT AT THE 0.05 LEVEL (bilateral). at the diagonal mark can be found the scale's reliability.