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Effects of Entrepreneurial Characteristics and University Environment in the Entrepreneurial Intention

Matheus Pedro*
Gustavo Hermínio Salati Marcondes de Moraes
Edson Sadao Iizuka

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effects of entrepreneurial and University environment characteristics in the Entrepreneurial Intention of the undergraduate student. A model that seeks to complement the literature of the field of entrepreneurship was developed and validated. The methodology employed was quantitative and the data were analyzed by Structural Equation Models with the technique of Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM). The sample consisted of 287 students in the final year of the Engineering and Business undergraduate courses at the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP). Results indicate that the Entrepreneurial Intention of students is influenced by the University environment and the attitude towards Risk-taking and Self-efficacy. The Self-efficacy, in turn, is influenced by student characteristics regarding Planning, Leadership and Innovation. The research collaborates with complementary reflections to studies on entrepreneurship held in Brazil, showing a model for evaluation of entrepreneurial characteristics of students and of the entrepreneurial context in educational institutions. The results may serve as a support to improve higher education institutions (HEIs) in the context of teaching, research and outreach, aiming at the entrepreneurship.

Key words:

Entrepreneurial Intention; University Environment; Entrepreneurial Profile.

Introduction

According to Lee et al. (2011), the context in which the student is inserted interferes in the entrepreneurial intention through personal and environmental factors associated with the student's reality. In this way, the entrepreneurial characteristics of the individuals can be obtained and developed according to the experiences and teachings throughout their life (Greatti et al., 2010).

Ferreira and Mattos (2004) highlight the influence of higher education institutions (HEIs) in the promotion of entrepreneurial posture, as well as in demonstrating that entrepreneurship is an alternative career. In the same way, Santos, Minuzzi and Cruz (2007) argue about the need for the HEIs to adopt a curriculum that explore and develop the potential of students for the corporate world.

In this context, the study aimed to understand the effects of entrepreneurial and University environment characteristics in the Entrepreneurial Intention of the undergraduate student. Thus, the question of this research: how do entrepreneurial characteristics and the university environment influence the entrepreneurial intention of the undergraduate student?

We intended to test factors related to the entrepreneurial profile as influencers of the entrepreneurial intention, as well as test whether the assessment of the University environment in terms of entrepreneurship has positive effect on entrepreneurial intentions of students.

Results and Discussion

The research was developed through a quantitative methodology, with the use of multivariate data analysis. According to the suggestions of Hair, Hult, Ringle and

Sarstedt (2014), in which the entrepreneurship theories are poorly developed and the goals are prediction and explanation of the constructs presented, we opted for the use of Partial Least Squares Path Modeling (PLS-SEM). The model developed for research presents reflective and formative indicators, which is another reason to use PLS-SEM (Chin & Newsted, 1999; Hair et al., 2014). We conducted a single cross-section through a survey, which seeks, among other objectives, to identify opinions of specific groups and distribution of the phenomenon in the population (Pinsonneault & Kraemer, 1993).

| Hypotheses | Description | Result |
|------------|---|---------------|
| H1 | The ability of socialization positively influences self-efficacy. | NOT CONFIRMED |
| H2 | The ability to plan positively influences self-efficacy. | CONFIRMED |
| H3 | The ability of leadership positively influences self-efficacy. | CONFIRMED |
| H4 | The ability to innovate positively influences self-efficacy. | CONFIRMED |
| H5 | The self-efficacy positively influences Entrepreneurial Intention. | CONFIRMED |
| H6 | The risk-taking positively influences entrepreneurial intention. | CONFIRMED |
| H7 | The university environment positively influences the entrepreneurial intention. | CONFIRMED |

Conclusions

The University environment is the construct that most influences on Entrepreneurial Intention. This way, when the student's assessment is positive in relation to the University Environment, i.e. when the university environment provides the development of attitudinal characteristics of students, increases the Entrepreneurial Intention

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Greatti, L., Gralik, E., Vieira, F. G. D., Sela, V. M. (2010). *Aprendizagem em Empreendedorismo dos Acadêmicos do Curso de Administração de uma Universidade Estadual no Sul do Brasil*. Anais do EnAnpad, Rio de Janeiro.