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L'impact des politiques entrepreneuriales gouvernementales sur l'intention entrepreneuriale des étudiants tunisiens

The Impact of Government Entrepreneurial Policies on the Entrepreneurial Intention of Tunisian Students

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Résumé
L'émergence organisationnelle est le résultat de la volonté d'un individu de créer une organisation et des actions qu'il entreprend à cette fin, recouvre des réalités diverses. Pour une meilleure compréhension, la théorie du modèle de comportement planifié incluant les politiques gouvernementales entrepreneuriales a été utilisée. Ainsi, une étude quantitative basée sur un questionnaire administré auprès d'un échantillon de 200 étudiants de premier cycle montre que l'attitude envers le comportement et la norme subjective a un effet positif significatif sur l'intention entrepreneuriale des étudiants, tandis que le contrôle comportemental perçu n'est pas significatif. De plus, les politiques entrepreneuriales gouvernementales ne sont pas aussi significatives et n'encouragent pas l'intention entrepreneuriale des étudiants. Ainsi, cela s'explique par le fait que les étudiants ont des connaissances théoriques sur la création d'entreprise et méritent de développer des connaissances pratiques pour considérer les difficultés liées à une carrière entrepreneuriale. De plus, les étudiants ne perçoivent pas positivement les politiques gouvernementales en matière de création d'entreprises. Cette recherche constitue un guide pour les jeunes et les pouvoirs publics afin qu'ils consacrent davantage d'efforts au soutien de l'esprit entrepreneurial chez les jeunes.
Mots clés : Étudiants, Intention entrepreneuriale, Politiques entrepreneuriales gouvernementales

Abstract
Organizational emergence, the result of an individual's intention to create an organization and the actions undertaken to this end, covers diverse realities. For better understanding, the theory of planned behavior model including entrepreneurial government policies was used. Thus, a quantitative study based on a questionnaire administered to a sample of 200 undergraduate students shows that the attitude towards behavior and subjective norm has a significant positive effect on students' entrepreneurial intention, whereas perceived behavioral control is not significant. Furthermore, government entrepreneurial policies are not as meaningful and do not encourage students' entrepreneurial intention. This is explained by the fact that students have theoretical knowledge about business creation and deserve to develop practical knowledge for considering the difficulties related to an entrepreneurial career. In addition, students do not perceive government policies on business creation positively. Furthermore, this research represents a guide for both young people and public authorities to devote more efforts for supporting the entrepreneurial spirit among young people.
Keywords: Students, Entrepreneurial intention, Government entrepreneurial policies

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is often associated with driving economic growth, innovation, and creating jobs as well as businesses. In addition, various researches have shown the importance of entrepreneurial activities for economic growth and social development (Haque, Kabir, Rahman, Chowdhury and Islam, 2017; Coulibaly, Erbao and Mekongcho, 2018; Lv et al., 2021; Laine and Kibler 2022; Chamberlain, 2024; Kraiem, 2025). Thus, entrepreneurship has become a priority subject in public policies (Luthje and Franke, 2003) and the most frequently chosen alternative (Badri and Hachicha, 2019; Nazri, Aroosha and Omar, 2016).

Entrepreneurship is an intentional behavior (Krueger, Reilly and Carsrud, 2000) and a process consisting of several phases, more precisely, formation of entrepreneurial intention (Hisrich, Peters and Shepherd, 2013). Similarly, the emergence of an organization requires, also, that the individual demonstrates a level of entrepreneurial intention (Bird, 1988). To the best of our knowledge, entrepreneurial intention precedes entrepreneurial behavior and represents a reliable predictor of entrepreneurship. In fact, understanding the intention towards entrepreneurship is crucial for developing a large number of entrepreneurs due to the fact that they are made but not born entrepreneurs (Mellor et al., 2009). Furthermore, people do not embark on an entrepreneurial adventure unless they demonstrate a sufficient level of entrepreneurial intention. To study human behavior, the theory of planned behavior has shown strong potential to explain intention and actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991). According to it, entrepreneurial intention is explained by three predominant determinants to cite, attitudes, social norms and perceived behavioral control.

However, entrepreneurial intention is also influenced by the environment and government policies. As a result, governments, in most countries around the world, have increased investments in programs that accelerate and promote entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial spirit (Ali, Ali and Badghish, 2019; Gonzalez-Serrano, Valantine, Herv´as, P´erez-Campos and Moreno, 2018). Indistinguishably, several policies promoting entrepreneurial activities, particularly entrepreneurship student, have been suggested in developed and even developing countries, contributing to strategies and programs for accompaniment and support from many governments. Indeed, many policies have demonstrated positive impacts, while others have shown only relative success (Baughn, Lim, Le, Neupert and Woods, 2004). The consequences of these efforts reflect the lack of awareness among some policy makers regarding the essential drivers of entrepreneurship (Baughn et al., 2004). Thus, the presence of government entrepreneurial policies that promote entrepreneurship can play a crucial role in the

development of entrepreneurial intentions among students. This research is part of this framework while answering the following question: do entrepreneurial government policies predict entrepreneurial intention among students?

This contribution seeks to explore our central question in more depth. To do so, two sub-questions will be examined in a structured manner, namely:

- To determine the extent of influence of attitudes, social norms and perceived behavioral control on students' entrepreneurial intention.
- To verify the impact of government entrepreneurial policies on students' entrepreneurial intention

To this end, a quantitative research method was adopted and data were collected using a questionnaire administered to Tunisian students. Accordingly, our approach leads us to organize this research work in two parts. The first section will be devoted to an overview of the academic literature on entrepreneurial intention both in general and among students, to the underlying hypotheses and the conceptual model of this research. The second part, then, will be reserved to the methodological framework presentation adopted and the main empirical results of the study carried out.

1. LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

1.1. Entrepreneurial Intention Among Students

The study of students' entrepreneurial intention is important for educational institutions and policy makers since it has been the best predictor of entrepreneurial behavior (Krueger Jr. et al. 2000). Likewise, the fact that the world is currently characterized by an aging population implies that students represent the potential workforce of a country and, therefore, could contribute enormously to economic growth (Samuel, Ernest and Awuah, 2013). Students' entrepreneurial intention was the subject of several studies (Luthje and Franke, 2003; Turker and Selcuk, 2008; Rasli, Khan, Malekifar and Jabeen, 2013; Khuong and Huu An, 2016), and some of them focus on personality traits (such as attitude toward risks, internal locus of control, and the ability to innovate) or motivational factors (such as the search for financial gain or the search for status).

Thus, the study carried out by Krueger et al. (2000), using a sample of approximately one hundred students from a business school in the United States, shows that the impact of perceived feasibility is significant with regard to behavioral attitudes on entrepreneurial intention. Similarly, the study conducted by Kennedy (2003), in which Ajzen's model was applied to a sample of Australian students, shows that three antecedents have a significant

effect on entrepreneurial intention. Within the same empirical contribution, Audet (2001), based on a sample of 150 Canadian business students, found the significant effect of perceived desirability and feasibility on entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, the abundance and quality of empirical studies do not eliminate concerns about such results in a specific context, particularly in the African environment. This justifies the need to undertake evaluations in Africa, in general, and in Tunisia, in particular, which is the subject of this article.

1.2. Theory of Planned Behavior and Entrepreneurial Intention of Students

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen 1991) was developed from Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) theory of reasonable action, with the postulate that entrepreneurial behavior can be explained based on behavioral tendencies to realize such behavior. In this sense, it was appropriate to explain certain key factors that impact the likelihood of business creation. Based on this, Kautonen, Hatak, Kibler and Wainwright (2015) confirm the relevance of this theory in the field of entrepreneurship. Bird (1988) and Krueger and Brazeal (1994) note that the TPB is the most cited theory in entrepreneurial intention studies. Furthermore, Kautonen et al. (2015), Maresch, Harms, Kailer and Wimmer-Wurm (2016), Miranda, Chamorro-Mera and Rubio (2017) and Saindou, Tuo and Issa (2025) note that the TPB is widely used to analyze students' entrepreneurial intention. Similarly, Armitage and Conner (2001, p. 175) stated that the theory of behavior planning "is a robust model with high explanatory power and applicable in varied areas of human activity".

Furthermore, according to Ajzen (1991), there are three determinants of the intention to act:

- Entrepreneurial attitude (the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior in question);
- Subjective norm (perceived social pressure to perform or not the behavior);
- Perceived behavioral control (PBC; the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior).

Entrepreneurial attitude is defined as an orientation of individuals to react favorably or unfavorably to entrepreneurship (Kusmintarti,Thoyib, Ashar and Maskie, 2014). According to Ajzen (1988), individuals who develop negative behavioral attitudes will suffer negative consequences. For Kusmintarti et al. (2014, p.3) "an entrepreneurial attitude is the tendency of students to engage in entrepreneurship". Dileo and Pereiro (2019), Nabi and Liñán (2011) and Naushad (2018) have highlighted that entrepreneurial attitude is considered a crucial determinant of the intention to become an entrepreneur. Indeed, students with a high internal

locus of control develop positive attitudes toward entrepreneurship (Hatten and Ruhland, 1995). As a result, students who have a favorable entrepreneurial attitude and the ambition to develop their own projects are willing to engage in an entrepreneurial process. A study carried out by Ayalew and Zeleke (2018) among Ethiopian students shows that attitude toward entrepreneurship has a significant positive impact on students' choice of entrepreneurial career. Various previous studies have shown that entrepreneurial attitude has a direct and significant effect on students' entrepreneurial intention (Armitage and Conner, 2001; Fayolle and Liñán, 2014; Dheer and Lenartowicz, 2019; Gieure, Benavides-Espinosab and Roig-Dobón, 2020; Jena, 2020; Mgueraman and El Abboubi, 2023; Kraiem, 2025).

H1: Entrepreneurial attitude has a positive impact on students' entrepreneurial intention.

Ajzen (1991) presents subjective norm as the perception of social coercion practiced by family, friends, and other important people on the individual to manifest a particular behavior. In this regard, Hussain, Zhu, Zhang and Abidi (2018) noted that people tend to avoid deviation from the cultural norm and values of their families and social circles. In fact, subjective norm is the most divergent antecedent of plan behavior theory because it has been theorized that individuals who possess higher subjective norms will, in turn, have higher levels of entrepreneurial intentions (Lüke and Grosche, 2018). As a result, students suffer from subjective norms to the extent that family, friends, and teachers expect a certain level of attitude based on suggestions that can impact their decisions, such as engagement in an entrepreneurial activity. Furthermore, Kautonen, Zolin, Kuckertz and Viljamaa (2010) note that the perceived lack of assistance and support from important social contacts has a negative effect on an individual's entrepreneurial intention. Thus, social pressure from those around them pushes students to potentially undertake entrepreneurship (Moriano, Gorgievski, Laguna, Stephan and Zarafshani, 2012). However, according to Shook and Bratianu (2010), the results of studies related to subjective norms impact on entrepreneurial intention are equivocal as these norms vary from one culture to another.

The culture of individualism versus collectivism is challenged. Indeed, subjective norms have a significant impact on entrepreneurial intention in a collectivist culture compared to an individualist culture (Ajzen 2001). From an empirical point of view, Begley and Tan (2001), in their study of East Asian and Anglo-Saxon countries, showed that individualistic cultures are less inclined to be impacted by subjective norms than collectivist cultures. Therefore, according to several studies (Koe, Sa'ari, Majid and Ismail, 2012; Patricia and Silangen,

2016; Otache, Umar, Audu and Onalo, 2019; Gieure et al., 2020; Santoso 2021; Kraiem, 2025), subjective norm has a significant positive impact on entrepreneurial intention.

H2: Subjective norm has a positive impact on students' entrepreneurial intention.

PBC is described as people's confidence in their abilities to perform behaviors predicted by the perception of the consequences of a person's action or behavior (Yakasai and Jusoh, 2015). Likewise, according to Luc (2018, p.4), this notion is defined as "the personal belief of the individual regarding his capacity and aptitude to accomplish or carry out a particular work/action". In his studies related to entrepreneurial intention, Luc (2018) notes that PBC is considered as the strongest determinant to adopt entrepreneurial behavior. Therefore, some past studies have shown that students with a high level of control locus have a high entrepreneurial intention (Vodă and Nelu, 2019; Esfandiar, Sharifi-Tehrani, Pratt and Altinay, 2019). In the same vein, a study by Chaudhary (2017) on students enrolled at an Indian university shows that students who have succeeded in their entrepreneurial projects have a high level of PBC. Thus, several studies have reported the significant positive impact of PBC on students' entrepreneurial intention (Koe et al., 2012; Fayolle and Liñán, 2014; Luc, 2018; Otache et al., 2019; Santoso, 2021).

H3: Perceived behavioral control has a positive effect on students' entrepreneurial intention.

1.3. Government Entrepreneurial Policies and Students' Entrepreneurial Intention

Several previous works in entrepreneurship have generally focused on the effect of the personality and character traits of the person on entrepreneurship, while little concern has been given to the impact of the context in which the entrepreneur operates (Cavallo, Ghezzi and Balocco, 2019; Stam and Ven, 2019). This is why some researchers focus on the notion of entrepreneurial ecosystem (Meshram and Rawani, 2019; Stam and Ven, 2019). According to Stam and Ven (2019), this was invented between 1980 and 1990. It has been increasingly appropriated by researchers and practitioners in order to divert research into entrepreneurship from the narrow framework to another broader which deals with the ability of a national or regional context to establish a system of factors favoring the development of entrepreneurship (Stam and Ven, 2019). Establishing an encouraging climate that encompasses policies, incentives and institutions is fundamental to fostering entrepreneurial success." (Audretsch and Belitski, 2017; Meshram and Rawani, 2019; Stam, 2015). Similarly, Nicolaou and Shane (2010) note that environmental factors perceived by individuals are the fundamental determinants of an entrepreneurial career. Furthermore, current and future economic and

political conditions of a country can positively or negatively impact entrepreneurial intention (Ozaralli and Rivenburgh, 2016).

According to Meshram and Rawani (2019), a universal and typical definition of the entrepreneurial ecosystem does not yet exist. It has been described by Stam (2015), as a group of factors that integrate in a way favoring the promotion of entrepreneurship in a particular context. Likewise, Spigel (2017, p.3), considers it a "combinations of social, political, economic, and cultural elements within a region that support the development and growth of innovative startups and encourage nascent entrepreneurs and other actors to take the risks of starting, funding, and otherwise supporting high-risk ventures". Thus, in this work, we place particular emphasis on entrepreneurial government policies as determinants of entrepreneurship.

Therefore, some past works note that government policy including infrastructure, financial benefits and public investments impact the entrepreneurial spirit of students (Miranda, Chamorro-Mera and Rubio, 2017; Moog, Werner, Houweling and Backes-Gellner, 2015). According to, Nabi and Linan (2013) and El Bouhtouri and Bedoui (2025), the economic and institutional context shapes entrepreneurial intention. Furthermore, Welter (2011) argues that to stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit and increase the number of entrepreneurs, the establishment of a favorable economic context seems necessary.

As a result, entrepreneurs do not operate in isolation and are impacted by contextual factors, opportunities and support. They deploy their relationships with their environment in order to acquire the resources they need to create a business (Trivedi, 2017). The association of the external environment with resources accomplishes entrepreneurship (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). The perception of information and the position of the individual in the environment play a crucial role in the formation of entrepreneurial intention (Jack and Anderson, 2002). Along the same lines, individuals tend to engage in entrepreneurial activities if they feel supported by the environment because they believe that the environment approves their entrepreneurial choices. Liñán (2008) and Fatoki (2010) note that when the lack of skills among young people and the necessary capital are associated with the absence of government support, it hinders the development of entrepreneurship. Also on his part, he added that the asymmetry of information inhibits access to available financial products as well as the procedure to follow to make requests.

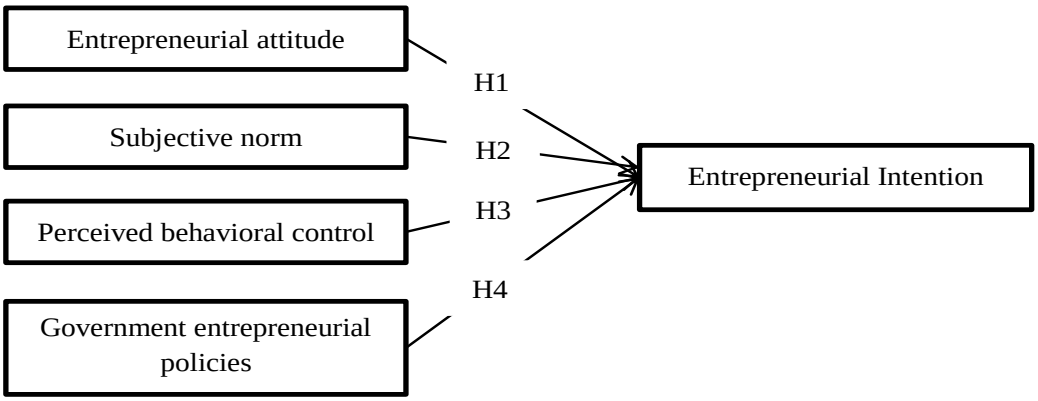
According to Bruton, Ahlstrom and Wan (2003), the regulatory dimension can exert a significant effect on individuals' entrepreneurial self-efficacy and improve their abilities to

detect and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities. In the same way, entrepreneurial intention is linked to the economic and political context (Nabi and Linan, 2013). Indeed, individuals who can benefit from tax advantages and financial incentives are more likely to launch entrepreneurial projects (Gnywali and Fogel, 1994). Moreover, if these advantages are clearly transmitted to future entrepreneurs, they can influence their entrepreneurial intentions. Consequently, a low barrier to entry leads to a high entrepreneurial intention.

Along the same lines, Wtterwulghe (1998) notes that an unfavorable environment including excessive intervention by public authorities, cumbersome administrative procedures, overwhelming taxation and a complicated rule of law inhibit the development of entrepreneurship. On the other hand, implementing structures, support and entrepreneurship assistance devices, enormously contributes to the realization of entrepreneurial projects. Thus, several studies, such as the study carried out by Uddin and Bose (2012) has shown a fortuitous correlation between the environment and entrepreneurial intentions. Correspondingly, Taormina and Lao (2007) noted that the environmental factors influence individual behavior. For Indarti, Rostiani and Nastiti (2007), the environment is an important aspect that impacts the entrepreneurial intention of students. However, Ibrahim and Lucky (2014) showed that environmental factors do not predict students' entrepreneurial intention. Moreover, for them, the direct impact of environmental factors including economic resources and institutional environment on entrepreneurial intention remains limited. Therefore, this study suggests the following hypothesis.

H4. *Government entrepreneurial policies would appear to be an important predictor of students' entrepreneurial intention.*

Figure 1: Conceptual model of research



Source: Adopted from Ajzen (1991)

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. Data and Variables

The controversy between the defenders of the quantitative method and the qualitative method fertilizes the methodological choices of study in this area of research. In this regard, Martinet (1990) notes that each researcher employs a method which aligns with their objectives. In the same perspective, Tounés (2003) and Fayolle, Kyrö and Ulijn (2005) assert that most studies on entrepreneurial intention commonly use the quantitative method. Given that the purpose of this research work is to test the effect of entrepreneurship education on the entrepreneurial intention of students, we opted for the quantitative method.

Furthermore, Thietart (1990, p. 156) states that "data collection is a crucial element of the management research process. It allows the researcher to gather the empirical material on which he will base his research". Thus, to collect data, we choose a questionnaire as a data collection tool, targeting undergraduate students in economics, management, science and technology, literature and humanities and legal Sciences enrolled at the University of Sousse in Tunisia. Given its central geographical location and the existence of all specialties in economics, management, science and technology, literature and humanities and legal Sciences, this university welcomes students from across the nation.

The questionnaire is based on a 5-point Likert scale to measure items related to all the variables of the study (entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial attitude, subjective norm, PBC, and Government Entrepreneurial Policies). This scale is continuous based on two symmetrical poles, namely 1—"Strongly disagree" and 5—"Strongly agree." The number of rungs of this scale is highly favored in management research given its conduciveness to recording the differentiation between responses. To measure the clarity and coherence of the asked questions, the questionnaire was tested on fifteen students, who found them clear and easy to understand. The variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Study Variables

Variables	Auteurs	Question
Entrepreneurial intention	Arranz, Arroyabe, and Fdez de Arroyabe (2019) and Urban and Kujinga (2017)	- The idea of starting your own business one day is appealing
		- I will choose a career as an entrepreneur
		- I prefer to be an entrepreneur rather than to be an employee in a company or an organization
		- I want to have the freedom to develop my own business
		- I want to make a great impact on society through my entrepreneurial skills

Entrepreneurial attitude	Holden (2008) and Bagheri and Pihie (2009)	- I have always worked hard to be among the best in my field
		- I often sacrifice personal comfort to take advantage of business opportunities
		- I would rather be my own boss than have a secure job
		- I can make big money only if I can create my own business
		- I feel energetic working with innovative colleagues in a dynamic business climate
Subjective norm	Arranz et al. (2019)	- I believe that my closest family thinks I should pursue a career as an entrepreneur
		- I believe that my close friends think I should pursue a career as an entrepreneur
		- I believe that people, who are important to me, think I should pursue a career as an entrepreneur
Government Entrepreneurial Policies	Busenitz, Gomez and Spencer (2000)	- Government organizations help individuals start their own businesses
		- The government has reserved government contracts for new and small businesses
		- Local and national governments have special support for people wanting to start a new business.
		- The government sponsors organizations that help new businesses grow
		- Even after a failure in a previous business, the government helps entrepreneurs to restart

Source: authors'

In order to have a sample of students maximizing the statistical quality of our data, we chose to administer the questionnaires to respondents face-to-face for ensuring the quality of the responses and removing ambiguity, if any.

2.2. Method of Analysis

To test the validity of the hypotheses of this study and examine the validity of the links proposed by the theoretical model, we use the techniques used for the development of exploratory analyses, namely principal components analysis (PCA). In addition, we use the multiple regression method for estimates of the links between the variables of the model studied.

Furthermore, to examine the validity of the measurement scales, we considered principal components factor analysis (Bryman and Cramer 2005). Validity is based on checking the factorial weight of variable items by examining standard regression coefficients of Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO), which must be greater than or equal to 0.5 to be judged acceptable. Additionally, Bartlett's Test of Sphercity should be statistically significant in order to show the strength of the correlations. In addition, we used Cronbach's alpha, which is a reliability coefficient allowing measuring the internal consistency between the items of a measurement

scale. The principle of reliability makes it possible to minimize the number of initial items and eliminate others according to the value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Thus, for Vuong, Phuong, Huan and Quan (2020), a Cronbach's alpha coefficient greater than 0.6 is acceptable, since reflecting the reliability of a measurement scale. To do this, a PCA was carried out in order to eliminate the poorly represented items, and then to obtain a purified version of the scale.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies, percentages, means, and minimum and maximum values were used in the analyses of demographic variables of the study sample. Table 2 summarizes these demographic data.

Table 2: Sample characteristics

Characteristics	Interval	Numbers	Percentage
Genre	Male	79	39.5
	Female	121	60.5
Age	18 to 20 years	53	26.5
	20 to 22 years	87	43.5
	22 to 24 years	32	16
	24 to 26 years	23	11.5
	Over 26 years	5	2.5
Field of study	Science and technology	52	26
	Economics and management	70	35
	literature and humanities	36	18
	Legal Sciences	42	21

Source: authors'

Regarding the gender distribution of the respondents, the results show that the majority of the respondents are female students representing 60.5 percent, while the remaining 39.5 percent are males. This result confirms the female domination in Tunisian universities. This may be attributed, among other factors, to socio-economic conditions as well as the increasing number of unemployed young male graduates, which explains why the latter leave the

university environment to seek other professional opportunities in order to guarantee a desired living standard.

The descriptive results of the respondents' age distribution indicate that the majority are between 20 and 22 years old with a rate of 43.5 percent, while only 2.5 percent are above 26 years old. The result confirms, also, that the majority of the respondents are still young people who can demonstrate a lot of energy to pursue an entrepreneurial career.

In relation to the study field of students surveyed, the result shows that 35 percent are enrolled in economics and management against 26 percent in science and technology, 21 percent in Legal Sciences and 18 percent in literature and human sciences. Thus, we tried to interview a significant number of students in economics and management because they have several modules related to the business world, namely accounting, finance, taxation and business management, which can help in developing their entrepreneurial spirit.

3.2. Descriptive statistics of the variables

3.2.1. Entrepreneurial Intention

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of entrepreneurial intention

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Cronbach's alpha	KMO
1. The idea is appealing of one day starting your own business	3.84	1.11	.848	.852
2. I will choose a career as an entrepreneur	3.75	1.07		
3. I prefer to be an entrepreneur rather than to be an employee in a company or an organization	3.73	1.14		
4. I will want to have the freedom to develop my own business	3.79	1.12		
5. I will want to make a great impact on society through my entrepreneurial skills	3.79	1.16		
Scale mean	3.78	1.12		

Source: authors' compilation using SPSS

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics results of undergraduate students' entrepreneurial intention in economics and management, science and technology as well as literature and humanities indicating they have a good level of entrepreneurial intention. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for measuring entrepreneurial intention was greater than 0.6, indicating good reliability. The KMO index is greater than 0.5, indicating good measurement validity.

3.2.2. Entrepreneurial Attitude

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of entrepreneurial attitude

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Cronbach's alpha	KMO
1. I have always worked hard to be among the best ones in my field	3.95	1.41	.911	.871
2. I often sacrifice personal comfort to take advantage of business opportunities	4.00	1.41		
3. I would rather be my own boss than have a secure job	4.08	1.34		
4. I can make big money only if I can create my own business	4.13	1.28		
5. I feel energetic working with innovative colleagues in a dynamic business climate	4.16	1.36		
Scale mean	40.6	1.36		

Source: authors' compilation using SPSS

Table 4 above shows the descriptive statistics result of entrepreneurial attitude among the respondents. As indicated, the scale mean is 4.06. This result indicates a good level of attitude towards entrepreneurship among the students which positively impact their entrepreneurial intentions. Cronbach's alpha coefficient indicates a high reliability of the measurements. Thus, the KMO index indicates good measurement validity.

3.2.3. Subjective Norm

Table 5: Descriptive statistics of subjective norm

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Cronbach's alpha	KMO
1. I believe that my closest family thinks that I should pursue a career as an entrepreneur	4.04	1.38	.858	.730
2. I believe that my close friends think that I should pursue a career as an entrepreneur	4.03	1.44		
3. I believe that people, who are important to me, think that I should pursue a career as an entrepreneur	4.21	1.37		
Scale mean	4.09	1.39		

Source: authors' compilation using SPSS

The descriptive statistics result of subjective norm is presented in Table 5. The scale mean is 4.09. It shows that the surveyed students are supported by social and family support system which can promote their entrepreneurial intentions. In addition, this scale has high reliability and measurement validity.

3.2.4. Perceived Behavioral Control

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of perceived behavioral control

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Cronbach's alpha	KMO
1. If I start my own business the chances of success would be very high	3.85	1.29	.900	.875
1. I have enough knowledge and skills to start a business	3.97	1.30		
2. I am capable to develop or handle an entrepreneurial project	3.97	1.25		
3. Entrepreneurs have a positive image within society	3.88	1.28		
4. I am aware of the startup support	4.02	1.23		
Scale mean	3.93	1.27		

Source: authors' compilation using SPSS

Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics result of perceived behavioral control. The mean of the scale is 3.93, which shows that the students surveyed have an average level of perceived behavioral control. The reliability measured by Cronbach's alpha also shows both high reliability and validity.

3.2.5. Government Entrepreneurial Policies

Table 7: Descriptive statistics of entrepreneurial government policies

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Cronbach's alpha	KMO
1- Government organizations help individuals start their own businesses	3.79	1.41	.875	.832
2- The government has reserved government contracts for new and small businesses	3.69	1.49		
3- Local and national governments have special support for people wanting to start a new business.	3.79	1.37		
4- The government spon sors organizations that help new businesses grow	3.61	1.47		
5- Even after a failure in a previous business, the government helps entrepreneurs to restart	3.70	1.44		
Scale mean	3.75	1.43		

Source: authors' compilation using SPSS

Table 7 indicates that the surveyed students note that there are entrepreneurial government policies to promote business creation with a scale mean of (3.75). There is also good measurement reliability and validity.

3.3. Multiple Regression Analysis

In order to achieve our objective, multiple regression analysis is used. In the research model, attitude towards entrepreneurship, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control and entrepreneurial government policies are regressed on the entrepreneurial intention of the surveyed students. The results of the explanatory power and ANOVA of the regression model are presented in the tables:

Table 8: Model summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.727[a]	.528	.518	3.08260	2.165

a. Predictors :(Constant), EA, SN, PBC, EGP,

b. Dependent variable: Entrepreneurial intention

Source: authors' compilation using SPSS

Table 9 : ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2072.224	4	518.056	54.518	.000[b]
	Residual	1852.971	195	9.502		
	Total	3925.195	199			

a. Dependent variable: Entrepreneurial intention,

b. Predictors: (Constant), EA, SN, PBC, EGP.

Source: authors' compilation using SPSS

The statistical results show a strong correlation between attitudes towards behavior, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control and entrepreneurial government policies (In this model (R=.727%)). The adjusted R2 is positive, indicating that the variables move in the same direction. Therefore, the model is overall significant ($p< 0.05$). The calculated F is 54.518, and is highly significant ($p < 0.05$). This implies that there is an effect relationship between entrepreneurial intention and the independent variables. Similarly, the Durbin-Watson statistic shows that the serial correlation of the residuals, 2.165, is a value within the acceptance range (1.5 and 2.5).

Thus, to determine the extent of attitude influence towards behavior, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control as well as entrepreneurial government policies on students' entrepreneurial intention, the regression results are presented in Table 10. They indicate that students' entrepreneurial intention is positively associated with attitude towards

entrepreneurship and subjective norm, manifested through the regression coefficients which are significant (p<0.05). However, perceived behavioral control and entrepreneurial government policies are not positively associated with the entrepreneurial intention of the surveyed students, as the regression coefficients are not significant (p >0.05).

Table 10: Regression coefficient[a]

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Unstandardis Errors	Béta		
(Constant)	5.006	1.162		4.309	.000
EA	.454	.048	.599	9.368	.000
SN	.203	.061	.170	3.309	.001
PBC	.053	.053	.064	1.000	.319
EGP	.061	.041	.081	1.488	.138

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intention

Source: authors' compilation using SPSS

3.4. Hypothesis Testing and Discussion

In order to test the research hypotheses, the regression results in Table 10 were used. The t-test and its significance were employed to assess the impact of attitude towards behavior, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and entrepreneurial government policies on entrepreneurial intention. The decision rule was to reject the hypothesis if the probability value (P-value) is greater than 5% of the significance level (0.05).

3.4.1. Testing the First Hypothesis

The regression result in Table 10 is used to test the first hypothesis (H1) restated below:

H1: Entrepreneurial attitude has a positive impact on students' entrepreneurial intention.

The t-values for attitude toward entrepreneurship in Table 10 are significant (p < 0.05). Thus, we can say that the entrepreneurial attitude influences the entrepreneurial intention among students. These results reflect other studies by Buli and Yesuf (2015); Trivedi (2016) and Kraiem (2025) which found a positive relationship between entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial intention. The strong entrepreneurial attitude of students is explained by the search for professional challenge, managerial power, as well as financial gain. Thus, all these reasons are important and can increase entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, H1 is supported.

3.4.2. Testing the Second Hypothesis

Table 10 is also used to test the second hypothesis (H2). To do this, the hypothesis is repeated below:

H2: Subjective norm has a positive impact on students' entrepreneurial intention.

Furthermore, the t-value of subjective norms shows a positive sign of significance ($p < 0.005$). We could assert that the subjective standard has a significant positive impact on the entrepreneurial intention of students. These results reflect those of Norashidah (2015); Alnemer (2021) and Kraiem (2025), which found a positive relationship between entrepreneurial intention and subjective norm. Thus, H2 is supported. This positive relationship may be explained by the fact that students do not often have professional or even entrepreneurial experiences and skills necessary for launching an entrepreneurial career which makes them more reliant on the opinions of friends, family, and colleagues (Wijerathna, Wickramasuriya and Marambe 2015). In the same vein, some researchers (Nanda and Sørensen 2010; Kacperczyk 2013) note that peers have strong effects on the entrepreneurial transition of students, especially for those who have a little prior exposure to entrepreneurship.

3.4.3. Testing the Third Hypothesis

The regression result in Table 10 is appropriate for testing the third hypothesis (H3) restated below:

H3: Perceived behavioral control has a positive effect on students' entrepreneurial intention.

The t-values for PBC in Table 10 are not significant at the 5% level in either model. Therefore, we can state that PBC has no substantial effect on entrepreneurial intention among students of economics and management as well as science and technology. The study results are consistent with the findings of Ebong, Rugimbana and Shambare (2017); Abdullahi, Khalid, Ahmed, Ahmed and Gumawa (2021) and Kraiem (2025), who revealed that PBC has no effect on students' entrepreneurial intention. This means that the PBC will not motivate students of Tunisian universities to intend to become entrepreneurs. This result may be explained by the fact that students do not have the practical skills needed to consider an entrepreneurial career. However, the result is contrary to other works that found a positive relationship between PBC and entrepreneurial intention (Sultan, Maqsood and Shrif, 2016; Vuong et al. 2020; Lingappa, Shah and Mathew, 2020). Therefore, H3 is rejected.

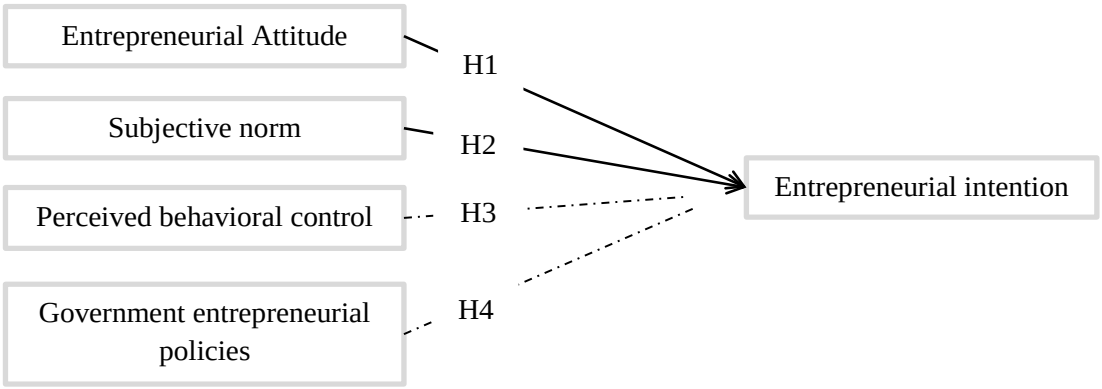
3.4.4. Testing the Fourth Hypothesis

The regression result in Table 10 is appropriate for testing the fourth hypothesis (H4) restated below:

H4: Government entrepreneurial policies would appear to be an important predictor of students' entrepreneurial intention.

The t-value of entrepreneurial government policies in Table 10 is not significant at the 5 percent level. Therefore, this study confirms that entrepreneurial government policies have no positive effect on students' entrepreneurial intention and do not encourage entrepreneurship. This can be explained by the fact that despite the Tunisian government implementing entrepreneurial government policies such as tax benefits, financial aid and subsidies, business creation support programs as well as the identification of development zones, students still express their dissatisfaction with these policies. Indeed, this dissatisfaction can be justified by information asymmetry, poor coordination among responsible parties, predominantly theoretical training and distrust of these policies. Therefore, we reject hypothesis H4. The result of this study contradicts the results of previous studies such as (Taormina and Lao, 2007; Indarti et al., 2007).

Figure 2: Research model



Note: Solid Line=Significant relationship; Broken Line = Insignificant

Source: Adopted from Ajzen 1991

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in economic growth and social development in both developed and developing countries. Business creation follows a sequential process of which entrepreneurial intention is the most important step, as it predicts the entrepreneurial event. Therefore, due to the increase in unemployment rates in most countries of the world, current strategies aimed at stimulating business creation through the encouragement of young university students and even graduates to create new businesses for facing this challenge. Therefore, the objective of this research is to study entrepreneurial intention among students

while verifying the impact of entrepreneurial government policies on their entrepreneurial intentions.

To do this and in order to achieve our objective, we used the model of the theory of planned behavior of Ajzen (1991). The results of the multiple regression analysis show that this model is verified. Attitude towards behavior and subjective norm significantly explain students' entrepreneurial intention whereas behavioral control and entrepreneurial government policies are not significant. For this reason, this is explained by the fact that students have theoretical knowledge about business creation and deserve to develop practical knowledge to consider the difficulties related to an entrepreneurial career. In addition, students do not perceive government policies on business creation positively.

The theoretical contribution of our study relativizes the linearity on entrepreneurship in Tunisia which generally explains the entrepreneurial intention of students only by the three antecedents of the model of the theory of planned behavior of Ajzen. Our research highlights the effect of entrepreneurial government policies on the entrepreneurial intention of students.

On a practical level, our study showed that reducing the unemployment rate among university students through self-employment requires strong attention from the public authorities to develop the entrepreneurial potential among students and strengthen their skills. This can be achieved by reviewing current government policies and establishing new, pragmatic, and functional policies that promote entrepreneurship among young graduates. In addition, efforts should focus on intensifying the practical aspect of entrepreneurship education at university, strengthening entrepreneurial competitions, facilitating access to financing for young graduates via public banks with discounted interest rate, reducing administrative barriers including access to information and lowering taxation or even tax exemption for projects in development zones.

This research represents a passage to study the entrepreneurial intention of students based on entrepreneurial antecedents according to the theory of planned behavior and entrepreneurial government policies. This field of research deserves to be further developed by other works focusing on the entrepreneurial intention of students based on a comparison with other government policies of another neighboring country or the comparison between two regions, one normal and the other of entrepreneurial development.

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